

**The centrality of Security Sector Reform in Post-conflict war-to-peace transitions:  
Implications for the military**

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Merci Gen Romeo et bon après midi.

I will structure my presentation in the following way: discuss the evolution of Security Sector Reform debate, touch on the players and the processes, elaborate on the parallel initiatives that arise from the SSR debate and address the implications all of this has for the military.

The conceptual debate on the extent to which the international community requires comprehensive solutions to its intervention strategies has advanced at an astonishing rate. If the post-Cold war era and the rise of 'new wars' and 'second dimensional peacekeeping' serve as a departure point, the debate then excelled towards the 'complex humanitarian emergency' era, during which the link between disaster, defence and development was loosely articulated. The argument was that, in this era of new wars and internal conflicts, any conventional man-made or natural disaster could immediately become 'complex' if it occurred in a collapsed or failing state whose frail infrastructure could not remedy the damage. The disaster could then become 'humanitarian' in nature if it displaced a percentage of the population and rendered them homeless; indeed, the situation would become further exacerbated if the displaced groups migrated across borders or wandered into unstable areas inhabited by lawless gunmen, or warlords.

It was felt that the concept of 'complex humanitarian emergencies' sufficiently underscored the fact that the military should cooperate with the humanitarian agencies and work together to create the 'humanitarian space' necessary for these agencies to undertake their responsibilities. The debate gave limelight to organizations such as the UN High Commission for Refugees, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, as well as a myriad of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including CARE, Medecins sans Frontieres, MERLIN, OXFAM and more.

Whilst the concept created a new understanding of civil-military relations, and could be applied during a fairly tranquil environment, it fell short of addressing pre-conflict vulnerabilities. The debate surrounding conflict prevention then took the lead and became the leading language of overseas development agendas. The World Bank commissioned study 'Voices of the Poor' empirically proved to the western world that the main concern of people living in impoverished areas was security, and ranked just as high, and in many cases higher, than access to food and shelter.

Thus, security was required for development and development was required for security. The discourse was coined a 'circular argument' out of which many countries could not escape. However, upon further examination, two levels of analysis gave this argument more clarity. At the state level, the provision of state security was necessary for human development and at the individual level, grass-roots security provisions were essential to promote confidence in the state structures. Without the latter, the former would fail to be comprehensive in its quest for human and national development. In some countries, this disproportional distribution of security has led to regional collapse within the peripheral rural areas that eventually permeates the core urban centres. In many respects, security provisions extended only to the 'elite', and the gap that widens between the elite and the masses, often triggers a spiral of heightened security measures that favour the governing regime, its extended families and commercial interests. A completely segregated society results in pockets of dissatisfaction that generate demand for alternative sources of security.

There was no dispute over the linkages and inter-dependencies between security and development. Its acknowledgement encouraged external assistance programmes geared towards the developing world to address these two concepts in a more comprehensive way. Policy that shaped the way in which overseas development funds would be disbursed began to formally recognize the need for a wider approach to addressing a development and security 'nexus' in order to yield more effective and longer-lasting solutions on which these funds were spent.

In this context, the conflict prevention debate became marginally overshadowed by a new sound-bite which the donor community called 'Security Sector Reform.' It recognized that, particularly during post-conflict transitions, states suffered from a lack of democratic and professional security forces that required re-building, transforming or reforming immediately following the end of a conflict. These extended security forces not only included the military, but also the police and the law enforcement agencies, the intelligence forces, the judicial system, the legislative functions and oversight mechanisms. 'Professionalism' became the key word, which acknowledged the dual thinking that one could not have a well-trained, operationally effective armed forces if it did not have control of them and, conversely, that a well-monitored, financially efficient defence institution was futile without a combat-capable armed force that could serve as a key instrument of foreign policy.

The debate on Security Sector Reform fuelled ahead without entirely appreciating the diversity of issues it embraced and the multitude of reform agendas across different regions. Undoubtedly, the United Kingdom's thinking towards the concept has advanced most rapidly, due in large part to the efforts of the former Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short. The fervour has spread into the national ministries of the UK's partner countries within the Commonwealth (Australia), and towards the thinking of traditional UN peacekeeping contributors that have recognized the 'human security' element of conflict as key to sustainable development (Netherlands). Canada falls into both camps and has made its most recent contribution to the SSR through supporting the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan.

Because the Security Sector Reform debate spans a range of activities and issues which involve practitioners, policymakers, and civil society – a range that now spans wider than a multi-tasked consolidated peace support operation – it is necessary to describe the main pillars of a Security Sector Reform Framework. These would include the following:

- q The security forces (armed forces, police, paramilitary and intelligence services);
- q The relevant ministries and offices within the executive branch charged with managing and monitoring the security forces (such as the ministries of defence, finance, internal and foreign affairs, national security councils, and budget and audit offices);
- q Informal security forces;
- q The judiciary and correction system;
- q Parliamentary oversight committees;
- q Private security firms; and
- q Civil and political society

Activities that emerge where security and development forces meet undoubtedly require joint and comprehensive planning, which includes all security relevant government departments. For the United Kingdom, this has primarily included the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Department for International Development, all of which have formally come together under the Global Conflict Prevention Pool following a government-wide review of conflict prevention work. This aimed to encourage different departments working in similar areas to cooperate more closely as part of

the joined-up initiative. The review concluded that the UK's contribution to conflict prevention 'could be even more effective if it was coordinated across departmental boundaries.'

The joined-up approach to government has also reached Canadian shores. A commitment to the '3D' model comprising defence, development and diplomacy has been articulated as Canada's three main instruments of foreign policy. Such a policy implies the cross-departmental cooperation between National Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). During the recent opening of the Diplomatic Forum in Toronto, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Peter Harder described the model as a "second priority in the current transition [of government] that places greater emphasis on horizontal thinking."

However, many have questioned whether or not the much-needed 3-D approach stops at indeed that: 'thinking'. In practice, there is no joined-up pool of resources from which to manage joined-up planning. Such an incomplete strategy precludes strategic thinking at the highest of levels, which, ironically, should be the primary aim of such an exercise. Without any resources, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade can exert minimal influence on CIDA. Similarly, whilst posing at the 'pointy' end of the foreign policy spectrum, the lack of resources within the Department of National Defence precludes any long-term operational effectiveness. This point became only too evident in the recent commitment of Canadian troops to Haiti, which has amounted to a duration of 90 days. The pledge was issued at the same time as reports suggesting that all branches of the Canadian military say they lack the resources for major international expeditions.

All this begs the question of who holds the purse strings in Canada and why the purse is not being shared. At present, CIDA manages a multi-billion dollar fund that is restricted by two things. First of all, Canada's membership in the Organization for Economic Development (OECD) implies a commitment to the OECD Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) criteria. These criteria include a remit to deliver development aid in a secure and safe environment and, arguably, are in need of serious revision that reflects the realities of failed and post-conflict states, as well as the debate surrounding the security-development nexus. Similarly, the strategic mantra governing CIDA speaks laudably about enhancing aid effectiveness through poverty reduction and by contributing to a more secure environment. However, Canada's involvement assumes some degree of absorptive capacity within the recipient country and a reasonably degree of stability and security in order for it to carry out its programmes. This precludes involvement in anything but secure and stable theatres of operations, and poses frightening limitations on the use of the discretionary fund for the 'Defence' and 'Diplomacy' pillars of '3-D'. Thus, investing in vulnerable countries seems counter to the CIDA strategic agenda which, again, is underscored by Canada's recent decision to intervene in Haiti.

However, all is not lost within the 3-D approach. The idea itself is encouraging shared discussions and shared analysis. This has emerged not only from a recent 'joint' scoping mission by all three

departments in Haiti but also a similar approach taken towards Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the picture is still incomplete without the joint planning, joint policy, joint implementation and joint endstate.

Lastly, SSR programmes that reflect the union between security and development must be duly reflected in military doctrine and concepts, which is a hybrid of the promoted 'joined-up' approach. Campaign analysis tools such as lines of activity and decisive points, must incorporate the wider security imperatives even if this precludes the direct involvement of the military. It is essential for military troops to envision the wider endstate, and the additional pillars that support wider security reforms. Following the deployment of other agencies to a theatre of operations, the military can see what transitional management strategies are involved in continuing the various 'lines of activity' from which the military can now stand back as lead agent. Within such transitional management scenarios, sub-optimal strategies must also be considered.

Nicole Ball, "Transforming Security Sectors: The World Bank and IMF Approaches" in *Journal of Conflict, Security and Development*, Volume 1, Issue 1, pp 45-66.  
*The Global Conflict Prevention Pool: A joint UK Government approach to reducing conflict*, Whitehall publication, 2003, p.6.  
See <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/54/1886146.pdf>