the united nations SSR perspective

United Nations
Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions
Security Sector Reform Unit

Sustainable Peace Through Justice and Security

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About the SSR Unit

The SSR Unit, located within the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), serves as the focal point and technical resource capacity on SSR for the United Nations system, as well as national and international partners. Specifically, the SSR Unit supports the rapidly expanding range of field Missions involved in assisting national SSR efforts, primarily at the sector-wide level of SSR. In addition, the SSR Unit serves as a global centre of excellence by developing guidance and fostering an international normative basis for SSR. Part of this specific role includes the facilitation of discussion and debate between Member States, regional organizations and civil society representatives. The SSR Unit provides the secretariat for the United Nations Inter-agency SSR Task Force, which is co-chaired by DPKO and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This system-wide Task Force seeks to facilitate a comprehensive and coherent "One-UN" approach to SSR, with the goal of enhancing the United Nations capacity to deliver more efficient and effective support to national and regional SSR efforts.

A WORD FROM:

Mr. Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General

Over the past five years, security sector reform (SSR) has become an integral part of United Nations assistance to countries and regions affected by conflict. SSR features prominently in the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations, and is increasingly recognized as an essential element in post-conflict peacebuilding.

The reasons for this growing global emphasis on SSR are clear. SSR helps build more accountable, effective and efficient institutions, thereby facilitating early recovery in the aftermath of conflict, political instability or other upheaval. SSR also has a strong preventive aspect, as those institutions provide the foundations for resilient societies based on the rule of law and respect for human rights.

The United Nations continues to sharpen its SSR tools and to seek innovative solutions that can support national reconstruction processes.

A well equipped and well trained security force is necessary but not sufficient. We also need to help national authorities to build a culture of accountability and effective oversight mechanisms. All too often, ill-disciplined security institutions become a party to or cause of conflict, victimizing the very populations they have been entrusted to protect.

SSR is not palliative or short-term. It is a core element of multidimensional peacekeeping and peacebuilding, essential for addressing the roots of conflict and building the foundations of long-term peace and development.

As demands for SSR support rise, it will be imperative for the United Nations family to work closely with Member States and regional organizations to understand their particular needs. This publication, coinciding with the annual observance of the International Day of UN Peacekeepers, highlights important SSR achievements in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Timor-Leste, South Sudan and elsewhere. I look forward to working closely with all partners to draw the appropriate lessons from these experiences, to strengthen our SSR efforts, and to build a safer, more just and prosperous world for all.

UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

"SSR IS NOT PALLIATIVE OR SHORT-TERM. IT IS A CORE ELEMENT OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING, ESSENTIAL FOR ADDRESSING THE ROOTS OF CONFLICT AND BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS OF LONG-TERM PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT."

KEY DEFINITIONS

Security sector

Acknowledging that there is no one model for a security sector, the Report of the Secretary-General on SSR (A/62/659) defines the security sector as "a broad term often used to describe the structures, institutions and personnel responsible for the management, provision and oversight of security in a country. It is generally accepted that the security sector includes defence, law enforcement, corrections, intelligence services and institutions responsible for border management, customs and civil emergencies. Elements of the judicial sector responsible for the adjudication of cases of alleged criminal conduct and misuse of force are, in many instances, also included. Furthermore, the security sector includes actors that play a role in managing and overseeing the design and implementation of security, such as ministries, legislative bodies and civil society groups. Other non-State actors that could be considered as part of the security sector include customary or informal authorities and private security services".

Security sector reform

The United Nations refers to security sector reform (SSR) as "a process of assessment, review and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation led by national authorities that has as its goal the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law".

UN Photo/Fred Noy

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The fundamental objective of SSR is to make people feel safer. Throughout this SSR Perspective, a number of "SSR Illustrated" articles provide the reader with personal stories from a range of people on what SSR means in practice – from their perspectives.

UN Photo/Tim McKulka

Securing a Nation: The Transformation of a Soldier and his Country

In 1995, shortly after assuming control of the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF) Mr. Kellie Conteh, the then Chief of Defence Staff of the RSLMF, wrote an unusual letter to his Government. In this letter, Mr. Conteh expressed concern over the state of affairs of the armed forces – not with regard to arms and equipment, but to governance and management.

"I needed clarity", Mr. Conteh says. In his view, Sierra Leone lacked proper systems for command and control of the uniformed personnel, and suffered from insufficient management structures and inadequate civilian oversight of the Armed Forces. In response to these deficits, Mr. Conteh called for the establishment of a National Security Council to provide stronger civilian leadership of the security sector.

At the time, Sierra Leone was engulfed in a civil war that lasted from 1991 to 2002. "It was a very unfortunate time in our country's history" Mr. Conteh notes. As the Chief of Defence Staff, he found that military operations were uncoordinated resulting in the Government and Armed Forces working at cross purposes. Orders from military headquarters were often countermanded at the political level. "There was much confusion and people fought and fended for themselves", Mr. Conteh explains. "The motivation to send the letter was based on my realization that while the Armed Forces had a significant role to play in security provision, the Government ultimately had to be responsible for security management".

The war made any reform efforts impossible. But Mr. Conteh continued to stress the importance of an effective and accountable security sector to ensure peace and prosperity. He repeatedly advocated to his colleagues in the Armed Forces and the Government that "without security there couldn't be development, and without development, security would be temporary".

As the war drew to an end, attitudes also started changing. "By 2002 we were ready to initiate the reforms and we went ahead with our programmes" Mr. Conteh explains. "These efforts were spearheaded by a democratically elected government who sought to restore its authority and legitimacy by putting in place a more responsive security sector". Mr. Conteh was put in a unique position to push for the reforms when he was appointed the National Security Coordinator in charge of overseeing activities across the security sector. He now found himself in a civilian position through which many of his previous recommendations as a military commander could be implemented.

"While the reforms were necessary, we met some resistance at first", Mr. Conteh notes. "However, as people started understanding the benefits of a clear national security vision and strategy, supported by an effective National Security Council responsible for coordination of the security institutions, things went bet-

ter". In the end, there was a growing understanding both in the Government and the Armed Forces that "military leaders and other security sector stakeholders could benefit from a focused civilian leadership and vice versa." Mr. Conteh says.

For more than ten years, Mr. Conteh served as the National Security Coordinator and saw his country emerge from the ashes of the war to re-establish functional security institutions accountable to civilian authorities while undertaking two democratic elections. "Senior Commanders have come to me and expressed gratitude that Sierra Leone has managed to build a strong foundation for the Armed Forces, which are now responsible to the population and the Government and enjoy more collaboration and cooperation across the security sector", Mr. Conteh notes.

Reflecting over his service to Sierra Leone, Mr. Conteh notes: "Making the security sector more effective and accountable was a challenging journey for my country and me. And I'm proud to have been a part of this transformation, because it opened up my eyes". In early 2012, Mr. Conteh left Sierra Leone to assist the authorities in South Sudan reform their security sector, as part of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan.

UN Photo/Thorodd Ommundsen

UN Photo/Fred Noy

UNITED NATIONS SSR APPROACH

This section introduces key **definitions, principles and concepts** that guide United Nations SSR support to Member States and regional organizations. It describes the **SSR Unit** and the United Nations **Inter-agency SSR Task Force**.

A WORD FROM:

Mr. Hervé Ladsous Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping

In countries recovering from conflict, there is a pressing need for the Government, political parties and all segments of society to establish a strategic and common vision for their security. The United Nations sees its task in facilitating the establishment of that vision. For SSR to be transformative and sustainable, it must therefore take place – first and foremost – in the context of national ownership and true partnership amongst host countries, with international and regional organizations and key donors.

The theme for this year's Peacekeeper's Day is "Global Partnership". It is fitting that this edition of "SSR Perspective" offers an overview of the many innovative ways in which the United Nations is engaged in supporting SSR, in partnership with Member States, civil society and many others.

SSR has rapidly evolved as a core element of many United Nations Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions. This publication solidly demonstrates that United Nations assistance to national SSR processes goes beyond critical, yet narrow, exercises like "right-sizing" the security services or "training and equipping" uniformed personnel. The aim of SSR is to strengthen the entire security sector architecture and values, including by enhancing sector-wide oversight and governance.

The country-specific scenarios described in this magazine illustrate the breadth of our work in several countries across four continents. For example, in Timor-Leste successive United Nations Peacekeeping Missions have worked actively with national authorities, the UN Country Team and bilateral actors to build the institutional capacity and governance of the security sector, as well as preparing the country for the departure of the Peacekeeping Operation at the end of 2012. In South Sudan, the world's newest nation, the Mission is already working closely with national authorities and bilateral partners to address many challenges with a view to establishing an effective and accountable sector.

UN Photo/Paulo Filgueiras

Earlier this year, I travelled to Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. Each country faces unique SSR challenges, and in both contexts United Nations Peacekeeping is playing a very important role, together with donors. In Liberia, UNMIL is working hard to strengthen the national police and other security institutions, while aiming to enhance civilian oversight and management of the sector. Côte d'Ivoire has come through a protracted crisis and has identified SSR as a key to sustainable peace; we are actively assisting in this. Yet, there are still fundamental challenges in this strategic sector in such peacekeeping settings as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti.

I recommend this publication to a diverse audience of practitioners, academics, policy-makers, and donors who are interested in how UN peacekeeping could more effectively and in a focused manner support national SSR efforts in pursuit of security, justice and sustainable development.

"THE AIM OF SSR IS TO STRENGTHEN THE ENTIRE SECURITY SECTOR ARCHITECTURE AND VALUES, INCLUDING BY ENHANCING SECTOR-WIDE OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE."

SSR Concept and Approach

The reform of a country's security sector is essential in post-conflict contexts. In those settings, making people feel safe and secure and (re)-building confidence between the State and its peoples is vital for sustainable peace and development. In other contexts, SSR can even prevent conflicts or crises from emerging or resurging and it is also a process that many States undertake on a regular basis to respond to emerging threats or potential internal or external pressures.

Acknowledging that there is no one model for a security sector, the Report of the Secretary-General on SSR (A/62/659) defines the security sector as "a broad term often used to describe the structures, institutions and personnel responsible for the management, provision and oversight of security in a country. It is generally accepted that the security sector includes defence, law enforcement, corrections, intelligence services and institutions responsible for border

UN Photo/Olivier Chassot

management, customs and civil emergencies. Elements of the judicial sector responsible for the adjudication of cases of alleged criminal conduct and misuse of force are, in many instances, also included. Furthermore, the security sector includes actors that play a role in managing and overseeing the design and implementation of security, such as ministries, legislative bodies and civil society groups. Other non-State actors that could be considered as part of the security sector include customary or informal authorities and private security services".

The United Nations defines SSR as "a process of assessment, review and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation led by national authorities that has as its goal the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law".

UN Photo/Jérôme Mellon

Ten basic guiding principles are set out for the United Nations in its SSR support:

i. The goal of the United Nations in SSR is to support States and societies in developing effective and accountable security;

ii. SSR processes should be based on a national decision and/or Security Council mandate;

iii. The sustainability of SSR depends on the ownership and commitment of the States and societies involved;

iv. A United Nations approach to SSR must be flexible and tailored to the needs of specific environments;

v. A gender perspective is critical in all stages of an SSR process;

vi. A SSR framework is essential at the outset of a peace process, in early recovery strategies and in post- conflict contexts;

vii. A clearly-defined SSR strategy is essential;

viii. The effectiveness of international support to SSR will be shaped by integrity of motive, accountability, resources and capacity;

ix. The efforts of national and international partners must be well coordinated;

x. Monitoring and evaluation are essential to track and maintain progress in SSR over time.

The Eyes and Ears of the People

Timor-Leste first declared its independence as a Portuguese colony back in 1976, but it was not until 20 May 2002 that it finally received international recognition as a sovereign State. The United Nations played a significant part in this story.

Mr. David Ximenes, as leader of the Clandestino movement was imprisoned and tortured during the 24 year occupation. "This was a long and terrible struggle and we lost a third of our population fighting for our freedom. Fighting for democracy. We owe it to the thousands who died, to the men and women and children that our freedom lasts forever," he says.

Today Mr. Ximenes is a Member of Parliament and takes particular pride as a senior member of the all party Parliamentary Committee B, responsible for Security, Defence and Foreign Affairs. "My job as Member of Parliament is to represent the people of my district, but as a member of Committee B, I have a second job to keep watch over the security forces of my country. We are the oversight mechanism", he notes.

Mr. Ximenes goes on to explain how the Committee is empowered to invite, question and seek answers from the Secretaries of State of both Defence and Security, as well as the Army Commander and the Police Commander. "For democracy to grow, the work, responsibilities and limits of the security sector must be clear to the people, and the men and women in uniform have to act lawfully and account for their actions."

"We are the eyes and ears for the people", Mr. Ximenes says. "People come to speak to us here in the Parliament and when we travel to the districts, they ask questions. Sometimes we are approached by civil society organizations and sometimes we react to reports in the newspapers."

Recently Committee B, using its powers invested under Decree Law No. 9/2008 has been scrutinizing the intelligence services to provide checks and balances on the activities to safeguard the rights, liberties and guarantees of citizens as provided for in the national Constitution.

Today, even as a senior citizen, Mr. Ximenes spends most afternoons at law school where he is studying for his degree. "To be a good Parliamentarian, not only must you be experienced and wise but, you must know the law. We need to educate more of our young people so they can contribute to Timor-Leste"

Mr. David Ximenes, Member of Parliament in Timor-Leste. (Photo/Raymundo Padua)

"FOR DEMOCRACY TO GROW, THE WORK, RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIMITS OF THE SECURITY SECTOR MUST BE CLEAR TO THE PEOPLE, AND THE MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM HAVE TO ACT LAWFULLY AND ACCOUNT FOR THEIR ACTIONS."

SSR Unit

The SSR Unit, located within the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), serves, as directed by the Secretary-General, as the focal point and technical resource capacity on SSR for the United Nations system, as well as national and international partners (ST/SGB/2010/1). Specifically, the SSR Unit supports the rapidly expanding range of field Missions involved in assisting national SSR efforts, primarily at the sector-wide level of SSR. In addition, the SSR Unit serves as a global centre of excellence by developing guidance and fostering an international normative basis for SSR. Part of this specific role includes the facilitation of discussion and debate between Member States, regional organizations and civil society representatives. Finally the SSR Unit provides the secretariat for the Inter-agency SSR Task Force, which is co-chaired by DPKO and UNDP. This system-wide Task Force seeks to facilitate a comprehensive and coherent "One-UN" approach to SSR, with the goal of enhancing the United Nations capacity to deliver more efficient and effective support to national SSR efforts.

Field Support

The SSR Unit leads planning processes related to the design and implementation of sector-wide SSR support to national authorities. Sector-wide security sector support goes beyond critical yet narrow exercises like "right-sizing" the security services or "training and equipping" uniformed personnel. In addition, sector-wide assistance addresses the combination of effectiveness and accountability in all security structures and processes. To that end, the SSR Unit assists Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions in support of efforts by national authorities to:

- facilitate national SSR dialogues
- develop national security and defence policies, strategies and plans
- strengthen oversight, management and coordination capacities
- articulate security sector legislation
- mobilize resources for SSR-related projects
- harmonize international support to SSR
- monitor and evaluate programmes and results

The Unit currently supports 14 peacekeeping and special political missions, as well as peacebuilding-support offices. The Unit works in close partnership with the Department of Political Affairs to provide strategic, technical and administrative support to SSR teams on the ground. The Unit also supports other United Nations entities and Member States upon request. The work is coordinated with partners in the United Nations Secretariat, as well as those in United Nations agencies, funds, offices and programmes.

A Centre of Excellence

The SSR Unit serves a global centre of excellence for the development of an international normative basis for SSR in line with Member States' perspectives. In addition to leading the development of guidance in this area, the SSR Unit also organizes events on themes at the forefront of the SSR debate, identifies best practices and delivers training on UN support to SSR. The SSR Unit has *inter alia*: initiated an analysis of the United Nations footprint in SSR, in collaboration with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (2012); developed guidance on United Nations Support to National Security Policy and Strategy Making Processes, as well as Defence Sector Reform (2011); co-hosted, in partnership with the World Bank, a conference on citizen-focused SSR in fragile, conflict and violence-affected situations (2011); and facilitated a High-level Forum on African Perspectives on SSR (2010).

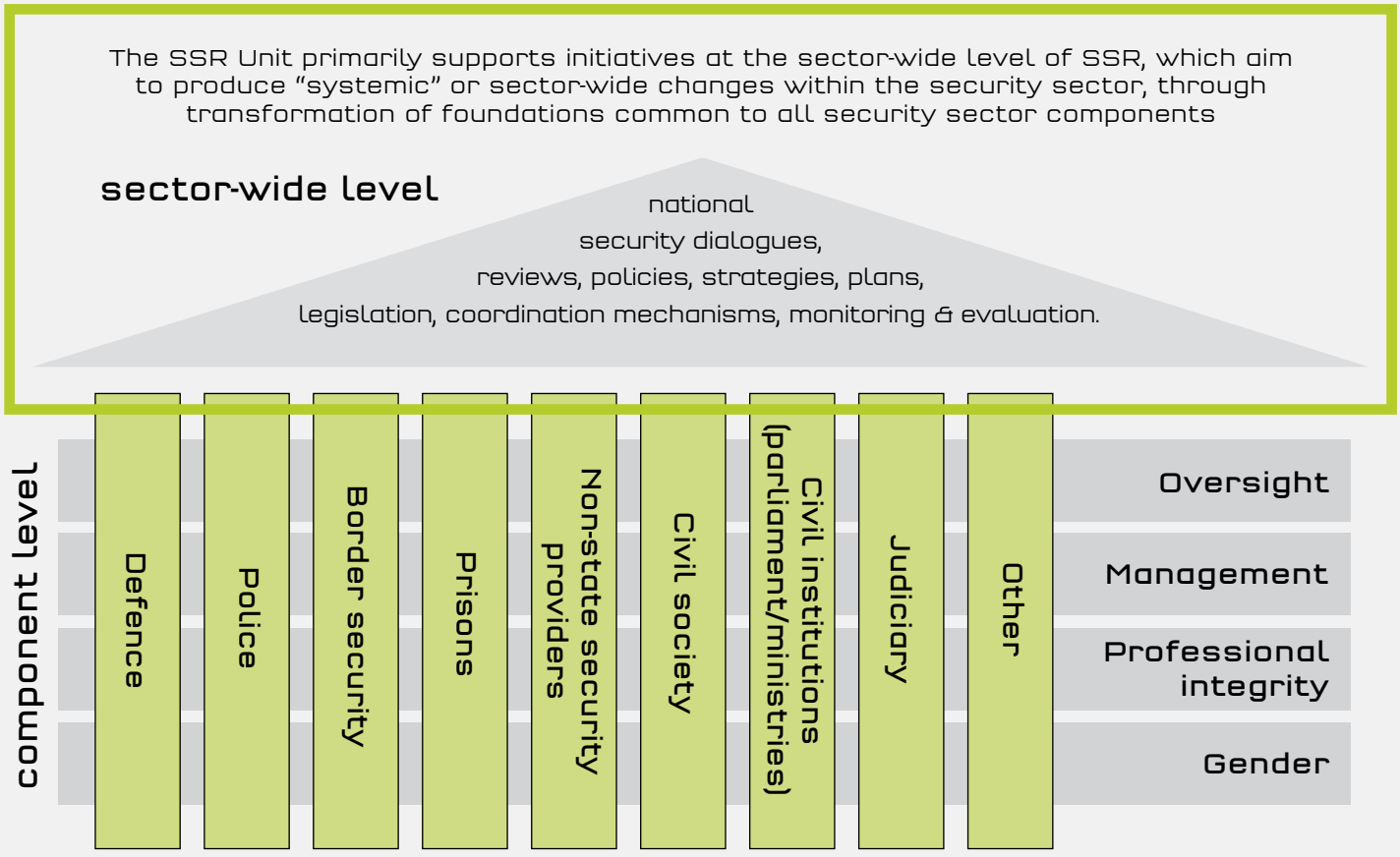
Developing a System-wide Approach to SSR

The SSR Unit provides the secretariat for the Inter-agency SSR Task Force (IASSRTF), which is co-chaired by DKPO and UNDP. In this capacity, the SSR Unit coordinates monthly meetings at the expert-level as well as yearly meetings at the principal-level. In addition, the SSR Unit also

maintains a Community of Practice for United Nations SSR practitioners. Between 2008 and 2011, the SSR Unit administered and managed the inter-agency capacity building programme entitled "Developing a System-wide United Nations Approach to Security Sector Reform". In this regard, the SSR Unit, on behalf of the IASSRTF, specifically led the development and delivery of Sensitization Briefings on the United Nations approach to SSR, undertook regional consultations on SSR in Latin America, Africa and South-East Asia, established the United Nations Roster of Senior SSR Experts, organized an Annual Inter-agency Senior SSR Practitioner's Workshop (2009, 2010, 2011), and developed a United Nations Strategic Partnership on SSR with the African Union.

Sector-wide SSR Approach

In the early years of United Nations support to national authorities, efforts were primarily focused at component-level reforms, such as those in the area of police and defence forces, taking into account a few cross cutting issues such as human rights and gender. Many of these activities were ad-hoc and disjointed, with little strategic or programmatic coherence. In recent years, requests and mandates have become even more complex to include a number of other core security providers and strategic sector-wide issues in which the United Nations can provide value added. This emphasis has grown out of the realization that security sector governance is best placed within a broader policy framework and national agenda, if SSR is to be transformative and sustainable.



Better Together: The United Nations Inter-agency SSR Task Force

The United Nations experience in SSR dates back decades and spans a number of technical specialties. A range of United Nations departments, offices, funds, agencies and programmes have provided diverse SSR support to national authorities and developed specific expertise and capacity in assisting Member States to maintain and enhance security.

In 2007, as part of the broader efforts to foster system-wide coherence, the Secretary-General established the Inter-agency Security Sector Reform Task Force (IASSRTF) to develop and promote an integrated, holistic and coherent United Nations approach to SSR. When it was first established, the Task Force consisted of seven United Nations entities: The Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Peacebuilding Support Office, the United Nations Development Programme, the Development Fund for Women (now part of UN Women) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Today, the membership of the IASSRTF has increased to 13, including five new members: the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs; the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa, the Office of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research; and the United Nations Population Fund. The IASSRTF is co-chaired by DPKO and UNDP, while the SSR Unit, located within the DPKO Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, provides its secretariat.

With the aim to inform and deliver a coordinated and coherent United Nations support to national SSR processes, the IASSRTF has been responsible for developing United Nations guidance, standards and practices in a number of areas of SSR; undertaking consultations with regional organizations; managing a roster of SSR experts and delivering training to United Nations personnel, external partners and Member States. The Task Force has a joint strategic Framework through which it pursues joint goals.

The principal level Co-chairs of the SSR Task Force, Dmitry Titov (DPKO) and Jordan Ryan (UNDP). (UN Photo/ JC Mcllawaine)

THE UNITED NATIONS INTER-AGENCY SSR TASK FORCE

Secretariat (DPKO - SSR Unit)

From War to Peace

In 2004, when Adjiratou Touré joined the Forces nouvelles, a coalition of rebel movements that controlled 60 percent of the territory of Côte d'Ivoire from 2002 to 2007, the country was torn by a violent civil war. Based in Séguéla, in the Northwest of Côte d'Ivoire, Ms. Touré worked within the police element of the Forces nouvelles.

The conflict, born out of deep-rooted political tensions and resentments in the face of ethnic marginalization, had reached a critical point with heavy fighting, deadly airstrikes and hundreds of casualties. In the turmoil, statutory security institutions had been politicized and had lost their republican ethos.

After peace finally broke out in the spring of 2007, it was time, as section 3 of the peace agreement stipulated, to reform and restructure the defence and security forces. Within that process, the Forces nouvelles had to be transformed.

"Not long after the process started," Ms. Touré recalls, "our commander said that we had to choose sides. He told us: 'There is a time for war, and there is a time for peace. Now is the time to choose'."

The decision to transition to new lives and livelihoods was a difficult one, but the reasons to return to civilian life were compelling for many.

"Many of us laid down our weapons because of our kids, our spouses," Ms. Touré explained. "Life has no price."

Soon after, Ms. Touré was receiving UN-delivered training on small business management and, as hundreds of other men and women were also accompanied in their transition, Ms. Touré was operating a small clothing business with seven other women.

"We received training and start-up funding," Ms. Touré further mentioned. "Some elements of the project were perhaps not perfect, but it greatly helped us – there was so much damage in the country!"

UN Photo/Patricia Esteve

"THERE IS A TIME FOR WAR,
AND THERE IS A TIME FOR PEACE.
NOW IS THE TIME TO CHOOSE."

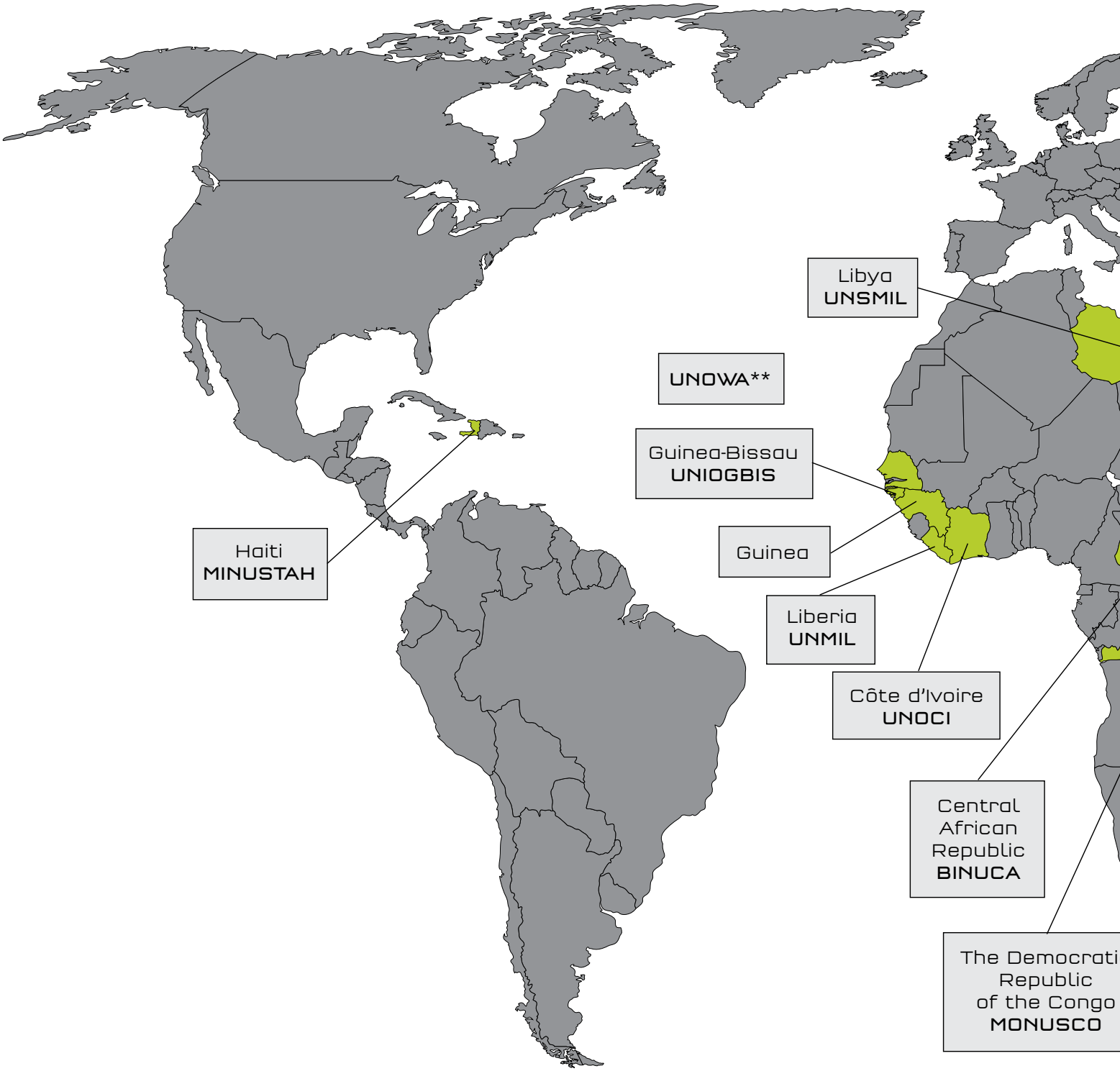
UN Photo/Martine Perret

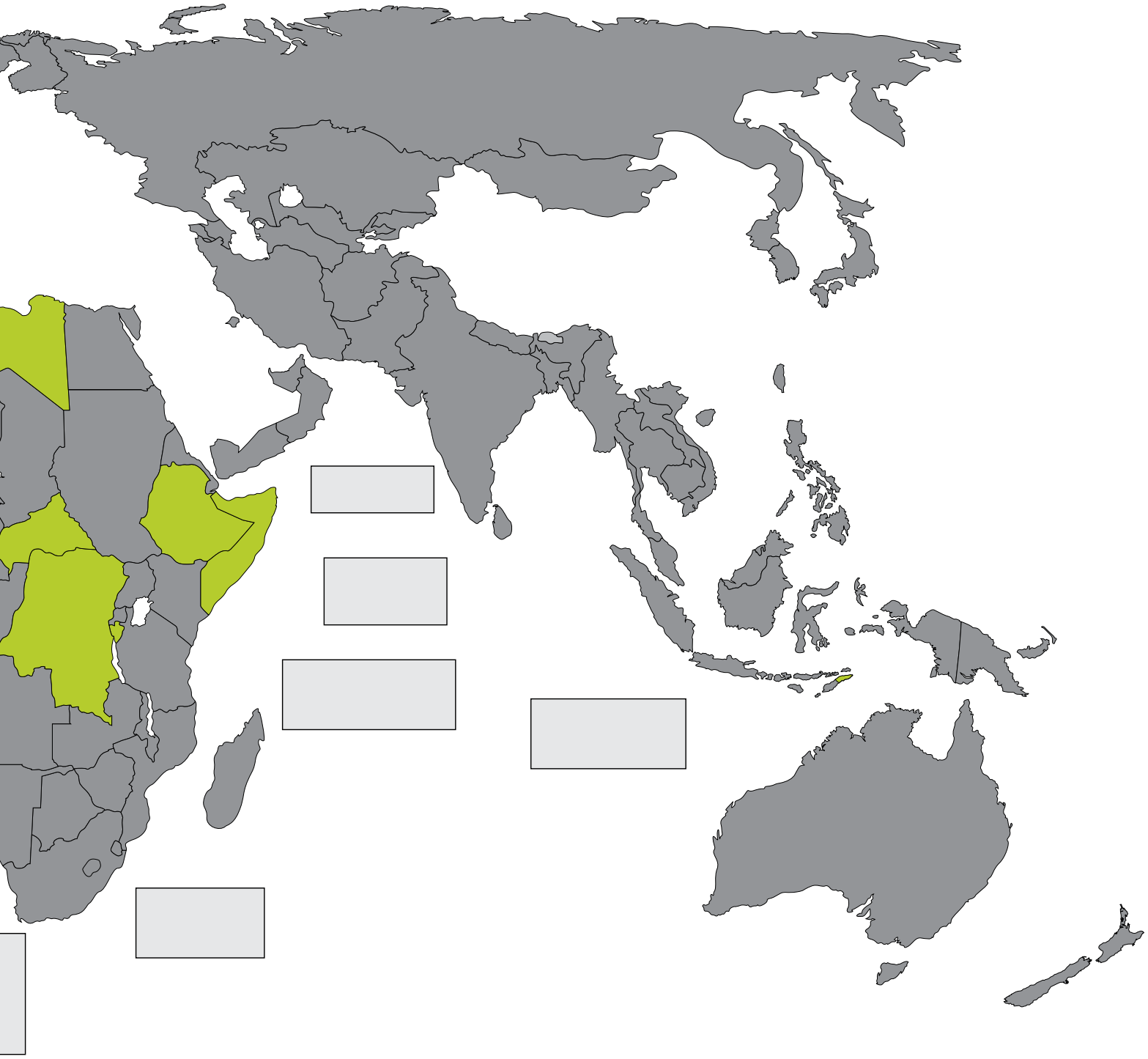
UNITED NATIONS SSR FOOTPRINT IN EARLY PEACEBUILDING

This section outlines key contributions by the United Nations in the area of SSR, particularly with regard to **supporting the reform processes** of Member States and regional organizations, developing **guidance** to United Nations staff and forging **partnerships** within and outside the United Nations system.

INCREASE IN DEMAND

Demand for SSR support has soared in the past few years. In 2007, following the establishment of an SSR capacity in DPKO, only three Missions included a designated SSR team. SSR has been recognized as an essential element of multi-dimensional peacekeeping and peace processes. It is now part of the mandate of many United Nations peacekeeping and special political Missions, as well as peacebuilding support offices.





A WORD FROM:

Mr. Dmitry Titov, Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions

UN Photo/JC McIlwaine

The persistence of fragility and violent conflict in many parts of the world necessitates a stronger emphasis on the reform of rule of law and security institutions. In this endeavour, there are no blueprints or quick fixes. It requires, in the words of the Secretary-General, that "peacekeepers are early peacebuilders".

As an essential component of multidimensional peacekeeping, SSR facilitates early recovery from conflict and lays the foundation for long-term peacebuilding. This support is based on building partnerships with national and regional actors to identify appropriate and context-specific solutions. It also means concentrating our support on gap areas where the United Nations can offer a distinct added value. This includes the provision of strategic sector-wide SSR support to Member Sates, which aims to build a legitimate and sustainable security sector by inter alia: facilitating national SSR dialogues; developing national security policies, strategies and plans; articulating legislation; and strengthening oversight, management and coordination capacities. It also involves working closely together with other members of United Nations family, particularly our colleagues in the funds, agencies and programmes, to improve coordination and delivery on the ground.

This publication seeks not only to highlight the United Nations principles and approach to SSR, but also to take stock of our contributions in this regard. As this section illustrates, the United Nations SSR footprint in early peacebuilding is becoming increasingly complex. From training and technical support on security sector strategies in Burundi to capacity-building for management and oversight of security institutions in Liberia and Timor-Leste; from review of the security sector in South-Sudan to strategic advice for the articulation of national priorities and the development of national security policies, strategies and plans for Somalia and Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations undertakes a multitude of tasks in support of national SSR efforts.

We are engaged in constant search for new and innovative approaches to make our support more efficient, flexible and sustainable. For example, a United Nations Roster of SSR Experts has been established and guidance material in a number of SSR areas has been developed to support UN staff engaged in SSR activities. In addition, partnerships have been forged within and outside the United Nations family, illustrated by the strategic partnership on SSR with the African Union, through which the United Nations supports the development of a continental SSR policy framework and is helping to build capacities for its implementation.

Much more needs to be done, and this SSR Perspective provides an engaging overview of progress made and remaining challenges.

"AS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL PEACEKEEPING, SSR FACILITATES EARLY RECOVERY FROM CONFLICT AND LAYS THE FOUNDATION FOR LONG-TERM PEACEBUILDING."

Burundi: Contributing to Maintaining the Peace

In Burundi, reform of the security sector – particularly the military and the police – has long been recognized as central to the country's stabilization and the consolidation of peace. The 2000 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement and subsequent ceasefire agreements include important provisions on the organization, structure, mandates and composition of post-conflict security forces that will act professionally and apolitically, adhere to human rights norms, and provide defence and security to all Burundians. These commitments are reinforced in the 2005 Burundian Constitution.

The United Nations has been involved in supporting national SSR efforts in Burundi since 2004. In December 2010, the UN Security Council established the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) to replace the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB). BNUB is mandated to continue to support the government of Burundi's efforts to professionalize and enhance the capacity of the national security forces, with a view to strengthening security sector governance.

BNUB Political Governance Section, in which the Mission's SSR capacity is situated, is focusing on providing technical advice to the Government on the development of a national vision for the security sector and a comprehensive SSR strategy. On the military side, this has led to the Mission to support the Government and international partners to undertake a Defence Review, including by funding a media awareness-raising workshop on the process prior to its launch in July 2011. BNUB also plans to support the development of a financial assessment for the transformation of the Army.

BNUB has been supporting SSR capacity-building efforts for the security forces, including in the areas of human rights and gender. In 2011, for example, BNUB organized training sessions on human rights and international humanitarian law for the military and police and, together with the German Cooperation, provided trainings on sexual and gender-based violence for the police. On the coordination side, BNUB is also an active participant in meetings of international partners providing support to the military and the police to ensure a harmonized approach.

BNUB has supported capacity-building of security institutions in Burundi, including in the areas of human rights and gender. (UN Photo/Martine Perret)

Central African Republic: Re-launching the SSR process

The Central African Republic (CAR) is located in the heart of Africa. Yet, unlike a number of its neighbors – including for example the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan – CAR has historically received relatively limited international attention, despite its great need for international support. For its part, the United Nations has been involved in CAR for more than a decade and has existed in its current configuration – the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) – since January 2010.

One of the main challenges to stability and peacebuilding in CAR is the limited capacity of the military, police and gendarmerie to provide effective, efficient and accountable security to the population, particularly outside of Bangui, the country's capital. This leaves many civilians vulnerable to violence, including in the hands of rebel groups and bandits, thereby undermining stability and development.

National authorities have recognized these and other weaknesses in the country's security architecture and launched a nationally-driven SSR process in CAR. This process was broadly consultative and focused on developing a short-term programme plan and the establishment of follow-up mechanisms. While the process advanced significantly between April 2008 and December 2009, it slowed considerably over the next two years due, in part, to a lack of resources and political challenges.

However, recently the Government of CAR explicitly requested BINUCA Security Institutions Unit (SIU) – the Mission lead in implementing the UN's SSR mandate in CAR - to support the re-launching of the SSR process through the elaboration of a medium-term national SSR strategy. In addition to providing this important strategic and technical advice, the SIU Unit also seeks to enhance the operational capacities of CAR security institutions by providing training to the military, police and gendarmerie as well as implementing practical projects, including the establishment of a computer centre in the National Police School.

The Minister Delegate for Defence congratulates officers for completing BINUCA-supported trainings in emergency assistance. (UN Photo)

UNOCI

Côte d'Ivoire: Facilitating a Common Vision for Reform

Côte d'Ivoire suffered from a protracted crisis for the major part of the last decade. Constantly postponed presidential elections exacerbated economic and social tensions and led to violent clashes, significant casualties and large displacements of the population. When presidential elections could finally be held in November 2010, the country lurched back into civil war as the incumbent leader refused to step down, using troops, paramilitaries and mercenaries to entrench his position and crush dissent. With the support of the international community, Ivoirians put an end to the five-month impasse by arresting the recalcitrant leader, and inaugurated the new legitimate President on 21 May 2011.

Building on its previous work, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) continues to assist the peace and reconciliation process in the country. Since July 2011, under a revised mandate, UNOCI is aiming at supporting that process through strategic assistance on the reform of the Ivorian security sector.

Initial efforts focused on re-establishing dialogue among the various components of the security sector with a view to developing a common and sector-wide vision for the reform. With the recent creation of a new team of SSR experts within the Mission, UNOCI is expected to support a security sector review, a national security strategy, the coordination of international support, the training of security sector institutions, and the vetting mechanism for security personnel, among other tasks.

While the political will seems favorable to sustainable reform efforts, important challenges lie ahead. Among them, the risk of a disproportionate emphasis on the reform of the military to the detriment of other components, and the large number of young combatants, estimated at 23,000, who were mobilized during the 2011 crisis.

UN Photo/Patricia Esteve