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SECURITY GOVERNANCE

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The common language on security governance remains a mid-to long-term objective for the Euro-Med community. But, the conceptualisation of security governance is a possible way to problematise security sector reform and democratic control of armed forces in the Euro-Med context. The EU as a civilian power had in the past little authority to deal with politico-military matters. This is now changing with the operationalisation of ESDP. From a EU perspective there are three motivations to promote security governance in the Mediterranean:

1. Security governance is part of the overall effort of the EU to strengthen democratic political institutions in Partner countries;
2. Security governance represents an additional modicum for the EU to promote certain criteria and standards as part of its economic partnership and development assistance programmes; and
3. Security governance becomes an issue with the EU involvement of third parties in ESDP operations.¹

The Euro-Med Partner states, in turn, may have little interest in the promotion of security governance, as this would add new liabilities to a democratic deficit, that is often perceived a product of Western neo-colonial machinations. North-South common interests exist, however, in the relationship between security and development. This correlation could be used as a premise for a top-down approach that could lead to the entry of the concept of security sector reform into the Euro-Med framework.

1. Questions of definition

The notions of security and governance are today part of both the scholarly and public discourse. Security governance, in turn, is still in a formative stage. **The concept of security** has today evolved well beyond the notion of national security and defence. Security must be understood today in its broad dimension that includes economic, social and environmental sectors. The broadening since the end of the Cold War has also led to a **deepening** of security concepts that emphasise societal and human security as much as global security. Key developments influencing this development are globalisation, democratisation, the rise of non-state security actors and the weakening of the role of the state in international affairs and security. These developments do not mean that realism is dead. At the contrary, the realist revival and the valorisation of the use of force has been boosted by 11 September.² What matters for the purpose of this paper is the fact that security today is:

- not an end point, but often part of a transition process towards sustainable development;

¹ ESDP has been introduced to the Barcelona process at the Valencia Summit (April 2002).

² See, for instance, John J. Mearsheimer, *The tragedy of great power politics*, (W.W.Norton: New York)

- driven by multiple actors other than the state, including NGOs and international organisations³
- Increasingly accepted as a product of both domestic conduct and international context.

Governance implies a legitimate conduct within a normatively delineated environment. Its objective is to strengthen democratic political institutions. It thereby often clashes with the orthodox view of the primacy of sovereignty. Governance implies fragmented authority, various actors and limited sovereignty. The OECD, one of the only inter-governmental organisations that have tackled the notion of security governance, argues that “security is an essential component of good governance and initiatives to ensure peace and sustainable development”.

The most important principles of governance are:

- political accountability
- transparency
- legitimacy through democratic participation
- respect for human rights and rule of law and
- efficiency in delivering public services.

2. Security Governance

Security governance has a normative dimension and two closely related operational activities. The normative side rests on the governance principle of political accountability and transparency in the defence sector. The operational sides deal with the democratic control of armed forces and security sector reform.

1. Norms and principles

Democratic governance of the security sector is today a political standard but not yet a universally recognised norm. Norms and principles can be introduced in a political process with help of “codes of conducts”, special agreements, agreed statements or other top-down democracy promotional efforts. The security governance should, in addition to political accountability and transparency encompass the following principles:

- Legitimacy through democratic participation
- Political control of civil authorities over defence budgets,
- Involvement of political parties, and civil societies in formulations of defence doctrine
- National defence reform issues as urgent project

2. Democratic Control of Armed Forces

Democratic control of armed forces means promoting and facilitating the structuring of civil-military relations in accordance with fundamental democratic principles. It reflects

³ The OECD, for instance provides the following security definition: „Security“ is increasingly viewed as an all-encompassing condition in which people and communities live in freedom, peace and safety; participate fully in the process of governance; enjoy the protection of fundamental rights; have access to resources and the basic necessities of life; and inhabit an environment which is not detrimental to their health and well-being. Underpinning this broader understanding is a recognition that security of people and the security of states are mutually reinforcing.” OECD, 2001, p.38.

the understanding that it strengthens the domestic setting and the international context. It also confirms the international principle of the primacy of the constitutional authority over the armed forces. The intra-state norms confine the use of the armed forces within a country to defence purposes against external threats. Components of democratic control of armed forces are:

- an adequate constitutional and legal framework;
- civilian leadership and civilian management of the defence sector;
- parliamentary oversight; and
- “public” involvement(parties, NGOs, media).

The operational side of the democratic control of armed forces should also include good practises in defence budgeting, planning and procurement. The oversight should not be mistaken for managing the defence sector. With a transition towards a demonstrated democratic control, the armed forces would be gaining legitimacy both domestically and internationally.

3. Security Sector reform

The security sector includes militarised formations other than the regular armed forces. They are paramilitary forces, police, internal security services, and intelligence services. A broad interpretation also includes organisations and institutions such as defence ministries, judiciary system and private security guards. According to Timothy Edmunds, SSR concerns ‘the provision of security within the state in an effective and efficient manner, and in the framework of democratic civilian control’.

There is a trend to accept a direct correlation between security governance and conflict prevention and development. The international donor community is increasingly linking development assistance to security sector reform efforts.

Aspired are institutional reforms, but also change of conduct and behaviour as an expression of a changing political culture. All elements of the security forces should adhere to the fundamental principles of good governance in the security sector. Transparency, for instance, can be created through information exchange and „comprehensive and disciplined" public-sector management. Access to information should be possible to civilian authorities and civil society. Security sector reform should be construed in a way to enable governments to provide for security and stability within policy and budgetary constraints that are consistent with national development goals.

4. Currently existing norms and standards for security governance

The notion of security governance is new to the Barcelona process. Neither has it been accepted on a universal level, but several regional cooperative arrangements have included good governance in security in their acquis. These organisations are:

1. The OSCE

The OSCE adopted in 1994 the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. This was possible because of the nature of the OSCE that allowed to elaborate multilateral commitments with intra-state norms. Sections VII and VIII of the Code outline detailed norms and procedures for the democratic control of armed forces. The Code deals with inter-state and intra-state norms. The code portrays the

“democratic political control of military, paramilitary and internal security forces as well as of intelligence services and the police to be an indispensable element of stability and security.” The Code has assumed today the role of benchmarking for memberships of NATO and the EU. The provisos of the Code are politically binding only, as not all of the OSCE community would have been in a position to subscribe to a legal framework.

2. PfP Framework Agreements

In the context of PfP, the participating states had to accept the following acquis on security governance:

- facilitation of transparency in national defence planning and budgeting processes;
- ensuring democratic control of defence forces;
- maintenance of the capability and readiness to contribute, subject to constitutional considerations, to operations under the authority of the UN and/or the responsibility of the CSCE;
- The development of cooperative military relations with NATO, for the purpose of joint planning, training, and exercises in order to strengthen their ability to undertake missions in the fields of peacekeeping, search and rescue, humanitarian operations, and others as may subsequently be agreed; e. the development, over the longer term, of forces that are better able to operate with those of the members of the North Atlantic Alliance

3. NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP)

MAP is the gateway to NATO membership. The requirements for candidates are very extensive and they reflect a wide spectrum of measures reflecting good governance in the security domain.⁴ These measures do not only apply to the member countries but have achieved also a centrifugal effect towards countries beyond the membership area such as the Ukraine.

4. The Americas (OAS)

Most commitments of the Organisation of American States are on classic inter-state level confidence building measures. But, at the Quebec Summit intra-state rules have been inserted into the Plan of Action, that was primarily dedicated to (inter-states) confidence-building measures. The plan requires the member states to:

“Improve the transparency and accountability of defence and security institutions and promote greater understanding and cooperation among government agencies involved in

⁴ To settle their international disputes by peaceful means

- to demonstrate commitments to the rule of law and human rights
- to settle ethnic disputes or external territorial disputes including irredentist claims or internal jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the OSCE principles and to pursue good neighbourly relations:
- to establish appropriate democratic and civilian control of their armed forces
- to refrain from the threat of use in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the UN
- to contribute to the development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions and by promoting stability and well-being;
- to continue fully to support and be engaged in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace;
- to show a commitment to promoting stability and well-being by economic liberty, social justice and environmental responsibility.

security and defence issues, through such means as increased sharing of defence policy and doctrine papers, information and personnel exchanges, including, where feasible, cooperation and training for participation in UN peace-keeping activities and to respond better to legitimate security and defence needs, by improving transparency of arms acquisitions in order to improve confidence and security in the Hemisphere.”⁵

5. What does exist today in the Euro-Med area?

The Barcelona acquis has basically no language concerning security governance. On a general level, the partners agreed in the Barcelona Declaration to “develop the rule of law and democracy in their political systems” . More specifically they commit to “refrain from developing military capacity beyond their legitimate defence requirements, at the same time reaffirming their resolve to achieve the same degree of security and mutual confidence with the lowest possible levels of troops and weaponry”. In the following I will examine a number of reasons why the insertion of security governance will be difficult to achieve in the short-term. To begin with, in many cases, the security forces are part of the security problem in the region. They are part of an opaque leadership that has little accountability towards the public at large. Furthermore, the Mediterranean region has a clear security deficit: a post-colonial sense of vulnerability is combined with regional and pan-regional power politics. Many states in the region are still in a state formation process and the regimes hang on to centralist and authoritarian rules. In general terms, there is a widespread societal insecurity due to problems of identity, poverty, and governmental legitimacy. This is exacerbated by demands of competition with “socially cohesive, politically responsive, and administratively effective states” of the West.⁶ The following paradigms represent formidable obstacles towards democratisation of the security sector in the region:

- Mix up between regime security and state security: In the Mediterranean region, there is a thin line between regime security and state security and any threats to regimes or governments are also considered a threat to the state;
- the wide acceptance in the Mediterranean that democratisation represents a risk to stability;
- political change is portrayed as a threat to stability;
- Regional security challenges, hot wars and 11 September as impediments to security governance.

Security governance will only become accepted in the region once democratisation is accepted as a complement to state making in the region.

6. What can be done?

In view of the controversial nature of security governance in the region, the most pragmatic approach is to circumscribe security governance issues in correlation with other common North-South concerns, such as development.

⁵ Plan of Action, Summit of the Americas, 2001.

<http://www.americascanada.org/eventsummit/declarations/menu-e.asp>

⁶ Mohammed Ayoob, *State Making, State Breaking, and State failure*, p. 131.

1. Top down approach:

The Barcelona process could launch an institutional approach to Security Governance. Any language on security governance needs first to reassert that:

- security affairs in the region are and remain a national responsibility;
- There exists a legitimate security needs of countries with reference to security as a public good;
- The Euro-Med partnership could, as this has been done in the OAS context, agree on a number of inter-states CBMs and then “nest” some governance language in this context.

Furthermore, the following linkages and correlation could be made:

- National and regional economic development are hampered by excessive and bloated security sectors;
- Democratisation cannot succeed without governance in the security sector;
- The protection of citizens should rank alongside national defence as primary goal of state security policy.

In the context of the relationship between security and development, security governance language could be “nested” within the Barcelona process by recognising the **social costs** deriving from bloated security sectors and establishing an explicit link between security and development. In the context of excessive security sectors, the issue area of arms transfers could be taken up as another theme related to security governance. But, both, Northern and Southern countries could have trepidation to introduce any language to the Barcelona process that could eventually link arms sales in the region of security governance.

Also, the existing promotion of democratic reform in the region could make mention of reforms in the security sector. But, common grounds on security governance would have to pay explicit lip service to “local ownership” and regional as well as cultural contextualisation. Drawing from a thesis of Nicole Ball, the following language could be inserted into the Euro-Med context:

- The principles, policies and laws applied to the transformation process must be part of the countries history and political culture;
- Transformation process should be carried out in continuous consultation within government and between government and civil and political society.

In addition to top-down language the Barcelona process could engage in a number of activities that overtime- could lead to a attitude change of the elite as security governance is concerned. Such activities could be part of the first chapter and include:

- Engage in exchange of threat assessments, defence doctrine
 - Promotion of transparency in the defence expenditures
 - Promotion of PfP-type of activities (under a different label) in the Mediterranean.
- With ESDP, the EU can, through PfP programmes or separately promote civil-military relations and security cooperation in the context of seminars, exercises, training sessions and exchange of officers and officials from MODs.

2. Bottom-up approach

Promote a bottom-up approach of security governance that would result the widening of the *marge de manœuvre* of civil society in security policy and expertise and capacity of national and international security. Future awareness building and civic as well as university education should concentrate more on security policies and peace. Education

course on security studies and peace should be actively promoted also to media and parliamentarians.

Given the essential requirement that security governance involves a broad participation of civil society, it would be essential to problematise this question not just in the Security and Political Chapter but also in the Third Chapter of the Euro-Med Partnership.

Civil society or a foreign policy network (e.g. EuroMesco) could create a Euro-Mediterranean Yearbook concentrating on information pertinent to the security sectors of the Euro-Med countries. Such a project could draw from similar efforts made by the SIPRI Yearbook, the Geneva-based Small Arms Survey or the IISS Strategic Survey.

Security governance is a long-term process that should go hand in hand with socio-political transformation of Mediterranean countries over the next 10 years. It should not be a stand-alone process and it would have to use both top-down and bottom-up approaches that would clearly be entrenched in the relationships between security and development and security and democratisation.