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Renwick, N & Phillipps, J

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5

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Reforming Kosovo's Security Sector: A Human Security and 'Local Know- ledge' Approach

Jacob Philipps and Neil Renwick

Kosovo's security sector reform—the local knowledge deficit

How 'secure' are the people of Kosovo today? Kosovo has rebuilt and recovered significantly since the devastation and horrors of the decades of ethnic internecine conflict and Serbian military intervention against Kosovo Albanian pro-independence forces. The conflict saw thousands of lives lost, many others physically injured, psychologically-scarred and displaced. A concerted international effort by NATO's KFOR intervention force, the EU and the UN finally drew the conflict to a close. But ending the conflict, peace-keeping and peace-building has been a long, arduous, and painstaking process led by the international community. Inter-ethnic dialogue and a degree of political cooperation has been brokered allowing constitutional reform, economic reconstruction, restoration of the built environment and agreement between Kosovo and Serbian governments not to block their respective applications to join the European Union. Kosovo would appear to be a stable and more secure society. A new, ethnically-inclusive national armed force has been proposed. The omens would appear to be good for a more prosperous and safe society. However, this picture is deceptive. A critical problem lies at the heart of the post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building challenge, one with the potential to derail achievements made and future prospects. This is the challenge of security sector reform (SSR).

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struction and peace-building challenge, one with the potential to derail achievements made and future prospects. This is the challenge of security sector reform (SSR). The heart of the problem is that SSR in post-conflict Kosovo primarily been an internationally-led process. This has been an inevitable and inescapable necessity to end the war, stabilise and reconstruct and will remain a central component in strengthening Kosovo's security environment and sector in the short and medium terms. However, this *Policy Brief* argues that, in the longer-term, the internationally-driven effort at SSR is unsustainable as it has produced a damaging local knowledge deficit, a lack of grounding in the local context and knowledge.

The policy challenge for stakeholder international inter-governmental agencies (IGOs), national governments (NGs) and particularly civil society organisations (CSOs) is to drive a transitional agenda of sector reform that is inclusive of local sources of security knowledge. CSOs are an integral form of oversight that can support parliamentary forms of oversight. This not only strengthens the process and quality of reform outcomes by , it also facilitates their durability by building-in local security knowledge stakeholders and the passing of responsibility once the international agencies have left. Effective policy to meet this post-conflict challenge operationalises to key, mutually constitutive, elements: an emphasis human security and local knowledge.

Analysis:

There are 3 main messages:

1. Kosovo's security sector is a complex, multifarious environment of multiple agencies. A high number of skilled political observers exist outside of Government. Advisory strategies can drive the consideration and utilisation of CSO policy recommendations. This may include focusing on influencing a specific policy by going to official meetings, talking to decision makers, holding conferences and building individual relationships. While publications represent a form of public criticism, more private and personal channels of communication provide a constructive and purposeful channelling of policy recommendations.
2. Reform lags behind that enacted in political and economic sectors and must be prioritised ensure a holistic, inclusive process and outcome.
3. Prioritising the mainstreaming of Human Security/Local Knowledge in Kosovo's post-conflict environment by the international stakeholders offers a an appropriate, practical approach capable of delivering a stronger and more effective security domain.

Policy Recommendations

A. For the organisational and policy-making level of the International Mission:

1. Integrate local strategic thinkers from the outset of security sector reform process and target an incremental increase by establishing dialogue and building policy networks.
2. Commission local strategic thinkers to conduct conflict and capacity assessments to ensure involvement in SSR.

B. For civil society actors producing local knowledge

1. Develop an array of multifaceted and multileveled advocacy strategies to stimulate the utilisation or uptake of local knowledge.
2. Establish or improve mechanisms to evaluate the impact of local knowledge.

To achieve these strategic and evaluative objectives, the task here is for *local agencies to take the lead in forming an inclusive collaborative knowledge and skills network*. The aims of this network being to:

- (i) extend and deepen collaborative relationships in formulating and implementing advocacy strategies and evaluation mechanisms ;
- (ii) identify specific policy domains for knowledge-sharing and skills transfer;
- (iii) establish joint working groups aimed at generating practical outputs (publications, conferences and workshops, training programmes, and research projects).

The Authors

Jacob Phillipps is a doctoral research student in the School of Humanities, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Coventry University and holder of a Coventry University doctoral research scholarship. he is Deputy Editor of the School Newsletter. He graduated with Distinction from York University, UK. In addition to his studies, he currently works as a policy research officer and analyst with a leading research institute in the UK. He specialises in post-conflict resolution challenges and security sector reform.

Neil Renwick is Professor of Global Security at Coventry University, UK specialising in Human Security. His research focuses particularly on China, East Asia and human security challenges and he has published extensively in this field, including Northeast Asian Critical Security (Palgrave). He also co-founded and co-edited the Ashgate Human Security book series for a number of years. He is a Senior Associate Member of St. Antony's College, Oxford and is a member of the International Institu-

te of Strategic Studies, London, European Consortium of Political Science, International Studies Association and International Political Science Association. He has also acted as advisor to organisations such as UNDP Pacific, worked with staff at UNAIDS Asia-Pacific Office, is a T20 policy advisor to the G20 and is a regular commissioned contributor to the international news media.