

United Nations Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform

1. Background and definition

The UN SSR policy culminates in [Security Council Resolution 2151](#) of 2014. It defines SSR as a process to ensure the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its people without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the Rule of Law. Further, the UN recognises the important role of SSR in the consolidation of peace and security, in preventing countries from relapsing into conflict and in laying the foundations for sustainable peace.

Previous policy documents that laid the foundation to UNSCR 2151 include: [Presidential Statement of the UN Security Council](#) in 2007; the first [Report of the Secretary-General](#) on SSR (2008) and the second SSR [Report of the Secretary-General](#), (2013).

2. Principles

The core guiding principles for the UN approach to SSR include:

- a) Effective, inclusive and accountable security institutions;
- b) SSR based on a National decision;
- c) National ownership and the commitment of the involved States;
- d) SSR approach must be flexible and country-region-environment-specific;
- e) Gender sensitivity through the SSR process;
- f) Early initiation of SSR processes and incorporation of SSR into early recovery and development strategies;
- g) SSR support should follow a clearly defined strategy including the identification of priorities, indicative timelines and partnerships;
- h) International support to SSR will be shaped by the integrity of motive, the level of accountability and the amount of resources provided;
- i) Coordination between the efforts of the national and international partners is essential;
- j) Monitoring and regular evaluation against specific benchmarks.

3. Implementation

The UN policy framework continues to evolve. The following are some of the UN's key efforts to improve SSR support:

2007: Creation of the UN Inter-Agency SSR Task Force (IASSRTF) that comprises 14 agencies and departments to promote an integrated, holistic and coherent approach to UN SSR support.

2007: Creation of a Group of Friends of SSR among UN Member States, to develop a consensus on the United Nations security sector reform agenda. The Group is currently co-chaired by Slovakia and South-Africa.

2012: Publication of the UN's "[Integrated Technical Guidance Notes on Security Sector Reform](#)"

2012: Establishment of a Global Focal Point (GFP) for Police, Justice and Corrections areas aimed at encouraging a unified and coordinated approach for overall UN assistance in these areas.

As of August 2015: 17 of the UN's peace operations include explicit reference to SSR in their mandate.

African Union Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform

1. Background and definition

The [African Union Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform](#) adopted in 2013, represents a major step in addressing the issue of African ownership of current SSR approaches. It builds on the international normative framework established by the UN and is also aligned with other AU instruments, including the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, and the [Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development \(PCRD\)](#). The AU Policy Framework defines SSR as the process by which countries formulate or re-orient the policies, structures, and capacities of institutions and groups engaged in the security sector, in order to make them more effective, efficient, and responsive to democratic control, and to the security and justice needs of the people.

2. Principles

The AU outlines the following principles in its Policy Framework on SSR:

- a) African solidarity and African partnerships;
- b) Linkage between SSR and regional integration;
- c) National ownership, national responsibility and national commitment;
- d) Adherence to a nationally defined vision of SSR and parameters for external support for SSR;
- e) Tailoring SSR processes to the unique histories and cultures of the national context;
- f) Integration of informal and customary security providers and traditional justice actors into SSR processes where appropriate;
- g) Recognising SSR as part of a broader democratisation and reform process;
- h) Adherence to the principles of accountability and transparency;
- i) SSR will aim to bring about transformative possibilities for gender equity within the security sector;
- j) Primary responsibility of Member States for the coordination of SSR assistance.

The Policy Framework acknowledges that Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are the building blocks of the AU system and are therefore the leading stakeholders in all continental peace and security policies and strategies.

3. Implementation

As part of its efforts to build capacity for the implementation of its Policy Framework on SSR, the AU- together with the UN and the EU- has elaborated a multi-year, multi-donor programme entitled “Building African Union Capacities in SSR”. This programme is being implemented with technical and operational support from United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the African Security Sector Network (ASSN).

The programme is comprised of three main components: a) SSR training and dissemination of the AU PFSSR to the RECs; b) Development of Operational Guidance Notes (OGN); and c) Undertaking of Joint Assessment Missions on SSR (Mali, Madagascar, CAR, Guinea Bissau were carried-out).

In terms of future steps, the AU intends to proceed with the dissemination of the OGNs in the RECs, and to introduce their contents in the training curricula for staff being deployed to peace and security missions.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

1. Background and Definition

The African Union (AU) acknowledges that Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are the building blocks of the AU system and are therefore leading stakeholders in continental peace and security policies and strategies. Subsequently, RECs such as ECOWAS, have a primary stake in regional SSR activities. The organisation's engagement in SSR has been guided by several policy documents. A [supplement to the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance](#) of 2001 emphasised the democratic control of the armed forces and prescribed that the police and other security agencies should to be under the control of legally constituted civilian authorities. The ECOWAS [Code of Conduct of the Armed Forces and Security Services](#) of 2006 aimed to establish common standards in the conduct and democratic governance of uniformed personnel in West African states. It also aimed at improving relations between and among the uniformed personnel, the political leadership and the civilian population. The [ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework \(ECPF\)](#), adopted in 2008, is intended as a comprehensive conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategy and includes references to security sector governance.

Since 2011, ECOWAS has been involved in the development of its own regional policy on SSR. Although still in draft format, the policy framework provides a clear definition on SSR. According to the policy, SSR is defined as “the process by which countries formulate or re-orient the policies, structures, and capacities of institutions and groups engaged in the security sector, in order to make them more effective, efficient, accountable and responsive to democratic control, and to the security and justice needs of the people”.

As a political document, the draft ECOWAS Regional Framework provides guidance to member states and other stakeholders involved in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of security sector reform and governance programmes and projects.

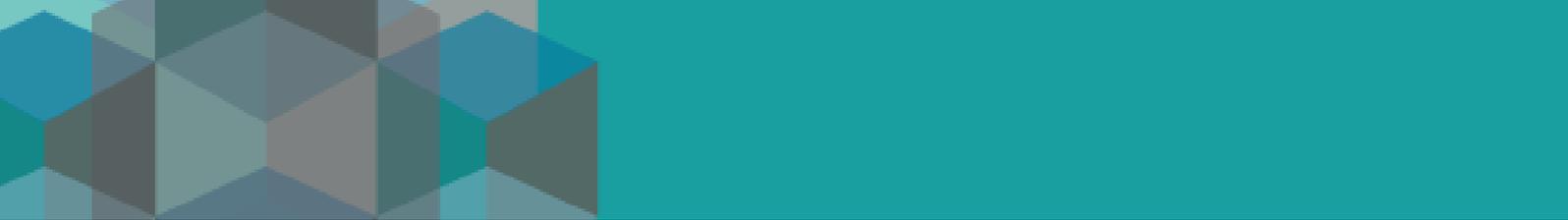
2. Principles

As outlined in the draft SSR Strategy, ECOWAS support to SSR is based on the following principles:

- a) African and West African solidarity and partnership;
- b) Respect of national sovereignty and territorial integrity;
- c) Linkages between SSR/G and regional integration;
- d) Regional and national ownership;
- e) Gender sensitivity;
- f) Development of relevant security legislation, such as national security policy;
- g) Conducting periodic security sector reviews and needs assessment;
- h) Involvement of customary authorities and community-based security providers;
- i) Effective involvement of CSOs and the media;
- j) Establishment of effective democratic control and oversight institutions;
- k) An effective resource mobilization strategy and financing; and
- l) A monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

3. Implementation

Taking its mandate from both the UN and AU processes and documents, ECOWAS has been actively supporting SSR processes in its member states. In 2010, ECOWAS led the development of the SSR



Roadmap for Guinea-Bissau, building on the 2006 National Strategy for Modernisation of the Defence and Security Forces.

The ECOWAS Regional Framework, however, is still remains a draft; its endorsement by member states' experts and its final adoption by the heads of state and government will be major steps in strengthening democratic norms through SSR/G in West Africa.

European Union Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform

1. Background and definition

The European Union's [Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Elements for an EU-wide strategic framework to support security sector reform](#), was released in July 2016, and approved in November 2016 by EU Member States. In the new strategic framework, SSR is defined as “the process of transforming the security system of a state in a manner that is consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance, and thus contributing to a well-functioning security policy”. The strategic framework aims to harmonise EU and Member States’ approaches, so as to promote a more comprehensive and holistic approach to SSR. The joint communication is premised on a phased implementation strategy, and aims at increasing the EU’s effectiveness in promoting and supporting partner countries’ efforts to ensure security for individuals and the state and to enhance legitimacy, good governance, integrity and sustainability of the security sector of partner countries.

2. Principles

The EU will aim to achieve its goals by:

- a) **Understanding the security sector in its wider context:** EU delegations will undertake an analysis of the security sector of the partner country or region, and include them in their regular reporting;
- b) **Enabling broad national ownership:** national actors will be encouraged to take responsibility of the results of the interventions, while external actors will provide advice and support;
- c) **Adopting a holistic approach:** embedding security sector issues in nationwide development strategies and linking them to other sectors;
- d) **Connecting SSR support to the broader political and policy dialogue:** the EU and the partner country should discuss non-binding instruments entailing political commitments (MoUs, joint statements etc.);
- e) **Coordinating the EU support with international actors:** the EU and the Member States should build consensus and seek synergies with other international actors;
- f) **Being flexible and balancing long-term systemic change and immediate security needs:** the EU should first engage in short-term activities in order to build confidence and later adapt to rapidly changing operational conditions and plan CSDP missions with long-term commitments;
- g) **Monitoring and evaluating progress:** the implementation of the new framework will be regularly monitored and evaluated, and the evaluations will be made publicly available;
- h) **Managing the risks of intervention:** foresee or mitigate insufficient national political commitment to change, negative unintended consequences, reputational risk, and risk of non-intervention.; and
- i) **Making the best use of EU SSR expertise:** the EU should mobilise staff with the appropriate expertise to be deployed at Headquarters, as well as in the field.

3. Implementation

The initial steps taken by the EU for the implementation of the new policy are the following:

- The EEAS/Commission will assist the EU Delegations to conduct security sector analyses that they will include in their regular reporting;
- The development of a pilot ‘coordination matrix’, followed by gradual readjustment and the development of a second, more specific, coordination matrix in another country;
- Joint monitoring and evaluation guidelines will be developed by the EEAS/Commission;
- The EEAS/Commission will develop a dedicated risk management methodology for EU support;
- Proposed establishment of a permanent inter-service SSR Task Force to oversee EU SSR projects.

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

1. Background and definition

The OSCE's comprehensive and multidimensional approach to security is understood to add value to efforts in the area of Security Sector Governance and Reform (SSG/R). At the normative level, SSG/R concerns are reflected in many of the principles and concepts developed by the organisation. The 1994 [OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security](#) is widely considered as the normative cornerstone for the democratic control of armed forces and provides a basis for many of the cardinal principles of SSG/R. Although relatively extensive, the normative framework is fragmented and lacks a common and holistic approach. While no common OSCE definition has been established on SSG/R, [the Spanish OSCE Chairmanship of 2007 attempted to do so](#), noting that the aim of SSR is to achieve "a security sector capable of delivering effective and legitimate security and justice functions fully consistent with the principles of democracy, good governance and the rule of law".

2. Principles

The core guiding principles for the OSCE approach to SSR, include:

- k) Supporting democratic control of the security sector in a framework of the rule of law;
- l) Promoting transparency and accountability for both the defence sector and the police;
- m) Respecting human rights, fundamental freedoms and humanitarian law;
- n) Preventing discrimination;
- o) Independence of the judiciary;
- p) Strengthening the complementarity of law enforcement and criminal justice systems;
- q) Building the trust and confidence of the population towards the security sector; and
- r) Strengthening gender responsiveness.

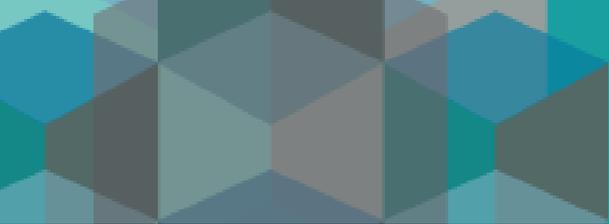
3. Implementation

At the operational level, the OSCE is actively engaged in supporting SSG/R activities through its Secretariat, institutions and field operations. The OSCE has extensive experience in this domain, providing support to participating States and partners for Co-operation and advice to field operations, particularly in the areas of border security reform, police reform and cross-dimensional issues as well as judicial reform and civil society oversight of the security sector. As of May 2016, all 15 of the OSCE's current field operations are engaged directly or indirectly in SSG/R work.

In June 2014, an OSCE Group of Friends of SSG/R was founded by Slovakia, Switzerland and Serbia. The group is currently composed of 23 members from all OSCE regions including Partners for Co-operation. The aim of the GoF is to provide an informal platform for participating States to discuss developments regarding SSR/G within the organisation. The participating States, through the Group of Friends, can contribute by sharing their ideas, experiences, and proposals related to ongoing SSG/R activities.

More recently, in April 2016, the OSCE published internal [SSG/R Guidelines](#) under the auspices of the OSCE SSG/R Focal Points Network. The guidelines cover key aspects of SSR including:

- Cross-dimensional approaches to SSG/R;
- Impact-oriented approaches to SSG/R,
- Needs assessments,



- Approaches to strengthening regional cooperation.

The guidelines aim to provide OSCE executive structures and their staff with a tool to pursue a coherent and co-ordinated approach to supporting nationally-led SSG/R processes.

4. Background and definition

NATO has a long record of assisting member and partner states in certain dimensions of SSR. Although the NATO approach to SSR was initially limited to train and equip strategies, the organisation has recently taken on a broader approach to SSR, including issues such as governance and oversight in its SSR activities. While most NATO high-level meetings in recent years have publicly endorsed the priority of SSR, NATO has not produced an official SSR concept; however, since 2001, it has developed an operational understanding of SSR that it uses in its programming activities in partner countries under the Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIB) programme.

5. Principles

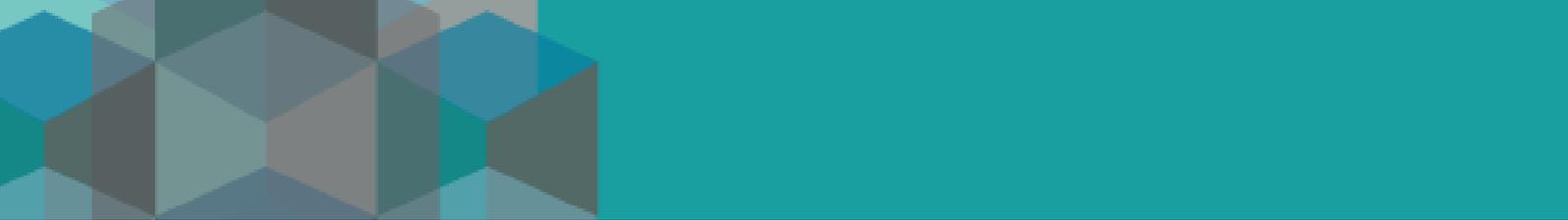
Programmes within the NATO cooperation and partnership frameworks are based on the following principles:

- k) Democratic control of defence activities;
- l) Civilian participation in developing defence and security policy;
- m) Legislative and judicial oversight of the defence sector;
- n) Comprehensive procedures to assess security risks and national defence requirements;
- o) Optimised management of defence ministries and agencies with responsibility for defence matters;
- p) Compliance with internationally accepted norms and practices established in the defence sector;
- q) Effective and reliable personnel structures and practices in the defence sector;
- r) Effective and efficient financial, planning and resource allocation procedures in the defence area;
- s) Economically viable management of defence spending; and
- t) Strengthened international cooperation and good neighbourly relations in defence and security matters.

6. Implementation

NATO has developed a number of tools and mechanisms to support cooperation with partner countries through a mix of policies, programmes, action plans and other arrangements. Many of these tools focus on interoperability and building capabilities, as well as supporting defence and security-related reform. In recent years virtually every NATO partner lists 'Defence and Security Sector Reform' as an area of NATO assistance to partner countries.

NATO's Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative builds on the organisation's expertise in supporting, advising, assisting, training and mentoring countries that require capacity-building support. NATO pursues these efforts in complementarity and close cooperation with other international organisations. Upon request, NATO can provide strategic-level advice on defence and related security reform and institution building. The organisation can also assist in the development of defence capabilities and local forces, in particular through education and training. Support can also be provided in several specialised areas such as logistics, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, civil emergency planning and cyber defence.



NATO's Building Integrity Programme provides practical tools to assist participating countries to strengthen integrity, transparency and accountability and to reduce the risk of corruption in the defence and security sectors. The Programme promotes good practices, processes and methodologies, and provides countries with tailored support to make defence and security institutions more effective.