SECURITY SECTOR REFORM: DEFENCE REFORM IN SOUTH SUDAN BETWEEN 2005 AND 2013

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ETHICAL STATEMENT

I hereby declare that all information in this thesis has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and complies with all ethical standards of the Middle East Technical University, North Cyprus Campus. I further declare that, as required by rules and standards, I have cited and referenced all materials and analysis that are not original to this author.

The author was engaged as a consultant to the UK Government's SSR programme in Southern Sudan from July 2009 to July 2013. Some of the authors cited herein are known to me personally, and I have been professionally involved in the delivery of some of the SSR activities analysed in this thesis. There is a possibility of researcher bias in identifying points of impact and importance in the UK SSR programme, and in the critique of programme delivery. As such points arise, I will endeavour to provide corroborating evidence in support of my claims.

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ABSTRACT

Security Sector Reform: Defence Reform in South Sudan between 2005 and 2013
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The internationally dominant framework for Security Sector Reform presents an integrated, holistic approach to national security sector management that claims to deliver, through international donors, a system for conflict-prone countries that will contribute to the stability required to enable sustainable peace and development. Security Sector Reform policy explains how a prescribed methodology, based on liberal democratic principles of good governance, contributes to long-term conflict prevention by addressing key sources of instability. This conception is challenged by alternative claims that Security Sector Reform represents a façade that in actuality primarily serves the interests of Western industrialised nations in reinforcing the international security order, and that adhering to core themes of Security Sector Reform can in fact be ineffectual at best and destabilising at worst. Security Sector Reform remains relatively new, in academic terms, and is still being tested through practical implementation experiences.

This thesis examines aspects of the UK Government's Defence Transformation project in South Sudan, as a component part of wider Security Sector Reform programming, for the purpose of evaluating the methodology and normative approach against claims of effectiveness as a conflict prevention mechanism. South Sudan provides an interesting case in that it is a conflict-prone country where significant international resources were dedicated to the implementation of the Security Sector Reform framework, yet done so recently as to remain under-analysed from a scholarly point of view. It is hoped that this thesis will in a small way contribute to the debate surrounding the efficacy and intent of Security Sector Reform as a development strategy and as a conflict prevention mechanism.

Keywords: South Sudan, Security Sector Reform, Defence

ÖZ

Güvenlik Sektörü Reformu: 2005 ile 2013 Yılları Arasında Güney Sudan'da Savunma Reformu
M.Sc., Siyaset Bilimi Ve Uluslararasi İlişkiler Bölümü

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Güvenlik Sektörü Reformu konusunda uluslararası düzeyde hakim olan kavramsal çerçeve ulusal güvenlik sektör yönetimine bütüncül bir yaklaşımla bakılması gerektiğini vurgular. Çatışma eğilimli ülkelere ancak bütüncül bir ulusal güvenlik sektör yönetişimi, uluslararası yardım kuruluşları aracılığıyla, sürüdürlebilir bir barış ve kalkınma getirebilmenin zorunlu koşulu olan istikrara katkı yapabilecek bir sistem getirebilir. Güvenlik Sektörü Reform politikası, iyi yönetişimin liberal demokratik temelleri üzerinde yükselen bir yöntem önerir. Bu yöntemin katkısı, istikrarsızlıklara yol açan temel nedenleri irdeleyerek, uzun dönemli çatışmaların nasıl engelleyebileceğini göstermesidir.Güvenlik Sektörü Reformu yaklaşımına karşı çıkanlar bunun bir aldatmacadan ibaret olduğunu, aslında bu yaklaşımın öncelikle Batılı sanayileşmiş ulusların çıkarlarına hizmet ettiğini, mevcut uluslararası güvenlik düzenini pekiştirdiğini, Güvenlik Sektörü Reformu prensiplere bağlı kalmanın aslında pek bir etkisinin olmayacağını ve hatta istikrarsızlığa yol açabileceğini idddia ederler. Akademik anlamda oldukça yeni bir alan olan Güvenlik Sektörü Reformu'nun geçerliliği halihazırda pratik uygulamalar ve deneyimlerle test edilmektedir.

Bu tez geniş anlamda Güvenlik Sektörü Reform programının bir parçası olan Birleşik Krallık Hükumeti'nin Güney Sudan'da uyguladığı Savunma Ulaşımı projesinin kimi özelliklerini incelemektedir. Buradaki temel amaç Güvenlik Sektörü Reformuna karşı yapılan çatışmaları engelleme konusunda etkin olamayacağı iddiaları karşısında bu normatif normatif özellikli yaklaşımın kendisini ve metodolojisini bir değerlendirmeye tabi tutmaktır. Güney Sudan Güvenlik Sektörü Reformu çerçevesinin uygulanması için önemli bir miktarda uluslararası kaynağın ayrıldığı, ve buna rağmen hakkında yeterli miktarda akademik çalışmaların yapılmadığı ilginç bir örnektir. Bu tezin bir kalkınma stratejisi ve bir çatışma önlenmesi mekanizması olarak Güvenlik Sektörü Reform çerçevesinin yeterliliği ve niyetleri konularındaki tartışmalara küçük çapta bir katkı yapması ümit edilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelime: Güney Sudan, Güvenlik Sektörü Reformu, Savunma

For the barbarian, war is the rule; peace the exception. His gods, like those of Greece, are war-like gods: his spirit, at death, flees to some Valhalla. For him life ***is*** *one long battle; his arms go with him even to the grave. Food and the means of existence he seeks through plunder and violence. Here right is with might; the battle is to the strong. Nature has given all an equal claim to all things, but not everyone can have them. This state of fearful insecurity is bound to come to an end.*

Mary Campbell Smith, 1917

The nation that will insist on drawing a broad line of demarcation between the fighting man and the thinking man is liable to find its fighting done by fools and its thinking done by cowards.

Sir William Francis Butler 1892

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASI – Adam Smith International

AU – African Union

CPA – Comprehensive Peace Agreement

CPP – Conflict Prevention Pool

CPRD – Center for Policy Research and Dialogue

CSO – Civil Society Organisation

DDR – Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration

DFID – Department for International Development

DOD – Department of Defense (US)

DOS – Department of State

ELF – Eritrean Liberation Front

FCO **–** Foreign and Commonwealth Office

GOSS – Government of Southern/South Sudan

HMG – Her Majesty's Government

IDP – Internally Displaced Person/People

LRA – Lord's Resistance Army

MDTF – Multi Donor Trust Fund

MOD – Ministry of Defence (UK)

NGO – Non-Government Organisation

OAG – Other Armed Groups

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OECD DAC – OECD Development Assistance Committee

SAF – Sudan Armed Forces

SAJP – Security and Access to Justice Project

SPLA – Sudan People's Liberation Army

SPLM – Sudan People's Liberation Movement

SSDDRC – South Sudan Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission

SSDDTP – Security Sector Development and Defence Transformation Programme

SSDF – South Sudan Defence Force*

SSLA – South Sudan Legislative Assembly

SSR – Security Sector Reform

TPLF – Tigrayan People's Liberation Front

PSP – Peacebuilding Support Programme

UK – United Kingdom (of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

UN – United Nations

UNESCAP – United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

UNMIS – United Nations Mission in Sudan

UNMISS – United Nations Mission in South Sudan

US – United States (of America)

WB – World Bank

*South Sudan Defence Force (SSDF) is both the title of a proxy-militia group formed by Khartoum in the 1990s to combat the rebel Southern Sudanese SPLA, and the new official name given to the post-independence SPLA by the President of South Sudan in April 2017.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1) Background

The Republic of South Sudan declared its independence as a sovereign nation on 9 July 2011, following a referendum in January 2011 in which voters in the nine southern provinces of the Republic of Sudan chose overwhelmingly to secede from the northern, ethnically distinct, provinces. After 50 years of almost continuous civil war, and a six-year interim period of ceasefire, the formal division of Sudan was delivered with relative amicability. The South Sudanese people and the international community had high hopes for the future of one of the world's most conflict-prone countries.

At the time of independence, South Sudan had almost no civic infrastructure, few functional governing institutions and a persistent state of humanitarian crisis. But it also had the attention of the international aid donor community, which had long been engaged in emergency humanitarian relief operations and conflict resolution processes in Sudan, and had accelerated development aid programmes following a breakthrough peace agreement between warring factions that was signed in 2005. One of those development programmes focused on reform of the security sector. Transformation of the southern rebel armed force, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), from a guerilla force into an assembly of professional, disciplined security structures capable of delivering consistent protective services to the community, was seen as critical to the stability necessary for sustained development and long-term peace, "Indeed it is a prerequisite without which those objectives will not be achieved." (ASI, 2009:2). Reform of the security sector was initiated by the Southern Sudanese leadership, not imposed by an external power, but the international community soon became enmeshed in the process.

Security Sector Reform (SSR), as part of the international development agenda, is relatively new in academic terms. Scholars in the field seem to agree that it emerged as a priority only in the late 1990s. Albrecht, Stepputat and Anderson (2010) point in particular to a series of international donor meetings that discussed imposing military spending caps in aid-recipient countries, which led to wider thinking about the role that development agencies could play in security sector budget management, and thus to security sector governance more broadly. Prior to these discussions, primarily occurring in the context of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) deliberations, the mutually dependent relationship between development and security was widely recognised, but mechanisms of governance and economic development, and security sector development, tended to operate independently of each other in the international aid arena.

Security Sector Reform policy was conceived as a holistic approach that would not only situate defence and security issues more squarely within the scope of traditional development agency programmes, but also prioritise security sector management structures alongside operational capability development. Broadening aid programming to incorporate development of security institutions, according to the thinking, should serve to more effectively achieve overall objectives of poverty reduction, access to justice, political stability, economic growth and, most of all, conflict prevention, without which the other indicators are largely compromised (OECD, 2007). Early adherents of SSR noted that “If states are to create the conditions in which they can escape from a downward spiral wherein insecurity, criminalization and under-development are mutually reinforcing, socio-economic and security dimensions must be tackled simultaneously.” (OECD DAC, 2004: foreword). Ideally, SSR should be implemented alongside other socio-economic and political development initiatives in the aftermath of conflict - or in fact before conflict arises following significant political or economic transition.

‘Security Sector Reform’, writ large, is an international development policy. It does not preclude domestic government initiatives to reform their own security structures, but should, in the idealised version, work in concert with such initiatives. In Southern Sudan in the mid-2000s, some government leaders welcomed international support for their efforts to reform, although at times the international and domestic agendas for the security sector appear diametrically opposed. This dichotomy illustrates the need for greater consideration of SSR priorities and practices in the context of ongoing conflict.

SSR was conceived almost in opposition to the traditional ‘train and equip’ model of international security assistance. ‘Train and equip’ is a moniker for programmes that focus on capability development of operational security forces without necessarily delving into governance and civil oversight structures (Sedra, 2010:18-19). Such programmes were prolific in the Cold War era, and usually operate through direct military-to-military or police-to-police transfer without engaging the broader development aid industry. SSR is a policy response to evidence that train and equip programmes routinely fail to promote responsible – democratically accountable – employment of security forces, have too narrow a focus on state-based security agencies, and even then fail to encompass the full spectrum of security agencies to include prisons, courts, and other discrete functions beyond just the police and military services (Ball, 2010:37 and Sedra, 2010:19).

SSR as an international development activity aims to address a perceived shortfall in terms of both foreign policy coordination on the part of donor countries, and security sector governance capability on the part of recipient countries. In order to successfully promote SSR in a post-conflict or transitional country, analysis suggests donor countries have to re-imagine their own structural division of responsibilities. Government departments, non-government organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs) need to

coordinate across development aid, security and foreign affairs portfolios in order to engage appropriate levels of expertise. Recipient countries, if they want security sector aid, need to be willing to expose their security systems to scrutiny at the highest levels of decision-making. Both donor and recipient systems have obstacles to surmount, but if they are able to do so, the outcome should be a democratically-accountable security service that is able to contribute to sustained conflict-prevention (DFID, 2007).

SSR exists both as a policy that claims to reduce the likelihood of re-emergent armed conflict in an unstable or politically transitioning country, and as an instructional model for development aid practitioners working in the security sector. As both, it has adherents and detractors. Chapter Three of this thesis examines different schools of thought regarding the normative political basis of SSR; whether it is a necessary evolution *en route* to human security in the developing world, or an attempt to transfer Western security architecture in furtherance of the interests of the industrialised world – regardless of the expense to human security in the developing world. Chapter Three also outlines the dominant, or current 'orthodox', approach to SSR programme design and identifies some of the key challenges that practitioners have experienced in implementation. In particular, how an approach that prioritises technical assistance in terms of security policy and management strategy can overlook contextual political indicators that may ultimately derail reform efforts. Negotiating certain prescribed aspects of the reform construct can leave security forces, and thus the state and/or community, vulnerable in situations where significant conflict is still present, or probable. Some of these challenges are mirrored in the South Sudan experience and serve to highlight elements of the SSR paradigm that are in need of further academic consideration.

South Sudan is a conflict-prone country. The armed conflict that persisted in the southern region of Sudan throughout most of the latter half of the 20th century was infinitely more complex than the simple north-south divide between Arabs

and Africans, or Muslims and Christians, that has frequently been portrayed in the media. Chapter Four analyses the primary actors and pivotal moments in the history of South Sudan's armed conflict, in order to identify the socio-cultural and political factors that later impacted SSR efforts in the country. Leadership oscillation, charismatic power structures, strong ethnic-group association, poor educational opportunities, an oil economy and international geopolitical interests all characterised Sudan's long-running armed conflict, and continued to shape security decision-making in the post-conflict era.

Chapter Five examines SSR efforts in the Defence sector that commenced in Southern Sudan around 2005, following the signing of a *Comprehensive Peace Agreement* between warring factions, and continued through transition to the independent Republic of South Sudan in 2011, up until a return to armed violence in the country in late 2013. The United Kingdom (UK), United Nations (UN) and United States (US) were the lead players in this effort, with other individual countries such as Ethiopia, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and Uganda providing additional discrete services (Rands, 2010:29-38). It is not possible, within the scope of this thesis and the documentary evidence currently available, to cover the entirety of SSR programmes in South Sudan. Thus, the focus is primarily on the UK Government's programme to address reform of the Defence sector. Even within this narrow band of SSR, there are multiple branches of technical and political reform initiatives too complex to be done justice here. Therefore, I have chosen to analyse the UK's programme design in comparison with the orthodox OECD policy, in order to determine the extent of compatibility and how the model fared in the local context of Southern Sudan. 'Defence' in this context is a distinct entity, encompassing both the military forces and the institutional structures that govern the operation of these forces. At the risk of appearing reductionist, study of the Defence environment, particularly the civil-military relationship and mechanisms of civil oversight and control of the use of armed force, reflects some of the wider challenges of SSR in Southern Sudan as a whole.

Chapter Six narrows the focus on the nature of civil-military relations envisioned for South Sudan. The SPLA was a ubiquitous organisation in the political, economic and social organisation of the Southern Sudanese community. One of the aims of the SSR programme was to disentangle the SPLA from the political establishment through a traditional approach to civil-military relations theory; physical and ideological separation through the establishment of institutions and legal-rational frameworks of engagement. The creation of the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs (later to become the Ministry of Defence) was one of these institutions. In general, a defence ministry exists to both advocate for the military in the parliament and public sphere, and scrutinise the activities of the military on behalf of the parliament and public. One of its most significant roles in a democratic system is to assist the elected government to exercise oversight and control over the legitimate use of armed force. The type and manner of mechanisms created to exercise this control depends on the particular approach to civil-military relations employed in the country. I will argue that a heavy focus on legal-rational mechanisms of oversight and control, a tradition favoured by Western approaches to civil-military relations, and prescribed in the orthodox SSR construct, may not have been the most effective approach to take in the context of Southern Sudan. Absent an adjustment for local political and socio-cultural approaches to the civil-military relationship, the SSR paradigm risks exposure as a blatantly subjective construct.

Chapter Seven contains further analysis of the normative political basis of SSR policy. This chapter is focused on the claim that SSR, in its liberal democratic format, acts as a conflict prevention mechanism. Despite roughly six years of SSR activities in Southern Sudan, the country again became embroiled in armed conflict in 2013, a conflict that continues - through a multitude of broken ceasefire agreements - to the time of writing. In its simplest terms, the conflict is a leadership dispute that is manifested through inter-ethnic group combat. Many close observers of South Sudan, such as scholar Alex de Waal (2015) and former

UN Special Representative of the Secretary General in South Sudan, Hilde Johnson (2016), believe it is a conflict that was easy to see coming. Southern Sudanese unity, even at the advent of independence, was little more than a marriage of convenience for the purpose of opposition to the Northern regime in Khartoum. Furthermore, de Waal (2015) argues that local political conditions in Southern Sudan operate on a completely different normative track to the liberal democratic agenda. Not only is violent conflict a historical norm, it is part of the traditional cycle of transitional power. In this context, Chapter Seven explores the argument that a basic miscalculation of the nature of conflict in South Sudan meant that SSR may have been predestined to fail as a conflict prevention mechanism.

In this thesis, I use the terms 'Southern Sudan' and 'Southerners' in reference to the areas and people of three historic regions of Sudan known as Bahr el Ghazal, Equatoria and Greater Upper Nile. This terminology applies up until the time these regions collectively declared national independence on 9 July 2011. For events occurring after this time I use the terms 'South Sudan' and 'South Sudanese', and recognise the division of the new country into ten administrative states; Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Unity, Upper Nile, Warrap, Western Bahr el Ghazal and Western Equatoria. Where reference is made to the SSR programme or other issues that span both the pre- and post-independence periods, the default terminology used is 'Southern Sudan'. Similarly, the Sudan People's Liberation Army / Movement (SPLA/M) references the organisation before the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005, after which it was officially separated into the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the military, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the governing political party in the Southern region. The Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs was established as a defence management agency reporting to the semi-autonomous governing administration of Southern Sudan during the 6-year interim period between the

signing of the CPA and the declaration of independence. After independence, it became the Ministry of Defence and Veterans' Affairs.[1]

Map 1. *Administrative Map of Sudan, c*irca 1998. The red line indicates the pre-independence, internal division between 'North' and 'South' Sudan. Published by Nations Online. Accessed online 02 Jan 2017 at: http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/sudan-administrative-map.htm

[1] There were some other name changes during the interim period, as the Veterans' Agency separated and then reunited with the Ministry of SPLA Affairs/Defence.

MAP 2. *Political Map of Sudan,* circa 2005. Published by Boyuggs. Accessed online 02 Jan 2017 at: https://boyuggs.org/of-sudan-political-map-of-sudan-political-map-of-sudan.html

1.2) Purpose

SSR policy is relatively new in terms of its application in the international aid and security assistance arenas. Emerging in international development dialogue in the late 1990s, it was not until 2007 that a systematic methodology was codified by the OECD. Since then, major international donors like the UK, UN and US have applied this approach to development policy and strategies across Africa, Asia and Latin America, with mixed results. There are now ongoing efforts to refine the SSR approach based on practical implementation exercises. The purpose of this thesis is to analyse aspects of the ideological basis and methodological approach to Defence transformation in Southern Sudan, as a component part of the internationally-led SSR programme, and to evaluate the Southern Sudan experience in relation to the dominant liberal democratic framework, particularly in relation to civil-military relations and the claim that SSR acts as a conflict prevention mechanism. This thesis analyses SSR policy, programme

design and implementation in order to determine how the Southern Sudan experience might impact revision of the orthodox SSR model.

1.3) Significance of the Thesis

SSR is still being tested in the field. Numerous case studies exist on international support to reconstruction or reform of military and police services in post-conflict and transitional countries around the world. However, most of these have been retroactively called SSR programmes, despite being mostly focused on training and equipping of armed forces (Schnabel & Ehrhart, 2005:6). Few reform programmes have been pursued in the context of an overarching framework that is designed not only to develop the operational levels of traditional and non-traditional security agencies, but also focuses on higher-level security agency governance, and situates the whole within the context of a democratically-accountable national security strategy. Even fewer have attempted to link a programme of internationally-sponsored security reform to other social, political and economic development objectives in a conflict-prone country. The programme in Southern Sudan is one of the few, starting as it did at a time shortly after the OECD Development Assistance Committee released its *Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice*[2], in 2007, which became the widely-recognised orthodox system of SSR implementation practice. Some of the architects of this *Handbook* were closely involved in the UK Government's SSR design proposal for Southern Sudan, making it a useful example for post-implementation critique.

The SSR strategy in Southern Sudan included the operational and strategic management (governance) elements of the security domain, incorporating the military, the police, and other armed agencies, as well as the parliamentary oversight function, the judiciary, and civil society organisations as informal

[2] The terminology of 'security sector' has now replaced 'security system' in the dominant literature.

representatives of public consent (DFID, 2008). This is not to say the SSR programme engaged each sector equally, or that there was an equal distribution of resources, but each of the primary agencies and security functions were considered in the styling of the programme, making it a good illustration of the orthodox approach. Nevertheless, it should not be assumed that there was one comprehensive programme plan with a singular lead-donor; there were in fact multiple donors engaging different elements of the security sector, at different times, and occasionally with different goals.

Significantly, The Republic of South Sudan is the world's newest official country. The latest – at the time of writing – to be admitted as a member of the United Nations. It is also one of the first in Africa to formally redefine its colonial-legacy international borders, something other former European colonies in Africa have resisted – despite widely acknowledged social problems created by arbitrary boundaries – for fear of encouraging a secessionist snowball effect. The civil war in Sudan was one of the world's longest-running in contemporary history, and the optimism for its post-conflict future exponentially great. Such prominent features make this country an innately interesting subject of study, and given the dynamic conflict environment, political and development events since the peace agreement in 2005 remain under-studied from an academic perspective.

Africa is the main arena for contemporary SSR programme implementation and "African knowledge and experience has contributed much to the evolution of the security sector reform (SSR) concept." (Bryden and Olonisakin, 2010: vii). I believe that an analysis of South Sudan's experience with SSR offers the opportunity to contribute to what remains a comparatively small body of scholarly work on SSR dedicated to this country in particular.

1.4) Primary and Secondary Research Questions

Primary research question: How is Defence transformation in South Sudan relevant to contemporary efforts to revise the conceptual framework for Security Sector Reform in conflict-prone environments?

This question will be addressed through analysis of the design and implementation of the UK-sponsored Defence Transformation Programme in Southern Sudan, in comparable relation to the dominant, orthodox SSR policy. UK, UN and US Government policy documents, as well as Government of South Sudan security sector strategies, provide much of the study material. Some information from the author's own fieldwork as a Defence advisor in the UK Government's SSR programme in South Sudan is used to exemplify arguments, although all attempts are made to eliminate personal bias and rely on documentary evidence to support conclusions.

Secondary research questions:

i. What are the normative political and methodological issues of contention associated with the orthodox SSR concept?

ii. How did the local context affect the ideological approach to SSR in South Sudan?

iii. Why did SSR fail to provide a platform from which to divert a return to violent conflict in South Sudan in 2013?

Each of these questions engages both specific material on South Sudan and broader notions of international security assistance. The significance of these questions lies in the development of a greater understanding of the impact of SSR activities in a conflict-prone country with little experience of governance in the democratic tradition. The third question in particular engages critique of whether or not SSR is on the critical path to conflict prevention.

1.5) Theoretical and Conceptual Approach

SSR is foremost an interventionist, international development activity, but lies at an occasionally contradictory nexus of international relations theory. It is part of a neo-liberal approach to international aid and democratisation, but deals with some institutions, such as militaries, that are inherently non-liberal democratic within their own structures. The political structure of an army shares more in common with a dictatorship than a democracy. As an interventionist exercise, it is also prescriptive and suffers some accusations of neo-imperialism. SSR is promoted as constituent of an altruistic liberal humanitarianism, but epitomises an enduring paradox of liberalism, "...its ability to speak in the name of people, freedom and rights while at the same time accepting illiberal forms of rule as sufficient or even necessary for backward or underdeveloped societies and peoples." (Duffield, 2007: Loc.3798).

SSR also has realist political overtones in its prescriptions, often revolving around issues of the primacy of the state, in terms of its absolute control over the legitimate means of violence in the domestic environment and its role as predominant actor in the international environment, where security posture is paramount in an anarchic system. Yet proponents try to mold SSR into a broader spectrum social-democratic objective focused on human security alongside, if not over and above, the security of the state (Ball, 2010:32). SSR is beset by a clunky arrangement of normative political motives and theoretical explanations.

The phenomena I am investigating in this thesis is how an institutionally-focused process of security reform in South Sudan was shaped by an internationally dominant, modern liberal approach to development. My critique of the SSR programme in South Sudan exists on two levels. The first level accepts the internationally dominant SSR policy as is, that is framed by neo-liberal values, and asks how these values were tested in practical implementation. The second level questions some of the broader, normative political principles inherent in the

underpinnings of SSR. Therefore, my orientation will be to adopt a broadly neo-liberal interventionist discourse in this thesis, coupled with a critique of the political mechanisms of international intervention.

There are four key concepts that form the underlying framework of this thesis; development, democratisation, good governance and security. Each are intimately linked within an understanding of SSR. *Development* and *Democratisation* are mutually inclusive in this thesis. All of the top OECD SSR donor countries are politically-developed democracies, and are frequently politically expeditionary in their aid policies. SSR as a development activity presumes democratisation at its foundation (OECD, 2007:10-13, and Hills, 2010:177). OECD development aid recipients may be required to demonstrate accountability and transparency in their resource management processes, and donor objectives may link programme funding to host government achievements in areas such as respect for human rights, gender equity or access to justice. These traits form part of the principles of *good governance,* as defined by the Western democratic establishment. *Democratisation* is partially measured against the achievement of *good governance* in bureaucratic practice, which in turn is a measure of *development* in terms of the liberal internationalist agenda. SSR introduces *security* as a *development* exercise which is grounded in mechanisms of *good governance* and democratic norms.

1.5.1. Development and democratisation

For the purposes of this thesis, development and democratisation are examined in concert, as they grew together in the context of Western aid-donor outreach. Global societal transformations over the past 65 years demonstrate that there is a strong, contiguous historical relationship between democracy and development, although not necessarily an exclusive nor uniformly beneficial relationship. A skeptical hypothesis posits that development may successfully progress in the absence of democracy, and that political democracy may progress

with negligible (or negative) impact on other aspects of development such as economic growth (Sirowy & Inkeles, 1990:153). Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis, democratisation principles are a core component of SSR as a development initiative, thus they are examined as interlocking features.

Contemporary Western notions of international development assistance draw much from US President Harry Truman's 1949 inaugural address in which he lauds a "...bold new programme for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas..." (Truman, 1949). President Truman was emboldened by the glow of post-WWII victory, a victory of political values as much as territorial conquest, to either altruistically 'spread the benefits' of advanced democratic development, or cunningly 'spread influence' for self-interested purposes, depending on your perspective. Either way, any humanitarian altruism was quickly overshadowed by political expediency at the onset of the Cold War, when East-West competition for ideological dominance was accompanied by a vast array of military assistance to proxy client-states. The victory of democratic ideology at the end of the Cold War inexorably tied development aid to democratisation in western-donor discourse.

'Underdeveloped' is a contentious term measured alternately via economic wealth, industrialisation, infrastructure, political institutions, or a wide variety of social factors such as education, health, access to justice and human rights (Chari and Corbridge, 2008:2-4). The term has undergone transition through 'Third World', 'undeveloped', 'underdeveloped' and 'developing', now even the 'global South', as it has passed through a succession of development theories. By most measures, South Sudan is easily categorised on the 'lacking' side of development terminology. The long-ranging conflict has generated some of the worst development indicators in the world. The United Nations' Human Development Index, measuring Gross Domestic Product, trade flow, employment, education, literacy, life expectancy, nutrition and maternal health, amongst other social and

economic factors, ranks South Sudan at number 181 out of 193 countries (UNDP, 2016). In the context of SSR as a development initiative, Amartya Sen's (1999) explanation of development as a component part of 'human freedom' is particularly relevant. Sen's work was instrumental in re-conceptualising security in international relations as an issue affecting the human condition, rather than just as a condition of the state.

Members of the 'post-development' school argue that the post-WWII era enthusiasm for liberal political and economic expeditions into the 'underdeveloped' world was not altruistic but rather a hoax and "...never designed to deal with humanitarian and environmental problems, but simply a way of allowing the industrialized North, particularly the USA, to continue its dominance of the rest of the world in order to maintain its own high standards of living." (Thomas, 2000:19). A similar challenge is lobbed against contemporary security assistance programmes by Duffield (2007, 2008 and 2011), who suggests that development is the liberal response to the problematic of security on an international scale. Analogous to the evolution of the welfare system as a means of dealing with those people left surplus to economic requirements by industrialisation, 'international development aid' is a means of containing populations left surplus to requirements by globalisation. Such populations pose a threat to the stability of international order, thus whilst development is "Usually experienced as a benign and practical act of helping others, [it is actually] a technology of security that is central to liberal forms of power and government." (Duffield, 2007: Loc.107). Duffield's thesis suggests that donor governments of the industrialised world provide development aid to the underdeveloped world not necessarily with the aim of bridging the economic gap between rich and poor countries or transferring the social and political protections of democracy, but to contain the destabilising effects of underdevelopment, such as regional conflict and mass refugee movement, that negatively impact financial and social systems in the rich countries (Duffield, 2007: Loc.127). SSR, viewed through this lens, becomes not just a component part but a paramount focus of the liberal

development agenda in a conflict-prone country. Strengthening the capacity of security services in a recipient country to deal with their own violence and criminality generated by underdevelopment, does not necessarily *resolve* conflict, but aims only to *contain* the effects so they don't spill over into the international arena.

Democratisation in the academic literature of the 1960s-1980s was largely approached from a structuralist perspective, focused on analysis of the capacity of institutions to meet the requirements of the democratic principles of pluralism, majority rule, popular electoral participation and rule of law (Chilcote, 1999:215). Theorists of political development working in the industrialised world context then applied this perspective to the democratisation of the post-colonial developing world, but discovered that the social, political and historical conditions required for progressive, institutionally-based democracy were incompatible with the conditions found in many developing countries (Chilcote, 1999:18-19). Later theorists tried to explore a less formal and institutional theory of change that focused on the evolutionary nature of crisis in the sequencing of democratic development, but critics still contend that there are few theoretical explanations that can overcome "...an implicit belief in the superiority of American political values, institutions, and processes." (Kesselman, 1973:153, in Chilcote, 1999:219). Despite a wealth of political and economic development theories attempting to explain the path to democratisation in the modern global context, be it focused on pluralism, political institutions, popular participation, education, industrialisation, economic growth, social equity or individual rights, that certain sociological bias may still pervade on the basis that the idealised social values of democracy, like freedom of expression or assembly, are still inexorably associated with Western industrialised systems. Contemporary international development policy certainly tends to be drafted in the ideological context of the dominant donor parties – the majority of which are Western liberal democracies.

The 21st century wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Arab Spring revolutions throughout the Middle East, generated renewed interest in theories of democratisation. The Western liberal establishment embraced new opportunities to export political democracy, and critics found new evidence for the failings of democratisation theory. Hawksley (2009) in *Democracy Kills* and Blum (2013) in *America's Deadliest Export*, illustrate the dangers of one country attempting to 'install' democracy in another country, particularly, and ironically, by force. They highlight a contemporary version of the earlier failings of modernisation by demonstrating how principles of democracy like transparency, accountability and freedom of association, alongside neo-liberal economic policies, can in fact have a destabilising effect on developing countries that are accustomed to a high degree of state control. Although, such contemporary failings may be more attributable to the flawed process of introducing democratic mechanisms – by rapid force rather than gradual evolution - than flawed theory as such. Despite the problematics, democratisation appears to remain the preferred objective of OECD interventionist countries in their international development assistance programmes, including SSR, and forms the basis of UN peace-building efforts in conflict-prone countries. SSR as a process for introducing democratic management mechanisms into the security sector is the subject of broad critique in this thesis; is the policy flawed or just the implementation?

1.5.2. Good Governance

Good governance references a set of political, bureaucratic, social and economic management processes. Although good governance is a broad term that can refer to the policies and decision-making processes of any corporate, commercial or private enterprise, it is predominantly used in the context of public political systems. The institutionalisation of good governance principles defines expectations in the relationship between the government and the citizens, or between different braches of the government. It also frequently appears as a

concept of international development and the objective criteria that aid recipient countries are measured against in terms of political development.

> Recently the terms "governance" and "good governance" are being increasingly used in development literature. Bad governance is being increasingly regarded as one of the root causes of all evil within our societies. Major donors and international financial institutions are increasingly basing their aid and loans on the condition that reforms that ensure "good governance" are undertaken (UNESCAP, 2009).

There is no singular, authoritative accounting of the principles of good governance, but there is a general consensus of views. Potter (2000:379-381) neatly summarises some of the key principles that are characteristic of a democracy or democratising country; accountability, transparency and efficiency in public sector management, commitment to the rule of law, protection of civil, political and human rights, and an equitable, inclusive, participatory political system based on open, multi-party elections. The United Nations identifies eight principles of good governance in a management system; participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law (UNESCAP, 2009). The Worldwide Governance Indicators programme, a World Bank funded initiative that has been measuring quality of governance in 180+ countries since 1996, identifies six dimensions that are indicative of good governance; voice and accountability, political stability and lack of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption (WB, 2017).

Although there are variations in character and emphasis on the principles of good governance, the concept is intimately linked to the political and economic decision-making processes characteristic of a modern democratic system. The standard of measurement of good governance seems most often to be associated with the Western liberal democracies of Europe and North America (Potter, 2000:379-381).

The OECD policy on SSR claims that institutionalising principles of democratic good governance in the security sector will help enable an environment conducive to sustainable development (OECD, 2007:3). Former UN Secretary General (cited in Gisselquist, 2012:1) said that "Good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development." However, as noted above, scholars argue the veracity of claiming a causal relationship between democracy and stability in the developing world. Hawksley's 2009 *Democracy Kills* is again a good illustration of how the implementation of principles such as bureaucratic transparency and consensus-oriented decision making can be destabilising and even prompt increased popular violence if implemented rapidly or through coercive means like international development aid. Despite academic oscillation, international development agencies and donors continue to make good governance inherent in their policy prescriptions, and may even make good governance factors a condition of assistance;

> The IMF places great emphasis on promoting good governance when providing policy advice, financial support, and technical assistance to its member countries... When warranted, specific measures to strengthen governance may become part of the programme's conditionality (IMF, 2017:1).

Although decision-making within operational security agencies is not always expected to be pluralistic, it is nonetheless expected to be transparent and accountable and subject to rule of law. Beyond bureaucratic management, application of good governance principles extends to the nature of the relationship between the military and the executive and legislative branches of government. This relationship, in a democratic context, is subject to much theoretical debate in the field of civil-military relations. The crux of the debate centers around the ideal professional distance to be maintained between political and military leaders, as well as *how* that distance should be maintained; through

formal-legalistic or other means. Different theories of civil-military relations in the context of democratic good governance are explored in greater depth in Chapter Six.

1.5.3. Security

Security is a contested concept, and difficult to contain in a singular description. In some respects, security is amorphous and subjective, meaning different things to different people in different contexts. Threat agendas are constructed according to one's own value system and definition of what requires protection; territory, population, culture, ideology, economic system? As an academic discipline, there is general agreement that security studies belong to a subfield of international relations, being that the macro construct of security refers to a function of nation states, concerned largely with preservation of state sovereignty or territorial integrity, in the competitive environment of intra-state relationships (Williams, 2008:7). How a state organises and resources its security sector, particularly its military forces, is indicative of how it intends on interacting with its neighbours and the rest of the world.

Different strands of realism explain the contest between states in self-help terms; in an anarchic world system, states perceive the main threats against them to emanate from other states, and they achieve security by organising their defences to balance competitors' capabilities (Elman, 2008:15-26). Various liberal traditions posit internal political organisation as key to developing secure relations with other like-minded states, as in democratic peace theory, or highlight the role of international institutions, like the United Nations, or international trading pacts in moderating some of the anarchy in the international system (Navari, 2008:29-36). Contemporary Constructivists, Game Theorists and Critical Theorists each have different explanations for the behaviour of states in relation to their sovereign security, however in this thesis, security is predominantly addressed in terms of a realist approach to force

capability development, intertwined with a liberal approach to international development interventionism. That is the paradox of SSR. In part, there is a focus on the state-centric conceptualisation of security, particularly where SSR is critiqued as a function of industrialised world protectionism, but security is also conceptualised in terms of the state's social contract with its own citizens; how it intends to ensure physical safety from internal threats, as well as access to broader economic welfare and social security.

The association of SSR with the international development industry has broadened the security component of SSR into the realm of 'human security'. Human security is concerned with notions of quality of life, not just preservation of life. Regular access to adequate food and water, access to adequate medical services, opportunities for educational or economic advancement, and access to fair judicial services (Duffield, 2007: Loc.2280). SSR policy aims to not only improve the physical condition of security through professionalisation of security agency management, but enable an environment that permits advancement of other conditions of human security. Thus, SSR is concerned with both conceptualisations of security as a state-centric, component feature of international relations, and as a social construct of human need.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1) Type of Available Literature

Two things are striking about the existing literature on SSR in conflict-prone environments; the first is that most scholars appear to agree that the field is relatively new, both in theory and in practice. This isn't to say that there is any lack of depth on development, democratisation or international security assistance literature, but the integration of these endeavors into a singular SSR policy approach appears to have only been given more considered attention since the late 1990s. The second striking feature is that much of the most prominent literature appears in journals, institutional working papers and edited collections, rather than single-author volumes. This is perhaps because the claim that SSR, when integrated with broader development initiatives, performs as a conflict prevention mechanism and contributes to an enabling environment for sustainable development, is still being tested by practitioners and it may yet be some time before scholars can provide a more comprehensive explanation of the impact of SSR in conflict-prone countries.

Policy documents from major donor governments and international institutions provide some of the clearest outlines of how SSR is designed; as a holistic approach to combatting instability in developing countries through the institutionalisation of democratic good governance in the security sector. International aid donors, at the political level at least, are attracted to the integrated nature of SSR and its blueprint for action, as well as the opportunity to consolidate resources, to the point where SSR, even within its short life-span, has been normalised amongst most major security donors (IMF, 2017:1). The OECD countries, which include 13 of the world's 15 leading aid donor countries by dollar amount, largely follow the normative political and methodological

prescriptions of the 2007 *OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice* when designing their individual SSR strategies (Parker, 2016 & OECD, 2017). Many donor countries have also drafted their own national SSR policies and strategies like the UK's 2004 *Security Sector Reform Strategy* and the USA's 2012 *Security Sector Reform Guidelines*. The UN Secretary General reported to the 62nd session of the General Assembly Security Council in January 2008 on the UN's SSR strategy intentions in *Security Peace and Development: The Role of the United Nations in Supporting Security Sector Reform.* Government policy, strategy and programming documents are relied upon in this thesis to demonstrate the political assumptions of SSR, as well as the particular nuances of programme implementation in South Sudan. For the most part, these donor government policies are homogenous in their political and practical approach, reflecting perhaps the newness of SSR.

The African Union's 2013 *Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform* represents one of the few policies to appear from outside the major donor network, however it diverges little from the standard except in emphasising how recipient countries should take greater leadership in SSR planning and should have veto over politically sensitive activities – which foreshadows potential for a clash with the principles of democratic accountability emphasised by major donors. Although the African Union's framework was not in place during the time period of initial SSR programming in Southern Sudan, it allows for identification of some of the issues of prevailing concern to contemporaneous regional leaders. Similarly, policy and security strategy documents produced by the SPLA and SPLM, particularly the 2008 *SPLA White Paper on Defence*, the 2009 *Security Strategy for Southern Sudan*, the 2012 *SPLA Transformation Plan: 2012-1017* and the 2013 *Ministry of Defence and Veteran's Affairs Transformation Plan:* 2012-2017, provide indicators of the primary threats of concern and the capability development intentions of the Southern Sudanese leadership.

Prominent amongst peer-reviewed publications on SSR are *The Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, The Security Sector Reform Resource Centre, The Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform, The African Studies Quarterly and African Security Network, Small Arms Survey* and the *Journal of Security Sector Management.* Contributors to these publications consist of a mixture of scholars and practitioners of SSR, and there can be a tendency towards reductionism in the work of the latter. These publications themselves appear to have a collective mission to 'improve on' current practice of SSR as a development strategy, whilst simultaneously reinforcing the normative political assumptions. Nevertheless, in the absence of much detailed work on Southern Sudan, these journals provide some useful comparative examples of SSR programmes in the Central African Republic, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and others on the African continent.

By the nature of the academic literature it is difficult to discern the most prominent scholars or publications, as there is a tendency towards edited volumes with multiple contributors. Nevertheless, leading representatives like Mark Sedra, editor of *The Future of Security Sector Reform* (2010), present SSR as an evolution from the narrow path of past international security assistance programmes that focused primarily on military and policing capability development. Such programmes were divorced from other component parts of a nation's security architecture, and were little changed from Cold War approaches of buying influence through arms transfer. Whilst there is much to be gained from training military and police forces in recipient countries, particularly improvement in discipline and restraint, it is not a comprehensive solution to control issues within a security sector, nor does it always address the security priorities of the broader community. The degree to which individuals believe they have access to justice or the ability to input into national security decision-making is not affected by teaching a soldier how to fire a more sophisticated weapon. Sedra argues that;

> The professionalism and effectiveness of the security sector is not just measured by the capacity of the security forces, but how well they are managed, monitored and held accountable. Moreover, the SSR model conceives of the security sector as more than its blunt, hard security instruments, recognizing that the security forces cannot perform their duties effectively in the absence of competent legal frameworks and judicial bodies as well as correctional institutions and government oversight bodies (Sedra, 2010:16).

2.2) Schools of Thought on International Security Assistance

The prevailing literature paints SSR as partly a technical process concerned with reforming bureaucracies and governance structures, and partly a political process in that it is based upon the notion that principles of good governance are the essence of democracy and necessary for a stable domestic security environment. But claims by supporters that SSR is an ideologically neutral process appear difficult to justify. Not least of all because of statements included in the *OECD DAC Handbook* (2007:28) such as "Security system reform has an explicitly political objective – to ensure that security and justice are provided in a manner consistent with democratic norms, human rights principles and the rule of law." These statements assume that such norms and principles have universal correlation. That notion is challenged in this thesis.

SSR was borne out of government policy work. Clare Short, former UK Minister for International Development, takes some measure of credit for championing the concept of linking security assistance to broader development goals in the late 1990s, in spite of being "...held back by old thinking in the bureaucracies and among intellectual and political elites." (Short, 2010, in Sedra, 2010: preface). The SSR hypothesis and implementation strategy has come a long way since it was first 'written on the back of an envelope', according to Short (Short, 2010, in Sedra, 2010: preface). However, following practical experimentation in applying SSR policy to real-world situations over the past decade - since publication of the

OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform – practitioners and scholars have been given cause to critique the concept on issues of technical aptitude and normative ideological foundation.

2.2.1. State security versus human security

One of the prevailing themes of critical analysis of SSR is the disagreement over whether or not the role of the state is paramount when considering a structural framework for the security sector. The orthodox school (Galletti & Wodzicki, 2010) (Salahub and Nerland, 2010), (Williams, 2010), tends to follow Weber's thinking on a nation state's right to monopoly control over the means of violence within its territorial boundaries. Although not without exception, this is one of the fundamentals of nation state sovereignty, irrespective of whether a nation state decides to exercise this right by commissioning its own armed forces, or constitutionally delegating that responsibility in whole or part to another state. At the heart of this mindset is the primacy of the state in delivering security, as well as reflections of Francis Fukuyama's (2004) concept of state-building; that it should be approached from an ahistorical and technocratic perspective focused on democratic (and capitalist) principles of governance. For orthodox SSR adherents, the state has the primary duty of responsibility for the protection of human rights, which cannot be guaranteed, in terms of international norms, by disparate non-state actors. These scholars do not discount bringing non-state actors and traditional justice systems into the realm of the professional security sector, this is in fact encouraged, but there is a clear preference for encapsulating these divergent actors into the statist system. The challenge for SSR, according to Hutton (2010), is to demand a new social contract between the state and society, particularly in the post-conflict and transitional societies of Africa where the locus of security is on regimes rather than citizens.

On the other side is the 'post-liberal state' school of critical theorists (Baker, 2010 and 2011), (de Waal, 2015), (Duffield, 2007), (Hills, 2010) which holds that

preoccupation with the state and Western, realist perceptions of security are counter-productive, and the SSR model, if not security assistance programmes in general, as currently conceived is geared more towards advancing the interests of donor countries than recipients. In this school are scholars who argue that security and justice services, particularly at the base community level in conflict-prone countries, are more often than not provided by non-state actors. In this context, ousting traditional systems in favour of rigid, state-centric paradigms of service delivery can create instability and insecurity in the community, countermanding the SSR ideal of conflict prevention. Some, like Hills (2010) and de Waal (2015), suggest that security assistance concepts inaccurately presuppose that recipients actually desire to accept the reforms that are offered. It may be the case that prescribed reforms are incompatible with local forms of political and social organisation and imposition of security governance principles through coercive aid practices may lead to greater instability. de Waal does not address SSR in particular, but his thesis on the nature of violence as a political currency in the Horn of Africa suggests that notions of reshaping security sector governance in a strictly liberal format may be incompatible with traditional power constructs.

2.2.2. Donor versus recipient country interests

The political motivation debate leads to another fundamental question; whose security is SSR really concerned with, the donor (and the international system by proxy) or the recipient population? Scholars like Paul Jackson (2010), claim that the whole idea of SSR as a component of development strategy lacks adequate analysis of theories of state-building and the liberal peace. Jackson notes the irony that;

> …it is the transfer of the political architecture of the liberal state from Western liberal countries to non-liberal states in the form of state building that leads to a tension between the pacific nature of liberalism and the issue of whether

> those structures really are the political manifestation of the moral freedom of the local population (Jackson, 2010:120).

There is a fine line between offering new options to a system that has long been denied them, and imposing foreign values on a recipient. Jackson (2010) and Hills (2010) are amongst those who allege that SSR is an ideological programmed process that is deliberately promoted in order to uphold the existing international order. Far from being a technocratic and ideologically neutral process, SSR is really;

> …a response to policy-relevant problems by a small group of rich industrialized democracies and intergovernmental organizations that wish to cultivate a pluralistic civil society whilst simultaneously reforming state structures and enforcing culturally specific values (Hills, 2010:177).

Duffield (2008 & 2011) argues along similar lines, going even further to chastise the international aid community for the manner in which ill-conceived transfers of Western values actually undermines human security in the developing world.

On the same general side as Duffield, Baker and Jackson regarding the inefficacy of transferring industrialised world systems and principles is Alice Hills (2010), a police reform expert, who argues candidly that African security services are basically thuggish clients of an entrenched system of corrupt 'big-men' in power and no amount of democratic political indoctrination is going to change them. In this context, the governance principles of SSR are patronising, inappropriate and potentially destabilising. Hills argues that straightforward 'training and equipping' operational security forces is a better option than SSR. Police-to-police or military-to-military training can mitigate against tendency towards brutality and thus have a greater impact on physical security of the population than 'irrelevant' appeals to democratic principles. However, it seems that Hills may have missed the finer points of SSR, which includes operational capability development as an integral part of the package - not a completely different

undertaking. Governance advocacy complements train and equip programmes. SSR strategy also encourages practitioners to be sensitive to local political context and adapt implementation programmes accordingly. Hills' critique may be more germane to malpractice she has witnessed rather than overall maladjustment of SSR policy.

Hills is not alone in favouring train and equip programmes over interfering with management or governance systems. The US Government's *Defence Security Cooperation Agency* has a mandate, through its *Defense Institution Building* programme, to "...establish responsible defense governance in order to help partner-nations build effective, transparent, and accountable defense institutions [and] advance the American ideals of democracy and the rule of law..." (USDSCA, 2017). Nonetheless, it is widely recognised in the SSR community that such programmes lost the initiative following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack on the United States (Ball, 2010, Sedra, 2010 and Sherman, 2010). Instead, the US Government has prioritised the quick transfer of equipment and training to international partners to enhance their counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency capabilities (Hendrickson, 2010:209). The implications for SSR include erosion of primary governance goals.

> These changes have led to the disproportionate militarization of US foreign assistance, not only in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also in countries beyond the "frontline". This security and development assistance has often undermined or contradicted principles of democratic governance, reinforcing repression and radicalization (Sherman, 2010: Loc. 933).

Competing strategic geopolitical objectives underscored some of the coordination shortfalls between international SSR donors in Southern Sudan in the early years. The US slowly turned back towards emphasis on institution-building and governance after the 2012 publication of its *Security Sector Reform* guidelines, but it remains to be seen what long-term foreign defence strategy the Trump

administration will pursue. This thesis adopts the position that, if the international community is to continue with security assistance programmes, which seems likely, then situating that assistance within a broader development framework and addressing the manner in which security services are governed, will ultimately have greater impact on human security than the isolated transfer of weapons systems, equipment and training packages. It is the foundational assumption of this thesis that the SSR policy framework is still malleable and flaws can be addressed.

2.2.3. Civil-military relations

One project that could be considered to have had poor results in the SSR programme in Southern Sudan is that of democratically-accountable civil oversight and control of the armed forces. The notions of power and stability are integral to SSR in the area of civil-military relations. The separation of the political/civilian world from the military world is almost inherent in the definition of political democracy, although opinions on the ideal degree of separation may differ. The basic problematic is how to reconcile the need for a strong military to defend your territory/people, with the need to ensure that that military does not go so far as to overthrow your own government. Samuel Huntington (*The Soldier and the State*: *The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations,* 1957) and Morris Janowitz (*The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*, 1960), led the post-World War II debate over how much a military should be inculcated into prevailing societal values, without compromising its fighting ability. Summers (1982), Feaver (1999 & 2003) and McMaster (1998) continued the debate in the post-Cold War era. Most scholars in civil-military relations agree on one fundamental; that military officers should not be directly engaged in political decision-making. As advisors perhaps, but not decision-makers. Rebecca Schiff (1995, 1996 & 2009) and Rocky Williams (2010) posit a different view. Schiff and Williams don't advocate for a complete revision of the democratic principle, just that the forced separation of the military from

political decision-making in a post-conflict, democratising country, particularly one where military officers have previously had a leading role, like Southern Sudan, can be counter-productive. The experience of SSR practitioners in Southern Sudan, in their attempts to formalise political and bureaucratic procedures that exclude military authorities from the decision-making process, provides a cautionary tale about trying to force the military out of politics.

2.2.4. SSR as a conflict prevention mechanism

The relevance of SSR as a conflict prevention mechanism again draws commentators into opposing camps. It is the clear position of SSR advocates such as the UN and the OECD, that reforming the security sector in accordance with the SSR model is paramount to stability in post-conflict countries. Security agencies in post-conflict countries are themselves frequently cited as instigators of insecurity, and SSR programmes are aimed at rectifying this situation;

> In most African countries, the security sector has played a dual role in attempting to maintain state stability, while at the same time being itself a major destabilising force. Accordingly, ensuring the democratic governance and improving the performance and overseeing of the security sector...can be considered as key to the process of statebuilding (Aning and Salihu, 2013:178).

According to the OECD (2007), coupling security with development, and ensuring that success in one of these aspects is not undermined by failure in the other, is part of the fundamental foundation of SSR. Thus, the hypothesis is that SSR acts as a conflict prevention mechanism by addressing behavioral and structural sources of instability such as police abuse or judicial corruption. The argument appears to be supported in Southern Sudan, where the success of the 2005 *Comprehensive Peace Agreement* was contingent upon security sector restructuring, with both major warring parties agreeing that there could be no end to violent conflict without it. As it happened, according to UN Special

Representative Heidi Johnson (2016), the *Council of Civil Society Organisations in South Sudan* (CCSO, 2015) and the *Bonn International Center for Conversion* (Breitung et. al., 2016), the return to armed conflict in South Sudan in 2013 was a result of failure to adequately reform the SPLA.

Opposition to the idea that SSR acts as a conflict-prevention mechanism is multi-layered. John Snowden (2012) and Richard Rands (2012) both suggest that SSR technical programmes can be detrimental to stability in the context of an ongoing armed conflict. Both authors, writing on Southern Sudan specifically, suggest that the SSR-inspired restructuring of the SPLA garrison and command system in fact left it weakened and more susceptible to attack, which therefore left the community more vulnerable to multiple predators. The South Sudan Liberation Army (SSLA), a distinct southern rebel group poorly integrated into the SPLA after the peace agreement, actually cited the SSR programme as its grounds for starting a new insurgency (Hutton, 2014:23).

A core element of many SSR programmes is the idea that armed actors in a post-conflict country should be 'disarmed, demobilised and reintegrated' (DDR) into civilian life in order to 'demilitarise' the social environment. DDR programmes may be applied to state and non-state armed actors, but when focused on the 'downsizing' of a national military it can have the added benefit of releasing budgetary pressure on the state. The development agenda is actually more prominent in DDR programmes than the security agenda, as it is a process of deconstructing the security sector, rather than constructing or restructuring. Furthermore, a security perspective would seek to 'rightsize' a military force in accordance with the threat environment and capability assessment, rather than immediately assume that a force should be demobilised and reduced in size. Snowden (2012) demonstrates that the DDR programme in Southern Sudan, despite its limited actual success, nonetheless had a destabilising effect on the community. Much of this effect was related to the economy - in Southern Sudan a high proportion of the population relied, directly or indirectly, on a military wage

and thus revoking that wage, as well as access to military medical and welfare services, in a situation of otherwise high unemployment had an extended negative impact on community well-being (Hutton, 2014: 21).

Galletti & Wodzicki (2010) tested multiple environments where SSR programmes have been implemented, and argue that their examples demonstrate minimal impact in terms of preventing a return to violent conflict. However, whilst it may be quantitatively possible to demonstrate that countries where SSR has been implemented have subsequently returned to violent conflict, studies that evaluate the quality of SSR programming in that country, the timeframe programmes were permitted for implementation, or what other drivers of conflict may have been present at the time, are harder to find. SSR is a long-term project, sometimes generational, and it is by design conducted in environments where there are multiple drivers of conflict that may interrupt programmes before completion. South Sudan is arguably in this category.

Duffield (2007) and de Waal (2015) lay forth a comprehensive theoretical opposition to the idea that SSR acts as a conflict prevention mechanism. Duffield (2007) argues that the conflagration of security and development has not led to the intended dilution of the 'military mentality' in conflict-prone communities, but rather led to the increased militarisation of the aid industry. Development aid has become an adjunct tool of the security industry, with SSR at the forefront, and whilst it may help prevent conflict from spilling over into the industrialised world through transnational crime or illegal people movement, it does little to prevent conflict in the aid recipient country. Alex de Waal (2015) argues that the international development community has fundamentally misjudged the transactional nature of the political culture in the Horn of Africa, which is predicated on a political marketplace where power and influence are traded through a currency of conflict, and that policies like SSR are not adequately positioned to interrupt this cycle. Lauren Hutton's work on the social dimensions of state-building in South Sudan supports this thesis with the contention that "It

would be arrogant to assume that international humanitarian or development intervention could have prevented the current crisis in South Sudan..." (Hutton, 2014:5). In this light, conflict prevention loses some of its impact as a justification for intervention, and for SSR.

2.3) The Security History of Southern/South Sudan

Academic literature specific to SSR in South Sudan is limited and it can be difficult to draw patterns of thought from such as small sample. Two key pieces of work on the SPLA are Richard Rands' (2010) *Defence Transformation in Southern Sudan: 2006-2010 and the Future*, and John Snowden's (2012) *Work in Progress: Security Force Development in South Sudan through February 2012*. These are working papers by SSR practitioners. Snowden and Rands heavily criticize the SPLA transformation project in particular as being devoid of historical context and, in some cases, devoid of subject-matter expertise. Casie Copeland, in *Dancing in the Dark: Divergent Approaches to Improving Security and Justice in South Sudan (2015),* levies similar criticism adding that there was too much of a state-centric institutional approach without enough focus on regional and traditional forms of managing security. These views are challenged in later parts of this thesis through the use of UK Government programme review documents, which demonstrate the donor's recognition of such issues. Jeroen De Zeeuw's *From Soldiers to Politicians: Transforming Rebel Movements After Civil War* (2008), also studies SPLA transformation, but characterises the challenges as more self-generated than externally imposed. Working-papers focus on specific issues of the SSR programme in South Sudan and provide good snapshots of interim periods of development by people who were actually engaged in SSR implementation programmes at the time. However, there are still very few of such papers, and none thus far found have been published by Southern Sudanese researchers, who may be able to present alternative or more comprehensive reviews at some later date.

There is not a wide array of academic literature written specifically on Southern Sudan. Where it does appear, it is often in the context of an adjunct to the issues of Sudan, and its politics analysed from a relational perspective to Khartoum, to East Africa or to former colonial authorities. Historian and frequent political advisor to the Southern Sudanese Government, Douglas Johnson (2007), is one of the few who has written extensively on Southern Sudan, as well as Sudan and East Africa more broadly. His decades of experience working with Sudanese of the north and south throughout the country's tumultuous history of ceasefires, peace agreements, treaties and abrogations, marks Johnson as one of the most eminent scholars working on Southern Sudan. Although not specifically noted for research on SSR, it would not be possible to have his knowledge of the history of Southern Sudan if it did not include an intimate understanding of the conflicts, armed actors and security sector management systems that have prevailed at various times over the past 60 years. Johnson is particularly noted for his almost impenetrable *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars* (2007), in which he dissects the nature of Sudanese tribal politics. Through his analysis of the literally hundreds of distinct tribal and sub-tribal groups, and the complex historical relations between them, it is easy to fathom the inadequacy of Western conflict mediation mechanisms.

Matthew Arnold and Matthew LeRiche's *South Sudan: from Revolution to Independence* (2012) is perhaps one of the most authoritative contemporary works on the SPLA, both authors having spent the better part of 10 years each working and researching alongside soldiers in Southern Sudan. The historical perspectives of these scholars provide comprehensive insight into the character of the SPLA/M and its leaders, and provide record of some of the seminal moments in the organisation's evolution which reverberate through its contemporary approach to SSR. Through the narratives of these authors, alongside the works of other insiders like Hilde Johnson (*South Sudan: The Untold Story from Independence to the Civil War*, 2016), the former UN Special Representative for Sudan, and then South Sudan, who was involved in the

negotiations for the *Comprehensive Peace Agreement* from the outset, Arop Madut-Arop (*Sudan's Painful Road to Peace: A Full Story of the Founding and Development of SPLM/SPLA*, 2006), and one of a handful of South Sudanese to have published their own account of their history, it is possible to see where and how SSR programmes in South Sudan could have been crafted to better suit the local context.

Southern Sudan's is a primarily oral culture, and its military a secretive organisation by nature, which is disappointing from an academic perspective as there appears to be very little literature in circulation produced by those with native experience and perspective. But it is also a culture that values formal education very highly, therefore it is likely that future researchers will find more and better local literature to rely upon than is available at present.

CHAPTER 3

EVOLUTION OF SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

The origins of Security Sector Reform lie in the fundamental changes that took place in the global political and security environment towards the end of the 20th century. These changes generated an evolution in thinking about the concepts of human security and the liberal world order, and consequently the engagement of the international development aid community in actualising human security in underdeveloped countries.

The normative basis of SSR is founded in the principles of democratic good governance, reflecting its evolution under Western liberal democracies. SSR policy embraces both a 'theory of change' – that introducing good governance principles to security sector management will act as a conflict prevention mechanism thus enabling the environment for sustainable development – and a process for achieving this change. This chapter analyses the evolution of the dominant SSR policy framework, and identifies the associated normative political and methodological issues of contention. These issues inform contemporary efforts to revise SSR policy.

3.1) Security Assistance During the Cold War

Security Sector Reform first emerged on the international security and development policy scene in the late 1990's, following the post-Cold War experiment in reforming security agencies in former Eastern European and African client-states of the USA and the USSR (Sedra, 2010:16). Operational capability of security forces had been the primary focus of international security assistance in the decades following World War II; assistance geared towards sustaining proxies on the Cold War battlefield (Ball, 2010:29). This assistance had little conceptual connection to human security, and was rarely coordinated with

other social, political or economic issues on the development agenda. Where there was a relationship between security assistance and political development, it was transparently about major donors lobbying cadre to their side of the bipolar global ideological divide (Wulf, 2004:4). International security assistance came largely in the form of weapons and training for armed forces (the 'train and equip' model) used to either shore-up local political authority, regardless of the domestic legitimacy of that authority, or combat opposing ideologues at the regional level. 'Security' in this context focused very much on the security of the State and/or the ruling regime, rather than on security for citizens or communities. Nicole Ball summarises the environment that led to early thinking in the international development aid community about how security assistance impacted development;

> Throughout the Cold War period, the major powers of both East and West had no interest in using security and development assistance to promote democratic governance in the countries receiving their aid. Rather, their assistance was intended solely to foster strategic relationships with key allies... In consequence, highly autonomous security services consistently undermined opportunities for developing participatory forms of government, societies based on rule of law and strong civilian capacity to manage and monitor the security sector (Ball, 2010:29-30).

Albrecht, Stepputat and Andersen (2010:76) reveal that it was during international donor conferences in the 1990s that participants initially focused on ways to curtail recipient-government military spending in underdeveloped countries, which they believed was widely infested by corruption and waste, and only served to generate further conflict. Wulf (2004:4) argues that the interest of the development community in defence and security issues actually has a longer history than this. In the 1960s, militaries in the developing world had a reasonably positive image as potential agents of change. Aid provided to these militaries was viewed as facilitating reconstruction and development. But the activities of the Cold War widened the gap between development and security

actors, and created a sense of distain in the development community for militaries in recipient countries (Wulf, 2004:4-5).

By the 1990s, the strategic landscape had changed again and international donors were reimagining their role in security issues. The rapid shift towards political liberalisation in Eastern European heavily influenced donor debate about the role of governance in development assistance, how development assistance could impact civil-military relations, and how donors could influence governance within the security sector itself (Wulf, 2004:4). Pressure on aid-recipient country leaders to simply reduce their military budgets was ineffective. Broader resource management and governance issues needed to be addressed. Extrapolation of these ideas led to thinking about how the end of the Cold War brought the end of the need to shape foreign policy predominantly around strategic security relationships, and the possibility of recalibrating the role of security in the development agenda, if not the emerging world order (Ball, 2010:31). The modern-day concept of the 'security-development nexus' arose from these deliberations. It relies on the basic assumption that there is better opportunity for sustainable economic and political development in areas free of ongoing violent conflict, and equally that security is easier to maintain where there is economic prosperity, a stable political system, and access to a reliable justice system. Security and development are mutually reinforcing. It is an 'enduring and essential relationship' (Duffield, 2007: Loc.103). This understanding of the security-development nexus lies at the very heart of SSR policy.

Repositioning security into the development paradigm led to increasing donor policy interest in the concept of 'human security', that is; the ability of people to enjoy free, safe, prosperous, complete lives in which their dignity and rights are respected. Human security addresses potential threats beyond traditional criminality or violence to include features such as poverty, disease, environmental pollution or food insecurity (Duffield, 2007: Loc.2271). It is a humanistic approach that broadens the concept of security beyond the realist

state-based paradigm, whilst also recognising that the protection of individuals is critical to both national and international security (Cawthra, 1997:32). This reconceptualising of security quickly filtered into formative thinking about SSR.

Thinking about human security in Africa led to the realisation that security agents themselves are often cited as a primary source of human insecurity, and professionalising such agencies may in itself have a significant stabilising effect on the broader environment. African Union (AU) Peace and Security Commissioner Rantame Lamamra commented at a UN workshop in 2009 that in many AU Member States; "...the security forces have, for one reason or another, become a threat to ordinary citizens." (Lamamra, 2009:2). Persecution by police and soldiers, coupled with a lack of access to justice, consistently rates highly in participatory poverty assessments undertaken by the international development community throughout the 1990's (Ball, 2010:32). According to Ball (2010), identifying SSR as a process beneficial to conflict prevention starts from the perspective of identifying organised security forces as themselves sources of conflict, thus reform of military and police governance came to the forefront of SSR thinking, later broadened beyond just the uniformed, armed agencies.

3.2) SSR Orthodoxy

Codifying the practice of SSR as part of the international development agenda initially occurred under the auspices of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The OECD approach is still considered the dominant SSR policy model amongst the world's major government development assistance donors (IMF, 2017 and Hendrickson, 2010:202). In 2007 the OECD's Development Assistance Committee produced the *OEDC DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice.*[3] This *Handbook* drew from various OECD member policy documents, strategies and experiences -

[3] The terminology of 'security sector' has been replaced 'security system' in the dominant literature.

particularly the UK Government's *2004 Security Sector Reform Strategy* - and was the first of its kind to formalise an integrated approach to reforming security sector governance in underdeveloped countries. The *OECD DAC Handbook* provides a step-by-step guide to implementing SSR programmes from initial design to final evaluation. But some critics argue that it is less of an instructional manual than the word 'handbook' would imply, but rather a set of normative beliefs and strategic policy statements based on donor-country interests (Sedra, 2010:27).

The content of the *OECD DAC Handbook* on SSR addresses the highest level of political management of a recipient state's security environment, through to the organisation, employment and behaviour of individual security actors. The 'security sector' is conceptualised in its broadest terms, extending past the traditional security agencies – police, military, intelligence and other state-sponsored affiliate branches – to incorporate not only non-traditional armed actors like militias, private security contractors and extra-national forces, but further into the realm of civil institutions such as ministries, judicial bodies, legislative assemblies, parliamentary oversight committees and organised civil society groups advocating for defence and security issues (OECD, 2007:22). Beyond agencies, SSR also delves into cross-cutting issues such as management of security resources through national budgets, education programmes and investment strategies. The *OEDC DAC Handbook* was launched with the maxim that "The professionalism and effectiveness of the security sector is not just measured by the capacity of the security forces, but how well they are managed, monitored and held accountable." (OECD, 2007:3), squarely positioning itself as a democratically and developmentally progressive evolution of the old 'train and equip' model of international security assistance. Training and equipping militaries and police forces is not outside the realm of SSR policy, it is just not at the forefront. SSR policy, as promoted by the OECD, is branded as defining the nexus of security and development.

OECD SSR policy is unapologetically based on liberal democratic principles of good governance. SSR is markedly defined as;

> ...the transformation of the "security system" – which includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions – working together to manage and operate the system in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance. (OECD, 2004:20).

The policy is also clearly focused on instructing recipient countries to manage their systems in accordance with liberal principles. The key donor country objective is to;

> ...increase partner countries' ability to meet the range of security needs within their societies in a manner consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of governance, transparency and the rule of law (OECD, 2004:1).

At all stages of SSR implementation, practitioners are encouraged to impress upon counterparts the imperative for democratic reforms, and to achieve not just acquiescence, but positive consent to programmes plans. "The bottom line is that reforms that are not shaped and/or driven by local actors are unlikely to be implemented effectively or sustained." (OECD, 2007:17). In order to achieve this, the local counterpart's thinking may need to be wholly transformed in favor of democratic management principles like transparency and accountability - whether or not they are standard in the recipient culture. SSR policy thus appears to contain the inherent objective of transferring values and principles from the industrialised, Western liberal democracy to the underdeveloped, transitional country. But just because SSR is an externally-imposed process, it does not necessarily mean that it does not meet the needs of non-OECD countries. Ball argues that;

> ...an examination of civil society activities around the world demonstrates that the principles behind SSR – transparency, accountability, inclusiveness – are widely supported and that there is an understanding that effective security services and justice institutions that are accountable to elected officials and citizens are critical to economic and social well-being (Ball, 2010:40).

A *Global Consortium on Security Transformation* was established in 2009 specifically to engage broader representative groups on SSR, beyond the OECD countries. Member institutions of this *Consortium* include the African Security Sector Network, the Arab Reform Initiative and other government and non-government platforms from Latin America and Asia (Ball, 2010:40). In Africa, there is a growing number of civil society organisations, academics, veterans' groups and others that are actively engaging in revolutionising SSR thinking, which may prompt a dialectical change that accommodates different principles in the future.

The United Nations took up the mantle of promoting SSR shortly after the OECD, on the assumption that it had a greater claim to universal principles of governance, was better able to adjudicate multilateral coordination, and had the most experience operating at the crossroads of the security-development nexus (Ebo & Powell, 2010:49-51). In 2008 the UN Secretary General issued *Security Peace and Development: The Role of the United Nations in Supporting Security Sector Reform,* in which the scope of actors targeted by SSR was comprehensively described (and largely reflects the OECD's earlier definition);

> Security Sector is 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 part of the security sector include customary or informal authorities and private security services (UNSG, 2008: para.14).

In 2009, the UN established a dedicated, inter-agency SSR Task Force to capitalise on its expertise (Ebo & Powell, 2010:51). Like the OECD, the UN also underscores its approach to SSR with notions of democratic good governance, and casts its objectives in the context of long-term development goals. The UN's rationale for SSR is that "...a reformed security sector – efficient, democratically governed and based on transparency and accountability – is a major tool for conflict prevention, stability, peacebuilding and sustainable development." (Ebo & Powell, 2010:48).

In 2009 the United States produced its own guidance on SSR. Simply titled *Security Sector Reform*, this policy paper was co-authored by a triumvirate of the US Government's development agency, USAid, its Department of Defense and its Department of State. The paper emphasises the need for an integrated approach to SSR across the US Government and with international partners. It also very clearly links SSR to US Government foreign policy and national security objectives in a way that is unambiguous about its liberal agenda and self-interest;

> The 2006 U.S. National Security Strategy stated that the goal of U.S. statecraft is "to help create a world of democratic, well-governed states that can meet the needs of their citizens and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system." SSR can help achieve that objective, reinforce U.S. diplomatic, development, and defense priorities, and reduce long- term threats to U.S. security by helping to build stable, prosperous, and peaceful societies beyond our borders (USG, 2009:1).

From the outset of the 'War on Terrorism' in 2001, the nascent community of SSR adherents in the US struggled to gain traction. "Where the US interests are

greatest – Iraq and Afghanistan – there is no pretence of concern about an SSR agenda." (Ball, 2010:37). The 2009 *Security Sector Reform* guidance, which again mirrors the normative principles of the OECD, was part of an attempt by the US development community to regain ground in the international security assistance arena. The US is one of the largest donors of security assistance, and development assistance, in the world. Its policy attitude can make a great difference.

The UK produced its first comprehensive national SSR strategy in 2004, which has since been revised and updated multiple times based on practical experiences in post-conflict countries. The UK conceptualisation and approach to SSR differs little from the OECD approach, given that the UK played a dominant role in delivery of the *OECD DAC Handbook*.

> There has been a significant inter-play between the UK and the international community concerning the development of the SSR concept, the principles underpinning that concept, and the practices flowing from it. As a result, UK thinking and practice on SSR has helped to shape the emerging international consensus on SSR, and consequently reflects that consensus to a large degree (Ball, 2004:v).

There is very little space between the OECD DAC approach to SSR and the UK Government approach. From the outset that UK focused not only on developing its own SSR policy and strategy, but on convincing other donors to adopt the same, and encouraging recipient countries, particularly in Africa which is the biggest regional recipient of SSR assistance, to embrace the idea as well (Hendrickson, 2010:206). This strategic promotion was effective to the point that the UK SSR policy approach, as expressed through the OECD DAC, is the dominant, orthodox model accepted by the international donor community.

> ...there is growing acknowledgement that the DAC's governance principles for SSR can help frame the technical

> inputs provided by diplomatic and security policy communities. This approach provides a framework [for] greater coordination and integration of development, security and justice policies and practices. It aims to make the international community's support to SSR more effect [sic], its impact more sustainable, and its vision more in tune with people's needs (Ball, 2010:36).

The UK Government, in a similar vein to US Government statements, makes clear its position that addressing instability overseas is both "...morally right and in Britain's national interest. ... It is far more cost-effective to invest in conflict prevention and de-escalation than to pay the costs of responding to violent conflict." (UK Govt., 2011:4). In response to academic criticism from scholars like Duffield (2011) and Hills (2010) that development aid policies like SSR are conceived in the national self-interest of donors, it appears that donors might actually embrace the accusation.

SSR exists at the nexus of security and development. It is a holistic concept that refers to an integrated, multi-sector approach to change in order to facilitate an environment conducive to human security. SSR implementation is based on institutionalising fundamental principles of democratic good governance in terms of the regulatory environment, security management behaviour and technical processes, on the understanding that these principles are essential to long-term political, economic and social stability. The security sector is imagined in its widest scope to include state and non-state actors, at the operational and political levels. Capability development of uniformed armed forces – training and equipping – is not in itself considered an SSR activity by purists, unless coupled with an integrated governance reform package.

There are a multitude of actors engaged in security sector development activities. Bilateral government donors constitute the largest group, alongside multinational institutions like the UN, IMF and World Bank. There are also non-government and private sector donors, which tend to focus on discrete activities

such as human rights training or non-violent conflict reconciliation processes. These activities could be considered as contributing to SSR policy objectives, but few such organisations have the capability to lead an integrated, cross-cutting SSR programme. It is the major government donor and UN activities in Southern Sudan that are in focus in this thesis.

3.3) Efforts to Revise SSR

Although a relatively new approach, the prominent position of SSR in donor foreign-policy deliberation has bred rapid critique of both the principles and implementation practices. There are dissenting interpretations of the political motivation behind SSR policy, and of the utility of SSR as a conflict prevention mechanism. There are also conflicting views on the efficacy of the SSR implementation methodology. Contemporary efforts to revise SSR are informed by practical experiences, with Africa figuring prominently as a region with multiple SSR recipient countries.

Critique of the normative basis of SSR revolves around a central assertion that SSR is part of a neo-imperialist attempt by Western countries to reassert dominance over the Global South in the post-colonial and post-Cold War client-state world. In this critique SSR is;

> …a response to policy-relevant problems by a small group of rich industrialized democracies and intergovernmental organizations that wish to cultivate a pluralistic civil society while simultaneously reforming state structures and enforcing culturally specific values (Hills, 2010:177).

Mark Duffield (2007, 2008 & 2011), who has extensive experience in Africa as both an academic and diplomat, places opposition to SSR in a broad context. He argues that development as a whole is part of the liberal will to power and that "Since decolonization, the security of the West has been increasingly predicated on establishing an effective developmental trusteeship over the surplus

population of the developing world." (Duffield, 2007: Loc.613). Duffield claims that whilst it may appear that policies like SSR were borne of a consensus in the development aid community that 'security' needed to be 'developmentalised', in reality 'development aid' has emerged as a technology of security, initiated for the purposes of stabilising the liberal world order in the post-colonial era. Underdeveloped countries, with poor governance systems that cannot deliver adequate services, are prone to conflict that subsequently has destabilising effects on the international system such as illegal people movement and transnational crime. Duffield (2007: Loc.609-668) suggests that the liberal resolution to this problematic of international security, is 'development'. Beneath the veneer of humanitarian concern for the population in underdeveloped countries, lies the self-interest of the industrialised donor country to protect its own system by using development aid to contain the damaging spill-over effects. Thus 'development' is part of the international *security agenda*, rather than 'security' being part of the international *development agenda.*

Whether international development is predominantly a humanitarian, a political, or a security function divides scholars. Nicole Ball (2010) suggests it is not an either/or proposition. The international development aid agenda favours the broad definition of human security and seeks to engage on security sector governance as a means to enable sustainable development, and the foreign policy agenda favours trusteeship over the developing-world security sector as a means of protecting transnational stability. According to Ball, in the context of SSR, both of these outcomes can be approached simultaneously;

> Most governments, as a whole, want to achieve both outcomes – improved security and access to justice for ordinary people in partner countries *and* a reduction of threats to their citizens at home and abroad.... Security of donor countries and their closest allies also depends on key partner countries having a security sector that is accountable to civil authorities and ordinary people, that is structured in a way that is appropriate to meet all the

> security threats to people, communities and the country in which they live (Ball, 2010:39).

This duality underscores SSR as a function of foreign policy in both the development and security assistance portfolios. As is evident in US Government policy on SSR, there is no compunction to hide the idea that giving foreign aid can also benefit domestic security. From a policy perspective, the US Government, alongside other OECD donors, adopts a neo-liberal approach that aid programmes benefit both donor and recipient. Duffield's argument is that development aid programmes are more absolutists and aim only to contain conflict in recipient states, not actually resolve it, thus they may do more damage than 'good' for recipients. To effect real change in recipient countries, donors need a greater appreciation of local socio-political conditions, and to resist the urge to impose political conditionality on assistance programmes.

Alice Hills is a practitioner of police reform with extensive experience in, and multiple publications on, policing reform in Africa. Her views on SSR are somewhat representative of other practitioners who have implemented programmes in countries like Liberia, Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Hills claims that attempting to change the political dynamic that characterises authoritarian and illiberal states is unrealistic, and little more than a distraction (Hills, 2010:178). Most states in Africa, according to Hills, are authoritarian or illiberal democracies where a repressive and opaque regime maintains power through the coercive use of armed forces;

> ...the style and organization of Africa's police forces are fundamentally similar. African policing is a brutal business for both officers and the population, regardless of the country concerned, and... This situation owes much to the instrumentalization of corruption and patron-client relationships characterizing African societies (Hills, 2010:180).

This is the way of life in Africa, Hill maintains, and the normative aspects of an ethnocentric, Western SSR programme lack political and cultural resonance in this region, and attempts to interfere with the patron-client relationship by exposing corruption and disposing of 'undemocratic' practices destabilises the security environment. Rather than attempting wholescale political and social engineering, what is needed is rather tactical support to operational forces; "Recipients always prefer equipment and technical training to normative advice." (Hills, 2010:179). If police and military forces are given training and the appropriate equipment to manage and resolve conflict in a less brutal and abusive fashion, the physical security of citizens is improved. But if leaders are exposed or coerced into change, particularly through public remonstration, their position is weakened and they may react negatively and with greater force against dissenters. Hills represents a not uncommon argument that the political 'way of life' in many African countries, whilst undemocratic, often violent and distasteful to the Western world, may have an inherent stability of its own and international development programmes advocating significant political or bureaucratic change can actually be detrimental to human security. Hills' views are based on first-hand experience, but do appear to suffer the tendency towards reductionism found in many technical practitioners. Whilst the violent and brutal actions of some regimes draw the most public attention, there are leadership regimes in other countries, like Rwanda, Sierra Leone and South Africa, that welcomed change in a more liberal democratic format. To some extent, international intervention can also provide a welcome 'buffer zone' for leaders to escape 'blame' for changes that might negatively affect the elite. Hills nevertheless demonstrates a tension within SSR between its security nature, which might tolerate a distasteful regime in the interests of broader state stability, and its development nature, with its inherent democratic conditionality.

Hills, Duffield, and other critics like de Waal, who will feature more in subsequent chapters, highlight two of the key challenges of SSR implementation that are contained in current efforts to revise the policy framework; the normative

political prescriptions may not always resonate with recipient states, and the effects of imposing standardised 'good governance' practices may in fact be destabilising in themselves. In the context of this criticism, SSR as currently conceived should be abandoned in favour of a different construct, perhaps one that originates with recipient countries rather than donors, and doesn't include prescribed governance structures.

For those who accept the current SSR political principles, there are still many implementation challenges to be addressed. Despite donor government policy consensus on SSR principles and strategic aims, they struggle to actualise the security-development relationship. Donor coordination, intervention timing and local ownership are prominent issues in the policy-practice gap.

For SSR to be implemented effectively, according to the OECD, it requires not only an integrated approach to the security sector in the recipient country, but a whole-of-government approach on the part of the donor. Putting this into practice is not without difficulty as the security and development communities do not always sit easily with each other.

> Development donors in general remain reticent about supporting reforms in the military sector. Even for the original champion of SSR, the UK, ...the fit is not comfortable and there are unresolved issues about the degree to which DFID should be engaged in the security arena. There are even DFID officials who are uncomfortable engaging with the police [let alone the military] (Ball, 2010:38).

In particular, a focus on 'hard security' issues like counterterrorism alienates the development community. For their part, security actors can also be reticent about engaging with the development community; the business of war, weapons and killing should not be left to the uninitiated. The UK's *Africa Peace and Security Network* brings together multiple Government agencies, as well as academics, civil society organisations and private industry actors, to deliberate on security

assistance and conflict reduction programmes, but in practice the inability to effectively coordinate programme implementation has been highlighted in multiple reviews (Bakrania, 2014:2). The programme in Southern Sudan experienced problems in the coordination area, which are explored further in the next chapter.

There is a debate amongst SSR policy revisionists regarding the best time to launch security-sector intervention. Some scholars argue that SSR programmes should not start until political conflict has been fully resolved. Luc van de Goor and Erwin van Veer (2010) say SSR is simply not feasible in post-conflict settings where local government structures may be 'in shambles' and political leaders too inexperienced to articulate their own national security vision. Efforts to reform security sector governance in this environment are wasted until the government in question is stable and has the capacity to engage in the programme. Without a stable, confident local government, SSR can end up being perceived as, if not actually is, a tool of external security interests (van de Goor & van Veer, 2010, Loc.1557). "Moreover, in view of the frequency with which countries relapse into conflict, the chances of SSR success are not great." (van de Goor & van Veer, 2010, Loc.1557). Others argue that this is exactly the reason why SSR is crucial in post-conflict environments – because SSR programmes are aimed at interrupting the statistically high chance of relapse. "Which comes first: conflict resolution or SSR? SSR is a mechanism for conflict resolution, which complicates the issue. Thus, SSR should not wait for conflicts to be settled." (Hutchful, 2007:5). Furthermore, the security sector is usually intertwined with the political structure in a post-conflict country and stability in the latter is co-dependent with stability in the former. Well-informed observers of South Sudan, like Hilde Johnson (2016), who signed the CPA as a witness in her capacity as Minister for International Development for the Royal Norwegian Government, argue that strategic SSR intervention came too late in Southern Sudan. Although there were provisions for the future of the SPLA and Other Armed Groups (OAGs) in the CPA, it is apparent that few SSR experts had a voice in negotiations. After demanding certain actions relating to

SPLA reform be included in the CPA, the international community then waited several years before engaging in direct support to those reform efforts, leaving an ill-equipped SPLA to deal with contradictory obligations on its own. Johnson regards the 2013 armed uprising in South Sudan as partially a result of failure to engage in SSR early enough.

The concept of 'local ownership' of an SSR programme raises significant issues. On the one hand, Africa scholars like England & Boucher (2009), (Gebretensae, 2009), Mobekk (2010) and Ogwu (2011), argue that reforms or strategies that are not 'owned' - developed and/or principally managed - by local participants often prove unsustainable and ineffectual. Fostering local ownership is also recognised in the *OECD DAC Handbook* as instrumental to programme effectiveness. No carefully crafted regulation or management system will survive without local champions. On the other hand, the donor governments that provide funding are accountable to their own democratic constituencies for their spending. Donors argue that recipients of the most significant SSR programmes frequently have little experience with democratic principles of security management and require substantial guidance (UK Govt, 2011). This is particularly the case when assets are transferred and donors are required to ensure they are used and managed in accordance with their own accountability requirements. In countries like Southern Sudan, where there is substantial government corruption and a history of human rights abuses by security forces, donors often feel they cannot afford to loosen the reins in terms of resource management or oversight (TI, 2016). The African Union has been particularly vocal on the point of SSR programme ownership. Whilst recognising that international donors bring the money, that money is ultimately wasted if it is not put to use on programmes that resonate with the local social and political culture. There is a balance to be struck between local and international objectives that has not yet been adequately realised; "There is consensus that **local ownership** is a key political challenge for donors, but a lack of clarity on how donors can support true local ownership." (Bakrania, 2014:2).

The following chapters of this thesis aim to contribute to the debate on how SSR policy could be revised, both in political principle and technical implementation, by identifying salient experiences with the implementation of defence sector reform in Southern Sudan.

CHAPTER 4

THE SPLA IN CONTEXT

An understanding of the historical and cultural experiences of the SPLA and its leaders is crucial to analysis of how the military later interacted with the international donor community on SSR. This chapter explores the evolution of the SPLA from its predecessor insurgency groups in Southern Sudan, through to the semi-autonomous sub-national military force it became once the implementation period of the *Comprehensive Peace Agreement* began in 2005. A political, economic and socio-cultural context analysis occurs at the first stage of SSR planning, and lack of attention to this exercise is cited by many scholars as one of the critical points of failure in SSR implementation (Copeland 2015, and Hills, 2010). Starting out as a rebel guerrilla force fighting an oppressive central leadership, the SPLA was a factional force of diverse ethnic groups with distinct territorial interests and competing political objectives. Despite optimistic rebranding in the international narrative as a unified, liberating force that fought for the freedom of one of the world's most conflicted regions, the SPLA also has a complex history of shifting allegiances, dictatorial leaders and brutal methods that often supplanted traditional political and justice systems. This internal cultural history, along with the changing geopolitical landscape and a revolving door of international partners throughout more than 50 years of conflict, impacted SPLA attitudes towards SSR efforts in later years.

The conflict resolution process in Sudan, ultimately leading to the CPA in 2005, provided the SPLA with an internationally-approved mandate for change. However, the guidance was not as comprehensive as advertised and produced multiple conflicting obligations. There is a sense that the international community, largely responsible for the drafting of the CPA, inserted its own preferred objectives in the form of security sector change-initiatives, but not in a particularly well-coordinated manner and lacking an understanding of the

practical consequences of decisions. The SPLA was not equipped to deal with these competing claims and stumbled badly in its early attempts at reform.

4.1) Sociological Background

Present day Sudan is an Arab republic in the Nile Valley of North Africa, sharing international borders with Chad, the Central African Republic (CAR), Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Libya and - since July 2011 - South Sudan, which now also shares borders with the CAR and Ethiopia, as well as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Kenya and Uganda. Originally settled by Neolithic agriculturalists, the area has been successively conquered and ruled by Nubians, Assyrians, Byzantines, Egyptians, Ottomans and eventually the British (through the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium) (Collins, 2008:4-9). The Byzantines introduced Christianity to the area during their 6th century C.E. rule, but the religion prevailed only briefly. Islam became progressively more influential over the next ten centuries through successive Arab and Ottoman empires. In the southern regions of Sudan, ethnic African resistance to this cultural and religious penetration sowed the seeds of a conflict that would grow hardily into the future (Johnson, 2007: xvi).

By the start of the 20th century, the country defined as Sudan by its colonial borders had two meta-ethnicities, Muslim Arab, roughly corresponding with the northern half of the country, and Pluralist/Christian African, in the southern half. These broad distinctions, of course, have multiple gradients within them. Within the 'African' construct are more than 60 distinct ethnic groups, which can be broken down further into almost 500 tribes, clans and sub-clans (Lesch, 1998:16-17). Nonetheless, there existed a perception of a natural, implacable ethno-linguistic divide between the northern and southern populations of Sudan, and the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium administered the country as if it were two distinct territories. The southern states were believed to lack viable natural resources thus the colonial power invested little in the way of civic infrastructure or economic development. The colonial attitude

towards those south of the ethno-linguistic divide appears to be as much one of neglect as exploitation (Johnson, 2008:12).

By the time of independence from colonial administration in 1956, the northern and southern populations had few commonalities on which to build a healthy future relationship. The situation owed much to colonial practice, however "It is not necessarily the case that Northerners and Southerners would have developed a common national understanding had the policy of administrative segregation never been imposed, but the gulf of misunderstanding which separated North and South was all the greater as a result of that segregation." (Johnson, 2007:25).

The first post-colonial administration in Khartoum, under Ismail al Azhari's National Unionist Party, was intent on Arabising and Islamising the southern population, including through introduction of the universal application of Shari'ah law (Johnson, 2007:27). This theme ran through successive Sudanese political regimes, with greater or lesser degrees of aggression, almost without interruption until 2005. Economic and social policies introduced by the Khartoum administration further increased the Southern Sudanese sense of subjugation; education was limited to Arabic speakers and access to public sector jobs required conversion to Islam. Whilst the Sudanese resource economy was booming in the 1960s, the people of the southern regions felt few of its benefits (Collins, 2008:77). Disenfranchisement and denial of access to political institutions and economic resources were all correlated with Southern Sudanese communal identity in the post-colonial period (Lesch, 1998: pt.1). In fact, the multitude of different ethnic groups that comprised the 'African' peoples of Sudan may have had little inclination to form a common identity if not for the belief that an 'otherness' had been imposed upon them;

> It was, in the end, the opposition and struggle against the '*jallaba'*[4] in Khartoum that fueled some kind of common purpose and corresponding identity between the myriad different peoples in what is now the Republic of South Sudan. Theirs is an identity born of the process of war and resistance to being rolled into a narrowly defined Sudanese unity state as 'Arab', with a dominant Muslim character (Arnold & Le Riche, 2012:3).

4.2) SPLA Evolution

The first armed uprising of Southern Sudanese against the regime in Khartoum occurred shortly before Sudanese independence, in 1955, in a town called Torit. Southern soldiers of the Equatorial Corps of the Sudan Defence Force[5] mutinied against their commanding officers, who were largely drawn from the northern Arab tribes (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:11). The mutineers were quickly suppressed with assistance from the Imperial regime in Ethiopia, under Emperor Haile Selassie, who was highly sympathetic to the regime in Khartoum and opposed the fragmentation of any national territory on principle – likely thinking of his own problems with growing secessionism in the Eritrean and the Tigrayan territories (Yihun, 2013:36).

More than five years after the Torit mutiny, the real nucleus of Southern Sudanese rebellion arose in the shape of the Sudan African Nationalist Union (colloquially known by the name *Ananya*, meaning snake venom). The *Ananya* force did not have a clear ideology at the time of formation, only a loose secessionist ideal based on antipathy towards Khartoum (Johnson, 2007:28-30). It was not a sophisticated message, but it resonated with the Southern community and over the next 9 years the *Ananya* guerilla force grew in strength and capability (Johnson, 2007:34).

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[4] Historically, a northern Sudanese merchant class that made their fortunes on the slave trade. The term came to be used in the south as a common derogatory reference to all Northerners. See http://www.sudanupdate.org/REPORTS/Slavery/slavery%20report/s6.htm

[5] A unit of the British Colonial Army

The *Ananya* rebels did not fight their war alone. Israel and Cuba both provided a regular supply of weapons and basic training (Johnson, 2007:36). By this time, the Imperial regime in Ethiopia was combatting the Eritrean Liberation Front, which Khartoum had decided to support with weaponry and access to safe-havens, leading Addis Ababa to swap allegiances and start supplying weaponry, training and territorial access to Southern Sudanese rebels (Yihun, 2013:37). Already the Southern Sudanese were seeing the vagaries of international assistance and the impact of geopolitics on their struggle.

The *Ananya*-led conflict ended with the *Addis Ababa Agreement* in 1972. Ten years of relative peace ensued, but it was a negative peace; absent of major violent conflict, but also absent of any social, political or economic initiatives that would contribute to long-term stability and prosperity for the Southern Sudanese. Eventually, enough of the key provisions of the *Addis Ababa Agreement* had been undermined or abrogated that the entire *Agreement* collapsed (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:16).

In 1983, a small group of Southern officers and soldiers of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) mutinied under the banner of *Ananya II* (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:61). Amongst this group was Colonel John Garang, a military officer, academic and farm owner with a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Iowa State University, who would later sign the CPA and become the first President of the semi-autonomous region of Southern Sudan in 2005 (Madut-Arop, 2006:43). The rebellion quickly echoed around Southern units, including in Malakal where Captain Salva Kiir Mayardit – the future first President of the independent Republic of South Sudan - abandoned his post as a military intelligence officer to join *Ananya II* (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:61). The mutineers were eventually out-gunned by the SAF, but were able to retreat largely intact into Ethiopia where they established a new rebel force, the Sudan People's Liberation Army and Movement (SPLA/M), with John Garang at the helm (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:62).

Unlike its *Ananya* predecessors, the SPLA/M declared a clear political mission; revolution. Not secession and independence for Southern Sudan, but a revolution to transform the political identity of the whole of Sudan. Garang provided a vision of a country that would be pluralistic, inclusive and universally reap the benefits of its resources (Madut-Arop, 2006:70). Amongst Southerners, including other senior rebel army officers, this was a controversial position to take. Many were convinced that divisions ran too deep and political and social reconciliation with the Arab North was impossible (Madut-Arop, 2006:75). But Garang was firmly opposed to secession and was prepared to oppose it violently, even if that meant fighting against other Southern groups (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:63).

Tensions regularly arose within the SPLA/M leadership group, particularly along ethnic lines, which Garang typically dealt with in one of two ways; either with the establishment of a committee, which he dominated, to give the appearance of consensus decision-making, or with a quick act of aggression against the dissenter (Madut-Arop, 2006:80-83). Garang was not above having senior leaders arrested, killed or otherwise violently expelled from the group (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:76). As an individual, Garang held absolute command over the SPLA/M, its fighting cadre as well as its political message. He was known as a brilliant orator, in a country of great orators (Kiir, 2006:1). There is virtually no written tradition in Southern Sudan and functional literacy rates have always been low, but oral traditions are strong and those who can deliver a powerful speech gain great influence (About, 2017 and CIA, 2017). Charismatic power trumps legal-rational power in this kind of environment, a structure not always understood by international SSR planners.

The most pivotal moments in the SPLA/M's early trajectory occurred in 1991. Firstly, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) took power in Addis Ababa and ejected the SPLA/M from its support bases in Ethiopia. This caused significant material damage and denied the SPLA/M the safe-havens it relied

upon (Madut-Arop, 2006:259). This weakening of the SPLA/M led to the second seminal point, a significant leadership challenge to Garang that played out along ethnic tribal lines. In August, a trio of senior commanders led by Dr. Riek Machar, the future Vice President of South Sudan, released a declaration calling Garang a megalomaniac and the Dinka tribal domination of the SPLA/M detrimental to the interests of the South as a whole. They announced their take-over of the SPLA/M and claimed the old doctrine of revolution was not viable. Under their leadership, efforts would be redirected towards total national independence for the South (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:77-82). The leadership coup failed to unseat Garang, but succeeded in creating a violent structural split in the SPLA/M.

By the 1990s, the conflict in Sudan had created hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) (UNICEF, 2003). The humanitarian needs were enormous, but the international aid community had to negotiate with different SPLA/M factions for access, which then siphoned food aid to support combatants (Riehl, 2001:7-8). "The manipulation of aid provision, especially the destructive targeting of it [to undermine opposition factions], was prominent throughout the 1990s." (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:79). Material support to your constituency is a feature of power in Sudan. Whenever Garang found himself out-resourced by aid agencies he would claim – justifiably in the local political context – that the international community was competing with him to govern and control the people (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:84).

The split in the SPLA/M played neatly into Khartoum's divide and conquer strategy. The 1990s and early 2000s saw brutal combat between SPLA/M factions, and mutual side-swapping by leaders and soldiers alike as they vacillated between different political messages, unity or independence. Both Garang and Machar at times 'collaborated' with Khartoum and the SAF, if it suited their purposes. A multitude of Other Armed Groups (OAGs) formed and reformed throughout the South, but loyalties and allegiances were usually tied to self-

interest and could easily be bought (Madut-Arop, 2006:298-300). Khartoum learned that it could buy Southern proxies to fight its battles.

The end of the Cold War prompted Garang to change his ideological message and organisational structure. The language of democracy and capitalism entered the discourse of Southern politics, displacing the old socialist rhetoric influenced by Ethiopia and Cuba. At the 1994 SPLA/M National Convention, delegates agreed that the military and the political sides of the rebellion should be separated into two distinct organisations, although Garang would still command both the Army and the Movement (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:95). This was the starting point when the Southern Sudanese began to sow the seeds of reform in their own security sector. Although, over a decade later the forward slash still appeared in the SPLA/M title - sometimes recorded as SPLM/A – leading many to believe the nominal separation was done only for appearances (de Waal: Loc.2815).

In 1997, Khartoum moved to consolidate their Southern proxy forces under one leadership, Machar's, forming the South Sudan Defence Force (SSDF). (Arnold and LeRiche, 2012:98). In the meantime, Garang's SPLA embarked on a mission to garner support from Yoweri Museveni in Uganda, which afforded them the resources to continue the struggle. The US and Israel also began channeling weapons to the SPLA through Uganda and Ethiopia around this time (Turse, 2016:33). Over the next five years, the SPLA forces gained control over significant territory in the southern regions and Garang convinced numerous disillusioned SSDF leaders to rejoin the SPLA – eventually including Machar himself. The SPLA had regained the initiative, but was still stymied by Khartoum and the SAF, which had benefitted from an influx of modern weapons and equipment as a result of booming oil sales (Madut-Arop, 2006:397). It was the military stalemate that would eventually lead both sides to the negotiating table in 2005, more so than the pervasive humanitarian crisis or political demands from the international community.

The history of the SPLA is of course much more complex than can be given justice here. The evolution of this military engaged internal and external actors who changed goals and targets, and sides, with alarming frequency over the course of 56 years. But there are repeated patterns that provide insight into the character of the organisation at the time of formal engagement on SSR with the international development aid community in 2005: Its leadership structure was based on charismatic power; its strategic mission was unresolved; its decision-making processes were underscored by memories of betrayal; its identity was formed through 'otherness'; it was vulnerable to corruption; it had a sketchy relationship with its constituent public, and; it had a healthy skepticism of foreigner partners. Critically, it had no tradition of responsiveness to civil oversight and few internal management systems that might equate with 'good governance'. Operational capability did not present much better: much of the SPLA cadre started as child soldiers with no formal education; soldiers were not garrisoned as few permanent bases existed; weapons were black-market or captured and; logistic support relied heavily on looting and pillaging (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012, Madut-Arop, 2006, and Johnson, 2007).

On the positive side, the SPLA of 2005 demonstrated a desire for reform. The leadership had nominally separated the military and political structures and they understood the need to recalibrate roles and responsibilities. The SPLA was also a disciplined force, to the extent that soldiers responded reliably to a chain of command. Soldiers received basic military training in Ethiopia and some officers attended staff college (military leadership education) in Ethiopia and/or Cuba. Morale was at a high point due to the ceasefire negotiations and the possibility of a final solution to the struggle with the North (Madut-Arop, 2006). Importantly, mixed relationships with the international community in the past did not forestall willingness to engage with foreigners in the future.

4.3) Traditional Justice

The extensive wars in Sudan eroded, but did not entirely eliminate, community level security structures and traditional justice mechanisms. Traditional systems of arbitration and reconciliation rely primarily on tribal chiefs, elder members of the community, or spiritual leaders, to adjudicate disputes and issue penalties in accordance with customary law (USIP, 2010:23). Some penalties are culturally-specific to a particular tribal group, but there are other long-established processes for negotiated settlement of disputes between tribal groups (USIP, 2010:5). In Southern Sudan throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, traditional laws and community conflict resolution mechanisms were severely undermined by having to contend with multiple centres of introduced authority, which changed frequently depending on which armed group happened to control a territory at any given time. Militant groups often co-opted local security arrangements, and introduced inter-communal conflict where it may not have previously existed, pitting villages against each other if they happened to be geographically significant to the strategic context. For the most part, security and justice systems in Southern Sudan by 2005 were local, inconsistent and heavily militarised (USIP, 2010:39-44).

Traditional systems of non-violent conflict resolution were never completely abandoned. The Rift Valley Institute identifies more than 50 people-to-people peace processes, many funded by large international donors like the US, UK and Norway, throughout the second civil war in the 1980s and 1990s (Bradbury et. al., 2010:7). These processes focused on direct interaction between aggrieved parties, individuals or communities, and resulted in penalties or reparations based on localised circumstances. Although not always empirical, and sometimes containing penalties that international donors might find distasteful such as corporeal punishment, customary law processes form part of the framework of the security system in Southern Sudan (USIP, 2010:38). Some observers complain that the SSR programme in Southern Sudan was flawed in the initial

design because institutional capacity building was focused at the national level, with minimal attention devoted to customary law and traditional justice mechanisms (Copeland, 2015:4).

4.4) The Comprehensive Peace Agreement

In 1993, the relatively obscure Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), made up of a consortium of East African countries, began mediating between warring factions in Sudan. In 1994, they achieved SPLA/M agreement to a referendum on self-determination, and by 1997 Khartoum also agreed. The next five years saw much dispute over the timing, popular participation and location of the referendum. There was also renewed violent conflict in multiple regions and backtracking on previous agreements by both sides (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:107-108). By the start of the new century, the war in Sudan was again at a stalemate, "...neither Khartoum nor the SPLA/M was able to win militarily." (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:105). Khartoum's international reputation had deteriorated due to the war with the SPLA, conflict in Darfur, and widespread political repression, as well as its role as host to both Osama bin Ladin and Carlos the Jackal (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012:106). Sudan's internal conflicts were disrupting oil production, at the same time as the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were negatively affecting global oil prices (Johnson, 2016: Loc. 384-397). John Garang was not in a particularly strong position either - fighting battles on too many fronts had depleted his resources - and was thus finally convinced to compromise on his dogmatic position regarding a unified Sudan and allow a referendum (Arnold & LeRiche, 2012: 106).

The world changed whilst Sudan was at war with itself. Sudan became a country-of-interest in the Global War on Terror and its internal stability was a growing concern for the international community (Johnson, 2016: Loc.397). In 2002, the United Nations and other international powers – notably Norway, the UK and the USA – joined East Africa's IGAD mediation process. Between 2002 and 2005 IGAD

and partners negotiated a series of 'Cessation of Hostilities' Agreements, each focused on discrete areas of inter-communal violence (Madut-Arop, 2006:400-410). There is little consistency across these Agreements, as each was built in a very different context, but they were eventually consolidated to form the foundation of the 2005 *Comprehensive Peace Agreement* between the *Government of the Republic of Sudan*, as represented by Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, and the *Sudan People's Liberation Movement / Sudan People's Liberation Army*, represented by John Garang de Mabior, signed on 9 January 2005.

The CPA legitimised a semi-autonomous legislature and bureaucracy in Southern Sudan, giving Southerners unprecedented power to manage their own political affairs. Khartoum was given six years to prove that it would no longer discriminate against or neglect the South. At the end of this six-year interim period, Southerners would vote in a referendum to decide if they wanted to remain part of a unified Sudan, or become an independent republic (CPA, 2005). During the interim period, John Garang would serve as Vice President of Sudan and simultaneously as President of the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS). The SPLM (separated from the SPLA in name, if not actuality) would form the semi-autonomous government until legislative assembly elections could be held. The CPA focused largely on political and economic issues and provided little in the way of social reconciliation measures. For Southerners, the CPA was very much John Garang's Agreement and, as the leader with the most charismatic power, he would be the driving force behind it. The CPA came into effect and John Garang was sworn in as Vice President of Sudan on 9 July 2005. Three weeks later he was killed in a helicopter crash.

Everything about the CPA interim period changed with the death of John Garang. He was replaced in the leadership position by his former deputy Salva Kiir who, although he publically stuck to the message of unity, was personally more ambivalent. Had Garang lived he may have taken his platform to the national level and pushed President Bashir to honour his commitments to make unity attractive

to Southerners through political reform and development activity. As it was, Kiir focused on consolidating his own tenuous position as leader. In Khartoum, the commitments made in the CPA to improve the distribution of economic and developmental resources were largely left to flounder.

4.5) The Mandate for SSR

After the CPA was signed, the international community began to engage directly with nascent government administrative bodies in the Southern capital, Juba, although diplomatic business still had to be conducted through, or with the consent of, national authorities in Khartoum. Khartoum was content to allow donor governments to initiate development assistance programmes directly with the GOSS, as long as those efforts conformed to CPA principal goals in support of unity (CPA, 2005:2). By identifying the SPLA as one of the two National Armed Forces of Sudan (alongside the SAF) the CPA provided legitimacy for the international community to engage directly with the SPLA on capacity-building activities.

> **CPA Annexure I. Permanent Ceasefire and Security Arrangements Implementation Modalities and Appendices. Article 16.3.** The two Armed Forces and the JIUs [*Joint Integrated Units*] shall be regular, professional, and non-partisan armed forces. They shall respect the rule of law and civilian government, democracy, basic human rights, and the will of the people.

This statement provided the SPLA with a mandate for reform based on internationally accepted principles of good governance in the context of security sector management. However, three other articles of significance to the SPLA were ill-formed and would later complicate SSR implementation:

> **CPA Chapter VI. Security Arrangements.**
>
> **Article 1.d.** The National Armed Forces shall have no internal law and order mandate except in constitutionally specified emergencies.
>
> **Article 4.b.V.** They shall be involved in the reconstruction of the country.
>
> **Article 7.b.** The parties agree that those mentioned in 7(a) [*author's note: article 7(a) refers to 'Other Armed Groups' – the various Southern militias*] who have the desire and qualify shall be incorporated into the organized forces of either Party (Army, Police, Prisons, Wildlife).

Article 1.d. above demands that the SPLA relinquish any role in domestic law enforcement or adjudication of domestic disputes. This is not an unreasonable demand for a democratic system. However, at the time the SPLA was heavily entwined in the domestic law and order system and could not be quickly extracted. The police and judiciary were poorly staffed and resourced and were incapable of maintaining law and order. A decision was made to decommission SPLA officers and soldiers and transfer them at rank into the Police, Prisons and Wildlife Protection services, but the process ensured that those transferred were the underperformers - the SPLA wanted to keep the strongest for themselves (USIP, 2010:47). Released from the scrutiny of the more disciplined SPLA, the incompetent and corrupt thrived in the Police Service and it quickly became known as a major source of threat to people's security (USIP, 2010:47). To be fair, there were not many alternative options to stocking the nascent services with former SPLA or OAGs, but the process lacked adequate oversight and was an initial detriment to human security.

Article 4.b.v. effectively gave the military a mandate to engage in business development. It is not unusual for a professional military in a democratic system to assist in reconstruction activities, particularly after a natural disaster when civic resources are stretched. However, in Southern Sudan, citing CPA authority,

the SPLA became involved in everything from road construction (for which they formed companies using military assets and rented equipment to donors funding infrastructure works) and farming to running hotels, restaurants, casinos and brothels (GOSS, 2013 and Veldwijk & Groenendijk, 2011:87-88). The SPLA also controlled gold mining concessions in the west of the country (GOSS, 2013). The military used its assets for multiple profit-making activities, despite the potential negative ramifications for private industry development. This provision also allowed the SPLA to generate revenue independent of the Government budget, which can be a dangerous thing in an unstable political environment, as independent revenue allows a military to make operational decisions outside of Government oversight and control.

Article 7.b. opened the ranks of the SPLA to all other Southern armed groups, including the SSDF conglomerate created by Khartoum. The aim of this provision was for the Government to consolidate, and thus get control over, all armed actors in the environment and establish its unique sovereignty over the legitimate use of violence, in accordance with Weberian tradition. But this Article is largely to blame for the burgeoning in size of the SPLA from an estimated 50,000 soldiers at the start of the CPA interim period to over 200,000 on the payroll by the time of independence, with consequent inflation of the salary and equipment budget (Snowden, 2012:20). As a peace agreement, the CPA is notable for generating a large increase in the size of the army, rather than a reduction, thus doing little to demilitarise the environment.

The CPA had little specific guidance for reform of the SPLA and left much room for interpretation and extrapolation. But it did invite assistance from the international community to supplement the SPLA's own plans for reform. The UK, UN, USA and Norway, amongst others, were signatory witnesses to the CPA and mandated to oversee implementation (CPA, 2005). All were reluctant, in the early days, to engage the SPLA on reform directly (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4694). It should be emphasised that the SPLA leadership was not entirely ignorant of

international principles of security sector management and military organisation in a democratic system. Many of the existing senior cadre had tertiary education qualifications and exposure to Western traditions. At the commencement of the CPA implementation period, the SPLA was not resistant to change and welcomed international assistance, on the provision that such assistance be adapted to the local context and conditions (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4787).

CHAPTER 5

SSR PROGRAMMING IN SOUTHERN/SOUTH SUDAN

This chapter analyses international SSR implementation activities in Southern/South Sudan, particularly focused on the Defence sector, in order to determine how the practical experience in this country is relevant to contemporary efforts to revise the dominant, international framework of SSR. The United Kingdom's SSR programme is the foremost target of this analysis, as it most closely conforms to the OECD framework in terms of policy and practical approach. The UK Government worked closely with the Government of Sudan and the SPLA/M throughout ceasefire negotiations in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and committed to an SSR programme in Southern Sudan during the interim CPA period between 2005 and 2011. This commitment continued up until the onset of armed conflict in the independent Republic of South Sudan in 2013.

The armed conflict between the northern and southern regions of Sudan attracted significant international attention, not least because of the 'Lost Boys' crisis in the late 1980s, when approximately 20,000 young children were forced to walk over 1000 miles of bushland to seek refuge from the fighting, almost half of them dying along the way (IRC, 2014:1). Humanitarian tragedy, post-colonial guilt, liberal world protectionism, counter-terrorism strategy; each in part motivated international engagement in Sudan's affairs. Alongside the UK, the UN and US were the primary donors in the SSR arena. A European consortium also funded discrete security-related projects through a Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) administered by the Government of Southern Sudan (CPA, 2005:61-62). Key aspects of these countries' contributions are analysed here, in particular where certain implementation challenges arose that impact revisionist thinking on SSR. However, the main focus of this thesis is on the UK's SSR programme.

The dominant approach to implementing an SSR programme, defined in the 2007 *OECD DAC Handbook*, emphasises donor coordination, local ownership of the process, contextual and needs-based programme design, adequate resourcing and integrated planning and delivery across the security and justice sectors. It is a political process balanced with technical assistance. An effective SSR programme is also a long-term exercise that lends itself to qualitative rather than quantitative measurement. It is against these criteria that SSR in Southern/South Sudan will be assessed in this chapter. I argue that, whilst the UK programme approached SSR implementation largely in accordance with the orthodox framework, there are critical lessons to be learned from the practical experience that impact future thinking on SSR.

5.1) Domestic Security Reform Initiatives

Reform of the security sector in Southern Sudan did not begin within the context of a structured, international SSR framework. It began with action on the part of Southern Sudanese authorities themselves. Up until the late 1990s, the whole of Southern Sudan appeared to be little more than a 'security situation' in itself; a ranging conflict that divided the populace into either armed actor or victim of violence, with political and military authority conflated (Johnson, 2016: Loc.605). The geopolitical shift that occurred with the end of the Cold War was reflected in changes in Southern Sudanese structural politics. Along with the nominal separation of the military from the political movement, a 1997 SPLA publication of job descriptions and organisational charts shows that John Garang was organising the SPLA into a conventional army structure of divisions, brigades and battalions (Rands, 2010:28). Although Garang still commanded both the SPLM and SPLA, they were moving from guerrilla revolutionaries into the foundations of a government and its standing army. However, a number of prominent policy decisions in the security sector during the early years of the CPA interim period were ill-formed and ultimately bore negative consequences for stability.

A professional, volunteer army (as opposed to conscripted), needs to recruit and retain soldiers through positive incentives. Salary is usually a more reliable incentive than ideology and generates more personal commitment than mandatory service. Paying existing soldiers in a conflict environment like Southern Sudan also reduces their incentive to loot and pillage. The SPLA began dispensing salaries for the first time in 2005. However, what could have been an act of democratic and economic normalisation turned into a desire to self-reward for decades of service in the liberation struggle. The starting salary for a soldier was set more than twice as high as in comparable economies in the region (funded through newly acquired access to oil-export revenues) (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4630). The lack of industry or international investment in Southern Sudan subsequently made the SPLA one of the most attractive employers in the country (Stone, 2011:40). In an environment where the bearing of arms already conferred political and social prestige, economic prestige was added – after the peace settlement.

John Garang signed the CPA on behalf of the SPLM and SPLA. The myriad of other Southern militia groups, many of whom had been combat rivals of the SPLA, were not represented and thus not conferred any formal status. After a disastrous attempt to disarm these groups through force, in January 2006 Salva Kiir signed the *Juba Declaration* stipulating that the SSDF – the largest conglomerate of Khartoum-funded Southern militias – be integrated into the SPLA (de Waal, 2015: Loc.2554). This integration was essentially an act of purchasing peace, "In effect...the SPLA absorbed many of its former enemies and rivals in order to create greater stability in the South." (Rands, 2010:10). But it came at a high cost, adding an estimated 50,000[6] soldiers to the payroll – doubling the size of the force at the time – and creating a crisis in command and control.

[6] There is considerable doubt as to whether all of these people were actually militia fighters. Many may have been regular citizens whose names were added to the integration list in order to inflate the salary budget allocated to ex-SSDF commanders. See Johnson, 2016: Loc. 4656.

The militia absorption process – colloquially referred to as 'accommodation' or the 'big tent' approach – was enthusiastically adopted and expanded by President Kiir as a political reconciliation mechanism and an attempt to ensure state monopoly over the means of armed violence. But the incentives were purely monetary, there was no adjudication of prior grievances and no state-sponsored process of reconciliation through dialogue and social compensation, important aspects of the Southern Sudanese traditional justice system (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4656). The military was left alone to address inter-communal grievances that largely fell along tribal lines. "The SPLA was given the unmilitary task of providing a framework for national identity and national reconciliation." (Thomas, 2015:164). For a military, one of the best ways to bond soldiers together is through joint training and operations. Geography and resources mitigated against the SPLA being able to achieve this. Discriminatory pay policies and the inability to equitably reconcile rank and promotional systems further incited poor morale (Rands, 2010:20). Leaders did not trust each other. The SPLA was left militarily weakened, with a force divided into tribal formations that responded to their own chosen commanding officer rather than a central, unified command structure (de Waal, 2015: Loc.2596).

> The SPLA was less effective as a national army than it had been as a guerrilla or liberation force...deterioration occurred primarily in 2006-7, when thousands of militia forces came in and efforts to integrate and train them properly failed (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4791).

The inability to reconcile ethnic divisions within the military structure, including at the highest levels, and create a politically impartial armed force would have devastating consequences when the political leadership of the country later fractured. The Presidential and Vice Presidential Guard forces, which consisted of hand-picked tribal affiliates of each party, would be at the nucleus of the outbreak of violence in 2013 (Johnson, 2016:4672). Another misstep was revealed regarding the decision to use the nascent Police service as a dumping ground for poorly performing SPLA soldiers. When the fight initiated by the

Presidential Guard forces turned into inter-tribal massacres on the streets of Juba, the Police were wholly incompetent to intervene.

Professionalisation in terms of technical capacity and leadership capability was a priority for the new SPLA in 2005. But institutional limitations affected the entire GOSS in the early days and "This overall weakness affects the security sector as well. There is no accumulated knowledge and experience to organize and lead the security sector. This problem is compounded by the lack of skilled and educated man power." (Gebretensae, 2009:3). SPLA efforts were further undermined by "...insufficient resources, underdeveloped administrative processes, a lack of understanding of conventional military theories... and limited training and discipline." (Rands, 2010:13). What they also lacked was the strategic framework necessary to understand not just what reforms were needed, but why, and how reforms fit into military doctrine. Without an overarching guidance strategy, capability development was unbalanced and effectiveness of the military undermined (Snowden, 2012:7). The SPLA did not have the experience to design such a strategy and thus;

> Not until the release of the SPLA White Paper on Defence in 2008 and the subsequent passing of the SPLA Act 2009 were mission, roles, functions, and a basic structure (ground, air, riverine, and reserve forces) clearly stated.... Both of these publications were produced with international assistance, sponsored by DFID, and guided by the DFID peace and security advisor and a team from the Ethiopian think-tank Centre for Policy Research and Dialogue (Rands, 2010:29).

Strategic guidance for the military did not appear until 3-4 years after the CPA was signed. Had it appeared and been implemented earlier, there may have been more time for the SPLA to consolidate its multi-ethnic force structure, implement disciplined training regimes, and exercise more effective command and control over the force before post-independence problems arose.

Throughout the CPA interim period, the SPLA was still deployed along the borders with Uganda and the Congo, fighting against incursions from the Lord's Resistance Army (Snowden, 2012:9-10). They were also dealing with internal armed skirmishes in the regions, and focused on a potential restart to the war with the North (Gebretensae, 2009:3). There are some scholars and practitioners who advocate waiting until armed conflict has ceased before attempting formal SSR intervention (Snowden, 2012), (van de Goor & van Veer, 2010) and (Wulf, 2004). In the case of South Sudan, I would argue that, despite ongoing armed conflict, SSR intervention may have been more effective had it started even earlier than it did. Ill-advised domestic initiatives, like the unfettered absorption of other armed groups, over-priced pay scales and entry of the military into commercial enterprises, weakened the SPLA's fighting capability and perhaps unnecessarily elongated the armed battles it was involved in, thus undermining human security and opportunity for the kind of development that may have buffeted the community against further resort to violence. The SPLA welcomed reform of the security sector, it was just ill-equipped to deal with the scale of reforms required and thus made some fatal flaws along the way.

5.2) International SSR Engagement

In the early years of the CPA interim period, the international community was circumspect about engaging with the SPLA or supporting institutional capacity building in the security sector (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4688). Humanitarian relief and private sector development were the priority focus. Furthermore, as the Government in Khartoum was the internationally recognised sovereign authority in the country, all engagement with the Southern Government was subject to prior approval from Khartoum, which was reticent about international donors supporting the development of an independently-functional security sector in the south (Johnson, 2016: Loc.824). However, as time passed it became increasingly apparent to the international community that Khartoum would not fulfil its CPA obligations in terms of making unity attractive, and the Southern Sudanese would

likely not accept anything other than full independence at the end of the CPA interim period (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4624). Looking back on its decision to engage in the security sector, the UN justified its position by stating that;

> The situation (military and political) remained tense, as there were many unresolved CPA issues ranging from border demarcation, the status of Abyei [*a contested border region*], oil wealth sharing, the popular consultations...and national debt concerns. These outstanding issues were more than enough to cast doubt on the smooth implementation of the remaining terms of the CPA (SSDDRC, 2013:11).

For the international donor community, 2008 was a year of planning and pilot SSR schemes. Donors initiated discrete programmes associated with particular interests: the UN invested in a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme as a part of its development objectives; and the US invested in SPLA operational capability as part of its international counter-terrorism strategy. The UK, drawing on its 2004 *Security Sector Reform Strategy*, attempted to craft an ambitious, holistic SSR programme for Southern Sudan that, in its overall design, acknowledged the UN's ambitions and the US-sponsored operational training and equipping programme already underway (DFID, 2012b:11). The UK itself would focus on filling the gaps at the institutional governance level. Each of the major donors contributed to a variety of projects within the SSR spectrum, however the following sections focus primarily on the SPLA and Defence transformation.

5.2.1. US contribution

The US Government's 2012 *Security Sector Reform* guidelines, published jointly by USAid, the Department of Defense and the Department of State, focuses on integrating traditional train and equip security cooperation programmes with higher-level management and security sector governance assistance (USG, 2012). This guidance was not yet available during planning for SSR in Southern Sudan.

As mentioned earlier, although the US participated in early development of the OECD approach to SSR, the 11 September 2001 attacks on New York City and Washington D.C. prompted a refocus on quick-impact, 'train and equip' security cooperation programmes aimed at helping international proxies to counter domestic or regional terrorism (Sherman, 2010: Loc.933). US security cooperation engagement with Southern Sudan was constructed within this paradigm (the US already had a history of training Eritrean forces in guerrilla war tactics specifically so they could pass these skills on to the SPLA (Marcus, 2002:247)). US security support was primarily funded and controlled by the Department of State, but heavily influenced by the Department of Defense (Rands, 2010:32). USAid did not engage directly with Southern Sudanese security agencies, but contributed to other peacebuilding initiatives.

Between 2006 and 2008, the US constructed facilities and conducted basic-skills training for the Military Police and Riverine forces. US Government sanctions against Sudan prevented the transfer of lethal equipment to the SPLA, but some vehicles and secure communications equipment were donated. However, the SPLA complained that donated equipment complicated maintenance and logistics processes since it differed from the bulk of equipment already in use (Rands, 2010:33). This is a common problem that affects not only security cooperation, but international development programmes as a whole; the disparity between what the donor wants or is able to provide, and what the recipient wants or can best utilise. The SPLA wanted training and equipment more than political instruction, and that is what the US gave them, but not always the *type* of training and equipment that they wanted. According to Rands, the US programme "...often focused on areas that were not a priority for the SPLA." (2010:35). That said, a major problem was that the SPLA, lacking a capability plan, was not always able to adequately or consistently articulate exactly what it wanted.

In mid 2008, the US expanded its security cooperation programme into officer-level mentoring in logistics, training, communications, medical and administrative services at the SPLA General Headquarters (Rands, 2010:32-35). In 2010, during the author's fieldwork experience, three US civilian advisors were added to assist in the human resources, procurement and policy areas of the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs, but they proved unable to meet requirements and were removed at the request of the SPLA. They were replaced by nine consultants with an expanded mandate to cover policy, finance, audit, public affairs, human resources, military production, veterans' affairs and the legal office. Most of the US team of advisors had prior military experience, but often at junior levels with little experience in strategic decision-making or integrated defence governance. This led to difficulty in gaining policy influence and many being treated by Ministry officials as staff rather than mentors. The US Department of Defense does employ specialist *Defence Assistance Teams* as part of its *Defence Institution Building* infrastructure, but these specialist advisors were not deployed to mentor the SPLA (US DSCA, 2017).

Less than a year after arriving, seven of the nine members of the US advisory team at the Ministry were removed, in a single day, for reasons not publically explained. Abrupt changes in international advisors unsettled the Southern Sudanese. The author was told many times during field experience that a foreigner needed to be in the country at least 3-5 years before they understood the issues, and longer to understand the people. The UN found similar sentiments across the African Union;

> The tendency toward relatively short-term deployment of international staff can also undermine the quality of external support to national SSR efforts. For example, international advisors tend to follow three-month to two-year rotations. This does not allow sufficient time to develop the requisite knowledge and understanding of specific contexts. It further places additional strain on national authorities who must deal with a variety of shifting interlocutors (UNDP, 2010:20).

It is popularly recognised by policy-makers and practitioners that SSR is a long-term enterprise (Bakrania, 2014:2). This is not just a matter of ensuring long-term funding commitment at the donor level. Political mindsets and behaviours do not change quickly, so achieving normative political outcomes in the recipient country requires constant and consistent reinforcement by trusted mentors over a long period of time. Donor policies and plans are made by diplomats and senior level bureaucrats, but the implementing partners in-country can make or break the programme. The US lost some of its goodwill and credibility in the defence arena in Southern Sudan due to a lack of focus on advisor recruiting.

The SPLA was still engaged in fighting internal insurgencies, clashes with northern-funded militias in contested areas, and external border incursions by the Lord's Resistance Army, so strong military capability was important for physical security of the community (Snowden, 2012:9-12). The US was the only security sector donor to offer basic training and equipment to the SPLA in the early stages of the CPA interim period, in line with US Army doctrine on security assistance, which seeks to first improve the capability of security forces to provide a stable environment, before moving on to security sector management and governance (US Army, 2009:4-5). The support undoubtedly had some positive impact on capability in the regions covered however, due to sanctions and other financial and geographical obstacles, it may not have been extensive enough to have lasting effect.

5.2.2. UN contribution

The UN has a long history of humanitarian relief operations in Sudan, and was actively engaged in the ceasefire negotiations that led to the eventual Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005. For the following 6 years, the UN mandate in Sudan hinged on support for implementation of the CPA, which inherently meant support for the primary objective of a single, unified Sudan

(CPA, 2005:2). Therefore, the UN was limited in the range of SSR-related activities that its Agencies, Funds and Partners could engage in with respect to Southern Sudan and the SPLA. However, CPA Chapter VI, *Security Arrangements*, Article 3.d) stipulates that a Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programme is to be implemented, with international assistance, in order to downsize the respective military forces. The UN treated DDR as a conflict reduction measure, distinct from SSR, and thus launched an interim DDR programme in early 2006 (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4690).

DDR is considered by many to be a 'cornerstone' of SSR practice, based as it is on the assumption that a violent conflict has too many armed actors who, in the post-conflict environment, need to be neutralised (Brzoska & Law, 2007: Loc.161). SSR policy is concerned with fostering an atmosphere of stability in which development can occur. In many cases this means perceptively 'demilitarising' the community. SSR is also concerned with structuring uniformed services in a manner appropriate to the threat environment. In a post-conflict environment, this often means reducing the size of the military. By this definition, a DDR programme is a significant component of SSR, as it is specifically designed to reduce the number of armed combatants in the environment by providing them with alternative livelihoods. SSR and DDR are, at the very least, conceptually linked. Michael Brzoska, in his *Criteria for Evaluating Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Security Sector Reform in Peace Support Operations* (2007: Loc.161) names effective DDR first on his list of criteria for achieving SSR objectives. However, other scholars, like Robert Muggah and Savannah de Tessieres in their *Alternatives to Conventional Security Promotion: Rethinking the case of Southern Sudan* (2009), treat DDR as a separate enterprise, in part because the DDR process is not concerned with building security institutions or developing capacity in the security sector, which they claim is the main purview of SSR. Rather, DDR is a process of decommissioning or removing armed actors from the environment. SSR is 'constructive' and DDR is 'reductive'. Furthermore, an effective SSR programme may in some cases actually result in an increase in

armed force numbers, hence the preferred terminology of 'rightsizing' rather than 'downsizing' in SSR parlance. In this context DDR is a very different kind of enterprise than SSR. However, for the purposes of this thesis, which approaches SSR in the broadest sense, DDR is considered a component part of SSR, but analysed only insofar as it impacted the Defence reform programme in Southern Sudan.

The CPA is a highly ambitious document that would be difficult to fully implement in the circumstances, even if all parties were actually committed to implementation, which, with the benefit of hindsight, they clearly were not. It also includes obligations that are contradictory. Chapter VI, *Security Arrangements*, Article 3.d) stipulates that all parties are to implement a DDR programme in order to downsize forces. Then the aforementioned Annexure 1, *Permanent Ceasefire and Security Arrangements Implementation Modalities and Appendices*, Article 11, commits the SPLA, the SAF and the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) to absorb and integrate Other Armed Groups, such as the SSDF, into the regular armed forces. These articles, both ostensibly peacebuilding initiatives, appear to have been drafted in ignorance of each other. The SPLA was obligated to expand and reduce in size at the same time. Implementation of both obligations, simultaneously, put the SPLA into a persistent schizophrenic state in terms of personnel management and undermined efforts to professionalise the force. Furthermore, neither of these policies, the absorption nor the demobilisation, were calibrated in terms of the military's requirement for defensive capability in the face of ongoing armed threats to Southern Sudan.

Whilst the SPLA dealt with OAG absorption on its own, the UN took up the mantle of DDR. The Interim Preparatory Support Project for DDR, implemented by UNDP and UNICEF, was launched in 2005 with the "...key objective of DDR capacity building of the National commissions while conducting DDR activities for Special Needs Groups." (Mulugeta, 2010:2). The 34,000 people identified as the Special Needs Group (SNG) included; women, elderly and disabled veterans, and children

associated with the armed forces. The project plan called for assistance to candidates in the form of livelihoods training, higher education, small business development and psycho-social support. The SNG is not a particularly high-threat group in terms of sources of instability within the security sector, thus little impact on the security environment could have been achieved by this interim project even if it had been successful, which it was not. Between January 2006 and June 2009, USD$70 million was spent by donors, but the list of programme achievements focuses on surveys and assessments, staff training, and institutional capacity building in the Southern Sudan DDR Commission (SSDDRC). According to UNDP (2009:34), only 168 children were demobilised during the project period, and only 18 of those were verifiably assisted by the SSDDRC team (the rest were assisted by internal SPLA mechanisms). An estimated further 8000 children remained at risk. Difficult working conditions and limited local capacity hindered progress, but the imposition of standardised Western models contributed to the overall failure of the project;

> The issue of child soldiers was one example offered. UNICEF and the international community imposed international norms without preparatory work "riding rough shod" over the SPLA perspective and rejected local thoughts and displayed a lack of understanding of the regional issues (DFID, 2013:4).

Prior to the signing of the CPA, many SPLA soldiers began service in childhood. This is a reality of the conflict environment (see *War Child: A Child Soldier's Story,* 2009*,* by Emmanuel Jal). The top leadership were committed to eliminating child recruitment, but many under-18 year olds already serving or living on military bases were, the author learned during field experience, war orphans that the SPLA kept in the fold because they had no other 'family' to care for them. It was a welfare arrangement. This was the type of SPLA perspective that the UN 'ran roughshod' over by demanding these minors leave the military environment.

In June 2009, the DDR project was recalibrated and relaunched with a Multi-Year DDR Programme calling for 180,000 ex-combatants (90,000 each from the North and South) to be disarmed, demobilised and reintegrated between 2009 and 2012 (Nichols, 2011:11). The security-related objectives of the programme included the enabling of a stable environment conducive to sustainable development, but more particularly the 'downsizing' of the armed forces and consequent reduction in budgetary burden presented by the SPLA and the SAF respectively (UNDP, 2013). The SPLA budget was a significant target, as it consumed an estimated 40% of Government revenue at the time (Johnson, 2016:4639 and ASI, 2011b:1). After three years, this second attempt at DDR was closed, with the final evaluation report by UNDP stating that the programme;

> ...did not contribute significantly towards the achievement of the relevant outcomes...namely improved environment for sustainable peace, restoration of socio-economic infrastructure, and revival of the economy (UNDP, 2013:6).

The UN revealed that only 12,552 people were processed through the programme between 2009-2012, well below the target number (UNDP, 2013:6). There were multiple problems with the technical implementation of the programme, including a reintegration package that was overly ambitious and not able to deliver the training and jobs that it promised. However, a lack of communication between the UN, SSDDRC and SPLA is also apparent. An independent verification process showed that many of those processed by the SSDDRC were not actually combatants, and of the combatants who were demobilised, several thousand were believed to have returned to SPLA service once they had received their food and cash incentives from the UN. Outbreaks of fighting along both the northern borders prompted the SPLA to start recruiting again in 2011, effectively neutralising any gains made (UNDP, 2013:5-8).

The UN's base assumption was that "DDR was highly relevant to the nation, which did not require a big army. Downsizing the army and releasing resources from

war efforts to developmental purposes was timely." (UNDP, 2012:9). This was a popular assumption repeated by other development donors and observers. However, the assumption ignored the fact of ongoing armed conflict, and the posture of the armies involved. The SPLA had no strategic weapons, so it relied on artillery and infantry soldiers as its main combat capability – meaning it generally needed more personnel than an army in a comparable threat situation with more sophisticated weaponry. In 2009, the SPLA did not have a comprehensive military strategy to guide force structure, so even the army did not know exactly how 'big' it needed to be. The dearth of confidence-building measures around the CPA meant the SPLA was not convinced that a transition to independence would be smooth, and passively resisted DDR because it did not want to diminish its main fighting capability (Johnson, 2016: 4815). The UN had no basis, aside from Western-centric assumption, on which to argue that downsizing the military was timely. Even the budgetary argument was tenuous, given that the SSDDRC plan relied, in the absence of many private industry options, on public service institutions to provide reintegration services (training and jobs), thus merely transferring the burden of government spending from one department to others, not actually reducing it (SSDDRC, 2011:37-38 and Yakovenko, 2014:138).

The UN's DDR programme was caught in a maelstrom of problems in Southern Sudan and had to fail twice, consuming tens of millions of dollars, before eventually being abandoned. One is left to wonder whether the inclusion of DDR as an obligatory mechanism in the Peace Agreement was even appropriate. Was it included just because it is something the international community knows how to do, lacking any more innovative solution to the problem of 'what to do with soldiers after conflict?' This is not an unusual scenario;

> One key deficit of peace agreements is that people come to the table ill-equipped and ill-prepared to talk about the issue of security. It is usually tacked on at the end. In this way, peace doesn't necessarily mean the end of the process; it might open up a whole new kind of conflict (Hutchful, 2007:5).

After independence in 2011, the new United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was given a broader mandate to engage in the rule of law and justice sectors (Johnson, 2016:4803). An SSR unit was created, which embarked on an assistance programme for the National Police Service and contributed advisors to the office of the National Security Advisor and the Security Committee of Cabinet, where they integrated with established UK and US advisors to work on a National Security Strategy (Johnson, 2016:4910).

Although late in entering the arena, the UN was starting to achieve some SSR successes before the civil war broke out in 2013, with a police transformation plan agreed, UN Police building local capacity in 10 states, and a National Security Strategy ready for signature (Yakovenko, 2014, 117-119). It was also active in the judicial sector and advised on prison operations. However, UNMISS' other primary tasks, such as reporting on military disobedience and human rights abuses, often put the UN at odds with the SPLA, undermining the UN's ability to affect real change in the political environment. The UN seemed to work on the assumption that the military was inherently subordinate to the Government, and that the Government was in a position to sanction the military for its actions, i.e. assumed that the processes of democratisation was much further along than it actually was. But the Government and the SPLA were so intimately intertwined that an attack on one was an attack on the other. Overall, the UN's reputation and effectiveness as an SSR implementer in Southern Sudan suffered for a general lack of socio-political awareness.

5.3) UK SSR Programme

In its 2004 *Security Sector Reform Strategy,* the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) wrote that "A democratically run, accountable, competent, effective and efficient security sector helps to reduce the risk of conflict and enhance the security of the citizens of the country, and in the process helps to create the necessary conditions for development." (DFID, 2004:2). This assertion, which echoes OECD statements, underscores the UK's approach to SSR in Southern Sudan. Many donors' security sector activities have been retroactively called SSR programmes, but these were largely discrete projects operating in the absence of integrated, sector-wide activity. The UK is the only one of the major, individual donors to have a fully articulated SSR policy and strategy prior to commencing its programme. This strategy led to the Peacebuilding Support Programme (PSP), which sponsored conflict-resolution dialogue and small arms control activities, and the larger Security Sector Development and Defence Transformation Programme (SSDDTP). The UK's SSDDTP is the main focus of analysis from this point on.

The UK Government employs three instruments to achieve SSR objectives; policy development and analysis, technical assistance, and capacity building (DFID, 2004:13). Policy development and analysis aims at generating understanding within the UK Government of the security environment in recipient countries so that policy and programmes can be tailored to context-specific situations. The UK SSR strategy commits the Government to conducting a context and needs analysis during the programme design phase. For the SSDDTP in Southern Sudan, this process was undertaken by consultant project managers during the course of multiple visits to Southern Sudan between 2006 and 2008. The contextual assessment for Southern Sudan covered the political and security situation, threat analysis and state of the security sector, as well as a baseline survey of public perceptions of community security, which revealed the SPLA as both admired as a liberating force, and derided as one of the main sources of instability

in the community (ASI, 2009:3). The technical assistance and capacity building instruments of SSR are mechanisms such as defence diplomacy, military education courses, person-to-person mentoring and advice, and institutional development facilitation. The principle behind each activity is transfer of skills and enhancing the counterparts' own abilities in planning, decision-making, problem-solving and delivery of appropriate services in the defence environment (DFID, 2012b:36).

5.3.1. Inter-departmental coordination

In 2001, the UK Government created Conflict Prevention Pools (CPPs) as a joint funding mechanism and forum for managing the UK's contribution towards violent conflict prevention in developing countries (DFID, 2004: iii). The CPPs are jointly operated by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), Ministry of Defence (MOD) and Department for International Development (DFID). The rationale behind the CPPs is that "...by bringing together the interests, resources and expertise of FCO, MOD and DFID, greater effectiveness can be achieved." (DFID, 2004: iii). SSR programmes fall under this budgetary line in the UK. Government departments traditionally have some degree of rivalry between them and, as previously mentioned, there is also a degree of cultural discomfort in the relationship between military and development agencies. Thus, it is difficult to determine how well personal relationships between staff of the three Ministries actually functioned, and how inter-departmental rivalries affected decision-making, but the institutional structure and senior level sponsorship of a united front appears intact. A 2004 evaluation of the CPP framework found that;

> As a result of the SSR Strategy, there is now a better idea of what a joined-up approach to SSR might be and a growing recognition that a joined-up approach can add value to UK SSR work. Progress is reflected in the development of an SSR Policy Brief (MOD, FCO and DFID) which sets out the Government's policy on SSR (DFID, 2004: v).

In 2018, the Conflict Prevention Pools continue to be a primary mechanism for managing and disbursing the UK Government's aid and development funds in respect to stabilisation and conflict-prevention activities, demonstrating overall political confidence in the functionality of this mechanism.

The lead management agency for the SSR programme in Southern Sudan was DFID, reflecting a genuine effort to remain true to the principles of SSR orthodoxy, namely that SSR is a development exercise with development goals, as opposed to a predominantly security exercise. If there were individuals in the UK military or Ministry of Defence who argued against a development agency leading on issues involving international military relationships, or DFID officials who were uncomfortable engaging with foreign security services, these issues did not terminally disrupt implementation of the programme in Southern Sudan.

There is a risk that if SSR programmes are led by defence or security agencies they may trend back towards the 'train and equip' comfort zone and lose focus on management and governance issues. In the case of Southern Sudan, the UK avoided this outcome, and maintained focus on security sector governance. However, the UK programme did not include traditional army-to-army or police-to-police engagement. Had there been a stronger train and equip element to the programme, it may have been more difficult for DFID to maintain overarching leadership. This element of SSR is thus untested in the case of South Sudan.

The UK Government contracted a private consultancy firm, Adam Smith International (ASI), as its primary implementing in Southern Sudan (DFID, 2012b). Between 2008 and 2011, the UK Government had only two diplomats posted at its Consulate in Juba. The Regional Conflict Advisor and UK Defence Attaché (DA) were based in Khartoum and visited Juba infrequently during the period of the author's field experience. SSR is a highly political activity that requires donor Government engagement and oversight, even if technical implementation has been contracted to a private provider. Private SSR consultants operate within the recipient Government's political spectrum, but they cannot make policy commitments on behalf of the donor Government. The UK Government recognised the importance of not being too prescriptive with consultant experts, but the limited Government interaction with consultants in the first phase led to lesser understanding of programme modalities, and unnecessary conflict between the donor Government and its implementing partner. After independence, a DFID SSR review team wrote that;

> The previous HMG [Her Majesty's Government] approach to South Sudan led to a small team with limited capacity and capability. The lesson is of the need for a stronger embassy from the start, including the DA function which languished too long in Khartoum. Inevitable tensions resulted." (DFID, 2013:6).

5.3.2. International coordination

The 2007 *OECD DAC Handbook* and the UK's 2004 *Security Sector Reform Strategy* both instruct donors and their implementing partners to coordinate with other international actors in order to maximise programme coherence for the recipient, and limit resource wastage for the donors (OECD DAC, 2007:63). However, it is not a surprise that donors may at times favor a bilateral framework for assistance; operating in a multilateral forum can reduce each individual donors' degree of influence over policy and planning, and reduce the individual credit that each donor may leverage for programme success. But donor coordination on

SSR repeatedly arises as a problematic issue for local authorities in Africa. In the UN DPKO's 2011 report on *African Perspectives on Security Sector Reform,* African recipients of SSR assistance noted their particular frustration with international programmes;

> Meaningful coordination has been lacking. ... The situation is further complicated by divergences between priorities and programmes of different donors and attempts to uncritically apply lessons and experiences derived from the experiences of other countries (UN DPKO, 2011:11).

Five years after programme commencement, international donor coordination in Southern Sudan was still at an early stage of evolution. Major donors de-conflicted SSR programme activities, such that tasks were reasonably well dispersed and overlap minimised, but de-confliction is not the same as strategic coordination. Richard Rands (2010:38-39) alludes to challenges in the relationship between the UK's DFID and the US Departments of State and Defense;

> Both parties report to masters in the UK and the United States (sometimes via embassies in Khartoum), where there does not seem to be any formal coordination mechanism or dialogue on defence transformation issues (Rands, 2010:38).

High-level international donor coordination on SSR appears to have been hesitant. This may have been because the different lead agencies involved did not have strong existing relationships with each other (DFID's counterpart agency is USAid, which was not the US' lead on SSR in Southern Sudan). Even after independence, when the UN tried to take a more leading role in SSR, it found "...no government wanted to share details. There was no systematic transparency or complementarity of effort (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4809). In-country advisors fared marginally better.

The UK and US had small teams each of 8-12 consultant Defence advisors who were co-located in the same offices at the SPLA HQ compound, and worked alongside each other in advising certain directorates, which enhanced professional collaboration (DFID, 2013:8). However, in the author's field experience it was notable that different countries' contracting practices - the US had a shorter contract re-tendering schedule, putting them in a permanently competitive mode - and different conditions of service could at times undermine professional relationships. The UK Government's 2012 review of SSDDTP noted that:

> A structured system of information-sharing and joint policy development has been developed amongst international advisers. Despite institutional constraints, the joint management, facilitation and funding by US and UK Advisers with closely aligned goals and (mostly) consistent messaging has significantly improved the overall quality and consistency of advice to counterparts. However, coordination between the strategic and tactical levels of engagement from the UK and US respectively remains suboptimal due to the absence of a shared overarching policy or strategy approach between the two Governments (DFID, 2012b:9).

The lack of systematised coordination at the top levels, and frequent turnover of some international personnel, may have diminished the degree of confidence that Southern Sudanese counterparts had in their international advisors. A trainer from the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of the Armed Forces who delivered a course in Juba was disappointed with the low turnout due to conflicting scheduling with other donor-sponsored courses and noted that "I am sure that the lack of coordination of the western donor effort was not lost on our Sudanese colleagues." (Law, 2014:2).

In practice, coordination is difficult to achieve in a post-conflict environment with a multitude of international actors, with different approaches and different objectives. The US had the biggest budget to spend, but was focused on discrete

operational issues. The UN had the most people deployed around Sudan, but a restricted mandate on security. The UK had a more limited budget and personnel, but as the only donor with an actual SSR strategy, it arguably had the greater responsibility to take the lead on international coordination.

5.3.3. Local ownership

Recognising that there is only so much influence that external actors can have, it is essential that SSR programmes are endorsed, if not championed, by local stakeholders if they are to be sustainable. To achieve this outcome, the OECD DAC recommends donors start by adjusting their own domestic expectations;

> Pressure of tight programme time frames and budget cycles often mean that local ownership may be seen as a luxury that cannot be afforded. This is a very short-sighted approach. Ownership is an important precondition for sustainability (OECD, 2007:64).

Local ownership is conceptualised in the SSR framework as investment by recipient community leaders in the change process. It is not a financial statement requiring recipients to fund programmes or activities, rather a political and managerial investment (OECD DAC, 2007:64-65). It is not enough for local authorities to lead committees, according to the *OECD DAC Handbook* on SSR, they need to drive the process and champion activities, not because an external partner told them to but because they personally have confidence that the direction of reforms will benefit their community based on their own inherent knowledge of local circumstances and likely outcomes of SSR in that environment.

There were existing local champions of SSR in Southern Sudan, as evidenced by the independent reforms conducted across the security sector by the SPLA and SPLM between 2005 and 2009, including production of the 2008 *SPLA White Paper on Defence*, a document outlining strategic defence policy for the interim CPA period. Although, in the author's experience, counterparts' enthusiasm could

ebb and flow relative to the perceived personal benefit of the activity and the relationship with the advisor. The UK recognised that local ownership of programme activities in Southern Sudan was fundamental to success;

> *Any instance on [sic] imposing Western solutions to meet demands that are generated by external politics and doctrinal perspectives is likely to fail.* ASI noted clear evidence of the US and other nations and organisations imposing systems without considering the local perspective (DFID, 2013:4).

Emphasising the local perspective does not simply mean that the Western model should be ignored. The SPLA rejected some local African models as 'unprofessional'. DFID reviewers found an example in the training of Platoon Commanders; "Despite three African models illustrated, the SPLA did not view them as positive and instead insisted on seeking a UK model." (DFID, 2013:4). In Southern Sudan, generating 'local ownership' was not entirely dependent on utilising regional models, rather listening to local desires and adjusting.

Some reforms are more difficult to gain local traction on than others. Despite local political investment in SSR, it came up short in areas associated with accountability and transparency of financial transactions (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4738). Financial accountability is one of the strongest principles of good governance and in a fragile country with an uncertain outlook, and serious corrupt incentive to maintain the status quo, introduction of budgetary reforms to enhance transparency are amongst the most difficult to achieve. UK advisors found the most success in cross-pollination of activities. "If one work strand falters, progress can be made on, or via, others." (DFID, 2013:3). By demonstrating the positive effects of a reformed personnel management system in the Human Resources Directorate, SSDDTP was able to convince the SPLA of the value of extending the system into the payroll area of the Finance Directorate. "The value of a system was demonstrated in a separate line of development which resulted in an overall output being achieved." (DFID, 2013:3).

Pushing through SSR reforms in the absence of internal drivers is counterproductive. An unidentified 'local chief' interviewed by HMG officers for an SSDDT programme review said that "what you do for me, without me, is against me." (DFID, 2013:3). What the UK found in Southern Sudan is the need for a delicate balance between advocacy for a Western SSR policy model or methodology where it is fundamental to overall good governance principles, or is in fact desired by the recipient, coupled with the willingness to adjust models to complement local expectations and a focus on enhancing local capability. A DFID review team interviewed counterparts and reported that;

> It was very apparent to the review team that national ownership was felt very strongly, and was based on strong long-standing relationships with trusted and valued advisors. In particular comments included the support provided on practical daily issues, the value of the coaching and mentoring approach rather than providing answers enabling issues to be discussed (DFIF, 2012b:36).

Choosing the right champion is also important, and this is not necessarily tied to titled position. UK advisors noted in a 2013 brief analysing the 'value for money' of the program that "The Minister for SPLA Affairs (2009-2011) was almost completely disengaged from development of the Ministry and his endorsement carried little weight." (ASI, 2012c:7). Approaching lesser ranked officials, with perhaps greater charismatic power, could yield better results.

5.3.4. Programme design

Identifying security sector areas in need of reform in Southern Sudan presented a different kind of problem to many other transitional or post-conflict countries, which often have some structures, institutions, laws and regulations in place. The task is then a matter of adjusting existing practices. In contrast, Southern Sudan started with almost no structural basis and severely limited personnel capacity. The Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SSLA) had weak oversight ability, no functional security strategy and lacked the capacity to ensure strict budgetary

control over the security services (ASI, 2012d:6). Security institutions such as the Defence and Interior ministries existed in theory, but were severely understaffed, poorly managed and lacked mission guidance. There was little regulatory framework for the security sector, and an almost complete lack of public space for dialogue on security issues (ASI, 2012d:7). The SPLA's self-vision placed their own status over and above the rest of the population, and with their cohort SPLM in power there was a risk that Southern Sudan would fall foul of a common problem;

> The security forces in such instances operate as an extension of a political agenda, which is particularly skewed towards the security interests of the regime. The most imposing challenge for SSR in Africa, from a civil liberties and democratization point of view, is to curb the tendency of ruling regimes to use state security resources against the people for narrowly defined interests (Hutton, in Sedra, 2010:194-5).

Establishing a regulatory framework for the security sector emphasising democratic civil oversight and providing clearly defined roles and missions for security agencies, *vis a vis* each other and the general public, was a priority for the UK in programme planning (DFID, 2012b:1). Physical security for the population was also a priority, but UK participation in operational security assistance was constrained by European Union sanctions and Export Control Orders.[7] Non-lethal assistance for humanitarian purposes was permissible, so the UK focused on strengthening the security sector institutional architecture and decision-making processes rather than training or equipment transfer. Behavioral change at the senior management level should move down the ranks and improve the operational behavior of uniformed services, thus improving physical security for the population.

[7] EU Council Decision 94/165/CFSP and UK Export Control Order 2008 SI2008/3231, implemented in 1994 on the whole of Sudan.

> The UK chooses to limit involvement to development of human capital at the policy-making level and is not involved with implementation at the operational and tactical levels. ... DFID's sole defence transformation-related programme, the SSDDT project, focuses on more strategic issues in five workstreams that cover broader security sector reform issues (Rands, 2010:36).

The SSDDTP organisational structure was aligned institutionally, and initially focused on 5 key intersecting work-streams;

- Strengthening the security decision-making architecture
- SPLA Transformation
- Legislative Assembly oversight capability
- Ministry of SPLA Affairs (Defence) Transformation
- Civil Society Organisations' contribution to security sector governance (DFID 2012b:3)

Transformation of the SPLA was the dominant focus in recognition that this organisation was the primary domestic and external security provider (and concurrently a primary source of community insecurity) and, in effect, continued to dominate the political environment. "SSDDTP is essentially a defence transformation project, with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) transformation (WS 2) at its core. Everything else is in support of this activity." (DFID, 2013:2). This statement does not mean that all activities were directed at the SPLA HQ. The focus on the SPLA included how the SPLA interacted with other security sector agencies, the parliament, oversight ministries and civil society at large. Each of the work-stream teams operated in close coordination with each other and, in the early days, were often the main conduit for information sharing between their respective counterparts. This is one of the clear benefits of the holistic approach; when different functional advisors are contracted together and operate as one team, information sharing is greatly enhanced.

The overall objective relating directly to the structural operation of the SPLA was ambitious: "SPLA supported to develop and deliver a transformation strategy

designed to develop adequate, appropriate, affordable and accountable armed forces capable of providing a source of security for all the people of South Sudan." (DFID, 2012b:8). This project engaged every element of military design and management, and had to be developed specific to the threat context and political environment, and in conjunction with every other actor in the security sector. It was a very gradual process that the UK Government eventually rated as 'moderately did not meet expectations'.' The strategy was finalised, but implementation was hindered by frequent outbreaks of conflict and a lack of resources to support training and equipment requirements – basic as they were (DFID, 2012b:8).

The SPLA faced significant bureaucratic deficits that had a direct impact on community security, particularly poor logistics and financial management. If soldiers were not paid on time, and they often weren't, they looted supplies from surrounding villages. If they did not have vehicles, or fuel, to move between towns, they 'commandeered' these from civilians (Hutton, 2014:20). More than once they satisfied both needs by hijacking World Food Programme vehicles at gunpoint (Reliefweb, 2011). The SSDDTP thus afforded logistical and financial management systems high priority because of the direct impact on physical security in the community. Although it is impossible to quantitatively verify if incidents of looting by soldiers were reduced, as no formal reporting exists, the introduction of a more efficient financial management system did reduce the payroll delay, which had been up to 4 months in some areas (Rands, 2010:25)

Transforming the SPLA included re-positioning it in terms of its role in the political sphere, hence a focus on the [sub]national security architecture - the regulatory framework governing the security sector – including the office of the National Security Advisor, the civilian decision-makers in the Legislative Assembly and the oversight function of the Defence Ministry. The SSDDTP was designed to assist in drafting and operationalising this architecture across the security sector. By mid-2013, a National Security Strategy was approved and the

backbones of institutional architecture were in place, but again the onset of violent conflict largely derailed further implementation.

The Legislative Assembly's *Specialized Standing Committee on Security and Public Order* was established in 2008 to fulfil the role of Government oversight. This Committee's roles include scrutinising legislation and regulations pertaining to the security sector, and monitoring the performance of all security agencies in terms of compliance with Government policy, administrative competence, financial efficiency, and operational behavior. SSDDTP was designed to assist in building the Committee's capacity to engage in these tasks (SSDDTP, 2011:6).

A key institutional element of good governance in the security sector is the functioning of a civilian-led defence ministry to assist in oversight and accountability of the armed forces. In Southern Sudan, the Ministry of SPLA Affairs had been established on paper in 2008, with a basic mission statement and an initial organisational diagram. However, by 2009 it remained severely understaffed, including at the most senior levels, and no clear responsibilities. The evolution of this ministry is the subject of more specific analysis in the next chapter.

Civil oversight and control of the armed forces is a vital but frequently misunderstood concept. As a principle of democratic good governance, civil oversight and control of the armed forces refers to the exclusive ability of the democratically-elected, civilian leadership to direct and scrutinise military activities in terms of policy implementation, management and operational behavior (Caparini & Cole, 2010:12). The concept encompasses the degree to which the armed forces are responsive to government direction. But civil oversight also refers to the ability of the general public to access information about their military and its operations, and to contribute to the dialogue on defence policy issues (Caparini & Cole, 2010:11). The media plays a significant role in promulgating information about defence and security issues to the general

public, if they are allowed access. In a conducive environment, academics also contribute to oversight through publication of analysis on security policy, procedures and practices. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) provide a collective environment for members of the general public to consolidate opinions and engage with security organs from a position of strength. A 2009 DFID review found that "...civil society in Southern Sudan does not currently hold the requisite internal assets and capacities, nor do they enjoy the democratic space in which to contribute to political debates on security." (DFID, 2009:15). The relationship between civil society groups and the SPLA was found to be "...not robust enough to support open constructive criticism on security issues without fear of reprisal." (DFID, 2009:17).

The SSDDTP programme design incorporated technical capacity-building within three nascent CSOs in order to develop their security sector advocacy skills. It also built into the SPLA and the Ministry of SPLA Affairs transformation objectives the requirement for civil society outreach (press conferences, radio shows, public seminars, private discussions with interest-groups and the establishment of a Defence Ombudsman). The overall holistic structure of the SSR programme meant that international advisors were able to facilitate interaction between a normally secretive SPLA, and rather nervous CSOs. DFID (2012b:27) considered this aspect of the SSDDTP to be highly successful in that the three CSOs 'thrived' once advisors opened a secure channel for them to communicate with the military.

In 2010, another functional area was added to SSDDTP; support to the Ministry of Interior and Police Service. The Ministry of Interior was based in the capital, Juba, but unlike the military, power to direct the police and other security services was devolved to provincial Governors (DFID, 2012b:3). This new functional area marked SSDDTP's foray into the regions for classroom-based police training and administrative support to provincial security committees, as well as exploration of the role of non-state actors in traditional security systems.

In mid 2010, an entirely new project, the Security and Access to Justice Project (SAJP), was launched as a component part of the UK's overall SSR strategy in South Sudan. The SAJP worked primarily on capacity-building in the police and judicial system; courts, judges, state's attorneys, prisons, and the legal environment surrounding the functioning of these institutions (DFID, 2010b:1). The SAJP was implemented by a different private consultancy company than SSDDTP, but both had instructions from the UK Government to share workplace information and coordinate strategies to ensure overall cohesion of the SSR programme;

> SSDDT and SAJP are both essential components of HMG's support to Security Sector Reform in Southern Sudan. HMG expects that Sudanese counterpart institutions should be as little aware of the different administrative structures in place to deliver this support as possible.... Both projects will be assessed on the extent to which this collaboration is delivered (DFID, 2010b:1).

The UK Government's SSR programme design began by focusing on transformation of the SPLA, as the most ubiquitous organisation in Southern Sudan let alone the dominant security actor, as well as the Government's decision-making architecture at the most senior levels. As the role of the police service expanded, SSDDTP expanded into this function, concurrently moving out from the center and into the regions. The later introduction of another project, SAJP, reflected recognition of the need for greater focus on justice systems. Addressing the role of non-state security actors was not an initial priority, probably because the GOSS was more preoccupied with consolidating all armed actors under its own control. However, there are signs that, over time, the issue of how private and traditional security providers factored into the overall security sector infrastructure in South Sudan would have become more prominent.

The UK programme heavily favored mentoring and short-courses, rather than giving equipment or other goods. Alice Hills (2010) and Richard Rands (2010) might argue that this was not really what the uniformed services of Southern Sudan wanted; they were short of transport capability, communications equipment, weaponry, apparel, medical equipment, facilities, furniture and all manner of other life-support goods and services. These shortages impacted their ability to operate effectively. Yet the UK provided for none of these. At the higher levels of defence management, South Sudanese counterparts told DFID that they understood and appreciated the role and activities of SSDDTP (DFID, 2012b:36). However, given the focus on governance, it could have been difficult for the broader local constituency to detect what benefits the UK SSR programme actually provided in the short term. The lack of willingness to provide equipment may have cost the UK some of the 'good will' benefit to be drawn from a broadly visible, tangible contribution.

5.3.5. Resourcing

The UK SSR programme in Southern Sudan was mostly funded by the Government's Africa Conflict Prevention Pool and involved a commitment of GBP £15.2 million for the first phase from February 2009 to December 2012 (DFID, 2012b:2). It may not seem a large amount of money, but it was spent on advisory services and education rather than tangible goods, which are often more expensive. The programme continued beyond 2013 and, at the time of the onset of civil war, was budgeted out to at least 2015. All indicators across the UK Government's SSR policy and strategy literature, and its experience in countries like Sierra Leone, where the SSR programme ran for more than 10 years, point towards a good understanding of the long-term resource commitment required for effective SSR implementation.

In the Horn of Africa, experience has shown that high levels of government corruption easily compromise aid and development programmes. In Southern

Sudan, the risks were very high; Transparency International states that "Corruption permeates all sectors of the economy and all levels of the state apparatus and manifests itself through various forms, including grand corruption and clientelistic networks along tribal lines." (TI, 2016:1). Bearing in mind Alex de Waal's theory of the political marketplace in the Horn of Africa, where politicians act like business managers and obtain their authority through a strong financial base - usually funded by corrupt appropriation of development aid and international security cooperation resources – the UK's SSR programme appears designed to avoid key pitfalls. By favoring mentorship, rather than provision of equipment or direct budgetary support, there were few tangible resources available for corrupt actors to misappropriate. In any case, the UK left the 'train and equip' portion of SSR to the US, which took on the greater financial and reputational risk in this regard.

Although exact figures are unobtainable, the US spent an estimated USD$100 million on the construction of three facilities/barracks for the SPLA. These were corrugated iron buildings that, even in the difficult terrain, should not have cost near that amount to construct (Rands, 2010:32). Some other US funded facilities were left unused due to high ongoing operational costs (e.g. fuel for generators to power the electricity) and others due to the lack of a technical support package (e.g. a language laboratory in Malou, where one instructor commented: "We have all the equipment but we do not know how to use it, nor do we have a curriculum." (Rands, 2010:34)). The US provided the Southern Sudanese with what they wanted and received a measure of political gratitude, but due to a combination of inadequate needs assessment and implementation monitoring, and/or corruption, they experienced 'value for money' losses. On the other hand, in attempting to remain aloof from the political marketplace – to avoid losses to corruption – the UK SSR programme may have undermined its own ability to influence and drive behavioral change. In such circumstances as Southern Sudan, if international donors are unwilling/unable to risk resource misappropriation

or misuse (as many are), then expectations of influence on governance issues need to be adjusted accordingly.

5.3.6. Advisors

It is easier, from a management perspective, for donor governments to use their own public servants to implement SSR programmes. This gives them greater political control, visibility of performance and increases the public accountability of development aid. However, SSR is a relatively new industry and public servants with the requisite technical skill and strategic-view experience remain in limited supply. There can also be a tendency to use serving military, police or prisons experts in SSR programmes, but the OECD cautions that these personnel may have expert technical skills, but not necessarily the experience to link reforms to the broader security sector and political system (OECD DAC, 2007: 239). Engaging private sector consultants allows the donor government to demand a specific set of skills and experience that meet the exact context of the SSR programme.

The UK Government contracted a private sector, management consultancy company to deliver its SSR programme in Southern Sudan. This company, Adam Smith International (ASI), was a medium-sized, development aid enterprise with extensive experience in Africa and in the security and justice sectors.[8] The main contractor also sub-contracted to an Ethiopian consultancy company, the Centre for Policy Research and Dialogue (CPRD), led by the former Chief of the Ethiopian Defence Force, Lt. General (ret.) Gebretsadkan Gebretensae. The SSR implementing team, of which this author was a member, included experts from a range of countries, including Australia, Britain, Ethiopia, Ireland, Kenya, South Africa and Uganda. Former police and military officers complemented former diplomats, public servants and other civilian experts in development aid, finance,

[8] See www.adamsmithinternational.com

gender diversity, human resource management, justice and the rule of law. Most had prior experience in SSR related programmes and more than three quarters of the team stayed with the programme for most of its five-year duration. The careful composition of the team reflected compliance with the principles advocated in the *OECD DAC Handbook.* Long-term, experienced advisors are the key to success because; "Ideas sewn in the minds of counterparts take time to blossom, ...SSR requires years of steady, unblinking engagement." (DFID, 2013:3).

DFID reviews highlighted that SSDDTP programme successes were largely due to the relationships built by advisors with their counterparts, and the training, mentoring and skills transfer approach adopted (DFID, 2012b:36-37). But SSR is a highly political process and it appears that some of the political aspects of the programme in Southern Sudan did not meet expectations. The limited engagement by UK diplomats with GOSS counterparts on the SSR programme represents a missed opportunity to reinforce the political principles that underscore SSR, the principles the UK Government pays a lot of money to entrench. In some cases, local counterparts attach more prestige to a relationship with a diplomat than a private consultant, and are more likely to absorb advice delivered or reinforced through this channel. Programmes like the SSDDTP, which are structured to reach the breadth of the security sector, present donor Government officials with a 'force multiplier' in terms of access and leverage. If donor government diplomats fail to take advantage of this situation, some of the gravitas of the core political principles of SSR can be lost, including the crucial link between reform in the security sector and other development initiatives.

In the context of refining SSR implementation methodology, longevity and diversity of experience amongst advisors could perhaps be given greater consideration. The *OECD DAC Handbook* recommends careful recruitment of advisors, but given that the most meticulously crafted programme can be undone by an ineffectual advisor, the issue of individuals as agents of change warrants more deliberate and prioritised attention.

5.4) Conclusion

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan was a bit of a misnomer. It was monumental in terms of the agreement to a referendum on independence, but its provisions for sustaining peace and recalibrating security arrangements were not comprehensive. The SPLA initiated a number of CPA-mandated security reforms, but they were ill-prepared for the broader consequences of these activities. The international community, whilst heavily invested in the peace negotiation process, committed only minimal resources to security reform in the aftermath. By 2009 it was too late to rectify some of the bigger problems, such as stocking the police service with poorly performing soldiers and shunting rival militias into the SPLA. SSR programmes cannot wait for stability when security services themselves are identified as a main source of instability. The signing of the CPA should have represented at least sufficient political stability for the international community to fully engage in Southern Sudan earlier than it did.

When the UK did engage, it approached its SSR programme in Southern Sudan with a clear strategy in place. For the most part, it appears to have attempted to faithfully execute that strategy. At the end of 2012 DFID reported;

> The evidence is clear that SSDDTP has had significant impact in terms of contributing to: enhanced ownership, decision-making, planning, delivery/problem-solving skills of counterparts. Given the low baseline, none of the work streams have yet achieved their full potential in term of benefits to counterparts. Quite rightly the pace of SSDDTP advisory input has been slow and considered to ensure gains in expertise and knowledge transfer are sustained (DFID, 2012b:37).

SPLA counterparts said they ultimately valued the complementarity between the UK's strategic advice and the US' tactical delivery. The SSR programme in Southern Sudan was structured for success. But the country still returned to violent conflict in 2013.

CHAPTER 6

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AND THE MINISTRY OF SPLA AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS

This chapter explores one aspect of the SSR programme in Southern Sudan, that of promoting an appropriate system of civil-military relations, and how this resonated through the creation and operation of the Ministry of SPLA/Defence and Veterans' Affairs. I argue that the construction of security strategy and institutions of civil oversight and control of the armed forces in Southern Sudan may have been unorthodox in sequencing and theoretical approach, but the local context demanded such departure from conventional SSR practice. Furthermore, the UK's SSR programme implementation guidance in Southern Sudan directed that priority be given to the establishment of certain formal, legal-rational institutions, laws, regulations and processes in support of civil oversight and control of the armed forces, in accordance with democratic norms. This is in keeping with the normative basis of SSR. But the traditional, liberal democratic approach to civil-military relations, that which is grounded in the ideological and physical separation of the armed forces from the civil sector and reliant on oversight through legal-rational mechanisms, may not have been the ideal strategy in the context of Southern Sudan. The UK did actually adjust its approach during the course of its programme, and this particular experience with SSR in an African country may contribute to expansion of donor mindsets when it comes to the methodology of achieving 'democratic norms' in terms of the civil-military relationship.

This chapter draws much from the experience of the author as an international SSR advisor in Southern Sudan from 2009 to 2013. Wherever possible it cites published or unpublished documents generated by the Government of South Sudan or the UK Government and its SSR implementing partners. However, South Sudan has a stronger oral culture than written, thus many local decisions and

instructions are undocumented. UK documents are also scarce in that the programme ended abruptly with the onset of civil war in December 2013, and the fact of the SPLA's leading role in that war may account for some donor reluctance to highlight involvement with SSR in South Sudan, and with the SPLA in particular. Other organisations such as the International Security Sector Advisor Team (ISSAT) at the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) provide a summary of various donors' SSR activities in South Sudan, but these papers focus largely on the post-independence period, and rarely mention the Ministry of SPLA/Defence and Veterans' Affairs. As far as the author is aware, little has been published on this institution specifically.

The author was one of the first people to commence work at the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs – and that includes amongst South Sudanese – and left only a few months before the Deputy Minister was arrested and the civil war commenced in 2013. An international advisor's perspective may have inherent sociological bias, and may lack self-critical awareness. I have attempted to overcome these obstacles to present an objective study. Nevertheless, the arguments and analysis here should be considered a mere contribution for future researchers to extract from.

6.1) Civil-Military Relations

Civil-military relations are a national security policy issue. Arguably one of the most important national security policy issues in the liberal democratic tradition, as the concept refers to the fundamental relationship between the state and its military, and how military force is organised based on a balance between the perceived threats the state faces, and the societal values it upholds. The theoretical debate surrounding civil-military relations in the context of a liberal democracy focuses on a basic problematic; "...how to reconcile a military strong enough to do anything the civilians ask them to with a military subordinate enough to do only what civilians authorize them to do." (Feaver, 1996:2). A

military should have coercive power commensurate with the size of the threats to its state, but must be controlled in such a manner that it does not prey on the society that created it, nor involve the state in conflicts that are contrary to societal interests. "A direct seizure of political power by the military is the traditional worry of civil-military relations theory and a consistent pattern in human history." (Feaver, 1999:214). Conversely, too much civil interference to restrain the military can weaken its structure to the point that it is not capable of defending the state against aggressors.

Traditional theories of civil-military relations are represented by Huntington (*The Soldier and the State*, 1957) and Janowitz (*The Professional Soldier*, 1960), which present an objective control and subjective control approach respectively. Both describe the military and the civilian worlds as distinct, with their own peculiar organisational systems and ideologies, the former more conservative and the latter more socially liberal. However, where Huntington suggests that the two should maintain a professional distance, a division of labor based on mutual respect of each other's professional expertise, and civil control should be objectively imposed only to the extent that it does not impinge on military effectiveness, Janowitz advocates subjective convergence; deliberately inculcating the military officer class into intellectually liberal values and principles as a mechanism to restrain aggressive military overreach. Finer (1962) describes this *military disposition* as the prime explanation for how civilians are able to control the military at all. These scholars worked in the post-WWII era and grounded their theories in the context of the liberal democratic state (Bruneau & Matei, 2008:911).

In the post-Vietnam conflict era, scholars like Summers (1982) and McMaster (1998) refined earlier civil-military relations theories, but continued the binary tradition of objective and subjective control. Feaver (2003) then calibrates the idea of a principal-agent model for civil-military relations, in which effective interaction between the two worlds is based on the degree of monitoring the

principal engages in, and the perceived cost of disobedience on the part of the military. In agency theory, the principle of separation of the two worlds remains constant, only the nature of what constitutes effective interaction changes. Feaver's work is also largely grounded in a Western tradition (Bruneau & Matei, 2008:911). In Western scholarship, the civil-military relationship structure invariably emphasises *control*; how to effectively subordinate the military to civil authority, whether through convergence or divergence (Bruneau & Matei, 2008:911).

Whilst traditionalists disagree over the optimum extent of normative political distance between the two worlds that is required for effective civil-military relations, they tend to agree that that distance is maintained through legal-rational mechanisms; institutions, laws, regulations, procedures and other systematised checks and balances, or through functional control mechanisms such as size and budget. Monitoring mechanisms "...are the critical arena for civil military relations in mature democracies." (Feaver, 1999:230). The legal-rational approach applies equally well to institutional, convergence and agency theories. Such mechanisms can either keep the military out of political debate, or incentivize them to engage in it. Bruneau and Matei (2008:916-917) characterise the major mechanisms used by civil/political agents to exercise control over the armed forces as;

> Institutional - includes a wide spectrum of institutions that begin with a clear legal basis; ministries of defence, committees in parliaments, national security councils, ombudsmen.
>
> Oversight – includes not only the formal oversight policies of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, such as legal and constitutional frameworks and codes of conduct, but also engagement with the media, NGOs, academic think tanks and civil society organisations.

> Professional norms – regulations and processes that govern how security actors have been recruited, educated, trained, and promoted, and indeed how they act in accordance with Government policy goals and societal values.

Whichever political tradition of civil-military relations is brandished, each focuses to a certain extent on the ability of legal-rational mechanisms to exert civil oversight and control of the armed forces (even whilst recognising that an overabundance of mechanisms can be self-limiting in that they might provoke military resentment (Feaver, 1999:229)). Oftentimes monitoring mechanisms are drawn to an actual physical setting, like a committee, or document like a constitution. In fact, most regulations or procedures that apply to a national government or security institution are presumed to be written down and consistently disseminated. The *OECD DAC Handbook* offers an extensive set of laws, processes and procedures that should be examined in the context of shaping defence reform. Many of these mechanisms are considered fundamental to good governance. But democratic legal-rationalism may have some limitations outside the cultural bubble of the developed world.

Militaries are institutions calibrated to respond to regulations, but they may not all respond to the same manner in which regulations are created, or proffered. A community such as Southern Sudan, accustomed to respond to a hereditary or charismatic power structure, frequently values a personal judgement over a written law (Santschi, 2014:46-47). Mechanisms that are calculated in a Western democratic tradition (or even ‘Eastern’ authoritarian tradition) of deference to legal-rational authority, may not be the most effective way to achieve a balanced civil-military relationship in an emergent African system like South Sudan.

6.2) Strategy Sequencing

"In the ideal model of civil–military relations, the democratic head of state sets out his or her policy, and armed forces coordinate the means to enable its achievement." (Bruneau & Matei, 2008:918). In the ideal model, the political leadership disseminates a National Security Policy that identifies strategic threats encompassing anything from transnational militancy to internal insurgency, organised crime, natural disaster or food insecurity. It then identifies the resources the state will use to counter threats, be they diplomatic, economic or military, and includes guidance for the institutions employed to address each threat, i.e. the military, the police service, the health ministry or the agriculture advisor.

> Essentially, National Security Policy entails the manner in which a State employs all the elements of national power to secure its interests, while Defence Policy details how the State employs the military element of power within the framework of the National Security Policy (SPLA, 2007: 2nd Plenary Session summary).

Usually, a Defence Ministry then draws from National Security Policy to produce a more detailed statement of Defence Policy, which articulates how the armed forces will be structured and strategically operated in order to meet the threats identified as requiring a military response. The Armed Forces command then draws from Defence policies and strategic plans to guide its doctrine and capability development plans. This is a vast over-simplification, and there are variants on the process, but it serves to demonstrate the top-down approach. In a democracy, the process is structured to reinforce the fundamental notion of civil oversight and control over the armed forces – being that the executive and its ministries are civil institutions. Even scholars with opposing views on the ideal management of civil-military relations, like classical theorists Huntington (1957) and Janowitz (1960), agree that Defence policy decisions in a democracy are made by civilian authorities and imposed on the military, not the other way around.

In 2007, the international donor community organised a workshop for senior Government and SPLA officials in Ethiopia, the purpose of which was to explore the parameters of producing a Defence Policy paper. At this time, the Southern Sudanese had no National Security Policy (or 'sub'-national as the case may be) and no Defence Ministry. The Executive and the Legislative Assembly did not have the capacity to coordinate such development, so in Southern Sudan the process of defence policy-making and institution building became inverted and led from the 'bottom-up'.

The SPLA started by drafting its own operational capability development requirements, then drafted Defence Policy in the form of the *2008 SPLA White Paper on Defence*, which led to the creation of the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs, and eventually ended up providing the basis for the National Security Strategy in 2012. It is without apparent irony that the *SPLA White Paper on Defence,* produced by the SPLA, recognises the civil authority of the virtually non-existent Ministry of SPLA Affairs to produce defence policy White Papers and oversee the SPLA (SPLA, 2008). Such is evidence that the SPLA undertook this process not necessarily for the purpose of intentionally usurping civil control of defence decision-making, but because the strategic-level political guidance the military required was not forthcoming. Reform of the security sector cannot always wait until sufficient political capacity has been built to guide the process, particularly in a conflict-prone arena. So, in this case, the military took on the civil role, without any apparent detriment to democratic stability. In fact, had the SPLA acted even earlier to assert its doctrinal position, its own combat capability may have been less subject to erosion by civil interference in the form of the executive's instruction to integrate tens of thousands of surplus militia forces into its roster. Traditional civil-military relations theory tends to assume that civilians are better at making national security decisions than military personnel– which is palpably not always the case.

In Southern Sudan, the process of creating strategic guidance for the security sector occurred in a way that does not necessarily conform to SSR 'best practices'. International donors initially tried to force the conventional sequencing protocol with production of the 2008 'national' *Security Strategy for Southern Sudan*. However, this document failed as an authoritative statement because it had such little local input or socialisation. As Williams points out, "Most African armed forces do not have the luxury or the latitude of dealing with their various transformational processes in a sequential manner." (Williams, in Schnabel & Ehrhart, 2005:61). In the context of the suspended animation of Southern Sudan's political status as well as the ongoing armed conflict, inverting the process of security policy construction might well be described as prudent - if not for the obvious distortion of the civil-military control dynamic.

Once created, the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs, as an institutional mechanism of civil oversight and control, then engaged in the process of creating other formal, legal-rational mechanisms used for civil oversight and control of the armed forces in accordance with democratic norms. This process was largely driven by international SSR advisors. Much of this effort traces the path of traditional, Eurocentric doctrine, which permeates the African civil-military relations landscape; "Virtually all African security institutions in general, and armed forces in particular, are mirror reflections of their former colonial security institutions." (Williams, 2005:66). The SSR programme was never completed and thus actual indoctrination of reformed governance principles was not widespread. Nevertheless, there are signs that formal mechanisms of management control may have ultimately had limitations in the local political culture and context.

6.3) Controlling the SPLA

In 2005 the region of Southern Sudan had virtually no functional government institutions (except perhaps the SPLA). Everything could be created from scratch

and structural relationships were open to debate. In terms of the political-military environment, the situation in Southern Sudan echoed many of the problematic issues of defence reform that are highlighted in the *OECD DAC Handbook*;

> Because control over the military is central to the exercise of political power, particular challenges arise with regard to democratic governance and oversight. In many countries, militaries have frequently been involved in politics and usurped governments or had significant influence over them (OECD, 2007:124).

In the tradition of classical civil-military relations theory, the implication of the above statement is that military involvement in politics is an undesirable situation. This assumption is made clearer in the *OECD DAC Handbook* by the contextual location of the quote; following a lament that post-conflict militaries are often violators of human rights and used for purposes of repression, and preceding a warning that such militaries can often capture a disproportionate share of scarce economic resources through legal or illegal activities (OECD DAC, 2007:124). The physical and ideological separation of the military from the political sphere is thus ideal, for the purposes of liberal democratic SSR.

In Southern Sudan, the SPLA morphed into the governing regime and, even after the public decoupling of the soldiers from the politicians, many observers still believed there was a real risk that the SPLA remained intimately linked to the SPLM and would follow the same path as other African forces into the business of regime protection. "South Sudan is not a country with a military. Rather, it is a military with a country. In this respect, the SPLA...are a social and political network that reaches right through all aspects of state, government and society." (Astill-Brown, 2014:9). SPLA leaders could end up inappropriately dominating the political sphere, allowing the military to operate without any credible checks or balances, such that are necessary for effective democratic civil oversight – according to traditional civil-military relations theory. Reorienting the security

command leadership away from participation in the political sphere should level the balance between protection of the state and protection of the people. This reorientation hinges on the structural integrity of the relationship at the macro level between the main parties, which should remain *distinct* and be defined by legal-rational institutional mechanisms.

> Much of this tradition can be traced back to the earlier writings of Samuel Huntington, who emphasized the subordination of the armed forces to a diversity of more "traditional' Western-styled checks and balances emanating from regulations, military procedures, military command and control patterns, and legislative oversight, for instance (Williams, 2005:53).

John Garang appeared to grasp the concept early in his own ideological conversion from socialism to democracy, when he formally separated the SPLA and SPLM. However, leadership decrees and laws are only the starting point for this endeavour, entrenching attitudes and behaviours requires more effort. Noting the number of military officers who still held simultaneous political positions after the signing of the CPA, the international community remained unconvinced that, absent institutionalised checks and balances, the SPLA could be held in effective control by its civil political system (Astill-Brown, 2014:9). A Ministry of Defence is one of the primary institutional mechanisms designed to exercise oversight of the military on behalf of the parliament and the public. The international community, and the UK Government in particular, became vested in the creation of a defence ministry for South Sudan as part of the civil-military separation strategy.

6.4) Why do we need a Ministry of Defence?

The recommendation to create a defence ministry was initially confusing to many in the SPLA and SPLM (Chuter, 2007:234). Such an organisation on the surface appears designed to re-merge the political and the military worlds. At this point

in time, the SPLA still saw itself as an equivalent counterpart to the SPLM; the political and military spheres existing side-by-side, not military subordinate to political. They did not see the point of a civilian-led, defence institution appearing between the military and political spheres, let alone being inserted above them to scrutinise their activities and hold them accountable for their expenditure (Chuter, 2007:234-247). Defence ministries are not uncommon in Africa. Most countries have one, or a similar institution that constitutes political authority over the armed forces. Williams (2005:58) argues that this is because defence management in African nations is historically influenced by Western concepts and traditions through a legacy of European colonialism. It is not necessarily a natural construct.

When SPLA leaders asked advisors at the 2007 *White Paper* workshop 'why do we need a defence ministry, what value does it add?' The answer focused on the institution as an important element of democratic good governance, providing an accurate if somewhat circular argument;

> "Why is there a need for a defence ministry?" It is not the question of why a defence ministry, it is why not. The government must be in control of all activities of the state, and to be accountable for all of them. Defence is no different. Defence is a big and important function and requires a lot of finance. A properly structured democracy therefore has a ministry of defence (Chuter, 2007:236-237).

A defence ministry has a practical role, alongside the normative one, in a democratic state. A defence ministry both advocates for the military, particularly in relation to budget and acquisitions, and holds the military to account for its actions and expenditure. It has a role in providing defence policy advice to the government, and implementing policy on behalf of the government. It controls the military's budget on behalf of the government. It monitors military training, practices and equipment acquisition to ensure they conform with international law and standards, particularly in relation to the potential for human rights

abuses. A ministry provides a certain credibility to monitoring activities that could not be achieved by the military monitoring itself. The role of a defence ministry is vital in the liberal democratic context; it is supposed to widen the distance between the political world and the military world.

A defence ministry is a civil institution, used to temper possible military excess. Feaver (1999:216) refers to society as having a belief in the 'moral competence' of a civilian to make decisions about the strategic use of armed force, more so than a military person, who may have a less restrained temperament. A defence ministry in a democracy is most often led by a civilian. As a Government ministry in a democracy, it is presumed to be a 'civilian' organisation. But the reality is that many positions in a defence ministry are staffed by military personnel. This is as necessary for a defence ministry as it is for an education ministry to have staff with experience in teaching, or a health ministry to employ staff with a medical background. They are the technical experts of the organisation. In understanding the principle of civil oversight and control of the armed forces it is necessary to remain cognizant of an important distinction; a defence ministry is a *civil* institution, but is not exclusively staffed by *civilians*, and does not need to be in order to perform civil oversight functions. It may seem that the terms *civil* and *civilian* are used interchangeably in the context of the topic of this chapter, but they are not. In the same manner 'civilian world' and 'political world/sphere' have also been used with distinct semantic intention – to differentiate on the basis that the political world may not be exclusively civilian. It is the failure to note this distinction that SSR scholars like Rocky Williams (2005) think has obscured potential alternative approaches to the organisation of civil-military relations in the African context.

6.5) SSR Approach to the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs

For the Southern Sudanese, there was no particularly urgency to operationalise the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs. Despite a commitment in the *SPLA White Paper* to do so, the summary notes of local workshops sponsored by international donors in 2007 demonstrate that the purpose of a defence ministry was not conceptually well-understood resulting in a lack of local champions for the endeavor (Kiir, 2007). A Minister for SPLA Affairs was appointed to the cabinet in 2007, but he was given only a small administrative support staff and he struggled with a role that was never clearly defined (Rands, 2010:39). The Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs continued to exist mostly in the pages of the *SPLA White Paper on Defence*. The SPLA had created the institution, but didn't know what to do with it. When UK SSR programme Defence advisors arrived in mid-2009 they almost outnumbered the Southern Sudanese staff appointed to the Ministry. Ultimately, it was international advisors that really drove the expansion of the institution (ASI, 2009b).

The *OECD DAC Handbook* on SSR does not explicitly reference defence institution building. The chapter on implementing defence reform highlights key issues that could be addressed by a defence ministry, or by the military, depending on local structure and context. The *Handbook* does not rigidly instruct what a security sector should look like in terms of institutions, agencies or organisations, it focuses more on principles and strategies. However, a defence ministry appears to stand out by virtue of its absence in the literature. Other institutions such as a Ministry of Interior or National Security Council are included. If the purpose and function of a defence ministry initially eluded the Southern Sudanese, the *OECD DAC Handbook* would not help in terms of clarification.

Despite the absence of guidance regarding establishment of a defence ministry in the OECD SSR framework, the UK included the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans'

Affairs in its capacity-building plans for Southern Sudan, alongside some key defence reform objectives framed around *OECD DAC Handbook* prescription (2007:124);

- Develop democratic control over defence policy and the armed forces, including a constitutional and legal framework and civilian oversight and management.
- Introduce integrated approaches to policy development, military expenditure, human resource planning, and management of military assets
- Improve budgetary processes for increased transparency and accountability of defence sector allocations and management.
- Encourage civil society debate and citizens' awareness of and engagement with defence reform issues.

The first objective, in part, envelopes the following three. Technical improvements in the policy-making process, accounting practices and personnel management, are ultimately aimed at ensuring the parliament and public are able to scrutinise the armed forces to ensure they are getting value for money – in both a financial and political sense. The first objective also emphasises a legal-rational framework for defence management, and 'civilian' oversight. It is unclear whether the use of 'civilian' instead of 'civil' was a grammatical oversight, or simply a reflection of the lack of distinction between the terms in the Western understanding of civil-military relations.

The *SPLA White Paper on Defence* allocates six directorates to the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs; policy and planning, finance, public relations, procurement, military production (engagement in industrial, commercial or retail enterprises for sustenance or profit) and legal oversight through the office of an Inspector General. This is not a comprehensive list of tasks that a defence ministry might undertake in a democratic system, but it was a solid foundation to build upon. As at July 2009, four directorates still actually reported to the SPLA Chief of General Staff rather than the Under Secretary of the Ministry. The other

two directorates, Policy and Planning and Public Relations, between them had only two staff members - who were military officers on secondment (ASI, 2009).

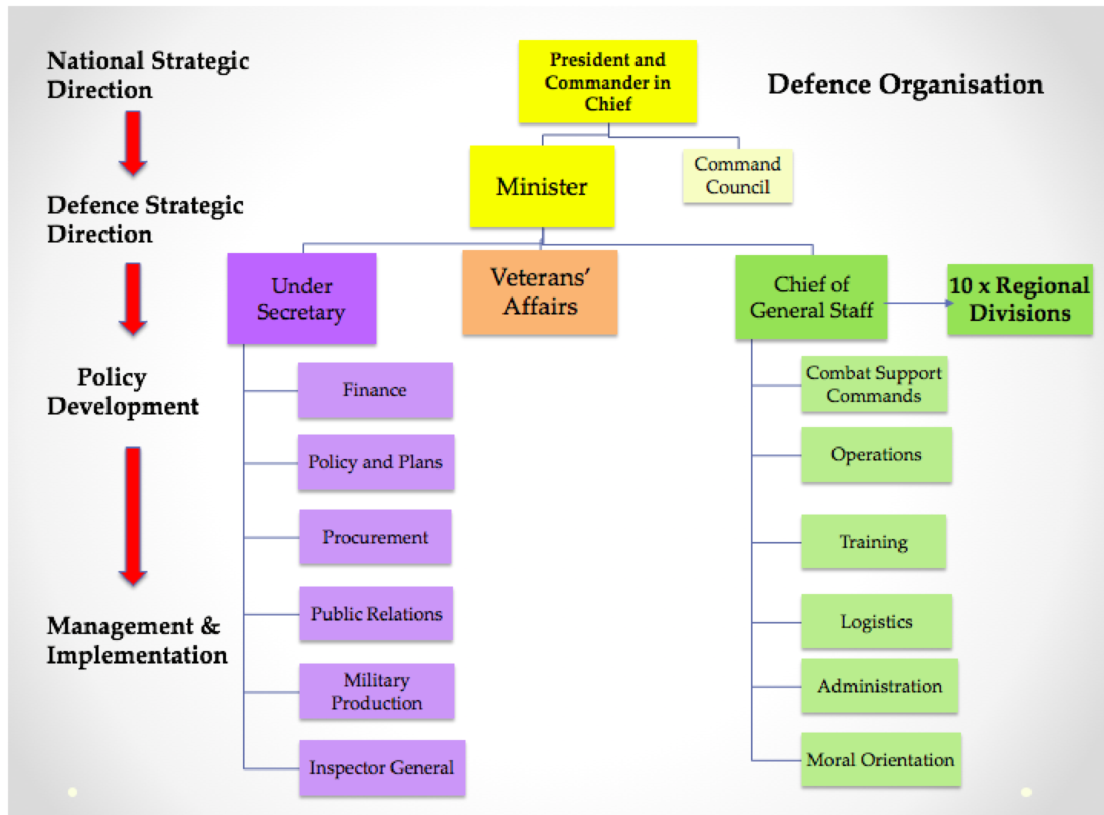

Figure 1. *Defence Organisation - August 2009*. Author's own chart design using information extracted from the *2008 SPLA White Paper on Defence*.

Structurally, the Under Secretary of the Ministry and the SPLA Chief of General Staff were designed to sit side-by-side, holding equivalent 'rank', and both reporting directly to an elected cabinet Minister. This is an integrated civil-military structure recognisable in the UK, Australia, New Zealand and in other British-influenced forces. In Southern Sudan the structure was adopted by suggestion of the international partners assisting in the drafting of the *SPLA White Paper on Defence.* But it was a visual delusion. The real power relationship ran directly from the Chief of General Staff to the President, and the Under

Secretary was never considered equivalent to the Chief (Rands, 2010:40). Formalising the structure as a diarchy reporting to a civilian Minister was considered important for the purpose of inculcating the normative democratic principle of civil supremacy over the armed forces. However, it would have been unrealistic to think that publication of an organisational diagram outlining reporting chains would be sufficient to change the reality of personal power relationships. There are numerous stories of the Chief of General Staff ignoring the formal reporting structure and going directly to the President on issues of funding and weapons acquisition – requests that were often granted (Rands, 2010:40). Effective democratic civil oversight mechanisms, or normative principles, require not only *military disposition* towards civil supremacy, but in fact that civil authorities also promote the principle. It was clear in Southern Sudan that both the President and the SPLA Chief viewed the former as the only necessary 'civilian' to be consulted. Nevertheless, the formal structure remained on paper as a goal attuned to that point in the future when the totality of the idea of civil supremacy might have actual resonance.

In the beginning, there was little option but to staff the Ministry with SPLA officers and soldiers. There were no defence policy and planning experts in the civilian community. SPLA members were 'posted' to the Ministry, but remained as serving military members. Although to the outside democratic world, a Ministry of Defence should present a civilian facade, inside the context of Southern Sudan a certain number of military staff needed to be maintained. One of the most critical factors for success of the Ministry was the relationship it had with the SPLA Headquarters. The balance of power lay with the Headquarters and for the Ministry to gain any leverage, it had to be credible in the eyes of the SPLA (Rands, 2010:39-41). Civilians with no military background would not be credible. Though there are exceptions; civilians with technical expertise in financial management or computer engineering are acceptable. But civilians in areas like defence planning or procurement of military equipment would have struggled for credibility and damaged the relationship with the SPLA

Headquarters. Such credibility warnings are not provided in the *OECD DAC Handbook*, which as mentioned previously, does not address the establishment of a defence ministry, and only obliquely references civil-military relations in the context of institutional separation of the military from the political sphere. For the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs to be able to function as a mechanism for civil oversight, it had to have credibility in the eyes of the SPLA Headquarters, and to be credible in the eyes of the SPLA, it had to employ military personnel in key roles. Civilians could only be transitioned in gradually. DFID (2012) missed the mark when it rated the performance of SSDDTP poorly on the objective of enhancing the capacity of the Ministry to act as a civil oversight and control mechanism – with the reasoning that there were not enough civilians employed in the building.

6.6) Institutionalising Oversight and Control Mechanisms

> Democratic civil control of the SPLA must be strengthened by institutionalising the working arrangements between the Ministry, the SPLA and other bodies with responsibility for security sector oversight within the GOSS and Legislative Assembly, in particular the Committee on Public Order and Security. The Ministry's understanding of its responsibilities for civil democratic control of the SPLA and its current working arrangements will be clarified with the Minister, H.E. Lt Gen Nhial Deng Nhial and the Under Secretary, Lt Gen Bior Ajang, and a regular meeting schedule with a standing agenda and published minutes will be negotiated. A means to disseminate and implement recommendations will be developed with the Minister. This activity will make democratic civil control of the SPLA more transparent and effective (ASI, 2009:26).

SSDDTP advisors assisted the Minister, Under Secretary and SPLA Chief to clarify their respective roles in detailed written documents. The responsibilities of each in terms of the others, and in terms of responding to other organs of government, were also either mandated through Legislative or Executive orders. Working arrangements were organised, committees were established, procedures drafted,

and legal mechanisms ratified, all in support of enshrining principles of transparent and accountable defence management that is responsive to civil oversight and control. The Ministry established an Ombudsman position, a Public Relations officer and a civil society liaison as avenues for members of the public to access the SPLA. They published *Transformation Plans* and held consultative workshops with other Government departments invited to dialogue on defence policy. There were real SSR champions amongst the SPLA and Ministry leadership, and it is a disservice to say, as the media frequently does, that the SPLA was wholly opposed to the principle of civil control. In fact, when the South Sudan civil war broke out in 2013 (the subject of the next chapter), the senior military command did not attempt to overthrow its political leaders. A small grace in the face of significant brutal behaviour by SPLA soldiers during the conflict, but nonetheless evidence of a determination by a small set of SPLA leaders that South Sudan would not become a military dictatorship. That said, it is unclear how effective many of the international advisor-driven legal-rational mechanisms actually were, and how much the principles of good governance were truly absorbed by the broader SPLA community.

SSDDTP advisors assisted an oversight body of the Legislative Assembly called the Public Order and Security Committee. Operationalising this Committee involved extensive work on legal and procedural foundations, as well as collaboration with the Ministry of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs and other security agencies to ensure that these institutions were prepared to respond to the Legislative Committee's requests for information, or attend formal inquiries when summoned. This was not a simple exercise. Committee members had little understanding of their function and were frequently absent (ASI, 2012:38). For their part, many SPLA and Ministry seniors felt little need to respond to a Committee of civilians demanding to know about their budget or preparations for operational security tasks. These were secret things only to be discussed with the President – in this sense there was scant understanding of how the civil oversight principle functions. The Committee had a strong Chairman who eventually managed to

entrench himself at the centre of national security dialogue, principally by developing personal relationships with security agency heads (ASI, 2012:38). But he and the other Committee members, were barely interested in formalising the Committee operating system.

> It was clear that there is little appetite for introducing more coherent principles and procedures – culturally, regular meetings of the Committee without a clear and urgent purpose is foreign. Instead active members congregate informally in the Chairman's office (ASI, 2012:39).

But what if what is described as 'informality' by international advisors is actually a more effective way of doing business in the local context? A purely legal-rational approach was not effective. Advisors struggled to convince even the most convivial counterparts to participate in official Committee inquiries, but these same civil and military authorities conducted business together easily in informal settings. And the results of decisions-made in these contexts were disseminated by participants through their patronage networks. Notes were not taken for archiving, but this is an oral culture, there is no guarantee that written notes or orders would have any authority – except to international advisors. In this circumstance, advisors are left with a choice, to embrace the informal in order to achieve practical results, even if it contradicts principles of good governance – particularly transparency – or to persist with the imposition of proper democratic principles and procedures, even if they are ineffective. Good governance principles obviously can't be wholly abandoned, they are the core of SSR, but the mechanisms perhaps don't always have to come from the standard legal-rational suite.

In the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, the Public Order and Security Committee, the Ministry of SPLA Affairs and the SPLA Headquarters, many decisions were made and objectives achieved through informal mechanisms. Hilde Johnson's (2016) account of her own political interactions in South

Sudanese homes and restaurants, and her frustration at not being able to determine if decisions made or statements given in this context could be considered 'official' or not, demonstrates the clash of political cultures. In Southern Sudan, an informal decision based on personal interaction may well take precedence over a procedural, legal or even constitutional provision. Encouraging this type of decision-making does not comply with democratic norms of good governance. Nevertheless, such procedures have been accepted by international advisors as a necessary compromise on the road to compliance. This is at the heart of contemporary efforts to revise SSR; to narrow the gap between policy and practice (Sedra, 2010:1-12). This may mean adopting alternative civil oversight and control mechanisms, and embracing a non-traditional civil-military relations approach.

6.7) Concordance Theory of Civil-Military Relations

Rebecca Schiff, in *Civil-military Relations Reconsidered: A Theory of Concordance*, is one of the leading proponents of concordance theory, which emphasises a cooperative partnership between the military, the civil state and the citizenry, rather than a distinct separation. In fact, this triumvirate partnership "...may or may not involve separation but does not require it." (Schiff, 1995:17). Schiff does not necessarily advocate for military officers to serve as part of the Executive or Legislature, but claims that concordance theory explains the case where significant military involvement in political decision-making has not led to significant deterioration of democratic stability, as other theories might suggest would occur.

Concordance theory rejects the traditional banners of civil-military relations theory whereby; the military is physically and ideologically separated from political institutions, soldiers are apolitical technocrats, and control processes are anchored in formal, legal-rational checks and balances. Rather, concordance theory is concerned with context specific norms, customs and values in the

determination of an effective civil-military oversight construct. It avoids superimposing a generic tradition on a particular country but instead "Concordance theory explains which major aspects of a nation should be in agreement in order to prevent domestic military intervention." (Schiff, 1995:19). Williams, arguing in the context of African countries, takes a similar position in saying that a focus on institutional separation arrangements is not a panacea to the problematic of civil-military relations;

> ...the effective subordination of the armed forces to civil control is not a necessary outcome of the institutional separation of the armed forces from civil authorities. Effective civil-military relations are achieved...via the extent to which political, military, and civil actors find agreement, and accommodate one another, in the definition of the values and objectives of the armed forces (Williams, 2005:53).

Between 2005-2013, Southern Sudan was a region stuck in a negative peace – between wars. The absence of major armed conflict provided some space for development towards greater political, social and economic justice, but violent insurgencies and border incursions persisted. The threat of return to major armed conflict lingered heavily throughout the interim CPA period (Astill-Brown, 2014:4-5). The SPLA, the lead force in the liberation struggle and the largest organised institution in the Government, may have actually had a legitimate claim to engagement in political decision-making based on an agreed description of Southern Sudan's most pressing needs at the time. However, the international community had a clear 'democratisation' agenda, which meant separating the military from the political decision-making sphere. It is possible that this effort actually weakened both.

Williams (2005:51) suggests that the very idea of an 'apolitical' soldier is not only erroneous, but is not a necessary aspiration for a democratising country. Armed forces' involvement in politics is largely benign in established democracies, but it

still exists in the construction of the identity of the corporate soldier and in the relationship between the military and the civil state.

> It is not only inevitable that the armed forces will be "political", but it is also perhaps desirable that they are so inclined. It is imperative that the armed forces of developing countries, and particularly those that are involved in the delicate task of consolidating democracy, are fully conversant with the democratic features of the system which they serve." (Williams, 2005:52).

Williams is not just talking about inculcating the professional military officer into prevailing societal values as a method of subjective control. Concordance theory explains that distinct separation governed by legal-rational mechanisms is not the only way of achieving the appropriate military disposition towards societal values, and hence effective subordination to civil control. Integration of professional military officers into the political system based on a set of agreed, needs-based criteria can assist the democratisation process by avoiding the risks associated with a harsh, rapid severance of the military from quasi-political leadership roles in the context of a newly establishing country like South Sudan.

Until a policy decree in May 2008, SPLA officers still held simultaneous positions in the SPLM party, and even in senior Government roles, in fact, "...the number of individuals wearing "two hats" was so great as to make it difficult to distinguish between the two organisations as their structures overlaid each other." (ASI 2009:5). This was not an acceptable situation for the international community. However, this duality might have been embraced, if not at least tolerated, by an advocate of concordance theory. More important than the institutional arrangements are the coalescence of views on the needs of each partner in the civil-military macro relationship. From an operational point of view, the military still has to accept subordinate status in order to qualify as a democratic system, but the relationship does not have to be conditioned by the same set of

parameters that contain military, state and citizenry relationships in the Western liberal tradition.

Williams (2005:53) argues that SSR policy makers and practitioners need to 'disenthrall themselves' of the concepts of civil-military relations and civil control of the armed forces that they so regularly adhere to in multiple contexts. Concepts of military sociology that have been pervasively influenced by the Western experience of civil-military relations (Williams, 2005:53). In Africa, practice needs to be calibrated to local traditions of the relationship between the state, the military and the citizens. These relationships tend to be more intertwined in post-conflict countries, particularly where there is a liberating armed force that has achieved a political goal and enjoys the general support of the population (Astill-Brown, 2014:10). Contemporary assessments of the SPLA and SSR in Southern Sudan unfailingly criticise the inability of programme implementers to force the separation of the SPLA from the political sphere, and cite this as the catalyst for continuing armed conflict. It was not for lack of effort, enhancing democratic civil oversight was at the core of every donor's SSR programme, yet the effort clearly did not achieve stated objectives. Criticism may well be justified, in terms of the failure to achieve stated objectives. But even with the benefit of hindsight, critics don't appear to delve into actual analysis of the civil-military relations approach, they are wedded to a singular critical path;

> The political and military sphere in the Republic of South Sudan is still very much inter-connected. The only sustainable way to promote a demilitarization of the South Sudanese society and to break political patronage is to disconnect the security services from the SPLM (Breitung et. al., 2016:8).

Between 2005 and 2013, there was no shortage of institutional mechanisms designed for civil oversight and control of the armed forces. Laws, policies, regulations, Presidential decrees and even the Constitution separated the military from the political sphere. The GOSS and Ministry of SPLA and Veterans Affairs

(and later, Ministry of Defence and Veterans' Affairs), created multiple legal-rational mechanisms to govern civil-military relations on the basis of physical and ideological separation. The SPLA and SPLM paid public homage to these laws and mechanisms, and then somewhat ignored them. These mechanisms clashed with the existing political culture, oral traditions and system of personal patronage. By 2018 it should be clear that a different approach to civil-military relations is required

Williams' normative interpretation of concordance theory, as applied in the post-conflict African context, does not discount the implementation of an overarching legal-rational framework to identify the distinct roles and responsibilities of the military *vis a vis* the political elite and the domestic community. Such a framework is valuable, as are security policy and strategy statements that guide SSR in an open and transparent manner. International SSR advisors discovered early on that the key to any civil oversight institution functioning lay not in the procedural mechanisms, but in the relationship between the participants, and what they were willing to agree on to accommodate each other's needs.

There is a certain parallel with administration of the justice sector in Southern Sudan, where customary law still takes precedence over statutory law in many regions. The key findings of a study conducted by the United States Institute of Peace and the Rift Valley Institute in 2099/2010 included;

> Customary law itself is not simply a set of rules and sanctions, but a contextually defined process, involving flexibility, negotiation, and reinterpretation of a dynamic body of knowledge to reflect what is considered reasonable under the circumstances. Due to historical [colonial] influences, it is often conducted with reference to rules, but the application of such rules is inherently contestable. ... People frequently express preference for just such negotiated, flexible settlements that take into account the particular social contexts of disputes, rather than any rigid application of written laws (USIP/RVI, 2010:7).

It is a drastic notion to suggest that removal of the military from the political sphere should not necessarily be the primary goal of SSR, or any democratisation effort in South Sudan. This is counter-intuitive to democratic sensibility. However, such a political-military separation was clearly not the intention of any of those in power in Southern Sudan up to 2013, even though it was also not the SPLA's intention to overthrow the Government. South Sudan in many ways exemplifies the hypothesis that military overthrow of the civil Government is not a necessary condition of military enrolment in political positions or participation in political decision-making processes.

The private organisation 'The Sentry', which investigates financial corruption in conflict areas in Africa, has produced compelling analysis of widespread embezzlement, fraud and misappropriation of public funds by the elite levels of the SPLA and GOSS (The Sentry, 2015). Various international organisations like the UN and Human Rights Watch have collected vast evidence of brutality and human rights abuses committed by the SPLA in the protection of their own interests (Breitung et. al., 2016:20-21). This thesis is not a defence of the SPLA or these actions, but offers the suggestion that accommodating the military institution's political needs in an inclusive fashion, rather than just railing against it in the name of a foreign democratic ideal, may be a more effective path to human security.

6.8) Conclusion

The UK SSR-Defence Transformation programme advocated a strong formal-legalistic approach to civil-military relations in the area of oversight and control of the armed forces, based on the principle of the professional soldier as apolitical and separate from the political sphere. It is evident in the reading that laws, regulations and procedures, from the CPA and the *Constitution* through to the 2008 *SPLA White Paper,* the 2009 *SPLA Act* (military by-laws), the *SPLA Code of Conduct*, and a suite of Ministerial and Legislative Committee instructions, and even the establishment of the Ministry of SPLA Affairs itself, that the traditional approach to civil-military relations was becoming entrenched. This traditional approach is part of the suite of accepted democratic norms in SSR. But there is also evidence that programme methodology needed to be adjusted over time and alternative tactics used in recognition of the customary approach to decision-making and conflict resolution in Southern Sudan.

The civilian Government in Southern Sudan did not initially take the helm in devising a national security strategy or defence policy, as SSR methodology would prefer – that was largely done by the SPLA. The SPLA's involvement in security policy decision-making during the CPA interim period was born of necessity and not necessarily designed to usurp civil authority. There is evidence that the SPLA was willing to accept a measure of civil oversight and control in the early days, and it did not just create sycophantic oversight mechanisms. The military's continued participation in the political sphere did not, at this stage, constitute a threat to democratic stability. Given the contemporaneous ubiquity of the SPLA in social, political and economic life, it may have even been a stabilising measure.

Concordance theory was advanced through observation of developing countries in the way they organised civil-military relations in the transitional process of democratising. Concordance theory focuses on the organisation of civil-military relations around the norms, customs and values of the particular society, and

explains how societies with little formal mechanisms of civil oversight and control might still manage to govern in a democratic fashion. In such societies, the overall aim is still to subordinate the military to civil control, a democratic fundamental, but concordance theory suggests that there are alternatives to the traditional Western model of achieving that subordination. Such models do not necessarily exclude the military from the political sphere, but engage them in a way that acknowledges the value of their contribution whilst also develops the appropriate military disposition towards civil control.

It would be difficult to argue that democratic norms and processes be abandoned in the face of contrary contexts, that would defeat the point of SSR – it is a liberal democratic interventionist exercise, and one that aims to generate improved human security through proven methods. But it is worth exploring alternative approaches to the way that militaries are controlled in a democratic state, how much separation is really required, and the way that SSR programmes are designed around Western doctrine and structures. The following chapter explores some facets of the South Sudanese political-military culture that should not be ignored in the context of designing an effective SSR programme in the future.

CHAPTER 7

SSR AS A CONFLICT PREVENTION MECHANISM

Why did SSR fail to provide a platform from which to divert a return to violent conflict in South Sudan in 2013? The OECD assertion is that an effective SSR programme helps to stabilise physical security, improve access to justice, and democratise management systems, thus creating an environment that enables sustainable peace and development (OECD, 2007:3). Yet, in 2013, in spite of all efforts, the newly independent South Sudan again became embroiled in widespread, violent armed conflict. The contemporary source of the conflict lies in an elite leadership dispute over access to power and resources, but it plays out between ethnic community groups; "Both sides have used ethnicity to fuel conflict in order to stay in power." (Astill-Brown, 2014:11). SPLA soldiers are fully-embroiled protagonists, fighting on both sides, who attack civilians as a matter of strategy, leading many commentators to blame inadequate military reform for the ferocity of the conflict: "While it was not unexpected that a political crisis could lead to violence, its speed, scale and scope can best be explained from within the security forces, dating back to 2005." (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4598). It appears that the SSR programme failed to act as a stabilisation or conflict prevention mechanism.

It may be that the SSR programme in South Sudan was sound, but simply did not have sufficient time to take effect, or was not sufficiently reinforced by other political reconciliation or development initiatives. SSR is supposed to *contribute* to greater overall stability in a conflict-prone country, reform in the security sector cannot alone prevent violent conflict. There are some observers, including Hilde Johnson (2016) and Matthew Arnold & Matthew Le Riche (2012), who argue that inadequate resources were devoted to resolving problems within the SPLA in the early stages of the CPA interim period, particularly between 2006 and 2009. The lack of political and diplomatic engagement to complement technical

support was also a limiting factor. Even when SSR donors became more fully invested, and better coordinated, after independence, they were focused at the center for a long time, leaving security and justice mechanisms in the regions to flounder. All of the issues raised in earlier chapters about timing, resourcing, lack of reinforcement and poor decisions like the OAG integration and DDR process, are strong contributive factors for the apparent failure of SSR to perform as a conflict prevention mechanism in South Sudan. There are also multiple other drivers of conflict, aside from the security forces, in the political and socio-economic environment of South Sudan. However, there is an intriguing argument that a misinterpretation of local political culture meant that external efforts to introduce institutions of liberal democracy may have been predestined to fail.

This chapter examines why the SSR programme was ineffectual in preventing a return to armed conflict in South Sudan, with a particular focus on discord between the normative principles of SSR and the local political culture. Alex de Waal's (2015) thesis on the political marketplace in the Horn of Africa, and the traditional approach to the management of armed actors within the construct of political power brokering in South Sudan, provides a valuable contribution to thinking about revision of SSR policy.

7.1) SSR norms

SSR is supposed to help create a secure environment that enables sustainable peace and development to occur. Ensuring that security forces operate efficiently within the rule of law and with respect for human rights, and advocating behavioral change at the leadership level in accordance with democratic principles of good governance, is supposed to improve human security and reduce the risk of violent conflict. In post-conflict countries, particularly in Africa, uniformed security services are frequently cited as one of the main sources of community insecurity. Corruption, ill-discipline and abusive behaviour towards the population characterise many transitional forces, and the SPLA is no

exception, "...many people see the security forces themselves—including the police, the SPLA, and other armed groups—as major sources of threats to their security and as perpetrators of crime and human rights abuses." (USIP, 2010:47). The SSR hypothesis seems sound in this context; changing the managerial and operational behaviour of the SPLA should help to stabilise the environment and allow development programmes to flourish.

The analysis of UK SSR programme design and implementation mechanisms in previous chapters demonstrates an approach that largely mirrored OECD best-practices in its intent, including calibration of the programme to the historical and political realities of the local environment. It even adjusted theoretical understanding of civil-military relations and introduced additional institutional mechanisms where the *OECD DAC Handbook* failed to provide direct guidance. There were governance projects alongside train and equip projects and community acceptance initiatives. Police training and CSO advocacy support from international donors accelerated in 2010 and continued through the transition to independence. After independence, the UN boosted its involvement in SSR activities. The international community may not have been perfectly coordinated in its efforts, but there is evidence of a clear attempt to address key sources of instability. Yet, despite all efforts, South Sudan became mired in violent conflict little more than two years after independence, and the SPLA was at the heart of that violence.

7.2) The 2013 Civil War

In July 2013 the South Sudanese President, Dr. Salva Kiir Mayardit, a member of the Dinka tribe, dismissed his Vice President, Dr. Riek Machar, a Nuer tribal member, citing his belief that Dr. Machar intended to launch a coup against him (Astill-Brown, 2014:6). Machar had threatened to leave the government on several previous occasions due to what he claimed was the President's intent to delay future elections in order to retain his position of power for as long as

possible. As well as dismissing the Vice President, President Kiir replaced most of the Government's 29 Ministers at the same time, effectively eliminating Machar's support in the Parliament (Astill-Brown, 2014:6). Nevertheless, power in South Sudan is tied as much to ethnicity and tribal affiliation as it is to titled positions of leadership. Machar retained the overwhelming support of the Nuer community and tensions simmered for the next five months.

On 15 December 2013, following an acrimonious SPLM National Party Convention, political tensions boiled over into violent conflict on the streets of the capital, Juba. Accounts of what happened that day differ, but the consensus seems to be that soldiers of the Presidential Guard, which Kiir had ensured was heavily stocked with ethnic Dinka, spontaneously attacked a group of Nuer soldiers in central Juba, fuelled by unfounded rumours of a coup (McCormick, 2015). Word of the attack soon infected SPLA and police battalions across the city, and from there spilled out into the civilian community. It quickly became a contest of Dinka versus Nuer on the streets of the capital (HRW, 2017:2). The speed of the ensuing carnage overwhelmed assistance agencies like the UN, which reported thousands of frightened people on the doorstep of its small camp in Juba within hours of the first killings (Copeland, 2015:27). Within days the conflict had spread further afield to regional cities.

The manner in which the earlier civil wars of Sudan were fought is partly to blame for why the newly minted South Sudan descended into violence in 2013. The divisive approach adopted by Khartoum since the end of colonialism – co-opting proxy Southern militias and using them to fight against other Southern groups – left a legacy of distrust amongst the South Sudanese leadership. The nature of the conflict resolution process – the CPA – did not adequately address the social divisions between North and South, let alone between fractured Southern groups (Astill-Brown, 2014:11).

The delicate ethnic cohesion of the SPLA at both the headquarters and regional commands collapsed easily at the start of the conflict. The programme of absorbing former militia into the SPLA in order to 'buy peace' in South Sudan appeared to fail in spectacular fashion. The lack of internal mechanisms to reconcile the myriad of traditionally inimical groups that had been imposed upon the SPLA by political expediency, resulted in an ethnic split through the military that saw the country's largest armed actor turn against itself, and against the community.

The signs of impending political conflict were apparently clear to anyone who understood the mechanics of the North-South conflict and the lack of reconciliation processes. Independence would not bring long sought-after peace, only shift the forum of conflict. In a prescient warning, UK advisors argued that;

> Once independence is agreed, the unifying cause of achieving statehood will give way to a less edifying spectacle as previously deferred rivalries and resentments start to come to the surface. In theory, the process of drafting a new constitution and of agreeing the nature and term in office of the IG [Interim Government] offers the possibility of resolving these issues peacefully. But this is likely to prove difficult, offering the prospect of increasingly heated debate and the possibility of political disagreements escalating into (at least local) violence and conflict (Astill-Brown, 2010:2).

The Council on Foreign Relations estimates that more than 50,000 people were violently killed in South Sudan's Civil War between December 2013 and May 2017, and over 1.9 million displaced from their homes (CFR, 2017:1). Human Rights Watch claims that civilians were not just 'collateral damage' of the armed conflict surrounding them; "…targeted killings of civilians and mass pillage and destruction of civilian property lie at the heart of how parties to this conflict are fighting this war." (HRW 2016:2).

Could SSR have been tackled differently to circumvent this war? Perhaps the problem was not the failure to create the military disposition necessary for subordinate status, but the inability of the civil leadership to exercise its control democratically. For all that the UK, UN and US and other donors had contributed in security and development assistance, when the crisis arose, none had any political influence. The US admitted it could not even get President Kiir on the telephone for the first three days (McCormick, 2015).

7.3) Problems with the Normative Political Basis of SSR

Multiple scholars argue that SSR is designed to reinforce and protect the liberal world order. Duffield (2007) posits that the whole international development agenda is predicated on a need to ensure that certain problems of fragile states, like organised crime, unregulated arms trade and undocumented movement of people, do not spill over and destabilise the industrial world. In this school of thought, development aid is characterised as an adjunct security tool, and SSR fits neatly into the toolbox. With its prescription of democratic objectives for security governance in post-conflict countries, SSR could be viewed as part of the international democratisation agenda of liberal neo-imperialism, designed in the self-interest of powerful states, rather than pure developmental humanitarianism. Manuscripts like the US policy guidance document *Security Sector Reform* (USG, 2012) evidence this by promoting the benefits of SSR for the developing world alongside links to US national security interests. In fact, the latter is more of a justification for the expenditure than the former. The UK is just as explicit in its 2011 *Building Stability Overseas Strategy.*

Adherents of SSR do not necessarily dispute the neo-imperialist argument. However, as Ball (2010:39) reasons, what is wrong with SSR being about both improving human security in the developing world whilst also protecting industrialialised world security interests? The idea that liberal democracy provides the greatest human security, and therefore democratisation of

transitional countries enhances global security, draws from a long philosophical tradition that can be identified in Immanuel Kant's 1745 *Perpetual Peace* thesis, and is supported by empirical studies by Maoz & Russet (1993), Doyle (2011) and Rousseau et. al. (1996 & 2005), who used quantitative data collection and analysis to determine that there is a significantly low incidence of wars between democratic states. Contemporary scholars like Ball (2010) and Sedra (2010) argue that SSR as an exercise in liberal democratisation can be simultaneously beneficial for the donor and the recipient country over the long-term.

Hills (2010) argues against Ball's win-win proposition. She claims that imposing liberal democratic values in a post-conflict country with no tradition of democratic governance or accountable public-sector management can actually generate instability. Leaders with autocratic tendencies resist and obstruct reforms that curtail their personal interests, and when these leaders control armed security forces, their obstructions manifest in violence. Public demand for greater transparency or accountability can prompt elite regimes to use security forces to crackdown on civil liberties. In this way, the liberal country donor appears to sacrifice the physical security of developing world communities in furtherance of a misguided view of their own long-term stability and dominance. Security cooperation programmes are part of this strategy.

Alex de Waal's (2012 & 2015) thesis makes an intriguing argument in determining why SSR may have failed to provide a platform from which to divert a return to violent conflict in South Sudan specifically. That is, because of a failure of liberal international donors to understand the base nature of the political marketplace in the Horn of Africa, and the role of armed violence as a currency. de Waal describes conflict in Sudan as part of a cycle of 'rent-seeking rebellion' followed by a 'peace-payroll', that all leaders participate in as a means of consolidating or advancing personal political power. This cycle, which does seem to provide an explanation for the targeting of civilians;

> ...begins with a provincial political entrepreneur who, dissatisfied with the resources allocated to him, seeks a better deal. He organizes a mutiny and mounts an armed attack to advertise his claim. Because the mutinous forces are tribally constituted...the attack takes on the character of a tribal raid and the conflict that follows resembles a tribal war...However, the key function of the raids and counter-raids, and the casualties given and endured, is an index of the determination of the protagonists (de Waal, 2015: Loc.2591-2602).

Throughout the fighting the two sides, typically the government and the rebel leader, are negotiating a settlement that involves some form of compensation in financial or power terms. All actors understand the rules. They are confident that the bargaining process will eventually produce an agreeable amount, at which point the violence will be stopped. And it usually is, but not before much civilian bloodshed. de Waal (2015) provides multiple examples of this practice, some of which he has personally engaged in as a peace negotiator, sufficient to suggest the cycle is standard operating procedure. It operates as efficiently at the macro level as the micro; de Waal characterises the mutiny by John Garang's SPLA/M against the Government in Khartoum as a rent-rebellion, and the CPA as the eventual peace-payroll; "The negotiations leading to the signing of the CPA in January 2005 were, in large part, to design a rent allocation formula that would satisfy both the NCP [Northern regime] and the SPLA and its affiliate Movement (SPLM)." (de Waal, 2015: Loc.2226). The 2013 split between the President and Vice President of South Sudan might also be similarly characterised; Machar always intended to challenge Kiir for power (as he had Garang in 1991), but he could be bought off with a Vice Presidential position and SPLA jobs for his supporters. Then the President's personal political budget ran dry when South Sudan stopped the oil pipelines flowing in 2012, and he couldn't afford to compensate his opposition anymore (Astill-Brown, 2014:5). This was an ideal time for Machar to demonstrate his strength in a bid to extract more political power.

The political marketplace system operates efficiently as long as resources are available to accommodate mutineers and maintain the political status quo. Problems arise when the money starts to run dry. That is when the fighting begins anew. Based on IMF data, de Waal graphed the relationship between oil revenues, Government spending and peace negotiations in Sudan between 1997 and 2012, and showed a clear correlation between rising spending and peace agreements (arrow points). A massive dive in oil revenues in both Sudan and South Sudan, and consequent drop in Government spending, occurs shortly before the outbreak of renewed fighting in 2013 (de Waal, 2015: Loc.2198).

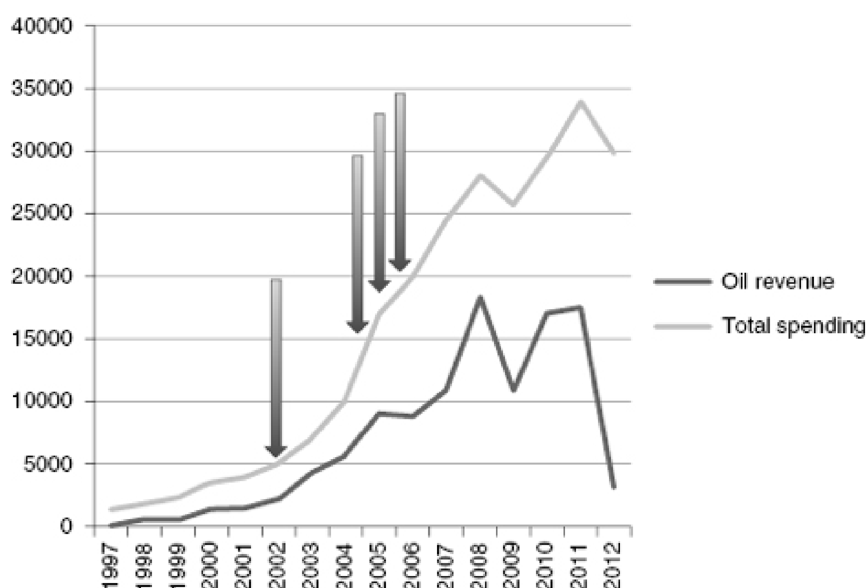

Figure 2: *Sudanese Government Finances and Peace Agreements, 1997-2012*. Alex de Waal, 2017, The Real Politics of the Horn of Africa: Money, War and the Business of Power. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

An interesting economic feature of the political marketplace appears in military budgets specifically; both the SPLA and the Sudanese SAF experienced a significant *increase* in military spending in the period after the CPA was signed – the peace period (de Waal, 2015: Loc. 2245). When the financial situation permits, leaders can buy military clients and peace bargains. But when their personal political budgets contract, and they can no longer afford their military

clients, violent conflict erupts. From 2006 to 2012 money flowed easily in South Sudan, oil resources made it a rich country compared to its neighbours, and much of that money flowed into the hands of SPLA Generals and senior politicians; “Massive corruption in South Sudan was not an error, but rather Salva’s [President Kiir’s] means of keeping the mob that was the SPLM/A leadership within a single camp.” (de Waal, 2015:2611). During this period, an average 35-40% of the annual national budget was spent on the SPLA, and that was just the official budget; “The technical advisors help prepare budget allocations, but then the army generals wheel into the minister’s office, and they make the real allocations.” (Larson et al, 2013:21). However, by 2012 things became financially difficult for the South Sudanese Government and President Kiir could no longer hold Riek Machar or the SPLA mob in check.

Government budgets are not the only source of revenue that leaders skim for use as personal political budgets to pay peace payrolls. Resource extraction empowered military entrepreneurs in Angola, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Renner, 2005:82-88). Large-tract land leasing to foreign companies for agricultural use or carbon credits occurs across South Sudan (Gurtong, 2011:1-2). Inflated-price arms deals, money laundering and commercial kickbacks from multinational companies, can all be good sources of rent to fill political budgets (de Waal, 2015: Loc.4689-4815). International aid, security cooperation, and peacekeeping operations are also good sources, “During the darkest years of the late 1980s and into the violent confusion of the 1990s, international aid was an important source of basic sustenance, a resource transfer and a source of political rent.” (de Waal, 2015: Loc.4821). John Garang understood the role of international aid as a currency in the local political marketplace, which is why he complained that aid deliveries to people in his rivals’ territory were attempts by international aid agencies to overthrow his leadership and ‘govern’ Southern Sudan themselves.

At the turn of the century, development aid supplanted humanitarian aid, providing more direct budgetary support and technical assistance programmes that could be skimmed. This period includes the introduction of SSR activities, which could be just as vulnerable to corruption, particularly in the provision of equipment and facilities. Detailed documents of donor Government budgets and loss reports are difficult to access, but one report from the US Office of the Inspector General outlines a US$12.6 million overspend, on a US$40 million project, by a security contractor due to oversight failures (OIG, 2010).

de Waal has spent 30 years observing political rent-seeking phenomena across the Horn of Africa, and entreats the international community to bear it in mind when negotiating peace agreements, designing aid packages or implementing SSR programmes. “A rent-seeking rebellion is a stylized if bloody confrontation in which the fighting and the peace process are equally part of a cycle that validates militarized ethnicity as the building blocks of governance.” (de Waal, 2015: Loc.2602). Development aid donors can’t just assume that human security is an absolute objective of local leaders. Violence and death are part of the political power bargaining process in South Sudan, which operates in unremitting cycles. Interrupting this cycle of violence requires more creative approaches than just espousing the virtues of liberal democracy for the common people.

de Waal’s is perhaps a harsh and pessimistic thesis, but he provides a solid evidentiary argument. Corroboration can be found in other literature, including US Embassy cables from Sudan, published by WikiLeaks, which provide record of Khartoum’s plans to ‘co-opt select SPLA generals’ through various financial incentives (Asquino, n.d.). Officials discuss these kind of peace-bribes as if they are standard procedure. Recalling a dinner with senior Southern Sudanese officials, including President Kiir, in 2009, Hilde Johnson said she was shocked at renewed talk of war with Khartoum and that “My attempts to remind them of the costs of war for their people and future generations failed miserably.” (Johnson, 2016: Loc.4629). Alex de Waal may have been less shocked, the costs of war for

the people is not a high priority. International commentators on the Civil War starting in 2013 remark that there is a logic to continuing conflict in South Sudan;

> It is not a binary choice between peace and war. The failure of the belligerents to engage with and implement ceasefires...does not strike many South Sudanese as particularly surprising. It seems clear that all sides still perceive political advantage in continued conflict. The people of South Sudan, with their long experience of civil war and violence, appear to accept that this is the natural order (Astill-Brown, 2014:14).

de Waal's thesis goes some way towards explaining why SSR failed to perform as a conflict-prevention exercise; because it was operating on a different ideological track to the local political bargaining system, where preventing conflict is not actually a primary concern. SSR contains certain normative objectives that can't easily be compromised; it is an unqualified liberal democratic exercise that aims to transfer largely unadulterated principles of good governance as a presumed catalyst for conflict prevention. There is much literature and nation-building experience underlying this presumption. In South Sudan, however, SSR policy-makers and practitioners may have underestimated the prevailing political culture. There are of course South Sudanese leaders who are genuinely invested in the principles of democratic good governance and human security as a priority, but they struggle against ingrained traditions.

7.4) Conclusion

The hypothesis that the political marketplace of the Horn of Africa is sustained through a continuous cycle of rent-seeking rebellions that are characterised by a natural ebb and flow of violence makes any attempt to implement an SSR programme based on liberal democratic values, with the aim of preventing further conflict, seem rather naive. Combined with all of the other problems of timing, sequencing, resource allocation, staffing, coordination, de Waal's thesis

emphasises how local ownership may be further compromised if the normative political framework of SSR is incompatible with the local political culture.

Critics don't suggest that the international donor community should just withdraw from security co-operation activities in illiberal countries. Hills (2010) accommodates illiberal political culture by advocating a shift back to the purely train and equip form of international security cooperation, as a direct focus on the behaviour of lower level troops has a greater impact on physical security of the population than does the attempt to change political values. In this event, donors might have to accept a degree of asset loss to corruption in exchange for improved human security. On the other hand, Astill-Brown (2010) suggests that SSR can still succeed as long as there is much higher priority placed on political engagement, rather than just technical assistance. Governance is at the heart of real change in the mindset of African security forces. de Waal (2015) doesn't claim to have a solution, rather he offers his thesis merely as a warning to donors to scratch more deeply beneath the surface of East African politics and develop more innovative approaches to interventionist programmes in this region.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

> OECD SSR policy guidelines and the SSR Handbook have become key reference materials for SSR policies and programming guidelines at headquarters. This is explicitly recognised in national policy frameworks for SSR, as well as those of the European Union and the United Nations (Bryden & Keane, 2009:6).

The changing geopolitics in the aftermath of the Cold War provided the space for more innovative and integrated foreign policy thinking in the Western world. The OECD framework for SSR represents a landmark in conceptualisation and operationalisation of the security-development nexus in the international aid arena. Over the past 10 years since publication of the *OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice*, SSR has moved increasingly towards the core of how major donors formulate international aid policy and strategy.

Adherents of SSR claim that broadening the scope of international security assistance programmes beyond operational level training and equipping of foreign forces, into the realm of security sector management and governance, and linking security sector objectives to development objectives in terms of human security, will contribute to a more stable and permissive environment for sustainable development to occur. SSR, by addressing issues of civil oversight and democratically-accountable management of security forces, encourages post-conflict governments to focus less on regime preservation and more on responding to the security needs of the population. A stable security environment then allows for economic and social development to flourish. In this way, SSR can contribute as a conflict prevention mechanism. On the flip side, there are those who challenge the political motivation behind SSR. The OECD does not attempt to hide the neo-liberal democratic characteristics of the good governance model

on which SSR resides, and as an expeditionary concept it is clearly designed to change the political and bureaucratic behaviour of recipient countries in order to suit the preferred model of the donors. This leaves the concept exposed to claims of neo-imperialism by scholars such as Hills (2010) and Duffield (2207, 2008 & 2011), as well as possible futility by scholars such as de Waal (2015).

Given the relatively recent codification of SSR policy and the limited number of practical exercises in terms of the fully integrated programme ideal, it is probably too soon to be able to decisively evaluate the impact in terms of strategic objectives. However, analysis of individual cases and particular objectives can help to refine the policy for further testing.

A landmark peace agreement in 2005 marked the end of more than 50 years of almost continual civil war in Sudan, and gave the Southern Sudanese their first real chance at self-administration. At that time, there were almost no functional governing institutions in the Southern regions. The international community committed to developmental assistance on a large scale; "Donors spent billions of dollars building the essentials of a state, working tirelessly to engage nascent institutions – and where they did not exist, to create them." (Astill-Brown, 2014:4). Several major donors, including the UK and US, pledged to support reform in the security sector, starting with the military, on the basis that;

> Failure to reform the defence sector in broad terms— including its governance and oversight— will likely impair a country's ability to build transparent, accountable, and efficient public institutions in general, and may also interfere with the larger economic recovery or development process (Boucher, 2009:2).

In 2005 the SPLA was the largest organised entity in Southern Sudan, with the greatest reach into all sectors of the political, economic and social environment. Although exact figures are difficult to determine, estimates suggest that around one in seven Southern Sudanese in some way relied on an SPLA salary, either

directly or through dependency, for survival (Astill-Brown, 2014:10). In 2005, the nascent Government and bureaucracy was populated by former (if not still serving) SPLA officers and soldiers. As soon as it became clear to international donors that Southern Sudan independence was inevitable, there was much talk of democracy and liberal ideals. Demilitarising the environment and disentangling the SPLA from its myriad roles in political and economic life to focus solely on professionalising the armed forces was part and parcel of the donors' ideal model. The US and UN introduced discrete assistance projects related to the SPLA in 2006, but it was not until the UK programme was launched in 2008 that there would be an attempt at an integrated SSR approach.

Many argue that SSR should not be implemented until after political conflict has been resolved. Intervening earlier risks wastage and may actually improve the capability of only one side of the conflict to the detriment of the other, possibly legitimate, actor. "In countries transitioning from conflict, SSR is only feasible following the political resolution of the conflict. In the absence of such resolution, SSR may degenerate into preparation for renewed war" (UNDP, 2010:9). I would argue that a part of South Sudan's experience that makes it relevant to efforts to revise the orthodox approach to SSR, is that international intervention was left too late to effectively address some serious miscalculations in security policy decision-making made by the inexperienced new Government. There were an estimated 100,000 armed actors left surplus to requirements in the South after the CPA was signed – both SPLA and other Southern militias. Policies of 'accommodating' militias into the SPLA and increasing salaries, swelled the ranks without any security strategy framework in mind, and swelled the budget beyond reasonable proportions. These policies also created ethnic cartels inside the SPLA which would be instrumental in the later return to domestic armed conflict. How effective more international intervention in the security policy-making arena might have been in the early stages of transition is unknowable, but it clearly did not help to sit back and wait.

The UK Government did many things right in terms of its SSR approach; it designed a holistic programme, consolidated internal Government policy and funding mechanisms, attempted to adjust mechanisms to the local context, and largely maintained resource commitments (until the Civil War made the programme unsustainable). However, a few things appear to have been lacking; international coordination was patchy, the programme focused too much on central Government institutions rather than regional, and diplomatic engagement was scarce. Implementing partners were given a technical programme to deliver – establish institutions, processes and mechanisms of good governance. But the diplomatic massaging required to inculcate democratic management principles at the senior political levels was insufficient. In light of Alex de Waal's analysis of the local political culture, robust diplomatic engagement undertaken in the context of this culture may have made more of a difference in terms of the performance of SSR as a conflict prevention mechanism. The UK ultimately admitted that its Defence Transformation programme in Southern Sudan may have had overly optimistic goals in the circumstances.

The *OECD DAC Handbook* encourages SSR practitioners to be flexible in programme design and open to adapting activities to local requirements. SSR advisors in Southern Sudan found that rigid adherence to legal-rational frameworks for civil oversight and control of the armed forces, and traditional approaches to civil-military relations, were not always the most effective way of achieving behavioural change in the senior leadership. There are alternative approaches to negotiating the civil-military relationship, like the concordance approach, that might be considered in terms of revision of the SSR concept.

Whilst reaffirming its commitment to supporting stabilisation operations in post-conflict countries worldwide, the UK appears to have made a small retreat in terms of leading holistic SSR programmes. On 28 April 2014, the UK co-sponsored the first ever UN Security Council Resolution on SSR, putting its considerable

policy weight behind a Resolution that would see the UN become the recognised international co-ordinating body on SSR (Grant, 2014:1). The UN does seem more practically suited to be the global leader on SSR, it is best placed to coordinate donor activities and incorporate recipient state perspectives into policy and planning. The snag is the UN's own internal bureaucracy and inability to move quickly on matters of policy. It can also be hamstrung by a requirement to compromise to the lowest common denominator in order to appease a plethora of member states. UNMIS needed to appease Khartoum, which limited its SSR engagement opportunities in Southern Sudan.

Most importantly for the purposes of this thesis, SSR experiences in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, South Africa and South Sudan, amongst others, prompted the African Union (AU) to issue its own SSR policy framework. The *2013 African Union Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform* acknowledges the UN's global mandate and leading coordination role on SSR policy and practice, and much of the AU policy reflects the UN and OECD normative frameworks (AU, 2013, Sect.1:10). However, the AU is eager to encourage its Member States to take a more definitive leadership role in evaluating their own needs, coordinating external assistance, and driving their own programmes:

> Africa is generally recognized as the theatre where the vast majority of SSR processes take place, particularly as part of post-conflict reconstruction. Yet, such SSR processes have been mostly informed by externally-generated policy frameworks and assumptions that often do not necessarily align with the realities and sources of insecurity of African peoples, states and societies. (AU, Sect.1:10).

The AU SSR Policy Framework talks of democratisation, good governance, civil oversight of the armed forces and emphasises human security. In fact, almost everything in this document would appeal to the liberal democratic OECD donor. Which makes it either a clear indication that all AU Member States have agreed to pursue the same normative direction as Western democracies in their security

sectors, or the document has significant Western influence. However, it does have some stand-out elements of diversion. International SSR partners are warned against "...any form of subversive activities on the territory of Member States.", which is a caveat that could be applied to any number of SSR activities with broadly political content. This might be an assertion that African political organisation is different to the Western democratic ideal, and interference may not be welcomed. Nevertheless, this regional policy framework, endorsed by the primary recipients of SSR, represents a substantial step in terms of furthering the conceptual development of the existing framework for SSR beyond just the donor perspective.

There is much still to be written about South Sudan. Contemporary first-person accounts of events, such as those by Madut Arop, Richard Rands and Hilde Johnson will be merged with those of Government policy-makers, and professional scholars of development and security theory like Mark Duffield, Rocky Williams and Alex de Waal, to undoubtedly create a more fulsome picture of SSR in South Sudan and what can be learned from the experience. I hope that this thesis has made some contribution to the discussion and provides future researchers with new directions to explore.

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