

Security Sector Reform: A New Framework for Security Assistance?

The Security-Development Nexus' Impact on policies Towards the South

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Reform and democratic control of the security sector and the joining together of security and development have become a major focus of international intervention in post-conflict societies since the turn of the 21st century (Malan 2008:6).

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List of Abbreviations

AFL - Armed Forces of Liberia
AU - African Union
CPA – Comprehensive Peace agreement
DDRR – disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration
DFID – Department for International Development
Ecomog – ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group
ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States
ERU – Emergency Response Unit
GOL – Government of Liberia
ICG – International Crisis Group
ICGL – Interim Contact Group on Liberia
IMF – International Monetary Fund
LNP – Liberia National Police
LURD – Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MODEL – Movement for Democracy in Liberia
NPFL – National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NSS – National Security Strategy
OECD DAC – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Development Assistance Committee
PAE – Pacific Architects and Engineeres
PMC – Private Military Company
SSR – Security Sector Reform
UNDP – United Nations Development Program
UNMIL – United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNPOL – United Nations Police
UNSC – United Nations Security Council
USAID – United States Agency for International Development

Map of Liberia



IPRSP 2006
<http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Liberia/Liberia%20IPRSP%202006.pdf>

1 Introduction

The concept of security sector reform¹ (SSR) entered the repertoire of international development aid in the late 1990s, focusing on civil-military relations and their impact on development. SSR is representative of a widening of the traditional understanding of security as relating solely to state or regime security. It hence represents a post-Cold War approach to security and development assistance and it has grown increasingly influential since the turn of the millennium. Security sector reform aims to reform a country's security sector in a manner consistent with enhancing both state security and security for the communities and individuals it comprises. The underlying assumption is that efficient and effective provision of security against external threats to the state does not automatically imply that the institutions responsible for protecting society are accountable to the needs of individual citizens and communities (Bendix and Stanley 2008).

Since the end of the Cold War, warring parties have increasingly targeted civilians, and security agents like the police and the army have been recognized as potential sources of insecurity and conflict in them selves. The people's safety, wellbeing and freedom from fear have thus come to be recognized as fundamental elements of security. Professionalization of the security forces to avoid them becoming instruments of the political elite, and subjecting security agents to democratic civilian control and oversight have thus come to be seen as essential steps towards making them more responsive to society's security needs (Brzoska 2003).

Security sector reform (SSR) is innovative in the sense that it organizes different donor approaches in the intersection of traditional security and development assistance under an overarching objective, hence functioning as a conceptual umbrella. The concept furthermore seeks to provide them with a common vision - one of a security sector that guarantees human rights, promotes human development, contributes to democratization and helps reduce poverty (Brzoska 2003). Peacebuilding has increasingly come to be seen as the framework under which peace, security, development, rule of law and human rights dimensions can be brought together under one common strategy at country level

¹ I have chosen to use the term *security sector reform* throughout the paper because it is the term most commonly used by development analysts and practitioners. Alternative terms are *security system reform*, *security sector transformation* and *justice and security sector reform*

(de Coning 2007), and SSR has become part and parcel of international peace interventions.

The UN Security Council has stressed that reforming the security sector in post-conflict environments is critical to the consolidation of peace and stability, promoting poverty reduction, good governance, extending legitimate state authority and preventing countries from relapsing into conflict.² Post-conflict situations offer quite specific opportunities for SSR because the need to demilitarize the society by “rightsizing” the security sector and restructuring and professionalizing armed forces, police and other security actors is almost universally accepted after the end of violent conflict. Post-war situations are generally fluid, with far-reaching changes taking place in several areas. They hence serve as good entry points to conduct efforts like disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, small arms control, police reform, recruiting and training of new armed forces and the transformation of civil-military relations to secure democratic monitoring of the armed forces (Møller 2007).

1.1 Research rationale

Most human geographic research on issues related to armed conflict and civil war has been conducted within critical geopolitics, focusing on the production of geopolitical knowledge around international crises and interventions (Ó Tuathail *et al.* 1998). Human geographic research on these topics is somewhat partial and uneven, since they fall between two traditions: Development Geography and Political Geography. Development geographers have traditionally paid little attention to armed conflict despite the relevance for development, whereas political geographers mainly have focused on northern geopolitical discourses on southern conflict, giving little emphasis to contextual political and development dynamics (Stokke 2009).

The concept of security sector reform (SSR) merges the fields of development and security. However, it remains a relatively new and underresearched phenomenon and literature on this topic tends to be policy-oriented and largely written by and for practitioners. This thesis seeks to address the knowledge gap at the intersection of security and development through i) investigating how the liberal hegemony in post-Cold War politics has contributed to the transformation of international peace operations, ii) investigating how state fragility and underdevelopment in the South have been construed

² www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=S/PRST/2007/3 (accessed 4/9 2009)

as threats to international security, and iii) investigating the practical geopolitics of security sector reform. The thesis is hence centered on an interest in the post-Cold War security-development nexus' impact on donor policies towards fragile and post-conflict states in the South.

1.2 Research questions

The internationally endorsed guidelines on security sector reform provided by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) identify *holistic approach, local ownership, local context sensitivity, and accountability and transparency* as the main procedural principles that external actors need to respect to ensure the efficiency, sustainability and legitimacy of security sector reform (OECD DAC 2005). Nevertheless, when reviewed, the principles are repeatedly found to be marginalized within actual SSR processes. This tendency is known as a *conceptual-contextual divide* (Scheye and Peake 2005). My research agenda is prompted by this inconsistency between theory and practice. The main research question of this thesis is thus *how has the international approach towards fragile and post-conflict states changed in the post-Cold War era?*

Two related sub-questions function to structure my thesis: *How has the merging of security and development influenced Western donors' geopolitical rationale for engaging with fragile states?* And finally, related to my case: *What characterizes the Liberian SSR process, and do the elements of the OECD DAC framework inform the implementation of the reform process?*

1.3 Structure of the thesis

In the following chapter, I will present the comprehensive theoretical framework I will use throughout the thesis. As I see security sector reform as both a discursive activity and a practical policy, my framework will draw from Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, the Copenhagen School's security theory, as well as critical geopolitics.

Chapter three deals with research design and the thesis' analytical approach. A particular concern is positionality of the researcher and how this impacts on the research process and concurrent analytical findings.

The fourth chapter takes a closer look at the context wherein the concepts and practices discussed throughout the thesis have emerged. It situates peace operations in global politics and contextualizes security sector reform as a post-Cold War approach to security assistance.

Chapter five and six constitute the analysis and answer my research questions. Chapter five investigates the post-Cold War merging of security and development that provides the backdrop and justification for new policies such as SSR. I argue that the security-development nexus has brought about a reinterpretation of underdevelopment and state fragility from humanitarian and developmental issues to international security issues. As an interface between security and development, SSR is an area of civilian-military co-operation, and a central divide exists between donors who see physical security as the most urgent issue, and those who see good governance and democratization of the security sector as the most fundamental task. This chapter specifically seeks to answer how the security-development nexus has impacted on Western donors' geopolitical rationale for engaging with fragile and post-conflict states.

Chapter six turns to the implementation of the SSR agenda by looking at the ongoing security sector reform process in Liberia. The Liberian reform has been unprecedented in ambition, but the quality of the process is widely disputed. Through this case, I will seek to investigate the relation between the OECD DAC framework on SSR and the implementation on the ground. Central to the analysis here is hence the question of what characterizes the Liberian SSR process and whether the elements of the OECD DAC framework inform the implementation of the reform.

The concluding chapter sums up my analytical findings and points to future challenges.

2 Theoretical framework

The analytical purpose of the thesis is to investigate the international approach towards fragile and post-conflict states in the post-Cold War era. I understand this new transformative approach as including both the practice of comprehensive peace operations and the theoretical and philosophical foundation underlying and informing it. The thesis hence focuses on foreign policy discourses and the relation between representations and social practice. As such, it aligns with the so-called constructionist approaches. The constructionist school has a common interest in how “(...) textual and social processes are intrinsically connected and to describe, in specific contexts, the implication of this connection for the way we think and act in the contemporary world” (Georg 1994:191, in Milliken 1999:225). The analytical focus is hence on the production and reproduction of meaning. This makes discourse analysis suited since it seeks to expose the systems through which the world appears meaningful to subjects and enables them to understand and interact with it in specific ways.

According to Jørgensen and Phillips (1999), the combination of elements from different analytical approaches can prove fruitful for the analysis of a subject matter, as long as these approaches share the fundamental philosophical premises. I follow their stand as my theoretical framework draws from and incorporates aspects from different perspectives. As my aim is to analyse the transformation of foreign policy discourse and the impact on policy, the discourse analysis is combined with the Copenhagen School’s security theory as well as geopolitical theory. I will start off by presenting the discourse theoretical framework before I turn to the geopolitical framework.

2.1 Discourse theoretical framework

The following section will account for the production and reproduction of meaning, how discourses are limited and transformed, and how the rules of a discourse depend on the framing of the subject issue. The theoretical framework draws from scholars like Laclau and Mouffe, Fairclough, Foucault, and the Copenhagen School of Security Analysis. Although fragmented, scholars writing in the area of discourse analysis build their research upon a set of shared theoretical commitments. According to Milliken (1999) they can be organized in three analytically distinguishable bundles: *discourses as systems of signification*, *discourse productivity* and *the play of practice*.

2.1.1 Discourses as systems of signification

Discourse analysis' first commitment is to the conceptualization of discourses as structures of signification that construct social realities. This stand implies a constructionist understanding of meaning; things do not *mean* – the material world does not convey meaning – rather, people construct the meaning of things using sign systems³ (Milliken 1999:229). Consequently, our knowledge about the world does not mirror an external and existent world; it is a product of our categorizations of it. Because “reality” only is accessible to us through our representations, discourse analysts share a critical approach to common sense of the existence and qualities of phenomena. The approach is hence *anti-essentialist*: as humans are cultural and historical beings, our representations of the world are equally historically and culturally specific. They are hence *contingent*, meaning that representations are possible, but not necessary, and that they change over time (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999).

To say that all knowledge about the world is contingent does not imply that meaning is completely arbitrary and that everything floats. If that were the case, language and communication would have been impossible. Nor does it imply a rejection of the existence of a material world. Take the 2003 tsunami as an example; it occurred as a material fact, but as it was framed in different ways - as a natural disaster, as a phenomena that could have been foreseen and prevented had it been higher on the international agenda, or as the revenge of God - it was ascribed different meanings and was no longer outside of the realms of discourse. The point is that language is ontologically significant - the material world is ascribed meaning through the representations we create through language.

Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory (2001) builds on an understanding of language that derives from structuralism, post-structuralism and Marxism. According to Saussure's structural linguistics, the relation between language and reality is arbitrary. The theory emphasizes the relationships in which things are placed in a sign system, and the relations by which objects are distinguished from each other in that system (Milliken 1999). The understanding of meaning can in a structuralist tradition be illustrated with the allegory of a fishnet. Things or signs attain their meaning by being different from each other and are located on specific places, like nodes, in a structure of other signs. Laclau and Mouffe (2001), however, follow Derrida's post-structural critique, which modifies

³ Predominately, but not exclusively linguistic

this allegory. According to this tradition, signs still obtain their meaning through their reciprocal difference, but they attain different meanings according to the relation they are placed in. Discourses are established as meaning crystallizes around certain *nodal points*; privileged signs that other signs attain their meaning in relation to. Nodal points are nevertheless not signifiers with a pre-determined meaning. Nodal points are *floating signifiers*; signs which are given different content in different articulations. They are hence subjected to discursive struggle. A *moment* is a sign with a fixed meaning in a specific discourse, while an *element* is a sign which holds no determined meaning (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999).

Every statement within a discourse constructs the relation between signs, and tries to turn elements into moments to establish meaning within its specific field. A discourse can hence be understood as the fixing of meaning within a particular domain. But because a sign can hold several different connotations, all articulations challenge or reproduce the discourse. Jørgensen and Phillips (1999) thus replace the fishnet allegory with that of the Internet: every word or sign is connected to other signs, but links are constantly added or removed, changing the underlying structure. In this conceptualization, structures of meaning still exist, but only as temporary fixations and not necessarily without inherent contradictions. According to Laclau and Mouffe (2001), the social production of meaning is hence about fixing the floating signifiers *as if* a Sausurrian fishnet structure existed. This means that discourses strive to fix meaning around a closed structure, but in the end neither absolute fixity nor absolute non-fixity is possible. Such an interpretation opens up for explaining change, traditionally a problem for structuralists.

Drawing from Derrida's philosophical work, discourses are furthermore expected to be structured in terms of *binary oppositions* which establish relations of power through a series of juxtapositions where one element is privileged in relation to the other (Milliken 1999). As an example, women in nineteenth century Europe were considered to have a political identity different and inferior to that of men, making female political influence inappropriate. Meaning is here constructed along two dimensions; through a positive *process of linking* female identities (motherly, reliant and emotional), and at the same time juxtaposing them to a male series of links (rational, intellectual, independent) through a negative *process of differentiation*. These processes can be distinguished analytically, but are enacted simultaneously in the process of identity construction (Hansen 2006:19).

As stated earlier, the nature of language is inherently ambiguous as it is both highly structured yet unstable. The construction of “women” in nineteenth century discourse was not solely negative as it was seen as an essential part of society, but they were in Derrida’s terms a *supplement*; secondary to the privileged male, but simultaneously necessary for societal completion and survival (Hansen 2006). Over time this “objective account of woman’s nature” came under attack from woman’s movements and went from being a widely accepted construction to one which was politically contested. This development shows the possibility for destabilization: the link between some of the “positive signs” might become unstable, or a negatively valued term might be constructed as positive within another discourse. I shall return to the construction of identities in international relations in more depth in the geopolitical framework.

2.1.2 Discourse productivity

Discourse analysis’ second theoretical commitment is to discourses as being productive of things defined by the discourse. Beyond giving a language for speaking about phenomena, discourses prescribe specific ways of being in, and acting towards, the world (Milliken 1999:229). Discourses operationalize specific *regimes of truth* which present different actions as relevant, possible or impossible in a given situation. Language should thus be understood as *political*, a site for production and reproduction of particular identities, which simultaneously excludes other. Language is not a neutral channel through which information and facts are communicated, rather, it is a “machine” which constitutes the social world (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999).

Even though the meaning of things *in principle* is contingent and thus always could have been different, not all representations are considered equally relevant or valid. Importantly, discourses limit the range of possible identities and actions and lay out rules for what statements are accepted as meaningful and true in specific historical periods (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999). According to a foucauldian understanding, power is both productive and limiting. Contrary to defining power as repressive and as something agents like states hold and practice in relation to passive subjects, Foucault sees it as the positive condition of possibilities⁴ for the social. Power is hence that which creates the social world and that which enables it to be represented in specific ways, while simultaneously excluding other representations (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999). Because

⁴ Jørgensen and Phillips use the term “mulighedsbetingelse”

power and knowledge are understood as intimately connected, it is consequentially impossible to speak of an objective Truth. This is always a representation produced in discourse.

While most discourse analytical approaches follow Foucault's conceptualization of discourses, they break with his monoism. Foucault tends to identify only one regime of truth within every historical epoch, but this view is largely replaced by one in which several different discourses coexist and compete over the definition of the truth. Discourses constitute themselves in relation to its outside, and Laclau and Mouffe (2001) use the term *field of discursivity* to refer to all the possible meanings excluded by a discourse. The field of discursivity is a reservoir of meanings that signs or elements can hold, but which are ignored and silenced within the relevant discourse to create unambiguousness. A discourse which is so established that its contingency is forgotten is in the discourse theory known as *objective*. A discourse moves from being political and contested to objectivity through *hegemonic interventions*; articulations which through force⁵ re-establish unambiguousness (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999:60). Hegemony thus resembles discourse in that both terms fix elements into moments, but the hegemonic intervention work across competing discourses. Because hegemonic discourses are accepted as objective and exclude alternative meanings, they are moreover understood as *ideological* (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999).

Laclau and Mouffe's system of concepts cannot, however, fully explain why some representations are more likely to occur than others, or why some representations are disputed while others are accepted as objective within a given period. Jørgensen and Phillips (1999) hence propose the incorporation of Fairclough's (1995) term *order of discourse* to distinguish between all meanings excluded by the discourse versus the limited number of relevant discourses that compete over meaning within the same domain. The order of discourse can be understood as a social space of discursive conflict, limiting the range of representations that are likely to be accepted as truthful and relevant within a particular domain. Fairclough (1995) uses the term *interdiscursivity* for the articulation of different discourses within and across different orders of discourse. Creative articulations move the borders between different discourses and within the

⁵ "Force" means the repression of alternative and present meanings

specific order of discourse, whereas conventional articulations sustain the dominant order of discourse and hence the social order.⁶

As productive structures, discourses define and restrict subjects authorized to speak and to act, in addition to knowledgeable practices by these subjects towards the objects that the discourses define. In international politics these “authorities” or “experts” typically include foreign policy officials, defence intellectuals and development professionals. Foreign policies need an account of the problems and issues they are trying to address, since any intervention is dependent on a description of the local in which intervention takes place as well as the peoples involved in the conflict. Neither can there be an understanding of development policies “without a description of who the underdeveloped are, where they differ from the developed West, and how they can transform their identity” (Hansen 2006:xvi). Through discourse, certain interventions, practices and disciplining techniques are rendered as logical and appropriate, while others are disqualified and excluded. In this process, people and social space are controlled, organized and disciplined; in other words, places and groups are produced as those objects (Milliken 1999).

2.1.3 The play of practice

Discourse analysis’ third theoretical commitment is to discourses as being (re)produced by practice. As discourses are unstable grids, they require work to articulate and rearticulate their knowledge and identities so as to fix the “regime of truth” (Milliken 1999:230). As stated, discourses produce different thoughts and actions as relevant, possible and appropriate, while at the same time excluding others. When subjects act based on discursive knowledge, certain social consequences are created which again contribute to uphold the subject’s discursive identity. It is therefore through the enactment of the policies prescribed by the discourse that the discourse comes into being. Accordingly, discourses on the one hand function as the legitimization of practice and are on the other hand (re)produced through these practices; they are hence simultaneously *foundation and product* (Hansen 2006).

⁶ Interdiscursivity is a form of *intertextuality*, which refers to the reciprocal influence of history on text and text on history. All texts can be read as parts of an intertextual chain, as they draw from previous texts and contribute to historical development and transformation (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999)

Discourse analytical perspectives shares an understanding of discursive practice as social practice, and that the struggle over meaning characterizes the social. They however differ when it comes to the issue of whether or not all social practice is discursive. Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory (2001) does not distinguish between discursive and non-discursive social practices – they merge Marxism's categories of structure and superstructure⁷ in one field produced by discursive processes. Consequently, all practices are seen as discursive, and as constituted by discourse. Importantly, this does not mean that only text and speech exist, but rather that discourses are material. Take children as an example; they are understood as a group which is different from other human beings, with the distinction being more than linguistic since they are materially constituted as a group in physical space through institutions like kinder gardens, schools, and playgrounds (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999). These spaces and institutions are hence seen as part of the societal discourse about children.

In Fairclough's critical discourse theory (1995), a distinction is made between discursive practice and other social practices, with the term "discourse" reserved for semiotic practices like text and speech. Discursive practice and other social practice exist in a dialectical interplay, and are therefore mutually constitutive of each other. Fairclough uses the family as an example of how social structures impact on discursive practices. The family is indeed a real institution with concrete identities, relations and practices. These identities, relations and practices are originally discursively constituted, but have over time been established in institutions and non-discursive practices. Both social and discursive structures thus lay the foundation for how the family functions (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999). Discourse is hence understood as both constitutive and constituted, making critical discourse theory less post-structural than Laclau and Mouffe's theory. Since some social phenomena function according to other logics than discourses, such as economic logics or institutionalizations of social practices, they have to be investigated with other tools than discourse analysis. Fairclough's critical discourse theory hence opens up for interdisciplinary combination of textual analysis and social analysis, aiming to elucidate the relations between linguistic practices and societal and cultural processes and structures. As this thesis seek to say something about the relation between foreign policy discourses and the practice which takes place on the ground, it becomes relevant not just to look at the discourses articulated by elites, but also the *implementation* of these

⁷ In historical materialism the superstructure (i.e. state, church, rule of law, media and school system) is determined by the structure (economy, ownership of the means of production)

policies. The thesis hence follows Fairclough's understanding of discourses as being both constitutive and constituted.

2.2 Security as discourse

In constructionist theory, there is no extra-discursive realm from which material objective facts assert themselves. All phenomena have to be located within discourse to have an effect on policy and identity. This is also the case for military or other forms of threats. For issues to become questions of *security*, they have to be successfully constructed as such within political discourse (Hansen 2006).

2.2.1 Copenhagen School of security studies

The Copenhagen School of security studies is a school of academic thought within international relations that focuses primarily on the social aspects of security. It questions the primacy of the military element and the state in the conceptualization of security, and seeks to widen the security agenda by allowing non-military issues to achieve security status. This implies that the referent object is kept analytically open, dependent on the specific discourse (Hansen 2010). The school seeks to construct a conceptualization of security that is more specific than just any threat or problem - to count as a *security issue*, issues have to meet certain criteria that distinguish them from the normal run of the political. This effectively means that they have to be presented as existential threats to a referent object by a securitizing actor (Buzan *et al.* 1998). The concept of *securitization* is hence central to the school: Drawing on Wæver (1997), Buur, Jensen & Stepputat (2007) defines securitization as the process by which a particular issue is presented as a security concern, thereby "moving politics beyond the established democratic rules of society" and framing the issue within a "special kind of politics" where a special right to use the means necessary exists (2007:12).

According to the Copenhagen School, security is thus a speech act with specific political consequences. Security discourses grant certain issues heightened priority, but also bestow a particular legitimacy on those handling the policies in question. By arguing that something constitutes an existential threat to a referential object - traditionally but not necessarily the state - an emergency condition is declared which justifies and legitimizes the use of extraordinary measures. This situation constructs the responsible actors with responsibility for answering the threats: they cannot easily turn

their backs on the issue without *de-securitizing* it first; rearticulating it in such a manner that it is no longer an issue of security (Hansen 2006).

A discourse that presents something as an existential threat to a referent object does not by itself create securitization – this is a *securitizing move*. Securitization happens when and if the relevant audience accepts it as such. Securitization can thus be understood as the construction of a shared understanding of what is to be understood as a threat and collectively responded to as such (Buzan *et al.* 1998). Emergency measures do not have to be adopted to represent a securitization process, but the argued existential threat has to gain enough resonance for a platform to be made from which it is possible to legitimize actions that would not have been possible prior to the formation of the discourse (Buur *et al.* 2007).

According to the security theory, any public issue can be placed on the spectrum ranging from non-politicized, through politicized to securitized. A *non-politicized* issue is not dealt with by the state and is not part of public debate and decision; a *politicized* issue is part of public policy and requires government decision and resource allocation; and a *securitized* issue is one which is conceptualized as an existential threat requiring emergency measures (Buzan *et al.* 1998:23). Because “security” elevates politics above the established rules of the game and strengthens the role of the state, securitization is a more extreme version of politicization. The essential difference is how the issue is framed; politicization presents issues as open and negotiable, matters of choice which entails responsibility, whereas securitization in contrast presents issues as urgent and existential, and important enough to legitimize secrecy and disregard for democratic procedures (Buzan *et al.* 1998). The Copenhagen School takes a normative stand by seeing security as a failure to deal with issues as normal politics and advocating for de-securitization – a move out of securitization and the danger mode.

Because the theory’s main focus is on security, non-politicized issues tend to appear less relevant than politicized and securitized issues, located as they are on the opposite range of the spectrum. Non-politicized issues, however, follow other logics and imperatives than security, which can be very powerful. I will thus follow Lene Hansen’s conceptualization of de-securitization as “a move out of securitization, which not necessarily implies a move into the political” (Hansen 2010). Leaving the idea of theory as a specter, opens up the possibility of issues moving directly from securitization into technicization and the non-politicized. This implies that the former securitized issues continue to be outside the political domain, as the non-politicized areas are dominated by

their own “experts” like religious leaders, jurists, the family or the private sector. I therefore propose the term *technicization* referring to this specific process.

Rearticulating issues as non-political can be used for political ends. A recent example is the attempt by Danish politicians to establish the Mohammad caricature conflict as belonging within the legal and hence non-politicized domain (Hansen 2010). What this specific case furthermore shows, is that one and the same issue can be contested and framed differently within different discourses. In contrast to the politicians who framed the conflict as belonging within the legal and non-politicized, Muslim communities interpreted the “offence” or “attack” as politicized or even securitized. Because the Copenhagen School conceptualizes the securitization process as *one* movement, it fails to shed light on the discursive struggle underlying the processes. Following Hansen’s critique however, allows one to see issues as contested and simultaneously securitized, politicized or non-politicized within different discourses. Securitization can hence be seen as one discourse within a broader order of discourse.

Having laid out the thesis’ discourse theoretical framework, the next section will account for the geopolitical framework.

2.3 Critical geopolitics

The central point (...) is that human history is made by human beings, and [s]ince the struggle for control over territory is part of that history, so too is the struggle over historical and social meaning. The task for the critical scholar is not to separate one struggle from the other, but to connect them... (Said 2003:331-332).

Geopolitics can be divided into the *practical geopolitics* of state leaders and foreign policy bureaucracy, the *formal geopolitics* of strategic institutions, think tanks and the academia, and lastly the *popular geopolitics* of transnational popular culture (Dalby *et al.* 1998). This thesis focuses primarily on the practical geopolitics of foreign policy, as it focuses on the relation between geopolitical representations and foreign policy implementation. The following section will discuss the geopolitical function of discourses, meaning how representations of space guide actions towards geographical areas and groups of people. Discourses designate agents and threats through the establishment of geopolitical identities, and hence direct geopolitical practices and contribute to (re)produce the geopolitical order (Sletteland 2008).

2.3.1 Classical geopolitics and the critical turn

Geopolitics has traditionally been defined as “the (scientific) assessment of geographic conditions underlying either the power (security) underlying a particular state or the balance of power in the global configuration of continents and oceans” (Dijkink 1996:3). Rudolf Kjellén first coined the term “geopolitics” in 1899. Other central theorists included Friedrich Ratzel, Alfred Mahan and Halford Mackinder, which emphasized the natural advantages of certain locations in terms of land and sea power, or the “biological” necessities in the spatial form and growth of states. This latter tradition fell into disrepute after German geographers and politicians used it to justify Nazi expansionism during the 1930s, and the term “geopolitics” was hence avoided for decades (Dijkink 1996).

Yves Lacoste and his French school of political geography started articulating a new type of critical geopolitics during the 1970s, which was followed by an American counterpart ten years later. Scholars like Gearóid Ó Tuathail and Donald Campbell proposed a constructionist approach to geopolitics and sought to deconstruct the ideological presuppositions of geographical practice and knowledge. Leaving behind a scientific explanation of the geographical foundation of power and security policy of states, the approach sees national identity as being continuously rewritten on the basis of external events, and foreign policies not as responding mechanically to real threats, but to constructed dangers (Dijkink 1996).

The critical turn in geopolitics can be understood as a theoretical adjustment to a new reality of increasing permeability of borders and independency of states. Importantly, the ongoing process of globalization has brought about changing spatialities which has forced a rethinking of long established concepts like geographical scale (Ó Tuathail *et al.* 1998). Concepts such as the national, regional and global are essentially social products and the relations between and across different scales are understood as increasingly complex in the contemporary world, evident in new terms such as “glocalization”.

2.3.2 The dialectics of geopolitical practices and representations

Dijkink (1996:11) defines geopolitical visions as “any idea concerning the relation between one’s own and other places, involving feelings of (in)security or (dis)advantage (and/or) invoking ideas about a collective mission or foreign policy strategy”. A geopolitical vision requires at least a them-and-us distinction and emotional attachment to

a place. A typical aspect of national identity is a “historic territory”; a narrative of conquest, defence, liberation and loss in which certain “Others” play a role. Feelings of national identity and geopolitical visions are thus difficult to separate, but geopolitical visions are according to Dijink (1996) more the *concrete translations* of national identity into models of the world.

As implied in the definition above, a geopolitical vision is organized around a distinct *geopolitical subject*, often but not necessarily the state. According to Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory (2001) the individual is not an autonomous subject. Rather, it is understood as structured by discourses. Drawing from Lacan, the individual is seen as fragmented and constantly seeking to “find itself” through discourses. The subject is assigned identity by letting itself be represented by certain *master-signifiers*; nodal points of identity (man, woman, Western), which are ascribed different meanings in different discourses. Through chains of equivalence or difference, subjects are inscribed with meaning based on what it is and what it is not. Identity is hence understood as socially constructed - as identification with the various subject positions appointed by discourses (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999).

Processes of subject-formation always occur somewhere and always occur relationally (Ó Tuathail *et al.* 1998), and the identity construction of groups and other entities, such as states, follow the same logic as the one described above. Territorial borders are justified by its “naturalness”, often involving an exaggeration of homogeneity within borders compared with dissimilarities beyond them (Dijink 1996). The state’s identity, or Self, is hence defined in relation to its external world, the Other. As described earlier, discourses are furthermore structured in terms of *binary oppositions* where one element is privileged in relation to a devalued other. In geopolitical discourses, classifications like First World/Third World, West/non-West and North/South are not simply referring to geographical or spatial realities; they are just as much social as territorial and represent charged categories with sedimented meanings (Duffield 2001).

The West has traditionally been constructed as a model and measure of social progress for the world as a whole, granting a primary identity to the West and a secondary and dependent identity to the non-Western other. This geopolitical categorization of the world is closely related to Euro-Americanism. Euro-Americanism portrays the West as the essential motor of progress, civilization, modernization and development, and the non-West as a stagnant and passive recipient. The basis for Euro-American representation can be summed up in three elements: *the primary or the special,*

the internally independent and the universal (Slater 2004). The special or primary feature of the West's inner socio-economic, political and cultural life is considered to be its leading civilizational role. Max Weber depicted the West as the "distinctive seat of economic rationalism", Gramsci stated that it was the "only historically and concretely universal culture", and contemporary political theory portrays the West as the primary haven of democracy, human rights and enlightened thought (Slater 2004:10). These attributes are seen as intrinsic and internal to European and American development, and importantly, as constituting universal steps forward for humanity as a whole.⁸ This representation of the West tends to go together with a *negative essentialization* of the non-Western other. Slater (2004) points to how the image of the South's stagnation, pervasive hardship, conflicts, lack of knowledge and political participation represents a negative sameness, ignoring the different realities in developing countries. In Western narratives, political and social problems to development in the South are not treated as specific and separate problems. They are viewed as inherent to the countries and combined to question the Southern societies as a whole.

The implication of understanding identities as socially constructed, is that there are no objective identities; they exist only insofar as they are continuously rearticulated and remain uncontested by competing discourses. The West's geopolitical identity is traditionally intimately related to its perceived civilizational role, and foreign policy makers aim to construct a link between policy and identity that makes them appear consistent with each other and hence legitimate to the relevant audience. The implications of geopolitical visions for practical geopolitics will be accounted for in more depth in the following chapters.

2.4 Summary

This chapter has presented the thesis' theoretical framework, which draws on Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, the Copenhagen School of security studies, as well as critical geopolitics. Throughout the thesis, this framework will be utilized to explain how discursive representations direct geopolitical practices and how different discourses struggle over the definition and response to the issue in question. How a discourse frames an issue importantly affects the "rules of the

⁸ Rostow's notion of the "stages of economic growth" captures the idea of the West showing the non-West its future development

game” in dealing with it. The unfolding of this discursive struggle relates to Fairclough’s concept of *order of discourse*, which together with the Copenhagen school’s security theory will provide a structuring foundation for the forthcoming analysis.

3 Analytical Approach

This chapter draws on the previous chapter as it accounts for the analytical choices I have made when approaching my object of analysis. Constructionist approaches recognizes that the researcher and her positionality necessarily determine the choice of empirical data, theories, analytical strategies and research questions. These are the fundamental elements of the research process, and they ultimately influence the research findings and conclusions. Aiming to make the research process more transparent, this chapter will therefore account for the route I have taken in writing the thesis.

3.1 Research design

I first became interested in the post-Cold War approach to fragile and post-conflict states after following a seminar on security sector reform (SSR) at the Free University in Berlin. I found SSR interesting because it represents a state of the art concept that brings together security and development thinking and provides a framework for the implementation of policy. I was, however, puzzled by the lack of debate on the theoretical fundament of the approach. Paris (2004:44) has argued that the study of peacebuilding is suffering from a “cult of policy relevance”, where the broader macrotheoretical questions about the nature and significance of these operations are neglected, causing the intellectual development of the field to be stunted. As I later started my own research process, I found that the literature on SSR tends to be self-referential and policy-oriented, largely written by and for practitioners. Generally speaking, there is a lack of external evaluation of the actual reform processes undertaken, and even when critical evaluations do occur, the concept of SSR attracts little critical investigation in it self. I was struck by the extent to which new and politically sensitive policies were presented as *a priori*, necessary and as requiring very little justification. Central concepts such as “underdevelopment” and “fragile states” were furthermore taken for granted. Typically, the so-called security-development nexus was presented as the underlying rationale for the new approach to fragile and post-conflict states, but its broader implications were not touched upon. How did the texts achieve this effect?

The policy orientation in SSR literature initially represented a huge challenge as it provided little direction for further theoretical investigation. However, as the nature of my research questions essentially was about the production of meaning and its impact on

social practice, I decided to adopt a discourse analytical approach. Discourse analysis can in principle be applied to any research field as a method of analysis, but because theory and methodology are intrinsically connected, it cannot be incorporated in any theoretical framework. Contrary to other social science approaches, discourse analysis focuses less on *ontology*; the study of the existence and the description of the basic categories of being, and more on *epistemology*; the study of the nature and scope of knowledge. In other words, the focus is on *how* and *why* objects exist as an object of knowledge, rather than *what* exists (Neumann 2001).

3.2 Analytical strategy

The thesis focuses on the international approach towards fragile and post-conflict states in the post-Cold War era. More specifically, it is a study of how Western foreign policy discourse has been affected by the security-development nexus. Although my analytical interest in the post-Cold War approach to fragile states was of an ontological nature, it did not emerge from a purely theoretical standpoint. Rather, I was interested in the interplay between discursive representations and social practices. A discourse analysis about social signification, should be based upon a set of texts by different actors presumed to be authorized speakers of the dominant discourse or representative of alternative discourses (Milliken 1999). This analysis takes security sector reform (SSR) policy papers from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) and the United Nations (UN) and as its starting point. The UN and OECD DAC both function as forums for coordination of international aid efforts. OECD DAC aims to be the "the venue and voice of the world's major bilateral donors",⁹ and has been the main driver of the SSR agenda. As the policy papers are internationally endorsed, they reflect the international community's official approach to fragile and post-conflict states. Importantly, they provide a set of guidelines for implementation of the concept, and I therefore decided to look at the ideas and assumptions informing the policy framework and how they impact on donor efforts on the ground.

To contextualize SSR as part of broader social and political trends, I have supplemented these documents with policy papers from influential bilateral donors such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the UK

⁹ www.oecd.org/dataoecd/3/38/1896808.pdf (accessed 04.09.2010)

Department for International Development (DFID) as well as a collection of broader policy and academic texts on development and international peace operations. To better enable theorization, I have made sure that my selection reflects different positions and so can be used as a basis for an analysis of discursive struggle. The decision to use specific policy papers is also in line with Fairclough's (1995) critical discourse theory, which advocates concrete texts as the foundation for analysis.

3.2.1 Data collection and analysis

As I previously had followed a seminar on security sector reform (SSR) at the Free University, I already had basic knowledge about writings on the topic as I started my own research. This provided an excellent platform from which to start the process of identifying and selecting data. As I already knew what actors constituted the main policy drivers on SSR, I started my research process by trying to identify key texts to base my analysis on and to further guide my research. Extensive reading confirmed that the OECD DAC and the UN's approach to SSR overlapped and consistently mirrored each other. I accordingly decided to base my analysis of the international community's approach to fragile and post-conflict states on a selection of policy papers provided by these two organizations.

As stated, SSR is a relatively new and underresearched field and writings on it are predominantly policy-oriented. Accordingly, it is a body of literature that gives you little direction about how to approach them in a wider sense. My approach was thus to utilize online sources such as the Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR).¹⁰ The GFN-SSR is an online source founded by the UK Government's Department for International Development, which aims to promote a better understanding of security sector reform through the provision of information, advice and expertise to practitioners, academics and policymakers. Through this Internet source, I conducted extensive document searches and was able to identify literature that was of a more critical nature. Surprisingly little of this literature would, however, question the underlying foundation of security sector reform. Typically, the critique would be directed at the efficiency or quality of actual SSR processes.

Writing my thesis at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) meant that I had access to their library and expertise, something that helped me

¹⁰ www.ssrnetwork.net/index.php

immensely in the process of identifying relevant literature and contextualize SSR as a post-Cold War approach to security assistance. Because parts of this terrain were largely unknown to me, the Liberian case in particular, I spent several months reading up on relevant literature before I turned to the actual analysis. In addition to several informal conversations, I conducted two in-depth interviews with researchers working specifically on post-conflict related issues in Liberia as well as in-depth interviews with two practitioners who had been central in planning and executing the UN Mission in Liberia's police reform. Whereas the first two can be classified as "sideline critics" and was chosen based on their critical writings on issues related to the Liberian SSR process, the latter had the important function of shedding light on the actual implementation of the process on the ground.¹¹ The interviews were *semi-structured*, as they were neither an open conversation nor a highly structured questionnaire (Kvale 1996). I varied between asking broad questions and more specific questions, dependent on the purpose of the interview. All of my informants were educated and had a professional background in the subject under discussion. Furthermore, none of them expressed any wish to be treated anonymously. I therefore have no concerns regarding ethical issues during the interview process.

During the analysis, I went back and forth between the policy texts and the broader selection of academically oriented texts. According to Thagaard (2003) the analysis can thus be said to be *abductive*, as it combines data-based inductive analysis with theory-based reasoning. The academically oriented literature focused on governmentality and various aspects of the international approach to security and development assistance. Its main function was to contextualize SSR and give me ideas about what to look for in the policy papers. Parts of this literature, including Duffield (2001), tend to interpret international interventions in the South in terms of neo-colonialism. Although this view certainly is interesting, it was important for me to avoid simplistic representations of the North and the South because they conceal internal discursive struggles over identities and valid practices. For this reason I early on rejected the idea of a uniform "Western" approach to the South.

As the contextual landscape surrounding SSR became clearer to me, the discourse theoretical framework provided me with the analytical vocabulary for identifying core concepts in the policy papers, as well as the meaning ascribed to them by chains of

¹¹ The informants are listed in the list of references

equivalence and difference. The finding that the UN and OECD DAC's approach to SSR was highly consistent meant that I could conduct an in-depth study of a selection of 5 key texts¹² without worrying about sacrificing the breadth of the analysis. The next step involved a circular process of reading and coding the policy papers, refining my classifications or nodes and mapping out relations between them. While not extensive, the direction of the analysis was centered on questions such as:

What is the text's context and who are the target group?

How does the text construct key concepts such as security, (under)development, conflict, and state fragility?

How does the text construct the relation between concepts such as security and development?

What is the geopolitical rationale underlying the policy of SSR?

What are the intended outcomes of SSR and which factors are expected to impact on these?

Are underdevelopment and state fragility represented as humanitarian issues or as international security issues?

Which actors are constructed as relevant?

How does the text construct the Self and the Others, and what features are they associated with?

Who's security is the text concerned with?

What models of ownership are present in the text?

What texts are implicitly or explicitly referred to, and what is the effect of this for the policy paper's perceived authority and legitimacy?

Among the discoveries I made during the process, was that the policy papers use *underdevelopment* and *state fragility* more or less referring to the same phenomenon. This notion is interesting because it reflects the state centeredness of the approach as well as the growing concern for international stability. I have chosen to use these terms interchangeably throughout my own research.

3.2.2 Analytical operationalizations

The temporal perspective of the thesis is predominantly the period following the Cold War's end and up until now. This choice could be criticized, as viewing security sector reform (SSR) simply within a post-Cold War peacebuilding framework arguably misses the historical context of Western interventions in the South. Rubin (2010) has made the case that stronger powers for centuries have intervened along their peripheries to establish politically acceptable forms of order, and that peace operations represent the

¹² Located in list of references as UN Security Council (2008), OECD DAC (2004), OECD (2004, 2005, 2007)

contemporary version of “the stabilization of the periphery by Great Powers” (Rubin 2010:215).

The contemporary global security framework, however, developed with the foundation of the UN system in the aftermath of World War II, which importantly had rendered imperialism an illegal doctrine. The principle of national sovereignty was enshrined in the UN’s charter and the UN’s first task was subsequently to oversee the decolonization process. The long-standing security task of stabilizing the periphery, as Rubin (2010) calls it, is now being carried out in an increasingly integrated global system juridically and politically organized around the principle of universal state sovereignty. Donors thus have to work through the institutions of post-conflict states with the aim of reforming them rather than absorbing them into more powerful units. Sovereignty is hence the guarantee that contemporary international peace operations are categorically different from the practice of empire (Duffield 2001). Acknowledging that security sector reform and the broader peacebuilding agenda could be seen as part of this historical context, means that my thesis should be seen as a study of a moment; *the post-Cold War security-development nexus*, rather than a study tracking historical processes of change. This era is an analytical construct, but the timeframe is widely accepted as relevant, since the Cold War’s end fundamentally changed the political and normative climate in which international security and development assistance is taking place.

Another demarcation is how I have chosen the analytical object of the thesis. My research questions demand that I conduct two analyses: one focusing on discursive struggle within the security-development nexus, and one that focuses on the practice of SSR. Whereas the first analysis is based on SSR policy papers and a broader selection of texts, the latter is centered on a case study. The focus on the Liberian SSR process was chosen because it represents a multilateral intervention in a post-conflict setting that allows for an illustration and discussion of key trends and paradoxes within the emergent security and development architecture. Although the case is studied in detail, the analytical focus is on the Western construction of official foreign policy; it is hence not a study of the discursive encounters between the West and “the Liberians”. This framing reflects my analytical interest in the relation between representations and social practice, but it is also a pragmatic choice, since I have not conducted a fieldwork in Liberia. As the case is chosen for its ability to demonstrate the phenomenon of interest, it can be labeled *instrumental* (Thagaard 2003).

3.3 Positioning of the researcher

Understanding knowledge as discursive and contingent implies that academic knowledge is neither neutral nor universal. Critical geographers have thus advocated the need to situate the knowledge that underpins research. I have already stated that literature on SSR tends to be policy-oriented rather than academic. First of all, I think that my positioning as a non-practitioner has enabled me to be critical and explorative of the theoretical and philosophical foundation of the concept, rather than having to limit my critical investigation to the *practice* of SSR. The latter tends to be the case for literature that exposes SSR to critical questioning. Since enhancing the efficiency of any national reform simply is not my job, I have remained free to think outside of the established “rules of the game”.

On the other hand, the fact that I am situated outside of this discourse means that it is hard for me to access and understand the impact that individuals, everyday practices and institutional arrangements, such as hierarchies and institutionalized rationales and methods of work, have on SSR processes. This aspect especially holds true regarding the military community, which has a culture of secrecy and opaqueness. Because of lack of information, the discursive struggle between the security and development community is asymmetrically represented, biased in favor of the civilian agents. This could indeed be criticized as a weakness of the research. It is however far from my desire to simplify the social phenomenon under question by depicting it as completely determined by discursive representations. I follow Fairclough’s (1995) stand as I see discourses as both constitutive and constituted, and distinguish between discursive practices and other social practices. I hence acknowledge that my positionality as a civilian and a non-practitioner could imply that I am unaware of the workings of institutionalized social structures on the outcomes of reform processes.

The fact that I am writing from an academic background is relevant for more than a practitioner/non-practitioner standpoint. Importantly, my academic background is in development studies, and this fact has without doubt shaped my approach to the topic of this thesis. The SSR framework aims to organize different policies being undertaken in the interface of traditional security and development assistance, and there is an ongoing tug of war between civilian and military actors over the development of the concept. My background is hence especially relevant in relation to normative evaluations about what SSR is and should be. However, in constructionist research, neutrality is neither a possibility nor an ideal. Although discourse analysis’ theoretical commitment of

discourse productivity is theoretical in nature, it also has a clear political and ethical significance. In explaining how a discourse produces the world, researchers can potentially denaturalize dominant forms of knowledge and question the practices they enable (Miliken 1999). Reflecting this, my thesis has a normative and political ambition to deconstruct taken-for-granted knowledge and expose the theoretical and philosophical foundation that the international donor approach to fragile and post-conflict states rests on.

3.4 Evaluation criteria

Academic research has traditionally been evaluated according to the criteria of *reliability*, *validity* and *generalization* (Kvale 1996). The criteria originated in quantitative science and rest on the premise that all knowledge is measurable. They moreover reflect a philosophical assumption about the possibility of achieving objective knowledge about the world. For these reasons, they have increasingly been challenged by the social sciences. This is particularly relevant to discourse analysis, which as a post-positivist project sees the distinction between theory and method as artificial. Thagaard (2003) thus instead proposes the criteria of *credibility*, *confirmability* and *transferability* for evaluating qualitative research.

The criterion of *credibility* implies that the researcher should aim to make the research process as transparent as possible by exposing her philosophical presuppositions, theories and analytical strategies and discuss the choices made throughout the research process. By discussing how the analytical object is constructed and analyzed, I have aimed at letting the reader assess the theoretical and analytical choices I have made throughout the thesis. Moreover, by relying on official documents, referring to my sources and providing excerpts to support my arguments, I have made sure that the information I use is accessible and verifiable by others. This aspect also relates to the criterion of confirmability.

The criterion of *confirmability* refers to the extent to which others can confirm the findings of qualitative research (Thagaard 2003). Since constructionist approaches hold that all knowledge is situated and discursive, this criterion is not unproblematic. Does the multiple readability of texts mean that different analysts would come to the different conclusions were they working with the same selection of texts? Is any reading equally valid? According to Hansen (2006) this critique is misleading insofar as the methodology

of discourse analysis insists on readings based on *explicit discursive articulations* of signs and identities, and that careful analytical attention has to be paid to the linking and juxtaposing of signs, how they construct Selves and Others, and how they legitimize particular policies. If the analysis overlooks important signs, misinterprets the stability between signs, if it exaggerates or downplays the degree of difference between the Self and Other, or if it fails to identify the connection between identities and policy, then it makes a weaker reading (Hansen 2006:45).

The criterion of *transferability* refers to the extent to which the results can be generalized and transferred to other contexts (Thagaard 2003). Human geography as a discipline demands a consideration of the spatial context in which political processes take place. Even though this thesis argues that context specificity is imperative in understanding social phenomena, I assert that my findings have value beyond the specific case in question. I believe that a theoretical approach that combines discourse analytical perspectives with critical geopolitics can be fruitful also for studying how geopolitical discourses structure broader social processes. Its strength lays in its ability to shed light on how discourses construct phenomena in different ways and how actors depend upon them as guides for social practice and as legitimizing mechanisms for political purposes. For this reason I see my findings as providing a starting point for other analysis.

Having accounted for the thesis' analytical approach, the next chapter will discuss the political and normative climate in the post-Cold War era, providing the backdrop and justification for the linking of security and development.

4 Contextualizing Security Sector Reform: a post-Cold War framework for international security assistance

The fullest perspective on peacekeeping (...) is one which places it firmly in the context of international politics (James 1990:13-14, in Bellamy *et al.* 2010:13).

As stated, security sector reform (SSR) is a relatively new and underresearched phenomenon. Aiming to investigate it as both a conceptual framework and a social practice, SSR has to be seen in connection to the broader context it is part of. This chapter will thus take a closer look at the context wherein the concepts and practices discussed through the thesis have emerged. Importantly, SSR reflects a post-Cold War approach to security and development and has become part and parcel of international peace operations. According to the UN Security Council it represents “(...) an essential element of any stabilization and reconstruction process in post-conflict environments.”¹³ This chapter will thus account for how the international approach towards security and development has changed in the post-Cold War era, starting with the role of peace operations in global politics.

4.1 Peace operations in global politics

Peace operations represent the international community’s most sustained attempt to work in an organized and multilateral fashion to reduce and manage armed conflict. As phenomenon they thus reflect trends and developments in global politics more generally (Bellamy *et al.* 2010). There is no absolute consensus about the role of peace operations in global politics, but all peace operations nevertheless reflect a desire to limit the scourge of war. Debates about what peace operations are for and what strategies peacekeepers should use, hence revolve around different conceptualizations of the causes and nature of violent conflicts, disputes about the relative value of state sovereignty and human protection, differences over the foundations of stable peace, and contending political priorities (Bellamy *et al.* 2010). For this reason, and even though the last decade did witness attempts to develop a common doctrine and strengthen the UN’s capacity, peace operations are best described as ad hoc responses to particular problems.

¹³ www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=S/PRST/2007/3 (accessed 04.09.2009)

4.1.2 Traditional peacekeeping

During the Cold War, the UN's main security activity was known as "peacekeeping", which required the consent of the parties involved and demanded strict neutrality (Heiberg 1994). Operations typically involved the deployment of a lightly armed military force to patrol neutral buffer zones or to monitor a cease-fire, and were strictly prohibited from intruding in the host nation's domestic affairs by taking on responsibilities that were falling under the government of the host state. The mandate of the first major peacekeeping mission to Egypt in 1956 provided a template for future peacekeeping operations conducted in the Cold War era. It stated that the United Nations Emergency Force should "refrain from any activity of a political character in a Host State" and in no way "influence the military balance in the present conflict and, thereby, the political balance affecting efforts to settle the conflict" (*Regulations for the UNEF (1956)* in Paris 2004:14).

The reason for this hands-off approach was multifaceted. The United Nations Charter and the legal basis for UN peacekeeping prohibited the organization from intervening in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.¹⁴ In addition, the parties to a conflict were normally not willing to accept a more intrusive role for international peacekeepers than limited tasks of monitoring cease-fires. The US and the Soviet Union were furthermore generally opposed to UN involvement in the domestic affairs of states belonging to their respective spheres of influence. Insulating allies and client states from outside meddling was a well-known strategy, and achieving a Security Council agreement for a peacekeeping mission was thus possible only when the strategic interests of the veto-wielding superpowers were not perceived to be threatened (Paris 2004). In cases where internal conflict endangered the stability of client states the superpowers would typically prefer to deal directly with it as to better control the outcome. For the US this implied propping up friendly regimes, while the Soviet Union supported the building of socialist regimes. Last but not least, the ideological differences of the Cold War era left no space for the UN to promote any particular model of domestic governance within the borders of individual states. Even if the support for "democracy" was almost universally shared among the member states, there was a fundamental disagreement over the meaning of democracy itself. The narrow definition of

¹⁴ Article 2(7) of the UN Charter (accessed 09.12.2009)

peacekeeping as a technical, ideologically neutral and predominantly military task was thus the direct outcome of the political and ideological conditions of the Cold War era.

4.1.3 The Cold War security agenda

Although located in the “periphery”, the Cold War’s bipolar world order had a massive impact on the so-called Third World countries as they were subjected to the superpowers’ geopolitical race for power and influence. Among the ways the East-West rivalry played itself out in developing countries was proxy wars and competing foreign aid projects. The objective of security assistance in this period was basically to garner support for the foreign and security policy objectives of the superpowers. Postcolonial states positioned themselves within these strategic relations and extracted aid by adopting, or pretending to adopt, structures based on the models promoted by one or the other of the contenders (Rubin 2010).

Technical, financial and material support was usually delivered through the donor’s foreign or security ministries, and focused on transferring skills, weapons and other security-related equipment. In states of high strategic importance, the major powers also provided economic support, like balance-of-payments assistance, to reduce the burden of maintaining security services. This latter kind of support was more often directed through development assistance agencies (Ball and Hendrickson 2006). Democratic governance of the security sector in countries receiving security assistance was of little interest to the security-assisting donors, nor was it part of the Cold War development agenda.

4.1.4 The post-Cold War political landscape

As the Cold War was coming to an end with the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, the East-West tensions declined considerably. With the break-up of the Soviet Union and the subsequent shift towards political liberalization in Eastern Europe, the strategic priorities of the major powers started to shift. None of the former Cold War rivals were willing to maintain the levels of military and economic assistance to their allies and client states, particularly not in parts of the world like sub-Saharan Africa, now perceived to be strategically inconsequential (Duffield 2001, Paris 2004). As they started to disengage themselves from costly foreign commitments, earlier political restraints were lifted and more maneuvering space was offered for third parties to become more

directly engaged in security and development issues in countries that had been proxy battlegrounds for the superpower rivaling.

The Cold War's end presented the international community with serious challenges that again impacted on the practice of peace operations. While established international norms like the prohibition of external interference in domestic matters arguably had contributed to the prevention of interstate aggression, they had indeed produced other, less benign, consequences too:

The concept of state sovereignty in security matters has often provided the rationale for creating powerful national military systems, justified budgetary policies that emphasize defense over domestic welfare, and encouraged measures that severely restrict citizens' rights and freedoms" (Commission on global governance 1995:2).

As the superpowers pulled back, several African regimes lost the foreign aid and military support that had kept them in power for decades through doling out patronage and ruling with an iron fist. The military threshold for armed challengers to those regimes was consequently lowered and internal violence and brutal civil wars broke out as dormant ethnic tensions reasserted themselves and the regimes no longer managed to suppress internal dissent (Ulriksen 2006). This distinctive form of violent conflict reflected an ongoing erosion of the state's monopoly on legitimate organized violence and came to be known as "new wars" (Paris 2004). These conflicts typically took place within states or were transnational in character, and the opposing sides often represented different nationalities living within one state. They were furthermore characterized by a new mode of warfare; intense brutality and deliberate targeting of civilians. In several instances rape and other serious human rights abuses were utilized as a weapon to traumatize civilians and destroy the social fabric of society (Solhjell 2010). These "state disintegration wars" often generated famines or occurred alongside natural disasters, creating complex emergencies. The demand for UN led multilateral peace operations therefore swelled with the end of the Cold War.

4.1.5 Defining peace operations in the post-Cold War era

Defining exactly what is implied by the term "peace operation" is a somewhat complex task, as it is a highly political activity and hence widely disputed. In 1992, the then UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali issued *An Agenda for Peace*.¹⁵ The report

¹⁵ www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html (accessed 10.06.2010)

conceptualized “peacekeeping” as one of several ways in which third parties might contribute to preventing, resolving and managing violent conflict and rebuilding of post-conflict communities (Bellamy *et al.* 2010). The policy statement offered a new taxonomy of post-Cold War peace operations, since many of the UN missions conducted no longer fitted the traditional mould of peacekeeping interventions. The rapport differentiated between “peacekeeping” - which corresponded to the established principles and practices of traditional peacekeeping; “peace enforcement” - which resembled peacekeeping operations in many respects, but which were more heavily armed and authorized to use armed force for purposes other than self-defense; and lastly “post-conflict peacebuilding” - which was defined as missions that would seek to “identify and support structures” that would tend to “strengthen and solidify peace” in the aftermath of “civil strife” (Paris 2004:18). Most subsequent definitions of peace operations tend to leave out the composition of the intervening force, since the mission’s composition does not determine its nature. They furthermore reject the idea that only the UN can conduct peace operations. Bellamy *et al.* (2010) hence defines peace operations as involving

the expeditionary use of uniformed personnel (police and/or military) with or without UN authorization, with a mandate or program to: i) assist in the prevention of armed conflict by supporting a peace process; ii) serve as an instrument to observe or assist in the implementation of ceasefires or peace agreements; or iii) enforce ceasefires, peace agreements or the will of the UN Security Council in order to build stable peace (2010:18).

Peacebuilding, according to the same authors, furthermore involves the use of civilian agencies and NGOs in the reconstruction of policies, economies and societies. During the 1990s, most of UN peace operations focused on post-conflict peacebuilding, which differed from traditional peacekeeping both in functional complexity and composition. New tasks and responsibilities were included, like disarmament of previously warring partners, destruction of weapons, restoration of order, repatriation of refugees, training of security personnel, monitoring of elections, protection of human rights, promotion of political participation and strengthening and reforming of government institutions (Paris 2004). Unilateral clientelism was largely abandoned and the expansive function of these operations led to the involvement of a multiplicity of internal actors and external peacebuilding agencies that varied from one mission to the next. The short term goal of these peacebuilding interventions was to assist internal actors with stabilizing the peace process and preventing a relapse into conflict (*negative peace*), but the long term goal

was to support them in transforming the underlying causes of conflict, hence laying the foundation for a just social order (*positive peace*) (de Coning 2007, 2010).

4.2 The impact of globalization on peace operations

Explanations for the proliferation and transformation of peace operations are commonly external: new forms of warfare and targeting of civilians necessitated new and fundamentally different responses, and the post-Cold War political landscape provided the conditions needed for the implementation of such policies. But the operational activities of states and international organizations do nevertheless not occur in a vacuum. They are shaped by the normative and political climate in which they occur, and they in turn shape that climate (Johnstone 2010). The emergence of peacebuilding should thus be understood in the context of an increasingly complex and interdependent international conflict management system, and as reflecting an immediate post-Cold War optimism that collective third party peacebuilding could represent a new era of benevolent international intervention (de Coning 2010). The emerging of a “culture of protection”, the growing emphasis on democratic governance, development and poverty reduction has played fundamental roles for shaping the international security and development architecture. The following sections will account for some particularly influential norms and their impact on international peace operations.

4.2.1 A culture of protection

The post-Cold War climate’s perhaps most important impact on peace operations can be attributed to globalization. Globalization is an elusive concept, but can be defined as a process embodying a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact - generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and the exercise of power (McGrew 2000:348). The spread of global communications on the one hand increased the awareness of violent conflict and humanitarian crises around the world, and on the other hand created a demand from civil society groups for the international community to assume greater responsibility for the protection of vulnerable populations (Bellamy *et al.* 2010:6).

Starting in the early 1990s, the UN Security Council started to employ an expanding definition of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security, the

threshold for action under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (Johnstone 2010:193). The trend began with the Council's declaration that the flow of refugees caused by Iraq's repression of its minority populations represented a threat to international peace. The following Security Council-authorized interventions in Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti and Sierra Leone represented case-by-case responses to humanitarian crises that over the years contributed fundamentally to the evolution in applicable norms.

As mentioned, peacekeeping operations grew in both number and scope during the last decade, and soon the *Protection of Civilians* became something close to a buzzword. The term was initially coined in 1998 by then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his report *The causes of conflict and promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa*,¹⁶ in which he identified protecting civilians in situations of conflict as a "humanitarian imperative" (Vogt *et al.* 2008). The term drew on the construction of the civilian idea, of which the notions of distinction, restraint, non-combatance and innocence are key elements (Lie and de Carvahlo 2009). The report reflected the recognition that new modes of warfare had made civilians the main casualty of war, not only due to collateral damage from being caught up in the fighting, but because they increasingly were deliberately targeted by warring parties. The Protection of Civilians accordingly aimed at establishing a robust normative framework for how to act in order to secure the protection of civilians in armed conflict and during post-conflict reconstruction. Rather than stipulating concrete actions or providing a once size fits all format, the aim of the term was to seek to nurture a "culture of protection" both in the drafting of peacekeeping mandates as well as in the execution of these. The Secretary-General's call for a "culture of protection" also brought about the development of a similar and related, yet distinct, term, namely "The Responsibility to Protect". The term has its origin in the controversial doctrine of humanitarian intervention and is hence interventionist, in negation to the more ambiguous Protection of Civilians, which is meant mainly as a guide to *how* to act, not as a trigger on *whether* to act (Vogt *et al.* 2008:14).¹⁷

¹⁶ www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/sgreport/report.htm (accessed 03.06.2010)

¹⁷ The Responsibility to Protect was endorsed in the World Summit in 2005, although in a watered-down language implying a *right* but no obligation to react to massive human rights violations.

4.2.2 Democratic governance and popular sovereignty

The emergence of a “culture of protection” went hand in hand with a modification of state sovereignty. Especially after the Cold War’s end, sovereignty has increasingly come to be seen as a property of the “people”, not of the state. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*¹⁸ affirms that:

The will of the people shall be the basis for the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures (in Joffe 1994:76).

With the elevation of this declaration as the foundation for the post-Cold War liberal word order, it became a moral duty for the international community to protect the rights of poor and vulnerable people around the world, no matter what citizenship they hold. The signing of the *Millennium Development Goals*, seeking to make available the opportunities and benefits of globalization to all peoples, and to “create a shared future, based upon our common humanity in all its diversity”, further committed the UN member states to their “collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level”.¹⁹ Liberal democracy has thus in the post-Cold War era come to be generally perceived as the most appropriate model for organizing human societies, or as the most legitimate form of governance.²⁰ As a result, governments are now perceived to have sovereign power if they are legitimized through popular support, not because, as in the past, of their independence or administrative and legislative competence (Joffe 1994). The notion of a global humanity apparent in the UN declaration functions as a moral justification for a more hands-on approach to violent conflicts. In conjunction with this, the legitimacy of democracy promotion by international organizations was established. According to Boutros-Ghali’s *An Agenda for Democratization*²¹ the legal foundation for democracy promotion lies within the UN Charter itself (Johnstone 2010).

Beyond facilitating “new wars” and creating a “global humanity”, the Cold War’s end furthermore brought about new and increasingly relevant non-state actors like NGOs

¹⁸ www.un.org/Overview/rights.html (accessed 11.12.2009)

¹⁹ www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm (accessed 11.12.2009)

²⁰ Fukuyama argued in “The End of History and the Last Man” that as mankind approached the millennium, the twin crises of authoritarianism and socialist central planning had left only one option for an ideology of potential universal validity - liberal democracy, the doctrine of individual freedom and popular sovereignty (Fukuyama 1992)

²¹ www.un.org/en/events/democracyday/pdf/An_agenda_for_democratization%5B1%5D.pdf (accessed 15.12.2009)

and warlords, who play important roles in maintaining or disrupting international peace and security. In combination, these factors functioned as a backdrop for and provided both supply and demand for the proliferation and transformation of peace operations.

4.2.3 From a Westphalian to a post-Westphalian conception of peace operations

The abovementioned developments had an enormous impact on security and development policies towards the countries in the South, and although there is no conclusive consensus about the role of peace operations in global politics, there are arguably more points of agreement today than at any time previously (Bellamy *et al.* 2010). Generally speaking, conceptualizations of peace operations have tilted in favor of a post-Westphalian conception. In classical Westphalian terms, the primary function of peace operations is strictly to *assist* peaceful settlement *between* states. Internal political organization and relationship between state and society falls under the domestic affairs of the conflict ridden state, in which peacekeepers should not meddle unless it directly represents a threat to the international order. In contrast, the post-Westphalian conception suggests that in the long term, peaceful relations between states, depends on certain regimes and societies *within* states. The underlying assumption is that domestic peace and the way a state conducts its foreign relations is inextricably linked to the nature of its society and political system (Bellamy *et al.* 2010). Threats to international peace and security are thus not limited to acts of aggression between states, but might also result from illiberal governance and or violent conflict within states. The post-Westphalian view supports a moderation of state sovereignty, and takes on the ambitious task of not only maintaining order between states, but also promoting peace, security and societal reconstruction within states, in addition to protecting the local population.

The basic idea of the post-Westphalian approach to peace operations holds that states emerging from war and conflict are best approached through the creation of domestic conditions capable of stabilizing and securing lasting peace. Although there in principle is no intrinsic reason for it, advocates of this view in practice have been committed to the creation of stable and lasting peace in war-shattered states through the building of liberal democracies (Paris 2004). The relationship between liberalism and peace has been extensively studied, and there is a general consensus about the finding that democracies rarely go to war against one another (Paris 2004, Rummel 1997). This tendency for liberal democracies to be more peaceful than non-democratic states is

known as *democratic peace* or *the liberal peace thesis*, and has become the conceptual foundation for contemporary peacebuilding. It is commonly argued that democracies foster the evolution of a social contract that lasting peace can be build upon and that democratic peace therefore is more just and more stable than autocratic peace (Hegre *et al.* 2001). As governments are freely chosen by their citizens and held accountable through periodic elections, they are more likely to promote the rule of law, respect individual and minority rights, cope effectively with social conflict or unrest, and respond to the needs of marginalized groups. The idea that runs through UN reports on peace operations is that strengthening democratic institutions has the effect not of doing away with all conflicts, but of ensuring that the natural conflicts of any society are resolved peacefully (Johnstone 2010). Through democratic processes, the people is given the ability to channel competing interests into “arenas of discourse” thereby reaching compromises which can be accepted by all participants in debates, hence reducing the risk of violent conflict (Hegre *et al.* 2001).

The tension between the Westphalian and the post-Westphalian conception of peace operations reflects on the one hand the tension in the UN Charter over whether states or human beings should be the referent point for security policies, and on the other hand different concerns about legitimacy in peace operations (Bellamy *et al.* 2010). The adoption of a general strategy of democracy promotion in peace operations hence reflects a broader shift in post-Cold War international politics towards political and economic liberalization. According to Paris (2004), the commitment to the liberal paradigm reflects a historic shift in the global culture defining the formal and informal rules of the international system; which the principal and relevant actors in international politics are, how they should organize themselves internally and how they should act. The Western definition of democracy has been established in world politics, and the belief that liberalism promotes peace has been institutionalized. The stabilization realized under the current hegemony of neo-liberalism is thus practically unchallenged. The status quo has become naturalized and made into the way “things really are” (Mouffe 2000), paving the way for new policies such as security sector reform (SSR). The next section will explore the post-Westphalian approach to peace operations in more depth, by looking at the SSR paradigm.

4.3 What is security sector reform?

Security sector reform (SSR) was first introduced to a larger public in 1998 in a speech by Claire Short, Britain's first Minister for International Development in the Department for International Development (DFID) that was created by the Labour government in 1997. The SSR concept was initially most welcomed in academic circles, but has grown increasingly influential among practitioners and policy-makers. The meaning of the term is still evolving as it is rapidly spreading throughout international discourses. Brzoska (2003) has argued that the popularity of the term indicated that the time was ripe for it. Security related issues had been on the development community's agenda since the early 1990s, although on an ad-hock basis, but the SSR concept was innovative in the sense that it organized the different donor approaches under an overarching objective, thus functioning as a conceptual umbrella.

"Security sector" is a broad term used to describe the structures, institutions and personnel responsible for the management, provision and oversight of security in a country.²² Its conceptualization can be understood in narrow or broad terms, but the internationally endorsed OECD DAC guidelines on SSR define the security sector as comprising: Core security actors (armed forces, police, gendarmerie, paramilitary forces, border guards, customs and immigration, intelligence and security services); security management and oversight bodies (the Executive, ministries of defense, foreign and internal affairs, national security advisory bodies, financial management bodies, public complaints commissions); justice and law enforcement institutions (the judiciary, justice ministries, prisons, prosecution services, human rights commissions and ombudsmen, traditional justice systems); and non-statutory security forces (liberation armies, private security companies, guerrilla armies and private militia) (OECD 2007). In broad terms, the security sector comprises all those responsible for protecting the state and communities within it. Other definitions would thus also include civilian representatives such as non-governmental organizations, civil society organization and the media.

The UN lists five common features of effective and accountable security sectors: (i) a legal and/or constitutional framework providing for the legitimate and accountable use of force in accordance with universally accepted human rights norms and standards, including sanctioning mechanisms for the use of force and setting out the roles and responsibilities of different actors; (ii) an institutionalized system of governance and management: mechanisms for the direction and oversight of security provided by

²² www.ssr-online.org/edocs/SG_report_SSR.pdf (accessed 03.04 2009)

authorities and institutions, including systems for financial management and review as well as the protection of human rights; (iii) capacities: structures, personnel, equipment and resources to provide effective security; (iv) mechanisms for interaction among security actors: establishing transparent modalities for ordination and cooperation among different actors, based on their respective constitutional/legal roles and responsibilities; (v) culture of service: promoting unity, integrity, discipline, impartiality and respect for human rights among security actors and shaping the manner in which they carry out their duties (UNSC 2008:6). The UN holds that “no single model of a security sector exists” and that states and societies must define and pursue security according to their particular contexts, histories, cultures and needs.

Security sectors are subjected to a constant and gradual process of transformation in response to changing needs and conditions. The term *security sector reform* however, implies a large scale and deliberate alteration of the security sector itself and its relations to society (Møller 2007). Caparini (2004) argues that SSR is to be understood as a comprehensive reform process with the aim of making the institutions responsible for protecting society more accountable to individual citizens and communities and more responsive to their security needs. It shall on the other hand ensure that the institutions become or remain effective and efficient in their providing of security (Bendix and Stanley 2008). OECD DAC’s SSR policy agenda is built on four main pillars: i) developing a clear institutional framework for providing security that integrates security and development policy and includes all relevant actors and focuses on the vulnerable, such as women, children, and minority groups; ii) strengthening the governance and oversight of security institutions; iii) building capable and professional security forces that are accountable to civil authorities and open to dialogue with civil society organizations; and iv) promoting the sustainability of justice and security service delivery (OECD DAC 2005, OECD DAC 2007). These interrelated challenges face all states, and SSR has thus in principle universal relevance.

4.3.1 SSR’s normative framework

The security sector reform (SSR) agenda extends way beyond the narrower focus on traditional security assistance to defense, intelligence and policing, but the aspect really distinguishing SSR from earlier models of security assistance is the normative framework informing it. SSR is concerned with the well-being and security of individuals and communities and has become prominent as a means to promote both human security and

human development. It moreover places security assistance within a framework of poverty reduction: “The overall objective of security system reform is to create a secure environment that is conducive to development, poverty reduction and democracy” (OECD DAC 2005:16). The normative aspect is important for both the success of the concept itself and the legitimacy of SSR processes.

4.3.1.1 Development and poverty reduction

The dominant rationale for today’s development policy is poverty reduction, as reflected in the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. Targets number one and three of the first Goal read: “Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day” and “Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger”.²³ The SSR agenda has an explicit normative and practical commitment to development and reform should be planned and implemented so as to maximize its contribution to development (Brzoska 2003).

The initial connection drawn between the security sector and development was a fact when international development donors like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) started to condemn what they termed “excessive military expenditures” perceived detrimental to economic growth (Brzoska 2000). Their basic idea was that reduced expenditures in the security sector would release capital that could be relocated and invested to promote economic growth and poverty reduction - a so-called peace dividend. Since it was recognized that there was no automatic link between a reduction in unproductive military expenditure and an increase in social spending, the issue was included in a broader good governance agenda. Based on that, donors began to encourage developing countries, also by the use of conditionality, to drastically reduce their military expenditures. Importantly, this initial approach stemmed from an economic rationale. It did not aim to tackle the deep-rooted and highly political reasons underlying these peculiar resource allocations, but instead sought to provide a technical solution to it (Ball and Hendrickson 2006).

Open conflict is furthermore one of the major causes of poverty. It has been recognized as one of the surest and fastest routes to the bottom of the Human Development Index table - and one of the strongest indicators for a protracted stay there (OECD DAC 2007). Collier *et al.* (2003) has found that countries tend to grow around

²³ www.un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml (accessed 04.03 2010)

2.2% slower during civil war than during peace, which accumulates to a 15% loss in GDP and an approximately 30% increase in the incidence of absolute poverty over an average civil war period of 7 years. Preventing violent conflict through the creation of a security sector able to manage conflict is hence seen as an investment in development itself. Thirdly, insecurity about personal security and the safety of property reduce confidence in savings and investments and hence inhibits economic growth. Enhanced security for individuals and societies on the contrary heightens the incentives for investments and facilitates economic growth. Lastly, greater participation in decision-making is imperative to make any policy more pro-poor. In the security sector, traditionally dominated by military actors, the issue of civil oversight and control is especially relevant in this regard (Brzoska 2003). To sum up, a badly managed, abusive and autonomous security sector is conceived to hamper development and perpetuate poverty, and SSR therefore aims to create a security sector which is human centred and promotes development (Bendix and Stanley 2008).

4.3.1.2 Democratic governance

The concept of “good governance” emerged as an influential topic in the development community in the 1990s as part of the broader democratization debate. The role of the state was reassessed and focus was redirected from cost reductions and downsizing²⁴ to reformation of the state and the ways that public goods were delivered (Smith 2001). Accountability and legitimacy of governments, and the role of the state as a sound and effective manager of resources were hence introduced as prerequisites for economic and political development and effective development assistance. The good governance agenda has been further developed by the UNDP, and today goes well beyond the initial “good economic management” to include an emphasis on the political and civic dimensions of governance (Johnstone 2010). Security sector reform has been incorporated in this broader good governance approach, and is founded on a strong commitment to consolidation of democracy, good governance and promotion of human rights (Hendrickson 1999). This notion is clearly enshrined in the UN’s approach to SSR:

(...) the United Nations continues to search for effective responses to address insecurity based on its Charter. Two related central themes have emerged. The first is that security, human

²⁴ Characteristic of the so-called “Washington Consensus” fronted by the IMF and the World Bank during the 1980s - a neo-liberal practice of structural-adjustment programs which comprised market liberalization, administrative reform, privatization of state-owned enterprises and rolling back of the state

rights and development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing conditions for sustainable peace. The second is the recognition that these fundamental elements can be achieved only within a broad framework of the rule of law (UNSC 2008:3).

The document goes on to define rule of law as:

(...) a principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, including the State, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated and that are consistent with international human rights norms and standards (UNSC 2008:5).

SSR aims at establishing accountable and responsive states able to ensure the livelihoods and safety of their people. OECD DAC further emphasizes that they should “meet the range of security needs within their societies in a manner consistent with democratic norms and sound governance principles, including transparency and the rule of law” (OECD DAC 2005:3).

4.4 Procedural principles

Whereas the sections above have accounted for the substantial elements inherent to the SSR framework, the following section will turn to the procedural principles that stipulate *how* SSR should be performed, and why these procedural principles matter. SSR is a comprehensive undertaking involving a multitude of internal and external actors. OECD DAC has in that regard enunciated that SSR should be seen as a framework to structure thinking about how to address diverse security challenges facing states and their populations through more integrated security and development policies and greater civilian involvement (OECD DAC 2005).

4.4.1 Holistic approach

Taking a broader approach to security makes it apparent that security sector problems are not fundamentally about the military, but more generally is a question of governance within states. This suggests that a narrow focus on professionalizing the armed forces at the expense of efforts to strengthen the rule of law or the role of civilians in managing and monitoring the security sector would be counter-productive and potentially dangerous (Hendrickson 1999). In a similar fashion, establishing a well-functioning police force able to enforce law and order would do little good for society if the penal system does not have the capacity to carry out criminal procedures. The SSR framework thus calls for a holistic approach encompassing all institutions of the security sector,

actors from civil society, oversight bodies and others. It is recognized that an effective reform of security institutions needs to encompass the different components of the security sector in an integrated fashion – all relevant stakeholders have to be included in the reform process and reform in different areas has to be sequenced and coordinated to function optimally (Bendix and Stanley 2008). Its implementation therefore not only requires close cooperation between relevant institutions in the recipient country, but also between the relevant bodies and government ministries in donor countries. This is commonly referred to as a whole-of-governance approach.

4.4.2 Accountability and transparency

Security agents commonly have a tradition of opaqueness and are often highly skeptical towards letting civilians into the security discourse. In post-conflict societies where the armed forces have been politicized and deployed against the civilian population it is especially important to establish civil oversight of the security agents. Only strong legislative input and oversight and activism from civil society and the press can provide the checks to prevent abuses from reoccurring (ICG 2009). To contribute to institutional capacity building, the SSR process should thus itself be carried out in accordance with the principles it seeks to establish, emphasizing accountability, transparency and democratic means. From the perspective of OECD DAC, SSR is a democratic project and a democratizing project. According to Nathan (2007:9) “It has technical components but it is not a technical endeavour and it is not simply concerned with making the security services more efficient and effective”. One of SSR’s main objectives is thus to ensure that governance of the security sector conforms to broader democratic norms.

4.4.3 Local ownership and local context sensitivity

There are a number of inherent dilemmas to SSR. Perhaps the most fundamental one is represented by the fact that the reform process is carried out under the supervision and guidance of external agents, whereas the outcome is supposed to reflect the security concerns of the local population. It thus follows that the reform process has to be firmly embedded in the local context. “Local ownership” or “national ownership” is part of standard development donor vocabulary and has been incorporated in the SSR paradigm. Local ownership of the reform process is seen as essential for two main reasons: First of all, experience has shown that lack of local involvement and commitment endangers the

success of the reform process when it comes to *efficiency and sustainability*. OECD DAC (2005) emphasizes that the most critical task facing countries embarking on a SSR process is to build a nationally owned and led vision of security. A nationally owned concept of security is the very foundation for the development of appropriate security system policy frameworks and the institutional mechanisms required to implement them. Central to this assumption is the idea that participation of local actors ensures that the process responds to the unique needs of the local context and therefore guarantees its quality. Local ownership of SSR is hence a prerequisite for the reform's context sensitivity. It is also presumed that local ownership implies approval or at least acceptance of SSR, so that potential resistance and opposition to the process can be avoided, and recipient's commitment to and trust in the security sector simultaneously enhanced (Bendix and Stanley 2008).

The second aspect is connected to *legitimacy*. Sovereignty is considered the enabling concept of international relations and implies a double claim: autonomy in foreign policy and exclusive competence in internal affairs. The security sector is traditionally viewed as the symbol and upholder of the defining element of modern statehood - the monopoly on the use of legitimate violence. Given the central role of the security institutions in maintaining state power and controlling political and criminal violence, the transformation of them is an essentially political process (Luckham 2009). Because of its highly politicized nature, SSR has been a contested concept, especially among countries in the developing world, which trends to be skeptical of more intrusive interventions by the North in the South (Johnstone 2010). Local ownership is hence imperative to help relieve SSR of a possible perceived neo-colonial taint. It can justly be argued that SSR derives its legitimacy precisely from its normative foundations that differentiate it from earlier models of security assistance, and local ownership is certainly a cornerstone in that regard.

The importance of building and assisting locally owned and led reforms is repeatedly enunciated in policy papers: The UN points to states as the central providers of security, as this is their "sovereign right and responsibility" (UNSC 2008:3) and OECD DAC emphasizes that "assistance should be designed to assist partner governments and stakeholders as they move down a path of reform, rather than determining that path and leading them down it" (OECD DAC 2005:13). Assistance should hence be provided in a manner that enhance domestic ownership of the reform process and strengthen institutional frameworks and human capacity for managing the security sector in a

manner consistent of sound democratic governance practices. Dialog with relevant stakeholders and the integration of the security sector into governance planning and public sector management are essential steps in this process of capacity building (OECD DAC 2005).

Model 1: Security sector reform

Aim: Enhance state and human security. Make security institutions more accountable to individuals and communities. Facilitate democracy and development.

Normative foundations:	Core security sector actors:
Human rights	Military
Democratization	Police
Good governance	Penal system
Poverty reduction	Intelligence
	Other relevant actors: Legislature, NGOs, CSOs, media Violent actors

Procedural principles: Local ownership, local context sensitivity, holistic approach, accountability and transparency

4.5 Summary

The break-up of the bipolar world opened up new maneuvering space to the international community, simultaneously demanding and allowing them a more hands-on approach in international conflict management. The Cold War’s end also represented a window of opportunity for revisiting the security agenda, reflected in a widened understanding of security and a shift from traditional peacekeeping to more comprehensive peacebuilding. Security sector reform is a post-Cold War phenomenon and a part of a discourse linking human and state security to development and poverty reduction. It represents a break with prior security assistance approaches in three important respects (OECD DAC 2005): first, security and development are perceived as mutually conditioned; second, it is concerned not only with state security but also human security; and third, it frames security as a broader governance issue. SSR should hence be understood as a normative, liberal and human centered framework for security assistance, aiming to enhance the state’s capacity to provide for the populations broader security needs in a democratic fashion and to

create conditions conducive to development and poverty reduction. SSR thus clearly reflects a post-Westphalian approach to peace operations. The holistic approach opens up a space for new non-military security agents, whereas the focus on partnership and local ownership is supposed to guarantee legitimacy and sustainability of the reform process.

The next chapter will take a closer look at the so-called “security-development nexus” which has become principal in the debate on development assistance and international conflict management. The chapter will investigate how the conceptual linking of security and development has changed how local conflict, poverty, underdevelopment and state fragility are understood in an international context and responded to.

5 The Security-Development Nexus

The most important reason why the development community should engage with security issues is that they are far too important to be left to security specialists alone (Luckham 2009:2).

The nexus between development, peace and security has become principal in the debate on international conflict management since the mid-1990s, and their mutual conditioning lies at the heart of today's international policy consensus (Duffield 2007). An important consequence of the merging has been that external agents have become increasingly engaged in institution building and state building, attempting to create stable environments for sustainable democratic peace. This chapter will focus on the emergence of the so-called security-development nexus and its impact on the international approach to fragile and post-conflict states. It will address certain issues in particular: the redefinition of concepts like underdevelopment, local conflict and fragile states in a globalized world. The chapter will focus on answering the question of how the merging of security and development has influenced Western donors' geopolitical rationale for engaging with fragile states.

5.1 Bringing security into the development discourse

Security sector reform (SSR) is a donor-driven concept, and was initially championed by the development assistance community. The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) in particular took a leading role in shaping the international donor debate on SSR and its normative framework. Successful international lobbying has been reflected in the OECD DAC's *Guidelines on Security System Reform and Governance* (2005) and in the UN's adoption of the concept, which emphasizes development and democratic governance of the security sector. During the Cold War, the development community generally refrained from getting involved in security-related issues and especially issues concerning the military. Security was equated with military security and the protection of the state, and development donors therefore mostly chose to turn a blind eye to war and insecurity, treating them as exogenous shocks which might disrupt development, but were not intrinsic to it (Luckham 2009). Over the last decade, however, donors increasingly started to recognize the ways in which the overall security environment contributes to or undermines development. The World Bank's participatory

research *Voices of the poor*²⁵ initially drew attention to poor peoples' security concerns, shedding light on the poor's disproportional suffering from insecurity. Poor and marginalized groups are the ones worst affected by violent conflict because it causes societal breakdown, impede economic growth, discourage foreign direct investment and domestic economic activity. In other words "wars kill development as well as people" (DFID 2005). The poor also suffer the most from direct forms of violence and physical abuse, be it from rebels or other armed factions, or security agents like the police or the army (Bellamy *et al.* 2010). Seeking to promote the wellbeing of the poor, it became increasingly harder for the development community to ignore the direct impact of insecurity on development.

5.1.2 The Human Security agenda

As alluded to, the Cold War's end represented a window of opportunity for revisiting the security agenda. Perhaps the most striking outcome of this process was the radical transformation of the security concept itself, as this period witnessed the merging of two previously autonomous fields - that of development and security. The twin concepts of *human development* and *human security* contributed to the transformation of the narrow state centric conceptualization of security and played vital enabling roles in bridging the gap between the security discourse and the development discourse. The human security concept was first introduced in the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report and aimed at complementing the already well-established concept of human development. The human development concept was innovative in that it recognized that growth in a country's GDP not automatically lead to poverty reduction for the marginalized and instead insisted on a more holistic way of describing and measuring the multileveled aspects of poverty and development. The concept of human security combined two ideas; first, that threats to security not only included classical military threats, but also threats like hunger, ecological disasters or epidemics; and second, that the security of individuals, not the state, should be the main unit of concern in security policy (Brzoska 2003:19). The concept of human security had an enormous impact on the security discourse. The focus of security policy was broadened from an almost exclusive focus on state security to include the well being of their populations and human rights (OECD

²⁵www.web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/0,,contentMDK:20613045~isCURL:Y~menuPK:336998~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:336992,00.html (accessed 16.12.2009)

DAC 2005). Through this process, security's complementarity with development was established, paving the way for new policies in the interface of traditional security and development assistance.

Born out of the security-development nexus, security sector reform (SSR) aims to establish a comprehensive conceptual framework for these practices and to provide them with a common vision - one of a security sector that guarantees human rights, promotes human development, contributes to democratization and helps reduce poverty (Brzoska 2003). Looking at SSR policy documents, the link between security and development is made explicit:

Security from violence is fundamental for reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and, more broadly, for sustainable economic, social and political development (OECD DAC 2004:2).

Similar assertions are that "security is a vital concern for development" and that "where violent conflict breaks out, within or between countries, development is arrested" (OECD DAC 2004). Hence, the SSR framework and the broader security-development nexus hold as a core assumption that development is impossible without security and security is unsustainable without development (Duffield 2001).

5.1.3 Redefinition of underdevelopment

The merging of security and development has further implications than the acknowledgement of insecurity's impact on development. If security and development are conceptually interlinked, it implicitly follows that *insecurity* and *underdevelopment* also are. When underdevelopment as a term originated in the development discourse during the 1970s, its meaning was mainly economic and political. It was seen as a condition created by unfavourable links to the developed world, and the solution to it as delinking from the capitalist system. Its interpretation has however undergone a transformation, especially since the Cold War's end.

Castells (1998) has made the argument that a "Fourth World" characterized as "black holes of social exclusion" has arisen alongside contemporary globalization. In these excluded areas, a "void of scarcity" leads to enhanced competition over resources and power, resulting in chaos and power struggles between different ethnic groups, clans and tribes, fighting to control the state. Competition over resources is hence constructed as the source of chaos, crime and conflict and the "breakdown of normative order", and

the root cause of it is seen as stemming from a developmental malaise (Paris 2004). Clapham (1996) has on the other hand argued that “zones of statelessness” historically has coexisted with the “civilized” part of the world. In an increasingly globalized world, however, these ungoverned spaces have imposed themselves as issues that cannot be treated as isolated from the rest of the world. The reason is twofold. First of all, normative developments like the emerging of a “culture of protection” have established the protection of civilians as a humanitarian imperative, and the signing of the *Millennium Development Goals* has further committed the international society to tackle the root causes of violent conflict. Whereas this first reason is framed as a moral obligation to protect human security, the second reason is founded upon the notion that the security of people and the security of states are intrinsically connected. This idea is reflected in the former UN High Commissioner for Refugees Sergio Vieira de Mello’s speech *Security for Peoples, Security for States*, held in 1996:

The narrow definition of security as it is applied to states is inadequate for present realities and therefore misleading. One must go deeper into the structure, into the ethnological strata, as it were, of states, and broaden the notion of security to include that of people. The security of states and the security of peoples are clearly intertwined, for the insecurity of peoples inexorably leads to the disintegration of states and to regional and international instability (OECD DAC 2004:2).

The excerpt reflects a clear shift away from the tradition of seeing the state as the sole referent object for security, but the most important aspect is perhaps the suggestion of a casual explanation from one level to another. If people’s security is threatened, be it by military threats or “soft” threats like pervasive poverty or hunger, it follows that national and international security is endangered too. This assumption rests on a specific interpretation of “conflict”. Conflict could, in theory, be seen as *productive*, as sites of social transformation and reordering resulting in new types of legitimacy and authority. The international community tends, on the other hand, to see conflict as essentially negative. They are understood in terms of social regression and as having causes that mechanically lead to chaos and societal breakdown (Duffield 2001):

SSR (...) is relevant to all partner countries. It is particularly important to those exposed to violent conflict (...). These countries need help to address their severe weakness in governance systems and civil society in order to prevent them from falling into – or relapsing into – armed conflict or state failure (OECD DAC 2004:3).

Consulting the SSR literature, various problems associated with places experiencing violent conflict are listed:

Related problems – such as trans-national crime and corruption, terrorism, the emergence of ‘war economies’, arms and drug trafficking, and the illicit proliferation of small arms and weapons of mass destruction – pose increased threats to people, nations and international security (OECD DAC 2004:2).

According to Fairclough (2000), the function of lists is on the one hand to associate different concepts with each other while on the other hand avoiding explaining the actual relations between them. The same is apparent in this list, as the mechanisms through which local conflict causes international drug trafficking or terrorism remains unexplained. In a globalized world, however, the local has become global. Ó Tuathail (1998) has argued that threats are diffuse and post-territorial in the contemporary world, and that state fragility is a general rather than regionally specific problem. Basically, what the excerpts reveals is an underlying fear of *violent, underdeveloped and ungoverned spaces* and their potential function as abodes for international crime and terrorism. The next section will account for the issue of state fragility in more depth, as the geopolitical aspect of the security-development nexus is elaborated on.

5.2 The Geopolitical aspect of the Security-Development Nexus

The security-development nexus holds as a central or hegemonic assumption that security and development are dependent on each other. The main threat identified within this nexus is *underdevelopment*. The notion of underdevelopment as a threat is fundamentally geopolitical since it rests upon the assumption that the developed world, or the West, is threatened by “the outside world”. The section will start by accounting for the construction of geopolitical identities, before it turns to how geopolitical visions guide states in their choice of foreign policies.

5.2.1 Geopolitical identities

Geographically, the West, the North, the First World or the developed world are customarily associated with the countries of North America, Western Europe, Australia and New Zealand, with Japan being classified as both First World and North, although clearly more East than West (Slater 2004). Globalization has brought with it an increasingly horizontal segmentation of the workforce in both rich and poor countries alike, into winners and losers from global capitalism. It has hence created new patterns of inclusion and exclusion that transcend the binary geographical division of global

economic space (McGrew 2000:354). It could thus be asked if the categories of First World/Third World, West/non-West and North/South²⁶ are becoming increasingly obsolescent. In response to this, Slater (2004) has borrowed Derrida's term "under erasure" to illustrate how these categories are questioned in an increasingly interrelated and globalized world, while at the same time retain a broad usage: The classification of three worlds of development dates back to the early 1950s, and the First world/Third World division is used even though the so-called Second World was dissolved with the end of the Cold War.

5.2.2 Interrelations between the Self and the Other

Processes of identity formation always occur somewhere and always occur relationally. As accounted for in the theoretical framework, subjects are ascribed meaning through processes of linking and differentiation, and identity is hence understood as socially constructed and contingent. Discourses are furthermore constructed in terms of binary oppositions where certain signs are granted primary identity in relation to secondary and subjugated others.

Post-war modernization theory provided the West with its current identity, an identity that depended on a relation of difference with another time and another space to be effectively constructed (Slater 2004). The first differentiation was a separation in time - the contrast between a modern now and a traditional, backward past. This break in time, or *temporal segregation* (Nustad 2003), located Third World societies in a previous time and erased their co-presence in modern time. Second, there was a differentiation in space, separating the modern societies of the West from the traditional and hence pre-modern societies of Africa, Asia and Latin-America. The latter separation hence reflects a geopolitical distinction.

Although based on the Western experience, modernization was conceptualized as a benevolent and universal process. The First World or the West was granted a primary identity in relation to the secondary non-Western Other, as modernization theory constructed it as a model of social progress for the world as a whole. Whereas the West was constituted as the primary, the internally independent and the universal, the Third World²⁷ was perceived as constituted through the interrelated features of non-alignment,

²⁶ I will use the abovementioned terms interchangeable throughout the thesis

²⁷ The original meaning of the term is rooted in the notion of the "Third Estate" – the dispossessed – current during the French Revolution

poverty and a colonized status (Slater 2004). Being the subject of imperial exploitation, the Third World was defined in terms of stagnation, hardships, inflammability and political instability. This negative portrayal of “traditional societies” was rooted in the geopolitical turbulence in the societies of the periphery. Few Third World countries went through the post-1950 period without revolution, military coupes to suppress, prevent or advance revolution, or some form of internal violent conflict. Hobsbawm (1994) has for this reason described it as “a worldwide zone of revolution – whether just achieved, impending or possible” (Slater 2004:6). However, problematically, the narrative ignores the history of colonial penetration and treats instability and conflict as inherent features of developing countries.

From the initial focus on the positive diffusion of modern Western democratic ideals, practices and institutional arrangements, the fear of the Third World’s possible “communist subversion” brought about a re-focusing of priority to a subsequent concern with political order and institutional control (Slater 2004). According to Rostow (1971), modernization was thought to diffuse according to a stage-like trajectory of economic growth, but he also argued that the West’s *political* “global mission” was to reconcile liberty and order in the periphery. The meanings and practices of modernization should thus be seen as intimately connected to the geopolitics of intervention.

5.2.3 The Third World threat

The construction of the West’s geopolitical identity includes not just the positing of difference as inferiority but also as danger. The representation of the South in relation to instability, disorder and war has lent itself to a notion of the South as a threat. Already in the early 1970s the “Third World Threat” was discussed in relation to US foreign policy, and in the post-Cold War era, issues of immigration, organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism have led to the perception of an “increasing Third World threat” to American and European interests (Duffield 2001, Slater 2004, Buur *et al.* 2007). This notion is mirrored in the following quote:

The problems that dog Third World governments – building coalescent societies, winning legitimacy, and meeting the basic needs of citizens – will neither respect borders nor be quietly or easily resolved. In point of fact, it is a safe bet that the global agenda for the 1990s will be shaped largely by the imperative of responding to crises originating in the Third World (Northon 1991:31).

In an increasingly global world, Luckham's concept of *ladders of (in)security* is a useful metaphor for the multiple interconnections across national boundaries and spanning North and South. These ladders do not bridge neutral spaces - they span vast, but shifting, asymmetries in power and wealth, giving rise to different discursive constructions of security (Luckham 2009:8). It is against this background that terms implying an erosion of state capacity, such as "state weakness", "state fragility" and "state failure", have become important terms in security and development lingo. The term "fragile state"²⁸ is essentially used referring to a state whose central government lacks control over significant parts of the territory and is unable to fulfill key functions associated with a modern state like providing security, safety and law and order. In a more development-oriented language, fragile states can be defined as states where the government

cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of the people, including the poor. The most important functions for poverty reduction are territorial control, safety and security, capacity to manage public resources, delivery of basic services and the ability to protect and support the ways in which the poorest people sustain themselves.²⁹

According to Wyler (2008) most countries in the developing world fall along this spectrum, as they exhibit at least some elements of weakness. Because fragile states lack effective control of their territory, they are commonly states that have been or currently are the sites of violent conflict. Such states may thus also be called "ungoverned spaces" or seen as the concrete manifestation of "underdeveloped spaces".

5.2.4 Geopolitical visions and the practice of state-building: the construction of sovereignty for security

It can be argued that any discussion of threats to order and stability must be linked to discourses of identity and difference (Slater 2004). Geopolitical visions are defined as "any idea concerning the relation between one's own and other places, involving feelings of (in)security or (dis)advantage (and/or) invoking ideas about a collective mission or foreign policy strategy" (Dijink 1996:11). As stated, contemporary political theory portrays the West as the primary haven of democracy, economic development, human rights and enlightened thought. Following the constructionist school however, identities as "democracy" or "developed" are not intrinsic; they are constructed as privileged

²⁸ The term most commonly used by the development community. I have chosen to use this term since it is somewhat broader than the term "failed state", which is favoured in foreign and security policy circles

²⁹ www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/fragilestates-paper.pdf (accessed 20.01.10)

identities through a process of linking and differentiation, and situated within a construction of temporal and spatial difference (Hansen 2006). Foreign policy makers aim to construct a link between policy and identity that makes them appear consistent with each other and legitimate to the relevant audience. This process might be thought of as a system of equilibrium where identity and policy is constructed by mutually adjusting the two. Identity and foreign policy are hence seen as ontologically interlinked: it is through the discursive enactment of foreign policy; the *performance* of it, that identity comes into being (Hansen 2006).

Remembering Lacleu and Mouffe's discourse theory (2001), subjects seek after and "find themselves" through discourse. Discursive identity thereafter provides the subject with specific guidelines for action. As stated in earlier chapters, the liberal discourse has become hegemonic in contemporary global politics, including the approach to fragile and post-conflict states. It hence functions as repertoire guiding Western states in the formation of national identity and choice of foreign policy. The United Nations' influential report *An Agenda for Development*³⁰ insists on a mutually reinforcing dynamic between peace and development. It argues that peace is the foundation and a fundamental element of development and that economic and social development is of crucial importance for securing lasting peace. The report thereby categorizes *countries in conflict as countries in need of development* (de Carvalho & Sciha 2008). This idea has fundamental implications for the post-Cold War approach towards fragile states: Since states in a globalized world cannot isolate themselves from threats originating in other states, it follows that they effectively have to *create development abroad to achieve security at home* (Andersen 2006). Because underdevelopment is seen as representing a threat to both the local populations' human security and to international state security, development is an investment in both. Duffield (2007) hence uses the term "enlightened self-interest" to refer to practices related to the security-development nexus.

Although the security-development nexus is concerned with both human development and human security, this does not imply a departure from the basic assumption that states are the fundamental units in international politics. According to the liberal peace thesis, peaceful relations between states are best guaranteed by stable democratic regimes within states. Liberal democracies are furthermore expected to promote economic and social development within their borders. The underlying idea is

³⁰ www.un.org/Docs/SG/agdev.html (accessed 15.01.2010)

that whereas democratization will shift violent societal conflicts into peaceful political competition, marketization will help reduce tensions by enhancing human wellbeing through the creation of sustainable economic growth. Criticizing the liberal peace thesis, Huntington's main argument in *Political order and changing societies* (1968) was that the process of modernization has a destabilizing effect in itself, and that Third World Countries' essential problem was the failure of political institutions to keep up with the pace of economic and social change. Instability and political disorder was hence not caused by the absence of modernization, but rather the efforts to achieve it. The global diffusion of modernization hence paradoxically increased the prevalence of violence (Huntington 1968). Huntington's book remains an influential contribution to the peacebuilding discourse. His thoughts are reflected in Paris's (2004) arguments that fragile and post-conflict states are poorly equipped to handle the societal tensions associated with the transition from conflict to market-democracy. Paris' argument is that it is not the desire to transform war-torn states into market democracies that is peacebuilding's essential problem; rather, it is the methods used to effect this change (Paris 2004). He proposes the adoption of a strategy called *Institutionalization before liberalization*, and argues that peacebuilders should "delay the introduction of democratic and market-oriented reforms until a rudimentary network of domestic institutions, capable of managing the strains of liberalization, have been established" (Paris 2004:7). According to Paris' strategy, the democratization and marketization process should only be initiated through a series of deliberate and externally managed steps, after these institutions are in place. Peacebuilders' most immediate task should thus be the building of robust governmental institutions.

Mirroring both Huntington's and Paris' ideas, the international donor community has incorporated institutional capacity building, democracy and the rule of law into the practice of peacebuilding, as they are perceived as the remedy through which effective and legitimate governance can be obtained in fragile and post-conflict states (Andersen 2006, Bellamy *et al.* 2010). The source of state fragility is believed to be "bad governance" - meaning ineffective and illegitimate governance. According to the United States Agency for International Development's *Fragile States Strategy*

Effectiveness refers to the capability of the government to work with society to assure the provision of order and public goods and services. *Legitimacy* refers to the perception by

important segments of society that the government is exercising state power in ways that are reasonably fair and in the interests of the nation as a whole (my emphasis added).³¹

States where both effectiveness and legitimacy are weak are expected to be especially vulnerable to internal conflict, instability and state fragility. OECD has in keeping with the reasoning of the liberal good governance paradigm advocated that *state-building* should be the central objective for international engagement in fragile states. State building is understood as the creation of new governance institutions and the strengthening of existing ones. Because the aim is to make states more effective agents of control over their own territories and population, Rubin (2010) has referred to this reformative practice as “constructing sovereignty for security”. This policy approach towards fragile states emphasizes the need for prioritizing and focusing assistance to the basic security and justice functions of the state, paving the way for policies like security sector reform (SSR). It hence follows that SSR is part of a liberal state centric discourse founded upon the universal appropriateness of “Weberian” statehood. This is reflected in the UN’s guide to SSR,³² which enunciate the state’s sovereign right and responsibility to provide for order and security.

Geopolitical visions, understood as the translation of national identity into models of the world, enable states to define their interests in the world, potential threats and feasible responses (Dijkink 1996). They hence provide geopolitical subjects with guidelines for geopolitical practices. As accounted for above, the West’s identity as democratic, developed and enlightened, is contrasted with the Outside world as a traditional, volatile and underdeveloped Other. The West’s elevated status in relation to the Outside world on the one hand causes the Third World to be seen as a threat and on the other hand invoke an idea about the West’s civilizing mission. This mission is expressed through the Western foreign policy strategy, and includes large-scale attempts to “stabilize the periphery” through the promotion of liberal ideas and democratic states. Geopolitical identity hence functions as the foundation for and the product of foreign policy (Hansen 2006), and as fragile states have been identified as particular threats to the West, they have become the main targets of international security and development assistance.

³¹ www.usaid.gov/policy/2005_fragile_states_strategy.pdf (accessed 20.01.10)

³² www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900SID/MUMA-7BT9VE?OpenDocument (accessed 02.10.2009)

5.3 The Security-Development nexus as an Order of Discourse

Having accounted for the geopolitical aspect of the security-development nexus, this section will proceed by investigating it as an order of discourse. Fairclough (1995) uses the term *order of discourse* to refer to the limited number of relevant discourses that compete over the construction of meaning within a specific domain. As stated, the security-development nexus rests on the assumption that development and security are interlinked, and sees underdevelopment as a geopolitical threat which should be responded to in a certain way. Going beyond the macro level however, the security-development nexus reveals itself as a field of discursive conflict where different discourses compete over meaning and strategies. It would thus be a mistake to interpret the geopolitical approach towards the Third world as uniform and consistent. Even if policies are founded upon the liberal peace thesis and react to the same security environment, interventions consist of different agents operating with different rationales and methods (Rubin 2010). This understanding is pertinent because it enables a more refined analysis of the approach towards fragile states from the formulation of policies to the actual implementation and the outcome that is produced on the ground.

The security-development nexus establishes state-building as the bedrock of the international approach towards fragile and post-conflict states. Taking this geopolitical prescription as a starting point, the thesis will proceed to identify different discourses within the SSR paradigm. The following sections will analyze how they construct the relation between security and development and how international actors should respond to the issue of state fragility. The thesis draws from the Copenhagen School of security studies as the discourses within the order of discourse are organized as *politicized* and *securitized*.

5.3.1 Competing discourses within the SSR paradigm

As argued throughout the thesis, security sector reform (SSR) is a holistic state-of-the-art term in the international donor community which joins together related concepts such as peacebuilding, governance and public sector reform, previously pursued as separate efforts. SSR is a highly ambitious concept involving a wide range of agents, and its objectives are thus inevitably not without inherent contradictions. Previous sections have hinted at these frictions, and they shall now be elaborated and analyzed in more depth. The main friction, as I see it, exists between a discourse that prioritizes the oversight and

control over security forces, and one that prioritizes the provision of physical security (Brzoska 2003). I will call them *the good governance discourse* and *the security first discourse*, and I see them as politicized and securitized accordingly.

The *security first* discourse emphasizes the provision of physical security and constructs this aspect as a precondition for any advances in the direction of creating social and economic development or building civil capacity for oversight. The majority of SSR undertakings take place in volatile post-conflict settings where both time and resources are limited. When pressed to choose, advocates for the security first discourse would prioritize the strengthening and professionalization of the security sector, even if it is unclear whether effective civil oversight exists or not (Brzoska 2003). This discourse centers on security and is principally associated with the military and other agents belonging to the security community, hereunder certain states in particular.

The *good governance* discourse on the other hand identifies security agents like the police or the armed forces as major sources of insecurity in themselves, and hence prioritizes the strengthening of democratic governance and civil oversight and control over the security sector. According to this view, SSR is the quintessential governance issue (Luckham 1998, Ball 2006), as a police or army reform separated from the strengthening of governance capacity is likely to fail to produce the desired outcomes of enhanced human security and economic, social and political development. The good governance discourse rests on the liberal peace thesis, and is generally associated with the so-called development community and especially international institutions such as the UN and OECD.

5.3.2 The complexity of identity – otherness, difference and the construction of Selves

Having sketched out the two main contending discourses within the SSR paradigm, this section will investigate the process of identity construction. Since identity is produced through and constitutive of foreign policy, the process of identity construction is situated at the ontological and epistemological center of discourse analysis in foreign policy.

David Campbell argues in *Writing security* (1998), that states need to articulate threats and radical Others to construct their identities. There is hence a drive within the ontology of national identity for constructing difference as radical Otherness. Threats, danger and deterrence is however not the only modality through which states meet the world. Viewing identity in foreign policy in a simple Self-Other duality hence represents

a limiting approach that would fail to shed light on important aspects of foreign policy, including diplomacy, peacebuilding and SSR. As argued earlier, the construction of identity is not accomplished through the designation of one particular sign for the Self or Other, but rather through the situation of this sign within a larger system of resemblance or difference. This implies that the construction of “the Third World” or “the South” as different from “the First World” or “the West” does not create much meaning unless it is situated within a discourse that links “the Third World” to a chain of interlinked terms such as underdeveloped, primitive, irrational and violent, and differentiate it against a developed, civilized, rational and controlled “Western” identity (Hansen 2006). Stepping beyond the classical security discourse, it is hence necessary to adopt an analytical perspective that allows for degrees of Otherness. The following analysis will seek to map out discursive differences between the *security first* and the *good governance* discourse by analyzing identity as spatially, temporally and ethically situated.

5.3.3 Identity as a spatial, temporal and ethical construct

Space, time and responsibility are the fundamental concepts through which all political communities are thought and argued. All foreign policy discourses construct relations between Selves and Others based on these categories, and the overriding goal of foreign policy discourse is to articulate them in such a manner that they draw upon and reinforce each other (Hansen 2006). While the discursive strive for stable links between them are constant, there is always more than one possible constellation. Taking each of the three dimensions in turn, I will analyze how the *good governance* discourse and the *security first* discourse construct the same signs to different effects.

To understand identity as *spatially* constructed implies an understanding of identity as relationally constituted, thereby involving the construction of boundaries and the delineation of space. Historically, the delineation in foreign policy discourse has centered on the nation state, abstractly through the privilege granted to national security and concretely through the construction of particular identities of other states, regions and peoples (Hansen 2006:47). The security first and the good governance discourse both construct underdevelopment as a problem that has to be dealt with, and fragile states as the space for intervention. As such, the fragile state is constituted as the Other, as an entity which is conceptually different from and located outside of the Self. It is hence both a territorial and a political identity.

The notion of the Self in the security first discourse is defined as a national Self in relation to the Other as a threat, invoking a national security discourse. The operating of the security first discourse is particularly present in the US interest in state fragility, which has become increasingly substantial since the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In the aftermath of the 9/11, Fukuyama (2004), among others was central in arguing that problems related to state fragility far from being local construed as a serious international security issue. American foreign policy discourse articulates fragile states as “safe havens” harboring US national security threats. Reflecting this tendency, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has emphasized how weak and failing states pose “unparalleled” danger to the United States, serving as “global pathways” that facilitate the movement of criminals and terrorists” and “proliferation of the world’s most dangerous weapons” (Wylter 2008:5).

The articulation of the Other is however not uniformly the state in question, and it is not constructed as a radical enemy which should be eliminated. As part of the construction of “fragile states” as radically different from Western states, a destabilizing fragmentation of the Other is evident in that the local population tends to be defined as victims of repressive regimes and violent armed factions. A recurrent notion is one of fragile states as threats to “poor people”, “women” and “civilians” – locals threatened by the fragile state and in need of protection. The term “spoilers” is furthermore frequently used referring to various groups such as government officials, soldiers or rebellions, which are hostile to or do not cooperate with the state building agenda as they see themselves as better off with the current situation. The Other is hence a fragmented construct, which is seen as constituting a threat to both international security and the local populations’ security.

In the good governance discourse, the Self is constructed as the international community. The dominant notion of the Other is on the other hand “the locals”; the population in the state of intervention.

Development agencies cannot ignore the impact that security threats at all levels – local, national and global – have on *poor people*. At the same time, *the world community* cannot ignore the critical role of poverty and inequality in increasing risks for us all. We need to ensure that, as an *international community*, we make progress on both security and development (DFID 2005:8) (my emphasize).

The notion of the Self as “the international community” is interesting because it depicts the good governance discourse as a universal discourse. As such, it does in principle

articulate the Self as a boundless political subject. I have, however, argued that identity always is relationally constituted, and the construction of policies to be undertaken “to achieve the Millennium Development Goals” or “in defense of universal human rights” is indeed made in response to the violations of these rights. It can therefore justly be argued that the good governance discourse also constructs particular political subjects, such as fragile or undemocratic states, as the Self’s opponent. The discourse is nevertheless more human centered than the security first discourse: The fragile state is identified as the target for assistance and intervention, but the policy is aimed at enhancing the local population’s safety and well-being, and also protecting international values such as democracy and human rights.

As a universal discourse, the good governance discourse constitutes spatial as well as *temporal* identities. Temporal schemes such as development, transformation, continuity, change, repetition or stasis are crucial in the construction of identity in foreign policy discourse, and discourses can be classified based on political, religious, civilizational or other forms of *progress* on the one hand and *intransience* on the other (Hansen 2006:48). One might therefore ask how the temporality of the Other is constituted in relation to the temporality of the Self. In the good governance discourse, fragile and underdeveloped states are articulated as objects with a different temporal identity than the Self, as located behind it on the temporal scale. The idea of the Other as temporally progressing towards a superior Self is also central in the discourse:

OECD government strategies to help developing countries reform their security systems can provide a critical step on their path towards democracy and the protection of the people and the state (OECD DAC 2004:6).

The notion of progress towards a Western ideal is blatant in this SSR policy excerpt. It reveals an underlying developmental ambition in that it portrays the underdeveloped Other as capable of liberal political transformation, although clearly in need of “a push” from the West. The notion of fragile states having different temporal identities than the Western Self is shared by the security first discourse. Both discourses operate on the assumption that the Western modern state represents the standard against which fragile states should be measured. Against this ideal, fragile states are perceived as “lacking capacity” to control and govern its territory, society and population. The role of the Self in both discourses is hence constructed as a helper or facilitator of the transformation of the Other into an almost-Self (Hansen 2006).

The transformation of the Other is in the good governance discourse constructed as falling within the moral responsibility of the Self. It is a compassionate response to human suffering and an act of solidarity:

Development co-operation is one way that people from all nations can work together to address common problems and pursue common aspirations. Sustainable development expands the community of interests and values necessary to manage a host of global issues that respect no borders (...) (OECD 1996:6).

The spread of liberal values such as democracy, human rights, gender equality and good governance, is constructed as part of the Self's *ethical identity*. This specific set of values are advocated by international organizations like the UN and OECD, but the agents belonging to the good governance discourse interestingly enough tend to understand themselves as de-politicized helpers facilitating the implementation of universal values (Friis 2010). This point is remarkable, since the strengthening of state institutions and capacities hardly can be perceived as anything but political. SSR, in addition, explicitly seeks to transform the society's power relations by professionalizing the security agents and subjecting them to civilian oversight and control. In such a process, some people will gain power and influence, while others will lose theirs. It is hence an inherently political activity (Stanley 2008).

The security first discourse is more national security oriented than the good governance discourse, and the construction of the Self's responsibility is hence mainly applicable towards the national body politics. The construction of fragile states as international threats invokes a moral force of protecting the national Self. According to the security first discourse, it is in the *national interest* of the US or any other western state to target state fragility. The notion of a moral obligation to protect the locals are to some degree apparent, but it is basically founded upon the perception of poverty and human rights abuses as long term risk factors associated with terrorism and radicalization of groups:

Attempting to draw neat, clean lines between our security interests and our democratic ideals does not reflect the reality of today's world. Supporting the growth of democratic institutions in all nations is not some moralistic flight of fancy; it is the only realistic response to our present challenges (Rice 2005).

The ethical dimension to the construction of the Self in the security first discourse is hence first and foremost the stabilization of fragile states to protect national security, and secondly, to protect the local population.

5.4 How geopolitical visions affect the rules of the game

The security first and the good governance discourse share conceptual terrain, as they coexist within the donor community's hegemonic approach to fragile states. The previous section has investigated which Selves and Others and the degrees of Otherness that are constructed in the security first and good governance discourses. The discourses articulate specific spatial, temporal and ethical identities and focus on different aspect of the Other. As a result, they construct different geopolitical rationales for engaging in state-building in fragile states. The discursive struggle is essentially about the definition of the geopolitical situation; whether underdevelopment and state fragility should be conceptualized and responded to as a threat, and whether it represents a threat to Us or to Them. This friction is visible in the internal struggle over the priorities and "rules of the game" of state-building.

5.4.1 Security First as a securitized discourse

Within the security-development nexus as an order of discourse, the signs *underdevelopment/state fragility* and *security* hold central positions in competing discourses, but their meaning and hence effect, depend on the specific discourse. Within the "security first" discourse, *underdevelopment* is a fixed moment. It is seen as a source of instability, chaos and unrest. As such, underdevelopment is constructed as an international security threat and as representing a threat to the local populations' security. *Security* is thus the nodal point which the other signs crystallize around:

Security for "Us (the United States), Them and the World" should be the guiding principle of US foreign policy, trumping democracy, in the event of conflict (Kuok 2008:1405).

The argument draws on Etzioni, a profiled American intellectual and former Senior Adviser to the White House. The article it is taken from is written in support of his basic idea that a "security first", rather than "democracy first" approach to fragile states provides a better outcome for democracy to take root in. They hence follow Huntington's (1968) view in that order, authority and institutional control should precede democratization. Because meaning in the security first discourse is structured around security, it represents a securitized discourse. As indicated above, the ethical responsibility of the Self is principally constructed around the protection of national security, but there is also a notion of responsibility to protect segments of the local population that are being targeted by the Other in question. *Security* is hence a floating

signifier, which interchangeably refers to “international security” and the local populations’ “physical security”:

Security refers to basic security, that is, the conditions under which most people, most of the time, are able to go about their lives, venture onto the street, work, study, and participate in public life (politics included), without acute fear of being killed or injured (Etzioni 2007:2).

The meaning of *security* is thus conceptualized in a narrower sense than in the good governance discourse where the term is more oriented towards broader social security, encapsulating human rights and development aspects. Insofar as a certain level of economic security is included in the security first definition, it is due to its potential effect on physical security:

It makes sense to include within basic security a certain level of economic security, because a failure to achieve this could have consequences as dire as the lack of physical security (such as if people are dying of starvation). The difficulty, of course, lies in ensuring that economic security is not so widely construed that it goes beyond subsistence. A development-first foreign policy, like one based on democracy first, is unrealistic in the short term and counterproductive insofar as it detracts from achieving security, which must precede development (Kuok 2008:1435).

The excerpt effectively argues that “if we do not tackle insecurity first, everything else will be irrelevant”. This is a securitizing move, and clearly reveals the structuring impact of *security* on the discourse. Although democratization is regarded as a positive development, security should take absolute priority and democratization should only be gradually phased in after security has been established. Democratization is thus reduced to *the means to an end*; firstly, as an investment in international security, and secondly, to the protection of the local population’s physical security.

By “speaking security”, an actor claims the right to break the normal political rules of the game and handle the issue through extraordinary means. “Security” is thus according to the Copenhagen School a self-referential practice, because it is in this practice that the issue at hand becomes a security issue – not necessarily because it represents a real existential threat, but because it is presented as such. Securitization is furthermore understood as the construction of a shared understanding of what is to be understood as a threat and collectively responded to as such (Buzan *et al.* 1998). The “remarkable consensus” that has emerged among Western governments on framing diverse issues like terrorism, organized crime, human rights violations, migration, poverty and violent conflict in a discourse of state fragility (Andersen 2006), shows that the articulation of fragile states as an international security issue has been a powerful

securitizing move. Underdevelopment and state fragility have been constructed as threats to *us, the West*, to our security, something which has changed the geopolitical rationale for donor engagement in fragile states.

5.4.2 Good governance as a politicized discourse

The good governance discourse also sees *underdevelopment/state fragility* as a threat, but in contrast to the security first discourse not primarily in relation to international security. Within the good governance discourse fragile states are understood as limited threats to state security; as states that “cannot or will not deliver core functions” to the poor, hence principally representing a threat to its inhabitants’ security. *Security* is thus not perceived as the main structuring sign, or as the nodal point, but is rather fixed as a moment. The meaning of *security* is broader defined than in the security first discourse, encompassing human rights and social and economic dimensions in addition to physical security. Underdevelopment is hence not primarily understood as a *security threat*, but as a moral and political issue. The nodal point within this discourse is *democratic governance*. The Self is understood as the international community, and the ethical dimension to this identity centers on the protection of universal rights and the transformation of the Other into a democratic almost-Self. The good governance discourse can thus be understood as a politicized discourse. It frames underdevelopment and state fragility as issues falling within the realms of public or other communal policy,³³ requiring government decision and resource allocation (Buzan *et al.* 1998). Such a framing affects the strategy towards the perceived geopolitical threat in a different way than in the security first discourse. The following sections will elaborate on the discursive struggle between the security first and the good governance discourse.

5.4.3 Discursive struggle over the rules of the game

The term interdiscursivity refers to exchange between discourses – how borders between discourses move when fixed moments from one discourse enter another (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999). The development community’s insistence that insecurity matters for development has increasingly brought (in)security and violent conflict into the development discourse. As part of this process, *security* was rearticulated as a broader concept than the traditional definition centered on the state, military means and the

³³ In this case also within the international community’s realm

provision of physical security. The new human-centered concept of *human security* moved the borders between the security and development discourse by producing a common ground for interaction and intervention.

The construction of security and development as inextricably linked, brought about several important changes. The construction was in many ways a tactical attraction for the development community, since *development's* relation to *security* contributed to enhancing its perceived importance in international politics. Development went from being about “doing good”, to being constructed as an important aspect of foreign policy agenda. The re-articulation of security can hence be understood as an attempt to “positively securitize” underdevelopment, so to speak, to attract more resources to classical development activities like poverty alleviation, reconstruction and capacity building. As part of this re-articulation however, the borders between *security* and *development* became increasingly blurred. *Underdevelopment* existed as a fixed moment in the development discourse, referring to various aspects of deprivation and human suffering. It was, however, rearticulated as a threat and securitized as it entered the security discourse. The conceptualization of (under)development as a security issue furthermore caused fragmentation of the traditional division of labor between traditional security and development agents, reflected in notions such as the comprehensive “whole of government” approach and the “3Ds” of security - defense, diplomacy and development.

The blurring of distinctions between security and development has not been unproblematic. The security community's increased involvement in traditional development activities in places such as Afghanistan has been heavily criticized as a “mission creep” by NGOs who argue that the military's use of quick-impact projects causes development and humanitarian workers to be perceived as part of the conflict and hence legitimate targets.³⁴ Humanitarian NGOs are in particular dependent on being perceived as neutral, impartial and separate from military operations to conduct their work. For them, it is imperative that the humanitarian space is left unpoliticized (Friis 2009). Quick-impact projects furthermore aim at responding to immediate needs and winning the local population's “hearts and minds”, rather than facilitating long-term structural transformation. It can hence be justly argued that the security community's “mission creep” has reduced development aid to a means to political and military ends.

³⁴ www.flyktninghjelpen.no/?aid=9066312 (accessed 05.05.2010)

The security community's increasingly dominant role can partly be explained by the fact that the post-Cold War approach to fragile and war-torn states has made donors embark on programs to create societal transformation in highly insecure environments such as Iraq and Afghanistan, where military actors naturally have a comparative advantage in relation to civilian actors (Patric and Brown 2007). Most civilian agencies are simply not fit to operate in situations of active insurgency, where their security cannot be guaranteed. The outcome of comprehensive approaches has thus been that security agents have become increasingly dominant in traditional development activities. This however, also holds true beyond situations of large-scale armed conflict. A worrying tendency exists in relatively stable post-conflict states, that military actors are expanding their spheres of influence beyond their conventional domains, hence marginalizing development actors in the process. This tendency points to important and unforeseen structural aspects, causing difficulties and imbalances within the post-Cold War approach to fragile states. As mandates and programs have been broadened, the asymmetries between civilian and military resources and capacities have become increasingly obvious. This tendency is illustrated in the following quote by Lieutenant Colonel David Kilcullen:

At present, the US defense budget accounts for approximately half of total global defense spending, while the US armed forces employ about 1.68 million uniformed members. By comparison, the State Department employs about 6,000 Foreign Service officers, while the US Agency for International Development (USAID) has about 2,000. In other words, the Department of Defense is about 210 times larger than USAID and State combined - there are substantially more people employed as musicians in Defense bands than in the entire foreign service (Patric and Brown 2007:3).

The massive imbalance in capabilities and resources reflects a chronically under-investment in non-military state-building agents, and it exerts a constant pull, tugging at civilian leadership in SSR in general and in US foreign policy in particular. As an institution, the military reflects a different intertextual history than the development community and is associated with the security first discourse. The security community's approach to SSR activities is hence not surprisingly of a military rather than political or social nature.

5.4.4 Securitization of policies

The security-development nexus has impacted on the international donor community's geopolitical rationale for engaging with fragile and post-conflict states in the South.

Importantly, fragile states have in the post-Cold War era come to be constructed as spaces of underdevelopment and instability, causing them to become increasingly securitized in an international context. It can be argued that fragile states in fact are double securitized, as they moreover are perceived as threats to their local population. The linking of local and global (in)security has had far-reaching consequences. As underdevelopment and state fragility are perceived as threats to local populations, regions and the broader international community, a new justification for intervention in fragile states have emerged (Duffield 2001). Because international security is perceived to be at stake, western states now have a moral responsibility to intervene in fragile states to protect their own population's security. Underpinned by the liberal peace thesis, Western donors have embarked on a mission to create stability and development abroad through the construction of liberal democratic states.

Successful *securitization* consists of three interrelated steps: articulation of existential threats, emergency action, and effects on inter-unit relations by breaking free of rules (Buzan *et al.* 1998:26). The sections above have argued that underdevelopment and state fragility have been constructed as existential threats in the post-Cold War era, and that the international community has accepted them as such. This notion is both evident in the formulation of policy documents and in practice, as military actors are becoming increasingly involved in traditional development work. What effect does the new geopolitical rationale have on inter-unit relations then? The bare fact that foreign donors are in charge of the transformation and building of the security sector in fragile and post-conflict states does in itself reflect a "breaking free of the rules" of traditional relations between states. The security sector is traditionally regarded as the cornerstone of state sovereignty. For this reason, the practice of SSR would have been unthinkable only few years ago, as it would have resembled earlier colonial practices and relations too much. It can thus be argued that the post-Cold War approach to fragile states reflects a process of *securitization*. This effectively means that the issue of underdevelopment/state fragility has come to be framed in a specific way, as a *security issue*, providing international security as the rationale for intervention. The fact that security actors have become increasingly involved in development practices underscores the relation between discourse and materiality. Moreover, because the security community's capacity and resources exceeds civilian agents', the military is constantly called upon to "fill the vacuum" after the civilian actors (Patrick and Brown 2007). This situation causes security actors to become increasingly dominant in security and development related work, where

they bring in their specific methods and rationales for action, which are centered on security.

5.5 Summing up

This chapter has accounted for the security-development nexus and its geopolitical impact on the international approach towards fragile and post-conflict states. By constructing security and development as interlinked and pertinent for both human security and international security, the security-development nexus has legitimized international donors' venture into the security sector of fragile and post-conflict states.

The SSR paradigm explicitly aims to make security a development issue by providing a conceptual framework for donor policies in the interface of security and development assistance. Paradoxically, it has simultaneously made (under)development a security issue, causing the security community to become increasingly dominant in development related work. How this situation plays out in practice will be addressed shortly. The next chapter will elaborate on the relation between discourse and materiality as I turn to the implementation of the security sector reform agenda in Liberia.

6 Implementing the SSR Agenda - the Case of Liberia

The previous chapters have accounted for the security-development nexus and contextualized security sector reform (SSR) as a post-Cold War framework for international security assistance. The internationally endorsed OECD DAC guidelines on SSR emphasize that security sector reform should reflect individual and societal security needs and facilitate “development, poverty reduction and democracy” (OECD DAC 2005:16). According to its foundation, SSR is a democratic project, and one of its main objectives is to ensure that governance of the security sector conforms to broader democratic norms. The framework moreover stipulates certain procedural principles for how to conduct SSR to ensure that the reform is efficient, sustainable and legitimate. The principles emphasized are *local ownership*, *local context sensitivity*, *accountability and transparency* and *holistic approach* (OECD DAC 2005).

Establishing a policy agenda is however only the first step in the development of an approach to any issue area. According to Bellamy *et al.* (2010), peace operations have had a clear and positive effect on the number and intensity of armed conflicts in the post-Cold War era. Deployment of peacekeepers has reduced the risk of armed conflicts reigniting by as much as 86% where operations are deployed with the consent of the belligerents and above 50% where operations are deployed in regions with unstable consent and lingering violence. Studies on the long-term effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts, have however found that the failure to build *sustainable peace* range from 30% of countries relapsing into conflict within two years (Doyle and Sambanis 2006) to 44% within five years (Mack 2007). These findings indicate that external peacebuilding efforts need to be well adjusted to the local situation if they are to succeed in building a peace that will remain also after the peacekeepers have left. A “one-size fits all” approach to fragile states is counterproductive and could easily end up reproducing or exacerbate the societal conditions leading up to violent conflict.

Following this stand, this chapter will seek to investigate the SSR framework’s impact on donor policies in post-conflict states. For this purpose, I have chosen the case of Liberia. The Liberian SSR process represents a highly internationalized process, heavily dependent on external donors, most importantly the UN and the USA. Undertakings have been unprecedented in ambition, but with mixed results (ICG 2009), and the success of the reform process is thus a disputed topic. After 14 years of brutal

civil war ending with a peace agreement in 2003, Liberia is a relatively stable country. However, the prevailing peace and stability remains extremely fragile and vulnerable to disruption, partly owing to weak national security institutions (UNSC 2009:20 b). Lack of employment and economic opportunities furthermore contribute to the fragility of the situation. Liberia thus remains heavily dependent on the presence of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). UNMIL is one of 15 current UN peacekeeping operations,³⁵ and the peace process follows the pattern of the UN's *modus operandi* that has been emerging since the end of the Cold War. It is characterized by a sequence of activities in the order of a peace agreement, followed by deployment of peacekeepers, a disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration programme (DDRR), security sector reform (SSR) and ending with elections (Ebo 2005:ii). The UN mission's strength as of 30 July 2010 was 9,399 personnel, including 7837 troops, 1347 civilian police and 128 military observers (UNSC 2010 b). Based on the Secretary-General's recommendations, the mission's mandate has been extended until the 30 September 2011 to assist the Liberian Government with the upcoming 2011 general presidential and legislative elections. The chapter will start off by accounting for the background of the Liberian civil war, since it provides the context and conditions wherein the SSR process is being implemented and carried out. It will thereafter turn to the ongoing SSR process and the results it has produced on the ground. The questions guiding my analysis are as follows: *What characterizes the Liberian SSR process, and do the elements of the OECD DAC framework inform the implementation of the reform process?*

6.1 Background to SSR in Liberia

(...) a major source of the dysfunctionality of the security sector in Liberia is that the armed and security forces have all through the country's history functioned as instruments for regime interests as opposed to the interests of the general populace. As such, their role has essentially been repressive, given the wide gap between regime interests and popular interests (Ebo 2005:14).

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on 18th August 2003 marked the end of fourteen years of brutal civil war. The signatories were the Government of Liberia (GOL), the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) and the political parties in Liberia. The CPA outlined the principles to which the parties would commit themselves, established

³⁵ www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmil/ (accessed 15.03.2010)

the National Transitional Government of Liberia and requested that the UN deployed a force to support the interim government and assist the implementation of the peace agreement (Bøås 2009, Stig 2009). In 2006, after the initial transition period, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was elected president, becoming Africa's first female elected head of state. Since then, reconstruction has taken place with security sector reform high on the priority list. The post-conflict environment in Liberia is, however, one of the most challenging SSR environments the international community has ever faced, as a wholesale rebuilding of the security sector is required.³⁶

To grasp the challenges facing the Liberian SSR process, it is essential to understand that they arise from over a century of deficient security sector governance. Retracing parts of the country's history is thus imperative for current attempts to reconstruct Liberia, especially because the problem of Liberian security forces abusing civilians from the early twentieth century on has been intimately linked to interventions by other governments (ICG 2009). This is a crucial point to an externally driven attempt to reform the security sector with the ultimate aim to avoid a repetition of the country's violent past.

6.1.1 State exclusion and the historical failure of the security sector

Liberia is Africa's oldest republic. It was founded in 1822 for the resettlement of freed American slaves. After 25 years of settlement, the Liberian legislature declared its independence on July 26th 1847. The Constitution of Liberia was based on the ideals of democratic governance and popular sovereignty. It called for a tripartite state structure based on the US model consisting of three co-equal branches of government: the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary (Jaye 2009). However, the constitution delineated sharply between the repatriates and the so-called "native tribes", consisting of 16 major indigenous groups³⁷ of people, each possessing its own languages, traditions, customs and religious beliefs. The latter were not eligible for election and voting, laying the foundation for entrenched alienation between the different ethnic groups and the America-Liberians (Bøås 2009). During the last decade of the nineteenth century, the American-Liberian settlers began to move inland and assert claims over a broadening swathe of territory. The True Wig Party was established in 1870, and for more than a

³⁶ www.ssrnetwork.net/topic_guides/liberia.php (accessed 14.04.2010)

³⁷ These are the Bassa, Belle, Dey, Gbandi, Gio, Gola, Grebo, Kissi, Kpelle, Krahn, Kru, Loma, Mandingo, Mano, Mende and Vai (Adebajo 2002:21)

century, post-independence Liberia was governed by the small American-Liberian elite³⁸ as “a single-party state with a strong, almost “imperial” presidency” (Jaye 2009:1). Both military force and the creation of administrative boundaries helped sustain the hegemony.³⁹ The True Wig Party ruled the hinterlands through direct commissioners who in turn ruled through local chiefs. The administrative boundaries thus sharpened and cemented differences between the different ethnic groups, which prior to the Americo-Liberian rule had had a more flexible and inclusionary character. The result was widespread political repression, nepotism, economic mismanagement and political and socio-economic marginalization of indigenous ethnic groups (Bøås 2009, Ebo 2005).

The structure of the colonial militia, the Frontier Force, resembled the rest of the Liberian society in the 1910-1960 period. Officers were typically from the settler Americo-Liberian elite, and Loma and Kpelle speakers from the centre and north-west of the country were disproportionately represented in the ranks. Clan and paramount chiefs in each locality organized recruitment and were supported by the Frontier Force in collecting taxes and rounding up local men for forced labour on public works projects. Provincial officials and chiefs from the central areas were rewarded for cooperating with the government with positions in the hinterland administration and Frontier Force. This situation led Sawyer (2005) to describe the military as “a patrimonial organization linked to both the Monrovia-based oligarchy as well as the indigenous social order” (ICG 2009:2). It was from this period that the armed forces traced a kind of ethnized geography of violence. Irregularly paid, the army was encouraged to “pay itself”. Having to live off the land and the local populations, the Frontier Force soon earned a reputation for brutality and looting, and it inflicted considerable violence on the Kru, Glebo, Bassa and Krahn-speaking regions in the south-east of the country.

Personalization of power was prevalent in the decades preceding the civil war, and the shaping of the security sector became the individual prerogative of the president. Juxtaposed to the powerful presidency was a very weak parliament. Liberia’s decision-making process was dominated by party-loyalty, subverting legislative and judicial checks and balances as envisioned in the constitution. Members of the Legislature were handpicked by party factions dominated by the President and his associates, which meant that it would not challenge the security legislatures crafted by the Executive through the

³⁸ 3-5% of the total population in Liberia

³⁹ It is questionable if Liberia could have survived as an independent state without the diplomatic and military support of the USA

exercise of its oversight responsibilities. Any process that could ensure transparency and accountability was thus removed (Jaye 2009). The Judiciary was also weakened by the single party rule, as the removal of judges only required an easily achieved “Joint Resolution” by the Legislature, firmly under control of the Executive. The judiciary thus functioned as an instrument of manipulation and a means of legitimizing the activities of government. The exercise of legislature oversight of the security sector thus suffered immensely in pre-war Liberia.

6.1.2 Coup d'état and downturn in stability

Partially successful reforms to bridge the gap between the settlers and the indigenous groups regarding educational access and political participation were launched under president Tubman (1944-1971) and continued under president Tolbert (1971-1980) (Adebajo 2002). The infamous Frontier Force changed its name to the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) in 1962, and recruitment began to resemble that of other modern armies. A military academy was established and recruits were required to have some formal training (ICG 2009). The AFL acquired an increasing reputation for professionalization, although the officer corps nevertheless continued to be heavily dominated by men of settler background.

The situation that provided the backdrop for the coup d'état staged on 12 April 1980 by the young Master-Sergeant Samuel Doe (Adebajo 2002), was characterized by gross economic inequalities, food crisis and president Tolbert's serious mishandling of the economic recession that Liberia was in.⁴⁰ The president had unwittingly alienated and politicized the army by using it to crush the various students and labour demonstrations opposing the regime. On the day of the coup, Doe and sixteen low-ranking soldiers forced their way into the Executive Mansion in Monrovia and killed the president along with twenty-six others, before announcing their coup over the radio. The brutality to come from Doe's regime was demonstrated by the following assassination of Tolbert's family and thirteen members of government, the latter broadcasted by Liberian television (Adebajo 2002). Doe was nevertheless celebrated by Liberians, who considered the removal of the True Wig Party regime a blessing liberating them from 133 years of settler dominance.

⁴⁰ In the midst of the crises, president Tolbert decided to host an African Union summit in 1979, spending an estimated \$200 million on a new hotel and conference centre (Adebajo 2002:22).

Adebajo has described the new government, the People's Redemption Council, as a "marriage of convenience" as "the intelligentsia had experience and expertise but lacked power; the soldiers lacked experience and expertise but had power" (Adebajo 2002:25). It soon became clear that the new rulers were neither willing nor able to dismantle the neo-patrimonial state. Doe had inherited an economic crisis from the former administration, and the People's Redemption Council became a vehicle for the enrichment of its members and the elite of the ethnic groups to which they belonged. Doe's rule accordingly came to be characterized by corruption, theft of state resources, murder, rape and other human rights violations (Bøås 2009). The coup thus marked the beginning of a rapid downturn in stability. Potential rivals were eliminated through assassinations or forced exile, and human rights abuses proliferated against groups that challenged his rule (Adebajo 2002). Peaceful avenues for dissent were closed off, causing several military challenges to the regime.

The rigging of the 1985 presidential elections is known as Doe's "second coup".⁴¹ The election was staged to lend a veneer of legitimacy to his autocratic rule, but instead sparked a coup attempt. The coup attempt was led by General Thomas Quiwonkpa, a native Dan. The coup attempt failed, and was followed by retributive killings of 2000-3000 persons belonging to minority groups⁴² in an area known as the Nimba county (ICG 2009, Adebajo 2002). The events resulted in an increased militarization of society and ethnicization of the army⁴³ which was turned into a praetorian guard protecting Doe's power. The Nimba county massacre more than any other incidence ignited the civil uprising, which culminated in Charles Taylor's invasion in 1989. The incident hence set the stage for the civil war to come.

6.1.3 Taylor's invasion and civil war

Up to the 1990s Liberia had been an American protégé, and it was hence unthinkable that the US would allow the country to fall into a full-scale civil war. But the combination of shifting geopolitical considerations and the actions of Doe's undisciplined Krahn-dominated army, which committed horrendous atrocities towards both military and civilian Manos and Gios, removed any chance of gaining critical support from the former ally in Washington. The withdrawal of American support clearly had a destabilizing

⁴¹ The two most formidable opponents, the United Peoples Party (UPP) and the Liberian People's Party (LPP) were banned only three months before the October 1985 election (Adebajo 2002)

⁴² Gio, Manu and Dan people

⁴³ This time by the Krahns

effect on Liberia, leaving a security vacuum to be exploited (Adebajo 2002). On Christmas Eve 1989, the 168 men strong National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor crossed into Liberia's Nimba County from Côte d'Ivoire. The rebel group mainly consisted of anti-Doe Liberian exiles in West-Africa as well as Burkinabès, Gambians and Sierra Leoneans. It had no clearly defined political identity beyond toppling the Doe regime. Presented as a continuation of the Quiwonkpa led coup attempt, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia had little difficulty recruiting new members among the revengeful Nimba population (Adebajo 2002).

As the National Patriotic Front of Liberia marched into the capital of Monrovia in July 1990, it consisted of an estimated 10,000 fighters. The Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) was by then reduced to about 2,000 fighters. Led by Nigeria, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) hastily deployed a peacekeeping force known as the Ecomog Cease-fire Monitoring Group (Ecomog) to Liberia. With Monrovia under heavy artillery, Doe was forced to offer a cease-fire. A stalemate occurred: Doe insisted the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) give up its guns before talks, whereas the latter insisted Doe give up his presidency before talks (Ellis 1999).

Shortly prior to the attack on Monrovia, one of the NPFL's commanders, Prince Johnson, had defected from the rebel force forming the splinter group the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia. 9th September 1990, this splinter group captured and abducted president Doe from the Ecomog base at Freeport and killed him shortly after. Johnson did seek to take over as president, but had little political support apart from the fighters he had recruited when he formed the splinter group (Ellis 1999). Just a few days in advance of Doe's murder, a conference of Liberian politicians meeting in Banjul, Gambia, had elected Amos Sawyer, a prominent academic and political activist, as the interim president of Liberia. Taylor blatantly refused to accept this decision. He denounced Ecomog as illegal and established a rival Governance in Gbarnga, declaring himself president of Greater Liberia. After the Ecomog mandate was changed from peacekeeping to peace enforcement and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia was pushed out of Monrovia, a cease-fire allowing humanitarian assistance to the capital was established in November 1990. Taylor nevertheless continued to provide a huge challenge to the Ecomog mission by controlling 90% of the country and huge natural resources. The continued conflict also destabilized neighboring countries. Sierra Leone was pushed into a decade long civil war, causing internal displacement of people and spilling refugees into Guinea and Liberia. The stalemate was a fact: Taylor could not

defeat Ecomog military in Monrovia, and Ecomog lacked the troops, logistics and political support to defeat Taylor in the countryside (Adebajo 2002:102). The problem was exacerbated by internal conflicts among the Ecomog members, and lack of external logistical and financial support from the US and the UN. The following years, peace agreements were signed and broken, and several new armed factions joined the war, fighting to gain control over natural resources such as timber, rubber, gold, iron and diamonds. These warlords had much to lose and nothing to win from a peace agreement, and human rights violations and ethnicized targeting of civilians were widespread (Adebajo 2002, Ellis 1999).

6.1.4 The making and breaking of the Abuja II peace accord

Following the eleventh peace agreement in the Liberian civil war, the 1996 Abuja II,⁴⁴ a disarmament process of the warring parties was initiated. In the following election in 1997, Taylor was elected president with a landslide.⁴⁵ Taylor initially embarked on a policy of national reconciliation, inviting members of rival parties to join the cabinet. However, the new president quickly started cracking down on opposition and institutionalizing his dominance. He failed to permit UN or Ecomog peacekeepers any role in restructuring the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), instead filling it with his own fighters from the former National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and building the notorious Anti-terrorist Unit as his own private army. In the words of Gompert *et.al* (2007:xiii):

The security institutions, forces, and practices of the regime of Charles Taylor, (...) were meant to serve the regime, not the nation, and were controlled and used - rather, misused - by one man, mainly against Liberia's people and neighbors.

Following Ecomog's departure in 1998, insecurity also along Liberia's borders increased. Liberian dissidents known as the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) launched an attack from Guinea in August 1999, mainly consisting of former Mandingo and Krahn fighters. This incident marked the beginning of Liberia's second civil war in a decade. Krahn leaders in Côte d'Ivoire similarly formed the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), and became the second main rebel group in the second round of the Liberian civil war (Bøås 2009). The situation was thus back to that of pre-

⁴⁴ Abuja I was signed in 1995 but broken shortly thereafter

⁴⁵ It is likely that Liberians' fear of a return to war if Taylor was to lose the election, contributed largely to his victory

war Liberia: “widespread insecurity, a weak economy, patronage-fuelled corruption, government harassment of the press and civic groups, interethnic clashes, trumped-up coup plots, and external sanctions” (Adebajo 2002:238).

6.2 The Comprehensive Peace Agreement – from peace keeping to post-conflict reconstruction

From 2001, the UN Security Council imposed economic sanctions on Liberia, including travel sanctions and an arms embargo. The sanctions, combined with the rebel groups’ military offensive and an indictment for war crimes⁴⁶ eventually forced Taylor into exile in August 2003 (Jaye 2009), and the Comprehensive Peace agreement was signed later that year. The National Transitional Government of Liberia was established under the chairmanship of Gyude Bryant to oversee a two-year period of transition, which was to end in democratic elections in 2005. The government reflected a compromise between the three main factions from the second phase of the civil war: Taylor’s forces; in the interim government known as the Government of Liberia (GOL), and the two main rebel forces, the Krahn-dominated MODEL and the Mandingo-dominated LURD. According to Bøås (2009) this compromise was essential to end the war, but also meant that it was impossible for the factions to “win the peace” in a longer perspective. As a result, many government members saw this as a last chance of benefiting from power, causing corruption to be widespread also under the interim government.

6.2.1 From DDR(R) to SSR

The UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) took over peacekeeping duties from ECOWAS forces on October 1st 2003. In collaboration with the Joint Monitoring Committee it was responsible for the implementation of a disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRR⁴⁷) program for all armed parties.⁴⁸ By November 2004, when the process officially was declared ended, the total number of former combatants disarmed and demobilized was roughly 104,000, among those 24% female and 11% children (von Gienanth and Jaye 2008:8). Moreover, UNMIL peacekeepers had collected a total of 28,314 weapons and 33,604 heavy munitions of other categories. In addition, 6,486,136

⁴⁶ The trial is currently ongoing in the International Criminal Court (ICC), where Taylor is being tried for war crimes and crimes against humanity

⁴⁷ Commonly referred to as DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration)

⁴⁸ www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmil/mandate.shtml (accessed 20.04.2010)

rounds of small arms ammunition had been surrendered.⁴⁹ According to Bøås (2010) this comprised an estimated 50-60% of the weapons used during the war. The process was far from comprehensive, hampered as it was by urban biases, lack of capacity to absorb ex-combatants, corruption in the transitional government and very limited employment opportunities. By the end of the program, only 1 in 8 of ex-combatants was engaged in reintegration and rehabilitation activities. Ebo (2005) has referred to the gap between disarmament and demobilization on the one hand and rehabilitation and reintegration on the other as a *DD-RR gap*. As von Gienanth and Jaye (2008) have pointed out, successful reintegration was largely dependent on factors outside the control of the DDR(R) actors, like the economic recovery of the country, but the DD-RR gap was also partly due to the handing out of too many demobilization packages to people with dubious claims, which left little left for reintegration efforts (ICG 2009). According to Jennings (2010), the DDR(R) program was designed on wrong expectations. The number of people affected after the civil war was largely underestimated,⁵⁰ and the requirements for entering the program were lowered too much during the process. Jennings (2010) has therefore questioned whether DDR(R) actually was a good solution to the Liberian post-war situation. The conflict left no clear winner, and whereas the whole society had suffered for years, the DDR(R) program only rewarded the ex-combatants who had terrorized the population. It thus “missed the boat” and created incentives for civilians to “cheat” the system by entering the program to gain from it.

Normally, DDR(R) and SSR are somewhat separated in time and sequencing and carried out by civilian and military personnel respectively. In the Liberian case, however, they constituted two completely separate undertakings. DDR(R) was conceptually divorced from the wider SSR process, which only started after the DDR(R) process had ended (Jennings 2010). This approach meant that soldiers demobilized during the DDR(R) process were not automatically recruited into the vetting process associated with the subsequent SSR reform, creating thousands of unemployed ex-soldiers. The DDR(R) process thus impacted directly on the climate for the following SSR process, as it undercut and created an imbalance between the short-term goals of demobilization and

⁴⁹ www.unmil.org/lcontent.asp?ccat=ddrr&zdoc=1 (accessed 20.04.2010)

⁵⁰ Initial estimation of ex-combatants was 34 000, whereas the program ended with 103 000 having been processed (Malan 2008)

medium- and long-term institutional reconstruction.⁵¹ SSR thus had to be set against the background of unaddressed legacies of the DDR(R) exercise (Ebo 2005).

6.2.2 The post-conflict landscape

As stated, the transition period ended in 2006 with the democratic election of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. The international community immediately recognized her government as essentially different from the previous ones. As president of Liberia she embarked on the country's post-war reconstruction process, which took place within volatile, uncertain and fragile internal and external security environments (Jaye 2006). Externally, they included the insecurity posed by West African transborder crime in general and the political instability in Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea in particular. Internally, the break-down in governance structures and rule of law, a contracted economy coupled with high unemployment and pervasive poverty, posed enormous challenges to the new administration. Among the issues it was facing was the politicization of security agencies, overlapping responsibilities, budgetary constraints, lack of infrastructure, poor human resource capacity and skewed civilian oversight (Jaye 2006:9). Fourteen years of civil war had moreover displaced nearly one-third of Liberia's population and killed approximately 250,000 people (Malan 2008). Historical problems of poor civil-military relations had been intensified, and the Liberian people had completely lost confidence in a security sector that was bloated in terms of both size and number of agencies and employees.⁵²

Recognizing that improving the security environment was fundamental for pursuing development and democratic policies, the new government prioritized key development issues into four pillars under the Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee: enhancing national security; revitalizing economic growth; strengthening governance and the rule of law; and rehabilitating infrastructure and delivering basic

⁵¹ The ICG (2009) reports that SSR specialists encountered potential new recruits who saw enrolment in the army as an entitlement to be turned into short-term advantage, much like the demobilization packages used to "buy peace"

⁵² Apart from the legislature and judiciary, the core state security agencies included: the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL); Special Security Service (SSS); Liberia National Police (LNP); Monrovia City Police (MCP); National Bureau of Investigation (NBI); the National Security Agency (NSA); Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN); the Roberts International Airport Base Security (RIA); National Port Authority–Liberian Seaport Police (LSP); Bureau of Customs and Excise – Financial Security Monitoring Division (FSD); Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA); the Ministry of National Security (MNS), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ministry of National Defense (MoD), the National Security Council; the security forces of the Liberia Petroleum Refining Corporation (LPRC), the Forestry Development Authority (FDA), and Liberia Telecommunications Corporation Plant Protection Force; and National Fire Service (NFS) (Jaye 2009:3).

services (IPRSP 2006:iv). Security sector reform was regarded a core policy in the pursue of these goals. The following section will briefly account for the legal framework, before I turn to the implementation of SSR in Liberia.

6.2.3 The legal reference for SSR in Liberia

Liberia's SSR program is pursued and implemented within an environment of conflicting legal frameworks. The 1986 Constitution of Liberia, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2003, and the 2003 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1509 together provide the legal framework for implementation of SSR (Jaye 2006:3). Until January 2006, the CPA functioned as the key source of legal reference for the Liberian SSR process. ECOWAS, the International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL) and Liberian stakeholders constituted central actors presiding over the crafting of the peace agreement, and the issue of security sector reform constituted an integral part of the peace dialogue (Jaye 2009). Part four of the CPA⁵³ considers SSR in particular and enshrines the conditions under which SSR should be implemented. Article VII, section 1a) stipulates that:

All irregular forces shall be disbanded and b), that The Armed Forces of Liberia shall be restructured and will have a new command structure. The forces may be drawn from the ranks of the present GOL forces, the LURD and the MODEL⁵⁴, as well as from civilians with appropriate background and experience. The Parties request that ECOWAS, the UN, AU, and the ICGL⁵⁵ provide advisory staff, equipment, logistics and experienced trainers for the security reform effort. The Parties also request that the United States of America play a lead role in organising this restructuring program (CPA 2003).

The CPA further stipulates that the AFL's mission shall be to defend Liberian "national sovereignty and in extremis, respond to natural disasters". Article VIII calls for the restructuring of the Liberian National Police (LNP) and the deployment of an interim police force until the new police force is operative:

There shall be an immediate restructuring of the National Police Force, the Immigration Force, Special Security Service (SSS), custom security guards and such other statutory security units. These restructured security forces shall adopt a professional orientation that emphasizes democratic values and respect for human rights, a nonpartisan approach to duty and the avoidance of corrupt practices (CPA 2003).

⁵³ www.trcofliberia.org/scholarly-resources/documents/liberia-comprehensive-peace-agreement/view (accessed 15.04.2010)

⁵⁴ the Government of Liberia, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy, the Movement for Democracy in Liberia

⁵⁵ the Economic Community of West African States, the United Nations, the African Union, the International Contact Group on Liberia

The other document that provides the legal framework for the Liberian SSR process is the UN Resolution 1509, adopted by the Security Council in September 2003. The resolution determines that the situation in Liberia represented a threat to the Liberian peace process, to stability in the West Africa sub-region and to international peace and security in the broader region. The framing of Liberia as a fragile state hence provides for the involvement of UNMIL in the SSR process. The resolution states that UNMIL shall:

(...) assist the transitional government of Liberia in monitoring and restructuring the police force of Liberia, consistent with democratic policing, to develop a civilian police training programme, and to otherwise assist in the training of civilian police, in cooperation with ECOWAS, international organizations, and interested States, and moreover:

(...) assist the transitional government in the formation of a new and restructured Liberian military in cooperation with ECOWAS, international organizations and interested States.⁵⁶

The CPA (2003) states that “(...) the provisions of the present Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, the Statutes and all other Liberian laws, which relate to the establishment, composition and powers of the Executive, the Legislative and Judicial branches of the Government, are hereby suspended”. The democratic election of and subsequent inauguration of Johnson-Sirleaf have nevertheless made the Constitution of Liberia⁵⁷ relevant to the SSR process (Malan 2008). As Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Liberia, the President clearly has a role to play in the restructuring of the country’s security sector. The Constitution also empowers the legislative branch on security issues. These three documents together constitute the legal frameworks for the SSR process in Liberia. So far, the question regarding which of these is supreme has not emerged (Jaye 2006).

6.3 The practice of SSR

Having accounted for the background to security sector reform (SSR) in Liberia, this section will focus on the practice of SSR. The Liberian SSR process is commonly referred to as a bold “root and branch” process. And indeed, under cover of the 15,000 strong UNMIL force, Liberia has drawn down its army and defense ministry to zero, aiming to rebuild the security institutions from the ground (ICG 2009). The Liberian case represents a highly internationalized and externally dependent undertaking. The SSR

⁵⁶<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N03/525/70/PDF/N0352570.pdf?OpenElement> (accessed 16.04.2010)

⁵⁷www.liberianlegal.com/constitution1986.htm (accessed 19.04.2010)

process has been ambitious, taking place in a challenging environment, and its results are disputed. Much remains to be done, and an adviser to President Johnson-Sirleaf has estimated that “we are about 40 per cent of the way there with the police and 55 per cent with the army” (ICG 2009:i). As evident in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the Liberian SSR agenda focuses on reforming the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and the Liberia National Police (LNP). The following analysis will focus on these undertakings as I look closer at the implementation of the SSR paradigm in the context of Liberia.

6.3.1 Reforming the Armed Forces of Liberia

According to the International Crisis Group’s 2009 report on Liberia, “army reform appears to be a provisional success” (2009:i). The vetting process is proclaimed a success in particular, resulting in a pool of 2000 rigorously vetted and trained privates. However, the AFL reform has been one of the most debated issues of the Liberian SSR process for several reasons, and the ICG report further states that “Had this report been written a year earlier, it would have evaluated the training program as deeply unsatisfactory” (ICG 2009:13).

6.3.1.1 Mandates

As stated, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) envisioned a restructuring of the armed forces and called upon the US to “play a lead role” in organizing the restructuring process (CPA 2003). ECOWAS, the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), and the International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL) were also requested to assist. The USA nevertheless exclusively took charge for the implementation of the AFL reform process, an incident which has been heavily debated by Liberian and international representatives. The American position as sole donor in charge of reforming the AFL does not reflect the mandates as provided by the CPA or the UN Resolution 1509. The CPA is specific about the central role of the USA in the restructuring of the army, but it simultaneously requests the assistance of ECOWAS, the UN, the African Union, and the ICGL to “provide advisory staff, equipment, logistics and experienced trainers”. The UN Resolution 1509 is specific about the role of UNMIL in training the police, but only refers to “Interested States” with regards to the army reform. Hence, no special role is assigned to the US (Jaye 2006). Moreover, contrary to the terms and conditions of the CPA, which requested a systemic effort to balance representation of faction members in

the AFL, the US decided to fully disband the army and rebuild it from scratch. The implications of this latter point will be elaborated on shortly.

6.3.1.2 Recruitment and vetting

The US signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Transitional Government of Liberia, formalizing USA's role and commitment to the Liberian SSR program and the reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia. The American private military company DynCorp⁵⁸ was awarded the contract to train the army in 2004. The company's proposal was to put 2,000 men through boot camp and supplement the training with a rule of law and human rights component emphasizing principles like respect for humanitarian law and the law of war, separation of army and police responsibilities and the imperative of civilian oversight of the security sector (ICG 2009). Another private military company, the Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE), was later awarded a separate contract for refurbishment of military bases, forming and structuring the army and its component units, and for providing specialized and advanced training, including mentoring of officers. DynCorp's role was thus to "recruit and make soldiers" while PAE was employed to "mentor and develop" them into a fully operational force (Malan 2008:29).

DynCorp designed and managed the following recruiting and vetting program. After extensive news media campaigns, a nation-wide recruitment process was launched aiming to rectify the historic lack of representation from rural areas and create a truly national army. New recruits were drawn from all 15 Liberian counties and from every ethnic group. Recruiting standards to the AFL were high, and all applicants were held to the same standards. To qualify, they had to be Liberian citizens between 18 and 45 years old; free of HIV, TB and drug use; and able to pass basic fitness and knowledge tests (Malan 2008). The recruits were rigorously vetted in a process termed by the International Crisis Group as "the best one witnessed anywhere in the world". Each applicant was vetted by Australian, Gambian, US, UK, Ghanaian and Liberian researchers, who interviewed them, visited their home villages, schools and talked to their family members and acquaintances. In addition, posters with photos of the applicants were distributed so that people could call in anonymously to lodge accusations of former human rights abuses (ICG 2009).

⁵⁸ Owned by Veritas Capital

President Johnson-Sirleaf's target of 20% female soldiers has, however, proved hard to accomplish due to both fitness tests and schooling requirements.⁵⁹ The process' total rejection rate was about 75%, most of them at the initial reading test (Malan 2008). Recruits who successfully passed through the vetting process were then offered a 5-year service contract, with a one-year probation period allowing for dismissal from the AFL for misconduct. The absence of any data on the current army makes it difficult to evaluate the outcome of the process, but that it is likely that the process has provided the Armed Forces of Liberia and the Ministry of Defense with new legitimacy in the eyes of Liberians (Jaye 2009).

6.3.1.3 Training

Whereas the vetting process has been deemed as highly satisfactory, the AFL training program has been hampered by unexpected delays, with timelines specified in contracts slipping badly. The first class of 110 trainees began their basic training in August 2006 and graduated three months later, but the process picked up pace only in mid-2007.⁶⁰ Weak and unpredictable funding from Washington is said to be the main cause of the slow pace of the AFL development, but funding from the Liberian government has also proved unreliable. The high cost involved in forming the army has also been heavily criticized. It mainly results from DynCorp's high instructor salaries to expatriate staff from the US Marine Corps and US Army. The delays to the process have thus repeatedly caused DynCorp to burn through its budget without being able to provide training. According to Malan:

The truth is that the SSR program was never fully funded, that funding to date has fallen far short of this figure, and that money, even when forthcoming, has been disbursed in dribs and drabs (Malan 2008:41).

The new Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) is being trained according to US Army doctrine. Every soldier is trained as an infantry rifleman during an Initial Entry Training (IET) course, irrespective of ultimate branch. During the initial intake the IET lasted 11 weeks, but faced with irregular funding and high cost of basic training, the period was reduced to 8 weeks (ICE 2009). This was achieved by cutting 3 weeks of training devoted to human rights and education in rule of law and civil-military relations in a democracy. According

⁵⁹ The 2003 literacy rate estimates for Liberians of age 15 and over were 57%, 73.3% for males and 41.6% for females (www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/li.html) (accessed 05.05.2010)

⁶⁰ Only 5% of the force had completed the basic Initial Entry Training course by August 2007. One month later the figure increased to 32% (Malan 2008)

to the International Crisis Group this development constituted “a significant retreat from the original concept” (ICG 2009:14).

The tendency to prioritize technical training and efficiency over the “soft” dimensions of the security sector reform program has raised concerns about the US’s use of private military companies (PMCs) in training the AFL. While a discussion of the appropriate role of PMCs in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction lies outside the realms of this thesis, the use of them certainly has had major implications for the Liberian SSR process. Malan (2008:69) has stated that

While contractors may be good at providing basic and even advanced infantry training, they answer to private sector bosses whose bottom line is profit and are therefore not the ideal role models to instill in the AFL the notion of duty to country and military subordination to a democratically elected government. Indeed, in a country and region where recent history has been shaped by warlords and mercenaries, the US Department of State has shown remarkable insensitivity by sending in contractors to shape the new army.

The issue of civilian governance and oversight of the security sector is imperative for ensuring the sustainability of the Liberian peace process, and PMCs might not be the best suited agents to carry out this type of work. Upon facing delays, DynCorp did not only speed up the process by cutting rule of law and human rights related training; it furthermore laid off its Liberian staff to reduce costs, naturally implying a loss of valuable local knowledge.

6.3.1.4 Pursuing army reform without strategic objectives

A central critique of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) reform is that the restructuring of the AFL does not result from, or reflect, a comprehensive review of Liberia’s security environment. According to Jaye (2006:13), the decision to train 2,000 soldiers for the army was “influenced by the purse and not by any threat assessment”. Strategic issues were only addressed well after the USA had determined how much it was willing to put up and how much the Liberian government would be able to pay in monthly salaries to soldiers (ICG 2009). This problem is intimately related to a lack of a national security strategy. A national security policy is a government-wide analysis of the strategic level concerns a country faces, and addresses how the government plans to deal with these concerns. A national security strategy (NSS) is a government’s overarching plan for ensuring the country’s security in the form of guidance for implementing a country’s national security policy (Boucher 2009:1). A NSS is essential for the integration and coordination of activities by various national security actors, since it defines each national

actor's role in dealing with national security needs, determines processes and chain of command for making decisions when response to threats is required, and delineates conditions for using security forces (Boucher 2009).

National security policies are commonly determined by a National Security Council structure. Liberia does however not have an operational national security council in place. In March 2004, however, the Defense Advisory Committee (DAC)⁶¹ of the Liberian Ministry of Defense conducted a workshop in Monrovia, with the purpose of updating the 1998 AFL Restructuring Plan and affirming a national consensus with regard to army reform. The Defense Advisory Committee consisted of the Chiefs of Staff of the parties GOL, LURD and MODEL (Ebo 2005). According to the workshop's visions, the new force would be known as the Liberian National Defense Force and consist of 6,500 soldiers. It would furthermore be composed of the army, the Air Reconnaissance Unit, the Liberian National Coast Guard and the Reserve Unit (Ebo 2005). The workshop's contribution was however not acknowledged by the donor community. Instead, the US military, the US State Department and DynCorp conducted an unrelated exploratory mission in spring 2004 to assess Liberia's security needs. After the mission, the Pentagon decided to train 2,000 soldiers – a far cry from the number envisaged by the DAC. It was furthermore decided that the army was to be known as the New Armed Forces of Liberia. The outcome of the process did not reflect any Liberian consensus.

Because of the lack of a comprehensive and authoritative national security strategy, the US Government two years later commissioned RAND to conduct a study on Liberia's security needs. The RAND Report stated that the primary mission of the Armed Forces of Liberia is

(a) to safeguard the country against possible external threats and (b) to support internal security forces in defeating any insurgency or other internal threat for which Liberia's internal security forces prove inadequate on their own.⁶²

The report was according to Malan based on international "best practices" and clear, logical analysis, rather than in-depth understandings of Liberia and the West African region (2008).

⁶¹ Not to be confused with the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD

⁶² www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG529.pdf (accessed 19.04.2010)

6.3.1.5 Lack of transparency and local ownership

The Governance Reform Commission has expressed that the lack of transparency and accountability of the Liberian SSR process is deeply worrying. US Federal Acquisition Regulations determine that the details of the contracts between the US Department of State and the two PMCs, DynCorp and Pacific Architects and Engineers, may not be revealed to the Liberian parliament or otherwise made public (ICG 2008). DynCorp has moreover refused to appear before the Liberian Parliament, as it is contracted to the US Government. This marginalization of the Liberian parliament runs back to the transitional period. Due to certain members' questionable record and allegations of corruption and other malpractices, the interim government was perceived as "lacking credibility". The opportunity to lay the basis for effective parliamentary oversight of the post-war security sector was hence missed (Ebo 2007).

The Liberian SSR process is nonetheless currently being undertaken within a democracy. Civil society organizations have expressed frustration at the lack of information, consultation, transparency and accountability with regard to external donors' SSR activities. After an organized attempt by several NGOs to establish an independent advisory committee to evaluate the SSR process, the groups were told by government officials that "it would be difficult to bow down to civil society's views because the international community have already developed their own plans and have committed a lot of resources to the process" (Ebo 2007:82). This ongoing exclusion and opaqueness has led representatives from civil society to state that "Civil society has not been involved in any meaningful sense in security sector reform in Liberia. In fact, not only is civil society not involved, there is no public debate on these matters" (Ebo 2007:81).

6.3.1.6 Technical solutions to political issues

The tendency described in previous sections, demonstrates that Liberia's state fragility is conceptualized as a security problem to be solved by technical reform, rather than as a political issue of exclusion and repression. In practice, the conceptualization means that focus is put on the professionalization of the army, rather than on broader societal transformation of civil-military relations. This can be cited in support of the notion that the security community is associated with the *security first discourse*. The SSR framework, as represented by the OECD DAC, has the creation of democratic institutions and civil oversight of the security sector as its core aims. The Liberian Governance Reform Commission has however stated that the army reform is being done in a very

insular way, where only lip service is being paid to the concept of SSR and without links to a broader security sector policy (ICG 2008). The tendency for opaqueness surrounding the reform is especially worrisome since the malfunctioning of the security sector is directly related to the lack of governance. The challenge for Liberia lies not just in reforming its security agents, but also in defining their roles in the post-conflict society and ensuring their effective oversight and management (Malan 2008).

It can be argued that the way that the army reform currently is being conducted both reflects and reinforces a lack of context sensitivity. The US's decision to completely disband the Liberian Army failed to take a number of practical challenges into consideration. With Liberia's broken economy, it proved extremely difficult to provide demobilized security personnel with employment opportunities. The result was that 17,000 former soldiers were thrown into the street with non-sustainable retirement packages, posing a potential risk to current and future societal stability. The crime rate and periodic threats of violence have posed major problems to UNMIL and the police, which have had to contain several violent uprisings by discontent ex-combatants (Jaye 2009). Had the DDR(R) process been used to absorb ex-soldiers not tainted by past civilian abuses into the new army, much of this problem could have been avoided. A related challenge is the new army's complete lack of expertise and institutional knowledge. The US's viewed the former leadership as "bad to the bone" and so seriously compromised that a total disbanding of the army was a necessity (Jennings 2010). Because of the repressive and abusive history of the Liberian army, the institutional knowledge that was lost in the process was not considered worth keeping. This has left a gap when it comes to senior command positions in the AFL, where the already trained brigades cannot be declared operational until the posts are filled. This in practice means that although the stated quantitative goals regarding recruits are fulfilled, Liberia will have to remain dependent on external leadership for years to come. Finally, Ebo (2005) has questioned whether the decision to simply remodel the AFL after the American model is in fact the best way of utilizing the opportunity provided by post-conflict reconstruction. He holds that the structure of the new AFL should reflect the threats that face Liberia, and should go beyond the country's historical links with the US

6.3.1.7 Summing up

The reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) is progressing, although it has been hampered by serious delays caused by lack of resources and lack of an overall strategy.

The two battalions of the AFL completed the United States Army Training and Evaluation Program in September and December 2009, marking the conclusion of the initial training phase of the new army. The current phase consist of intensive mentoring under the Liberia defense sector reform program, supported by 61 United States serving military personnel, who arrived in Liberia in January 2010 (UNSC 2010 a). On 1 January 2010, the Government of Liberia officially assumed responsibilities for the development of the new army. The US also handed over Armed Forces of Liberia equipment to the Ministry of Defence. It is nevertheless assessed that the army will not be independently operational before 2012 the earliest, given that the Force's officer corps is in need of significant additional experience before it is able to take command (UNSC 2010 a, b). The slow pace of implementation of the security sector reform program and the build-up of the Armed Forces of Liberia have left different security agencies competing to prove their relevance, which have contributed to the tension, rivalry and refusal to co-operate which is apparent at this point (Baker 2007, UNSC 2010 a). The situation represents a concern also for the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) since an operational army capable of assuming responsibility for Liberia's territorial integrity is a precondition for the withdrawal of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) forces (Malan 2008). Having accounted for the Army reform, the next sections will take closer look at the UN led police reform.

6.3.2 Reforming the Liberia National Police

The Liberia National Police (LNP) grew heavily politicized and militarized under Charles Taylor's regime, and used weapons indiscriminately against civilians. Reform of the police force was hence of high priority in post-conflict Liberia, and an important aspect of UNMIL's mandate. The comprehensive peace agreement (CPA) called upon and mandated the United Nations Police (UNPOL) to "assist in the development and implementation of training programs for the LNP" (CPA 2003). Again, in the absence of a comprehensive national security strategy and policy, the RAND Corporation's report provided the clearest guidance on the role and functions of the new police force:

The primary missions of the LNP are (a) to prevent and fight crime and (b) to maintain public safety. These missions call for a light but sizable, community-friendly police force that can earn the confidence and cooperation of the Liberian people. Anticipating occasional civil disorder, the LNP should also have a branch capable of riot control - e.g., the police support unit (PSU) (Gompert *et al.* 2007:xv).

6.3.2.1 Recruiting and vetting

When UN Police began its work in 2004, some 5,000 people claiming to be members of the Liberia National Police (LNP) were registered. Few had uniforms and none had been paid for the past few years. Police officers had survived by extracting bribes from the public, causing public confidence in the LNP to be “zero” (Malan 2008). The UN Police embarked on an extremely difficult task; it did not have an executive mandate granting it powers of arrest, as this was reserved for the LNP, the same police force they were required to reconstitute. UNPOL consequentially had to recruit and vet a few hundred new LNP officers from the already registered ones and work alongside them to try and maintain law and order. New recruits were drawn from both inside and outside the Liberia National Police. The reform hence diverted from the “root and branch” approach to rebuilding the army (Ebo 2005). The selection and vetting criteria were agreed by UNMIL and the Government of Liberia: Candidates had to be between 18 and 35 years old, have a high school education, be physically fit and mentally competent, with no criminal record or pending charges, and hold no positions in political organizations (Malan 2008). The vetting process was vigorous, but due to restricted resources, admittedly not perfect. The applicant’s background checks were less thorough than DynCorp’s vetting of the Armed Forces of Liberia, with only a list being passed on to NGOs for scrutiny and comments. By comparison, UNMIL rejected only 10% of the police recruits, compared to a 75% rejection rate in the army reform process (Malan 2008:32). Nevertheless, 2,700 registered police officers failed to meet the selection criteria and were not admitted to the Police Academy for training. Because UNMIL lacked resources to deactivate them and provide them with severance packages, many returned to the streets and the extorting of bribes for a living, until a year later, when the UK provided the necessary money.

6.3.2.2 Training

The National Police Training Academy was reopened in July 2004. A Basic Recruits Training Program based on a post-conflict training model used by the UN to address emergency situations in post-conflict societies was implemented. The philosophy behind the program was to mass-produce police graduates for rapid deployment to restore law and order (Dahlen 2007). During this initial reform process, police recruits received a general 29-week training course consisting of 13 weeks at the academy and 16 in-service (ICG 2009). Given the situation on the ground, it was imperative to get visible police out

into the streets. The approach was thus satisfactory for an interim period, but as graduates were criticized as “inefficient, ineffective and corrupt”, the need to review the course of the program soon was recognized (Dahlen 2007).

UN Police Training and Development Officer Dag R. Dahlen arrived at the Police Academy in September 2006. He initiated a new program extending the training to 6 months at the academy and 6 months supervised in-service training. The curriculum and instructional methods were also revisited. As the new program favored quality over quantity, it was necessarily more time-consuming and delayed the deployment of new police officers. The program aimed at introducing the recruits to the police as a profession, and consisted of classroom lecture and outdoor demonstrations. It consisted of four modules covering i) general policing; (democratic policing, human rights), ii) Liberian legislation; iii) criminal investigation; v) tactical training; (modern policing techniques, limited firearms training⁶³) (Dahlen 2010). In addition, “in service programs” were implemented to try and update the skills of the officers educated during the initial program. The training at the Academy was supervised by international UN instructors, but mostly performed by Liberians, many of whom were selected from within the old LNP and retrained.

The second phase of the program was field training, designed to give the recruits practical training experience in real situations. After successful completion of the first phase of the Basic Recruit Training Program, the recruits were deployed at police stations nearby Monrovia, and supervised by a Field Training Officer. Core police policing skills to be practiced was covered by areas like patrolling, civil disturbance, investigation, traffic and charge of quarter (Dahlen 2007). After 16 weeks of field training, the recruits then returned to the Academy for four final weeks of training upon graduation. This phase was designed to be a time of reflection and validation of theoretical and practical knowledge, preparing the recruits for graduating as LNP officers.

6.3.2.3 Police performance

UN Police (UNPOL) was committed (but not limited) to provide a proper basic police training program for 3,500 law enforcement personnel. This target was achieved by June 2007, by which time 3,522 (3,319 male and 203 female) LNP personnel had graduated from the Basic Recruits Training Program (Malan 2008). The police training program

⁶³ Liberia is under a weapon embargo, and the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) is the only armed wing of the LNP, dealing with armed insurgencies, robberies, and such

initially focused on meeting numerical targets, with UN Police gauging success by the number of recruits graduating from the Police Academy. Kari Marie Kjellstad (2010), former team leader for the UNPOL Donor Aid Coordinating Team in Liberia, confirms the tendency for measuring the police reform's success in output rather than outcome, with great significance being ascribed to the number of police stations built and the type of equipment provided to the units. The need to address the issue of police *performance* has however become increasingly obvious. Even though the training program has been prolonged and enhanced, the Liberia National Police (LNP) is still far from being an effective police agency for the prevention and prosecution of crime. The rates of armed robbery, mob violence, rape and gender based violence remain unacceptable high throughout the country. A security assessment conducted by the Liberian Government, UNMIL and the UN country team in May 2008 found that "most Liberians felt their security was more precarious than at any time since the war ended and that police presence in the counties was negligible" (ICE 2009:19).

The Liberia National Police (LNP) thus continues to face serious constraints to its operational effectiveness. According to Malan (2008) LNP's biggest problem is on the one hand low morale and poor discipline, and extremely poor leadership and management on the other. Among other things, for a long time, the LNP did not have a standardized system of how to operate and manage police stations, leaving it up to the individual commander to conduct business the way he pleased. The process of implementing a national system is however ongoing, aiming to enhance discipline and accountability. There is also a worrying tendency for new police recruits to pick up former institutionalized habits such as soliciting bribes. This tendency has frequently been attributed to the recruitment and training process. Isolating this initial process as the key reason for underperformance is nevertheless misleading, since it neglects the impact of resource scarcity on police performance. According to Dahlen (2010), Liberia faces a fundamental lack of police infrastructure, implying critical shortages of essential police equipment, such as vehicles, fuel, phones and radios, generators to light stations and so on. According to the LNP's 2009-2013 Strategic Plan:

Although the LNP budget has increased, it still falls some way short of providing the necessary funding for the substantial institutional and operational capacity building needed to enable the LNP to achieve its mission. The LNP still lacks basic resources, such as communications and mobility, to enable officers to perform the essential function of receiving and responding to calls for assistance from members of the public (LNP 2009:2).

The lack of basic infrastructure in Liberia causes the police reform to be both inefficient and very expensive. Police stations remain dependent on costly generators, and Dahlen estimates that a total of US \$500,000 every year is spent on electricity alone. There are neither the resources nor competence to fix broken police cars or to ensure that they have fuel, rendering the LNP an immobile police force with a huge area to police. Throughout Liberia, the LNP, as an institution, thus remains critically weak (Stiernblad 2008). The immobility of the police force poses a huge challenge, particularly in rural areas (Baker 2007, ICE 2009). Lack of resources also feeds back into the low moral among the LNP officers. Poor working conditions, no assurances and poor and unreliable payments means, that, for many of the low paid officers, corruption is a necessity. Crime scenes investigation and case preparation are also extremely poor, with the only expertise available located in Monrovia. Thus even when arrests are made, successful prosecutions remain rarities (Malan 2008).

6.3.2.4 Lack of holistic approach

LNP's lack of operational capacity is being exacerbated by the disconnected manner in which the police reform has been pursued without proper linkage to the wider justice system (Jaye 2009). Judicial reform has not been an area of commitment within the SSR process, and is thus lagging behind the army and police reforms. Building the justice sector is a time-consuming process and its poor condition is seriously hampering the efficiency of the police reform. In many cases, suspects are sent to jail after being arrested by the police, but because of the prosecuting authority's lack of capacity, the process becomes delayed or even stops completely at this point (Dahlen 2010). As a result, the correction facilities face major security concerns related to overcrowding and escapes. The situation is again exacerbated by a lack of funding, infrastructure and staffing (UNSC 2010 a, b). For these reasons, many Liberians are unwilling to pursue cases for fear of reprisal, and storming of jails and police stations to mete out mob justice remains widespread. The mob tendency cannot be seen in isolation from Liberians' disillusionment with and lack of trust in the judicial system, since the police are the implementing agent of the criminal justice system (Ebo 2005).

6.3.2.5 Top-down implementation of donor policies

Kjellstad (2010) confirms that insufficient budgets, financial shortcomings, poor infrastructure and logistics represent main challenges to the efficiency of the police force, but she furthermore brings up the issue of how donor policies affect the reform process. Donors have overarching agendas which steer their priorities and earmarking of funds and this represent huge challenge on the ground. The desire to control in detail how and on what their contributions are spent has repeatedly delayed and hampered the implementation of the SSR process. As an example, Kjellstad (2010) explained how the UN's "green policy" prevented the improvement of sanitary and security conditions at a police station downtown Monrovia. Liberian correction facilities generally face serious security concerns related to overcrowding and lack of infrastructure (UNSC 2010 a, b). In this specific case, the cells did not have any toilet facilities and inmates therefore had to be escorted out of the station and down to the river for this purpose. This process was considered a pressing security issue, since dangerous inmates frequently tried to escape during the outdoor toilet visits, putting themselves, the guards and people living nearby in considerable danger. The only quick and viable solution to the situation was to utilize the pipe system going from the cells and down to the river. This system was already in place, but it was not operate. This solution was, however, perceived as "not green enough" to live up to the UN's standards. It was hence not implemented, causing both the insecurity and the pollution of the nearby river to proceed exactly as before (Kjellstad 2010).

In another example, resources were donated to the building of a police station in a rural area outside of Monrovia. Because of the location, it was necessary to build barracks to house the officers that were to be deployed there. However, the resources had been earmarked to fund only the building of the actual police station, and could not be used to build barracks. As a result, the police station was not built (Kjellstad 2010). The incident was not an isolated event. In similar cases, it was reported that police officers had to use their offices to sleep in.

The top-down implementation of donor policies have created a rigid, fragmented and incoherent process which is unable to respond flexible to the many unforeseen expenditures and problems destined to occur in a post-conflict society where the basic infrastructure simply is not present (Kjellstad 2010). Other examples include donations of computers to police stations without regular power supply, printers to stations unable to provide for ink and paper, and vehicles that the police cannot afford to repair or buy fuel for. What these examples have in common is that they show how poorly some policies

are adapted to local standards. Some of them also represent clear examples of donor agendas taking precedence over local security needs.

According to Dahlen (2010), it is usually easy to attract donors and funding at the beginning of a peacebuilding or SSR process, but it is considerably more complex committing them to stay on a long term basis as new and pressing situations emerge in other places. Donor fatigue is a common problem and it hence gets increasingly harder to attract funding to complete the ongoing process. Even though security sector reform should be seen as a long term and time consuming process, donors typically plan their exit strategies from the very beginning. A prolonged stay is costly and donors tend to prefer supporting projects which are easy to justify to a potentially critical audience back home (Bøås 2010). Some donor areas, such as “Training and Development”, are considered less charged and are hence more popular among donors (Dahlen 2010). Others do not attract resources that easily. This tendency have also been present in Liberia’s case, where very few donors wanted to get involved in the training of the armed wing of the police, the Emergency Response Unit. The US eventually stepped up and took responsibility for this project, which aimed at training and equipping up to 500 LNP officers.⁶⁴ Also this time the contract was awarded to the private security company DynCorp.⁶⁵

6.3.2.6 Summing up

According to the UN’s latest report on the Mission in Liberia, the Liberia National Police continues to make progress towards becoming operationally independent, although it continues to face a number of serious challenges (UNSC 2010 b). Standard Operating Procedures for police stations and policies on professional standards have been finalized and are currently being introduced nationwide, something which over time should improve the quality of the LNP’s work. However, both the Police Support Unit and the LNP’s armed unit, the Emergency Response Unit, continues to face serious constrains to their operational effectiveness. To build up the Police Support Unit to its desired strength and to maintain the Emergency Response Unit, substantial additional donor support for training, equipment and infrastructure is needed (UNSC 2010 a, b). After the new LNP’s Strategic Plan was presented in New York in September 2009, several donors did express interest in continued support, but so far little support has materialized. Lack of sustained

⁶⁴ Expected strength as of March 2010 was 334 officers (UN SC 2010)

⁶⁵ <http://ir.dyn-intl.com/releasedetail.cfm?releaseid=302437> (accessed 09.06.2010)

political will on behalf of the donor community thus constitutes a serious challenge to the success of the police reform. The situation on the ground remains that the police is not able to respond effectively to the security needs of the Liberian population.

6.4 Marginalization of SSR's core principles

Security sector reform in Liberia has been unprecedented in ambition but has produced mixed results. Major concerns regarding the reform are competing demands on the attention and resources of both donors and the Liberian government, lack of long-term commitment and a lack of a holistic response to Liberia's security needs (Ebo 2005). To improve the ongoing intervention, the UN Security Council has emphasized the need for additional resources, political commitment and longer timeframes. According to Andersen (2006) there clearly is a mismatch between international ambitions and resources allocated to the task, and this situation naturally impacts on the chances of successful reform.

But what about the broader reform efforts, the performance of it? As stated, the OECD DAC framework stipulates certain procedural principles for how to conduct SSR and assure that the reform is efficient, sustainable and legitimate. The principles emphasized are *local ownership, local context sensitivity, accountability and transparency* and *holistic approach* (OECD DAC 2005). To start with the latter, *holistic approach*, the Liberian SSR agenda is narrowly conceptualized in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and focuses primarily on reforming the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and the Liberia National Police (LNP). These two reforms have been conducted as separate undertakings, with the US leading the army reform and the UN taking responsibility for the police reform. Work on both reforms has been undertaken in isolation from the other and wider governance reforms. The CPA briefly refers to the restructuring and professionalization of "other security services", but this aspect has to date been neglected in practice. The problem of a multitude of agents with duplicating and overlapping mandates with respect to internal security thus still remains a reality. This situation causes considerable confusion regarding responsibility, perhaps mostly among civilians who are unsure about where to turn for help and protection (Dhalen 2010). The situation moreover causes tension between security agents that are forced to prove their continued relevance (Baker 2007). Related to this issue, the lack of holistic approach to Liberia's security needs is also reflected in the disconnected manner in which

the police reform has been conducted without proper linkage to the wider justice system (Jaye 2009). The police are the implementing agent of the justice system, but since reform on this area has made little progress, it risks sabotaging the wider security sector.

The SSR program was, moreover, initiated only after the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDR(R)) program had ended. SSR and DDR(R) hence constituted two completely separate undertakings. This approach created thousands of unemployed ex-soldiers, as soldiers demobilized during the DDR(R) process were not automatically recruited into the vetting process associated with the subsequent SSR reform. The DDR(R) process hence impacted directly on the climate for the following SSR process by laying the foundation for up-risings to come (Jennings 2010). The Liberian case thus illustrates the problem of regarding these reforms as sequential and separable activities, rather than as a dynamic whole (NMFA 2008).

The next procedural principle is *accountability and transparency*. According to OECD DAC (2005), one of SSR's main objectives is to ensure that governance of the security sector conforms to broader democratic norms. To contribute to institutional capacity building, the SSR process should itself be carried out in accordance with the principles it seeks to establish. All countries face the paradox that an army trained to act only under civilian control can be manipulated by elites to act against the national interests, and Liberia confronts the problem more acutely because of its post-conflict fragility (ICG 2009). The SSR process and the army reform in particular, have nevertheless been characterized by secrecy and opaqueness. The Memorandum of Understanding between the US Government and the Interim Government still remains inaccessible to both Liberian officials and civil society, and so do the outsourced contracts between the US Government and the private military companies DynCorp and Pacific Architects and Engineers. DynCorp has moreover refused to appear before the Liberian Parliament (ICG 2009, Ebo 2007). It should be obvious to anyone that such practices neither conform to democratic norms nor contribute to institutional capacity building in the host country.

The next procedural principle is *local context sensitivity*. The security review which provided the basis for the Liberian SSR process was undertaken by the American think tank RAND, and reflected international "best practices", rather than in-depth understandings of Liberia and the broader West African region (Malan 2008). The reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) was planned with economic considerations in the forefront, and did not reflect any Liberian consensus about size or composition of the

army (Ebo 2005). The US decision to dismantle the AFL and rebuild it from scratch was, furthermore, contrary to the mandate provided by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and failed to take a number of issues into consideration. Most importantly, with Liberia's broken economy it was extremely difficult to provide deactivated soldiers with employment opportunities. Consequently, 17,000 former soldiers were thrown into the street with non-sustainable retirement packages, posing a risk to the current and future stability of the Liberian society (Jaye 2009, Jennings 2010). A second result of the strategy was that the new army now lacks expertise and institutional knowledge. The AFL will thus have to remain dependent on external leadership for years to come. Regarding the police reform, the policies of the donor's involved have created a rigid, fragmented and incoherent process that is unable to respond in a flexible manner to unforeseen expenditures and problems. This is mainly due to overarching agendas and earmarking of resources to specific programs. Many donations, moreover, reflect a disregard for the lack of basic infrastructure on the ground (Kjellstad 2010), with the LNP receiving equipment they simply cannot afford to utilize.

The last procedural principle, *local ownership*, is intimately related to the principle of context sensitivity. OECD DAC (2005) stresses that the most critical task facing countries embarking on a SSR process, is to build a nationally owned and led vision of security. A nationally owned vision of security is the very foundation for the development of appropriate security sector policy frameworks and the institutions required to implement them. Despite this, the degree of genuine local ownership of the Liberian SSR process is far from impressive. Most importantly, the reform process is being pursued without a locally produced national security strategy. The Liberian government has been marginalized because of a perceived lack of credibility and capacity and repeated attempts by civil society groups to contribute to and impact on the process have been ignored, with reference to decisions already made by the donor community (Ebo 2007, Bendix and Stanley 2008). According to Ebo (2005:55) "there is a general consensus among Liberians - public officials and civil society alike - that the international community (...) has failed to emphasize local ownership of the reconstruction process.

6.4.1 Conceptual-contextual divide

Compared to the OECD DAC framework on security sector reform (SSR), the Liberian case clearly depicts a *conceptual-contextual divide* in that the procedural principles are endorsed in theory but not adhered to in practice. By reducing SSR to police and army

reform and not adhering to the procedural principles for how to carry out the reform, the efficiency, sustainability and legitimacy of the reform is endangered. The Liberian SSR agenda is framed as a technical exercise responding to a narrow security problem, and has thus been far more rudimentary than what the OECD DAC envisages. Although the police and the military forces clearly are part of the problem, they are seldom the underlying cause of violence, but function as an instrument in violent conflicts (Wulf 2004). According to Ebo: “All efforts to reconstruct Liberia and ensure a durable peace hinge on the provision of adequate security which in turn requires the right governance environment” (2005:57). The notion of insecurity as a broader governance issue lay at the very heart of the SSR framework as envisaged by the OECD DAC. SSR should not merely be a technical exercise of restructuring the security agents, but rather a transformation of broader civil-military relations, to ensure that the security sector respect the populations’ human rights and respond to their security needs. Because of its limited and security oriented focus, the Liberian SSR process is moreover not embedded in any overall development agenda:

Reintegrating the ex-service personnel and ex-fighters into “civil” society is not a narrow military-security issue; it is a social and economic development issue as well. Thus, while the emphasis on guaranteeing physical security by addressing irregular and regular security structures is important, this goal cannot be pursued separate from the human security needs of the people (Jaye 2009:19).

Due to the conceptualization of SSR as a security issue, the security community has remained reluctant to include civilians in the security discourse, as they are perceived as lacking capacity and military expertise. In other words, they have not been considered necessary or relevant to the reform process. The dangers of this tendency, is that the donor community in effect are implementing a reform that does not correspond to the needs and realities on the ground. The ongoing army reform is taking place outside any shared vision of national security (Jaye 2006), and the process is only paying lip service to the principles of security sector reform. This situation is a paradox, in as much as development and democratic governance are considered the very foundation for the creation of sustainable peace in fragile and post-conflict states.

6.4.2 The paradox of implementation: securitization of SSR?

The Liberian SSR process reflects a disproportionate level of assistance going to traditional security agents such as the police and the military in comparison to

governance and justice institutions. Does this tendency move SSR away from its original development roots? Is the concept of SSR becoming securitized?

What seems to be the case is that the *concept* of security sector reform remains true to its core values. SSR continues to evolve conceptually as the debate on it becomes more sophisticated in both policy and academic discourses. The *practical implementation* of the concept is on the other hand lagging behind to the degree where it is even contradicting the conceptual progress.⁶⁶ Brzoska (2003) has argued that the SSR framework itself is a part of the underlying reason for the conceptual-contextual divide. He argues that while the poverty reduction framework provides a useful framework for security related activities, it gives little indication when it comes to prioritizing and sequencing them. This situation has caused different agents to embark upon different projects falling under the umbrella concept of SSR, and as a result the activities on the ground are becoming specific and fragmented. The different components are only pieced together as parts of a “holistic” approach once they are placed into the broader SSR framework and interpreted as such (de Coning 2010). Such an understanding can explain the tendency why the security community has been able to “hijack” the implementation of the SSR agenda to serve traditional military or geo-strategic interests.

6.4.3 Technicization and non-politicization of policies

The conceptual-contextual divide cannot however be fully explained by the security community’s venture into development related work. Nor can it be adequately explained by a lack of resources. Whereas the military’s capacity and securitized rationale goes a long way in explaining the lack of government dimensions and that SSR is becoming militarized in practice, it cannot explain the reason why core principles like local ownership and local context sensitivity are neglected also by civilian agents. Are the principles not considered important in practice?

The fact that the normative framework has been internationally endorsed indicates that they indeed are considered important. Perhaps is something more fundamental at stake; perhaps is it the foundation underlying the international approach to fragile and post-conflict states that falls short. I have previously referred to state-building and security sector reform (SSR) as belonging to a liberal paradigm aiming to enhance human security and facilitate development. Such practices challenge traditional state sovereignty,

⁶⁶ www.ssrfuture.org/blogs/day1concep/discussion (accessed 05.05.2010)

and have more than anything else been legitimized by the liberal hegemony in international politics. According to Malmvig (2006), sovereignty has not only been open to different constructions over time, but also across space. The liberal hegemony in global politics has facilitated a movement from absolute sovereignty to sovereignty conditioned by respect for liberal principles like democracy and human rights. Consulting the SSR literature, this notion is widely displayed:

The political sensitivity of security issues can create developing country resistance to external assistance. National defense and internal security are the traditional cornerstones of state sovereignty. However, *when security is seen in its wider sense*, as involving human security and a range of development issues, *donor engagement in this domain becomes more relevant and legitimate*⁶⁷ (OECD 2004:4) (my emphasis added). And moreover:

OECD members recognise that development and security are inextricably linked. This perception is opening the way to treating security in developing countries as a public policy and governance issue, inviting greater public scrutiny of security policy (OECD 2004:1).

The excerpts reflect the naturalization of liberal democratic values as the fundament in the international approach to fragile states and its geopolitical impact on state sovereignty. They furthermore reflect a *de-securitizing* move. Although the policy document at first glance seems to frame security issues as belonging in the political realm, the insistence on “security in developing countries” constituting a “public policy and governance issue” for international donors to decide on, reflects a clear attempt to establish it as a technical and hence non-political issue. Security issues *in the South* are hence moved directly from securitization to non-politicization. Hansen (2006) has argued that when foreign policy discourses articulate an explicit international responsibility, such as combating “humanitarian disaster” or protecting “human rights”, a powerful discursive move is undertaken in that “the issue is moved out of the realm of the strategic and “selfishly national” and relocated within the “higher grounds” of the morally good” (Hansen 2006:50). Donor activities are hence legitimized based on universal values and the Self’s moral responsibility to help and transform the Other. The dominant perception of security sector reform as a necessary and largely technical matter of “right-sizing” and “professionalization” may further facilitate the tendency for donors to define local ownership in pragmatically terms (Andersen 2006). This tendency mirrors the argument made by Huntington (1968) and Paris (2004) about the need for institution building to precede democratization. The marginalization of local ownership and related procedural

⁶⁷ www.oecd.org/dataoecd/20/47/31642508.pdf

principles are hence legitimized by referring to the local population's human security needs. The normative framework hence functions as a legitimating force for the international community's venture into the security sectors of fragile states.

Importantly, the linking of security and development has thus opened up for treating security in development countries as a governance issue. The underlying geopolitical rationale is fundamentally related to the issue of state fragility. The international community tends to see fragile states as "*terra nullius*"; places characterized by chaos and anarchy, where nothing works. Fragile states are perceived as failing to meet the normative Weberian ideal of the modern state. These countries are hence collectively perceived as lacking the necessary institutional capacity and as in need of external guidance and help to become stable democracies. In this respect, fragile states are effectively perceived and responded to as "pseudo-states", as holders of a qualitatively different and weaker form of sovereignty than modern Western states. In the Liberian process, this is repeatedly illustrated in the marginalization of the Liberian Government and civil society, which are perceived as lacking competence and capacity.

In the contemporary world, the label "fragile state" brings about a specific technical response or "cure", known as liberal state building. As a project, post-conflict peacebuilding has in the post-Cold War era become synonymous with the advancement of liberal democratic principles. As a result, the authority of external actors engaged in activities such as security sector reform (SSR), is not only derived from their legal or humanitarian mandate. It also stems from their knowledge and experience in what liberal principles are, how they can be made operational and how they should be implemented (Sending 2009 a, b). This specific framing of liberal state-building as being about the implementation of pre-defined and essentially non-negotiable principles about democratic rule, human rights, liberal economic policy and the rule of law, elevates western donors to "experts" on how to best establish sustainable security and development in the South. The solution to state fragility is hence perceived as pre-given and ahistorical, resulting in the implementation of "universal principles" (Sending 2009 a). This technical and top-down approach essentially implies that universal knowledge about how to build liberal democracies is considered more important than local knowledge. This can explain why competence in functionally specific tasks, such as SSR, again and again takes precedence over local and context specific knowledge.

Sending (2009 a, b) moreover argues that the donor community assumes that the internationally established legitimacy of liberal principles they advance, automatically

translates into local and domestic legitimacy. The legitimacy of the intervention in question is hence perceived as flowing from a set of international sources, rather than a local source. These sources include conformity with the liberal human rights paradigm and the UN's authorities. Such a conceptualization entails a perception that the "actual" legitimacy of the intervention is unrelated to the "perceived" legitimacy of the intervention in the local population (Sending 2009 a). As such, the process will be "locally owned" as soon as the local population accepts the foundation for the new institutions and transforms into a liberal, democratic almost-Self.

6.5 Summing up

The Liberian case has illustrated the implementation of SSR in practice. The process clearly reflects that the security community's entry into the development domain has skewed the implementation of the SSR paradigm in a military and state centric direction. Previous chapters have argued that this is due to it outmatching the civilian development community with regards to resources and capacities. The result has been that the governance and broader democratic dimensions of SSR has become marginalized in practice. This chapter has moreover argued that the conceptual-contextual divide illustrated by the Liberian process, not necessarily is caused by the fact that donors disrespect the procedural principles or consider them as insignificant. Their ongoing conceptual development and the international endorsement of them by UN and OECD member states indicate that they do. Rather, it seems that the conceptual-contextual divide is intimately related to the implicit assumptions of universal knowledge and external legitimacy operating within the liberal peacebuilding discourse. As fragile states are perceived as "lacking capacity" when it comes to building liberal democracies and modern state institutions, donor's tend to act based on the idea that the process is better performed top-down by external "experts". The illiberality of the process is thereafter legitimized by referring to the institutionalized system of liberal democratic values, including the broader need to protect human security and development.

7 Conclusions

This thesis has focused on the emergence of the post-Cold War security-development nexus and its impact on donor policies towards fragile and post-conflict states in the South. My research rationale has been to address the knowledge gap at the intersection of security and development, and contribute to the body of critical literature on the underresearched concept of security sector reform (SSR). For this purpose, I have applied a theoretical framework comprising Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, combined with the Copenhagen School's security theory and geopolitical theory.

The main research question guiding the thesis has been: *How has the international approach towards fragile and post-conflict states changed in the post-Cold War era?* Two related sub-questions have further functioned to structure my thesis: *How has the merging of security and development influenced Western donors' geopolitical rationale for engaging with fragile states?* And finally, related to my case: *What characterizes the Liberian SSR process, and do the elements of the OECD DAC framework inform the implementation of the reform process?*

The research questions have been answered throughout the thesis by investigating the impact of the liberal hegemony in post-Cold War politics on the international security and development architecture. Chapter four situated SSR in global politics and contextualised it as a post-Cold War liberal approach to security assistance, centred on liberal state building. Chapter five proceeded to investigate the conceptual merging of security and development, providing the backdrop and justification for SSR. It argued that state fragility and underdevelopment has been constructed as international security issues in a globalized world, hence changing Western donors' geopolitical rationale for engaging with fragile states. The chapter moreover accounted for SSR as a policy area of civil-military cooperation, encompassing actors with differing intertextual histories, working methods, priorities and rationales. As such, the thesis identified an ongoing discursive struggle between the *security first* and the *good governance* discourse over the definition and appropriate response to the issues in question. Chapter six investigated the relation between discourse and materiality by looking at the relation between the OECD DAC framework and the implementation of SSR in the Liberian context. It depicted a fragmented and militarized reform process, and moreover identified a

conceptual-contextual divide, where the normative principles of the SSR framework are committed to in theory but not adhered to in practice.

Main findings of the thesis are that the reconceptualization of underdevelopment and state fragility as international security issues has caused the international donor community to become increasingly involved in state building in post-conflict and fragile states. The underlying foundation is the liberal peace thesis, which holds that national and international peace and stability is best guaranteed through the building of liberal democracies. Because of the merging of the previously separated concepts of security and development, new policies such as security sector reform (SSR) have emerged in the interface of traditional security and development assistance. The SSR framework aims at joining together these efforts and to provide them with a common vision of a democratic security sector that facilitates development and protects the security interests of the local population. Although the framework as represented by the OECD DAC and the UN, explicitly frames security as a development issue, the security-development nexus' has caused the security community to become increasingly dominant on traditional development domains. Because the security community largely reflects a securitized discourse, it has approached SSR in a traditional state centric and security oriented fashion, causing the implementation of the concept to become skewed in a militarized direction.

The currently reality is that SSR remains more conceptually than institutionally developed, and that actual undertakings on the ground remains fragmented and incoherent. As the thesis has illustrated through the Liberian SSR process, there is a tendency for a conceptual-contextual divide, where the procedural principles of local ownership, local context sensitivity, accountability and transparency and holistic approach are adhered to in theory, but marginalized in practice. I have argued that the security community's venture into development related work has contributed to the marginalization of the procedural principles, but also that this tendency in itself is not a sufficient explanation for the gap between theory and practice. Drawing from Sending (2009 a, b) I have argued that part of the problem is to be found in the ideas underpinning the liberal peacebuilding regime. Essentially, the solution to state fragility is seen as ahistorical and pregiven, hence resulting in top-down implementation of "universal principles", further contributing to the marginalization of the SSR framework's procedural principles. Related to this aspect, the thesis has argued that it is misleading to

speak of the international approach to post-conflict and fragile states as a uniform “Western” approach, even if it responds to the same security climate. Rather, it has pointed to discursive splits within the Western Self, illustrating the importance of spatial, temporal and ethical representations in foreign policy. As accounted for, the security first and the good governance discourse importantly construct the same signs to different results, hence making different policies and approaches relevant and legitimate.

Related to these competing discourses, two processes that contribute to the conceptual-contextual divide have been identified. The most obvious one is the process of *securitization*, which frames underdevelopment and state fragility as international security issues and legitimize that policies directed at post-conflict states are lifted above normal politics. The process of *depoliticization* or *technicization* on the other hand, frames security issues in the South as governance issues, hence contributing to moving them out of the political domain. This process of technicization is intimately related to the fact that the liberal paradigm has become hegemonic in the post-Cold War era. Illiberal and undemocratic donor activities are hence legitimized based on universal liberal values and the Western Self’s moral responsibility to help and transform the Other. The thesis has argued that taken together, these two processes, securitization and technicization, help explain the tendency for a conceptual-contextual divide.

Reforming the security sector and subjecting it to democratic oversight and control is critical to the consolidation of peace and security in any post-conflict state. The SSR framework recognizes civil-military relations’ potential impact on both security and development, and aims to make the security sector more responsive to the populations’ security needs. As such, the SSR framework holds enormous potential. Nevertheless, if SSR is to live up to its own ambitions, donors need to be held to higher standards regarding accountability, local context sensitivity and respect for local ownership of the processes. This aspect is imperative for the legitimacy, efficiency and sustainability of the reform process, and ultimately, for long-term peace and stability. The UN’s role in SSR activities must also be strengthened to guarantee that the reform process is carried out in a coordinated and holistic fashion. In this I concur with Ball and Hendricks (2006) in that it would be counter-productive to abandon the concept, even if it falls short of its own ambitions. There is, however, a strong case to focus on re-energising the concept by stimulating greater debate on the core principles which underpin SSR, and how these principles apply to specific contexts in host countries. If SSR is to produce the desired

outcomes, SSR thinking furthermore needs to be institutionalized in the practice of international assistance in both the development and security spheres (Ball and Hendricks 2006). With regard to both human and state security, we simply cannot afford to fail with failing states.

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