

CSG PAPERS

Assessing the Impact of Orthodox Security Sector Reform in El Salvador

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

This paper is the product of a multi-year CSG research project, titled *Exploring the transition from first to second generation SSR in conflict-affected societies*. Led by CSG Executive Director Mark Sedra, the project assesses and evaluates the impact of orthodox security sector reform (SSR) programming in conflict-affected countries. Employing a common methodology, the project features original research on four case study countries: Bosnia-Herzegovina, El Salvador, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste. The case study countries chosen each feature two broad characteristics: they are recovering from conflict and making transitions from war to peace; and they are mature cases of SSR, in that they have been subjected to at least ten years of externally supported SSR programming of some form. It is also important to note that geographical diversity played an important role in case study selection, with four distinct regions represented— Balkans, Central America, West Africa, and Asia-Pacific.

The SSR model as it is applied in war-to-peace transitions and broader state building projects is in the midst of a period of change. Over a decade of case study analysis, particularly in conflict-affected environments, has shown that the SSR model, as outlined in formative documents like the *OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform*, has had a meager record of achievement. A survey of key SSR implementation cases demonstrates a distinct conceptual-contextual gap. The principal tenets and features of the SSR model, like its holistic character, focus on governance, and human security orientation are rarely translated into practice in conflict-affected SSR settings. It can be argued that the SSR model in its fundamental form has never actually been applied as designed in conflict-affected environments, prompting many scholars and practitioners to explore new approaches seen as more viable in difficult implementation settings. This thinking is often loosely grouped under the heading of second generation SSR, involving a move to a new, more contextually attuned reform approach. This second generation SSR discourse is still nascent and ill-defined but rapidly taking form and gaining momentum.

The dominant objective that has united the still disparate second generation SSR thinking is the imperative of narrowing the conceptual-contextual gap. This discourse has already spawned some ad hoc programmatic initiatives in conflict-affected settings, often revolving around notions of empowering non-state security and justice providers as a means to build more sustainable and locally legitimate reform outcomes, or employing interim stabilization measures to help shape conditions for more conventional SSR interventions. In spite of the SSR model's mixed record, SSR stakeholders and observers are not calling for its jettisoning, but rather a refashioning of the model's core methods and good practices to make it more applicable in conflict-affected environments.

This project seeks to contribute to the gradual shift or transition in SSR policy and practice, through comparative analysis of four prominent conflict-affected SSR cases. By investigating the impact of conventional SSR and tracking entry-points for alternative approaches, the project aims to generate innovative, evidence-based insights and practical recommendations to improve SSR policy and programming in conflict-affected contexts. Importantly, the project will provide a detailed evidence base on how SSR has been applied to transform the security and justice architectures of states making war-to-peace transitions. The project will ascertain what works and does not work in the application of the orthodox SSR model, and by extension if and how a second-generation SSR approach could deliver better results in conflict-affected environments.

As already mentioned, alternative or second-generation SSR initiatives are already emerging organically in many reform contexts, thus part of the purpose of the project will be to identify these instances and investigate whether they can inform changes to the wider SSR model. On a broader level the project seeks to advance constructive dialogue on the future of the SSR model, which has come under increasing scrutiny and pressure among policy-makers, practitioners and analysts in donor and recipient states alike due to its mixed record of achievement in conflict-affected environments.

The project seeks to answer the following main research questions for each case:

1. To what extent and how have SSR efforts followed the orthodox SSR model as described in the *OECD-DAC Handbook on SSR*? In assessing SSR efforts in each case study country, how have orthodox SSR approaches succeeded and failed and why?
2. What alternative approaches or entry-points for security and justice development programs are available? Are they used, and if so, how? If not, why?

The project has produced two reports per case study country—eight in total—one for each of the aforementioned research questions. The final report of the project—the ninth in the series—will synthesize the results of the case study research, drawing conclusions about the efficacy of orthodox SSR approaches and the potential for second generation SSR ideas.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1992, the Chapultepec peace accords brought to an end El Salvador's civil war and laid the foundation of a profound transformation of national politics. Well before the elaboration of the security sector reform concept, the country reformed its security forces and justice system as a key component of the peace process. More than 20 years later, the Salvadoran peace has been maintained, but the country remains unable to address epidemic levels of crime and violence. This report assesses the impact of orthodox SSR on peace and security in El Salvador; it evaluates the extent to which the reform process respected the core principles of SSR as conceived by key stakeholders such as the OECD-DAC. SSR in El Salvador was a modest success, based on the first generation SSR model. The reform process was locally owned and changed the security sector in several ways, contributing to the sustainability of the peace process. However, it lacked a long-term and holistic vision that would have truly transformed the security sector, while cronyism and lack of transparency remain an important issue in Salvadoran politics. As a consequence, the Salvadoran security institutions remain unable to prevent and address in a sustainable manner armed crime and violence.

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

ANSP	<i>Academia Nacional de Seguridad Publica</i> (National Public Security Academy)
ARENA	<i>Alianza Nacionalista Republicana</i> (Nationalist Republican Alliance)
CNJ	<i>Consejo Nacional de Justicia</i> (National Judicial Council)
CNSP	<i>Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Publica</i> (National Council of Public Security)
COPAZ	<i>Comisión Nacional para la Consolidación de la Paz</i> (National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace)
CSJ	<i>Corte Suprema de Justicia</i> (Supreme Court of Justice)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
FESPAD	<i>Fundación de Estudio para la Aplicación del Derecho</i> (Foundation for the Study of Applied Law)
FGR	<i>Fiscalía General de la Republica</i> (The Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic of El Salvador)
FMLN	<i>Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional</i> (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front)
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDP	internally displaced person
IUDOP	<i>Instituto Universitario de Opinión Publica</i> (Central American University Institute of Public Opinion)
IEP	Institute for Economics and Peace
MDN	<i>Ministerio de la Defensa Nacional</i> (Ministry of National Defence)
MJSP	<i>Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad Publica</i> (Ministry of Justice and Public Security)
NGO	non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONUSAL	UN Observers Mission to El Salvador
PNC	<i>Policía Nacional Civil</i> (National Civilian Police)
RESDAL	<i>Red de Seguridad y defensa de América Latina</i> (Latin American Security and Defence Network)
SSR	security sector reform
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

INTRODUCTION

Security sector reform (SSR) emerged as a key concept of the state building paradigm at the end of the 1990s. While broad policy frameworks defining and guiding SSR programs were only articulated by international agencies and multilateral donors in the 2000s, initiatives to reform the security and justice institutions beyond train-and-equip programs took place soon after the end of the Cold War in many countries exiting political crises and civil wars. El Salvador is one of those countries. The reform of the Salvadoran security institutions was a core element of the negotiated peace agreement that put an end to 12 years of armed conflict. At the time, the Salvadoran peace process was considered truly revolutionary since it led to a lasting negotiated peace between the right-wing government and the guerrilla movement, reshaped national politics, and promised important economic and social transformations.

This paper explores how SSR in El Salvador followed the principles of the first generation SSR model described in the *OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform* published in 2007. Since SSR in El Salvador was implemented more than a decade before its publication, it did not follow the model and presents some strong limitations, such as the absence of a holistic and long-term vision. Nonetheless, the process in El Salvador is an important case study for SSR: it included the entire country's security system and was one of the first true efforts in the post-Cold War era to transform how public security is provided beyond traditional train-and-equip programs.

This paper first presents an overview of the SSR process in El Salvador, discussing problems to be addressed by the reform and the challenges it faced, as well as its main champions and spoilers. Second, it looks at the evolution of SSR priorities after the departure of the United Nations (UN) and the transformation of the security environment from political to social violence. Third, it evaluates SSR in terms of security provision effectiveness, governance, economic viability and public perceptions. Fourth, it assesses the SSR process based on 11 indicators in-line with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee's (DAC's) *Handbook*. The paper concludes that the reforms undertaken in El Salvador present a modest success based on the first generation SSR model. It was a locally owned process that changed the security sector in several ways and contributed to the sustainability of the peace process. However, it lacked a long-term and holistic vision that would have truly transformed the security sector in order to make people feel safer.

OVERVIEW OF THE SSR PROCESS IN EL SALVADOR

Problems Intended to be Addressed by SSR

SSR was implemented in El Salvador in 1992, following the end of the civil war that opposed the military-led government dominated by the *Alianza Nacionalista Republicana* (ARENA) to the *Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* (FMLN), a communist guerrilla movement. Gross inequality and the concentration of land ownership in the hands of a few wealthy elites, supported by a powerful army, were at the origin of the insurrection. More than 75,000 Salvadorans, mostly civilians, were killed during the armed conflict. The war was punctuated by massacres of regime opponents and key opposition figures, creating a climate of terror. While both sides were responsible for violence against civilians, the military and state-sponsored death squads perpetrated the vast majority of the killings.

External forces also influenced the course of the war, contributing to its intensity and duration. During the 1980s, El Salvador was one of the main battlegrounds opposing the two superpowers. The Salvadoran military was heavily funded and trained by the United States, while the guerrilla received support from the Soviet bloc. The end of the Cold War led to a decline in capacities on both the rebel and the government sides (Kalyvas and Balcells, 2011). After the battle of San Salvador in 1989, it became clear for both parties that a military victory would not be possible, opening the way to a long negotiation process.

The war came to an end after two years of negotiation, made official by the signing of the Chapultepec Peace Accords in Mexico City on January 12, 1992. Resulting from a series of preliminary agreements between the Government of El Salvador and the FMLN, the peace accords were considered, at the time, as one of the most innovative and comprehensive settlements ever negotiated under the United Nations' auspices. As underlined by Álvaro de Soto, the UN chief negotiator, the organization played a “ground-breaking role in El Salvador, the first case of the UN mediating the resolution of internal conflict between a government and an insurgent group” (de Soto, 2013: xviii).

While the concept of SSR had not yet been articulated in 1992, some of its main components were included in the provisions of the peace accords: the reduction of the armed forces and the limitation of their mandate to external defence, the creation of a new civilian police force and limited judicial reform. Reforming the security sector was a key element of the peace agreements, alongside the integration of the FMLN in the political life of the country and the implementation of economic reforms. Considering the nature of the conflict, the widespread human right violations committed by members of the security agencies, and the necessary political compromise to stop hostilities, SSR was essential to a lasting and sustainable peace in El Salvador.

Initial Challenges

SSR was implemented in challenging settings due to the end of the civil war and the rapid demobilization of combatants. First, SSR targeted old institutions that felt entitled to their advantageous position in the country. Principles of good governance, such as civilian oversight, civil-military balance and transparency, were foreign to Salvadoran security institutions. Prior to the conflict, the armed force benefited from a privileged position giving them access to important resources in exchange for support and protection of national elites. The three existing police forces, the National Police, the Treasury Police, and the National Guard, were under the command of the *Ministerio de la Defensa Nacional* (Ministry of National Defence) (MDN) and were involved in widespread human rights violations during the war. Death squads operated out of the military and the intelligence services, which were also under the control of the MDN (Call, 2003: 831). For its part, the judiciary was highly politicized and there was little distinction between the different branches of government. The *Corte Suprema de Justicia* (Supreme Court of Justice) (CSJ) was a powerful institution whose judges were closely associated to right-wing political parties. Combined with the inquisitorial model of the justice system, where judges would lead investigations, there was little place for fair, transparent and evidence-based justice.

Second, SSR was implemented at the same time as other key programs to facilitate the transition to peace. These other initiatives supported by the international stakeholders included the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of combatants, and the establishment of a truth commission to shed light on wartime crimes and human right violations. Those different initiatives and their outcomes were mutually dependent and would bear significant consequences for the sustainability of the peace process. Hence, a lot had to be done in the immediate aftermath of the war and resources were limited, both at the national and international levels.

Finally, a security vacuum characterized the country in the months that followed the peace agreements. The demobilization of the armed forces and the guerrilla, in addition to the disbandment of the police forces, significantly undermined the ability of the Salvadoran state to control its territory and deter crime. From 1992 to 1995, crime rates increased sharply despite the presence of foreign observers from the UN Observers Mission to El Salvador (ONUSAL) and the formation of a transitional police force to maintain peace and order. Crime numbers for that period are debated, but numbers gathered by Charles T. Call (2007: 38) show that homicides increased from 3,229 in 1992 to 7,673 in 1994. The perceived insecurity in the direct aftermath of the war however did not fade out as the new national police (*Policía Nacional Civil* [PNC]) was deployed; public security became the main public concern by the end of the decade (Cruz, 2003: 30).

Initial Structure of the SSR Agenda and Priorities

The peace accords signed by ARENA and the FMLN were truly revolutionary at the time due to the amount of detail included regarding the reform of the armed forces and the creation of a new civilian police force. SSR was essential for the FMLN to ratify the deal and agree to peace, alongside its integration in the political life of the country and the reform of land administration. The process was monitored by ONUSAL.

Armed Forces

The peace process depended on the transformation of the armed forces and the containment of their role and influence in the Salvadoran state. ARENA and the FMLN agreed to reduce significantly the strength of the armed forces and limit their mandate to external defence and the management of natural disasters. The institution was put under civilian oversight in order to promote transparency, democracy and respect for human rights. Troops were also reduced by half to fit the institution's new mandate. From 55,000 personnel in 1990, the number of troops was brought down to 28,800 in 2000 (World Development Indicators, 2016). The reduction of the armed forces, alongside the demobilization of the guerrilla force, certainly presented an important challenge for the Salvadoran government and ONUSAL, which will be discussed later on.

Furthermore, the civilian-run State Intelligence Office, which reports directly to the president and is supervised by the legislative assembly, replaced the military-controlled intelligence directorate. The three police forces under the command of the MDN – the National Police, the National Guard and the Treasury Police – were disbanded, as well as paramilitary and civil defence groups formed during the war to fight the insurgency. However, during the training of the first cohorts of new police agents, the National Guard, in charge of security in rural areas, would retain function under the supervision of ONUSAL to ensure the transition. The peace accords sought to exclude the armed forces from any public security matter, unless “very exceptional circumstances” would call for the military to support the civilian police in the conduct of its activities. Rather unrealistically, parties had agreed to complete most of these reforms in the first 90 days following the signature of the peace accords. Indeed, there was some initial resistance within the government of Alfredo Cristiani to disband the armed forces, pretexting the creation of a security vacuum, and to transfer resources from the military structures toward the new PNC.

Based on their new constitutional role and after their drawdown, the armed forces were expected to revise their doctrine to modernize their structure and better fulfill their mandate in accordance with new principles of civilian oversight, professionalism and respect for human rights. Yet, no agenda was set and the responsibility for those advanced reforms fell to the high command of the armed forces, with virtually no external support.

Additionally, a national ad hoc commission was created to review the files of high-ranking military officers and recommend the purge of those involved in unlawful acts during the war.

National Police

The peace agreements stipulated that a new professional civilian police, independent of the military and free of any partisan influence, would be created to replace military institutions in the management of public security. The creation and the deployment of the PNC was supposed to be swift: according to the peace accords, the PNC would be fully deployed within 21 months, reaching 5,700 new police officers and 240 senior officers after two years. Those numbers were expected to increase to 10,000 agents and 500 senior officers after five years. The accords stipulated that recruits would be selected through a series of tests to evaluate their level of general knowledge, physical fitness and mental state before entering the new National Public Security Academy (*Academia Nacional de Seguridad Publica* [ANSP]) for formation and training.

The peace compromise influenced the composition of the PNC. The government and the FMLN agreed that the number of ex-combatants in the PNC should be limited; former soldiers and *guerrilleros* would account respectively for 20 percent of the PNC's officer-level and basic agent personnel. Those limitations on recruitment sought to ensure that a majority of the new recruits – 60 percent – would be civilians in order to limit potential politicization and militarization of the new institution. However, ONUSAL and the ANSP were both denied access to the complete list of personnel of the old security forces and demobilized members of the armed forces. It was therefore impossible to make sure that the quotas were respected. Today, the general understanding is that both sides managed to exceed their quotas.

National Public Security Academy

The ANSP, independent from the PNC, is in charge of the recruitment, selection and training process. It opened three months late due to conflict over funding between the Salvador government and international donors (Stanley, 1999: 117). Delays in the reduction of the armed forces and the disbandment of the old police forces meant that resources could not be reallocated to the creation of the PNC. The armed forces were also opposed to the transfer of some of its installations to the PNC (Costa, 1995: 371). Furthermore, the Cristiani government initially refused to allocate any resource to the ANSP, claiming that, during the negotiation process, international donors had promised to bear the costs associated with the creation of the new police force. Yet, funding was slow to come since most donors preferred to provide personnel for training and monitoring rather than funds and material, which were considered too risky. Norway ultimately provided some start-up funds and the United States funded most of the reform activities that followed, but the

government remained slow in requesting additional international assistance (ibid.: 379). Nonetheless, the first cohort of 600 officers graduated in February 1993, after six months of training provided by instructors from Chile, Norway, Spain, the United States and Sweden. The initial cohorts of senior officers were trained abroad in the United States, Spain and Chile.

Local instructors, selected from among ANSP graduates, progressively replaced the team of 40 international advisers (ibid.: 367). At first, training was very theoretical, ill-adapted to most recruits since the requirement was a ninth grade education (Stanley, 1999: 121). Lack of resources also prevented specialized formation – for example, financial crime, drug trafficking, intelligence gathering and homicide investigation – and practical training. Once deployed, the first cohorts showed some significant weaknesses. In response, requirements were raised, training was extended and the curriculum was made more practical. ONUSAL also developed a human rights component that was included in the academy's curriculum. By the spring of 1995, the ANSP had trained 8,000 police agents (Montgomery, 1995: 159).

Justice Sector

The judicial reforms included in the peace accords were less extensive than the measure targeting the coercive institutions. Nonetheless, the accords increased the autonomy of the National Judicial Council (*Consejo Nacional de Justicia* [CNJ]) from the powerful and politicized Supreme Court. The CNJ was also mandated to supervise the new judicial training school for magistrates.

Furthermore, the parties had negotiated constitutional reforms that modified the nomination process for Supreme Court justices, the attorney general office (*Fiscalía General de la Republica* [FGR]), the state counsel and the new Human Rights Advocate's Office (*Procuraduría para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos*). Those nominations would now require a two-thirds majority vote from the legislative assembly (Popkin, 2001:15). The new constitution also assigned six percent of the national budget to the judicial branch to ensure its independence (Call, 2002: 554).

The United States has been the main contributor to justice reform. Once the implementation of the peace accords was well under way, the Department of Justice led a series of reforms to modernize all the components of the judicial system, with the financial and programmatic support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). USAID focused especially on the transformation of the criminal and judiciary codes, which is still underway 20 years later.¹

Main External and Internal Champions

Internal Champions

Despite some delays in the DDR process and the creation of the PNC, national actors implemented the reforms detailed in the peace agreements in a timely manner, under the supervision of international stakeholders. The Government of El Salvador and the FMLN, as the negotiating parties, agreed on a very detailed and innovative SSR program at the time. The agreement also provided some mechanisms through which the peace process would be monitored. In addition to the ad hoc commission in charge of reviewing the files of high-ranking military officers, the negotiation process led to the creation of a National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (*Comisión Nacional para la Consolidación de la Paz* [COPAZ]), which was mandated to oversee the implementation of the political agreements between the parties. COPAZ was composed of representatives from the government, the FMLN and all the political parties. It did not have any executive power, but it could draft legislation to be presented to the legislative assembly (Call, 2002: 555).

External Champions

In comparison to more robust peace operations deployed later on in Haiti, Timor Leste and Sierra Leone, for example, the role of international actors in SSR, and especially the United Nations, was modest. National actors designed and implemented SSR, for the most part, under the supervision of ONUSAL. Nonetheless, negotiators contributed to the elaboration of the details contained in the peace accords that would set the basis for SSR, and external stakeholders played a key role in monitoring the reform process and overcoming some obstacles between the parties.

ONUSAL was the first integrated peace operation ever deployed by the United Nations that included human rights, political, police and military sections (Call, 2002: 555). Its mandate did not concern traditional peacekeeping, but rather monitoring and advising. ONUSAL called for “blue berets and baseball caps, rather than blue helmets” (Montgomery; 1995: 160). The mission was initially mandated to monitor the implementation of the successive agreements between the parties prior to the ratification of the final peace accords, as well as the human rights situation in the country. After the conclusion of the Chapultepec accords, ONUSAL’s mandate was extended to the verification of the ceasefire and the monitoring of public order during the establishment of the PNC (United Nations, 2003a). At its peak (May 1992), ONUSAL relied on 368 military observers and 315 civilian police, supported by international and local civilian staff. The mission, however, never reached full personnel capacity, and there were some issues – language, lack of contextual knowledge and awareness – regarding the quality of the personnel deployed (United Nations, 2003b; Montgomery, 1995). After the general elections of March 1994, won by ARENA, ONUSAL was downgraded and ultimately replaced by a limited political mission

to follow up on the implementation of the remaining elements of the peace accords. At the time, the nature of the UN engagement in El Salvador was unprecedented, both in terms of its scope and length: “UN engagement through negotiations, a major multifunctional peacekeeping operation mandated by the Security Council, smaller political missions mandated by the General Assembly, and then close liaison through UNDP [United Nations Development Programme] provides for a successful example of the merits of ‘staying the course’” (Whitfield, 2001: 39). Those efforts were not, however, always coordinated with the United States, especially in the justice sector. USAID provided important support to the reform of the criminal code and the restructuring of the FGR. However, it did not use its political weight to support the Commission on the Truth for El Salvador (Truth Commission) supervised by the UN, and oppose the amnesty law (Popkin, 2001).

Spoilers

Until the end of the 1990s, there was some consensus, at least among external actors, about the overall success of SSR and the broader peace process in El Salvador (Nield, 2002: 2). There was no complete spoiler to SSR, likely because the reform was the result of a negotiated compromise between the government and the guerrilla movement. However, resistance in the existing institutions and mistrust between parties slowed down the process.

In 1993, following the discovery of weapons caches concealed by the FMLN, President Cristiani deployed military units in rural areas in violation of the peace accords, arguing that these troops were necessary to fight crime and restore security. Indeed, ONUSAL did not have the necessary resources or mandate to fill the security vacuum and there had been some delays in the deployment of the PNC. However, as discussed earlier, these delays were the result of the government’s refusal to fund the ANSP and resistance to the transfer of resources from the military forces and the former police forces toward the new PNC and the ANSP (Stanley, 1999: 117).

During the same period, entire anti-narcotic and special investigations units from previous police forces were transferred to the PNC, without following the vetting and training channels put in place by the peace accords. Their members were only vetted following important pressure from ONUSAL (Costa 1995), but the necessary measures were never applied against officers from those units who had been involved in human rights violations during the war. Those elements were later accused of contributing to political bias, favouritism and corruption inside the PNC. Furthermore, both the armed forces and the FMLN managed to exceed their recruitment quotas, altering the balance between parties and undermining the civilian nature of the PNC.

In the justice sector, there was some clear resistance to reform from both the judiciary and the executive branches. The judiciary system was highly politicized, and there was open opposition to the prosecution of those responsible for war crimes. The UN-supervised Truth Commission, composed of three international human rights experts, concluded that significant judicial reforms were necessary before undertaking any prosecution. In its report published in March 1993, the Truth Commission recommended the immediate removal of the entire Supreme Court (Popkin, 2001: 11). The Cristiani government reacted negatively and swiftly; the legislative assembly adopted an amnesty law less than a week after the presentation of the Truth Commission's report. The amnesty law prevented the prosecution of any military officer other than those who had already been purged by the national ad hoc commission. Some Salvadorans felt that amnesty was necessary for peace. However, it prevented any form of national reconciliation beyond the government and the FMLN. Lack of prosecution for those responsible for war crimes undermined the rule of law and the legal process, protecting those in positions of power and authority. It also reinforced a sense of impunity of some members of government and officers of the newly reformed security institutions.² Subsequent efforts to investigate remaining death squads and similar criminal structures produced few results, also due to political resistance (ibid.: 12). Nonetheless, other experts have argued that, at that point in time, the purge had been the most extensive process targeting a non-defeated armed force in the region (William and Walter, 1997: 62).

Finally, some judges and Supreme Court justices refused to collaborate with ONUSAL and submit themselves to the terms of the peace accords. For example, Mauricio Gutierrez Castro, then the Supreme Court president, argued that the peace agreement did not apply to the judiciary since it had been concluded by members of the executive branch (Arson and Holiday, 1992: 11). Deficit of political will to transform the justice sector led international donors to focus on technical aspects of the justice reform. Today, budget resources are still disproportionately assigned to the Supreme Court, while the FGR is overwhelmed and under-resourced. Judicial reforms certainly represented a greater challenge than the reform of the military, police and intelligence, in part because they were less linked to the peace process and the terms of the accords (Call, 2003: 827). Informal actions by state security institutions have remained a constant concern in the face of endemic violent crime (Cruz 2011a; 2011b). The incapacity of the justice system to prosecute individuals arrested in a timely manner feeds extralegal actions by state actors, undermining principles of due process, transparency, respect for human rights and rule of law. More broadly, the continuous inability of the state to respond to crime and violence has led to a militarization of public security, which will be discussed later on.

EVOLUTION OF THE SSR PROCESS

The main objective of SSR in El Salvador was to transform the institutions in ways that would promote the end of military supremacy and facilitate the democratization process. Yet, poor coordination between SSR and DDR led to the security vacuum and rising levels of crime in the aftermath of the conflict. Reform delays and unrealistic expectations toward the new PNC also contributed to a change in discourse and priorities in the security sector. As the situation evolved, the security sector focus switched from imperatives for demobilization and democratization to law enforcement and crime control. However, SSR never adapted to these new challenges, due to the absence of a holistic and long-term vision that would have enabled the development of strong, professional and democratic institutions able to adapt and respond to new public security challenges such as gang activities, extortion and violent crime.

Initial Progress

Initial concerns about respect for the peace accords and the implementation of reforms were progressively replaced by a general perception of insecurity associated to rising levels of crime and violence. The state seemed unable to face crime and address the security concerns of its population due to the demobilization of the armed forces, the disbandment of the police and the slow buildup of the PNC. Transitional policing by the National Guard under the supervision of ONUSAL was not sufficient to deter crime and maintain order.

As touched on earlier, delays in the implementation of the reforms and disproportionate expectations about immediate results produced frustration among the population and within the new security institutions (Stanley, 1999: 123). In 1993, police officers expressed frustration over the incapacity of justice, claiming they might turn to illegal means to control crime (ibid.). Indeed, between December 1994 and March 1995, the vigilante organization Black Shadow claimed to be responsible for the assassination of 16 known criminals who had avoided prosecution in the city of San Miguel (Call, 2003: 842). Black Shadow was allegedly composed of PNC officers, including the departmental commander and several important local figures. Some of the PNC officers were arrested, but no broader measures were taken to prevent similar organizations from forming in the future. The example of Black Shadow also illustrates continued impunity for members of state security institutions, which was reinforced by the adoption of the amnesty law.

Long-term Progress

The withdrawal of ONUSAL after the presidential elections and the completion of the initial deployment of the PNC in 1995 suggests that enough progress had been achieved for SSR to be considered an initial success, despite some weaknesses. The PNC was up and running, but it was not yet able to project its force and provide security to the whole population.³ SSR lacked a long-term vision going beyond the terms included in the peace accords and the initial mandate of ONUSAL. SSR never included a second phase in the development of the PNC, which was crucial to its professionalization and its sustainability. As a result, Salvadoran institutions have struggled to develop investigative capacities and increase the effectiveness of the security and justice process. Lack of capacity and continued impunity have also undermined long-term progress.

As a consequence of those flaws in SSR strategy, the public security agencies have been unable to address crime and reduce violence, at least until the conclusion of the gang truce in 2012. El Salvador has ranked among the most violent countries worldwide for the last 20 years, an unenviable position for a country at peace. By the end of the 1990s, popular opinion had been replaced by generalized public concerns toward crime, and social violence had replaced popular hope following the signature of the peace accords (Cruz, 2003). For these reasons, narratives about SSR changed drastically after 2000. In 2013, pointing to the successive but ineffective repressive strategies used by the Salvadoran government and other governments in the region to tackle crime, an official from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) stated: “SSR in Central America did not work.”⁴ SSR certainly resolved some of the wartime problems, but it did not make Salvadorans feel safer in the long run.

IMPACTS OF THE SSR PROCESS

The following section assesses the impacts of the SSR process in terms of operational effectiveness, governance, economic viability and public perceptions.

Operational Effectiveness

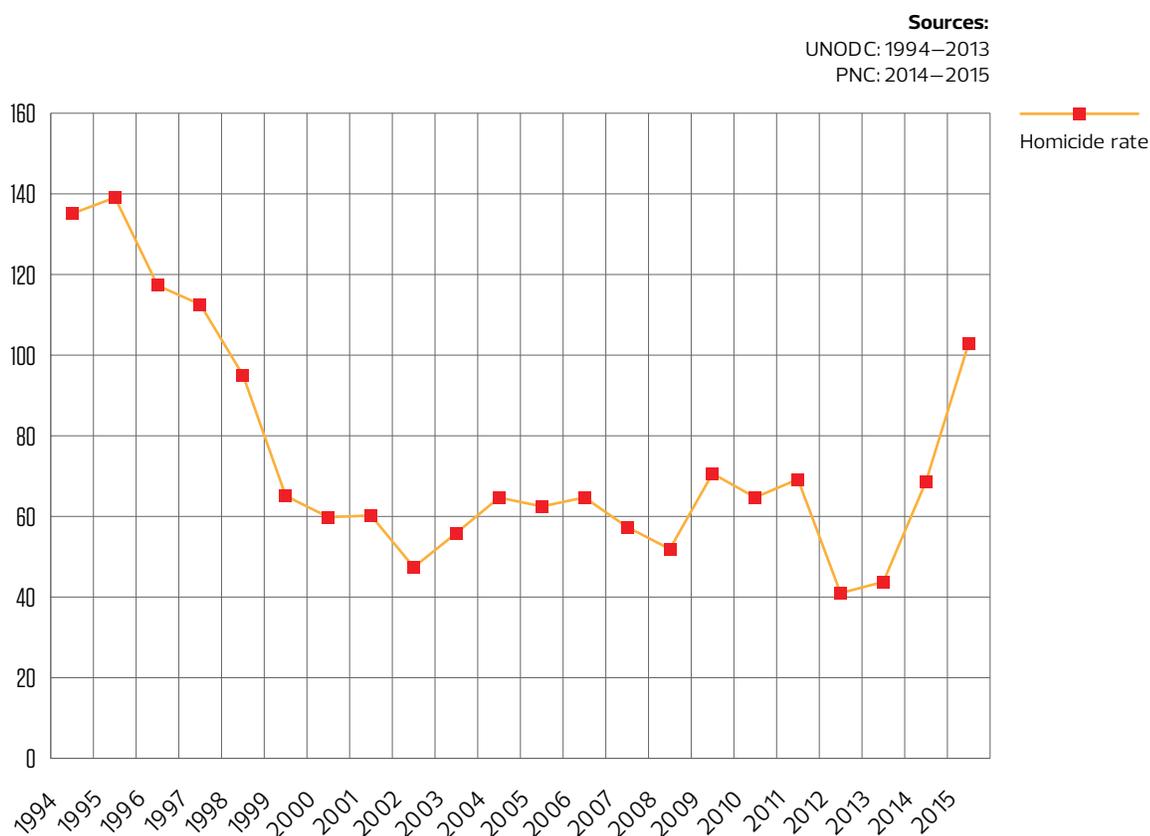
Security trends

Violence and crime increased drastically in the direct aftermath of the war. As discussed earlier, the demobilization of the armed forces and the guerrilla movement contributed to the formation of a security vacuum in many parts of the country. Since the signature of the peace accords, more than 73,000 Salvadorans have died violently, making the peace almost as violent as the war, during which approximately 75,000 people were killed (*Instituto*

Universitario de Opinión Pública [IUDOP], 2014: xix). Social violence has replaced political violence. Despite SSR and the creation of a new civilian police force, the Salvadoran state has been unable to address violence and crime. Insufficient capacity within the police and the justice system, impunity and corruption are all key factors explaining the inability of the Salvadoran security and justice institutions to tame violence.

Other factors also play a role in explaining violence in El Salvador since 1992. In addition to DDR shortcomings and the circulation of illegal small arms, changes in the US immigration policy play a key role in explaining crime and violence (Wolfe 2011; Cruz 2009; Zilberg 2004). The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, passed in 1995 by the US Congress, “established that any alien who was serving a longer-than-one-year sentence would be subject to removal from the U.S. after completing the full prison term” (Cruz, 2009: 3-4; Thale and Falkenburger, 2006). Salvadoran nationals with criminal records were sent back to El Salvador, where there were no resources or programs to receive them.⁵ They joined the ranks of other marginalized groups and reproduced previous criminal behaviours, contributing to crime and violence trends in El Salvador.

Figure 1: National homicide rates, 1992–2013⁶



The first upsurge in homicides that immediately followed the end of the war dropped in the second half of the 1990s, but the national homicide rate remained rather high and the culture of violence inherited from the war and decades of authoritarianism prevailed. Homicide rates increased again in the early 2000s and did not drop until 2012, following the negotiation of a truce between the FMLN government of Mauricio Funes and the leadership of the two main criminal gangs in El Salvador, the *Mara Salvatrucha* and the *Barrio 18 Sureños*. The exact role of the government in the negotiation of the truce remains unclear, but the fact that the leaders were transferred from the maximum-security prison to regular jails at the same time as the sudden decline in homicides suggests that the Funes administration played a key role. Homicides increased again in 2014, following the election of a second FMLN government led by Salvador Sanchez Céren, a former guerrilla commander, who had refused to negotiate with the gangs. The situation is not getting better; May 2015 was the most violent month since the end of the war, with approximately 640 homicides reported and violence is still rising.⁷

Security forces functioning and performance

“The plan to consider the PNC fully deployed when it reached a force level of 5,900 was highly unrealistic for a post-civil war context” (Stanley, 1999: 119). After 1995, the functioning but inexperienced PNC was left alone to face a volatile and challenging security environment. The police strength grew nonetheless. By 1999, the ANSP had trained 16,000 police officers, and the formation was entirely given by Salvadoran instructors (*ibid.*: 117). Today, the PNC relies on approximately 22,000 police officers, but remains unable to respond to widespread insecurity in the country (Ribando Seelke, 2015).

A USAID expert argues that the PNC is simply overwhelmed by the astonishing amount of crime and violence, and is perceived as such by the population.⁸ However, factors other than strict capacity and resources have undermined the ability of the PNC to fight crime and violence, and ensure public security. The existing culture and practices promoting corruption and impunity within the security institutions have also undermined PNC effectiveness. José Miguel Cruz (2011a; 2011b) argues that repressive measures and extralegal violence by the state has only contributed to increasing gangs’ cohesion and level of organization.

A purge was undertaken in 2000, following a series of severe incidents – kidnappings, crime rackets, extrajudicial killings – that involved members of the PNC. The legislature, which comprised for the first time a significant number of representatives from the FMLN after the 1998 legislative elections, granted special powers to the PNC director, and a presidential commission was created. The process led to the removal of 1,215 police officers, in addition to 1,485 officers through regular channels (Call, 2003: 844). Charles Call (*ibid.*) cites a UN report from 2000: “[the PNC] never succeeded in establishing themselves as guarantors of transparent police procedures nor of the application of

appropriate discipline.” In 2009, 14 commissioners and sub-commissioners out of 63 members of the PNC leadership were under investigation, the majority for offences against “life, dignity, freedom, [as well as] physical, moral and juridical integrity of third persons”⁹ (Valencia and Arauz, 2009).

Despite these concerns, the PNC Inspectorate Office (*Inspectoría General de la PNC*) is unable to systematically fulfill its mandate. Limited resources and the massive number of complaints against police abuses prevent the Inspectorate from processing all the cases it receives in a timely manner. Furthermore, the vetting process within the organisation is not consistent, which contributes to the climate of impunity.

In addition, the overrepresentation of former members of the armed forces in the leadership of the PNC has contributed to the militarization of the organisation. Despite the structural causes of violence, such as the marginalization of poor communities and inequality, little energy and few resources have been invested in prevention programs. Through successive repressive strategies since the mid-1990s, the PNC has relied on large operations and massive arrests to address crime and violence. Repression has shown little result, due to the lack of a coherent strategy and the necessary resources to investigate and prosecute all pending cases.

When it comes to the armed forces, the institution in itself has ultimately respected the terms and the spirit of the peace accords. However, the executive has used the armed forces periodically in public security matters, in response to popular pressure for quick and swift solutions to address crime and violence in the country. Those incursions of the military institution in the sphere of public security have not been circumscribed by a clear plan to promote transparency and accountability principles. While the constitution provides for the use of military forces in situations of crisis, the continued reliance on military personnel to maintain order and support the PNC violates the spirit of the peace accords.

In 2009, President Mauricio Funes adopted a presidential decree that increased significantly the role of the armed forces in public security and especially in the administration of the prisons. The decree was contested in front of the Constitutional Chamber of the CSJ, which determined that it did not violate the constitution. The decree has since been renewed several times, and the number of military troops engaged in public security activities increased from 1,760 in 2009 to 11,500 in 2014 (Ávalos, 2014).

The Sanchez Céren administration announced in April 2015 the creation of three army battalions (*batallones de limpieza*) to support the PNC in anti-gang operations. An adviser from the MDN recognized that those battalions have further increased violence if they are not used properly. As a matter of fact, the Foundation for the Study of Applied Law (*Fundación de Estudio para la Aplicación del Derecho* [FESPAD]), a Salvadoran non-

governmental organization (NGO) for the defence of human rights and the rule of law, has publically reported cases of abuse toward youth in marginalized communities where military personnel has been deployed alongside the PNC to fight gangs (Avelar, 2015). FESPAD denounces the abusive use of violence, arguing that the militarization of public security will only worsen the problem. The continued involvement of the armed forces in public security without proper boundaries illustrates how hard it is to change attitudes and practices in the security sector despite the formal reform of its institutions and structures. The “very exceptional circumstances” stipulated in the peace accord have become rather permanent. According to Jeannette Aguilar, the 2009 decree poses a threat to the legacy of the peace accords, the country’s constitution and the balance between civil and military powers.

Judiciary and prison trends

The prison system is under the authority of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (*Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad Pública* [MJSP]). The situation in Salvadoran prisons is one of the worst in the region, and the world. The prison population has increased by almost 400 percent between 1995 and 2015, from 7,013 to 27,033 inmates. According to a recent report, the majority of the prison population is between 18 and 29 years old; 44.7 percent of male inmates and 40.4 percent of female inmates are between 18 and 24 years old (Bergman et al., 2015). More than 95.5 percent of inmates report having been beaten by other inmates and 65.9 percent by prison staff (UNDP, 2013).

Prison overcrowding is, in large part, due to the disconnect between strategy and resources in the security sector. Under popular pressure for quick solutions to insecurity, the executive and legislative powers have supported and adopted a series of anti-gang policies and legislation that led to the arrest of hundreds of alleged gang members. Between July 23, 2003 and July 8, 2005, for example, 30,934 alleged gang members were arrested (Cruz, 2011a: 143). Some individuals were probably arrested more than once, which inflates the numbers, and most of them were released due to the lack of charges, but it still represents an enormous volume of inmates to process.

According to the World Prison Brief, pre-trial and remand imprisonment represents an important portion of the prison population. Absolute numbers increased from 5,147 inmates in 2001 to 8,439 inmates in 2010, and decreased to 6,509 in 2015. However, and probably due to the drastic increase in the total prison population after 2000, the proportion of inmates in pre-trial detention declined from 54.3 percent in 2001 to 22.1 percent in 2015 (World Prison Brief 2016).

Despite this gruesome portrait of El Salvador’s jail system, there have been some reform efforts under the Funes government, but results are very modest. Funds allocated to prisons have increased, but remain limited. For example, in 2013, the budget allocated to

alimentation was only US\$2.10 per day, per inmate (IUDOP, 2014: 129). The development of formation and reinsertion programs supervised by the prison administration has also been slow. Inmates still rely on church groups, family members and domestic NGOs for basic supplies such as clothes, soap and toothbrushes. Prisons are nonetheless open to independent monitoring by human rights observers, NGOs and other organizations from the civil society (US Department of State, 2014: 5).

Governance

The peace agreements and SSR improved the governance of the security institutions. Important political developments, including – but also going beyond – the terms of the peace accords and the constitution, have ensured increased civilian oversight over security and justice institutions. First, the transformation of the FMLN into one of the main political parties of the country and its ability to gain seats in the legislative assembly, win elections at the municipal level and ultimately win the presidency in 2009 and 2014 attest to the important progress made by the country in terms of democratization.

Second, the UN recommended in 1996 the creation of the National Council of Public Security (*Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Publica* [CNSP]) to provide a counterweight to the influence of individual ministers (Neild, 2001: 9). The CNSP, with members nominated by the president, provides concerted recommendations on public security matters. The relative influence of the council and its members has varied over time, however. René Figueroa, minister of public security under Antonio Saca (2004-2009), claims that the president headed the CNSP during his appointment. Under the current administration, however, it seems that the minister of national defense, former general David Mungia Payes, de facto leads the CNSP. Civilian oversight and governance of security and justice institutions certainly improved in comparison to the pre-war period; however, there is a lack of vision and political will when it comes to ensuring that the spirit of the peace accords regarding the role and place of the military is respected.

Security policies

Over the years, there has been a clear lack of vision when it comes to public security and violence reduction strategies. Repression has always been the first and prioritized strategy. The successive ARENA administrations of Francisco Flores (1999-2004) and Antonio Saca (2004-2009) promoted iron fist policies (*Mano Dura* and *Super Mano Dura*). *Mano Dura* and *Super Mano Dura* were sold as swift responses from the government to popular demands for action against violence (Cruz, 2011a). However, the PNC and the FGR did not have the resources to carry out those strategies.¹⁵ In 2006, resources allocated to the police force increased following the failure of the *Mano Dura*. However, very few resources were directed toward crime prevention, in part due to lack of strategic vision and insufficient

funding. Today, René Figueroa recognizes that prevention rather than repression is key to violence and crime reduction.¹⁶

Things did not improve under the FMLN leadership after the election of Mauricio Funes in 2009. Despite adopting a more progressive discourse about social equity and economic development, the Funes administration increased the role of the military in public security and adopted more repressive legislation against gang members and other forms of criminal associations (*Ley de Proscripción de Maras, Pandillas, Agrupaciones, Asociaciones y Organizaciones de Naturaleza Criminal*).

Perhaps more importantly, the leadership of both the PNC and the Ministry of Public Security and Justice changed three times in less than four years. In 2011, Funes nominated former generals David Mungia Payés and Francisco Salinas minister of public security and director of the PNC, respectively. Civil society groups denounced the nomination of former members of the armed forces in positions reserved for civilians. The Funes administration pledged that both Payés and Salinas had retired at the time of their nomination and were therefore eligible. In May 2013, the Constitutional Chamber of the CSJ ruled that their nomination violated the constitution.

It is under the authority of Funes that the gang truce was brokered in March, a couple of months after Payés promised a reduction of homicides of 30 percent during his first year in office. The truce certainly had an unprecedented impact on violence, reducing homicides by more than 40 percent across the country (see Figure 1). It also created significant windows of opportunity in many communities to introduce violence prevention programs and open dialogue with marginalized groups, including gang members. Nonetheless, a great deal is still unknown about the negotiation process that occurred and what was promised on both sides. The truce collapsed early in 2014, when it became evident that none of the presidential candidates would support the process further.

Over the past year, components of the Salvadoran government and civil society have presented five different plans to fight crime and improve security in the country. While those plans may signal that El Salvador is willing to take the right steps to address crime and insecurity, efforts to transform discourses and written proposition into concrete actions remain to be seen. Furthermore, there is a clear lack of coherence and coordination between actors and strategies in the elaboration of those plans. As underlined by a senior researcher from the Salvadoran Foundation for Economic and Social Development (*Fundación Salvadoreña para El Desarrollo Economico y Social [FUSADES]*), there is a new interest in proposing holistic solutions to the problem of crime and violence in El Salvador, but there is no continuity or sense of priority between the reports or their numerous recommendations. Nonetheless, the current government recognizes for the first time the need for leadership, proper funding and a holistic vision¹⁷ to reduce violence, improve security and enable development.

To sum up, the Salvadoran government has failed to provide security institutions with the strategic and policy tools necessary to control crime and contribute efficiently to public security. If resources are limited, there also appears to be a deficit in political will to tackle the crime problem in a sustainable manner, from one administration to the next. The lack of a long-term vision, policy making based on vocal popular complaints, and difficulty getting legislation approved by the legislative assembly have prevented the Salvadoran state from addressing public insecurity. Despite reformed institutions and the instauration of a system of checks and balances that prevent gross violation of the constitution, there is a clear lack of transparency and vision in the decisions made by the successive administrations in terms of public security.

Economic

SSR had a significant impact on the allocation of resources to the security and justice institutions. Military expenditures in constant US dollars¹⁸ and percentage of government spending decreased drastically after 1992. In 2014, 5.1 percent of government spending was directed to the military forces, compared to 15.1 percent in 1992 (SIPRI, 2015). These reductions in military spending in El Salvador are among the greatest recorded globally since the 1990s (Institute for Economics and Peace [IEP], 2015: 36).

However, a lack of transparency¹⁹ and governance shortcomings have undermined the ability of the Salvadoran state to use tax revenue to adequately fund its security sector. Despite formal reforms, the allocation of resources between the different institutions still reflects long-standing political and partisan preferences for the armed forces and the courts; the FGR and the investigation branch within the PNC do not have enough resources to process all the cases.²⁰ Substantial backlog in criminal investigations further contribute to the culture of impunity and lack of trust in the PNC. According to multiple sources (and an opinion largely shared by representatives of NGOs and civil society met in El Salvador), less than five percent of crimes lead to conviction (Ribando Seelke, 2015: 10; Chávez and Avalos, 2014).

Budget

SSR shortcomings in terms of governance have had important repercussions on the funding, fiscal transparency and economic sustainability of the security and justice sectors. In 2012, the Open Budget Survey gave a score of 43/100 in terms of budget transparency to El Salvador, which is below the regional average (Quintanilla 2013). The situation has, however, improved significantly in the latest report, with a score of 53/100 (International Budget Partnership, 2015). While budget oversight by the legislature and the supreme audit body is considered adequate, El Salvador ranks very low when it comes to public engagement in the budget process. In fact, in 2014, El Salvador occupied the

80th rank on a total of 178 countries on the Corruption Perception Index (Transparency International, 2014). Budget mismanagement has important repercussions for violence containment and public security.

Interviews highlighted the discrepancy between the budget of the military forces in a regional context, where El Salvador faces very few external threats, and the constant lack of resources experienced by the PNC despite the demanding public security environment. In 2012, according to the 2012 Public Security Index, the defence budget was approximately US\$144 million, while the PNC had a budget a little bit over US\$258 million (*Red de Seguridad y defensa de América Latina* [RESDAL], 2013b: 52). The PNC budget composes on average 77 percent of the MJSP'S envelope; 81 percent of the PNC budget goes directly to salaries and other allowances (*ibid.*: 54). There are very few resources left for operation planning and capacity development.

In the three years following the 2009 presidential decree increasing the internal role of the armed forces, the strength of the armed forces grew by 40 percent (IUDOP, 2014: xxx). Experts consider that resource allocation between the military and the PNC threatens the spirit of the peace accords and the constitution in terms of civil-military balance.²¹ The nature of the current security situation in El Salvador falls under the responsibility of the PNC. The institution does not have the necessary resources to respond to the situation, however, and this situation has persisted for many years (Ribando Seelke, 2015: 9). Rather than increasing the budget share allocated to the PNC, successive governments chose to increase the role of the military in internal matters. In 2012, 39 percent of the armed forces contributed to public security, including 2,575 personnel assigned to security in prison (RESDAL, 2013b: 63). As a consequence, private security is prevalent in El Salvador. In 2013, there were 28,600 private security guards, in comparison to approximately 22,000 police agents (Ribando Seelke, 2015 9; RESDAL, 2013a). In 2012, 460 private security companies were registered in the country (RESDAL, 2013b: 44).

In the case of the judiciary, the courts received resources guaranteed by the constitution, while the FGR, under the authority of the MJSP, is under-resourced and unable to prosecute cases in a timely manner.²² There are just not enough prosecutors to carry out cases.²³ Budgetary limitations lead to power struggles between groups, fostering partisanship and competition over the control of resources.²⁴

Violence containment

El Salvador has the tenth highest cost of violence containment²⁵ as a percentage of GDP in the world. In 2014, the Salvadoran government spent US\$1,340 per capita on violence containment measures, for a total of almost \$US8.5 billion. Homicides alone account for 82 percent of El Salvador's violence containment expenditure (IEP, 2015). In comparison, the country's GDP for 2013 was US\$24.6 billion. Despite USAID programs targeting fiscal

reform in order to increase tax revenue without raising taxation rates (DAI, 2012), there are too many needs for current state revenue and there is no national consensus about what should be prioritized to ensure political stability and development.²⁶ Not surprisingly, the private sector denounces how state taxes are increasing, despite the fact that the government is doing nothing to improve the security situation, which also prevents foreign investment.²⁷

Budget numbers regarding prevention and repression are hard to come by. However, interviewees agree that the vast majority of funding to the security sector (between 75 percent and 80 percent) goes to repression rather than prevention.²⁸ There is little investment in the latter because it does not bring immediate results. Prevention programming by the state usually depends on funding from international donors, such as the European Union and the IDB.²⁹ More often than not, prevention activities are carried out by NGOs and civil society groups, which represent substantial, but usually uncoordinated, investments. When it comes to the daily work of the PNC, there is no specific funding for prevention in the different police delegations beyond the assignment of police agents to prevention activities in problematic schools and communities. Hence, short-term vision and reactive public security policy have dominated crime control strategy and budget allocation to security institutions.

Public Perceptions

Rising crime and violence in the postwar period have led Salvadorans to question the success of SSR. From the mid-1990s, narratives of crime and violence became part of the regular media coverage, especially through newspapers (Moodie, 2010: 2). Crime was reported on a daily basis in a graphic manner, and gangs quickly became a central public security concern. As a response, successive governments have adopted strong public stands against crime and violence. However, as discussed earlier, *Mano Dura* and *Super Mano Dura* turned out to be empty shells due to the lack of a clear strategy and resources on the ground. This strong rhetoric, supported by periodic large operations against alleged criminals, created a false sense of security through the media.³⁰

Today, even though Salvadoran security and justice institutions are often conceived as the best in the region, they remain highly mistrusted by the Salvadoran population. Transparency International's Corruption Index has ranked El Salvador as a very corrupt state since 2001. Popular perceptions of corruption give a gruesome image of El Salvador. In 2013, 85 percent of respondents felt that political parties were corrupt/extremely corrupt, and 87 percent considered that the PNC was corrupt/extremely corrupt. The armed forces are perceived as the less corrupt institution, even though 55 percent of respondents felt that it was corrupt/extremely corrupt (Transparency International 2013).

Interestingly enough, the PNC as an institution is usually portrayed as professional in general discussions. However, when people are asked whether the PNC protects people and small businesses, answers are less positive. For example, the head of a national business association considers that her association has good relations with the PNC and the FGR, but she denounces how the PNC does very little to protect businesses from extortion. She states: “[the PNC] has the information [about who commit extortion], but they do nothing about it.”³¹ Extortion is an endemic problem in El Salvador and very little is done by the PNC to counter it. It especially affects the economic activities of small and informal businesses. The perceived inability of the PNC and the government to address crime explains why the private sector recently reached out to Rudy Giuliani, the former mayor of New York City, to develop a plan to fight crime in El Salvador.³²

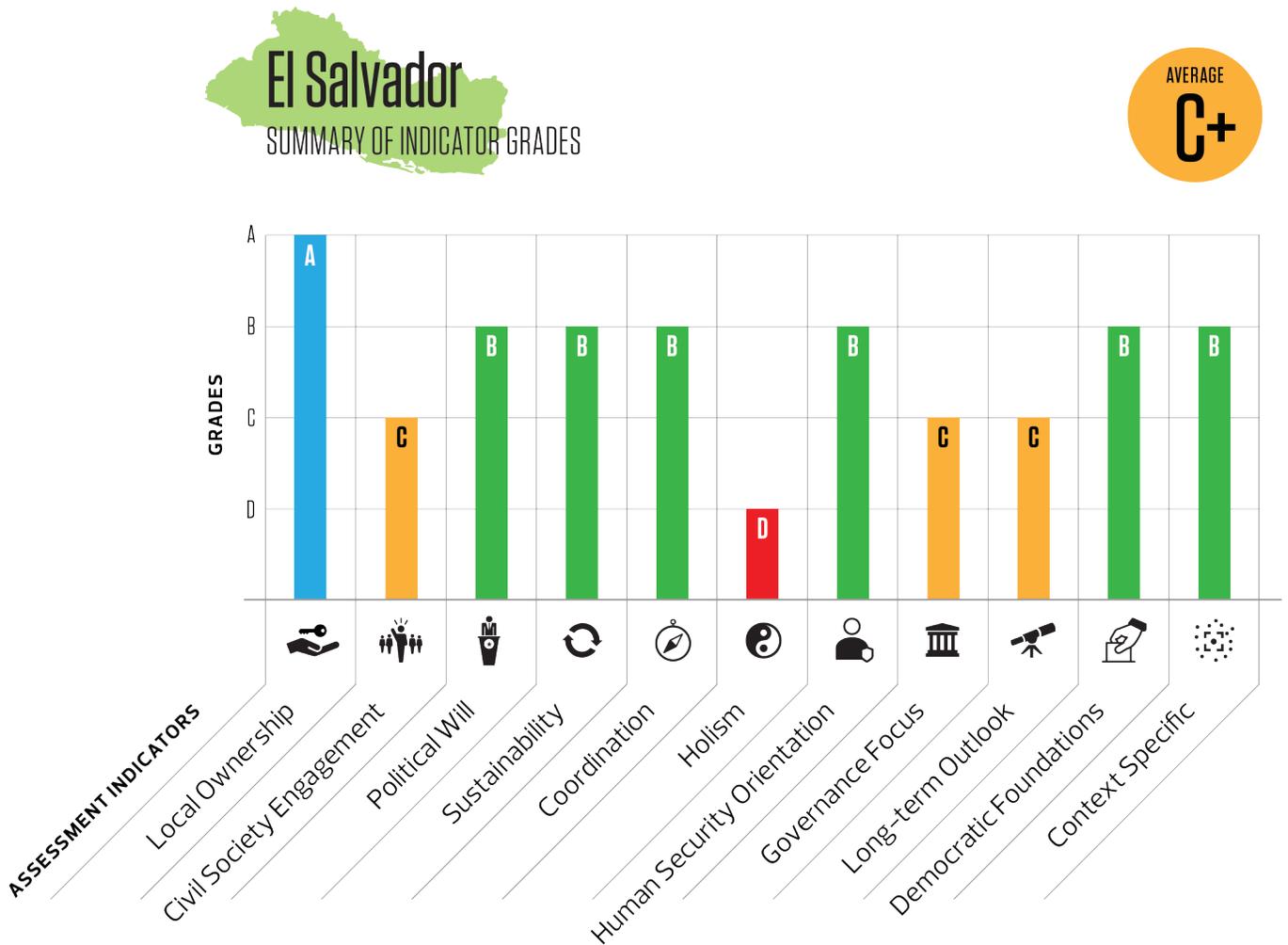
When it comes to individuals, people often do not go to the police. In 1996, studies showed that only 25 percent of crime was reported to the police, mainly because the police were considered ineffective (Neild, 2001: 34). Still today, the PNC is often generally perceived as being overwhelmed and backlogged.³³ Others do not trust the institution as a whole and instead interact only with police agents they know directly.³⁴ The continued prevalence of extralegal violence discussed earlier has also undermined popular trust in the PNC. As such, the inability of the PNC to control and discipline its personnel following reports of abuse only contributes further to the culture of impunity in the country. As a consequence, 40 percent of Salvadorans say they do not trust the justice system, and this lack of trust concerns all institutions (the PNC, FGR and CSJ) (IUDOP, 2014: 58-62).

To sum up, SSR has transformed the security and justice institutions in El Salvador in line with the terms of the 1992 peace accords, but many challenges remain. The security apparatus is still plagued by corruption and a lack of transparency, which has led to the mismanagement of economic resources and a lack of sound public security. Consequently, the country directs an important share of its GDP toward violence containment without much result. SSR has addressed some of the core initial problems of the security sector to ensure the sustainability of the peace process, but it has not evolved to face the changing security environment, with some experts arguing that a new round of SSR is needed.³⁵

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK: ASSESSING ORTHODOX SSR IN EL SALVADOR

This section provides an assessment of the application of SSR norms and principles in El Salvador. The evaluation framework for this project comprises 11 indicators that mirror the core SSR norms and principles.³⁶ These 11 indicators are assessed and a letter grade (A, B, C, D) is assigned for each indicator, with an ‘A’ grade representing the most effective possible application of the core SSR norm/principle in the country and the ‘D’ grade signifying the worst. A summary of the assessment for this case study is provided in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Summary of Indicator Grades



Local Ownership

Indicator grade: A

In El Salvador, SSR was mostly designed and led by local stakeholders, including the Government of El Salvador but also the FMLN movement that had openly challenged the state's authority and legitimacy during the civil war. Hence, through the negotiation of the peace accords, both state and non-state actors contributed to the design of the reforms, and the resulting institutions reflected those compromises. The role of the UN negotiation team and ONUSAL was limited to facilitating discussions between the parties, and monitoring the ceasefire and the human rights situation. As a young politician and member of the legislative assembly in the direct aftermath of the war, René Figueroa did not like ONUSAL, thinking that the solution to the war should come from Salvadorans. However, in retrospect, he considers that the UN intervention was a good thing for the country; it ensured the sustainability of the peace process.³⁷ As such, international priorities and funding have certainly influenced the evolution of SSR.³⁸

Civil Society Engagement

Indicator grade: C

Despite the opening of the political process made possible by the Chapultepec accords, the postwar democratization process did not address the needs of all Salvadorans. It targeted mostly members of the FMLN, and their integration into the country's elite circles. Politics and security remained mostly driven by and for elites, leaving out most of the population. Peripheral and marginalized communities won very little from the years of war and the following peace, which both had a disruptive effect on local governance mechanisms (Wood, 2003). Structural conditions that led to the war in the first place were not addressed,³⁹ and the promised economic reform did not produce the desired effect on growth and development (Cruz, 2003).

Since the end of the war, civil society organizations, such as FESPAD,⁴⁰ have denounced the lack of transparency of the justice process, poor prison conditions and the militarization of public security. There is certainly room for public debate in El Salvador. The civil society is quite active through NGOs, unions, the press and research groups. In the early days of SSR, they were included in certain processes, such as the selection of Supreme Court justices. Today, they are vocal in denouncing abuses, crime and violence in the different components of the system – PNC, prisons, use of armed forces in public security, etc. Many organizations and local authorities work with international partners – USAID and the European Union, for example – in order to fund violence prevention/reduction and reinsertion programs. Nonetheless, the role of the civil society beyond the

FMLN in initial SSR was limited, and there has not been proactive action by the successive governments to reach out more systematically to the civil society on public security issues.

Political Will

Indicator grade: B

Reform of the police and the armed forces in El Salvador gathered a large political consensus, illustrated by the inclusion of the key reforms in the Chapultepec accords. While there was some initial resistance within the old institutions to transfer resources and power to the new PNC, the transition was pretty much complete by 1995. Parties managed to build up consensus during the negotiation process, and the reforms included in the agreements were implemented rather quickly, despite some initial frictions and delays. However, reforms that had not been detailed in the peace accords were harder to implement. One of the reasons for this could be that the peace accords were a political compromise where enough had already been granted, especially from the perspective of the military and the ARENA government.

Furthermore, issues emerge when we look at the practices and attitudes that endured once the formal reforms were implemented. Evidence of extralegal violence can be gathered from the early days of the reform up to today (see, for example, Ribando Seelke, 2015; Silva Avalos, 2014; Cruz, 2011; Call, 2003; Costa, 1995). Furthermore, as discussed earlier, the justice reforms met more political obstacles since they were not part of the peace accord. Transforming the justice sector has been more challenging than reforming the security institutions, due to the lack of consensus between national actors, the limited attention given to this sector in the peace accords and the lack of coordinated action between donors.

In sum, if the peace accords relied on strong determination to end the war and proceed to some important reforms in the security sector, political will frayed over time; new measures were needed to truly democratize the security and justice sectors. Lack of resources and efforts toward ending impunity and corruption have impeded the effectiveness and transparency of security institutions, especially the PNC.

Sustainability

Indicator grade: B

The Salvadoran security system is certainly self-sufficient, but it faces massive violence containment costs that alter the country's development, diverting money and preventing the implementation of programs in other sectors – education, poverty reduction and

health services – in many communities deeply affected by crime and violence. Where violence is too intense, social programs cannot be implemented, and in communities controlled by gangs, agencies often need to negotiate their way in.

Furthermore, poor policies, lack of a clear and comprehensive public security strategy, and corruption have prevented optimal use of resources in the security and justice sectors. Those factors alter the ability of the security and justice institutions to address the security situation. Today, resource allocation to the various institutions does not appear to be entirely based on needs and mandate. Partisanship and the militarization of public security affect resources allocation, and undermine the economic sustainability of the security and justice sectors.

Coordination

Indicator grade: B

Coordination has been an important issue throughout the SSR process in El Salvador. In the early stages, the peace negotiations provided a way to establish consensus, and the resulting agreements offered a road map and institutional mechanisms through COPAZ to oversee the implementation of the peace accords. However, the SSR and DDR processes were poorly coordinated, which contributed to the postwar security vacuum and the following crime wave.

Besides, the CNSP has been a key coordination mechanism for the Salvadoran security and justice institutions. Composed of representatives from the different bodies, ministries and agencies, the CNSP meets frequently and reports directly to the president. However, those meetings do not translate into coherent and comprehensive programming. Furthermore, the recent publication of five different reports on violence and public security illustrates the lack of coordination and consultation between national stakeholders in the elaboration of a comprehensive and overarching public security strategy. Hence, coordination mechanisms are present at the national level, but the lack of a clear holistic public security strategy undermines the ability of the security and justice institutions to maximize their intervention and the use of their resources.

Furthermore, as is often the case elsewhere, coordination between donors is often missing, which is certainly related to institutional and strategic weaknesses at the national level. National ownership and the absence of a multi-dimensional mission after 1995 means that each donor works with the Salvadoran government to implement programs and reforms. In the early days, ONUSAL coordinated most of the support to the creation of the PNC. However, after the departure of the mission, international donors engaged with different components of the government to support reform efforts. Interactions with

donors and multilateral organisations in San Salvador in 2013 suggest that there was very little consideration about how international assistance can coordinate and maximize its support to the Salvadoran security sector through capacity building in the security sector and violence prevention initiatives. El Salvador is a good example of where limited assistance oriented toward short-term goals such as transition and stabilization rather than long-term institutional development has shown important shortcomings.

Holism

Indicator grade: D

As discussed earlier, in the direct aftermath of the Cold War, the peace agreements prioritized the reform of the coercive institutions and the democratization of the political regime. The final agreement also included more limited reforms in the justice sector, which was innovative at the time. However, in the first years of the process, most national and international efforts were put toward the drawdown of the armed forces, the disbandment of the former police forces under the authority of the MDN and the creation of the PNC. Delays and resistance in the justice system slowed down reforms in this sector, and today the prison system is still overcrowded and the scene of human rights abuses. A holistic vision was never truly developed between the different pillars of the security system. This is well illustrated by the lack of an overarching public security strategy, as well as by the gap between the iron fist policies and lack of resources allocated to the PNC and the FGR to carry them out. The Salvadoran government is increasingly recognizing the need for leadership and a holistic vision to address the public security crisis after 23 years of violent peace, but a comprehensive strategy remains to be articulated.⁴¹ The important upsurge in violence since the election of Sanchez Céren in 2014, the continued inability of the security forces – police and military – to tame homicides, and increasing reports of extralegal abuses also demonstrate that the current administration has yet to match words with actions.

Human Security Orientation

Indicator grade: B

One of the key objectives of the reforms included in the peace accords was to put an end to human rights violations perpetrated by the armed forces, the police and the paramilitary groups, and dismantle the structures that had contributed to the war outbreak in the first place. The peace accords addressed some human security principles by putting in place a system of checks and balances to keep security institutions under civilian supervision and protect human rights.

However, public security challenges in the aftermath of the war, resistance to principles of oversight and accountability in security institutions inherited from the war, and the continued impunity that benefits some key individuals in the armed forces and the police strongly suggest that human security principles were put aside in the latter stages of the reform process. Furthermore, the preference for repressive strategies and the lack of resources invested in prevention programming highlight how citizen security and safety are not prioritized. Despite strong and capable security institutions, Salvadorans still feel unsafe. Insecurity and fear in the population represent an important obstacle for development.⁴²

Governance Focus

Indicator grade: C

Good governance of the security institutions remains an important problem in El Salvador. In 1992, efforts focused on reducing the influence of the military on the entire security apparatus. Transferring intelligence and police capacity under civilian oversight was expected to improve governance significantly. However, there was no real focus on the development of governance throughout the Salvadoran state. Ultimately, lack of transparency, partisanship and continued impunity have undermined the governance of the security sector. In the case of the PNC especially, most resources have been directed toward training and capacity building; too little attention has been given to internal discipline, oversight and vetting. At higher levels, lack of transparency and complex bureaucratic structures have also undermined the governance of the different ministries and agencies.

Long-term Outlook

Indicator grade: C

From the outset, the peace accords established a very short timeline for both SSR and DDR. For many stakeholders, SSR was completed after the 1994 presidential election and the completion of the initial deployment of the PNC in 1995. ONUSAL left the country at approximately the same time, giving the impression that the Salvadoran security and justice institutions were now ready to ensure peace and security in the country. However, the inability of the new PNC to face and address the high levels of violence in the 1990s and the 2000s suggests otherwise.

External stakeholders certainly had a short-term outlook on the reform process, like in many other initiatives that took place in the early 1990s. The lack of long-term perspective

affected the development of the security and justice sector after 1995, explaining the reactive strategy adopted by the Salvadoran state to deal with crime and violence since then.

Democratic Foundations

Indicator grade: B

SSR was actually a core element in the democratization process outlined in the peace accords. Principles of transparency, accountability, civilian oversight and respect for human rights were included in the discussion and the terms of the peace accords. However, despite formal reforms, an enduring culture of impunity within security and justice institutions and among political elites have presented an important obstacle to the true implementation of democratic principles in the security and justice system.

Furthermore, in reaction to the public security challenges, governing bodies, including the CSJ, departed from those principles for national security reasons. In 2014, the CSJ ruled that the role of the armed forces in public security matters was justified by the economic situation and the inability of the PNC to address the crime and violence through regular means (Ávalos, 2014). Hence, security imperatives in El Salvador have undermined the democratic foundations of the SSR process

Context Specific

Indicator grade: B

Since the SSR strategy was designed through the negotiated settlement of the war between national actors, the reform process was highly adapted to the political and security environment at the end of the war. ONUSAL counted on a relatively small force, composed of advisers and observers. In that sense, SSR was tailored to the post-conflict context and the political dynamics that had characterized the country before and during the conflict.

Financial assistance, however, never reached the expectations of the Salvadoran government (Costa, 1995: 379). The lack of long-term vision has prevented the development and the adaptation of the security institutions to the evolving and challenging national context. The inability of the entire sector to adapt and respond adequately to crime and violence after 1995 suggests that their development was not based on an assessment of the evolving public security situation and was rather reactive.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, SSR in El Salvador was a modest success. It addressed some of the main problems that led to the civil war and contributed to its duration. The reform process as part of the postwar settlement ensured the sustainability of the peace process. SSR put an end to the domination of the military forces on the entire security apparatus, and managed to depoliticize the judiciary. It also led to the creation of a new civilian police, based on principles of good governance, transparency and respect for human rights, at least on paper. This early progress was certainly significant. Local ownership, political will and the specificity of the reforms to the context contributed to this success.

However, SSR did not ultimately lead to the creation of a “secure environment that [was] conducive to development, poverty reduction and democracy” (OECD/DAC, 2005: 16). The lack of emphasis on governance elements beyond overarching civilian oversight undermined SSR. In addition, the absence of strong political will to support extensive reforms in all spheres of government to ensure transparency and the end of impunity ultimately reduced the ability of SSR to transform not only the formal structures, but also institutional culture and practices. Finally, short-term vision of national and external stakeholders undermined the ability of the reformed institutions to adapt and respond to new security challenges. The lack of attention given to rising crime and violence in the 1990s beyond the security vacuum created by the end of the conflict, and the lack of sound policies to address organized crime and widespread social violence in the 2000s, undermined the legacy of SSR in El Salvador.

Today, law enforcement, crime control and violence prevention all represent interesting entry points for renewed SSR efforts. The current government has shown some willingness to address the national public security crisis, and recognizes the need for sound funding, leadership and a holistic approach to public security. The Government of El Salvador and the civil society currently show renewed interest for intervention in the security sector to address crime and violence in a sustainable manner. However, lack of consultation, coordination and holism between all parties might undermine any new effort if precautions are not taken right away. The multiple public security plans presented in the last year are a good first step, but they are not sufficient to ensure a sustainable solution to crime and violence in the country.

SSR in El Salvador highlights the importance of a long-term and flexible strategy that changes at the same time as the political environment and the security situation. In post-conflict settings especially, peace accords tend to present the necessary conditions to prevent a return to hostilities; however, they cannot predict how peace will unfold and may not include sufficient details to ensure a sustainable peace that enables development and truly makes people feel safer. The case of El Salvador strongly suggests that creating new security institutions is only the first step of a long endeavour.

NOTES

1. Interview with program coordinator, USAID, San Salvador, June 6, 2015.
2. Interview with program coordinator for second-chance project, Catholic Relief Services, San Salvador, May 30, 2015.
3. Interview with Jeannette Aguilar, director, IUDOP, San Salvador, June 4, 2015.
4. Interview with state modernization specialist, IDP, San Salvador, June 21, 2013.
5. Interview with adviser, MDN, San Salvador, May 29, 2015.
6. Those numbers are challenged by many researchers, but are still widely used by the policy community. While the absolute numbers are questionable, the trend still shows the patterns of violence in postwar El Salvador.
7. The PNC reports 635 homicides for May 2015, while the FGR reports 641 violent deaths (Cídon, 2015). The final number will be determined by a round table composed of the PNC, the FGR and the Forensic Medicine Office, following comparison of their respective data.
8. Interview with senior adviser, USAID, San Salvador, June 3, 2015.
9. Loose translation.
10. Interview with adviser, MDN, San Salvador, May 29, 2015.
11. Interview with Ren Figueroa, former minister of public security and justice, San Salvador, June 1, 2015.
12. Interview with adviser, MDN, San Salvador, May 29, 2015.
13. Interview with Jeannette Aguilar, director, IUDOP, San Salvador, June 4, 2015.
14. Interview with adviser, MDN, San Salvador, May 29, 2015, and interview with René Figueroa, former minister of public security, San Salvador, June 1, 2015.
15. Interview with adviser, MDN, San Salvador, May 29, 2015.
16. Interview with Jeannette Aguilar, director, IUDOP, San Salvador, June 4, 2015.
17. Interview with senior researcher, *Fundación Salvadoreña para El Desarrollo Económico y Social*, May 29, 2015.
18. According to SIPRI database (2015), military expenditure in constant (2011) US dollars dropped from \$438 million in 1992 to \$253 million in 2014.
19. For example, the 2013 budget breakdown made public by the PNC is contained on one page and provides very few details beyond aggregated numbers for each type of expense (PNC, 2013).
20. Interviews with adviser, MDN, San Salvador, May 29, 2015, and Jeannette Aguilar, director, IUDOP, San Salvador, June 4, 2015.
21. Interview with Jeannette Aguilar, Director, IUDOP, San Salvador, June 4, 2015.
22. Interview with Jeannette Aguilar, director, IUDOP, San Salvador, June 4, 2015.
23. Interview with senior adviser, USAID, San Salvador, June 3, 2015.
24. Interview with adviser, MDN, San Salvador, May 29, 2015.
25. The IEP “defines violence containment spending as economic activity that is related to the consequences or prevention of violence where the violence is directed against people or property. The measure the IEP proposes is based on 13 dimensions: military expenditures, homicides, GDP losses from conflict, internal security, terrorism, death from internal conflict, IDPs and refugees, private security, incarceration, violent crime, fear, UN peacekeeping, and death from external conflict. For more details about each indicator, see the 2015 report published by the IEP.
26. Interview with senior researcher, *Fundación Salvadoreña para El Desarrollo Económico y Social*, May 29, 2015

27. Interview with Lic. Sonia Jule de Rivera, executive director, *Asociación de Distribuidores de El Salvador*, San Salvador, June 5, 2015.
28. Interview with adviser, MDN, San Salvador, May 29, 2015; and interview with René Figueroa, former minister of public security, San Salvador, June 1, 2015.
29. Interview with adviser, MDN, San Salvador, May 29, 2015.
30. Interview with program coordinator, USAID, San Salvador, June 3, 2015.
31. Interview with Lic. Sonia Jule de Rivera, executive director, *Asociación de Distribuidores de El Salvador*, San Salvador, June 5, 2015.
32. The report entitled *Estrategia Integral de Seguridad Ciudadana* was presented in May 2015 by the *Asociación Nacional de la Empresa Privada*.
33. Interview with senior adviser, USAID, San Salvador, June 3, 2015.
34. Interview with program coordinator for second-chance project, Catholic Relief Services, San Salvador, May 30, 2015.
35. Interview with adviser, MJSP, San Salvador, July 16, 2013.
36. For more information on the evaluation framework applied to the four case studies for this project see Annex I, which details the criteria that informed the grading for each of the eleven SSR indicators.
37. Interview with René Figueroa, former minister of public security, San Salvador, June 1, 2015.
38. Interview with researcher, FESPAD/Interpeace, San Salvador, September 11, 2013.
39. Interview with program coordinator for second-chance project, Catholic Relief Services, San Salvador, May 30, 2015.
40. Created in 1988, FESPAD is a political and research NGO that is involved in the promotion of the rule of law and the defence of human rights in El Salvador. Today, it is particularly active in violence prevention, the protection of due process and the defence of the fundamental rights of marginalized populations in and outside the judicial process, including gangs.
41. Interview with a senior researcher, *Fundación Salvadoreña para El Desarrollo Economico y Social*, May 29, 2015.
42. Ibid.

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ANNEX I - EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation framework applied to the four case studies for this project - Bosnia-Herzegovina, El Salvador, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste - comprises 11 indicators that mirror the core SSR norms and principles. Taken together these SSR norms and principles provide a good lens to assess the efficacy of SSR programming, and thus form the backbone of the methodology for this project. While it may be difficult to determine with any precision the short-, medium-, and long-term programming on local security, development, and political conditions given the range of other variables at play, it is possible to assess the extent to which reform processes have adhered to the core norms and principles of the SSR model.

Based on their field research, the case study researchers were tasked to assign a letter grade (A, B, C, D) for each SSR indicator, with an 'A' grade representing the most effective possible application of the core SSR norm/principle in the country and the 'D' grade signifying the worst. This annex details the criteria that informed the grading for each of the eleven SSR indicators.

1. Local Ownership

A - SSR process was fully designed and led by local stakeholders with state and non-state engagement. There is a clear consensus on the goals and end state of the process among domestic stakeholders. External donors limited to a supporting role.

B - Local ownership and leadership of the process was limited, with the bulk of local stakeholders buying into an externally designed and led process across much of the sector. Non-state engagement is confined to a narrow set of issues.

C - Little state engagement in the SSR process altogether. State involvement centers on a small coterie of reformist leaders (primarily Western oriented) supporting an externally designed and driven reform agenda. Very limited engagement of non-state actors.

D - An entirely externally designed and driven, top-down reform process with little local legitimacy. Local capacity or will to engage in the process is practically non-existent

2. Civil Society Engagement

A - Broad-based grouping of civil society actors actively engaged as a full partner/stakeholder in the planning, implementation and oversight of every aspect of the SSR agenda.

B - Diverse set of civil society actors involved in the SSR process, but it is limited to

particular issues and institutions. Civil society not perceived as a full partner in the process. Rather, it has been engaged on an ad hoc basis to fulfill particular tasks such as monitoring and evaluation or project implementation.

C - Limited outreach to narrow grouping of civil society actors in the form of information sharing, not planning, implementation or oversight. Noticeable hostility among government actors toward a more concerted civil society role in SSR. Civil society engaged only peripherally by external donors.

D - No meaningful engagement with civil society actors as a part of SSR. They are viewed as a competitor for authority and external funds by most government stakeholders and largely ignored by external donors.

3. Political Will

A - There is robust political consensus surrounding the SSR project within the executive and legislative branches of government, with external donors investing significant political capital to consolidate that consensus. SSR was included in all major peace agreement(s) and treaties.

B - Significant political will for SSR expressed by certain constituencies in government and across the state, with some donor investments of political capital. Few significant political spoilers have emerged.

C - SSR only supported by a narrow stratum of elites, and largely in rhetoric only, with powerful factions opposing the process. Donors investing limited political resources to advance the process. Several spoilers have sought to obstruct parts of the process.

D - No natural SSR constituency, with widespread distrust of a process seen as a form of external interference. Open political opposition to SSR activities with meager and ineffective donor political interventions.

4. Sustainability

A - SSR process designed with explicit consideration of long-term economic sustainability. Direct attention provided to government budget capacity over the short, medium and long-term. The security sector is projected to be completely self-sufficient in the medium to long-term. Strong emphasis placed on building public finance management practices and procedures in the security sector.

B - Significant but not universal consideration provided to economic sustainability of the security sector. Some reform projects and institutions of the security sector more attentive

to sustainability concerns than others. Some external subsidies will be required in the medium to long-term for the continued development of the security sector. There has been modest engagement to build public finance management systems in the security sector institutions.

C - Marginal consideration given to economic sustainability issues. Concern is expressed in government and donor policy and public statements, but there are few concrete plans for translating policy into practice. The security sector projects will be significantly dependent, although not entirely so, on external subsidies for the medium to long-term. There has been little effort to develop public finance management capacity.

D - Almost no attention paid to issues of economic sustainability. Reforms being implemented are not sustainable on a financial basis. The security sector will be an external dependency for the foreseeable future. No effort to construct sound public finance management systems.

5. Coordination

A - Comprehensive and holistic coordination system established that engages donors, the state, and civil society actors. Involves the establishment of coordination bodies with oversight and enforcement capabilities.

B - Modest coordination systems established surrounding particular segments and actors of the security sector. Coordination structures have some capacity and influence, but lack teeth for enforcement.

C - Ad hoc approach to coordination dependent largely on opportunistic alliances and agreements between different constellations of like-minded actors within the security sector. Few if any institutional structures established.

D - Coordination almost totally absent, with various actors advancing their own interests with little consideration of broader coherence within the sector. There have been many instances of duplication, waste and clashing interests in the security sector.

6. Holistic

A - Strong linkages have been developed across the various pillars of the SSR process, reflected in unified strategies and mechanisms for joint assessments, project implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Communication lines between stakeholders in the various security sector pillars are strong. The SSR process has been advanced according to a coherent common vision for change.

B - The SSR strategy is holistic in character, but there are few practical mechanisms to facilitate cross-sectoral coherence in implementation. There is some cross-sector dialogue, but joined up implementation activity among the various security sector pillars is modest in scope. A common vision for the security sector is recognized across its various pillars but there is uneven adherence to it in practice.

C - The references to a holistic approach in SSR strategies, policies and plans are weak. Divisions and contradictory interests within the security sector and among external donors have obstructed constructive cross-sectoral dialogue and there is no joined-up implementation. A common vision for the security sector exists, but it is largely window dressing that is not taken seriously by domestic or external stakeholders.

D - The SSR process is entirely siloed and compartmentalized in policy and practice, with no connectivity between the various pillars of the process. There is very little communication between the various SSR pillars and no joined-up implementation. A common vision for the process was never articulated.

7. Human Security Orientation

A - The SSR process in both planning and implementation has a clear people-centered vision, prioritizing human above regime security. The process has accorded equal emphasis to regime-centric and people-centric reform processes.

B - The main SSR stakeholders have articulated human security principles, but only modest headway has been made to mainstream those principles into concrete reform programming. Significant emphasis on people-centric reform programs, although the bulk of resources invested in conventional regime-centric initiatives.

C - Human security principles recognized in SSR policy and planning, but little influence on reforms, where regime-centric approaches are the norm. With the exception of a few ad hoc initiatives, the process is regime-centric and heavily statist in orientation.

D - The process is wholly regime-centric with human security considerations an afterthought at best.

8. Governance Focus

A - Good governance promotion is a central pillar of the SSR process, receiving commensurate funding and support as security force train-and-equip programs. Robust, well-funded initiatives have been established to improve governance capacity (human and institutional) within the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the state.

B - Strong attention provided to good governance promotion in the security sector, but with some variance in impacts across institutions. Still, levels of funding provided to governance projects have been disproportionately low as compared to train and equip initiatives.

C - While rhetorical support has been provided to good governance initiatives, they are clearly a secondary priority for donors and the government. Improving governance across the security sector is largely perceived as a long-term objective rather than an immediate priority. The bulk of the resources for the SSR process are channeled to developing the operational capabilities of the security forces.

D - Good governance promotion is largely ignored in the SSR process, an afterthought in policy and practice. This is typically justified with references to security or political crises that militate against complex and disruptive governance programs. The SSR process has an overwhelmingly technical focus on improving the operational capabilities of the security forces.

9. Long-Term Outlook

A - Donor and government planning is clearly long-term, with programs and strategies projected at least a decade into the future. Funding and resource commitments are extremely durable. Planning takes into account short, medium, long-term time horizons.

B - Long-term ramifications of SSR programming are considered, but most initiatives are short to medium-term in focus and duration, projecting five years into the future. Donor resourcing is perceived as reliable but no guarantees of protracted engagement exist.

C - SSR outlook is predominantly short-term, with planning and programming cycles typically 1-2 years in duration. Stakeholders aspire to long-term approaches, but these rarely materialize, principally due to adverse conditions on the ground. Donor funding is fragile and prone to cuts.

D - SSR programming and donor funding is entirely reactive and short-term. No long-term planning, and donor funding commitments are tenuous.

10. Democratic Foundations

A - Core democratic principles, including accountability, transparency and respect for human rights, are mainstreamed throughout the SSR agenda and unconditionally embraced by all major stakeholders. The sector has effectively been subordinated to democratic civilian control and is seen as a vanguard of the democratic transition.

B - The SSR process has a strong foundation in democratic principles, as reflected in planning and policy documents, but these principles have been unevenly applied in SSR programming. The sector has largely been placed under democratic civilian control although some deficits exist.

C - Democratic principles are observed on a selective and opportunistic basis by stakeholders and reformers, an outgrowth of a mixed commitment to those principles. Many aspects of the SSR agenda could be considered illiberal and undemocratic. Democratic civilian control of the security sector is largely hollow, with security sector actors wielding significant independent power.

D - Democratic principles of SSR are observed in rhetoric only, with little to no demonstrable effort to mainstream them in practice. Illiberal practices are widespread in the security sector with few remedies being considered. Violations of fundamental rights are commonplace. Security sector actors are not beholden to democratic civilian authority and have the power to undermine the civilian government at will.

11. Context Specific

A - Strong efforts have been made to tailor SSR programming to the local context, based on robust initiatives to assess and map the security sector. Attention has been paid to local culture, historical tradition and political dynamics in programming, as well as engagement with a plurality of local actors, and security/justice traditions (including non-state actors).

B - A concerted emphasis has been placed on contextualizing reforms, but the impact on programming has been piecemeal. Adequate assessments and mapping have been undertaken to inform planning and reform design, although with limited engagement of a broad cross-section of societal actors.

C - Limited efforts have been made to contextualize the SSR process. External actors demonstrate inconsistent desire to understand and engage local context. Assessment and mapping exercises were weak and had little influence on planning and programming. Little engagement with local non-state actors and traditions.

D - SSR processes and programs have been largely transplanted from other contexts with marginal adjustments for local conditions. No adequate assessments or mapping done to inform programming and societal actors outside of a narrow clique of elites within the state were largely ignored.

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