

# **ASSESSMENT OF FINNISH SSR EXPERTISE IN THE SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN AFGHANISTAN**



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Finnish Defence Forces International Centre (FINCENT)

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## Abstract

Finland has been engaged in Afghanistan since the end of the Taleban rule and it uses different tools while addressing the fragile situation by contributing to a Security Sector Reform SSR. This study provides grass-root level experiences from the Finnish experts, both military and civilian, who have worked and are still working in different international operations in Afghanistan. The study also analysis the level of the Finnish SSR expertise as well as the strategic national debate on the SSR by those Finnish authorities that are engaged in the planning and implementation of the Comprehensive Crisis Management approach.

As operational actors, both Crisis Management Centre (CMC) Finland and Finnish Defence Forces International Centre FINCENT are interested in the SSR based on their respective training activities: it is important that both the civilians and military personnel that are deployed in Afghanistan are able to use their skills and knowledge while enhancing the security sector reform in the country.

The study provides several recommendations in relation to pre-deployment training, recruitment and deployment as well as regarding the further development of the Finnish national SSR expertise both at the operational and strategic level. Along this study an updated training needs assessment has been carried out which enables both organisations, CMC Finland and FINCENT, to develop their common SSR training activities under the auspices of the Finnish Centre of Expertise in Comprehensive Management.

# 1 Introduction

The emergence of the SSR (Security Sector Reform) concept followed the new post-Cold War thinking on security in the 1990s. There was a paradigm shift from state-centred to people-centred security approach. During the Cold War the manner how the security sector of the recipient country was governed was not taken into account, but the growing awareness of the inseparable link between development and security started changing the attitude and enhancing the human security perspective and the governance of the security sector<sup>1</sup>.

The problem with the SSR, however, has been the haziness of the concept with number of different comprehensions and related concepts (such as "security system reform", "security and justice sector reform", "rule of law" etc.). The concepts used are similar and normally they are also used to discuss and do similar things. A good starting point for opening up and raising awareness of SSR is through the definitions made by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) that has become a common reference point in the SSR field, both among the policy makers and practitioners<sup>2</sup>.

The OECD DAC has built up its broadly quoted and acknowledged SSR policy on the grounds of the work of the former UK Secretary of State for Development Clare Short.<sup>3</sup> Further, based on the OECD DAC principles, among others, the United Nations in the Secretary General's report (2007) proposed ten basic guiding principles for the UN in SSR, and the European Union has prepared its own SSR-documentation, culminating in the Council Conclusions on a Policy Framework for Security Sector Reform (2006).

The OECD DAC understanding of security is also consistent with the broad notion of the human security, and SSR is used to describe the transformation of the "security system" – which includes all the actors, their roles, responsibilities and actions – working together to manage and operate the security sector in a manner that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance, and thus contributes to a well-functioning security framework.<sup>4</sup> The Swiss based International

1 UNDP's *Human Development Report* (1994) is considered as milestone publication. It argued that human security requires attention to both *freedom from fear* and *freedom from want*. Later divisions have emerged among actors over the scope of the protection and over the appropriate mechanisms for responding to these threats. See also Sedra 2010a: 3.

2 Two key documents are *Security System Reform and Governance: Policy and Good Practice* (Paris: OECD 2005) and *The OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform (SSR): Supporting Security and Justice* (Paris: OECD 2007).

3 See e.g. Ball 2010.

4 DAC Guidelines and Reference Series: *Security System Reform and Governance* (2005).

Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT) summarizes the SSR nicely to one approach (local ownership), two objectives (effectiveness and accountability) and three dimensions (political sensitivity, holistic nature and technical complexity)<sup>5</sup>. SSR can therefore be seen both as a guiding concept for example to the donors, but it is also a practical and programmatic implementation tool to those external actors planning and conducting the SSR assessments, evaluations and programming in a partner country.

In European Union Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) operations security sector reform forms the core of the operation activities and support to the partner nation. Main sectors focused are the police sector and rule of law sector<sup>6</sup>. Yet, CSDP operations are not considered SSR operations as they do not comprehensively cover all the sectors in SSR. Up to date there has only been one CSDP operation that can be classified as a SSR operation, namely SSR operation in Guinea-Bissau (2008-2010). However, recently EU has started to look at more closely the SSR concept and its utilization in the forthcoming CSDP operations particularly in Somalia and North Africa.

Finland has been engaged in Afghanistan since the end of the Taleban rule and it uses different tools while addressing the fragile situation in Afghanistan: military participation in the International Security Assistance Force ISAF<sup>7</sup>, support to the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL) by Finnish police and civilian secondees<sup>8</sup>, and funding various development aid projects. There are also several national strategies that are addressing the link between security, development and conflict management: Finland's National Strategy for Civilian Crisis Management (2008), Finland's Comprehensive Crisis Management Strategy (2009), Finland's National Action Plan 2008-2011 in implementing UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 *Women, Peace and Security*. This study provides an updated analysis on SSR understanding by those Finnish authorities that are engaged in the planning and implementation of the Comprehensive Crisis Management approach.

As operational actors, both Crisis Management Centre (CMC) Finland and Finnish Defence Forces International Centre FINCENT are interested in the SSR based on their respective training activities: it is important that both the civilians and military personnel that are deployed in Afghanistan are able to use their skills and knowledge while enhancing the security sector reform in the country. Along this study an updated

5 See <http://issat.dcaf.ch/Home/SSR-Overview/Principles>.

6 See European Council 2005: EU Concept for ESDP support to Security Sector Reform (SSR). 12566/4.

7 As of 30 November 2011: 193 military officers.

8 As of 30 November 2012: 31 secondees.

training needs assessment has been carried out which enables both organisations to develop their common SSR training activities under the auspices of the Finnish Centre of Expertise in Comprehensive Management.

## 2 Research objectives and accomplishment plan

The purpose of this research is not to concentrate on assessing the overall SSR efforts and challenges in Afghanistan in detail as it is outside the scope of the study, although it touches upon the SSR work carried out by the international community. The main focus is on Finnish participation in Afghanistan; to assess the Finnish expertise in SSR field, to seek strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations on future participation and the profiles of experts operating in the SSR field. Moreover, this research aims, based on the interviews of the Finnish line Ministries (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland MFA, Ministry of the Interior MoI, Ministry of Defence MoD) operating under the Comprehensive Crisis Management Strategy, at making recommendations on Finland's future SSR approach vis-à-vis SSR related training, recruitment and the ways of handling and smoothing the "conceptual-contextual" divide in Finland.

The **overall objective** of the research was to assess the comprehensiveness of the role and activities of the international community concerning the security sector reform in Afghanistan. The research had also three specific research objectives.

The **first specific objective** was two folded; on the other hand to assess what kind of SSR expertise do Finnish experts possess and on the other hand to assess what kind of expertise would be needed in the future CSDP operations. Thus the research examined in detail the professional and educational background of the Finnish experts, namely those civilian crisis management experts and military experts currently deployed in Afghanistan and those repatriated from Afghanistan. In addition, it examined the level of understanding of the experts concerning SSR concept in general and the knowledge and skills they perceived to be a prerequisite for carrying out SSR related work in Afghanistan.

The **second specific objective** was to assess the experiences and challenges concerning SSR work in Afghanistan. The research questions under this objective were as follows: *how* is a security sector reform implemented in EUPOL Afghanistan (mandate, activities) and how the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) tasks are carried out by military experts? *What kind of multiple challenges* are related to security sector reform in general? *What kind of factors* should be taken into account in enhancing the security sector reform? Is implementation of SSR even possible in the current situation in Afghanistan?



The **third specific objective** was to primarily explore collaboration and coordination among different ministries in Finland in relation to SSR, as well as, secondarily among international community in Afghanistan. The research questions under this objective were as follows: how is SSR understood in the Finnish strategic level discussions? Is SSR an established concept? Is it a concept that is needed? Which governmental bodies should be involved in developing and implementing SSR activities in Finland? What are the current challenges?

In the beginning of the research, a critical assessment regarding the original research objectives were carried out. Based on the discussion among the research team, it was decided that this research would not be able to assess the *impact* of Finnish experts on SSR work in Afghanistan. The main reason being that there was no baseline available that could have been used to assess impact. Also the overall objective of the research was considered too ambitious when taking into account the short time frame for the study and the challenging research context in Afghanistan.

The research was a joint effort by CMC Finland and FINCENT, as part of their activities in relation to the *Finnish Centre of Expertise in Comprehensive Crisis Management*. The administrative responsibilities were carried out by CMC Finland, which was also the lead organization in carrying out the research. The CMC Finland research director (Launiala) was in charge of the overall research project including supervision of the civilian understanding of the SSR, while the Chief of Research and Development Sector of FINCENT (Autio) was responsible for supervision of the research questions focusing on the military understanding of the SSR. Two researchers were contracted to carry out the research. One of the researchers (Viikki) focused on the civilian side questions and the other one (Asplund) covered the military side. The board of the Finnish Centre of Expertise in Comprehensive Crisis Management acted as a steering group for the research.

The research was carried out in several phases, starting mid-March 2011. During the first phase (April), the researchers conducted a literature review in order to gain an understanding of the main international discussion and critical debates on SSR, particularly concerning Afghanistan. The second phase (from May to mid-June) included a data collection in Finland, followed by preliminary data analysis. During the third phase a brief data collection field visit to Afghanistan was carried out in July. The fourth phase focused on the data analysis (from July to mid-September) and the fifth phase until 2 December was spent in report writing.

### 3 Materials and methods

The theoretical framework of the research is based on the *comprehensive approach* in crisis management. Comprehensive approach refers to management of conflicts and building peace by taking into account the various actors involved in crisis management, namely military, civilian crisis management, development aid and humanitarian aid actors in order to enhance coordination and collaboration among these actors.<sup>9</sup> This research is also linked to the EU *Civil-Military Co-ordination* (CMCO) concept that concentrates mainly on coordination between EU actors<sup>10</sup> and it has thus been much narrower than e.g. UN's *Integrated Approach* which refers to the strategic relationship between UN peacebuilding and UN organisations<sup>11</sup>.

This research utilised both qualitative and quantitative methods. Main qualitative research methods were key informant and in-depth interviews based on thematic guidelines. Quantitative data was collected utilising web based structured survey questionnaire that had closed and opened questions. Survey questionnaire was developed to examine same thematic areas and questions as the qualitative interviews (triangulation of data sources).

Table 1: Summary of materials and methods

Methods	Who/how many	Where/When
<b>In-depth interviews</b>	Civilian crisis management experts repatriated (12)	Finland (May-June 2011)
	Government officials involved with strategic planning (6)	
	Civilian crisis management experts currently deployed (1)	
	Key informant interviews (7)	Brussels (April 2011) Afghanistan (July 2011)
<b>Survey (web based)</b>	Civilian crisis management experts currently deployed (13)	July-August 2011
	Military experts (8)	July 2011

9 de Coning & Friis 2011.

10 See European Council 2005. *Draft EU Concept for Comprehensive Planning*, Brussels, November, 13983/05.

11 See de Coning 2009.

The main target group for the research included currently deployed civilian crisis management and military experts in Afghanistan and governmental official involved with strategic planning. Secondary target group was composed of civil servants working in Brussels (different positions), international experts working in relation SSR in Afghanistan, and Afghan civil servants (see Table 1).

## 4 Results and discussion

### 4.1 Experiences and challenges of doing SSR in Afghanistan

The SSR Resource Centre<sup>12</sup> in its publication *Security Sector Reform 101* lists several key norms and principles for the SSR model: people-centred, the primacy of the rule of law, transparency, democratic accountability and oversight, whole of government coordination, operational effectiveness, coordination, sequencing and integrated policy responses, civilianization, civil society engagement, a political process, ownership, gender, sustainability, long-term and context specific.<sup>13</sup> Many of these principles were touched during the interviews and the questions were linked especially to the themes concentrating in coordination and comprehensiveness, local ownership and gender mainstreaming.

However, it is necessary to highlight that Afghanistan is a very challenging environment to operate. Therefore it is valid to ask whether SSR is even possible in the current circumstances in Afghanistan, where the on-going conflict as well as reconstruction and reform efforts go hand in hand. Sedra lists the preconditions for the SSR and one of them is the minimum level of security as the "SSR cannot be implemented in a security vacuum; it is a long-term process intended to address the structural causes of insecurity, not a means to confront immediate security threats"<sup>14</sup>.

Finland has contributed to the ISAF operation since 2004 and since 2007 it has provided OMLT mentors for the operation to train the Afghan Army.<sup>15</sup> The impact of the training is difficult to assess because already gaining trust with local counterparts takes time. On one hand short OMLT rotation cycle creates frustrations among local partners, and on the other hand, the level of expertise among the rotating mentors may vary considerably every six months.

12 See <http://www.ssrresourcecentre.org>.

13 Sedra 2010b: 8.

14 Sedra 2010b: 8.

15 Saloni-Pasternak 2011.

Major obstacle is also the limited period that an active officer can be released from his or her national duties. Faster rotation necessitates more resources to identify new candidates in a situation where for example OMLT experts are hard to find.

Unfortunately due to the short research period it was not possible to interview Finnish OMLT officers in Afghanistan. While some repatriated OMLT officers did answer to the web-based survey, the civilian sources are more abundant to list experiences and challenges of doing SSR in Afghanistan.

EUPOL Afghanistan (EUPOL) started its operation in 15<sup>th</sup> June 2007. It followed Germany in taking the leading role in the police reform in Afghanistan. EUPOL operates in the field of police and rule of law and the mandate has currently been extended until 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2013. The mission focuses on the strategic level mentoring, advising and training the Afghan Ministry of Interior and National Police.<sup>16</sup>

There is no doubt that EUPOL has faced serious problems since the beginning<sup>17</sup>. However, as mentioned by many respondents, the mission performance has improved during the past few years and developed towards more focused vision on its role in Afghanistan also in regards other international actors, NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan (NTM-A), in particular. However, even if there has been visible improvement in the EUPOL's operation, its **mandate** continues to be ambiguous, especially vis-à-vis mentoring. EUPOL's performance is described as indistinct without steadiness and clear objectives: "Mandate is so abundantly written that it is difficult to define clear objects or end state". Moreover, it is still a challenge in EUPOL to measure progress and impact of its activities – other than counting the number of trainings conducted.<sup>18</sup>

What is also neglected by EUPOL, as well as other international actors involved in security sector related work, when looking at SSR principles, is that SSR is never only about technicalities and institutional building. All aspects, political, governmental, economic and societal including active civil society participation, are largely seen secondary in the activities, which no doubt impacts negatively the idea of **comprehensiveness**.<sup>19</sup> One respondent noted that in Afghanistan the central

16 See more details of the EUPOL mandate and six strategic objectives: <http://81.17.241.206/?q=node/4>.

17 Interviews in Brussels, April 2011.

18 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

19 See Chanaa 2002, 27-30. According to Jane Chanaa, SSR has four dimensions: political, institutional, economic, and societal. The political dimension focuses on ensuring the civilian governance and democratic civilian control, the institutional dimension on reform, capacity-building and professionalization within the security institutions, the economic dimension on security sector's consumption of resources, stressing the long term sustainability of reforms and societal dimension on a crucial role to civil society in the security functions of the state.

government does not have an influence in the provinces and districts; the decisions don't reach the lower level administration and therefore the strategic advice that EUPOL provides wasn't working, "the level of development and the organizational culture in Afghanistan is not ready for the high level MMA [monitoring, mentoring, advising] and therefore the training aspect was added to the mandate of EUPOL"<sup>20</sup>. This is a good example of comprehensiveness of SSR – external actors have to have a wider vision and, for example, in the case of Afghanistan, the poor governance has a major impact to the end-results and it must be taken into consideration when planning the operation and implementing the mandate. Moreover, during recent years the EUPOL has greatly increased the level and number of projects that in the beginning were seen secondary for the implementation of the mandate, for instance, recently a 15 million euro project, funded by EU, was signed with a significant capacity building role for the EUPOL<sup>21</sup>.

Linked to the comprehensiveness, the **coordination** problems continue to exist in Afghanistan. Many interlocutors in Kabul mentioned that the coordination between EUPOL and NTM-A have improved, essentially because the Head of Mission of EUPOL has managed to create a good personal relationship with the leadership of NTM-A<sup>22</sup>. Unfortunately the coordination overall largely depends on the good personal acquaintances; if there is no chemistry there often is no coordination or **information sharing**. Moreover, information sharing is important, but whether it can be called coordination is another matter. Coordination, in general, requires a common goal that all try to achieve. The problem is that in Afghanistan the security sector strategy is rather vague and more or less non-existent. The external actors tend to focus on implementing their own mandates and goals without looking at the bigger picture and seeing the security sector in the larger context which has created confusion and contradiction.

**Local ownership**, the one and only approach in SSR, continues to be more of a rhetorical device than a guide to donor officials engaged in SSR. It is often the case that the internationals rely on their English speaking favourites who don't necessarily have the authority and influence in the wider institutional structure. One respondent also commented that while drafting the police related policy document, it functioned relatively well in the small circle of Afghans led by the Deputy Minister of Interior, "elsewhere in the Ministry, the officials don't necessarily know about the existence of the document". In the Ministry of Interior the delegation of responsibilities is not

20 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

21 See <http://81.17.241.206>.

22 Interviews in Kabul, July 2011.

common, “the high level officials talked about the importance of the chain of command but ignored it themselves”.<sup>23</sup> Poor and divided governance, added with the low institutional capacity and little genuine will of the Afghan Government for progress, combined with profound corruption and nepotism, are some of the main reasons why SSR and RoL are facing major challenges in Afghanistan and emphasize the problems with the local ownership. All this, mixed with the urgency of the international actors to get something visible done, better sooner than later, and the lack of consistency of the action, is alarming from the SSR point of view: The security sector related activities are mainly led by number of international experts and there are hundreds of on-going external projects for example in the Ministry of Interior. As reminded by an Afghan civil society actor: “Local ownership and empowerment will take time; the sense of ownership does not exist among Afghans. Now the policies are mainly written by internationals and ‘given’ to Afghans”.<sup>24</sup>

In the policy circles it has been also debated which national or local actors should be involved in relation to the SSR and local ownership<sup>25</sup>. They must include the national and local governments as well as justice and security providers, both formal and informal. Moreover, the end-users should also have a say about the reform, e.g. through **civil society participation**<sup>26</sup>. Also, as written by Mobekk, in each of these categories there are insiders and outsiders as well as critical differences between and among categories<sup>27</sup>. It is not necessarily in the interest of the national government to include the civil society to the process or as is the case in Afghanistan, the influence of the central government hardly reaches the provinces, where the “local ownership”, also in relation to the justice and security providers, is often controlled by the local strongmen in top of the provincial and district governments. When it comes generally to the dedication of the Government, an Afghan civil society actor commented that the Government has very unclear policies on how to tackle the security threats, and that “there are not committed people in the Government who are devoted in protecting the Afghan people”<sup>28</sup>.

Civil society contributions to SSR remain undervalued and marginalized, even though there is a general agreement of its significance. According to Marina Caparina, despite of the general agreement in the policy circles on the contributions that civil society can make to SSR and governance, civil society organizations tend to remain

23 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

24 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

25 See <http://www.ssrresourcecentre.org/2011/10/12/un-security-council-debates-the-future-of-ssr>.

26 Ibid.

27 Mobekk 2010: 233.

28 Interviews in Kabul, July 2011.

on the side-lines. It has also been a challenge for the international actors, who do realize the importance of the civil society, to find concrete ways of involving the civil society, and therefore the efforts have been more "ticking the box" type of activities.<sup>29</sup>

The lack of larger SSR context, as highlighted above, is a challenge also from the civil society perspective. This is reflected well in the operational level interviews. Majority of the respondents, those working in the EUPOL's police component, said that the civil society has no role in their own activities and that the RoL component takes care of the civil society activities in EUPOL. One respondent commented "we didn't have actual cooperation with the civil society because our work was focused so strongly only to one group, police". Moreover, it was commented that the civil society can't support the police training activities or that the civil society doesn't belong to the EUPOL mandate – "I believe we should only concentrate in sticking with our own mandate".<sup>30</sup> However, there were also comments that civil society is a significant part of the EUPOL mandate. EUPOL Human Rights Unit, for instance, has started a monthly "Civil Society Liaison Board" which role is to facilitate the interaction between the civil society organizations and Afghan authorities. In addition, the contacts with the University and civil society organizations including the women's organizations were mentioned by some respondents. In the interviews with the Afghan civil society actors, it was brought up that sometimes EUPOL organizes seminars and forums on female police issues or human rights – however, it was also pointed out that EUPOL has its special plans and projects and it is difficult to participate in those projects. The coordination board was evaluated as a "useful information sharing meeting", but at same time it was commented that "there is communication with the EUPOL, but no partnership".<sup>31</sup> This is the key question and challenge, how to create effective and useful partnership with the civil society organizations? How to move from information sharing to the partnership?

One problem when it comes to the cooperation with the civil society is the lack of understanding what is meant by it and the controversy about what its role could possibly be in the security sector. The respondents in the operational level were asked whether civil society has a role in the SSR in Afghanistan. Majority answered negatively. One respondent said, reflecting the situation in Afghanistan that "the civil society has no role, the voice of people has no weight, and the activities are run by the internationals or local warlords". Another one commented that there isn't civil society in Afghanistan and questioned "what could be the Afghan civil society; it is

29 Caparini 2010: 251-252, 30

30 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

31 Interviews in Kabul, July 2011.

unknown concept in the Afghan culture". However, it was also emphasized in some answers that there are traditions that have an impact to the matters related to the security; shuras and other informal justice mechanisms were seen as part of the civil society activities.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, it is important to realize that the civil society also consists of other actors than merely civil society organizations, and in Afghanistan there exist both traditional and modern civil society where the local religious and tribal leaders play a crucial role; above all there *is* a civil society. The possible roles for the civil society in the security sector were also discussed during the interviews. The security sector, including the justice sector, in general doesn't have a flattering image in the eyes of the Afghan public. It was suggested, and rightly so, that the civil society could play a role in sharing information what people can and should expect, for example, from the community police. People have been so badly mistreated by the police and justice institutions over the years that they are not aware what to presume from them and they relate to the institutions with great suspicion. Therefore, as suggested by some respondents, the role of the civil society could be linked to the advocacy and awareness. Moreover, linked to advocacy, it was suggested that the civil society organizations could raise the problems of Afghan society that are e.g. linked to the social control and the domestic violence, EUPOL only focuses on the problem when the crime has been committed and here "the civil society could be like an extra hand in the police performance".<sup>33</sup>

**Gender** is a crucial part of SSR and, as commented by Salahub and Nerland, "the notion that gender can easily be separated from security reflects a shallow understanding what security means in practical terms and only serves to undermine the effectiveness of the SSR programming". They, however, suggest that practitioners have had limited success in integrating gender into SSR policy and practice.<sup>34</sup>

All respondents in the operational level said that the cross-cutting themes such as gender have been taken into consideration in EUPOL. However, the responsibility of the gender-issues was mainly given to the EUPOL's Human Rights and Gender Unit. Moreover, it was commented that even if gender is one of EUPOL's key themes, one of the six strategic priorities, it is fairly superficially understood in the mission blandly as "women issues". It does not matter if there are very capable and dedicated people working in the Human Rights and Gender Unit, if the other sectors in EUPOL don't take the matter seriously or understand its significance and, above all, reflect it to their own work. It was mentioned that previously the Gender Adviser in EUPOL worked directly

32 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

33 Operational level interviews, May-August, 2011.

34 Salahub & Nerland 2010: 264 & 271.



under the HoM, now there is a separate unit, and the gender mainstreaming seems to be disappeared from the agenda.<sup>35</sup>

It is misleading and unnecessary, however, to generalize that staff in EUPOL's Police Component, for instance, don't take gender seriously; majority acknowledges that the gender has to be high in the agenda. Yet, the question is how to increase the understanding and the number of staff members doing the actual gender related work, get their own hands dirty and get involved in mainstreaming. One respondent mentioned that he and his colleagues [from the Police Component] were acting as close protection for the EUPOL's gender adviser who was giving gender training to the Afghan police officers; he had genuinely appreciated her work and considered it very positive, necessary and substantial in the Afghan context.<sup>36</sup> But how to get these international male police officers to participate in and act as gender advisers, this is the question.

By and large the respondents working in EUPOL, or those previously worked, understood relatively well the content of the UNSCR 1325; on the other hand, many generalized it to touch only "women's rights" or "equality". When it comes to the understanding of *gender*, there was more dispersion. Even if the majority of the respondents claimed to understand the meaning of the concept, the definitions were rather narrow concentrating in equality, respect, women's rights (as reflected above) – gender with socially and culturally constructed roles between the sexes were only mentioned by few respondents.

Only six out of fourteen interviewed officers recognized UNSCR 1325 and what it stands for. When explained the relation between UNSCR 1325 and gender, all interviewed apparently understood and recognized gender equality and the status of less fortunate in order to ensure equal treatment for all.<sup>37</sup>

Moreover, it was pointed out in the strategic level interviews that the number of women in managerial positions in the international operations should be increased. However, even though the European Union, for example, is advocating the UNSCR 1325 and the female participation in the Afghan security institutions, the internal practice is showing quite the opposite. It was also reminded that we should do some self-reflection here in Finland too.<sup>38</sup> The respondents also highlighted the problems internally in the mission when it comes to gender; "the gender work can only be transformed to the Afghan context when it is reflected and respected first internally"<sup>39</sup>.

35 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

36 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

37 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

38 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

39 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

In relation to the Afghanistan context, it was suggested by one respondent in the Finnish line Ministries that there are noble objectives to increase the number of Afghan female police and army officers, but the starting point is quite limited if the only tasks that can be given to the women are the administrative tasks, cleaning, clothing care and female check-points. It was also reminded that there is a lot of lip service from the Afghan side in this context, the real willingness to change the present circumstances is questionable.<sup>40</sup> One respondent in the operational level emphasized that the gender is part of the EUPOL training programs and "the Afghans are playing the flute as we want them to play, but they don't necessarily like the sound of it"<sup>41</sup>.

Interestingly, and on the contrary, an international gender, human rights and Afghanistan specialist said in the interview that "the International community has played lip service to the gender issues in Afghanistan". She said that there was a fair amount of commitment to the gender issues in the earlier years, however in line with the declining security situation the gender has certainly taken a back seat position. She suggested that there is a tendency with the internationals, particularly by the international men who come to Afghanistan to pursue firstly that they can't work with the Afghan women and secondly that Afghan women can't do certain work. She reminds, however, that this is never a clear cut issue, you can always try to find ways for Afghan women to work; "it is perfectly possible for the Afghan women to work". She gives an example that in the police service, if not patrolling, women could work as investigators, dealing with certain types of cases, family cases etc. "There are Afghan female combatants and Afghan female commanders, so you could have them also in the police force. It is not easy, but possible."<sup>42</sup>

## 4.2 Finnish SSR expertise

Based on the interviews in the operational level, the understanding of the Security Sector Reform (SSR) concept is rather limited and ambiguous among the Finnish experts in EUPOL and ISAF operations. In the strategic level, in the Finnish line Ministries, the SSR concept is recognized, but not actively used in every day work. In summary, SSR has not yet found a solid ground in Finland. Overall the confusing use of the SSR concept in Afghanistan echoes in the answer of one respondent: "It [SSR] is something familiar, but I can't define it more in details"<sup>43</sup>.

40 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

41 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

42 Interview in Finland, June 2011.

43 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

This is not, however, unexpected as only a few of the respondents had had training on SSR and the concept simply has not been part of the common language used among both the Finnish practitioners and policy makers. SSR terminology is not actively used by the EUPOL or Finnish troops in ISAF. Nor is it widely discussed at the European level even though the SSR debate has moved from rather abstract concept to practical implementation<sup>44</sup>. The rather narrow usage of the concept indicates that SSR as a normative concept is more recognized among the experts, but its operational and programmatic role is relatively ignored, also at the policy level. Besides, SSR is considered more than civil-military cooperation and some of the respondents<sup>45</sup> were referring to "beyond civil-military cooperation", as defined in the recent publication on SSR by FINCENT<sup>46</sup>. This operational gap has been acknowledged also more generally when it comes to SSR; Mark Sedra points out that "Although this holistic vision would become the bedrock of the SSR conceptual framework...SSR stakeholders have encountered difficulty applying it programmatically"<sup>47</sup>.

Moreover, there was a lack of understanding among the interviewed experts about the wider SSR context and strategy in Afghanistan. One respondent from the Finnish line Ministries emphasized that "the *Afghanistan National Development Strategy* (ANDS) is a guiding star that every actor in Afghanistan has to support"<sup>48</sup>. However, the ANDS was hardly mentioned or referred to at the operational level. When asked whether the respondents are able to elaborate what the priorities of the Afghan Government in security sector reform are, the majority said that they don't know and could not indicate one clear policy or strategy.<sup>49</sup> Some, however, mentioned the Afghan National Police Plan and the transition process, which are more closely linked to the specific sector of the EUPOL<sup>50</sup>. This demonstrates how focused the experts in the field are on their own narrow sector, work and organization and they don't necessarily look at and see the bigger picture, larger context, of their work.

Even though the majority of the experts working in EUPOL saw their technical background sufficient - some even overqualified - for the assignment in EUPOL, they however highlighted the most important, skills and qualities that, in addition to police technical expertise, are required: strategic and theoretical planning skills, proactivity,

44 Interviews in Brussels (EEAS), April 2011.

45 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

46 Security Sector Reform: Beyond Civil-Military Coordination 2010.

47 Sedra 2010a: 16.

48 Interviews in the line Ministries, May-June 2011.

49 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

50 Both the ANPP and transition process, however, materialize from the ANDS or its follow up document *ANDS Prioritization and Implementation Plan Mid 2010-Mid 2013*.

good communication, social and diplomatic skills, patience and knowledge of the political and cultural aspects.

Reflecting this, mentoring, in particular, was seen challenging. Mentoring was also considered challenging due to the ambiguous mandate and lack of guiding from the EUPOL mission management. These were highlighted by one Finnish police expert, "there are good police officers in Finland, but how many of them have a potential to mentor the Chief of the Kabul city police?" And another stated that "all police officers are not automatically good mentors".<sup>51</sup>

Moreover, there seems to be mutual distrust between some police and other civilian experts which is amplified in the mission structure of EUPOL with its separate police and Rule of Law (RoL) components. Police is seen doing policing and civilians "civilian stuff". The division is rather controversial; isn't the policing part of the RoL? It was also commented that the staff in the components don't necessarily see the work conducted in the components as a whole, but they often concentrate in competing, for example, on the number of trainings organized. However, good examples were also mentioned, such as joint projects between the components. Inter-component cooperation was seen functioning especially well in the provincial level, where the teams are smaller and naturally more integrated. The experts in the interviews also acknowledged that the expertise is currently rather narrow as well as understanding what the others are doing, both internally in the mission and in the wider international context. Integrated and cross-sectorial training would both strengthen the cooperation in the field and decrease the prejudices. As summarized by some of the respondents: "Prejudices combined with communication problems is the biggest threat for the success of the mission" or the message to the pre-deployment training: "it would minimize the time wasted in the mission, if all the actors involved in the security sector were clarified prior the mission".<sup>52</sup> In the strategic level interviews the future SSR training was also seen important, especially to understand the comprehensive picture of the security sector and to appreciate all the expertise included in the SSR<sup>53</sup>.

It is difficult to define what consists of "Finnish SSR expertise" so far the SSR concept itself has not been clarified among the Finnish policy makers. This does not mean that there isn't expertise in Finland in various SSR related sectors; however, expertise is rather fragmented. In the responses some "typical" Finnish focus areas

51 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

52 Operational level interviews, May-August 2011.

53 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

were brought up, such as civilian policing, border issues, gender and human rights – however, generally Finland approaches these sectors through international organizations (largely EU and NATO) by expert contribution, not through bi-lateral projects.

### 4.3 SSR in the strategic level in Finland

SSR has been in the national agenda at least since the last EU Presidency of Finland in 2006 when one of the key EU SSR documents, *Council Conclusions on a Policy Framework for Security Sector Reform*, was prepared with the active involvement of Finland.<sup>54</sup> However, the national SSR debate has been mostly linked to the notion of comprehensiveness. In November 2009, *Finland's Comprehensive Crisis Management Strategy* (CCMS) was published. The working group that put drafted the Strategy consisted of the representatives from the MFA Political Department and Department for Development Policy, Prime Minister's Office, MoI, Ministry of Justice MoJ, MoD and the Defence Command.

As is the case with many policy documents, and as recognized by the respondents in the line Ministries, it is easier to write strategy papers than implement them. It is criticized that the comprehensiveness has been incorporated to the pronounced concepts and strategies; however, when dismantled to the practical level of implementation, the question what the comprehensiveness actually is starts to vanish. There is information sharing and discussion, but "the activities are not planned or certain crisis areas processed according to the CCMS". Moreover, it is commented that the CCMS is largely linked to the missions and the comprehensive crisis management seen much as an operational concept, "military led that others can then contribute". The CCMS is seen as a good starting point, but still rather narrow from the development point of view: The military and civilian crisis management, development and humanitarian aid don't complement each other and "SSR is a good example, why these sectors should be coordinated". However, also a good example was mentioned in Jericho, where Finland is financing, through the development instrument the civilian police section as well as takes part in the CSDP mission.<sup>55</sup>

The following aspects were listed that make the implementation of the CCMS difficult and challenging: the variety of actors with own operative, technical and tactical methods, lack of experience and knowledge about comprehensiveness – only

54 See Siivola 2010, 28

55 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

changing of information is not enough, there is no clarity of “whose comprehensiveness” is been discussed and the comprehensiveness can be understood in various ways. Moreover, transformation from the conceptual and strategic level to the practice and implementation is perceived problematic generally in the crisis areas.<sup>56</sup>

Overall, the discussion on the comprehensive crisis management has been seen challenging, and is still debated in spite of the existence of the strategy document. One respondent commented that there still is “a constructive tension between the military and civilian approaches which is good”. The fundamental problem both with the SSR and CCMS seems to be the ambiguousness of the concepts, what is meant by them and once clarified and internalized by all relevant actors, how then to move forward from concept to implementation. As one respondent said, “unfortunately our comprehensiveness is still only talking, but we are moving forward”.<sup>57</sup>

The CCMS is probably the closest context for the SSR and this was also mentioned in the interviews of the officials from the four line Ministries that were included in this research. In the CCMS Finland's SSR activities are largely linked to the support measures of the EU and other international organizations such as the UN, NATO and OSCE<sup>58</sup>. Finland has, for example, contributed to the EU SSR Pool of Experts set up in the beginning of 2011 and is participating in various CSDP missions e.g. in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Palestinian Territories. In Afghanistan Finland also funds a project on police-prosecutor cooperation, administrated through the EUPOL, and in the Palestinian Territories the funding goes to the police training centre in Jericho as mentioned above. These projects combine the instruments of the civilian crisis management and development cooperation and can be linked to SSR.

In the CCMS it is written: “The focus of Finnish civilian crisis management participation is already on the training, mentoring and support measures related to SSR and rule of law development”. Moreover, in the military side, the CCMS brings up the new opening: training of the Afghan National Army. It is stressed that “Finland must also continue to actively participate in SSR projects within the framework of military crisis management”. Here the link with both the civilian crisis management and military crisis management and SSR is made clear.<sup>59</sup>

Even if the CCMS takes account of the SSR, the Finnish SSR approach doesn't surface clearly from the document. The views from the respondents emphasize the

56 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

57 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

58 CCMS 2009: 36-37.

59 CCMS 2009: 37.

current emptiness of the SSR concept: "I believe that the common SSR definition among the Ministries does not exist" or "When it comes to the SSR, the concept has not been developed and it does not belong to the Finnish crisis management discourse". Moreover, the respondent's own contemplations of SSR varied: it was criticized that "especially the military personnel sees SSR as the development of the security actors and the defence sector". SSR is seen concentrating still in the military side in Finland, but it is "becoming more civilian"; more civilians are working in the security sector or military is moving to do something civilian. Moving closer to the SSR definition, it was commented that "the CCMS has such SSR thinking that civilian and military crisis management starts to have similar elements".<sup>60</sup>

In the comments it is highlighted both "who does" (civilian or military or civilian and military together) and "what does" (civilian or military crisis management). Also in the CCMS SSR is subject to civilian and military crisis management. However, the majority of the civilian crisis management tasks, for example, can nowadays be linked to SSR and they are expected to increase,<sup>61</sup> and therefore it would be important to start moving forward from this civilian-military dichotomy and perhaps start looking at the Comprehensive Crisis Management through the lens of SSR and not another way around.

Pointed out by the respondents, there are many reasons why SSR is relatively foreign and unused concept in Finland. First of all, it is still a fairly new concept here, broad and mixed. It is also questioned whether the existence of the clear SSR concept can even be possible, because it is perceived to include so much. In addition, the Finnish strategic level group operating in the crisis management field is small and heterogenic: "There are those who have international experience, including the diplomats, and those officials who have not necessarily been in any international operation, there are researchers who do research, but don't implement and those who are there not because of professional interest, but because it is part of their official post and task in the current assignment". Even though this variety of actors can be seen as a positive aspect and in the SSR perspective a necessity, it is felt that the diverse discourses, concepts and understandings among the actors create a challenge. Yet, as noted before, SSR can be understood differently and without clarifying what it is, it is also difficult to talk about it or further define the Finnish SSR priorities or special need for expertise: "Before determining Finland's SSR priorities and, for example, channels (bi-lateral, multinational) to distribute expertise, Finland

60 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

61 The CCMS 2009; See also Siivola 2010: 30.

should first have a general view on SSR and a jointly processed area of expertise that could be exported to others. This is not the case at the moment". Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that even if the international organizations, the UN and EU, have made their own SSR policies, they too are still in very conceptual level in their activities. The UN SSR policy implementation is seen more comprehensive and practical, whereas the EU remains conceptual and thin in its SSR approach. It was also reminded that the EU, as well as NATO, have a deeper division between the military and civilian activities than the UN has.<sup>62</sup>

It was further commented by one respondent that the Finnish effort in crisis management is seen to be linked to the themes discussed in the international organizations and the Finnish national thinking is been developed through the support and positions on issues discussed in the international forums, "I suppose we can't say that much own, national, thinking has been developed during the past year".<sup>63</sup>

There is a high level CCMS coordination group, chaired by the Under Secretary of the MFA, which also includes, in addition to the above mentioned actors, the Prime Minister's Office, Ministries such as Traffic and Communication and Finance and other actors involved in the work in the crisis and catastrophe areas. This group meets approximately once in two months. In the CCMS the role of the coordination group has been defined: "The task of the group would be to monitor and promote the comprehensive development of crisis management. In this context it would be important to pay attention to the entire conflict cycle including early warning, humanitarian aid, military and civilian crisis management activities as well as measures related to crisis resolution and post-conflict reconstruction."<sup>64</sup>

In addition to the CCMS group there are other working level forums, where the matters related to the CCMS are discussed, for example so called "tripartite", one for the civilian crisis management (MFA, MoI and the agencies within its administrative branch as well as the MoJ) and another for the military crisis management (MFA, MoD and Defence Command). There are additional working groups under the "tripartite", such as civil-military working group (chaired by the MoI). Moreover, if required and case by case basis, the cross-sectorial "task forces" concentrating in one specific conflict area can be established by the MFA which has also been mentioned in the CCMS<sup>65</sup>, for example a task force related to Afghanistan is currently

62 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

63 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

64 CCMS 2009: 47.

65 CCMS 2009: 47.



in operation. According to one respondent "the Afghanistan-coordination in Finland has been advanced a great deal, because the activities increased to the level that we had to shape up"<sup>66</sup>. The Afghanistan coordination has shown positive signal to other potential regional task forces.

There aren't separate working groups for SSR; however it was mentioned that the topic is included in the agenda of the different forums and working groups when needed. Moreover, it was stressed by all respondents from the line Ministries that there is no need for a separate SSR coordination mechanism or working group, but to keep it under the framework of the CCMS: "To establish a working group on the topic is a classic way in Finland to solve problems, another is writing a concept paper". It was also mentioned that the existing organization/establishment is in principle sufficient, but the execution should be better. The role of the MFA is seen crucial here, "new structures are really not necessary, only the issues should be dealt thoroughly; we all support this and hope that things would work out better". The MFA has a leading role in overall CCMS related issues, including the coordination role in SSR. The CCMS structure consists of the strategic, high level, coordination group and then working level groups, but in practice, mentioned by some respondents, these levels are mixed and often same people go to all meetings, both strategic and working level. Besides, one respondent commented that the comprehensiveness requires that all relevant actors are in the same place and in same time, but it continues to be challenging to get everyone equally involved.<sup>67</sup>

To the question how the inter-Ministerial cooperation generally functions, the responds were fairly positive. In the personal level the relations are good, everyone knows each other relatively well, the distance between the Ministries is not far; especially the desk-level cooperation was said to function well. It was also mentioned that Finland is an exception when it comes to the cross-sectorial cooperation. Linked to SSR, for example, it was said that when the MFA does not have a specific expertise, for example, on police, justice or border issues, then the Ministries dealing with these subject matters are contacted, "this somehow compels to the cross-Ministerial cooperation". Respondents were calling more concentration for the working level meetings, as too official and inflexible configurations don't often bring an added value. On the other hand it was also acknowledged that only to gather for the meeting is not an absolute value. Generally, the strategic level coordination group was commended by the respondents; however its disadvantage was the infrequent meeting schedule and the lack of decision making capacity. It is mainly a forum for

66 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

67 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

information sharing and exchanging. Therefore, it was not seen suitable for taking care of the operational matters and as a current format not even intended to do that.<sup>68</sup>

The comprehensiveness in coordination was not seen successfully materializing for the various reasons. First of all, the Ministries involved in the CCMS have their own decision making processes. Also the resources are insufficient, as well as the culture of thinking and acting together when something happens; humanitarian side has been clearly a separate actor. Moreover, a huge number of different existing coordination and working groups is considered problematic, for instance, for the EU-related issues there is an own coordination mechanism. Time is seen as one of the constraints, "there should be more time to stop and think in advance the contents, options and policies in the meetings, now the meetings mainly concentrate on issues that are overdue and that have to be therefore dealt quickly". All these restrictions have negative impact and reduce the opportunities to think and talk about substance, such as SSR, or have other content driven conversations, over all to actively enhance the understanding about the crisis and conflict related questions in order to understand the difference between the relevant and not so relevant issues, "currently often is the case that three Ministries gather to talk about rather small and irrelevant issues".<sup>69</sup>

SSR hasn't belonged to the Finnish strategic level discussion and only recently the SSR awareness has increased, mainly through the publication by FINCENT, *Security Sector Reform - Beyond Civil Military Cooperation* (2010). Moreover, the International Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT), in cooperation with FINCENT and CMC Finland, has organized two basic level SSR trainings. In November 2011 the first advanced level SSR training was conducted again by ISSAT together with FINCENT and CMC Finland. Finland has also been an active contributor to the European Union SSR Pool of Experts.

All in all, the respondents in the line Ministries adapt a positive attitude for the future SSR undertakings. What is primarily called is thorough concentration to the theme and concept. The Finnish SSR understanding should be developed: "Finland has a lot to contribute, but own comprehension has to be established in regards what is the Finnish SSR and what could it be". It was also emphasized that concepts come and go and if SSR is used without comprehension and significance, it may remain short-lived; however important is to acknowledge that the deeper contents of SSR will not change, because "the reconstruction projects and efforts in the conflict societies have shown how weak actors we still are".<sup>70</sup> Examples from the operational level

68 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

69 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

70 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

interviews in relation to the concepts such as comprehensiveness, local ownership and gender in Afghanistan also support this argumentation. There is lot to learn, for instance, about sustainability and transition in societies. It is a secondary aspect what concept is used, the content matters. The respondents were asked to give ideas how they would start making the change vis-à-vis SSR and the CCMS. Firstly, widening of the perspective was called; when it comes to recruiting experts Finland should not only concentrate in missions, lately almost exclusively to the EU and NATO operations, but also open doors to the senior experts in the UN and OSCE. Besides, even if the expert contribution was seen important, it was also reminded that the SSR can also be supported through funds, for example, of the UN and World Bank.<sup>71</sup> Siivola in her article mentions that "the question of SSR funding was perhaps the most debated issue during the preparation of the [CCMS] strategy"<sup>72</sup>. There are examples from the UK and Netherlands and recently from Denmark where, through financing mechanisms and creation of new funds, the comprehensiveness of the action and inter-Ministerial cooperation has been strengthened. It was commented by a respondent that Finland has with great interest followed what results these arrangement will bring. However, the results from the discussions and assessments to set up a distinct coordination or financing mechanism for the purpose of SSR funding in Finland continue to remain open. It is acknowledged that there should be consideration whether possible and sensible to create a financial mechanism that combined, for example, money from the development and crisis management budgets: "The administration of this kind of financial mechanism would automatically bring the actors together and strengthen coordination, whereas at the moment the performance depends on the individual activity". It was also highlighted that "this would create concrete cross-Ministerial co-operation".<sup>73</sup>

Finally, the UK or Netherlands type of solution of the inter-Ministerial Stabilization Unit was highlighted and brought up, but at the same time deemed, in the Finnish perspective, as "radical". This solution would bring the knowledge and expertise in the crisis management field (development, civilian and military crisis management), including the SSR expertise, under the same roof and under the Prime Minister's Office. Largely, the current fragmentation of different expertise within and between the Ministries was perceived as a key challenge in strengthening the idea of comprehensiveness.<sup>74</sup>

71 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

72 Siivola 2010: 30.

73 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

74 Interviews in the line Ministries, May 2011.

## 5 Recommendations

### SSR-training:

- In order to strengthen the civilian crisis management trainings, for example, in relation to the CSDP, the SSR approach could become a good foundation for the trainings, especially since the majority of the present civilian crisis management functions are related to SSR;
- Finland should concentrate further on development of cross sector training, where military components and experts as well as civilian crises management and development actors function together. The cross-sector training would be even more relevant in case the Finnish involvement in Afghanistan would increase;
- There is no added value if SSR is only included as a separate sector to the trainings, on the contrary, this way it will remain as an abstract and intangible concept without concreteness which should be seen as one of its main functions and strengths;
- The experts deployed to the specific missions, need to have more training on the structure and mandate, main objectives and aims, of the mission that would prepare them to conduct their tasks. Moreover, the pre-deployment training must focus on creating a comprehensive picture of the operational area (who are the other actors, both national and international) and motivating the experts to be sensitive to and aware of the issues that are not directly linked to their own personal tasks, but which can have an impact to their work (e.g. cultural, political and financial aspects) and which are integral part of the task as a whole (e.g. human rights and gender aspects, civil society involvement). Cross cutting issues such as gender and human rights have to be mainstreamed in the SSR activities. Additionally, the EUPOL mission and the mission leadership have to start appreciating and paying attention to the cross cutting issues and see them as an integral part of the mandate and the implementation as a requirement for the mission's success.

## **Military Deployment**

- It would be very important for Finland to have at least a deputy gender advisor assignment filled;
- Finland should not try to fill designated posts in haste, but follow through proper identification process and proper training of staff appointees for the next possible opening or rotation;
- Finland's most certain advantage would be to maintain longer serving periods in comparison to other NATO contributing nations. This increases also the knowledge and experience of the Finnish officers. If designed and marketed transparently and smartly, Finnish rotation planning could ensure significant advantages in defining direction of forthcoming staff rotations and ensure deployment of experienced and qualified staff officers to well-planned and defined positions, instead of being handed what was left over from others;
- The apparent luxury and advantage of one year or more tenure, if liaised correctly and systematically early enough, infusion has to be strong already in NATO capacity and training seminars and pre-deployment design and execution. Best advantage also for the NATO School training component is to get the first hand and latest for the new staff HQ component rotation from the already six month experienced staff officer from the respective HQ cell serving in theatre;
- Reconsidering the length of tenure and specify depending on actual assignment. Not generalize all assigned the same way. For specialist and less work intense HQ duties and OMLT mentoring duties 12 month should be a minimum, 18 -24 months acceptable. In comparison to usual tenure of equivalent so called civilian crises management experts which may vary from up to two or three years on one duty station. Enable staff officers to release from national duties for normally extended time.

## **SSR Expertise**

- Only after clarifying and defining the concept of SSR in the policy level, the question concerning the Finnish SSR expertise can be examined in detail. When it comes to the expertise, it should be first explained what is meant by it – is it more varied expertise in the missions or expertise in some specific sector (bi-lateral focus) – or both. After that, if the need to concentrate in specific SSR expertise has been noted, it should be identified what are or could be the sectors or areas where Finland has an exceptional expertise and could start

building up further proficiency. When it comes to the expertise that Finland contributes to the missions (EU, NATO, UN, OSCE), the specialization and building up of already existing expertise and seniority should be also scrutinized;

- The lack of coordination, local ownership, including the civil society inclusion, and gender mainstreaming in Afghanistan, among other things, continue to be a challenge vis-à-vis overall security reform. SSR could offer a way to address these problems and bring solutions; however it requires a clear and implementable strategy as well as commitment and genuine cooperation of all actors involved in security sector work, both national and international. Indeed, the governance part and the civilian oversight of the SSR, have to be further acknowledged and highlighted by the external actors. Poor governance, in addition to the immediate security threats, is one of the main obstacles for the successful and sustainable security sector reform in Afghanistan;
- The SSR discussion in Finland should continue by clarifying the concept and developing the common SSR understanding within the line Ministries. Linked to this, also the comprehensiveness, what is meant by it, needs clarification within the line Ministries. SSR approach offers an example of the comprehensiveness – especially regarding civilian crisis management activities (and also growingly to military crisis management): there isn't civilian crisis management and SSR, but civilian crisis management is (principally) SSR. To enhance comprehensiveness and start moving from strategy to implementation, the SSR can offer a concrete and practical tool. Moreover, the attitude to SSR should become more practical in addition to the normative and value based. The SSR is primarily a programmatic tool and, for example, a joint financial mechanism, also discussed in the CCMS, should be considered as well as other ways to improve the inter-Ministerial cooperation and comprehensiveness;
- There is no need to establish a separate SSR coordination group, CCMS is a suitable context for the SSR; however the framework of the CCMS has to be further strengthened, get all the relevant actors equally involved and work on moving from strategy to implementation.

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