The Development - Security Nexus Policies in Afghanistan: Feasible or Fashionable?

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The changing conceptual relation between development and security from the 1950s to present, and their coming together in a nexus is investigated in the article. The latest interpretation of this nexus is exemplified by Security Sector Reform (SSR) policies. Through an analysis of SSR in Afghanistan, I contend that the implementation of these policies does not reflect their conceptual richness constituted by the concept of human security and human development, but it addresses only state's military security concerns. Despite this partial implementation, SSR policies have become fashionable because they frame military-security concerns within development polices, and they avoid answering the development question. The consensus among international policy makers is indeed to postpone the tackling of the development question to an unknown future.

Keywords: Afghanistan, development, security policy, Security Sector Reform (SSR) policies

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to investigate these policies publicised as addressing both development and security concerns, called Security Sector Reform (SSR) policies, and highlight their misconception. These policies aim at strengthening the governance of the security sector of states so that their institutions can guarantee a peaceful and stable environment conducive to the enjoyment of development entitlements¹. The rationale behind these policies derives from the changing conceptual relation between development and security in the last two decades, and their coming together in a conceptual nexus in the 1990s and in the 2000s. The adoption of the language of hu-

manity within the development and security discourses in the 1990s provided the base for their conceptual merge exemplified by the concept of human security. This developmentalisation of security was superseded during the years 2000s, by a conceptual reshuffling called the securitisation of development. While the development-security nexus maintains its conceptual validity, security is now regarded as a precondition of development: security thus comes first. This new interpretation constitutes the conceptual base of Security Sector Reform (SSR) policies. I contend that the publicity given to these policies as addressing both development and security concerns does not correspond to their design and implementation. One reason is that despite having the development-security nexus as their conceptual base, these policies end up addressing only

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state security concerns, postponing the tackling of the development question to an unknown future. Secondly, the interpretation by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that these policies as they are implemented address human security concerns is flawed. This is shown by an analysis of the OECD interpretation of SSR and by taking as an example SSR policies currently implemented in Afghanistan. Here these policies are used to frame the creation of the state army and security forces. In this example I question if SSR are the appropriate instrument to be used in this war/policy theatre. It is my contention that the obstinacy of policy makers to use SSR for building armed and security forces has hollowed the significance and objectives of SSR policies by depriving them of their conceptual richness. My conclusion is that even if the implementation of SSR in various countries seems to validate them as a feasible policy tool, their implementation and feasibility is partial and incoherent with their conceptual base. Thus, SSR are more fashionable than feasible. They are fashionable because they frame security-military necessities within a development imperative, fitting well with a current trend that sees the concept of development interlinked with security; they frame security-military necessities within the reassuring objective of state-democracy building, as in Afghanistan; and because they avoid answering directly the daunting development question.

2. The Development-Security Nexus

The concepts of security and development have emerged from and have been the expression of states' interests and concerns. In the last few centuries in Europe, more and more theorising about security has prioritised the institution of the state. Since the state's claim on its monopoly on legitimised violence was accepted, security became its primary concern to be dealt by military means. In the 1950s this security discourse was accompanied by the emergence of a development discourse. Initially, development was a positive thought that emerged with the post-war optimism. In order to bridge the gap between rich and poor states, the idea proliferated into a plurality of

theories which marked the passing of the development decades up to the years 2000s. However, the 1990s saw the emergence of a new development paradigm which focuses on people rather than on states: the concept of human development was used as a theoretical defence against the brutality of market forces in order to level the power differential between people, both rich and poor. This emphasis on humanism did not intend to tackle the growing economic gap between rich and poor countries. It was just delivering more rights to individuals who could not even meet their basic needs as recognised during the 1970s. Rather than a shift from neo-liberal individualism to humanism, the concept of human development looked like a re-labelling exercise, which introduced a more acceptable and marketable brand. But it cannot be denied that the positive novelty of the concept of human development was the transformation of the individual into a human being. This change of focus was not a fortuitous change of lexicon. The use of the term human development instead of individual development had the purpose of enlarging and equating the development discourse to a universal concern for those unfortunate of the world who lack entitlements and choices in life, as development was lately defined2.

It also provided with an alluring conceptual base for attracting the concept of security within its field of interests. Indeed, it was the first time that the concept of security was targeting a referent object of analysis different from the state. The concept of human security had two main functions: it provided with a conceptual base merging development and security concerns, creating de facto the development-security nexus. The creation de jure of this nexus happened a decade later, exemplified by Security Sector Reform (SSR) policies. Plus, the conceptual attention of human security towards securing the development entitlements of citizens, exemplified by the conceptual trend called the developmentalisation of security, led towards a debate on security entitlements and state's responsibilities. The state, again, re-appeared in the security discourse as an agent of security for its citizens; a security provider more than a security receiver.

The Developmentalisation of Security: In the report Human Security Now3 human development became the "freedom from want" linked to the "freedom from fear". These expressions were firstly used half a century ago by the USA President Franklin Roosevelt⁴ and had the state as their referent object. More than sixty years were necessary to shift the object of these combined freedoms from the state to the individual, or human being, and into the concept of human security. This shift might have been caused by a new population geography during the 1990s, and by their uncontrolled mobility⁵, which took place in a different international political scenario. In fact, the 1990s decade began with the end of the Cold War. Rather than a war as such, this war was a mark of the century, a military architecture used as a backbone of the international order. However, for the two superpowers, the USA and the USSR, keeping this order was quite a routine exercise as they both had the certainty of the inaction of their opponent. Thus, the perceived order or security of the Cold War period was a matter of inaction rather than a well done security management exercise. The perceived disorder or insecurity of the post-Cold War was then a matter of finding new security management tools which were apt to face a different type of inaction. However, the difficult task that states had to face was that it was not a matter of another type of military inaction, but of citizens' mobility who were entitled of human rights. So far, the security discourse and strategies have prioritised state security, following Realist theorists' concerns: the face of security was the state army which was also the expression of potential international threats. When facing the post-Cold War scenario, without clear evidence that people mobility constituted a danger and a threat, this discourse perceived them as the next opponent and/or winner, and sided with them, or rather with their accompanying humanism discourse. Security became human security.

Human security rejects a narrow view of security considered as the monopoly of the militaries, and one in which threats, solutions and agents are to be found in the military domain only. As stated "Poverty is conceptual-

ised as a human security threat - not because it can induce violence which threatens the stability of the state, but because it is a threat to the dignity of individuals"7. The concept of human security changed the components of security: tools of security are not weapons but freedom(s); agents are not soldiers but politidevelopment workers, individuals; threats are not nuclear weapons but hunger and diseases; the aim is not to protect national interest but individuals, wherever they live. However, new as well as old components of security are not considered mutually exclusive: human security does not deprive the state of its sovereign power and military capacity. The paradox with this concept is that defining what it is, is as important as defining what it is not. This double necessity is due to the fact that this concept a priori appears to be utopian, even revolutionary and anti-state. It is therefore necessary to explain how human security considers the role of the state. In a way, human security is not less political than state security, it is probably more so. In fact, it called for the reinforcement of political identities such as citizenship rights and human rights. The individual defined by human security is a citizen of a state demanding protection from threats, and a human being demanding respect of his/her human rights. Perhaps this is the revolutionary aspect of the concept of human security: giving the individual the possibility to move in and out of the state-box in order to have his/her human rights guaranteed. What human security did was to de-link the citizen from the state when his/her human development entitlements are not protected. Therefore, the respect of human rights, as doubling the security net of citizen rights, was included in the human security sphere. Human security does not imply that state security has to be primarily inward looking, leaving aside international relations concerns. In fact, it accepts business as usual for international relations up to when the human development of the citizens in a particular state is respected. Furthermore, proponents of human security started a dialogue with the state that did not exist before. It stressed that state policies have to guarantee and secure the human development of its citizens. Thus, the state has never been

taken out from the human security scenario. This is why it could more explicitly be called a human state security. This concept implied a much closer investigation of the capacities of the state, asking for a balance sheet of state's capabilities, achievements and failures. It is awkward that a concept that is publicised for putting the individual at the centre of state's polices, ends up by showing that a new theory of the state is necessary8. In fact, while the concept of security has changed throughout time, the concept of state has not benefited from the same theoretical elasticity. It could also mean that a new concept of security has clashed against an old concept of state, shaking it. This state inadequacy could be explained by the fact that citizens have gained more (human) rights and therefore the state has to work harder to meet its social contract with its citizens. When we do an analysis of state capabilities, automatically different categories of states appear: there are states fulfilling their obligations vis-à-vis their citizens and they are simply called states, with no adjective attached; those not fulfilling their duties or doing it partially are instead defined by a plurality of adjectives such as: failed, quasi-state, weak, and fragile. Whatever degree of incapacity is pointed out by these adjectives, the consequences at domestic and international level are worrying. In particular, a causal link between an adjective-state, the high incidence of its domestic poverty and the capacity to produce conflicts and threats has been mentioned more and more by policy makers. This debate ran parallel to the emergence of a new wave of international threats for Western states at the beginning of the new millennium. The conceptual response to these new threats was that failed states, characterised also by poverty and underdevelopment, acquired conflict capabilities, which meant that they were deemed capable to cause war and to export it outside state borders. This situation, called the securitisation of development, is what characterises the conceptual interpretation of the development-security nexus in the years 2000s: the development-security nexus is no longer concerned with human development unless it is tied in with the security question.

The Securitisation of Development: The developmentalisation of security did not rise sceptical voices about the negative influence that development concerns could exercise on security ones, because the Realist's security concerns have never disappeared from states' priorities. The theoretical shift called the securitisation of development, however, preoccupied development theorists because of the overwhelming influence that security could exercise on development, so to render development policies tightened to security concerns. In the 1990s, development and security merged under the human security banner. Therefore, raising the problem of the securitisation of development implies a reading of development and security as it was done during the pre-human security age; this also highlights how strong the Realist interpretation of security is, or how weak the tendency of humanising security has been.

Securitisation means that security has become an action, "a speech act ... It is by labelling something a security issue that it becomes one"9. In fact, -ation is a suffix that, when it is added to a noun, it makes it into a noun of action. The notion of securitisation of development implies that development has been included into the action of security, whose constitutive elements are: urgency, threat, fear. The risk is that when development defines a situation as a humanitarian emergency, the urgency should not be motivated by a political "state of emergency" dictated by security concerns, but by the life conditions of the people¹⁰. The securitisation aspect in the development-security nexus is a reality. Whether or not it becomes a danger or a threat depends on the capacity of policy makers to present a development discourse anew. Lack of doing so would mean the recognition that the discipline of development is no longer capable to defend its old theoretical integrity or to present a new one. The securitisation of development came to the fore in the 2000s when the concept of human development/security merged with the human rights discourse causing a weakening of the spirit of development. In fact, once the idea of development embarked on the discourse of human develop

ment and human security, the foreseeable following step was the convergence with human rights. As stated by the UNDP, "Divided by the cold war, the rights agenda and the development agenda followed parallel tracks... Human Development Report 2000 looks at human rights as an intrinsic part of development – and at development as a means to realizing human rights"11. This merged would weaken the spirit of development, as this concept no longer monopolised the attention of policy makers, and it became one among their many concerns: human rights violations, humanitarian emergencies assistance, debt relief, etc. The Western security concerns post 9/11 pushed for an analysis of those states considered capable to produce war from a condition of poverty. This geographical selection had to be done together with an analysis of poverty, or rather of this new type of poverty which has recently acquired conflict capabilities. The term poverty started to be used in a binomial expression with the term underdevelopment¹². Policy makers took for granted that Dependency Theories lost their validity in theorising issues of development in the contemporary period as the world division into core and periphery no longer corresponded to the new interdependence and neo-liberal scenario. Therefore, they thought that the term underdevelopment as well had hollowed its meaning, and that they could appropriate it for describing a new mechanism that went from producing poverty/wealth to producing war. Currently, this term is simply used by policy makers as an attribute to poverty, as an onomatopoeic word that sounds like the poverty of the South.

The thesis that underdevelopment produced by failed states is considered to be dangerous¹³ has been embraced by Western policy makers "Security and development are linked ...Poverty, underdevelopment and fragile states create fertile conditions for conflict and the emergence on new security threats, including international terrorism..." Despite all the emphasis on the link between poverty and war, it has not been demonstrated that poverty, by depriving individuals of development entitlements, automatically endowed them with conflict capabilities¹⁵. However, a new trend of

policies emerged called Security Sector Reform (SSR), aiming at transforming the security sector of states perceived to be conflict prone and with which donor states expected to create *international security* through *national security*.

3. Security Sector Reform Policies

From a theoretical point of view, SSR policies exemplify the securitisation of development trend and contextualise it within a wider development discourse (developmentalisation of security). There are many definitions of SSR¹⁶. Among these diverse views, some common denominators can be identified which explain the rationale behind these policies, their main constitutive elements, and their conceptual weaknesses and opportunities. One relevant view on SSR is provided by Claire Short¹⁷ and relates to the rationale behind the SSR inclusion within the development discourse:

"Twenty of the 34 poorest countries are either involved in conflict or have recently emerged from conflict. I believe that a security sector of appropriate size, properly tasked and managed, is a key issue. We are therefore entering this new area of security sector reform in order to strengthen our contribution to development".

SSR policies are seen as policy tools supporting development strategies by preventing war and human rights violations¹⁸. Short's conceptualisation of SSR is useful in reminding the development roots of these policies, and the development fruits that these policies are supposed to bear. While this view contextualises the theoretical framework of these policies, it does not define their spectrum of applicability, namely the security sector itself. It has been defined as encompassing the military forces and including "those civil structures mandated to control and oversee these agencies"19. One of the most authoritative voices on SSR is the OECD20. OECD stated that:

"The overall objective of security system reform is to create a secure environment that is conducive to development, poverty reduction and democracy. This secure environment rests upon two essential pillars: i) the ability of the state, through its development policy and programs, to generate conditions that mitigate the vulnerabilities to which its people are exposed; and ii) the ability of the state to use the range of policy instruments at its disposal to prevent or address security threats that affect society's well-being"²¹.

This OECD definition provides the basis for a discussion not only about the main features of SSR, but about a more extensive analysis of the OECD conceptualisation of these policies. The analysis of this definition starts with elucidating the presence of the term 'democracy' within SSR objectives. In particular, SSR policies aim at a targeted democratisation, as they focus on the security sector of the state. Namely, SSR endeavour to have a state where there is a democratic oversight of security issues which should, thanks to a whole of government approach, makes the democratic echo audible in other state departments. This targeted democratisation leaves room for other policy objectives: development and poverty reduction. Two main issues about the OECD's conceptualisation of SSR require an in-depth analysis: its interpretation of human security; and how this interpretation has influenced OECD's view on the significance of the development-security nexus. As I shall analyse, the OECD proposed notion of security is presented as inclusive and conciliatory in character but is actually misleading in terms. OECD asserts that the notion of state security is inadequate and that it must be complemented by the notion of human security²². This view of complementarity recalls the definition of human security which stresses the necessity of "creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, dignity and livelihood"23. Therefore, the view that states and citizens have different but interlinked security concerns and that there should be systems addressing these concerns derives from the human security discourse. The conceptual debt that OECD seems to recognise towards human security is the one of having complemented the notion of state security. However, this

view contains an antinomy which is not defendable in conceptual terms, also considering the centrality of the role of the state in the concept of human security. It implies that the task of SSR policies is to build a framework which would work as a bridge between these two security concerns. However, this *security collage* is a very simplistic portray of the conceptual background of the notion of security (and development) carried out by SSR policies.

While state security is a concern that has grown together with the process of state building, the concept of human security has a shorter chronology. The conceptual novelty of human security is the inclusion, in the security equation, of the concept of human development. In fact, human security implies that the state has to guarantee individuals' development entitlements, putting together the "freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one's own behalf'24. This definition of human security bridges the gap not only between state and citizens' security concerns, but also between security and development concerns. The vision of security put forward by OECD, human security vs. state security, does not recognise the development side of human security. Moreover, the OECD's view disregards the significance of the development component of human security, and this can be considered as a policy expedient in order to create policies which can focus their attention only on the 'freedom from fear'; using the concept of human security to validate and justify their attention to the state system of governance; and showing proclivity towards the development discourse without assuming it as a policy responsibility.

Despite all this, it is not so easy to dismiss the conceptual weight of human security in the interpretation of security within SSR policies, as OECD does. This concept was the conceptual driving force behind the formulation of policies which state the imperative to address development and security concerns as a nexus. It was the concept which has linked together concerns about people access to development entitlements; concerns about the security of these entitlements; and expressed all this through a language of "humanity".

OECD says that SSR policies are a response to a new concept of security which takes into account not only the militarised security management provided by armed forces, but it also includes other sectors of governance whose duty is to guarantee the "freedom from fear" of citizens, such as the judiciary. The holistic and people-centred approach to security professed by OECD should not mislead²⁵. OECD stresses that 'the pillar' responsible to create an environment conducive to development is the state. In fact, SSR policies are directed toward state institutions; in the words of OECD. SSR is "a question of governance". Therefore, by defining security issues as governance issues, and by including security actors as part of governance, it implies that reforming the security sector means reforming the whole government. It also implies that SSR can neither refer to the reform of the armed forces alone nor a defence reform can be considered as a targeted SSR. This because the conceptual and implementing strategies of these two types of policies are totally dissimilar. Another reason for regarding both security and development as a governance issue is to maintain the close conceptual relation between the two which dates back since the 1990s. OECD says that in SSR policies security and development are "inextricably linked" and that these policies maintain the validity of the developmentsecurity nexus²⁷. However, according to OECD, what binds together the concepts of development and security is no longer the humanism discourse of the 1990s which exemplified their nexus with the concept of human security. The nexus between these two concepts is now ensured by the concept of governance. This new emphasis on governance implies that the long journey of the conceptual relation between development and security has reached, paradoxically, a halt by the same policies which say to exemplify the developmentsecurity nexus. The nexus is indeed maintained, but its fulcrum is no longer humanity; and no longer development. An example of how these policies, originally conceived in order to address "the freedom from want and the freedom from fear", ended up addressing state military interests is the implementation of SSR in Afghanistan.

4. SSR Afghanistan: A Policy Theatre in a War Theatre

There have been several studies on SSR Afghanistan, but they all limit their focus to the progress and failure of these policies, and above all on the lack of coordination among SSR lead-donor countries²⁸. However, what is needed is an analysis that does not take for granted the application of SSR policies in the Afghan context and that focuses on the conceptual implication of their usage. Under scrutiny is then the general consensus among policy makers about the adoption of SSR policies in Afghanistan despite the ongoing conflict, and the need for questioning if they were the right conceptual tool for framing the creation of the army and security forces. In particular, what is the meaning and validity of using the conceptual framework of SSR in a war theatre which has added a military victory to the policy objectives of strengthening the governance of the security sector?

The legal framework of SSR in Afghanistan: The benchmark for SSR in Afghanistan has been 2001, which is the starting date of the ongoing conflict between Coalition of armed forces, NATO, USA, and the Taliban armed forces²⁹. The aim of this war was to destroy the Taliban's state in order to rebuild an Afghan democratic state which would be innocuous to the international community. This was in fact the objective of the "Kabul winners", namely some Western states and Northern Alliance, when they participated at the Bonn Conference in December 2001³⁰. Statebuilding is a political exercise which requires among other things a political space, not a battle-space. The lack of a military victory by Western forces, who have only managed to win in Kabul; and the lack of a peace agreement between the parties of the conflict, as war still continues, have made the national and international political effort of building the Afghan state as a chimerical exercise. And SSR policies have been tasked to design it³¹. The legal framework of SSR Afghanistan has been placed within a broader political architectture called state-building. Therefore, prisources related to SSR are included

within documents which have marked the political path of the country since 2001. The storming of Kabul in November 2001 was followed by the Bonn Conference in December 2001 organised by the Kabul winners. The outcome of this meeting was "The Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions" (the Bonn Agreement). In the Bonn Agreement it was recognised the need for the state to have the monopoly of the armed forces within its territory. This document set the tone for SSR Afghanistan and signed the first milestone of building the Afghan state, as it established the Afghanistan Interim Authority (AIA). This body was put in charge of leading the country towards the elaboration of a constitution, the creation of state institutions, and presidential and parliamentary elections. This first phase of statebuilding was accomplished with the inauguration of the Afghan National Assembly in December 2005. Since the start, SSR policies have been included in this state-building exercise. As stated by the Afghan Interim Authority, the "management of the security sector is the first and necessary step to reconciliation and reconstruction; indeed managing this sector may be considered the first reconstruction project... Failure to do so could critically impede or even reverse the Bonn peace process"32. In this statement, the absence of development as one of its objectives is due to the implementation of SSR in a new policy theatre which is a war theatre. Development is regarded as a condition which will come after the creation of state structures; after a military victory in the conflict; after a political victory of strengthening state institutions. But will the SSR echo still be heard that far?

From 2001 to 2008, more than twenty major international conferences have been organised to discuss the situation in Afghanistan³³. Already in 2002, during the initial conferences held in Tokyo and Geneva, SSR policies appeared as one of the items in the agenda³⁴. As pointed out by the UN representative during the conference in Geneva:

"Security is the basic element of this peace process, and therefore with this view the

reform of the security sector, the establishment of a national army, a police force, demobilisation and reintegration, the judicial system; these are keys elements that have to be tackled as soon as we can, and by 'we' I mean the international community along with the Interim Administration"³⁵.

This statement by the UN is in line with the Afghan authorities, as it regards SSR as a tool to achieve peace. The novelty of this conference was the methodology used for the implementation of SSR. Each component constituting the security sector of Afghanistan was coupled up with a donor state: the USA took charge of the army; Germany of the police; UK of counter-narcotics; Italy of the judicial system; UNAMA and Japan in charge of DDR³⁶.

A more detailed and ambitious plan of SSR was presented by the Afghan government at the Berlin Conference in 2004. The conference's document affirms that: "Security is a precondition for development in the short tem, while over the long term development is the key to ensuring the sustainability of security and stability. Security sector reform is the vehicle that can achieve the baseline of security needed to advance the reconstruction and development process"37. What the document does not say is that this short term period will be as short as, or as long as, the war in Afghanistan. The policy focus is on the present tense, while the policy promises lay in an unreported future.

The London Conference in 2006 marked a second watershed in the state-building process. With a state structure finally in place, Afghanistan was deemed capable, on paper at least, to exercise a political centripetal force and to assume the responsibility, or better the coordination, of SSR policies. Thus, the lead-donor SSR scheme was put under the umbrella of the Afghan government, but this was not sufficient to say that a whole of government approach was achieved. The outcome of the conference was the Afghan Compact (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the International Community 2006). This document maintains the SSR framework with its five pillars and it

asks donor governments to continue their engagement in training the armed forces³⁸.

This SSR strategy maintains the vision of a security sector which includes the judiciary and other factors affecting security such as drug production and trafficking. However, this unity is not kept for long. The same document interprets narrowly the security sector, including only the armed and police forces, and lists the judiciary in another sector. This narrow meaning of the security sector and its lack of a cross-cutting impact within governance has prevented SSR policies from being the fulcrum of the state-reforming initiatives.

At the latest conference on Afghanistan in Paris 2008, the key documents were the Afghanistan Compact and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy³⁹. This latter document pays respect to the OECD's interpretation of SSR and it also includes a link to the OECD SSR handbook⁴⁰. This unexpected appearance of the OECD SSR guidelines after six years of SSR policies implementation in Afghanistan was highly due. However, it was not followed up by a critical analysis on the rationale behind the adoption of SSR policies in this war theatre.

5. Conclusions

SSR policies have been heavily influenced by the OECD's interpretation of security, development, and their coming together under the aegis of governance. Some common denominators distinguish SSR from the panoply of contemporary policies. One element is their spectrum of action which is the security sector. This sector includes armed and security forces together with the judiciary and all the government bodies in charge of guaranteeing the democratic control of a state's means of violence. SSR policies are also characterised by their implementation modalities: this set of multiple targets requires a cross-cutting whole government approach. This means that SSR policies necessitate the participation of many government departments whose actions and efforts are united under a common policy framework. This plurality of actors guided by one policy script is the real challenge of SSR,

linked with the challenge of cross-cutting communication within many government departments and between them and a myriad of foreign donor state representatives.

Another element is the avoidance of responding directly to the human development question even when they are implemented in countries in dire economic situations. For SSR, development is a situation of well-being which should happen once citizens experienced the 'freedom from fear' which derives by a democratic usage of state force. Thus, SSR are characterised by not addressing directly issues such as lack of food, health centres, and schools. The original conception of SSR was not to hollow the development discourse of its significance but to impede that development fruits were stolen by the same state actors in charge of defending them. The misconception is that SSR policies, by having used the development discourse as a background to contextualise their significance and as well as the ultimate objective of their intervention, ended up relegating development concerns away from the present tense. This temporal remoteness has hollowed the validity of policies formulated to address development and security concerns. This, however, is what has increased the feasibility of these policies, which have been implemented in several countries. However, this feasibility is only partial and flawed. That is why I contend that SSR are more fashionable than feasible. As shown with the case study on Afghanistan, they are fashionable because: a) they frame and justified securitymilitary policies within development policies; b) and within state-building policies; c) and because they avoid answering directly the daunting development question.

In particular, the adoption of SSR policies in Afghanistan was a response to the country's military necessities. The need to continue fighting a war which started in 2001 has been the driving force for using SSR as a policy banner under which gathering all the details and instructions about the creation of the armed and police forces. In all documents related to these policies, SSR was no more and no less than a massive state defence creation

effort, which had like auxiliary issues DDR, de-mining and the reform of the judiciary. The counter-narcotics program, which was seen initially as one of the pillars of SSR, ended up be considered as a cross-cutting program, like gender and the environment. SSR policies, as they are conceived in Afghanistan, reflect the needs of the battlefield. The priority of having trained armed forces to deploy in the battlefield has monopolised the objectives of SSR policies and also the dialogue with the Ministry of Defence, rather than developing a communication which cuts across all government ministries. The definition of security sector ended up including the armed and security forces only, so that SSR has lost their transversal impact on different departments responsible of guaranteeing freedom from fear to citizens.

Moreover, SSR fit well within the state building exercise, because SSR show a large spectrum of applicability in the state building process. The language of SSR was needed in Afghanistan to reassure a worrying policy theatre about the methodology used for addressing military necessities. Even if the military language of a defence reform would have probably been more appropriate, policy makers included the war effort in the state building effort: SSR could guarantee this type of cohesion. According to SSR, the development postponement inherent in SSR policies has been pushed even further by the presence of the conflict. War is to blame for lack of development entitlements by the Afghan people, but who will they blame for lack of policies tacking the development question in Afghanistan?

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