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**The Delegation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the OSCE First Annual Security Review Conference
Working Group D: Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management**

Summary of Report "A Goal Oriented Approach to Governance and Security Sector Reform" by International Alert

In September 2002, International Alert presented a report titled "A Goal Oriented Approach to Governance and Security Sector Reform". This report, which was commissioned to the London-based international Non-Governmental Organisation by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sets out the approach national governments could take towards Security Sector Reform (SSR). This report can be summarised as follows.

The report defines the security sector according to the criteria set out by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). According to a policy document from the OECD, the security sector encompasses:

- a) state institutions which have a formal mandate to ensure the safety of the state and its citizens against acts of violence and coercion (e.g. armed forces, police, the intelligence and similar bodies); and
- b) the elected and/or duly appointed civil authorities responsible for control and oversight of these institutions (e.g. Parliament, the Executive, including the defence ministry, judicial and penal systems).

This two-pillar definition of the security sector encompasses state institutions which 'produce' security and those institutions which assure democratic control, management and oversight over that process. When activities in the field of SSR are undertaken, it should be kept in mind that security is a public good. The above reflects the two-track approach to SSR.

Building on the definition of the security sector, SSR may be defined as: "the activities undertaken in transformation of security institutions so that these institutions will play an effective, legitimate and democratically accountable role in providing external and internal security for their citizens".

It is argued in this report that poor governance of the security sector is a key obstacle to sustainable development and peacebuilding. Therefore, the promotion of good governance is a key priority to many donors. The four characteristics of good governance are:

- 1) transparency
- 2) accountability
- 3) the effective and legitimate use of resources
- 4) the role of civil society

Nowadays, donors believe that SSR is a key element of good governance policy and that SSR contributes directly to conflict prevention. It is clear that SSR indirectly also contributes to poverty alleviation.

SSR is based on the premise that the state avails of a monopoly of violence. In failing or conflict-torn societies this may not be the case. The state's monopoly of violence is in such cases contested by various movements (rebel factions, militia, etc.) resulting in the existence of security dilemma's within states. Such movements fall outside the realm of the security sector as described above. Usually, SSR is a national issue in that it merely focuses on the security sector within a specific country. Sometimes, a regional approach is advisable, especially in the case when a national conflict has cross border effects.

The report describes a number of activities, which contribute to SSR. These activities can be divided in four different fields:

- 1) strengthening civil-democratic control and oversight of the security sector
 - a. civil-democratic institutional strengthening
 - b. management and oversight of the security budgeting process
 - c. strengthening civil society
- 2) professionalisation of the security institutions
 - a. military assistance programmes
 - b. strengthening the capacity of the police and improving police-community relations
- 3) strengthening the rule of law
- 4) demilitarisation and peacebuilding
 - a. disarmament, demobilisation and re-integration (DDR)
 - b. regulation of small arms and mine action
 - c. regional security measures

The report also sets out a number of key considerations for donors. Donors should be mindful of these considerations when developing effective policies and programmes on SSR. These considerations are:

- 1) understand the context and adopt a case-by-case approach
- 2) provide for local ownership, entry points and partnerships
- 3) provide for coherence and sequence, identify priorities
- 4) recognise that SSR is a political process
- 5) appreciate scale and resources, give a long term commitment
- 6) measure impact
- 7) use internationally agreed principles, standards and laws

Finally, the report makes a number of recommendations for donors working in the SSR field. Donors should:

- 1) integrate security sector reform into relevant policy areas
- 2) adopt the OECD definition of the security sector
- 3) provide for local ownership and establishment of reform partnerships
- 4) adopt a goal-oriented approach to security sector reform
- 5) identify country strategies for security sector reform
- 6) review support given to security sector reform and define a distinctive national competency
- 7) provide for greater coherence and co-ordination (national, bilateral, regional and international)