



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

73rd Joint FSC-PC

Presentation by the Secretary General on his [report on SSG/R](#)

Vienna, 20 March 2019

Dear Chairs,
Assistant Secretary-General Jenča,
Ambassador MacGregor,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Chair of the Permanent Council, Ambassador Boháč, and the Chair of the Forum for Security Co-operation, Ambassador Wild, for inviting me to present my report on Security Sector Governance and Reform (SSG/R) here today.

When Slovakia asked me to contribute with a report on the OSCE's approach to SSG/R, I saw it as a great opportunity to strengthen our efforts and to help increase understanding of this concept in the context of the OSCE.

So I greatly appreciate Slovakia's priority to work towards the development of a common understanding of SSG/R. For many years Slovakia has provided guidance and leadership in this area. And the Group of Friends has been a valuable platform for frank discussions. I thank all participating States that have constructively engaged in these discussions.

Dear colleagues,

As we all know, security challenges are becoming increasingly complex and interconnected. They are neither unique to any State nor confined to a particular region. They demand comprehensive, effective and long-term approaches. This is the case with a wide variety of phenomena, including violent extremism that leads to terrorism, cyber security, organized crime, the return of foreign fighters, and trafficking in drugs, arms and human beings.

An effective and responsive security sector is fundamental to dealing with these threats. A comprehensive response can only benefit from a well-functioning and well-governed security sector that is gender-responsive and demonstrates respect for human rights.

But SSG/R is also a key element for conflict prevention. In too many cases, we have witnessed how poorly governed security sectors have failed to protect the population and even triggered or prolonged underlying conflicts.

So supporting national security sector governance and reform efforts is essential to achieving peace and security.

In the spirit of the Sustaining Development Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, our SSG/R efforts focus on strengthening local capacities and institutions at all levels to address root causes and foster peaceful and resilient societies.

Excellencies,

Let us be clear. The OSCE already has a long track record of supporting participating States in strengthening the governance of their security sectors and undertaking reforms in line with OSCE commitments. While not always labelled as such, all OSCE executive structures and the Parliamentary Assembly are actively involved in SSG/R support. The concept of SSG/R is already deeply embedded in our norms and commitments, with the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security as the mother of all. And last year the Parliamentary Assembly adopted a Resolution on Strengthening the OSCE's approach to supporting SSG/R in participating States and Partners for Co-operation.

Considerable expertise has also been developed in addressing cross-cutting security challenges, such as combating trafficking in human beings. We have done so by bringing together law enforcement with other governmental agencies and NGOs while applying a people-centered and human rights-based approach.

SSG/R is very much in line with our comprehensive approach to security. The OSCE Presence in Albania is a good example of how we can engage on SSG/R in all three dimensions in a co-ordinated manner. Besides obvious first dimension issues, second dimension efforts to strengthen good governance, particularly through anti-corruption measures, are a key element of SSG/R. And third dimension considerations – such as ensuring the security sector's compliance with the rule of law, or enhancing the role of women in the security sector – are equally important.

To illustrate this last point, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and the Mission to Montenegro promote women's leadership in the police. And the Secretariat's Gender Section supports development and implementation of National Action Plans on UNSC 1325.

The OSCE also actively supports civilian management and democratic oversight, which is a central element of an SSG/R approach. Many of our missions engage with parliamentary security sector oversight committees and ombuds institutions.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In recent years, the OSCE has made important progress in strengthening our SSG/R support. Our SSG/R Guidelines for OSCE staff have already contributed to more effective, coherent and impact-oriented support to participating States. Some field operations have even included SSG/R in their cross-dimensional objectives, such as the Programme Office in Bishkek.

While much has been achieved, the OSCE still faces three major challenges that prevent us from fully utilizing all the potential of SSG/R and providing the most effective support.

First, we still lack a common understanding of SSG/R.

Participating States could provide the Organization with principles to guide our assistance to national SSG/R processes. These principles should be rooted in existing commitments and

based on national ownership and political will, which are prerequisites for successful SSG/R processes.

So I would encourage all participating States to engage in discussions on SSG/R as an essential part of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and conflict prevention. The conflict cycle seminar on 13 May will provide a good opportunity.

The second challenge relates to limited capacities within the Organization.

To match the demand of participating States to support national reform processes, SSG/R capacities need to be strengthened in all executive structures.

We should start by recognizing and acknowledging the contributions to SSG/R of our work in the second and third dimensions. As a step in this direction, we have recently moved the SSG/R portfolio from the FSC Support Section to the Office of the Director of CPC.

The creation of a knowledge platform and an internal roster of experts would allow us to capitalize on existing expertise across the Organization.

Third, we should better mainstream SSG/R into our programmatic work.

Applying a coherent and co-ordinated approach to SSG/R entails placing greater emphasis on the governance aspects of security. This includes the active participation of women and civil society organizations and a better co-operation and co-ordination across the OSCE family.

Regular monitoring, reporting on and reviewing of the implementation of SSG/R support helps improve the effectiveness of our work. I will continue the practice of regularly reviewing the implementation of the OSCE Guidelines on SSG/R, and I encourage our Heads of Missions to pro-actively share their experiences and progress.

Dear colleagues,

Before I conclude, let me highlight here a fundamental element for SSG/R mainstreaming: Acknowledging national ownership as a necessary element for success.

Embracing SSG/R thus implies the recognition that **reform processes are fundamentally nationally led and demand-driven**. Thus, national ownership provides the basis for the Organization to work in full support of national processes and at the request of participating States.

I firmly believe that a common understanding of SSG/R is the foundation for ensuring that our support to participating States is effective and efficient. In other words, it would better allow us to deliver what you have tasked us to do.

My report on SSG/R offers specific recommendations for achieving synergies and enhancing collaboration within and among our executive structures. They offer food for thought for our discussions on what an OSCE approach to SSG/R should entail, and how we can improve the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of OSCE assistance to participating States.

In closing, I would like to thank all colleagues involved in the drafting of this report. Particular thanks go to CPC and Alexandra Pfefferle for their excellent work over the past few months.

I would also like to thank the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces – DCAF – for the continuous support, expertise and guidance on SSG/R it has provided to the OSCE and our participating States.

Finally, I hope that future OSCE discussions on SSG/R will be enriched by presentations by female as well as male experts.

Thank you very much for your attention.