From Regime Security to Human Security: Arab Spring and Security Sector Reform

Dr. Monika Wohlfeld

Introduction

On 17th June 2011, in response to the Arab Spring events in neighbouring countries, King Mohamed VI of Morocco presented in a speech[1], reform proposals focusing on constitutional changes. Significantly, in his speech the King insisted that appointments in the military 'remain an exclusive, sovereign prerogative of the King, Supreme Commander and Chief-of-Staff of the Royal Armed Forces', while officials in charge of *inter alia* domestic security agencies will be appointed by him on a proposal of the Head of Government and at the initiative of the ministers concerned. Thus, Morocco's ruler, who has pursued domestic reforms in the past, and has been hailed for his response to the unrest, stopped short of establishing democratic control of the security sector. This lack of willingness to touch upon the role and powers of the security sector is symptomatic of the regimes of countries in North Africa, that have traditionally relied on the security sector, in particular the military, the police and secret and intelligence services, to shore up their authoritarian or semi-authoritarian rule, and that have focused on regime security rather than human security.

This paper argues that Western partners would do well to push for quick security sector reform (SSR) on the one hand, and support intellectual change towards the concept of human security, starting in Tunisia, but also in other states in North Africa, on the other. It suggests that the two concepts, SSR and human security, are linked to each other through their understanding of the respective roles of the armies and security forces. Human security could also be a useful concept, in the process of establishing local ownership of reform processes related to the security sector. The paper explains that civil society in North Africa is the right entry point for SSR efforts. Thus, in order for the transformation and democratization processes to be successful, both goals, SSR and human security, need to be pursued in parallel in the region.

Concepts of Regime Security versus Human Security

It has been argued that in weak states, in particular, ruling elites tend to opt for short-term strategies of survival, rather than long–term state-building policies or policies focused on the well-being of citizens. The goal of regime survival is thus reflected on both external strategies and foreign policies and internal strategies. The latter tends to be a variety of carrot and stick approaches to challengers of any kind, including coercive power and state intimidation. 'This entails creating or expanding the security forces, spending large sums of the national income on military supplies, and using violence and intimidation against real and perceived opponents of the regime.'[2] The human rights records of regimes using such tactics are consequently appalling.

Of course, strong instruments of coercion, especially the armed forces, can themselves become a threat to the survival of a regime. Strategies are available to rulers to prevent such turn of events: controlling appointments, creating competition among the services, establishing elite units such as presidential guards, employing foreign mercenaries or private military companies. This has been done for example in Libya but also in other states of North Africa. But other strategies, such as providing generous defense budgets or economic opportunities for militaries, have been used, for example in Egypt. Consequently, in basically all cases, the defense and military spending is not at all, or not entirely, transparent.

Arguably, all of the autocratic regimes in North Africa employed such tactics; relying on military and security forces for their survival, and committing grave human rights abuses, such as unlawful imprisonment, forced disappearances, extra-judicial killings, torture, and violent suppression of political expression. Military and security forces were often the instrument of choice for such abuses of power.

The concept of human security has been developed in the policy-world, rather than academia, in order to broaden traditional conceptions of security, and, as such, builds on other notions with that pedigree (such as for example common security, co-operative security, comprehensive security). Significantly, human security suggests that the focus should be placed on the individual, rather than on the state. Human security is a concept that has been adopted by a variety of governments, international organizations and NGOs, which have developed on its basis some quite important foreign

and security policy approaches and practical initiatives. It is however not accepted universally, mainly because with its focus on the human being, it is seen as standing in tension with state-centric concepts of security.[3] Some analysts point out, however, that the state is vital in providing human security and, furthermore, that by focusing on human security, governance is enhanced and thus the state strengthened.[4]

The concept was first used in a significant way by the United Nations Development Programme 'Human Development Report' in 1994, and it was aimed at linking the notion of development and security, by broadening the notion of security to include economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security.[5] The Commission on Global Governance, in its 1995 report, also advocated a very broad understanding of human security that included safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease, and repression, as well as protection from sudden and harmful disruptions in the patterns of daily life.[6] Significantly, the UNDP report of 1994 noted *inter alia*, that countries with military governments and those with high military spending were not likely to be politically secure. It noted that 'one of the most helpful indicators of political insecurity in a country is the priority the government accords military strength – since governments sometimes use armies to repress their own people.'[7]

Two different understandings of human security emerged. The very broad notion of human security, which focused on 'freedom from want' was aimed at ensuring basic human needs in economic, health, food, social and environmental terms. That included issues such as access to health care, access to education, food security and so on. The more focused vision was linked to the notion of 'freedom from fear', that is about removing the use of or threat of force and violence from people's lives. The proponents of the more narrow definition argued, that a very broad notion of human security made the term all-encompassing and therefore meaningless. As Keith Krause argues, 'at this point, the concept no longer has any utility for policy-makers nor, incidentally, to analysts – since it does not facilitate priority – setting or policy coherence and it obscures the distinctive entailments of the idea of "security", inextricably linked to existential threats, conflicts and the potential or actual use of violence.'[8] On the other hand, a very narrow understanding of human security may also not be appropriate, as it may limit the usefulness of the concept to the people that it focuses on.[9]

Whether in its narrow or broad definition though, it is quite clear that the governments of North African states did not have a good record of pursuing human security[10], nor in most cases indeed, any stated policy objectives of pursuing the goal of ensuring human security. Indeed, the notion of human security, if it has been put on the political agenda at all, was introduced mostly by the civil society and NGOs, through a bottom-up approach, and appears, to some observers, as more promising than programmes of reform that rely on state institutions.[11]

In 2009, the UNDP, in its Arab Human Development Report, argued that 'the trend in the region has been to focus more on the security of the state than on the security of the people. While this adherence to the traditional conception of security has in many cases ensured the continuity of the state, it has also led to missed opportunities to ensure the security of the human person, and has left the bond between state and citizen less strong than it might otherwise be.'[12]

The events that took place in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, and other North African and Arab states in 2011, underline this finding in a most impressive way. The conception of security, which focused on survival of regimes, led *inter alia* to situations in which armed forces and police, in the name of autocratic regimes, fired live ammunition and killed peaceful protesters demanding social and economic change.

Although this aspect is maybe not getting sufficient exposure by media and analysts, it was the relationship between the military and security forces and the regimes, that not only galvanized some of the protest agendas, but also defined the methodology of response of the autocrats to the demands of the demonstrators in those popular uprisings, and significantly, also the character and speed of reform in those countries, that have embarked upon changes.

The Concept of Security Sector Reform (SSR)

The concept of Security Sector Reform is also a relatively recent one, and linked, to some measure, to the emergence of the concept of human security. While in an early, narrow definition, the security sector was understood to consist of only armed forces, the most recent efforts to define what should be included in the understanding of what constitutes security, broaden the scope considerably. This development reflects the recognition, gained

mostly during efforts to reform the security sector in Central and Eastern Europe and elsewhere, that reforms that do not take into account the broader environment are doomed to failure. To give an example, the OECD DAC Guidelines on Security System Reform and Governance, agreed by ministers in 2004, define the security system as consisting of: 'core security actors (e.g. armed forces, police, gendarmerie, border guards, customs and immigration, and intelligence and security services); security management and oversight bodies (e.g., ministries of defense and internal affairs, financial management bodies and public complaints commissions); justice and law enforcement institutions (e.g. the judiciary, prisons, prosecution services, traditional justice systems); and non-statutory security forces (e.g., private security companies, guerrilla armies and private militia).'[13] Other efforts to provide a definition identify some categories of actors:

'1. State security and justice providers;

2. State governance and oversight mechanisms;

3. Non-state security and justice providers; and

4. Non-state governance and oversight mechanisms.'[14]

Thus the concept of Security Sector Reform (SSR) refers to the process, through which a country seeks to review and/or enhance the effectiveness and the accountability of its security and justice providers. According to the 2008 report by the UN Secretary General on security sector reform, 'Security sector reform describes a process of assessment, review and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation led by national authorities, that has as its goal the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law.'[15]

DCAF argues that SSR is:

• 'A Nationally-Owned process aimed at ensuring that security and justice providers deliver…

• Effective and Efficient security and justice services that meet the people's needs, and that security and justice providers are…

• Accountable to the state and its people, operating within a framework of good governance, rule of law and respect for human rights.'[16]

SSR has been successfully implemented in a number of states that have undergone reform, including in Africa. However, as the paper will argue,

North African states have, so far, done very little, if anything at all, to advance SSR.

Link SSR-Human Security

What is the link between SSR and human security? There are several ways of linking the concepts. DCAF, a Swiss think-tank devoted to advancing SSR, argues that the concept of SSR developed along with the shift towards human security. The link that DCAF emphasizes is development. Thus, SSR, both in post-conflict situations and post-authoritarian settings, is seen as prerequisite for sustainable development, and thus the broader notion of human security.[17] Analysts point to a link between SSR and human security in several realms, namely development, democratic governance and sustainable peace.[18]

What is of interest to this paper is, that an explicit link focusing on the role of security and armed forces has been suggested by the UNDP Arab Human Development Report of 2009, and argues forcefully that 'Security and armed forces that are not subject to public oversight present grave potential threats to human security, as the experience of numerous Arab states attests.'[19] Ghada Ali Moussa, writing about human security in Arab states, also develops an explicit link between SSR and human security, by suggesting that reforming the security sector creates critical preconditions for human security, namely physical security, justice, and the rule of law. 'Since state-sponsored conflict and repression are major sources of physical insecurity and fear of violence, the instruments of violence controlled by the state must be transformed, so that they support, not undermine, the achievement of human security.'[20] Consequently, it is worth noting that the adoption by a state of a human security approach would have a significant impact on the shapes of and roles performed by the security sector and how and by whom it is controlled and governed.

The UN Human Development Report 1994 also established a link between the political dimension of the broad understanding of human security and military strength, and military spending.[21] The paper, in exploring the situation in the states of North Africa, will thus analyse both aspects, the size of the military and military spending, as both arguably serve as interesting, although clearly not conclusive, indicators of the state of human security in those countries.

It is worthwhile pointing out, that while SSR and human security as concepts, share the focus on the individual, and are interlinked in significant ways, they are by no means identical. Their main difference is that SSR is concerned with 'freedom from fear', while human security, particularly in its broader application, includes many more considerations of threats to human beings. This in itself is not problematic. However, some analysts warn that SSR cannot adhere to the broader understanding of human security, because this may have implications for the role and mandates of the security sector. To be more specific, while specifically in North African states, the goal of SSR should be *inter alia* to shift from military performing internal tasks to external tasks (unlike the police for example), adoption of a human security approach may lead to the armed forces to perform non-traditional internal tasks (linked to the broad agenda of human security).[22] It is worth pointing out, however, that cuts to bloated military budgets can potentially result in more budgetary support for the broader human security agenda.

Situation on the ground: Case Study of Armed Forces

The scope of this paper does not allow for an in-depth analysis of the situation in the individual countries of North Africa. However, a quick look at the military size and budget of some of the countries of the region (Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Libya) will be helpful in the context of this paper.

<u>Military size</u>

Although the size of military forces is arguably not the single, most important information pertaining to it, it is worth having a quick look at the numerical strength. Information about size of armed forces should be viewed in combination with broader sets of date on resources, demographics, social change and regional issues in order to give an appropriate picture. One such effort is The North African Military Balance, produced in 2010 by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, which serves as an excellent resource for any student of the region.[23] Here, only very brief and generic references will be provided.

There is a profound difference between the Tunisian military and its counterparts in other parts of North Africa. The Tunisian Army, which did not lay the basis for the new Tunisian regime after the country's independence in 1956[24], has a relatively small number of personnel of some 35.000 men,

mostly conscripts. Experts argue that the population did not associate it with the past authoritarian regime.[25] Tunisia, together with Morocco, is one of the major recipients of US military equipment and training in North Africa, but not on a scale comparable to Egypt.

In contrast to Tunisia, the Egyptian army has a manpower of some half a million troops in the armed forces, but there are also 300,000 strong paramilitary forces, the Central Security Forces, staffed with conscripts, and created in the 1970s to address domestic disturbances.[26] The Egyptian military benefits from US defense-procurement credits and training and assistance programmes, both in the US and in the country. It is claimed that Egypt is one of the largest recipients of U.S. military aid. In 2007, Washington agreed to a $13 billion, 10 year aid package to Egypt.[27] 'Egypt's military is the foundation of the modern state, having overthrown the country's monarchy in 1952. All four of the country's leaders since then – Gamal Abdel Nasser, Anwar Sadat, Hosni Mubarak and now, Mohammed Hussein Tantawi – have been army or air force officers, and the armed forces play a major role in the Egyptian economy.'[28]

Algeria and Morocco, which are not directly in conflict with each other, but compete and pursue an arms race over the issue of Western Sahara, both have relatively large militaries. The North African Military Balance has the following to say about the Algerian military strength: 'Algerian regular military manpower peaked at around 170,000 in the mid 1980s, but declined to 147,000 actives by 2010, including some 80,000 conscripts. It had an on-paper reserve strength of some 150,000, with little or no real-world readiness and war fighting capability.'[29] The army is seen as heavily politicized. The military is a direct successor of the armed wing of the National Liberation Front, which fought the war of independence.[30]

Morocco has some 195,800 active military forces, including the 175,000-man army, 'the only force in the Maghreb that has recently had to train and organize for serious combat, although this combat has consisted largely of guerrilla warfare'. The Moroccan army has conscripts and regular military corps.[31] Morocco also has a 150,000-man reserve and a paramilitary Force Auxiliaire, with 30,000 men designed to reinforce the army in a campaign against Algeria. According to US embassy reports published on Wikileaks, the King keeps military and police under strict controls due to lack of trust, and the very large, costly and reportedly corrupt military, constitutes a drain on national resources. [32]

It is rather difficult to describe the Libyan army, as information is not released. It is reported, that Libyan army consists to a large degree of conscripts and volunteers, and is relatively small with 50,000 men. There is lack of information about other units, such as special guards and paramilitary units. 'While the army is sometimes reported to have some 40,000 men in its People's Militia, this force is more a symbol of Qadhafi's ever-changing ideology than a military force. The Libyan army seems to lack anything approaching an effective and well-trained reserve system.'[33] However, it is the paramilitary forces and personal guards, which the events have shown as being the mainstay of the regime.

Thus, there are substantial differences in the region in the sizes and structures of the militaries. But only Tunisia, and possibly Libya, do not have a large and overbearing military apparatus that is linked to the political elites. Libya, however, makes up for the weak and smallish army with other units. Its complete lack of transparency on the security sector makes it also a very specific case. The ongoing use of military and special units by the regime, to violently suppress protests and to use military means to quell rebellion, points to the complete lack of attention to human rights, human security and SSR.

Military spending

Quite clearly, North African countries are militarized countries with considerable defense budgets. As is the case for most non-democratic states' budgets, there is a certain lack of transparency on defense budgets and spending. Here again, the countries that are providing the opposite ends of the spectrum is Tunisia and Egypt. Tunisia has a small defense budget, with spending lowest in all North African countries, and significantly lower than its neighbours Algeria and Libya. However, some analysts note that spending on paramilitary units, which are to guard public order and safety, is higher than funds allocated to the armed forces. [34] 'Egypt's USD4.56 billion defense budget in 2010, makes it the strongest among its immediate neighbours in Africa'.[35]

The SIPRI Yearbook 2009 describes North Africa (excluding Egypt, which it considers as part of the Middle East), as the region with one of the largest increase in military spending worldwide in the last years.[36] Spending growth in this region 'accelerated sharply', dominated by Algeria, the largest military spender in Africa[37], and Morocco. Morocco's defense spending reportedly

increased by 127 per cent between 2000-2009, while Algeria climbed by 105 per cent.[38] The media reported[39] also, that Morocco doubled its military budget for 2009 (or as some reported in the period 2005-2009), attributing this increase to an arms race with Algeria. For Libya, there are no official figures for 2009 or 2010. However, a jump in defense spending has been noted for the period 2007-2008.[40]

While most analysts note, that in terms of share of GDP the defense budgets of North Africa remain within an acceptable budget, it must be noted that none of the countries release full sets of data, and some suggest that the real spending on the military is much higher than the figures that are provided in publications such as SIPRI Yearbook, or the North Africa Military Balance. It is clear, however, that the lack of transparency on military spending is a serious problem in assessing the situation on the ground. As Fred Tanner argues, 'Military spending, [...], is not only very high in the countries of the region, but also unaccountable, as the militaries, in addition to formal defense budgets, typically have various informal sources of income over which there is no independent control.' [41]

What are the armed forces used for ?

The biggest problem is really what the militaries in North African countries are used for and who they are accountable to. Keith Krause argues that the developments of separation of the internal and external security functions of the state, and the subordination of armed force to civil authority, illustrates the way in which the concept of 'freedom from fear' became part of the understanding of the liberal state. He points out that this is the reason why human security concerns (in their narrow, more focused form) resonate so strongly with some international actors.[42] Thus, in a modern liberal state, the police is used to protect against threats from within, such as criminality, and the military is used to defend the state from external threats, and this, thus, also assures that the narrow understanding of human security, as freedom from fear, is safeguarded.

Looking at what militaries are used for in North African countries, it is quite clear that they have had an internal role, supporting authoritarian regimes, quelling unrest and suppressing political opposition, and often also having a clear direct or indirect political role itself.[43] The UNDP Arab Human Development Report 2009 eloquently formulates the problem in the following way:

'Executive branches and security and armed forces that are not subject to public oversight present grave potential threats to human security. All Arab heads of state wield absolute authority, answering to none. They maintain their hold on power by leaving the state's security apparatus an extremely wide margin for manoeuvre, at the expense of citizens' freedoms and fundamental rights. Arab security agencies operate with impunity because they are instrumental to the head of state and account to him alone. Their powers are buttressed by executive interference with the independence of the judiciary, by the dominance (in most states) of an unchanging ruling party over the legislature, and by the muzzling of the media.'[44]

It is possible to go a step even further and claim that 'the security sector constitutes the backbone of the Arab political system'[45] and indeed, militaries have for a long time been seen as guarantors of regime security, as the ultimate protectors of the regimes.

Who are the armed forces accountable to?

The second question is how the militaries are being controlled and made accountable. Fred Tanner argues that 'in practically all countries of the region, there is only limited, if any, civilian participation in and oversight over security policy-making. Instead of being accountable to elected parliaments, the security forces of these countries remain the preserve of executive powers and military establishments.'[46] This lack of transparency, accountability and democratic control of the security forces in general and militaries in particular, is a picture that most analysts of North Africa would agree with.

While these shortcomings would indicate a need for reform, not surprisingly maybe, there has been so far, very little demand for it from the North African countries. Indeed, experts on security sector reform argue that of all of the regions of the African continent, North Africa is the least advanced on this matter, and indeed that North Africa constitutes one of the most problematic regions worldwide, when it comes to state of security sector reform.

Morocco is an interesting case study. King Mohammed VI has initiated in 1994 some limited reforms aimed at 'limiting abuses of power by security actors and educating police and prison staff, as well as the general

population, about human rights.'[47] However, most analysts argue that the reform is largely cosmetic as long as the constitutional arrangements remain unchanged, and those do not provide for democratic control of the military.[48] The Security Sector Reform Resource Centre argues that 'the eventual goal of full democratization and civilian control is impossible, as Morocco continues to function as a Constitutional Monarchy and the King retains wide authority over the army and other security actors.'[49] The reinvigorated reform efforts that the King launched, following the Tunisian and Egyptian events and constitutional referendum to take place in June 2011, combined with the demands of the civil society in Morocco, may yet bear fruit, but following the King's speech on 17 June 2011, it appears, not surprisingly maybe, that the very key issue of democratic control and reform of the military will not be tackled directly at this stage.

Role of the armed forces in Arab Spring events

While arguably the militaries are the guarantors of regime security across the region of North Africa, it is worth noting that the behaviour of the militaries, when faced with public protests on the one hand and autocratic leaders on the other, has by no means been uniform. This reflects, of course, the fact that the various regimes faced with unrest, have chosen different ways forward, such as revolution, evolution, repression, unstable status-quo, or all out conflict, and some have oscillated between them. But this is not the full explanation, because in some instances all or parts of the military apparatus did not follow the policy of the regime. An explanation for this phenomenon is provided by Dr Lutterbeck in his contribution to the volume. Suffice to say at this stage, that the military structures have in basically all cases, except possibly Tunisia, played an important role of their own in conditioning the response to the protests.

While in Tunisia some civilian protesters were shot by security forces, the military, which is not the oversized military common to the region, ultimately demanded the ouster of the President.[50] In Egypt, with its large and powerful armed forces, the military is now in charge of the transition processes, but abuses of human rights by the military continue to be reported regularly.[51] It is also unclear whether, and in which way, the Egyptian military will conclude its political role in the transition process. Algeria, where large protests have taken place, but no meaningful changes have followed, is one of the largest military spenders in the region. Morocco's ruler has responded to events in neighbouring countries by announcing reforms. But here too, the military is

large and military spending is high. It is, at this stage, not possible to predict the course of events in both of these countries. In Libya, while some units and military leaders have sided with the rebel forces, Quaddafi was able to sustain military actions with troops loyal to him, but mostly with elite guards and mercenary groups, that cause suffering and death among the civilian population.

Impact of the Arab Spring Events

Indeed, the militaries and the security sector overall, once geared to ensure regime security, have become a difficult legacy for those countries that have embarked upon the course of reform. Significantly, it is Tunisia, which comparatively speaking should have the least difficulty in reforming the security sector, that has shown the desire for change first. DCAF reports that already in April 2011, a Tunisian delegation discussed reforms to Tunisia's security sector as part of the transition and democratization process. DCAF suggests that 'Bringing the security forces under democratic control, constitutes the biggest challenge to reformers after the overthrow of former Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. People expect that reformed security forces respect the law, especially human rights, perform professionally, stay apolitical, and remain accountable for their actions. Tunisia wants change in the minds, texts, institutions and practices in order to get security forces that serve the people'.[52] Sources indicate also, that individual states within the EU and the USA have been approached at high level by Tunisian officials wishing to explore the possibility of expert support for efforts aimed at SSR, and specifically at reforming the police sector. There is little to indicate at this stage, that the military would also be subjected to reforms.

At the same time, the question worth asking is whether Egypt, with its strong military now firmly embedded in the process of change, is able and willing to implement such changes? The size and budget, as well as the political and economic role of the army, would make it a difficult and long-term effort. The additional difficulty here is that the Egyptian army has been built and supported by the US, and therefore the US needs to be on board for any reform process to succeed, possibly with the EU and other players involved.

This realization leads to another question. With the democratization processes more or less firmly on the way only in Tunisia and Egypt as well as Morocco, are those the only countries of North Africa which could possibly

pursue SSR and change of overall philosophy concerning the use of armed forces, or are other states of the region able to, as well? Clearly, as from June 2011, Libya is out of bounds for any such reforms for the time being, but ultimately, they will be possible and necessary. The context of it will be any post-conflict reconstruction and reform effort the international community might undertake, and it is, as yet, too early to speculate how this will be undertaken, as the discussion is ongoing. And while Algeria's and Morocco's relationship makes any effort at reform more complex because of their rivalry, still it appears that Morocco may be open to some aspects of reform of the security sector.

The issue of timing, with regards to putting SSR and the concept of human security on the agenda, appears significant. As constitutional reforms are under way in Tunisia, Egypt and to some degree Morocco, it is clear that there is not much time to approach the issue. Once the constitutions are amended, only superficial and more technical reforms will be possible, as the issue of separation of powers and supervision of the armed forces will be set in principle.

Most observers, writing prior to the Arab Spring events, argue that introducing SSR in North African countries will not be an easy task. Medhane Tadesse described the situation in the following way: 'The idea of security sector reform (SSR) in the Arab region of Africa seems highly unrealistic, given the sensitivity of the issues involved.'[53] The events of 2011 did transform the political landscape in the region, and arguably the idea of SSR is no longer unrealistic. But the sensitivities of the issues certainly did not disappear overnight.

Issue of Ownership of the Processes of Reform of the Security Sector

Taking into account these sensitivities, the process of reform must, on the one hand assure local ownership, by involving civil society and media in the reform drive, and on the other hand, SSR good practices must be imported from abroad (while allowing for development of own solutions).

The issue is how to support local ownership. Working with unreformed governments or police and military leaderships will be difficult in most places, not only because there may be no particular interest in pursuing a reform agenda, but also because efforts to decouple authoritarian or semi-authoritarian rulers (or even transitional governments) from the formal

security sector, may be perceived by both sides as threatening to their *raison d'être* and privileges. There will be significant differences in responsiveness, depending on which course of action both the regime and the security sector have chosen in response to the popular movements demanding change. But the case of Morocco indicates how difficult the process will be overall.

However, the concept of SSR, based on a broad definition of its stake-holders and agents, does provide for starting points other than formal co-operation with a state's police or military force. Indeed, civil society and NGOs are considered significant actors and potential partners in the SSR process. In simple terms, civil society actors and organisations can place the issue on the domestic agenda, start and sustain a public debate on the issue, and generate pressure on state actors. That is, of course, immensely more difficult and more dangerous for civil society actors in non-democratic societies, particularly those in which the formal security sector (i.e., police, military, secret services) have privileged access to economic and/or military power and where human rights are routinely abused. In the case of North Africa, where little to no reform of the security sector from the top has been observed, and where the Arab Spring has reflected and, indeed, been based on active, although, often unstructured engagement of civil society, there may thus be interest and indeed demands for steps in this direction.

The concept of human security would be a useful tool in this context. It is both a conceptual model, that allows explaining the end-goal of SSR, and a policy tool, which frames the individual reforms and steps needed to launch SSR. Human security is a concept with which civil society in North Africa appears more familiar with than SSR, and that may have tremendous appeal to societies in transition. Furthermore, human security may allow creating a network with civil society organizations working on human security issues across borders. Analysts suggest that on human security in Arab countries, 'a more inclusive dialogue between states and civil society is desirable, as is an effort to create links between civil society actors at the transnational level – a sort of global civil society dialogue'.[54]

An additional difficulty for any such reform is the lack of a regional framework, that could tallow for tackling this matter in a co-operative fashion and would assure local ownership for the efforts to introduce SSR and place human security on the agenda, but also involve other major players, such as the USA and the EU. Much could be said both with regards to why there is no framework tackling security-related issues in the region, and, also, why it

would be needed. But as there are no indications in the immediate future, such a framework could be constructed, suffice to say, that a response to the situation on the ground must cope with this additional problem.

Having been involved in train and equip projects in the region of North Africa and having provided military aid, the US must be involved in SSR efforts there, and particularly in Egypt. However, as has been pointed out recently by US commentators, the US does not have a clear policy approach on SSR, or any centralized institutional capacity to pursue SSR abroad effectively. Robert Perito of the United States Institute for Peace calls the US track record on this issue 'spotty', but indicated that there may be a shift in thinking on this issue, as a result of the Arab Spring events.[55]

Interestingly, in his seminal foreign policy speech on North Africa and Middle East in May 2011, US President Barak Obama touched upon many important consequences of the Arab Spring, that has to date resulted in changes in governance and leadership in Tunisia and Egypt: 'the need to consider not only the stability of nations, but also self-determination of individuals', support for political and economic reforms, the example that both countries could set through 'free and fair elections, a vibrant civil society, accountable and effective democratic institutions, and responsible regional leadership'. [56] Noticeably however, President Obama did not refer in his speech to the role and need for reform of the security sectors in general and militaries, more particularly, of the countries of the region. This is not to say, that this aspect could not be subsumed under some of the consequences mentioned above.

The EU has thus far 'been rather reluctant to become involved in SSR activities in the Mediterranean region and the Middle East.'[57] Indeed, the EU's experience of failed efforts to give the Barcelona process a security co-operation dimension, testifies its difficulty engaging on security issues with the southern Mediterranean. Nevertheless, the EU does have at its disposal, several instruments that would allow it to shape an SSR role for itself in the region.

The first EU document to respond to events in Tunisia and Egypt, the Joint Communication of the European Commission and the high representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy entitled, 'A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean'

(March 2011) does not mention SSR or human security at all.[58] 'Security and law enforcement sector reform (including the police) and the establishment of democratic control over armed and security forces', is recognized in the Joint Communication of the European Commission and EU High Representative on the changing Neighbourhood of the 25/5/2011[59] as one of the elements common to building deep and sustainable democracy, and part of political reform, that the EU is ready to support.[60] However, the document does not specify in which way any such reform could be supported by the EU, which according to observers failed, so far, to place the aspect of security sector reform in southern Mediterranean high on its agenda.

A number of European and transatlantic organizations and NGOs with experience in SSR and in democratization processes, such as NATO, OSCE, parliamentary organizations, and DCAF, could act by contributing their intelligence and experience. They can and should be activated to support the message and provide expertise.

An additional question concerns the examples that should be invoked for the reform processes. It would be counterproductive to be entirely Euro-centric and invoke, for example, the Central European model. Some analysts have been pointing to the example of Turkey, and the changing role of the military in its political context, as a possible model for the way forward. But as some point out, 'Turkey does not provide much of a model for many liberal democrats in countries like Egypt and Tunisia who seek to establish a secular-parliamentary political system along European lines. Egypt and Tunisia are looking at a more telescoped transition from considerably more authoritarian states.'[61] However, the Turkish example, just like transitions in Eastern Europe of 1989, the period following the collapse of the Soviet Union, as well as other transitions moving away from authoritarian regimes in other parts of the world, and the accompanying efforts aimed at reforming the security sectors, may provide lessons learned, rather than complete examples on how to move forward. Other regions, such as Asia or other parts of Africa, may also yield useful lessons for the situation in North Africa.

Thus, partners such as the EU and the USA, possibly working in tandem with a network of human security and SSR-focused NGOs, and using examples from a variety of regions, may have the opportunity in those countries where reforms are under way, that is Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco, and in the future possibly also Libya and possibly other states, to work towards ensuring local ownership through co-operation with civil society. But the matter is not

straightforward: much remains to be done to place the issue of SSR and human security high on the political agenda, following the Arab Spring, both in the countries of southern Mediterranean and their partners in Europe and North America.

Conclusions

Almost every analysis of the situation in Arab states, published at this stage of the Arab spring, starts with references to the use of security apparatus to shore up the regimes, and its use as an instrument of repression. But most then focus on issues such as elections and economic reform and short-term challenges. Thus, while the problem has been recognized, there is no clear analysis on the cure.

This points to a lack of analytical coherence, or the belief, that once the autocratic rulers are gone, the militaries and security forces will somehow automatically behave in the right way. Of course, this cannot be seen as anything but wishful thinking, particularly in countries in which the military has entrenched political roles.

The countries of North Africa that embark upon a course of political reform, inherit a difficult legacy with numerous economic, social and political challenges. It is important to understand their need to embark upon the long-term and complex process of amending the lack of transparency, accountability and democratic control of the military and security forces. It is worthwhile to specify what is at stake.

At stake is the legitimacy of the governments and their security forces, in particular if human rights abuses and violations committed by security forces, cannot be curtailed and brought to justice. Furthermore, failure to make transparent the allocation of scarce public resources to militaries and to review this allocation, to create what some term 'a peace dividend', would also pull into question the legitimacy of efforts to reform. And finally, a democratic domestic order will be very difficult, if not impossible, to pursue if the old habits of striving for regime security and using security forces for this purpose, will not be eradicated.

A good starting point for efforts aimed at introducing SSR and the policy goal of human security, would be those countries that have embarked upon a course of reform. At this time, those are Tunisia and Egypt, as well

as Morocco. But the different roles that militaries play in those countries, as well as their sheer size and budget, indicate that Tunisia is the only country where quick progress may be possible. What augurs well is, indeed, that Tunisia's transition government has stretched out feelers to explore possible sources of expertise and assistance on SSR. But others must follow.

The reform processes can only go ahead on the basis of local ownership, through the involvement and inter-linkages of civil societies and NGOs, but with expertise from major players, such as the USA and EU, that need to step up their involvement on the issue of security sector reform, and other organizations with experience in democratization issues. The concept of human security will also be helpful in galvanizing civil society input.

The key issue will be timing, as the constitutional reforms under way in a number of countries of North Africa, provide a limited window of opportunity to start a debate on the role, place and responsibility of the security sector, but also on the issue of its transparency, accountability and democratic control.

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