A NEW CONCEPTUALIZATION OF CIVIL–MILITARY RELATIONS

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Introduction

In an attempt to complement the available but deficient conceptualization of civil–military relations (CMR), I propose, in this chapter, a new, more relevant framework with equal applicability to both developing and consolidated democracies. The prevalent concept of civil–military relations is concerned primarily with the armed forces, and narrowly with issues of praetorianism and military intrusion in domestic politics through coups d’état, as well as with asserting civilian control of the military. I expand these ideas into a framework that better captures the priorities and requirements of both democratic consolidation and contemporary security challenges. It consists of a trinity: (1) Democratic civilian control of the security forces;1 (2) the effectiveness of the security forces in fulfilling their assigned roles;2 and (3) their efficiency, that is, fulfilling the assigned roles and missions at a minimum cost.3 (The concept of efficiency, however, is only touched on briefly in this chapter. See Chapter 4 by Tom Bruneau for a more in-depth discussion of efficiency as an aspect of civil–military relations.)

Control of the armed forces remains a central part of the civil–military relations framework proposed here, especially with regard to all new democracies, but most importantly those that emerge from military dictatorships. Nevertheless, it is not sufficient to describe civil–military relations in the twenty-first century in terms of control alone. Today when the overall security context has changed, national security is no longer the military’s sole business. Due to the network-centricity and network-like traits of new security threats and challenges (such as terrorism and organized crime), and, as a consequence, the blurring of boundaries between domestic and external security threats, military forces (focused primarily on external threats), police forces (focused primarily on domestic threats), and intelligence agencies (focused on both) are increasingly compelled to support each other, share roles, and cooperate, sometimes at the international level. Under these circumstances, not only is control of the military insufficient to define civil–military relations, but even extending control to include police and intelligence remains unsatisfactory. From the perspective of making effective security decisions and policies, which requires “functioning” security forces, civil–military relations must involve more than control. The concept should, then, include the effectiveness of all security forces in doing their jobs, at the optimum cost possible—that is, efficiently.
This new conceptualization is the outcome of continuing teamwork, teaching, and research within the Center for Civil–Military Relations (CCMR). Since 2003, when I joined CCMR, I have worked closely with Thomas Bruneau on developing this framework, while preparing and conducting one-week programs in new democracies throughout the world, or two-week resident courses at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. I used these courses, along with graduate resident courses in the school’s National Security Affairs Department, as opportunities to discuss challenges and prospects for democratic consolidation, defense institution building, and reform of the security forces with military officers and their civilian counterparts from five continents. Dr. Bruneau and I have turned these seminars into research opportunities, in addition to the planned coursework on national security issues, defense institution building, civil–military relations, and other seminar topics. What we have learned from civilians and officers regarding the current global security environment, requirements for democratic consolidation, and the interchangeable roles and missions of the security forces in their countries or regions have led us to depart from the traditional Huntingtonian view of CMR and formulate a new concept, which we have then tested in different contexts on diverse audiences.4

The need for a new conception of civil–military relations

Tom Bruneau and José Olmeda, in Chapters 1 and 6 in this Handbook, discuss in detail the problems the field of civil–military relations has faced in trying to move beyond Huntington. While there is no need for me to repeat those discussions here, I will address a few of the problems with the current literature below, as it relates to our framework.

First, while there is relatively abundant literature on the role of the armed forces in democratic transitions, there is much less on the armed forces in democratic consolidation.5 Second, most of the literature on both democratic transition and consolidation focuses myopically on how well civilians exercise democratic control over the military and/or intelligence agencies. This analytical tunnel vision has not changed since the beginning of the Third Wave of Democracy, which started on 25 April 1974 in Lisbon, with the military coup that became a revolution and gradually evolved into democracy.6 This is explained at least in part by the fact that the security sector has played a prominent role, for better or for worse, during the transition and in some cases the consolidation. For instance, even though neither Portugal nor Spain, whose transition began on the death of Francisco Franco in late 1975, were military dictatorships, their militaries played a key part in the transition to democracy.7 This was even more the case as the third wave spread to include explicitly military regimes in Latin America, Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Even the transitional governments of the former Marxist-dominated states, although never under military rule, had to learn to deal with their armed forces once the Berlin Wall came down and a new political environment developed. In Romania, for example, the armed forces were a central actor in the transition to democracy from the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu and his nefarious Securitate (secret police).

Under these circumstances, many analyses of democratic transitions and consolidation since 1974 include, of necessity, a discussion of the role of the military, including in some cases the intelligence services, in democratic consolidation. Some of these authors also take into account the institutions involved in CMR. The major contribution by Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan on Southern Europe, South America, and post–Communist Europe includes a focus on different military groups as a central variable under the category of “actors.”8 Adam Przeworski and Philippe Schmitter call explicit attention to the “military variable.”9 There also are some excellent case studies of CMR in the context of transitions and consolidation, or, in the case of Venezuela, what some see as democratic “deconsolidation.”10 Essentially, these authors express
two main concerns: (1) The threat a large standing army poses to democracy; and (2) the need to keep it subordinate—that is, under civilian control; and the implications of a trade-off between security and liberty, especially with regard to intelligence. Overall, what these works demonstrate is that, in contrast to their authoritarian pasts, whether military- or civilian-dominated, the emerging democracies of South America, post-communist Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, and elsewhere emphasize democratic security over national security. In other words, these new regimes focus on control of the armed forces as more important than the ability of the armed forces to defend the country. While the danger of military coups admittedly has not totally disappeared in many parts of the world, even the literature on civil–military relations in consolidated democracies does not go beyond achieving and maintaining democratic civilian control.

Third, the conceptual literature on other security instruments and democracy is also problematic. Most of the studies that do exist are not analytical but rather are about tradecraft or intelligence failures, or they advocate policy positions. In addition, normally little attention is paid to the police, which in most of the newer democracies are national police forces that at times undertake military-like roles (these will be discussed later in this chapter). There is also minimal discussion in the literature about what security forces, including police and intelligence agencies, do beyond national defense, or the implications of their roles and missions for democracy. This is surprising in that today very few militaries are trained, resourced, and prepared primarily to combat other armed forces; armed combat is in fact probably the least likely role among the six common roles that militaries, and other security forces currently fill. In March 2011, there were 99,210 military and police personnel from 114 countries engaged in peace support operations in 14 countries experiencing conflicts. In Afghanistan, in 2011, 132,203 troops from 48 nations were divided into 28 provincial reconstruction teams, including 90,000 from the United States. Some of these troops and police in Afghanistan were fighting the Taliban, but most were engaged in “nation building.” In early 2007, international peacekeeping forces in Haiti were fighting street gangs, which is more typically a police function, as well as doing humanitarian relief after the earthquake of early 2010. In many regions, on the one hand, military forces either support or, currently in the case of Mexico, supplant police forces in operations to combat drug trafficking and street crime. On the other hand, in countries such as Bolivia, Colombia, Pakistan, and the Philippines, the police fulfill military functions. Because threats span a spectrum from global terrorism to national and international drug cartels to street gangs, militaries and police forces rely heavily on intelligence agencies to identify threats and plan missions. There is, in short, a great variety of activities that incorporate different instruments of state security to deal with contemporary threats, opportunities, and challenges in both national and international environments. This combination of activities, and the resulting mixing of armed forces, police, and intelligence agencies, are the issues that democratically elected policy-makers must deal with to meet domestic and, increasingly, global expectations and standards. Nevertheless, none of this literature deals with what the militaries or other instruments of security are expected and able to do in terms of roles and missions.

Unfortunately, the existing literature still influences not only scholarly works on democratic transition and consolidation, but also policy-makers’ decisions with regard to defense and security institution building and reform. An exclusive focus on control to the detriment of effectiveness, and even efficiency, can endanger national security. Argentina, which is analyzed in Chapter 12 by Tom Bruneau and myself, provides an example of precisely this obsession and its negative impacts. Two incidents, the 1992 terrorist attacks on the Embassy of Israel in Buenos Aires, and on the Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina, a Jewish community center building, in 1994 (with a total death toll of 114), took both security forces and policy-makers
by surprise, and serve as a painful support of this argument. Unfortunately, while these attacks 
awoke the political elites to post-Cold War security challenges, those in power have still 
maintained their single focus on strengthening civilian control.

Considering the preceding discussions, my argument in this chapter is twofold. On the one 
hand, the exclusive focus on civilian control is a significant impediment to understanding the 
larger and more complex relationships concerning democracy, elected policy-makers, and 
security forces. In a democracy, policy-makers craft and implement security decisions and poli-
cies that are in the service of safeguarding democratic values, national interests, and the citizens 
themselves; successful policies, however, go hand in hand with effective security forces. We 
must remember that even when civilian control is unquestioned, as in the United States, civilian 
control by itself is no guarantee that the policy-makers will make good decisions, or implement 
policy in such a way as to result in military success. On the other hand, the exclusive focus on 
the military versus the other security forces is detrimental to understanding the larger and more 
complex relationships concerning democracy and security forces, particularly when we consider 
the very wide spectrum of interchangeable roles and missions. I therefore argue that there is 
need for a new concept of civil–military relations.

A new conceptualization: the trinity of control, effectiveness, and efficiency

Even though virtually all recent, and some not-so-recent, scholarship rejects Huntington’s 
model, nobody has yet come up with a new basis for what is essentially a contribution to 
normative political theory rather than empirical theory. I have found from my experience 
working with civilians and officers in both developed and developing democracies that 
the analytical focus exclusively on civilian control is neither empirically adequate nor, for the 
purpose of developing comparisons, conceptually adequate. In fact, as previously mentioned, 
militaries have long been engaged in humanitarian assistance, such as disaster relief, or to back up 
the police in domestic upheavals and riots. Peace support operations (PSO) became increasingly 
critical in the former Yugoslavia, parts of Africa, Lebanon, and elsewhere, and more and more 
countries have opted to furnish military, police, or gendarmerie forces for this purpose. New 
global threats such as pandemic terrorism require governments everywhere to reevaluate their 
security capabilities in terms of both control and outcomes. In this context, attacks by interna-
Moscow, and elsewhere, have compelled militaries everywhere to become involved in fighting 
terrorism to a greater or lesser extent, a job usually performed by intelligence and police forces. 
Thus leaders must pay attention to matters both of control and outcomes, using instruments 
beyond the armed forces. They must provide for security that today is both domestic and 
international, such as providing troops to NATO for PSO in Afghanistan, and cooperation in 
intelligence and law enforcement to counter the threat of international terrorism. In short, 
the challenge in the contemporary world is not only to assert and maintain civilian control over 
the military but also to develop effective militaries, police forces, and intelligence agencies that are 
able to implement a broad variety of roles and missions. Therefore, while the conceptualization 
presented here includes civilian control as a fundamental aspect of democratic consolidation 
and does not assume it exists in any particular case, control is only one aspect of the overall 
analysis. A clear picture of how effective security forces are and at what cost is also necessary to 
understand the contemporary importance for democracy of the relationship between 
elected leaders and the security forces. That is, to understand what armed forces, police forces, 
and intelligence agencies actually do in the twenty-first century, how well they do it, and at
what cost in personnel and treasure, requires a comprehensive analysis of CMR that encompasses the three dimensions of control, effectiveness, and efficiency. That is the goal of the framework described below.

Democratic civilian control

The question of why leaders and scholars focus so narrowly on democratic control of armed forces is captured in the classic dilemma, “Who guards the guardians?” Any armed force strong enough to defend a country is also strong enough to take it over. This is, of course, the assumption behind most analyses of civil–military relations, leading not only into military governments but also out of them. \(^{21}\) The issue is all the more important in those states where the military was the government and still enjoys prerogatives it negotiated for itself during the transition from authoritarian rule. Control is the fundamental concern as well with regard to the intelligence apparatus, which paradoxically works in secrecy while the very foundation of democracy rests on accountability and transparency. This becomes clearer in the case of most non-democratic regimes, military governments, or former Soviet bloc countries, where the intelligence sector enforced state security, protecting the authoritarian regime against its own citizens. Control is also important with regard to police forces, which in many countries are corrupt and even involved in organized crime activities (e.g., in countries from the former communist bloc in Central and Eastern Europe).

The next question is, how are these three main instruments of state security controlled by democratically elected leaders? There is a wide spectrum of possible control mechanisms, which will be described below. Most countries, and especially newer democracies, however, are characterized by the paucity in the number and robustness of these controls. Nor does a narrow focus on the mechanisms for democratic control encompass most of the contemporary roles and missions in which security forces are engaged. Rather, democracies should consider control over all three instruments of security in implementing the contemporary spectrum of six roles and their myriad missions. While at the local level these may be easily conceptualized, at a more global level, things are much more complicated. Any discussion of multinational efforts such as countering terrorism and organized crime, or supporting peace operations, must include the umbrella organizations that are charged with carrying out specific missions. These include, for example, NATO, the United Nations, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the African Union. While each of these organizations has its own policies and bureaucracy, national executive branches maintain control in coalition operations through mandates with further caveats. \(^{22}\)

My main argument, building on research and work within CCMR, is to conceptualize control in terms of authority over the following: Institutional control mechanisms, oversight, and the inculcation of professional norms (although professional norms can also contribute to effectiveness). Institutional control mechanisms involve providing direction and guidance for the security forces, exercised through institutions that range from organic laws and other regulations that empower the civilian leadership, to civilian-led organizations with professional staffs. These latter can include a ministry of defense for the military, a ministry of the interior for national police, and a civilian-led intelligence agency; one or more committees in the legislature that deal with policies and budgets; and a well-defined chain of authority for civilians to determine roles and missions, such as a National Security Council-type organization. \(^{23}\) Oversight is exercised on a regular legal basis by the civilian leadership to keep track of what the security forces do, and to ensure they are in fact following the direction and guidance they have received from the civilian chain of command. In a functioning democracy, oversight is exercised not only by
formal agencies within the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, but also by the independent media, NGOs, think tanks, and even international organizations, such as Human Rights Courts. Professional norms are institutionalized through legally approved and transparent policies for recruitment, education, training, and promotion, in accordance with the goals of the democratically elected civilian leadership, thus internalizing the previous two control mechanisms.

Table 3.1 illustrates the level of control national and international authorities exercise over security instruments as those instruments fulfill the six major security roles. As can be seen, institutional control, oversight, and professional norms are defined and exercised mainly at the national level. Professional norms are an important facet of democratic control in all six of the roles shown in Table 3.1. Oversight and professional norms on the international level apply primarily to four roles: Wars, terrorism, humanitarian assistance, and peace operations. Table 3.1 also suggests that there are many potential control mechanisms that remain under-utilized.

These three sets of mechanisms are, in the best of circumstances, utilized by democratically elected civilians to exercise control over security forces. But there is much more involved in security and democracy. We must also consider effectiveness and efficiency.

**Effectiveness in fulfilling roles and missions**

While there are cases in which the effectiveness of the security sector in fulfilling roles and missions can be demonstrated, effectiveness generally is best determined by whether or not the security institutions are prepared to fulfill any or all of the previously-introduced six roles assigned to them. Generally, however, effectiveness is very difficult to measure. War fighting is the one role that tends to have obvious benchmarks of success, and for which preparedness can be empirically evaluated through tactical and larger-scale exercises. Finding realistic measures of success for the other roles is more difficult. For instance, while the United States was successful during the initial wars against the Taliban and Saddam Hussein’s regime in Afghanistan and Iraq

### Table 3.1 Authorities and levels of control over security actors in six major roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles and agencies</th>
<th>Instrument of control</th>
<th>Institutional control mechanisms</th>
<th>Oversight</th>
<th>Professional norms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wars: armed forces, military intelligence</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal wars: special forces, police, intelligence</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low or N/A</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low or N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism: intelligence, police, armed forces, special forces</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime: police, police intelligence, back-up support from the military</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian assistance: military, police back-up support from intelligence</td>
<td>N/A or low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace operations: military, police, intelligence</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
respectively, it was not successful at the post-conFLICT stages. When countries prepare to defend themselves or their allies against external enemies, the greatest indicator of success will be the avoidance of armed combat, whether it is due to the perception that the defenders possess overwhelming force, success in the use of diplomatic tools, or the integration of an aggressor into an alliance that mitigates ambitions or grievances. The best recent example is probably the Cold War, which never became hot directly between the United States and the Soviet Union thanks to the mutual deterrence imposed by the two sides’ nuclear arsenals. Internal wars, including such recent cases as Colombia, Nepal, and the Philippines, have deep economic, political, and social causes that cannot be resolved by force of arms alone. Fighting tends to drag on, and it is all but impossible for either side to ever declare “victory.” The fight against global terrorism, which differs from civil conflict in that terrorism is a tactic, not a cause, and has no finite locale such as a state to defend, can be considered successful when no attack occurs. It is impossible to know, however, whether there was no attack due to effective security measures, or because the terrorists simply chose not to attack. Nor is there a clear moment when it will be safe to say, “Terrorism is defeated.” Fighting crime is ongoing, as is the provision of humanitarian assistance. Neither criminals nor natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, or hurricanes are ever going to disappear. These are a matter of anticipation, preparation, and mitigation, with the goal of keeping the level of crime or loss of life and property within acceptable limits (leaving aside the question, acceptable to whom?). With regard to peace support operations, the issue is similar. If conflicts between parties arise due to religious, ethnic, or political differences, and require intervention by foreign security forces, the troops’ presence in itself will not resolve the fundamental causes behind the fighting. Rather, they may provide some stability, separate the antagonists, and allow space for negotiations. While there may be much to say about what is required for security measures to be effective, we must nevertheless be realistic about our ability to measure it, let alone explain success.

Under these circumstances, based on our research and studies of what is necessary, yet not necessarily sufficient, for the security forces to be effective in fulfilling any of the six roles and missions, I suggest three basic requirements. First, there must be a plan in place, which may take the form of a strategy or even a doctrine. Examples include national security strategies, national military strategies, White Papers on security and defense, strategies for disaster relief, strategies on organized crime, doctrines on intelligence, counterterrorism doctrines, and the like. Second, there must be structures and processes to both formulate the plans and implement them. These include ministries of defense, ministries of interior, national security councils, or other means that facilitate jointness and/or inter-agency coordination, as well as international cooperation. Third, a country must commit resources, in the form of political capital, money, and personnel, to ensure it has sufficient equipment, trained forces, and other assets needed to implement the assigned roles and missions. Lacking any one of these three components, it is difficult to imagine how any state would effectively implement any of these roles and missions.

Table 3.2 presents requirements for ensuring the effectiveness of security forces. As can be seen, the three requirements are high when it comes to external wars, terrorism, and to a certain extent, peace operations, and low when it comes to internal wars, crime, and humanitarian assistance. Table 3.2 also suggests that there are many potential control mechanisms that remain under-utilized.

Efficiency in the use of resources

Efficiency in the use of resources refers to the ability to fulfill assigned roles and missions at the optimum cost. Although efficiency in the security sector is a necessary dimension of the CMR
framework, it is complicated by a variety of issues, including the multiple potential roles and missions; the difficulty of establishing measures of efficiency for any one function, let alone a combination of them; and the methodological challenges inherent in and measuring efficiency. Efficiency, thus, represents a “red herring” in the field of security, in that its use, mainly in the field of defense economics, includes a great many undefined assumptions. Notwithstanding these challenges, I found there is still a need for a set of institutions to allocate and oversee the application of resources as part and parcel of democratic accountability and transparency. This Handbook therefore includes a separate chapter (Chapter 4) by Tom Bruneau on efficiency, and the challenges and institutions involved in ensuring efficiency in the security sector.

The interdependency and tradeoffs between control, effectiveness, and efficiency

The three elements of CMR must be assessed as interdependent parts of a whole in a democratic context. Each of the three is necessary, and individually none is sufficient to ensure stable, democratic civil–military relations. Civilian control is basic and fundamental, but it is irrelevant unless the instruments for achieving security can effectively fulfill their roles and missions. Furthermore, both control and effectiveness must be implemented at an affordable cost or they will vitiate other national priorities. While the focus by the scholars working in CMR has been exclusively on control, the other two sides of the triangle must be included as well to assess the wider impact of roles and missions, and the instruments of security, on democracy. Democracy is not only about institutions; the legitimacy of those institutions is also a vital factor. How effectively and efficiently the government handles defense and security issues can influence its legitimacy. The debates in Canada and several Western European countries during 2007–11 on sending troops to serve with NATO’s International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan no doubt influenced how citizens view the responsiveness and credibility of their governments. Despite initial resistance by segments of the populations in Argentina, Brazil and Chile, sending security forces (military, police, and carabineers) for PSO in Haiti has generated pride in and increased support for the governments and security forces.29 The main intellectual and policy challenge seems to be to recognize that of the six possible roles and missions, external defense against a peer adversary is the least prevalent today, yet it is the one most militaries and civilians prefer to focus on, possibly because its unlikelihood means there is no need to provide many resources for the security sector.

Table 3.2 Requirements for effectiveness in fulfilling the six roles and missions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles and missions</th>
<th>Plans</th>
<th>Structures (interagency coordination/cooperation)</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wars</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal wars</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian assistance</td>
<td>N/A or low</td>
<td>N/A or low</td>
<td>N/A or low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace operations</td>
<td>Medium-high</td>
<td>Medium-high</td>
<td>Medium-high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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29 The main intellectual and policy challenge seems to be to recognize that of the six possible roles and missions, external defense against a peer adversary is the least prevalent today, yet it is the one most militaries and civilians prefer to focus on, possibly because its unlikelihood means there is no need to provide many resources for the security sector.
Democratic control and effectiveness

Although it may seem counterintuitive, increased democratic control can improve the effectiveness of military, intelligence, and police forces. Based on historical research, Deborah Avant concludes, “Having more civilians in control of the army made it easier, not harder, for the army to maintain its focus.” While too much direction and oversight obviously can hamper the security services’ capabilities or compromise sources and methods in intelligence, implementing “good” control, i.e., instituting control and oversight in a way that provides top-level direction and general oversight guidance as opposed to malfeasance or cronyism, leads to improved effectiveness. For example, one of the few acknowledged successes in U.S. civil–military relations, the 1986 Goldwater–Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act, both reinforced democratic civilian control and mandated jointness for the military services of the United States. Although some interoperability issues certainly remain, U.S. forces have been more effective at fulfilling their various roles and missions since this level of democratic control was enacted. Operation Desert Storm, operations in the former Yugoslavia and Afghanistan, and the initial combat success in Iraq bear witness to these improvements.

Colombia under President Alvaro Uribe (2002–10) is an interesting case of how democratic control can improve the effectiveness of the security forces. President Uribe took strong personal control of the armed forces, police, and intelligence organizations, and compelled them to confront the insurgent forces, especially the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. The result was generally improved security.

Democratic control and efficiency

While, admittedly, improved democratic control generally improves effectiveness, efficiency is not always a byproduct of increased democratic control. In most countries, there are several different branches of the military, along with various police and intelligence organizations. This diversity fosters better democratic control in that no single security apparatus monopolizes all government knowledge or power; yet it often leads to duplication of effort and bureaucratic competition among various entities vying for government resources. The reality is that direction and oversight are costly. If security services never had to testify before legislative committees, provide data to oversight organizations, reform their institutions when problems are uncovered, undergo time-consuming audits, or improve professional standards, then all resources might be used to obtain the best military equipment, provide the most intelligence product, or increase the number of police on the streets. Despite this, it is not always the case that increased democratic control will reduce efficiency. Police reform, in particular, has improved efficiency when a comprehensive approach to democratic control is adopted. In the Chilean and Brazilian cases, community policing efforts, while initially difficult and costly, have helped create efficient policing in the long term because citizens worked to support their own security. Probably most important is for democratically-elected decision-makers to have a realistic understanding of efficiency in the roles and missions of security forces. Applying a simplified business model to this area is inappropriate and can lead to disaster. An example is Guatemalan president Óscar Berger’s decision upon taking office in 2004, to cut the military by some 50 percent, down to 15,000 men. The result was a wave of violence by street gangs and organized crime, which forced his successor, President Álvaro Colom, to double the size of the military in early 2008 to counter the violence.

Effectiveness and efficiency

Improvements in management and leadership that increase effectiveness may yield positive results in efficiency as fewer resources are consumed. But it is more often the case that an operation may
be effective while being quite inefficient. Launching numerous expensive missiles at a single target and destroying it “multiple times” is clearly effective but not an efficient use of resources. Similarly, a “just in time” supply chain works well for profit-making companies like Costco and Target, but not for a warship at sea or a brigade in combat, which may face dire consequences if they fall even temporarily short of vital stocks. They require redundancy and self-sufficiency for effectiveness, but this is not efficient in the normal use of the term. Further, allocating a large police force in response to a spate of crime in a certain area may cause crime to go down, but costs may disproportionately go up. Where the balance lies is something each society needs to determine for itself, based on its own circumstances, goals, and resources.

Conclusion

I propose, in this chapter, a new, more relevant framework for the analysis of civil–military relations in the contemporary world, based on research and work I have conducted over the past decade, together with Tom Bruneau, at the Center for Civil–Military Relations. Because the current framework, focused as it is only on democratic civilian control, is both practically and analytically insufficient for dealing with the real issues facing contemporary military and political leaders, I expanded my analysis to account for the six contemporary security roles, and included not only the armed forces, but also police and intelligence agencies. This led me to define the three factors that I believe constitute contemporary civil–military relations: Control, effectiveness, and efficiency. Democratic civilian control is necessary and remains a cardinal component of this revised framework. But in a democracy, which requires broad legitimacy, governments, including the security sector, should also be both effective and efficient. Increasingly, populations are aware that their security forces must not only be under control, but must also be able to implement the assigned tasks at a reasonable cost. If the only role of the military was to fight and win wars, this point would be moot, since a loss would mean the government collapses or is replaced in any case. But citizens have a right to expect the security forces to be effective in fighting organized crime, participating in PSO with other respected states, and providing humanitarian assistance when disasters occur.

To achieve its purpose in the framework proposed here, each of the three aspects requires particular institutions responsible for control and implementation. A realistic appreciation of national security and defense, however, begs for caution when coming to conclusions on how to improve effectiveness, and especially efficiency.

Notes

1 There are three main instruments that governments use to achieve security: The military, police, and intelligence services. Each of these in turn can be subdivided. Militaries are divided into services, typically army, navy, marines, and air force; then further into communities such as infantry, artillery, aviators, surface warfare, etc.; and into active or reserve branches. Police forces can be organized at the national (Colombia, El Salvador, Romania), state (Brazil, the United States), and municipal levels; and may include specialized units, such as paramilitary carabinieri, gendarmerie, or so-called S.W.A.T. (special weapons and tactics) teams. Intelligence agencies can be divided into military, civilian national and police intelligence, to name just a few.

2 From a review of the literature and conducting our CCMR programs globally, I found that the current roles and missions of most security forces fall into six major categories: (1) Fight, and be prepared to fight, external wars; (2) fight, and be prepared to fight, internal wars or insurgencies; (3) fight global terrorism; (4) fight crime; (5) provide support for humanitarian assistance; and (6) prepare for and execute peace support operations. For a discussion on roles and missions, and the mixes in different countries, see Paul Shemella, “The Spectrum of Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces,” in Thomas
Bruneau and Scott Tollefson, eds., Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic Civil-Military Relations (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2006).

3 The framework proposed here can also include the concept of Security Sector Reform (SSR), which Timothy Edmunds addresses in Chapter 5 in this Handbook.


7 Thomas Bruneau and Alex MacLeod, Politics in Contemporary Portugal: Parties and the Consolidation of Democracy (Boulder, CO: Lynne Riener Publishers, 1986); Agüero, “Democratic Consolidation and the Military.”


9 Przeworski, Democracy and the Market; Schmitter, “The Consolidation of Political Democracies.”


12 A bloodless coup by the military took place in Honduras in 2009, and Ecuador’s military and police attempted a coup in 2010.


A new conceptualization of civil-military relations


18 A working paper by one of the leading analysts in the “military in the political transition” literature offers a glimmer of interest in effectiveness as a topic of research. See Agüero, “The New ‘Double Challenge.’”

19 See, for example, Thomas Ricks, Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), for a well-researched account of the poor planning and implementation of U.S. security in Iraq with serious consequences for the administration of George W. Bush and indeed for the global prestige of the United States.

20 I am encouraged to see that the importance of effectiveness is forcefully advocated in a recent article by the eminent British scholar of strategy, Hew Strachan. See Strachan, “Making Strategy: Civil–Military Relations after Iraq,” Survival 48(3) (Autumn 2006): 59–82, especially p. 66.


Instead of asking why the military engage in politics, we ought surely ask why they ever do otherwise. For at first sight the political advantages of the military vis-à-vis other and civilian groups are overwhelming. The military possess vastly superior organization. And, they possess arms.

(ibid., p. 5)


26 Some cases of success include: The Goldwater–Nichols Defense Reform Act of 1986, which compelled U.S. military forces to work more jointly and thus more effectively; Colombian President Álvaro Uribe’s Democratic Security Strategy, which began in 2003, and has resulted in increased security through a wide variety of measures; Romania’s successful transition to a smaller, more professional force, now operating in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere, and its effective reform of the intelligence system; and Mongolia’s transition from a territorial defense strategy during the Cold War to deploying effective peacekeeping forces in Iraq and Sierra Leone.

28 Although it is rather difficult to assess effectiveness, what comes out clearly from the preceding discussion is the importance of such institutions as a ministry of defense and a national security council. That is, they are critical to how well the security forces work. There is evidence from new, and not so new, NATO countries that they created robust institutions, which are staffed by certain numbers of civilians who offer some level of expertise, and who can count on some career stability within the ministries, security councils, or other security-related institutions. Nevertheless, these countries were more or less compelled from outside (by NATO membership requirements) to recruit civilians and give them stable positions. Conversely, countries in Latin America lack such institutions. At a minimum, they have recruited civilians (and provided them with stable careers), but only for administrative jobs (Argentina, Chile). In those cases where subject matter experts are brought in, their positions are not stable (Argentina).
