Plenary Session 2: Coalition Building

Format: Plenary presentation
              Discussion groups

Objectives:

- Examine the legislature's roles, responsibilities and relationships in the context of security governance
- Compare and contrast processes, challenges, and successes in building coalitions for inter-ministerial vs intra-ministerial cooperation
- Examine the roles, relationships and communications within government and between government and civil society in the context of the security sector

Background:

Security is one of the most important public goods a state provides to its citizens. It is critical, therefore, that citizens are able to shape the national security objectives. One way to achieve this goal is by undertaking broad-based consultations, both within and outside the government. Building and maintaining effective coalitions, then, is crucial to effecting structural change in the security sector.

A whole-of-government approach to security sector challenges, while necessary, is insufficient unless the media, civil society, and the private sector are taken into account. Reformers are therefore encouraged to undertake a whole-of-*society* approach, leveraging all stakeholders to effect SSR objectives. All stakeholders within the government, at all relevant levels—national, regional, and local—whose activities impact on a state's ability to provide security to the citizens must have a voice in the process. Improving coordination and breaking down bureaucratic silos is part of the security sector reform process, both within and between ministries.

Citizens must also be provided with an opportunity to have their voices heard as well – either directly or indirectly. Direct participation can take the form of individual submissions or "town-hall" type meetings. Indirect participation is often done through organizations representing women, youth, workers, etc. To this end, society and media outlets play important roles in providing a feedback mechanism between the people and the states. The objective is to ensure all relevant citizens and groups are engaged and have a stake in the process.

Discussion Questions:

- What practices are in place in your country to identify and engage a broad variety of stakeholders, including civil society, in the processes of security sector governance?
- To what degree are civilian stakeholders empowered to communicate their views on security matters?
- What mechanisms are in place for capturing all voices and incorporating them in key decisions and priorities impacting governance?
- What roles might the legislature have in oversight of the security sector? What are the challenges to the effective implementation of that oversight?
- What role does civil society play in security sector governance and oversight? How can tensions between civil society and the security sector be mitigated and communications improved?

Recommended Readings:

AU Policy framework on Security Sector Reform, 2013.
http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/au-policy-framework-on-security-sector-reform-ae-ssr.pdf   http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/ua-cadre-d-aoorientation-sur-la-reforme-du-secteur-de-la-securite.pdf

Communication for Governance and Accountability Program, "Coalition Building," World Bank.
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTGOVACC/Resources/CoalitionBuildingweb1.pdf

Parliaments, Roles and responsibilities in good security sector governance, Security Sector Reform Backgrounder, *DCAF*, 2015. In English and French:
http://www.dcaf.ch/parliaments-roles-and-responsibilities-good-security-sector-governance