



**AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

**NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOP**

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“Mechanisms and Institutions of Control”

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Introduction

- **Reminders**

1. National Security Strategy (known in French as SSN): Defining threats, risks, objectives, means, and resources with a view to protecting a state's population, territory, and vital Interests
2. National Security Council (known in French as CSN): the body responsible for implementing the SSN

- **Plan**

1. Overview: SSNs exist in some western and central African states, but they are lacking in the majority of the states of the area
2. Parliamentary oversight of the security sector prescribed by the constitutions of states with or without SSN
3. Reality and effectiveness of institutions and control mechanisms in states with SSN (examples: Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia)

Overview (1)

- Lack of SSN in many countries (Senegal, Mali, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon...). In these countries, the CSNs are limited to the Executive Branch and exclude the institutions and bodies of control
- However, in Mali and Senegal, SSN development processes are beginning
- Existence of SSN and CSN noted in countries in post-conflict situations (e.g., Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone)
- However, in all the countries, laws provide for various institutions and mechanisms of control of the security sector

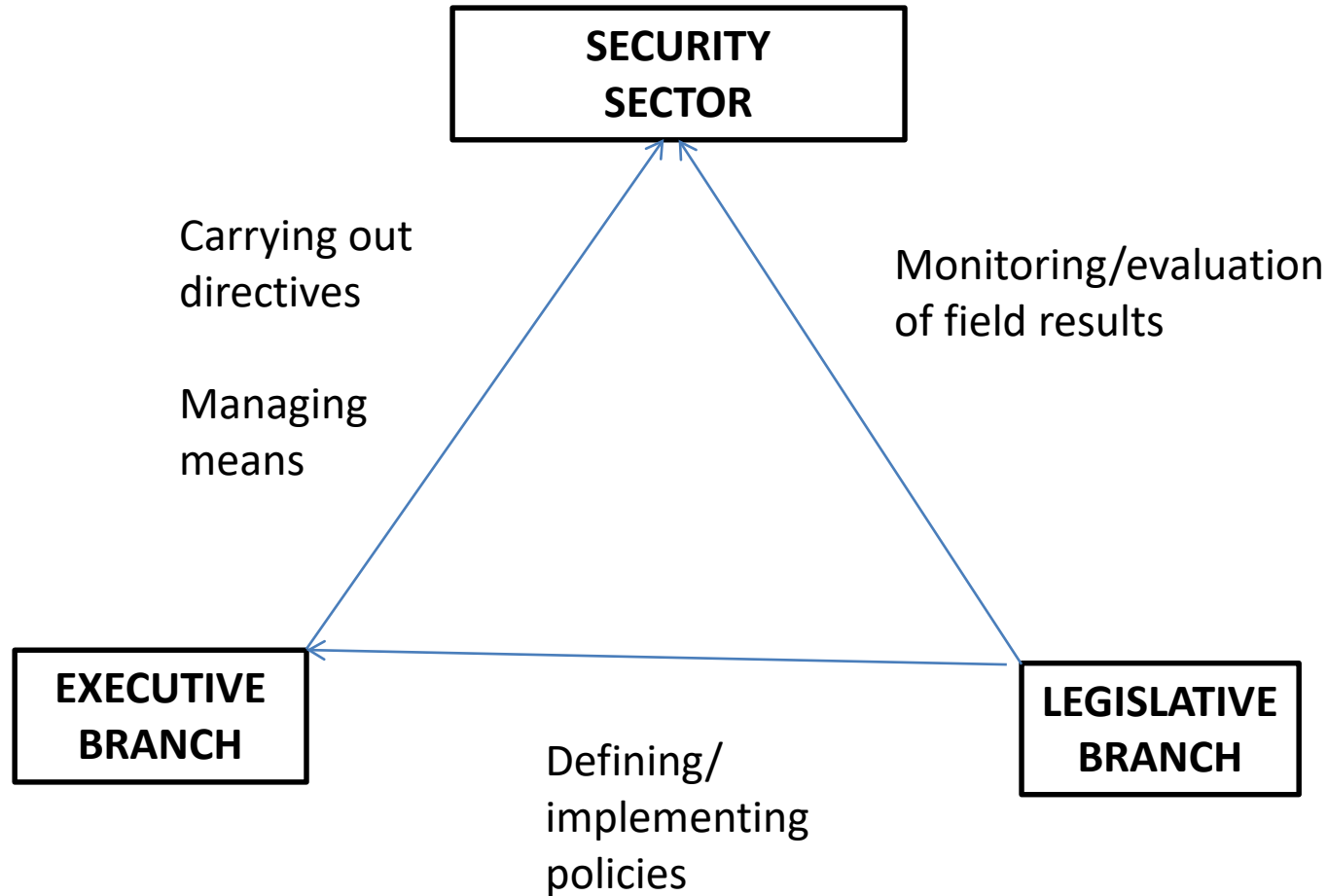
Overview (2)

- Hypothesis: the establishment of SSN and CSN is perceived as a modality of the crisis resolution policies, generally recommended by the international partners
- Parliament is the most important of the institutions overseeing the security sector and government action in general
- Civil society organizations and the judiciary branch, among others, have an important role to play
- Remarks: The adoption of SSN may allow **the anticipation of conflicts** and not just the management of post-conflict situations

Parliamentary control of the security sector (1)

- The control consists of monitoring activities and examining, verifying, and inspecting, ... their compliance with standards
- Parliamentary control is provided for and organized by the Constitutions
- Parliamentary control mechanisms include:
 - Discussion of the budget and other laws**
 - Written and oral questions**
 - Investigation commissions**
 - Ministers' hearings**
 - Field visits**

Parliamentary control of the security sector (2)



Parliamentary control of the security sector (3)

- Details related to “defense secrecy” laws and military regulations and difficulties in monitoring field operations
- Allows security managers to make arguments, especially on budget issues
- The institutional weaknesses of Parliaments limit the scope of control: limited exercise of constitutional roles, inadequate capacity of members of Parliament and administrative staff

Côte d'Ivoire: Institutions and mechanisms of control

- Preparation of a Security Sector Reform containing 108 reforms, grouped into 6 pillars including pillar #4, “Democratic control”
- The CNS has 19 members, all officials of the government and the security forces. No representation of the National Assembly
- In a partial assessment, the Secretary of the National Security Council gave this pillar a score of 2/5.
- According to him, an *“insufficient involvement of the National Assembly in the control of the execution of the process”* was noted.
- He recommends *“that the CNS regularly report its activities to the institution”*.

Liberia: Institutions and mechanisms of control

- Existence of an SSN dated January 2008 and including 11 points
- Item #10 deals with “civil oversight and democratic control”
- Presentation of general ideas on the need to remedy the weakness of the democratic control, in particular parliamentary control
- No indication of the links between the CNS and the Parliament nor on the methods of parliamentary control of the implementation of the CNS

Conclusions

- Institutions and mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of SSNs remain very weak
- The control provided for in the general framework of Parliament's constitutional roles is also weak
- Define the status of a full-fledged player for Parliaments and civil society organizations, especially in the development and re-updating phases of SSNs
- The reality and effectiveness of the control depend entirely
 1. on the commitment of Parliaments and members of Parliament to exercise their constitutional prerogatives to a greater degree
 2. on the dynamism of the Parliamentary committees in charge of defense and security