Governance, Development, and Security:
Understanding the Role of Governance in Enhancing National Security through Security Sector Reform and Governance*

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Introduction

The Philippines outlines its national security priorities and objectives through the National Security Policy (NSP)—released in March 2017—an official document which provides a blueprint for the achievement of the country's national security visions and goals. It enumerates the prevailing national security threats and challenges that the government needs to address in order to serve and protect the Filipino people. Accordingly, one of the country's national security strategic objectives is to "strengthen the integrity of national institutions by promoting transparent, participatory, and accountable governance."[1]

In relation, the issue of reforming the security sector has been one of the new agenda of various states in the world in order to anchor security considerations within the context of democratic governance, and development.[2] Considering the heightened importance of establishing security institutions that are guided by the principles of transparency, participation, and accountability, there is a need to explore strategies to improve the security sector founded on the principles of democracy and governance.

This paper intends to show how governance can enhance national security. Specifically, it aims to elucidate the role good governance principles—accountability, participation, predictability, and transparency—in the security sector.

The second part of this series, which is also anchored on the principles of security sector reform and governance, will examine the milestones of this agenda in the Philippines and provide recommendations how this can be further improved or enhanced.

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Governance, Development, and Security

Defining national security has been an endless debate among scholars and practitioners. Various academics, institutions, and organizations have defined national security in several ways. Generally, national security is understood in a military sense which is ostensibly drawn from the realist school of thought in international relations.[3] The military and the police used to be perceived as the sole actors responsible for the provision of national security. However, national security is now taken to mean to be the responsibility of other actors that have considerable impact on the delivery of national security. Arguably, this expanded participation of other actors in the security sector has been the influence of the global trend of democratic civilian control of the military[4] and the series of democratization at the latter part of the 20th century.[5] This also contributed to the dramatic change in the definition and scope of security. At the latter part of the 20th century, security was no longer interpreted as a concept that is exclusive only on the state. Security policies became more inclined in incorporating the non-traditional aspect of security by including the well-being and welfare of the people as main concern.

Arnold Wolfers argued that national security can be an ambiguous concept and involves various ways and means for its fulfillment.[6] Nevertheless, Wolfers maintained that the concept must consistently be a "matter of subjective evaluation and speculation."[7]

Considering the wide array of concepts and ideas surrounding national security, it would be best to adopt a definition of national security that suits best the needs and interest of the country and recognizes that the state is not the only entity responsible for the delivery of national security, but also of other sectors and stakeholders in society.

The NSP 2017-2022 defined national security as the "state or condition wherein the people's welfare, well-being, ways of life; government and its institutions; territorial integrity; sovereignty; and core values are enhanced and protected."[8] This definition of national security provides a multidimensional perspective of the concept, thus it is best to adopt the definition as the take-off point in understanding national security in the Philippines.

Carolina Hernandez stated that measures that were made in this regard include "constitutional arrangements where the military were put under a civilian commander-in-chief; the separation of the police from the military; the creation of civilian oversight institutions such as parliamentary committees with oversight and/or investigative powers over the defense budgets, military appointments and promotion; setting up independent national human rights bodies, an ombudsman for the military, an audit body, and an independent judiciary (horizontal accountability), as well as the rule of law and civil liberties, particularly media freedom for citizens and their organizations (vertical accountability)."[9]

Meanwhile, various organizations and institutions make up the security sector. Carolina Hernandez added that security sector can include the "uniformed services of the state, such as the military, police, paramilitary forces and intelligence services, as well as the whole array of oversight institutions in and outside government, such as an elected civilian commander-in-chief of the armed forces, various executive, legislative, judicial, and other independent bodies that have the power to check and balance the uniformed services, and civil society advocacy groups from human rights, justice, peace and security, independent media and academe."[10]

Further, these organizations can be grouped into the following: 1) Core security forces or actors (armed forces, paramilitary forces, reserve, and local security units, intelligence services, police, border and customs officials, coastguards, customs authorities), 2) Security management and oversight bodies (executive departments, national security advisory bodies, congressional committees, financial management bodies, human rights institutions), 3) Justice and law enforcement institutions (ombudsman, criminal investigation and prosecution services courts, prisons,), and 4) Societal groups (academe, policy think-tanks, peace and human tights movements).[11] Christoph Bleiker and Marc Krunpanski[12] added non-statutory civil society groups which includes "professional groups; the media; research organisations; advocacy organisations; religious organisations; non-governmental organisations; and community groups" as fifth category of security sector actors.

Aries Arugay argued that this initiative in the security sector is a relatively new concept in discussing democracy, security, peace, and development. The security sector is given importance primarily because of its crucial role in providing security for the state and its people. Further, "the security sector has also seen to be an important actor for its capacity to support or undermine democratization processes, promote or undermine good governance and contribute to the pursuit of sustainable peace."[13]

According to the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), an international think-tank dedicated to providing support and assistance to various states in the world in improving the security sector within the principles of transparency and accountability, security sector governance (SSG) refers "to the structures, processes, values and attitudes that shape decisions about security and their implementation while Security Sector Reform (SSR) aims to enhance SSG through the effective and efficient delivery of security under conditions of democratic oversight and control." Further, SSR provides "a framework for conceptualizing which actors and factors are relevant to security in a given environment as well as a methodology for optimizing the use of available security resources."[14]

SSR and SSG have been adopted by various countries as a strategy in reforming the defense and security sector to make it more responsive and effective in providing security for the state and its people. Considering that SSR and SSG is essentially an administration and management agenda, one can explore a concept in public administration to help improve the operationalization of SSR and SSG in the defense and security sector.

Governance has taken precedence when it was advocated by several multilateral and international organizations like the United Nations (UN), the World Bank (WB), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as a tool to improve the overall performance of public service delivery. Andrew Heywood stated that the term 'governance' lacks an agreed definition on what specifically constitutes governance.[15] However, 'governance' may be generally referred to as the many ways in which social life is coordinated wherein the government is only one of the actors or institutions that is involved in the provision of governance. Governance

may have been lacking a generally agreed definition among scholars and practitioners of public administration and political science, however a key defining feature of governance is that the government is not the only actor that has the sole responsibility of providing services to the public and bringing in about development in the society.

From this concept of governance, there emerged a more novel and specific notion, which is good governance. To illustrate the concept and main characteristics of good governance, Alex Brillantes and Maricel Fernandez[16] cited a document from the Asian Development Bank[17] which provides the basic elements of good governance:

Basic Elements of Good Governance	Key Dimensions	Specific Areas of Action
Accountability means making public officials answerable for government behavior and responsive to the entity from which they derive authority	Establishing criteria to measure performance of public officials Institutionalizing mechanisms to ensure that standards are met	• Public sector management • Public enterprise management • Public financial management • Civil service reform
Participation refers to enhancing people's access to and influence on public policy processes	Undertaking development for and by the people	• Participation of beneficiaries and affected groups • Interface between government and the private sector • Decentralization of public and service delivery functions (empowerment of local government) • Cooperation with nongovernment organizations
Predictability refers to the existence of laws, regulations and policies to regulate society and the fair and consistent	Establishing and sustaining appropriate legal and institutional arrangements	• Law and development • Legal frameworks for private sector development

application of these	Observing and upholding the rule of law Maintaining consistency of public policies	
Transparency refers to the availability of information to the general public and clear government rules, regulations, and decisions	Ensuring access to accurate and timely information about the economy and government policies	• Disclosure of information

These principles and basic elements of good governance are adopted by several states in the world as a tool in enhancing their strategies and techniques towards a better and efficient government. Kofi Annan, a former United Nations Secretary-General, stated on his inaugural speech that good governance is a crucial element to achieving development and an effective mechanism in alleviating poverty.[18] Also, Joseph Ukwayi and Bassey Annam stated that good governance and the improvement of the well-being of people's lives is a basic requirement for national security.[19] In the same manner, for a society to effectively function, Christian Lepreucht mentioned that four basic conditions have to be met: security, good governance, economic development and psycho-social conditions.[20] Moreover, these principles of good governance are applied in the security sector to improve the overall performance of security institutions and organizations. If applied to security sector, the elements of good governance can be understood as follows:

Basic Elements of Good Governance	Good Security Sector Governance
Accountability	Institutions and organizations in the security sector must deliver their respective mandate and duties with an entity that that will ensure that these institutions will adhere to their responsibilities
Participation	Other sectors in the society must be able to participate in public decision-making and be given equal opportunity to effect program and policies of the government

Predictability	Key legislations and mechanisms that will serve as a guide to all stakeholders in the defense and security sector must be observed
Transparency	Relevant and pertinent information must be accessible to everyone like issues on national security threats and challenges

These elements of good governance, as applied in the security sector, can be further realized and operationalized if one will be able to identify the appropriate mechanisms that are intended uphold the values of accountability, participation, predictability, and transparency. In the Philippines, for instance, various institutions and mechanisms were installed in the system to ensure that these values are integrated in the public service. Some of these includes the creation of constitutional bodies which are tasked to maintain an ethical and accountable bureaucracy like the Commission on Audit (COA), Ombudsman, and the Civil Service Commission (CSC). Other institutional mechanisms that are consistent with the principles of good governance are integrated in the processes and procedures of the government. The three (3) main branches of government—executive, legislative, and judiciary—exercises the principle of checks and balances and the notion of separation of powers as a prerequisite to having a democratic and republican government as enshrined in the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines.

Conclusion

In summary, this paper was able to show how governance as concept in public administration can enhance national security using the basic elements of good governance—accountability, participation, predictability, and transparency—in security sector reform and security sector governance. Also, it enumerated the mechanisms to which an improved security sector, coupled with the basic elements of good governance, can be applied in the defense and security sector. The second part of this series will examine the milestones of this agenda in the Philippines and provide recommendations how this can be further improved or enhanced.

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Endnotes

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—4