I Introduction

Do complex power-sharing arrangements offer the means to address and resolve the underlying causes of self-determination conflicts, and might such arrangements offer inclusive and durable futures, within which political and social stability can reasonably be expected? It is clear that the interest in complex power-sharing has both practical and normative dimensions. In this respect, expectations of complex power-sharing are similar to those found in another area of contemporary political science concerned with conflict resolution – security sector governance.

Security sector governance (SSG) seeks to eliminate armed conflict by developing policies specifically focused on the reorganization, rehabilitation, and governance of organized armed forces (whether formal or informal) and other elements of the security sector, such as armed police and border guards. One recent and authoritative study of peace operations and post-conflict reconstruction described effective reform of the security sector as the “sine qua non of post-conflict reconstruction” (Dahrendorf 2003: 13). Lakhdar Brahimi, head of the UN mission in Iraq makes a similar point: “When you speak about creating a national army you are talking about the first development project ... because without it you are not going to have anything else that lasts” (Financial Times 2003). In its more ambitious guises, however, security sector governance is also characteristically normative. More than merely addressing local causes of tension and dispute and removing the means to fight, SSG sets out to improve civil-military relations and, in short, to improve society by privileging means other than armed force in the settlement of disputes and disagreements.

The purpose of this chapter is to test the compatibility of two sets of ideas: complex power-sharing (CPS) and SSG. Both are central features of the debate on post-conflict reconstruction and state (re)formation, and the literature in each case is extensive. Orthodox academic and policy-oriented analysis generally accepts that post-conflict reconstruction programmes must be comprehensive, ad-
dressing both power-sharing and security sector issues, as well as issues concerning social, judicial, and economic reform (CSIS 2002). Yet in the process, the complex (and, occasionally, dysfunctional) relationship between power-sharing and reform of the security sector has largely been overlooked. One notable exception is Davis and Pereira’s collection of essays on the role of irregular armed forces in state formation, which argues trenchantly that where state formation and post-conflict reconstruction are concerned, a broad definition of the security sector is essential in order to comprehend the destructive and constructive potential of irregular armed forces. Irregular armed forces, of course, are a particular challenge to power-sharing arrangements in that they are a forceful, if not violent, expression of the cultural, ethnic, and civil society differences that must be bridged. At the same time, irregular armed forces might also be expected to be most resistant to security sector governance initiatives, which might be seen as a threat to their power and influence (Davis and Pereira 2003). More typical of the literature is Rees’ study of security sector reform in post-conflict transitional administrations, which describes the challenge as “a unique and complex undertaking”, but merely hints at the possibility that many of the difficulties confronting the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor were caused by the inability to co-ordinate security sector reform and power-sharing activities (Rees 2002).

To ask whether security sector governance initiatives can function and be effective in the context of complex power-sharing arrangements is more than merely an academic inquiry. The scope and utility of both CPS and SSG must, to a considerable degree, be reflected in the vitality of the relationship between them. From the outset of any attempt to settle a self-determination dispute through power-sharing, it would be reasonable to suppose that military (both regular and irregular), paramilitary, and police agencies must in some way be drawn into the process. But there are practical and conceptual difficulties here. How can power-sharing arrangements manage such agencies when they might, typically, be more concerned with power maximization and physical and economic dominance? By what argument and by what means can advocates of CPS bring military and police forces into the process, to ensure that a reformed system of governance based upon power-sharing is matched by a reformed security sector that is designed to be compatible with power-sharing? Conversely, security sector governance initiatives are characteristically Weberian and centralist, in that they emphasize the indivisibility of key state security and coercive functions (police, military, border guards, customs, etc.). In that case, how can such initiatives manage the deep cultural and ethnic differences that might be expected in post-conflict situations, particularly where regular and irregular armed forces remain significant actors, other than through reliance on a carefully crafted power-sharing arrangement, such as consociation between different ethnic groups?

Following a discussion of security sector governance, this chapter draws general and specific lessons from eight case studies in complex power-sharing: Bougainville; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Gagauzia; Kosovo; Macedonia; Mindanao; Northern Ireland; and South Ossetia.