

Co-opting Multi-stakeholder Security Provisions

“Demobilization by Rearmament” – The Dual Conversion of the KLA into Kosovo’s New Army

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The process by which Kosovo’s new army, the Kosovo Security Force (KSF), came into being represents a remarkable novelty in the classic toolbox of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) measures in countries emerging from violent conflict. What took place in the last decade of postwar peacebuilding in Kosovo in the security sector was a process of turning a military into a civilian force and then back into a military force. At first sight, such a process might appear to be an example of failed peacebuilding; but quite the contrary is true. Consequently, this paper argues that the currently ongoing conversion of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC)—once established to demobilize and transform structures of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA or UCK) into a civilian emergency organization—back into an armed security force contributes to the further socio-political consolidation of newly independent Kosovo through renewed demobilization and parallel rearmament of a strictly-controlled group of 1,000 former KLA members as the core of the new KSF army. The paper finds that such a dual-conversion policy represents the outcome of a constant bargaining, re-negotiation and final co-optation process between local and international stakeholders. By line of argumentation, the following chapters will first briefly describe the concepts of *multi-stakeholder partnership* and *co-optation of peacebuilding*, and then apply these concepts to the analysis of the demobilization and rearmament processes in postwar Kosovo with reference to the KLA, the civilian KPC, and the rearmed KSF, before formulating overall findings and conclusions.

1. Defining Multi-stakeholder Partnerships & the Co-optation of Peacebuilding

The term *multi-stakeholder partnership* (MSP) emerged during the early 1990s following the UN Environmental Summit at Rio de Janeiro and has since been adopted as an programmatic and academic concept drawing from related debates, such as governance, partnership, public networks, etc. with a focus on activation processes, coordination mechanisms, efficiency and participatory inclusiveness (cf.

MultiPart 2008: 42-47). In defining MSP, its broad conceptual understanding needs to be narrowed down in accordance with the specific research focus of concern. Consequently and in combination with the classic definition of “stakeholders” in the field of corporate management¹ and a UN-based understanding of “partnership”², the EU-funded Research Consortium on Multi-stakeholder Partnerships (MultiPart) suggested operating with the following definition:

“Multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs) bring together several stakeholders—i.e. actors (private or public) that have a shared interest in the outcome and demonstrate some degree of ownership - to address a particular issue” (MultiPart 2008: 28).³

What is essential in terms of MSP-related interaction and cooperation dynamics among the various stakeholders involved is the quality of their interdependence and the prevailing principle of collaboration among them (cf. Malena 2004; Mele 2008: 5). However, the rather euphemistic notion of partnership does not imply that it will “translate itself automatically into a principle of equality among partners: inasmuch as roles and responsibilities among partners differ, the power associated with them also varies, determining “unequal” decision-making rights”, as Mele remarked (ibid.). It is here where another concept with strong implications for MSP processes and outcomes needs to be introduced: the *co-optation of peacebuilding*. This term was recently coined by Barnett and Zürcher (2009), whose model of a “peacebuilder’s contract” describes four basic forms of peacebuilding interaction between local and international actors—cooperation, confrontation, capture and co-optation. In accordance with this model, co-optation of peacebuilding takes place when both sides (local and international actors or stakeholders) are willing to compromise on originally divergent demands using a constructive discourse on the necessary modification of the initial peacebuilding provisions while, at the same time, preserving their basic interests in political power and/or economic resources. Over the long run, such co-opted forms of external-local peacebuilding interaction are most likely to

¹ For example, “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives” (Freeman 1984: 46).

² Such as, “voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both state and non-state, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and to share risks, responsibilities, resources, competences and benefits” (Annan, 2007).

³ With respect to the practical analytical application of this MSP definition, MultiPart suggested pinning down the main characteristics of MSPs according to specific factors (ibid.: 52 ff.; MultiPart 2008: 180 ff.): i.e. actors involved (international, public, civic or private); operational issue areas and sub-areas (i.e. DDR, SSR, SALW); functionality and longevity (advocacy, information, coordination, implementation for a period of 2 years+); clear geographical range (global, regional, national, local); and degree of institutionalization (structures/processes high, medium or low).

occur, as both parties have little incentive to defect once this option is agreed upon (cf. *ibid.*: 25; Graubner/Riese/Zürcher 2007: 3 f.).⁴ However, it can be assumed that political struggles will take place over the respective degree of local ownership in and control over certain peacebuilding sectors during the MSP interaction processes of mutual bargaining and re-negotiation among the stakeholders involved. For example, “the later local ownership is achieved by transferring external authorities to legitimate local representatives and capable institutions, and the longer external peacebuilders retain effective control of political decision-making, the more are local actors willing and able to challenge the external peacebuilding agenda and its overall legitimacy [by which] external peacebuilders come under pressure to compromise and to restructure their peacebuilding agenda” (Narten, forthcoming: 13 f.).

2. A Dual Conversion: the KLA into the KPC into the KSF

Following the cessation of hostilities in Kosovo and the withdrawal of Serb forces on the basis of the Military Technical Agreement between NATO and Belgrade on 9 June 1999, UN resolution 1244, which established the international UN administration in postwar Kosovo (UNMIK), called for the demilitarization of the KLA (UNSC 1999: par. 15). Ten days later, this provision was codified in the “Undertaking of Demilitarization and Transformation by the UCK” as of 20 June 1999, agreed upon by the KLA and KFOR (KLA 1999). This agreement became the key document for the initial disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of KLA fighters into civil society. Apart from reaffirming KFOR’s final authority over all security aspects in Kosovo (*ibid.*: paras 3 and 7), the KLA also agreed to its complete disarmament, KFOR-controlled weapon storage, and the complete disbandment of its troops within 90 days under the supervision of a joint KFOR-KLA-UN Implementation Commission (*ibid.*: par. 20 and 23). In return, the international actors involved would “give due consideration to: a. Recognition that [...] the UCK [...] is committed to propose individual current members to participate in the administration and police forces of Kosovo, enjoying special consideration in view of expertise they have developed. B.

⁴ Indicators of such co-optation can be found in any form of joint re-determination of initial peacebuilding agendas according to new programmatic priorities equally acceptable to international and local actors. In such cases, “local elites and external interveners negotiate a peacebuilding program that reflects the desire of those who intervene for stability and the legitimacy of peacebuilding and the desire of local elites to ensure that reforms do not threaten their power base” (Graubner/Riese/Zürcher 2007: 3 f.). In a similar context, Richmond argued “[i]f a sustainable peace is to be constructed, there can be no exit [for international actors] until both local and internationals have agreed that such a version of peace has actually been achieved” (2006: 304).

The formation of an Army in Kosovo on the lines of the US National Guard in due course as part of a process designed to determine Kosovo's future status" (ibid.: par. 25).

While former KLA membership was introduced as an additional qualifying criterion in the recruitment process of Kosovo's 4,000-7,000 strong Police Service (KPS) from 2000 according to this agreement, the formation of a Kosovo Army designed on the model of the US National Guards never materialized. Instead, since the envisaged status process did not commence for years to come, KFOR and UNMIK urged the KLA to officially transform the core of its troops into a civilian emergency service agency, the civilian KPC, designed on the model of the French *Securité Civile* (cf. UNMIK 1999: Art. 1.1; UNMIK 2001: Chpt. 7; Heinemann-Grüder/Paes 2001: 22).⁵ However, such essential co-optation of the June 1999 Undertaking was made possible by a series of implicit compromises between the KLA, KFOR and UNMIK: (1) the bulk of the 3,000 active and 2,000 reserve troops of the newly established KPC was to be recruited from KLA ranks (mainly KLA officers); (2) the KPC would retain the existing KLA military command structure and its dense network of facilities and barracks throughout Kosovo; and (3) the KPC would be allowed to keep 2,000 weapons under joint KPC/KFOR storage, 350 of them for active guarding of its facilities (cf. Statement of Principles 1999; SEESAC 2006: 7).⁶ Through this compromise, the former KLA and new KPC leadership could hope to effectively maintain the core KLA structure in form of a "demilitarized" civilian KPC as an army-in-waiting to be upgraded into a regular army once Kosovo gained independence. In this context, former KLA commander-in-chief and then KPC commander Çeku declared: "[w]e see the KPC as a bridge towards the future, from the KLA as a wartime organization towards a regular, modern army of Kosovo" (cf. Kusovac 1999, quoted in Heinemann-Grüder/Paes 2001: 22).⁷

⁵ UNMIK regulation 1999/8 tasked the KPC with disaster response, search and rescue, humanitarian assistance, de-mining, and rebuilding of infrastructure, without "any role in law enforcement or the maintenance of law and order" (UNMIK 1999: section 1). Unlike the Kosovo Police Service (KPS), the KPC was defined as a successor organization to the KLA (cf. Heinemann-Grüder/Paes 2001: 27).

⁶ However, 56 KLA officers were recruited into the KPC without passing the required recruitment test (Heinemann-Grüder/Paes 2001: 22). Moreover, several reports indicated that the KLA/KPC continued to dispose over clandestine weapon stocks (cf. ibid.: 20; Ripley 2000: 22; Vaknin 2000; Khakee/Florquin 2003: 14; Pozhidaev/Andzhelich 2005: 57; Petersen 2005: 3). The 2006 SEESAC report estimated that "that around 20,000 former-KLA weapons are stored in caches in Northern Albania or illegally held in Kosovo" (ibid.: 14); while a private household survey estimated "a rough approximation of 317,000 unregistered firearms currently in circulation throughout Kosovo" (ibid.: 9).

⁷ International stakeholders had also accepted this vision: former SRSG Kouchner stated that the "artful arrangement [of the KPC] allowed to take account of what was for the international community an impassable red line, at the same time offering to general Çeku and half of his men a structure and

In terms of demobilization and consecutive capacity-building of the KPC, UNMIK and KFOR tasked the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with a five-month registration and screening process of KLA veterans and their subsequent reintegration into civilian life, into the private sector and into the new KPC, all of which contributed to the initial stabilization of post-war Kosovo (cf. Petersen 2005: 4). For the 25,723 KLA veterans registered by IOM by November 1999 (cf. IOM 2000), two programs were of special importance: (1) IOM's *Information Counseling and Referral Service* (ICRS) from 1999 to 2003; and (2) its *Kosovo Protection Corps Training Program* (KPCTP) from 2000-2004. The ICRS started as early as August 1999 and later included the *KPC Recruitment Battery Test*, through which the initial 4,552 KPC members were selected by a joint KFOR-KLA-UNMIK commission from an overall group of some 18,000 applicants (IOM 2002: 6).⁸ The remaining 15,000+ registered KLA members were eligible to benefit from a wide range of vocational and on-the-job training and education programs, micro enterprises and agricultural support, in-kind equipment, self-employment startup stipends and grants, job referral and financial incentives for employers, psychosocial assistance and rehabilitation projects, all of which were financed by the IOM-managed *Reintegration Fund*. The aim of the ICRS program was to reintegrate veterans into the civilian sphere by linking former combatants with private employers, in consultation with or with the direct participation of receiving local communities, municipal authorities, and a number of international cooperating partners and donors (cf. Pozhidaev/Andzhelich 2005: 34 and 62).⁹ Overall 9,785 KLA veterans (and 58,275 family dependents) benefited from this program; as did the 1,515 urban and rural businessmen providing 9,785 employment positions (ibid.).

The KPCTP program represented the second key reintegration program for ex-KLA, to convert military KLA structures into civilian ones. The program was also developed and conducted by IOM and aimed at enabling the KPC to meet its mandate of civilian emergency response. It consisted of five training phases from February 2000 to April 2004, and an additional sixth phase added in May 2004 (cf.

means that would allow them to prepare an armed force one day" (2004: 161, quoted in Pozhidaev/Andzhelich 2005: footnote 108, p. 73). Interestingly in this context, the Albanian translation of "Kosovo Protection Corps" is *Trupat Mbrojtëse Të Kosovës*, which in Albanian has two meanings—Corps for the Protection of Kosovo and Corps for the Defense of Kosovo.

⁸ Parallel to this, another group of 1,668 former combatants joined the new Kosovo Police Service, in which roughly fifty per cent of the initially-mandated 4,000 member-strong police force was set aside for KLA veterans (cf. Heinemann-Grüder/Paes 2001: 27).

⁹ IOM's ICRS program was supported by the ICRC, the International Rescue Committee, Dutch KFOR, the Swiss Liaison Office, and the Danish Workers Educational Association (cf. ibid.: 62).

IOM 2004; Petersen 2005: 4).¹⁰ With the program's long-term focus on building local trainer capacities (Train-the-Trainer programs), the IOM enabled a process of essential local ownership and active involvement at all levels of the KPC (cf. Di Lellio 2005). At the same time, the program seemed to have been flexible enough to adapt necessary training content according to local needs in mutual consultation between KPC staff and the IOM core team, whose members joined at an early stage and stayed in the program for several years (cf. *ibid.*; Petersen 2005: 5). However, in October 2004, the KPCTP program had to close down due to a lack of secured funding in the IOM-run KPC Trust Fund, following a massive reduction in the core US funding for the KPC Trust Fund (cf. IOM 2004).

With their overall rather inclusive partnership approach at planning and implementation levels, both IOM programs (ICRS and KPCTP) exemplified essential characteristics of a multi-stakeholder partnership program bringing together local private and public stakeholders (KPC, Kosovar businessmen, ex-KLA, etc.) as well as international stakeholders (IOM, UNMIK, KFOR, US Government, etc.), sharing an interest in successful reintegration of KLA veterans and demonstrating a certain degree of local ownership in the security/DDR sector.¹¹ In terms of effective peacebuilding output, the IOM programs were designed to allow for prompt intervention in geographical areas of potential conflict or disturbance, which added the note of conflict-resolution efforts to the both programs (cf. Pozhidaev/Andzhelich 2005: 34; Petersen 2005: 4 f.). The programs' rather disciplining effect of KLA registration for KPC recruitment resulted in a significant consolidation of the (until then fragile) postwar situation in 1999/2000: more than 20,000 of the total 25,000 KLA veterans applied for service in the KPC, whose strict policy was to reject any applicant with a criminal record during the application process and thereafter (cf. Di Lellio 2005). While the outcome of KLA-related disarmament and general weapon

¹⁰ Phase 1 (February-September 2000) foresaw basic training in activities that aimed at promoting personal accountability, discipline, and individual and organizational skills. Phase 2 (October 2000-May 2001) focused on consolidation of control and resources at headquarters levels and the development of unity and cooperation between key KPC leaders and regional authorities. Phase 3 (June 2001-May 2002) aimed at fostering the unity of command within KPC and increasing KPC's willingness to respond to civil authorities' needs and strengthening mutual relationship with them. Phase 4 (June 2002-May 2003) concentrated on the institutionalization of individual training at the KPC (School of Civil Protection, Simulation Center, 2 basic and 1 collective training center). Phase 5 (June 2003-May 2004) foresaw further specialized training to acquire new skills and knowledge abroad, and to prepare for self-sustained disaster relief response. Phase 6 (May 2004-2005+) was to further engage the KPC in assistance projects for ethnic (return) communities (cf. *ibid.*; IOM 2004).

¹¹ However, despite major input of the KPC in contributing to the content of the KPC Training Program, additional input or partial oversight of the KPC by local provisional institutions for self-government (PISG) was excluded by the international stakeholders involved (cf. Di Lellio 2005).

collection programs was rather disappointing, IOM's reintegration programs for ex-combatants largely succeeded in keeping the bulk of KLA troops busy and focused on a career in the new KPC, which later on developed a remarkable track record of successful emergency interventions.¹² Such a "medium-term truce" function can thus be considered a key achievement of KLA's conversion into the KPC and the supporting IOM programs.

However, longer-term cooperation and coordination between the KPC and KFOR/UNMIK—which exercised oversight and control functions over the KPC through KFOR's KPC Inspectorate and UNMIK's Office of the KPC Coordinator—became problematic after early 2001 when suspicion arose (and partial evidence came to light) of direct involvement of former KLA and active KPC members in illegal and criminal activities, such as support for Albanian extremist groups in Kosovo, Macedonia and Southern Serbia; terrorist acts; political murder; and economic crimes inside and outside Kosovo—as well as after the March 2004 riots against ethnic minorities (cf. Pozhidaev/Andzhelich 2005: 31 f. and 49 ff.; Petersen 2005: 5).¹³ Following this "deterioration in trust" (ibid.) and in order to place the KPC structures as an "army-in-waiting" under tighter control, UNMIK's SRSG Office under Steiner initiated a policy in the summer of 2002 known as "standards-before-status" which aimed at linking the commencement of status talks with meeting local standards *inter alia* with respect to the KPC's increased financial transparency, minority incorporation, and purely civilian focus (cf. KSIP 2004: 110 ff.). In order to add leverage to these provisions, these standards were later incorporated into Kosovo's European Partnership Action Plan with the EU (cf. UNMIK/PISG 2006). However, the events of the Kosovo-wide riots in March 2004 radically changed the bargaining position of Kosovo-Albanian stakeholders vis-à-vis KFOR and UNMIK and led to a renewed co-optation process with respect to the demilitarized KLA-KPC option. The first indicator of this was the thematic re-opening of Kosovo's unresolved status question by the two reports compiled in 2004 and 2005 by UN Special Envoy Eide after the March riots (Eide 2004 and 2005). At that time, the international perception

¹² For example, by implementing de-mining and infrastructure projects, or well as during the Gjilan earthquake and forest fire, the fire at the Obiliq power plant, the Mitrovica industrial accident, and general reconstruction in minority areas after the 2004 March riots, demonstrating a combination of reintegration and reconciliation efforts (cf. Di Lellio 2005; Pozhidaev/Andzhelich 2005: 30).

¹³ A group of some 2,500 ex-KLA fighters, who fell under suspicion of having joined extremist groups inside and outside Kosovo, had been left unaccounted for by the IOM programs (cf. Heinemann-Grüder/Paes 2001: 39). Stronger oversight ambitions by KFOR and UNMIK, following the March 2004 riots and at the end of IOM's training program led to intensified KFOR/UNMIK efforts "to assist the KPC to develop its own training capacity" (Petersen 2005: 5).

of the KPC and the policy of their tight control by international stakeholders had been in flux. In summer 2006, the Contact Group (CG) members (the US, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia) agreed on 13 priority areas for the local PISG government which watered down UNMIK's formerly strict standards. None of these areas was directly related to the KPC (cf. UNSG 2006: Annex I).¹⁴ In 2007, UNMIK's comprehensive "Assessment of Standard Goals to April 2007" found most of the KPC-related standards fulfilled—including compliance with the law, efforts to recruit minorities and reconstruct minority communities, transparent and independently-audited funding, reduction of KPC installations, introduction of a disciplinary code, etc. (cf. UNMIK 2007: Art. 102-109).

The political turn-around with respect to the KPC came about, finally, under UNMIK's new SRSG Jessen-Petersen, who replaced Holkeri after the 2004 riots. In close cooperation with the Western member states of the CG (the Quint) and the EU, Jessen-Petersen initiated and steered the UK-managed compilation of the 2006 "Kosovo Internal Security Sectors Review" (KISSR).¹⁵ This broad review culminated in a detailed outline proposing a comprehensive security framework for Kosovo, including the establishment of a (re-)armed Kosovo Defence Force (KDF, later KSF) to be supervised by international forces and "depending on the continued transfer of competencies and decisions on status" (KISSR 2006: XVI and XVIII).¹⁶ According to the KISSR recommendations, the bulk of active KPC members was to be disbanded—covered by an IOM/UNDP resettlement and pension program—and a small percentage of KPC members would be transferred to a new defense force (ibid.). During the KISSR "bargaining" process, the Kosovo-Albanian leadership seemed to have insisted on using the KPC as "the primary source of recruitment for the KDF" (ibid.: 140, footnote 233). Trained and funded by NATO/KFOR, the future KDF would support KFOR operations in Kosovo (in order to allow a gradual withdrawal of KFOR troops some time in the future), while oversight authorities held

¹⁴ Solely, the "Technical Assessment of Progress in Implementation of the Standards for Kosovo", as attached to the quarterly report of the UN Secretary General, mentioned the KPC and their task of reconstructing the March 2004-damaged village of Svinjare in conjunction with CG priority areas (UNSG2006: Art. 46).

¹⁵ Steering the KISSR process was later followed by SRSG Rücker, and co-chaired by a representative of the EU High Representative, with the Heads of the UNMIK's OSCE and EU pillars, the Commander of KFOR, Kosovo-Albanian political leaders represented in the Steering Committee, and advised by the Commander of the KPC, the UNDP Resident Representative and DCAF (cf. KISSR 2006: Annex III).

¹⁶ As justification for such a policy, it was argued in the KISSR that "should the international community attempt to deny an independent Kosovo its own defence force, action would be taken to create such a force" (ibid.: XVIII).

by UNMIK's Office of the KPC Coordinator would be transferred to a new Kosovar Ministry of Defense (ibid.: 141). This sudden turn-around in UNMIK's/KFOR's policy, within a year or two, from a tightly-controlled and purely civilian Kosovo Protection Corps towards advocacy for the Corps' transformation into a re-armed defense force of Kosovo is remarkable insofar as it has led to a renewed co-optation of the initial security provisions in postwar Kosovo.

In March 2007, this co-optation was manifested in the "Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement" by UN Special Envoy for Kosovo Ahtisaari (UNSG 2007), following 14 months (from January 2006 to February 2007) of status talks between Belgrade and Prishtina without tangible results. As neither side could agree on an effective compromise with respect to Kosovo's future political status (autonomy vs. independence), Ahtisaari presented his own proposal of an internationally supervised sovereignty for Kosovo to be endorsed by the UN Security Council (UNSC). In this proposal and in line with the KISSR, he suggested the dissolution of the KPC through a renewed demobilization and reintegration process for KPC retirees (ibid.: Annex XIII, Art. 6), and the establishment of a lightly armed Kosovo Security Force (KSF)—with 2,500 active and 800 reserve members and no heavy weapons, under civilian governmental and international control by KFOR and a new International Civilian Representative, the ICR (ibid.: Art. 5.1-4).¹⁷ With this setup, the KSF would take over crisis response, de-mining and civil protection tasks from the KPC, but could also be tasked with "other security functions, not appropriate for the police or other law enforcement organizations" (meaning military functions) upon authorization by KFOR and the ICR, (ibid.: Art. 5.4). As UNSC endorsement of the Ahtisaari proposal was prevented by Russian veto threats—and after another unsuccessful trilateral facilitation attempt to find a compromise between Belgrade and Prishtina (EU-US-Russia Troika Process)—, the newly-elected Kosovar assembly and government under former KLA Commander-in-Chief Thaçi as new Prime Minister, supported by most EU member states and the US, decided to declare Kosovo's independence from Serbia as a sovereign state on 17 February 2008 (cf. Narten 2008: 381-385). The declaration of independence was announced as being "in full accordance with the recommendations" of the Ahtisaari proposal, which was declared legally binding for Kosovo and would be incorporated into Kosovo's new constitution (cf. Kosovo Assembly 2008a: Art. 1-4 and 12). As a result, this (mainly

¹⁷ These limits in manpower and equipment were meant to be subject to a review process by KFOR and the ICR after a period of five years (ibid.: Art. 5.3).

EU/US-drafted) Constitution entered into force on 15 June 2008 and included provisions for a Kosovo Security Force to be established under “control by democratically elected civilian authorities” and “to protect the people and communities of the Kosovo Republic” (Kosovo Assembly 2008b: Art. 126).

Parallel to this process, the Kosovo Assembly issued two new laws related to the KPC and the KSF. The “Law on the Dissolution of the Kosovo Protection Corps” foresaw dissolving and demobilizing the KPC, under the control of KFOR (International Military Presence/IMP) and the ICO, within one year after the constitution entered into force (“transition period”) and parallel to a demobilization and resettlement program “for current eligible members of the KPC” (Kosovo Assembly 2008c: Art. 1 and 3-5). All KPC members would be able to apply for service in the new Kosovo army—or eventually for the KPC pension, severance package and resettlement program (cf. *ibid.*: Art. 4 and 6-10). The new “Law on Service in the Kosovo Security Force”, on the other hand provided for the regulation of service in and the initial standup of the KSF by the new KSF Ministry (cf. Kosovo Assembly 2008d: Art. 1). The Kosovo Security Force would be a “flexible force with no territorial affiliation [...] and may be deployed abroad”. KFOR/IMP would have “overall responsibility for the initial establishment, development and training of the KSF”, as well as for the development of a formal selection procedure for KSF members together with the Kosovo government (*ibid.*: Art. 2 and 5.1-2). With respect to former KPC members, their initial appointment and rank within the new Security Force “may take account of their former ranks, appointment and experience within the KPC” (*ibid.*: Art. 5.3-5.4).¹⁸ By end of January 2009, the new Kosovo Security Force was officially established and the recruitment process commenced with a joint commission of KFOR/ICO and the Kosovar authorities. This triggered an immediate protest by the Belgrade government (cf. Agence France-Press 2009). In coordination with KFOR/ICO, the Kosovar Government and UNMIK’s KPC Coordinator, UNDP was tasked as implementing agency with the management of a \$20-million budget of NATO’s *KSF Trust Fund* and with conducting the *KPC Resettlement Programme* (KPCRPP). As potential beneficiaries, UNDP’s program planning estimated that up to 1,800 KPC members (out of 2,883 active ones) would be in need of the KPCRPP’s

¹⁸ All KSF ranks would “initially enlist on a *Short Engagement*” before transfer to a full one (*ibid.*: Art. 9.2). All former KPC members within the new KSF were, furthermore, guaranteed the amount of their former KPC salary (cf. *ibid.*: Art. 16.4); while the general age criteria of maximum 30 years for KSF officers and 25 for other ranks may be waived for former KPC members (cf. *ibid.*: Art. 8.1).

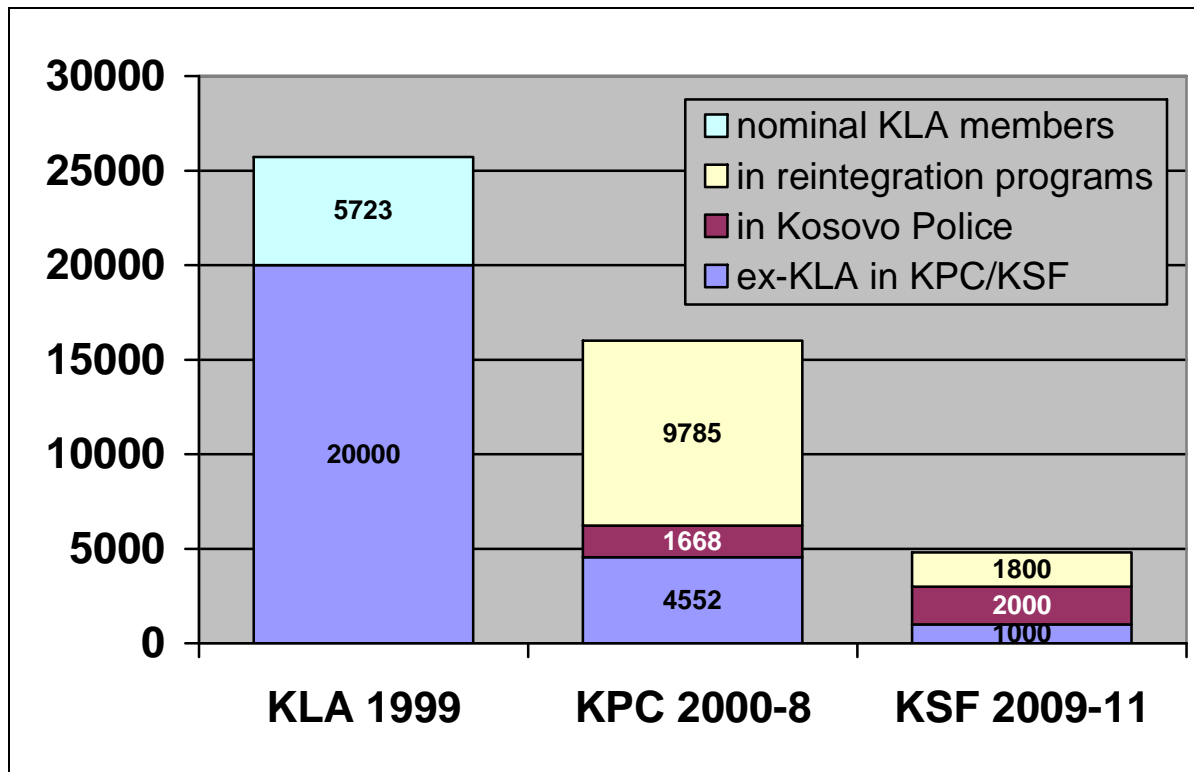
three-year assistance scheme (including a 12-month severance-payment option) that started in January 2009 (cf. UNDP 2008; KPC 2009).¹⁹ The KPCRP represents a follow-up program for civilian resettlement of former KLA members—almost ten years after the start of IOM’s initial ICRS program. Disaster relief training similar to that of IOM’s 2000-2004 KPC Training Program is likely to be continued under the KFOR’s new training program for the KSF (US State Department 2008). However, as a rearmed security force, the focus of the KSF training will not lie on civilian tasks but on a military defense function. With Kosovo as an independent state—recognized by mostly Western countries—, both KSF programs were designed and are to be implemented based on the principle of a multi-stakeholder partnership with increased input by Kosovar actors.²⁰

Taken together, Kosovo’s postwar security sector has experienced a process of dual conversion of the initially intended demilitarized KLA into a civilian disaster-relief organization, and back into a re-armed military security force. This process was effectively buffered by a first generation of civilian reintegration efforts that lasted from 1999 to 2003; and will again be buffered by a second reintegration round from 2009 to 2011. Out of the 25,723 registered KLA members as of June 1999—of which only roughly 20,000 could be regarded active members—, 4,552 (mainly officers) were “demobilized” into the KPC (while 1,668 were absorbed by the KPS). Another 9,785 benefited from IOM’s reintegration programs during that time. Some ten years later, starting in January 2009, roughly 1,000 KPC officers are in the process of becoming rearmed within Kosovo’s new Security Force (while another 1,800 will benefit from UNDP’s new resettlement program; which taken together covers the bulk of 2,883 active KPC members in 2008). The number of former KLA in the KPS remains roughly unchanged (cf. Figure 1).

¹⁹ , This estimate leaves an estimated 1,000+ KPC members to be enlisted in the new Kosovo Security Force (cf. *ibid.*).

²⁰ Stakeholders at the international level include UNDP, DPKO, NATO, BCPR, UNMIK; and at the national level the Kosovar ministries, the KPC Commander and, most importantly the Kosovar NGO APPK (Employment Promotion Agency Kosovo) as UNDP’s local implementing partner, which will run seven regional offices throughout Kosovo (cf. UNDP 2008; KPC 2009).

Figure 1: Dual Conversion of Registered Ex-KLA Members



Adapted by J. Narten from IOM 2000/2002 and UNDP 2008

In essence, the army-in-waiting option—as favored by the former KLA/KPC leadership and tolerated by KFOR and UNMIK—has led to long-term civilian reintegration of nearly the entire KLA membership as of June 1999, and to a strictly-controlled rearmament of only a small group of former KLA officers. This outcome has effectively satisfied Kosovo-Albanian interests in keeping these officers on duty in the new KSF structures, and has served the interests of international stakeholders in an encompassing and sustainable demilitarization of the former KLA. In so doing, both sides have been able to compromise on this form of co-optation of initial multi-stakeholder security provisions in postwar Kosovo since 1999.²¹

²¹ However, Serb stakeholders opted to widely boycott the participation in the KLA-KPC-KSF conversion process, despite their limited engagement in the 2006 KISSR process and the Ahtisaari-led status talks. Serb recruitment for the KPC was also rudimentary, and is likely to remain so for the new KSF; although both organizations were designed as multi-ethnic bodies. In that regard, cross-ethnic incorporation of all potential stakeholders was not achieved during the overall MSP process.

3. Conclusion: Co-opting Multi-stakeholder Security Provisions

A limited rearmament of a demobilized liberation army or civilian emergency organization represents a staggering novelty among traditional DDR policies. Having scrutinized Kosovo's dual conversion process from the military KLA to the civilian KPC and back to the rearmed KSF, it can be seen that over the long run initial multi-stakeholder partnership programs and security provisions can become effectively co-opted by a process of political struggles and re-negotiation between local and international stakeholders with respect to the agreed level of effective local control, ownership and self-determination in the security sector. Such a form of peacebuilding co-optation might then lead to a renewed demobilization of former combatants, but also to their partial re-conversion and rearmament of a "civilian" army-in-waiting. However, despite of—or perhaps because of—a policy that seems so contradictory at first sight (demobilization vs. rearmament) and the challenging of initially agreed-upon security provisions, the resulting peacebuilding outcome of such measures can effectively contribute to the further consolidation of a postwar society in the long-term perspective.

This finding is based on the fact that—with regard to Kosovo—at each step of the dual-conversion process, roughly a quarter of ex-guerilla members was kept "undisbanded" in the KPC under international control; while more than double that number benefited from reintegration programs. Through this process, over three quarters of formerly active fighters were able to be kept under a certain level of control over the period of almost a decade. This achievement, in turn, enabled international peacebuilders in cooperation with local stakeholders to buy the necessary time for long-term peacebuilding efforts, such as postwar administration, socio-economic reconstruction, and democratic institution-building. Having secured this kind of postwar foundation, the limited rearmament of a small defense force under continued international military and security oversight no longer poses an essential threat to the future peaceful development of Kosovo, nor to the wider region of the Western Balkans.

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