

Failure to do so can result in a loss of belief in the UN and the international system in general, and international human rights protection specifically. This is not to infer that the UN and member states have an open ended commitment once they agree to get involved. Local responsibility, including the fair allocation of national financial resources to protecting human rights, always exists and grows with the strengthening of society and its government. Any other approach would exonerate local society from its responsibilities, and act as an impediment to UN member states agreeing to get involved in the first instance in fear of 'mission creep' or that they were signing a financial 'blank cheque'.

But despite the inherent responsibility of local society for its human rights development, like economic development, most societies recovering from a crisis will lack sufficient financial resources and expertise. The UN and thus the HRO can play important roles in a number of key human rights areas including:

- police, prison guards, and the military;
- legal reform, judicial system, legal aid & other judicial access tools;
- human rights commissions, ombuds;
- civil society.

### 9.2.1 Police, prison guards, and the military

The security forces including police, prison guards and often the military, are particularly politically sensitive topics since they traditionally are part of the human rights problem. For the very same reason, they are equally critical to human rights capacity building as part of the human rights solution.

Human rights reconstruction is largely about behavioural changes, and this is particularly true for security forces. The "heart of the problem of the police and the army lies not fundamentally in a lack of professionalism, but rather in the general absence of any notion for any practice of respect for human rights."<sup>200</sup> HROs should focus on changing attitudes and encouraging security forces to create standing operating procedures and mechanisms that serve to protect human rights.

Incentives are critical to this behavioural change. Security forces need to see and believe that key rewards such as status, promotions, and pay are linked to protecting human rights. Less effective but still important are the negative incentives such as demotions, financial penalties, firing, and ultimately prison, which are linked to human rights violations or the failure to protect them.

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<sup>200</sup> p.76 Goldenberger, Jean, & Manigat, *Haiti: Attentat à l'espérance*, Editions de l'Institut Culturel Karl Levesque, unpublished manuscript, reported in *Haiti: Learning the Hard Way*, Lawyers Committee 1995 op cit., p.114.