

contemplate using the defense apparatus in its quest for achieving the new and higher forms of security. If there is a tendency for militaries, in both North and South, to occupy such spaces one must also recognize that also entails a relative failure or weakness on the part of government and civil society to contribute to human security.⁶

In many countries, democracy will not function without the capability to effectively control and defend the national territory—the paradox of democracy is that it may demand a well-armed army to deal for example with the international drug cartels, yet do so in a way which at the same time is subordinate to civil control. At the same time, the rise of certain new missions for the military—whether internally or externally funded—may be inimical to democracy. Such is the case with the present US-led global trend toward militarizing the counter-narcotics assignment, blurring the traditional boundary with law enforcement, and thus posing a grave challenge to civil-military relations and democracy in general, in both the US and abroad.⁷ Drug interdiction also poses a corrosive potential for corruption, particularly where woefully underpaid military officers confront an enemy with virtually unlimited financial resources.

From the standpoint of democracy, there is also need to distinguish between the military as such and special intelligence and security units which are much more likely to be responsible for human rights abuses and political interference. Reconversion here begins with tough streamlining, which in order to be effective may invoke the higher self-interest of institutional survival. In the case of South Africa, the military (and military-industrial complex) has benefitted from the transition process which was once suspect. The army has to be involved in the not

⁶As one expert explains in regard to civil-military relations in the U.S., “to the extent the military is different than the rest of society, there is a rationale for limiting its involvement in framing policy or even excluding it altogether. But to the extent the military reflects and represents society, it should be fully integrated into policy-making. The only solution is a fragile balance, shifting in response to changes in the strategic environment” (Johnson, “American Civil-Military Relations,” p. 1).

⁷This was argued by a serving US military officer cited by Douglas V. Johnson, “American Civil-Military Relations: New Issues, Enduring Problems,” US Army War College: Strategic Studies Institute, 1995), p. 8.