



Interorganizational and International Cooperation and Coordination in Providing Security: Current Practice and Lessons Learned

Philipp Fluri¹  (✉) and Iztok Prezelj²  (✉)

¹ *Department of International Affairs, Wenzao University, Taiwan, <https://c041.wzu.edu.tw/>*

² *Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, <https://www.uni-lj.si/>*

ABSTRACT:

This editorial article starts with a generic reflection on interagency and international cooperation and coordination. Then, the two editors report on their personal experience. First, Dr. Fluri critically assesses the experience and lessons learned from the coordination of national, internationally supported initiatives to reform security sectors and enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, and oversight. Then Prof. Prezelj focuses on interorganizational cooperation and coordination in counter-terrorism, crisis management and critical infrastructure protection. Finally, the article briefly presents the volume and each individual contribution.

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Introduction: Interorganizational Cooperation and Coordination in Providing Security and Security Sector Governance

Societies in the post-modern world face increasingly complex security challenges, such as pandemics, armed conflicts, transnational criminal networks,

cyberattacks, terrorist networks, environmental degradation, etc. Many of the contemporary challenges cannot be anticipated and addressed by a single security institution and multidisciplinary and multi-organizational approaches are called for. However, these multi-approaches are insufficient without strong interorganizational cooperation and coordination. Ideally, we should achieve a whole-of-government or even a whole-of-society approach. As a consequence, traditionally hierarchically organized law enforcement, civil protection, armed forces, intelligence services, and other national agencies are increasingly cooperating in networks with other governmental institutions, business and societal organizations. This can be seen in crisis management of many different threats and situations (such as terrorism, natural disasters, etc.) as well as in the realm of security sector governance and reform. This was also reflected in increasingly complex peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding operations. International organizations, such as the UN, EU, NATO, OSCE, and others, are also increasingly cooperating. None of the mentioned actors can really claim efficiency without investing a lot of effort in horizontal cooperation. Uncoordinated approaches are to be avoided.

The practice has shown that the lessons on the need for interorganizational cooperation are continuously being drawn and selectively integrated as evidenced by a multitude of practical examples. These examples show that horizontal cooperation is difficult. What is still largely missing is academically processed knowledge which, indeed, is indispensable for successfully framing and overcoming existing difficulties of cooperation among different organizations. The main motive to publish this issue of the *Information & Security* journal is to reflect on these challenges and present novel approaches and solutions. Our aim is to examine the theoretical and conceptual basis for interorganizational and interagency cooperation in providing security and examine cases of cooperation and coordination at national and international levels in various fields (e.g., counter-terrorism, fight against crime, critical infrastructure protection, cybersecurity, disaster management, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, etc.). This topic requires to be studied from various perspectives, such as policy, legal, organizational, technical/technological, and oversight perspectives. We need to discuss good practices in cooperation and coordination on one hand and also challenges and problems among cooperating organizations, and efforts to identify and overcome them on the other hand. There is a lot of space and opportunities to identify and compare different interorganizational approaches, identify and discuss interorganizational exercises and simulations, analyse interorganizational planning and focus on technical and technological aspects of sharing data and information across agencies and institutions. Finally, the academic and practitioners' worlds need recommendations on how to enhance interorganizational cooperation and coordination.

Both guest editors have significant interorganizational experiences. These experiences motivated us to initiate academic work and research on this theme.

The Interorganizational Approach to Security Sector Governance and Reform – An Editor’s Experience

The discourse on Security Sector Governance (SSG) and Reform (SSR) emerged during the first phases of post-Cold War optimism in the 1990s, when democracy and liberal market economy seemed to have prevailed, and were seen as spreading to the darkest corners of the world. If defence, security, and development had previously been kept from flourishing and successful cooperation by siloed approaches, and (in the case of the former two) restrictive secrecy and confidentiality rules, an *integrated* approach guided by liberal democratic values now was seen to remedy this situation. Democracy was no longer to be just a nice-to-have accessory, but the organizing principle. Democratic control of armed forces which had traditionally been a rather academic discipline now gained a role in the centre of the stage, and was understood to not only encompass the military, but everyone in uniform and carrying a weapon (or not in uniform and otherwise claiming to protect the state, and/or the population). The 1991 Moscow coup attempt further focussed minds on how unreformed military may seek to capture a state. Little attention was yet paid to unreformed security services.

Good governance and reform of the Security Sector by *definition* involve interorganizational cooperation at different levels and in different dimensions: *horizontal* coordination of previously not or only loosely coordinated (often relatively autonomously acting or non-acting) defence and security-providing entities – one of the reasons why reform of the sector is necessary. SSR/G involves *vertical* cooperation and guidance, by the executive, but also by the democratically elected oversight organs formed by parliament and the judiciary. It often also involved and involves cooperation with similar organizations and/or their representatives *internationally*. Such international assistance has been and is designed and delivered by both governmental and non-governmental organizations and actors. A plethora of NGOs have been and are involved in the design and delivery of such programs.

Origins and Principles of SSG/R

The discourse on SSR/SSG started with the conceptual and practical possibilities opened by the 1994 OSCE *Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Cooperation*, and early discussions within and stemming from the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Though different organizations added facets and orientations, SSG has been seen to contain the following aspects (with SSR being the transformation leading to such governance):

- How to establish effective governance, oversight, and accountability of the security system
- How to improve the delivery of security and justice services
- How to contribute to the development of local leadership and ownership of the reform process

- How to provide sustainability of justice and security sector service delivery.¹

In the light of SSG, security is seen as a *product* – no longer as a restricted process shrouded in mystery and protected by secrecy rules and their implementation – to be delivered to people, taxpayers, voters, with a legitimate intention for it to be transparent and wrenched from the hands of authoritarian political leaders interested in (ab)using the security sector for the protection of their own interests.

Empowerment Tools and Programs

If democracy is to be the organizing principle, democratic oversight institutions such as parliaments and their committees, the media, civil society, and non-politicized academic institutions need to be correctly understood, and strengthened. There are established principles of how such empowerment can be organized, as there also are established principles of how disempowerment can be organized, and these democratic instruments instrumentalized and ridiculed in one-party and/or one-person states, one-party parliaments, state-run NGOs, a media providing propaganda for the one-party or one-person regime, and the imitation of reform, etc. In parallel, principles of transparent and accountable, effective and efficient management of the security sector need to be formulated and shared, thus enabling executive oversight within the sector. Unless such principles are formulated and the international and interorganizational discourse guided by them, so-called ‘capacity building’ seminars with testimonies by practitioners from a variety of countries may be colourful and soon become part of a ‘security diplomatic’ tourism culture, but excessively costly, and not leading to the desired results. We have seen plenty of them.

The writer, in parallel to being involved in a number of SSR projects on the ground, sought to contribute to the interorganizational elaboration of ‘handbooks’ on good practice to be used in capacity building. Such publications can now be found in good libraries, on the internet, at academia.edu and researchgate.net, on the websites of DCAF (www.dcaf.ch), and its cooperating organizations. They deal with oversight aspects,^{2,3} management of defence and security institutions⁴ (including anti-corruption measures),^{5,6} defence and security-relevant laws,⁷ human rights and civic freedoms.

The development of civil society⁸ and academic⁹ capacities for a critical assessment of government policies and their implementation was promoted by research cooperation entailing capacity-building; similar offers were made to representatives of the media.¹⁰

The writer was personally involved in the design, organization, and delivery of inter alia long-term SSR programs in Indonesia (in cooperation with Indonesian Working Groups and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation Office in Jakarta), in Nepal (a Swiss-Danish-Norwegian-UK funded program on SSR and Peace-Building), and for years in Ukraine and other parts of the former Soviet Union. He was invited by reformist governments in Argentina and Chile to initiate multi-year discourses on defence reform, on intelligence oversight reform in

Uruguay, and on internal security reform in Mexico.¹¹ After the so-called Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine and the downing of a Malaysian Air MH-17 airliner over the occupied territories in the east of the country, he co-directed a public discussion platform on security sector reform, funded by the NL Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹² More recent studies and initiatives have been focussed on intelligence reform,¹³ resilience and stabilization,¹⁴ and interorganizational cooperation (this issue).

Cultural Politics of Security Sector Reform and Cooperation

An often-overlooked fact (until things are starting to go awry) is that the national and international entities involved in this cross-cultural exchange come with their organizational culture, and *cultural politics*. Innocence in intercultural affairs both on the donor and the recipient side, a not infrequently selective and idealized account of the defence and security sector organization and its management as the basis for such capacity-building, and ulterior political reasons for ‘cooperation,’ have been responsible for the limited success of such exercises in comprehensive reform, including in post-conflict contexts.

The Future of SSG/R

In sum, Security Sector Reform and good governance of the Security Sector are objectively needed. The *holistic* approach to SSR may, however, have been exceedingly ambitious – it has largely been replaced with piecemeal engineering programs, often without reference and ambition to full democratic oversight.

SSR programmes can be expected to continue as long as there are (mostly governmental) donors sustaining funding and belief in them – SSR and SSG have been successfully mainstreamed into the development and defence/security reform toolboxes. However, the number of state party recipients sincerely interested in holistic SSR can be expected to shrink further in the future (Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia may be among the last to make it onto the bus, and then maybe not¹⁵). The window for finding new candidates for comprehensive democratic reform and oversight of the defence and security sector at the global level would seem to be rapidly closing. In Afghanistan it just has.

Interorganizational Approach in Crisis Management and Counter-Terrorism – the Guest Editor’s Experience

The experience of Iztok Prezlj, Guest Editor for this volume, with interorganizational cooperation, is based on academic research and personal practical experiences from his home country, Slovenia. His academic research from the end of the 1990s showed that security threats are multi-dimensional and interconnected, requiring a multiorganizational approach. His research in the field of crisis management showed that contemporary threats and crises are increasingly complex, requiring the participation of many organizations. Such crisis will supersede organizational capacities and competencies of individual organizations (geographic, operational, administrative, and legal competencies), there will be no single actor able to solve such crisis, and crisis management actors

are becoming increasingly multifunctional with their borders increasingly blurred.¹⁶ His research also showed that relevant international security crises, like the Yugoslav crisis, were a sort of microcosm of shaping relations among the international security organizations after the end of the Cold War. The UN, NATO, WEU, and EU tested and proved their crisis management capabilities and finally started to cooperate to a much larger extent than ever before. For example, the complex crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina in a pre-Dayton phase could have been brought to an end only with extensive interorganizational joint, complementary and mutually reinforcing endeavours of these international organizations. For them, it was easier to implement their own goals and retain legitimacy in a more complex security environment by intensive interlinking and interorganizational cooperation with others based on complementary advantages and more or less mutually supporting and clear division of labour.¹⁷ From this period, we can recommend two books to the readers who are interested to dig into the logic, dilemmas, and secrets of interorganizational cooperation. The book by Bohn, titled "Nerve Center,"¹⁸ reflects on the system and challenges of interorganizational cooperation and coordination at the strategic level in the USA (e.g. in the White House, its Situation room, and the National Security Council). The other recommended book is by Hillyard¹⁹ on how and why organizations work together to solve society's most threatening problems. This book is a great insight into how interorganizational networks emerge and operate at the operational level.

Prezelj's practical experiences in the interagency world as a member of two Slovenian governmental interagency working groups (one in the field of counterterrorism and one in the field of crisis management) reflect huge possibilities of interorganizational cooperation but also huge frustrations due to the actual or imagined obstacles to solving complex issues. "Interorganizational chemistry" enabled agencies to implement a broad spectrum of joint tasks on the one hand, while on the other hand, it became obvious that even after 9/11 some serious institutional barriers exist among the agencies, preventing joint progress in certain fields. These obstacles were related to institutional culture, competition or, sometimes, simply misunderstanding or inability to think comprehensively. If optimal interagency cooperation is not possible in a small relatively developed country where almost everybody knows each other (Slovenia's population is 2 million), where is it possible then? This practical experience also showed that a great number of national security and non-security institutions, including non-governmental institutions, need to be involved in prevention and reaction to a threat, such as terrorism.

His further academic work on interorganizational cooperation in counterterrorism showed that four levels of complexity must be successfully mastered to ensure an optimal and comprehensive strategic approach in the fight against terrorism: the first level of multiorganizational cooperation, the second level of interorganizational cooperation, the third level of network cooperation, and the fourth level of managing many related interorganizational challenges.²⁰ The SWOT assessment of interagency cooperation in this field showed which are the

strengths and weaknesses of interorganizational cooperation, potential opportunities for improvement, and the threats in the case of weak cooperation. The results reflect a deep division between the strengths and weaknesses of interorganizational cooperation that strongly affects the extent to which emerging opportunities to improve it are being undertaken. The paper on this subject proposed a three-dimensional strategy to improve interorganizational cooperation by focusing on interactive, procedural, and analytical measures.²¹ Further work in the field of critical infrastructure showed that the process of shaping an integral critical infrastructure protection policy has also turned out to be very demanding due to the growing network complexity of critical infrastructures and deep institutional and policy fragmentation across sectors. A group of authors proposed to improve interorganizational cooperation by identifying and focusing on the cross-sectoral similarities among functionally different sectors of critical infrastructures.²² Eventually, Prezelj authored a sobering text on the general limits of interorganizational cooperation. The changing security environment has led to the development of many comprehensive security approaches, strategies, and policies. The “holistic approach” has become an academic and practical mantra. This paper proved, however, that comprehensive security approaches face serious obstacles to their practical implementation. The critical evaluation of several examples confirmed that the implementation phase is a weakness of comprehensive approaches and that a truly comprehensive and holistic approach seems to be beyond the implemental capacities of our security systems.²³ Such conclusions on the difficulties on the one hand and the need for interorganizational cooperation on the other represent a huge motivation for further work in this field and also a motivation for working on this special journal issue.

Overview of the Volume

The contributions to this volume of *Information and Security: An International Journal* are structured in four sections, briefly presented below.

Interorganizational Cooperation and Coordination in Information-Sharing and Communications

In “Public-Private Partnerships for Information Sharing in the Security Sector: What’s in It for Me?” Emma Van Goethem and Marleen Easton (Research group ‘Governing and Policing Security,’ Department of Public Governance & Management, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium, <http://gaps-ugent.be>) used insights from previous research on the benefits of public-private partnerships from organizational science, information management, innovation economics, and technology studies to examine whether they are also valid within the security sector. Their research results confirmed that traditional benefits, such as increased effectiveness, efficiency, improved relationships, creation of learning opportunities, and obtaining a strategic, operational, and/or economic advantage that were found in other contexts, are also valid in the Belgian security sector. In addition, Belgian security

actors saw improved decision-making and service delivery, increased personnel safety, and a more integrated security chain as potential benefits of information exchange in Public-Private Partnerships.

Cyber security and critical infrastructures are increasingly gaining importance in security research and practice. All EU member states are in the process of transposing the EU Directive on Network and Information Security (NIS Directive) in their national cyber security strategies in order to improve cybersecurity levels across critical infrastructures. In "Interorganizational Cooperation in Supply Chain Cybersecurity: A Cross-Industry Study of the Effectiveness of the UK Implementation of the NIS Directive" Tania Wallis, Chris Johnson, and Mohamed Khamis (University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK, <http://www.gla.ac.uk> and Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland, <http://www.qub.ac.uk>) investigate related experiences and challenges of British organizations in three different critical infrastructural sectors (Energy, Water, and Aviation) and provide examples of effective cybersecurity collaborations. The paper emphasizes the need for greater interorganizational cooperation in applying the NIS directive, and the need for use of common language, standards, and frameworks to promote shared understanding along the supply chain. Their research also recommends a specific combination of control and cooperation mechanisms in the process of transposition of the NIS Directive.

In "Research, Education, and Practice of StratCom in the Security Service of Ukraine in Interagency Settings" Dr. Larysa Kompantseva (National Academy of the Security Service of Ukraine, <http://www.academy.ssu.gov.ua>) explains a good practice of building a strategic communications (StratCom) platform in the Ukrainian national security community. The StratCom concept provides for a 360-degree view by involving all relevant actors, such as specialists from various security institutions (practitioners), scientists, journalists, civil society representatives, and volunteers, in joint processes of single voice communicating, training, and producing joint monographs, textbooks, and methodologies of asymmetric response to hybrid threats. The platform enables all these institutions to improve interagency cooperation and become more united in ensuring Ukraine's national security.

In "Comparison of the Regulations on Communication Privacy between EU and Japan: Toward Reinforcement of Japan's Communication Privacy," Atsuko Sekiguchi (National Center of Incident Readiness and Strategy for Cybersecurity, Japan, <https://www.nisc.go.jp/eng>) examines the communication privacy in the telecommunications services and territorial application in Japan and the EU. Both face similar regulatory challenges regarding how to ensure a level playing field between incumbent and emerging services, and how to protect communication privacy in Over-The-Top (OTT) services (media services provided directly to users via the Internet). A difference between Japan's and the EU's current legislation is that Japan's regulatory framework has the issue of extraterritorial application, whereas the issue in the EU is the scope of regulatory services and territory. The EU has proposed a revision of the law to address the issue, whereas Japan has not taken any measures, despite an increase in the number

of people using OTT services and accompanying demand for ensuring the protection of online privacy.

Interorganizational Cooperation and Coordination in Fighting Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism

In “Interorganizational Cooperation and the Fight against Terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel” Dr. Olayinka Ajala (Leeds, United Kingdom <http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk>) argues that—given their transnational nature—effectively combatting the security threats in the 21st Century necessitates interorganizational cooperation. The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), charged with curtailing the threat posed by terrorism in certain parts of the Sahel and West Africa is one such international instrument that arguably has not been successful in achieving its mandate. The author discusses five reasons for this: the lack of a clear mandate and operational responsibilities; the lack of understanding/ acknowledgement of the neo-patrimonial aspect of politics in the fight against terrorism; the underestimation of the threat posed by Boko Haram and its affiliates; the unclear role of vigilantes in the MNJTF structure; and the inability of the MNJTF to adapt to new threats. The author concludes that for interorganizational security cooperation to be successful, the allies must equally acknowledge that they face the same existential threats which will make them commit to the demands of the organization, also financially and politically.

Authors Prof. Giray Sadik (Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Ankara, Turkey <https://aybu.edu.tr/sosyalbil/>) and Dr. Aybike Yalcin Ispir propose in their “Comparative Analysis of Counter-Terrorism Efforts of NATO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization” to look at the parallel profiles of interest of the two organizations which have not led to cooperation in the field of Counter-Terrorism in spite of what one would assume are mutual interests. The article seeks to address a perceived lack in the literature regarding the comparative analysis of counter-terrorism efforts of these two significant regional security organizations under the aspects of founding principles, legal doctrines, organizational structures, and military operations headings and looks at possibilities of cooperation. The differences in the two organizations’ structures at all four levels may not allow for large-scale cooperation and coordination, whereas some cooperation in the field on a case-by-case basis would seem to remain possible and would need to be further explored politically.

Interorganizational Cooperation and Coordination and the Future of Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

In the article “African Union-Led Peacekeeping Operations: Constraints and Opportunities of Inter-Agency Co-Operation,” the former Vice-President of Burundi Dr. Gervais Rufikyri (currently Executive-in-Residence at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, www.gcsp.ch) proposes to look into implications of the multidimensionality of peacekeeping missions. His paper specifically analyses the experiences of South African troops in Burundi and Burundian troops within

AMISOM in order to understand the constraints and opportunities of inter-agency cooperation in the case of AU-led peacekeeping operations. According to the author, both examples show the importance of multilateralism in peacekeeping missions. The diversity of actors, their cooperation, and the complementarity of their specific contributions are vital when dealing with the very complex and tangled challenges facing a conflict country. Several factors, including financial and military capacities, actors' own interests, domestic politics, policies, and standards influence the level of trust and the nature of cooperation between actors and their positioning.

In "Multinational Cooperation and Intervention: Small Steps to Better Results," the authors professors Timothy Parsons (Liverpool, John Moores University <http://www.ljmu.ac.uk>,), James J. Nolan (University of West Virginia at Morgantown, <http://www.wvu.edu>), and Frank Crispino (University of Quebec Trois-Rivières, Quebec City, Canada, <http://www.uqtr.ca>) consider the political and practical challenges inherent in large-scale multinational interventions executed by western powers, aimed at addressing regional instability through the application of military power to provide or restore local security. Exploring the efficacy of more limited interventions targeted at very specific problems the authors argue in favor of a different style of security intervention described as tightly focused, developed locally, delivered in partnership with community stakeholders and elected representatives. An example of such a smaller-scale intervention is the OSCE's Law Enforcement Officer Program for Combatting Hate Crime (LEOP-CHC). Whereas this type of intervention remains vulnerable to political influence, it can according to the authors serve as a model of international cooperation that is tested and proven to work if a conducive environment for implementation is established with support from inter-governmental organizations.

In "Prospects for Improvement in Peacebuilding: A Choice for Cooperation and Coordination," the author Giulia Ferraro (Rome; giuliaferraro@gmail.com) argues that there is a systematic tendency of some actors operating in the field of peace and security to resist cooperation and disregard the importance of coordination – which leads to unhealthy relationships and unsatisfactory outcomes. With a focus on the case of Libya, the author looks at promising results recently achieved thanks in part to the overarching and determined intervention of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). Specifically, a new interim government voted by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum following its convening in Switzerland by UNSMIL at the beginning of February 2021 was sworn in Tobruk in March 2021. This new temporary unified executive authority is now expected to lead the country to the national elections scheduled for 24 December 2021 and to uphold the strategy outlined in the Roadmap for the transitional period. In the author's opinion, investing in cooperation and coordination (the model presented by the UNSMIL led first by Ghassan Salamé and then by Stephanie Williams) is seen as a prerogative for the positive development of the peacebuilding field of the future.

A highly specific approach to Peace-Building has been proposed by the WTO's Trade for Peace initiative, launched in 2017 and based on the rationale that WTO accession of conflict-affected and fragile states served as a transformational moment for these countries and as a means of securing a place in global trade. In "Framing Trade and Peace in the time of Covid-19: The World Trade Organization and the Narratives of Inclusion of Peripheral Trade Zones" professor YM Chiao (WZU Kaohsiung, Taiwan/China) looks into the results of the first 'Trade for Peace Week' organized by the WTO in late 2020. His paper analyzes the narratives and frames used to link trade with peace at select sessions of said conference. The author concludes that the WTO's Trade for Peace initiative may lead to a synergy of trade and peace-building strategies if dialogue includes local stakeholders and with careful consideration of cross-sector policies and their effect. With clear divisions of labor and coordination between agencies to overcome differing institutional priorities, trade can be better employed as an antecedent.

Interorganizational Cooperation in Security and Crisis Management

Organized crime in all its forms represents an increasing threat globally. Strong international police cooperation is needed to tackle it. In "Development of the EU Policy of Police Cooperation with Third Countries: The Case of the Republic of North Macedonia" Romeo Drobarov and Biljana Popovska (Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defence, Republic of North Macedonia) focus on the inter-agency cooperation among the EUROPOL, police forces of EU member states and third countries. Their case study of cooperation with the Republic of North Macedonia shows that the way to successful interagency cooperation goes through establishing joint policies, strategic and operational cooperation agreements, common platforms, joint teams, joint operations, liaison offices, memoranda of understanding regarding secure communication links and sharing common concepts.

Another case study in this special journal issue focused on two major natural disasters in Serbia in the past seven years. In "Coordination in the Security Sector in Response to Natural Disasters: The Serbia Cases of 2014 Floods and Covid-19" Orhan Dragaš and Zoran Dragišić (International Security Institute, Belgrade, Serbia, <https://isi-see.org>, Faculty of Security Studies, University of Belgrade, Serbia, <http://fb.bg.ac.rs/en>) looked for similarities and differences in response to two different security challenges. Both disasters required strong interorganizational cooperation despite their differences in terms of causes, affected areas, affected people, etc. The authors found out that in both observed cases state authorities have resorted to centralization and hierarchical organization of crisis management as the most efficient ways to gather information, make adequate and timely decisions on measures, etc. The cases differed in the level of centralization: the Flood Response Team in 2014 was built around the Ministry of the Interior of Serbia and its Sector for Emergency Management with the great participation of local self-governments and the Crisis Response Team for the fight against Covid-19 was formed at a broader and higher level, which in-

cluded all departments of government with an emphasis on the role of experts from the health sector.

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We hope the readers will find the contribution of this volume to the understanding of the challenges of coordination and collaboration of interest and beneficial both for future research and practical implementation.

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About the Authors

Dr. Philipp H. **Fluri** was a co-founder and long-time deputy director of the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF; earlier Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces) and the founder and executive director of DCAF Brussels. He was subsequently an Executive-in-Residence at the Geneva Centre of Security Policy and the Sergio de Mello Chair at the Seton Hall University School of Diplomacy and International Relations. He is currently a professor in the Department of International Affairs at the Wenzao Ursuline University (WZU) in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8369-6231>

Dr. Iztok **Prezelj** is a Professor in the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, and Chair of Defence Studies in the Defence Research Centre. His main research interests are in National security, crisis management, terrorism & counter-terrorism, threat & risk assessment, intelligence studies, interagency cooperation, critical infrastructure, and the Western Balkans. Prof. Prezelj is a member of the Editorial Boards of *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy*, the *Journal of Criminal Justice and Security*, and *Security, Terrorism and Society*. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2725-7298>