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Germany's Security Assistance to Tunisia: A Boost to Tunisia's Long-Term Stability and Democracy?

Anna Stahl, Jana Treffler


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*Anna Stahl**, *Jana Treffler***

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* Project Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) in Tunisia

** MA Student in Political Science and Student Assistant at the Center for Middle Eastern & North African Politics at Free University Berlin, Member of Coop4Med

Introduction

On 19 September 2019, Tunisia's ousted long-time ruler Zine El Abidine Ben Ali died in exile. Eight years earlier, he was forced from office by popular protests. The 2011 revolution in Tunisia triggered similar uprisings in other countries in the region, known as the Arab Spring. Tunisia is often hailed as the rare success story of the Arab Spring. Nevertheless, the country remains fragile, and 2019 marks a major test for Tunisia's nascent democracy. In July 2019, Tunisia's first democratically-elected president Béji Caïd Essebsi died. He played a significant role in strengthening the country's democratic institutions. Despite initial concerns that the lack of a strong political figure may lead to instability, the legal procedures for a transition of power played out as expected. The presidential election was brought forward to September. In parallel, the country held its second parliamentary elections since the revolution.

Although the peaceful transfer of power was a positive sign, Tunisia's democratic future still hangs in the balance. Because Tunisians have little faith in the current political parties, Tunisia's parliament, the National Assembly of the Representatives of the People (ARP), is sharply fragmented. The Islamist party Ennahda came first in the recent parliamentary elections, followed by Qalb Tounes ("Heart of Tunisia"), the party of presidential candidate Nabil Karoui. However, both parties have fallen short of the majority and will therefore need the support of smaller parties to form a government. The relative decline in support of mainstream politicians was also echoed by the Tunisian presidential elections. The first round was won by two political newcomers: the businessman and media mogul Nabil Karoui, who was detained in prison on suspicion of tax evasion and money laundering, and the conservative academic Kaïs Saïed. Following a runoff vote on 13 October 2019, Kaïs Saïed became Tunisia's new president. Despite the fact that the Tunisian president is elected through a popular vote, his powers are limited and he relies on the support of the parliament. Crucial policy issues such as the economy are in the hands of the parliament-selected prime minister. Due to the plethora of parties represented in the ARP, the negotiations to form a government and select a prime minister will be lengthy and risk ending in a political deadlock.

Tunisia's democratic future will not only depend on the ability of the different political actors to reach a consensus but also on their support for reforms of the country's troubled security sector. The Arab Spring has demonstrated that security forces can become decisive political agents, who can either facilitate or repress democratic transition (Gaub, 2013). Under Ben Ali, Tunisia was a police state par excellence. During and shortly after the revolution, the country's military, internal security forces (ISF) and judiciary continued their work, ensuring order and law enforcement. Since 2011, the young democracy has been faced with growing internal and external security threats.

Tunisia has not only witnessed political assassinations of opposition leaders but also multiple terrorist attacks. Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility for the two suicide bombings that took place in Tunis in June 2019. Moreover, Tunisia is affected by the unstable regional security situation. In particular, the conflict in Libya and the new outbreak of fighting after forces from renegade commander General Khalifa Haftar started an offensive to capture Tripoli in April 2019. The number of Tunisian foreign fighters is one of the highest among those travelling to join conflicts in Libya, Syria and Iraq (Zelin, 2018). The Tunisian security forces play a key role in responding to these new security challenges.

As the only democracy to emerge from the Arab Spring, Tunisia represents a showcase for Security Sector Reform (SSR) in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Thus, the international community has significantly increased its security assistance and support for SSR in Tunisia over the past years. While there is ample literature on international SSR efforts in the MENA region and Tunisia in particular, Germany's security engagement is generally overlooked. Experts have noted that unlike the United States (US), United Kingdom (UK) and France, Germany has not been a traditional "player" in the MENA region and refrained from any influence in terms of political balance of power (Furness, 2018). Yet, since the 2011 Arab uprisings, Germany has taken on more responsibility in the MENA region in general, and Tunisia in particular. This is reflected in the fact that German aid to Tunisia has more than doubled since the revolution, making Germany Tunisia's main bilateral donor (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2018). Tunisia is also the most important target country of Germany's "Transformation Partnership with the Arab world", a foreign policy instrument launched in 2012 to support democratic reforms in the MENA region. In 2016, Germany signed a specific security cooperation agreement with Tunisia. In the same year, it launched the "Enable & Enhance Initiative" (E2I), which allocates additional financial assistance to Tunisia. Through this new security instrument, Germany wants to play an active role in the reform of the Tunisian security sector. In September 2019, the German government also adopted a new strategy for SSR (German Government, 2019). The document is the outcome of a consultation process, involving different German stakeholders and ministries. Building on initial efforts like the E2I, the new German "Interministerial Strategy to Support SSR" aims to provide a more comprehensive, cross-ministerial understanding of SSR. This paper¹ examines the particular role played by Germany in support of SSR in Tunisia. It examines the broader implications of German security assistance both for the country's democratic transformation and long-term stability. The paper starts by providing a mapping of Tunisia's security system, examining the different laws and actors involved. Later, it analyses recent efforts of SSR in the

¹ It draws on the recent work of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) on SSR and Security Sector Governance (SSG), as well as field research in Tunisia.

context of Tunisia's democratic transition. Finally, the paper critically examines Germany's shifting security policy and its growing support for SSR in Tunisia. Drawing special attention to Germany's E2I, the paper proposes a set of policy recommendations for German policy-makers.

Mapping the Tunisian Security Sector

The Legal Framework

Despite a large number of regulations and laws concerning the security sector, there is a lack of judicial transparency because under the Ben Ali regime legislation concerning the security sector was often promulgated in the form of so-called administrative circulars (Ouamara, 2018). Many of these circulars limit individual freedoms of citizens and have therefore become the centre of public debate. The two main laws governing the military and ISF date from 1967 and 1982 respectively. Affiliated to the Ministry of the Interior (Moi) are the national police, the national guard, the civil protection units, and the prison and re-education officers, whereas the latter are structurally assigned to the Ministry of Justice. The 1982 ISF law was modified twice. In 2000 (Law no. 2000-58) more authority over the ISF was given to the president. This can be considered as an initial shift towards a concentration of power over the security sector by the president. After the revolution, a second modification of the 1982 law (Decree law no. 2011-42) introduced the right for ISF to form unions. Further important progress concerning the rights of security agents was established through an amendment of the 2014 electoral law in 2017 (Organic law no. 2017-7). As a consequence of this amendment, security forces voted for the first time in the 2018 municipal elections. Yet, they are still excluded from the right to stand as candidates or participate in electoral campaigns or party rallies.

With the adoption of Tunisia's new constitution in 2014, the status and role of the military and ISF was codified in articles 17 to 19 and the right of the ISF to form unions, previously granted by decree, was constitutionalised. However, there is neither a reference to intelligence agencies nor to the contribution of democratic institutions and civil society actors in the field of security. Scholars have argued that the constitution "does not provide positive reform" and "has failed to regulate the security sector" (Jebnoun, 2014). Article 80 enables the president to call a state of emergency. In the face of the terrorist attacks, the president used this right in 2015. This declaration of the state of emergency has caused concern given the fact that the Constitutional Court is still not operative, which means that an important instrument of democratic and constitutional control is missing (Lafrance, 2018b). Another source of concern is Tunisia's military justice, implemented through military courts. The Tunisian Code of Military Justice grants military courts jurisdiction over non-military offences, including gross human rights violations. Yet because prosecutors and judges in Tunisian military courts are also members of the military and are subsumed within the military structure, there is a lack of impartiality to conduct investigations of gross human rights violations. Following the military trial of an independent member of parliament (MP) for insulting the Tunisian army, experts have called for an end to military trials of civilians (Grewal, 2019).

While an overall legislative reform of the security sector is still missing, some highly contested pieces of legislation have been adopted over the past few years. The most prominent example is the counter-terrorism law (Organic law no. 2015-26), which was passed in 2015 as an update to the regulations in force since 2003. Human rights organisations have criticised this law for being a threat to the democratic transition and accountability of the security sector (Human Rights Watch, 2015). The vague definition of terrorism, possibly applied to non-terrorist political activity, as well as the detention of suspects up to 15 days without charge or legal support, are at the core of the debate. Still in deliberation, a draft law dating from 2015 on the "Repression of Attacks against the Armed Forces" is also disapproved of by human rights Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Tunisian civil society, among them Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, which have called for an abrogation of the draft law because it would "strengthen the culture of impunity" (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Critics consider this draft law as the institutionalisation of oppression, especially as attacks on journalists by security agents and police unionists are increasing (Samoud, 2017). However, the law is strongly supported by the Minister of the Interior Hichem Fourati, who called for an acceleration of the adoption ("Hichem Fourati appelle", 2018), a demand which has been repeated by Mohamed Ennaceur, President of the ARP, after a suicide attack in Tunis in October 2018, where 15 police officers were among the 20 persons wounded ("Tunisie : l'attaque-suicide dans le centre", 2018).

Tunisia's Security Actors

In order to understand the current state of Tunisia's security sector, it is important to look at its origins. Under the authoritarian rule of Ben Ali, the security apparatus was used as an instrument to safeguard the power of the regime. At the heart of this oppressive apparatus was the Mol (Aliriza, 2015). Today the Mol still occupies its headquarters (HQ) in the centre of Tunis, which used to be a place of torture and mistreatment under the old regime. The fact that Mol's HQ has remained in the same location since the revolution can be seen as a symbol of continuity and resistance to reforms of the security sector. The Mol remains a black box, making it difficult to identify different groups or internal power structures. According to some experts, the lack of transparency of the Mol is a way for Tunisian security actors to escape external control (Interviews, Tunis, 2018). Tunisia's ISF are affiliated to the Mol. The ISF are divided into two parallel structures: the national police and the national guard ("garde nationale"), both headed by a General Directorate. While the national guard is mainly responsible for securing Tunisia's external borders and rural areas, the police operate mostly in urban areas but also secure airports and border crossings (Hanlon &

Herbert, 2015). Moreover, the judicial police force is responsible for investigation and operates in courts. It is also subordinated to the Mol.

Experts have noted that in most Arab countries the security sector represents a “bloated institution”, which lacks a clear purpose (Gaub, 2013, p. 2). This is also the case in Tunisia. Tunisian ISF are vastly overstuffed. According to rough estimates by NGOs like the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), in 2011 the number of ISF ranged from 50,000 to 200,000 officials (FIDH, 2011). Today, around 90,000 officials constitute Tunisia's ISF, excluding the presidential guard (Interviews, Tunis 2018). The area of border security exemplifies the lack of clear purpose and fragmentation of Tunisia's security actors. In addition to the police, the national guard and the military, customs officers, who are under the authority of the Ministry of Finance, are also responsible for securing Tunisia's borders. Hence, three ministries are involved in the organisation of border security: the Mol, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Ministry of Finance. Although the coordination of border patrols between the national guard and the military has improved since the collapse of the Ben Ali regime (Hanlen & Herbert, 2015), ambiguities regarding the role of the other security agencies persist.

In contrast to the ISF, Tunisia's armed forces are small. According to experts, the military was composed of 35,800 armed forces under Ben Ali (Haddad, 2017). Unlike the ISF, which have witnessed some degree of politicisation, the Tunisian army has always held far less political power and military capacity than its counterparts in the region. Since President Habib Bourguiba, there has been a tendency in Tunisia to keep the armed forces away from power and politics in order to prevent a military coup. This was the result of a failed coup d'état carried out by military officers in 1962 in support of Bourguiba's rival Salah Ben Youssef. Yet, in the 1970s and 1980s, the role of the Tunisian military started to change. Due to internal and external events, namely the 1978 general strike, the 1980 attack on Gafsa and the bread riots three and four years later, which revealed some limitations of the ISF, the role of the military was strengthened (Haddad, 2017). Moreover, despite attempts to marginalise the army, civil-military relations have always persisted and army officers were increasingly appointed to civilian positions. One of these promotions was the later president, Brigadier General Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. Ben Ali was first appointed General Director of National Security at the Mol and then Minister of the Interior. In 1987, he used this position to become president through a “medical coup d'état.”² Despite his military background, Ben Ali did not build a military dictatorship but strengthened the Mukhabarat (intelligence service). Following a supposed coup by the military and the Islamic movement Ennahdha in 1991, Ben Ali completely lost trust in the military and increased the budget of the Ministry of the Interior to 165% as compared to the defence budget (Grewal, 2016).

2 The 1987 bloodless ousting of the ageing president of Tunisia Habib Bourguiba and his replacement as president by his recently appointed prime minister, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, is referred to as “medical coup d'état” because the action was justified by reference to Bourguiba's failing health and Article 57 of the country's constitution.

The Tunisian military has often been praised for its refusal to fire on civilians during the Jasmine Revolution. Yet this does not mean that the military has remained completely neutral in Tunisia's democratic transition. In fact, the army played an important role in securitising the country after the revolution and containing terrorist threats. General Rachid Ammar presided the Tunisian army during this difficult period and became one of the most powerful figures of the first transition period. In 2013, however, Tunisia's military chief resigned and former interim resident Moncef Marzouki conducted a range of personnel changes in order to ensure the army's loyalty. This shift in the role of the Tunisian military can be explained by fears of a repetition of the 2013 Egyptian scenario.

According to experts, the recent increase in Tunisia's military budget, attaining 72% of the budget of the Mol, could be seen as a sign of a rebalancing of the military-police relation since 2011 (Grewal, 2016). This trend seems to continue, as the budget plan for 2019 even foresees a 31% increase of the defence budget, while the Mol only receives a 7% rise ("Loi des finances 2019", 2018).

As mentioned, the Tunisian intelligence service was at the core of Ben Ali's police state. Experts have highlighted that the power of Tunisia's secret service relies on its "monopoly of access, control and manipulating sensitive information" while operating outside the law and lacking any accountability or transparency (Jebnoun, 2017). The Tunisian intelligence service is composed of several agencies that are affiliated to different ministries. Before 2011, most of the intelligence competencies were assigned to the Ministry of the Interior under the General Directorate of Special Services (Bourrat, 2017). The Directorate of State Security, also known as the "political police", was dismantled in March 2011 as a symbolic measure against the repression of the former regime. Despite its functional core, the Tunisian secret service has been operating in a rather ineffective manner. A first step in reforming the rather ineffective intelligence sector was to transform the Directorate of Military Security at the MoD into the Intelligence and Security Agency for Defence in 2014, widening its competencies including the fight against terrorism in coordination with other ministries. In January 2017, a National Intelligence Centre was created by governmental decree and assigned to the Head of Government, possibly risking an overlap with the Intelligence Agency affiliated to the Ministry of Defence. With the support of the European Union (EU), an Intelligence Fusion Centre was established within the Mol to share intelligence and give support to Tunisian special forces in counter-terrorism activities (European Parliament, 2018). Moreover, the establishment of a NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) Intelligence Fusion Centre on Tunisian soil was announced by Jens Stoltenberg in 2016, but the Tunisian authorities denied that such a centre would be created. The two initiatives of setting up intelligence fusion centres in

Tunisia show the eagerness of foreign partners to involve Tunisia in the international action against terrorism. According to the Tunisian authorities, the controversy regarding the partnership with NATO on counter-terrorism can be explained by Tunisia's concerns to preserve national sovereignty in security matters. Instead, some experts have argued that it was an attempt by the Tunisian authorities to conceal the lack of transparency in international intelligence cooperation, which escapes all democratic control and oversight (Jebnoun, 2017, p. 80).

Another important actor shaping Tunisia's security sector are the police unions. Legalised in 2011 by presidential decree, a large number of police unions for different units and regions were created. After their constitutionalisation in 2014, no further regulation followed. Thus, the police unions largely operate in a legal void. Because the powerful and strongly political Tunisian trade union (Tunisian General Labour Union [UGTT]) is considered as a model for unions in Tunisia, the police unions quickly started to work beyond the classical field of union activity and became a political player, defending the interests of the security sector in the political arena with coercive tactics. According to Moncef Kartas (2014), the police unions' discourse against reform initiatives can be described as "victimhood defence" (p. 382). Through this strategy, the police unions have politicised the security sector to such an extent that former Minister of the Interior Hédi Majdoub (in office 2016-17) called them a "major hindrance to any serious attempt to reform" (Jebnoun, 2017, p. 56). The three biggest police unions today are the Syndicat des fonctionnaires de la Direction générale des unités d'intervention (SFDGUI), the Syndicat national des forces de sécurité intérieure (SNSFI) and the Union nationale des syndicats des forces de sûreté tunisienne (UNSFST), their members numbering 25,000, 8,000, and 3,000, respectively in 2015 (Grewal, 2018). In 2012, under the Ennahdha affiliated Minister of the Interior Ali Laarayedh, police unions started to influence legislation processes and reform attempts by demonstrating the power of a security sector that lacks democratic control. They conducted sit-ins, demonstrations and blockades, besieged courthouses and went on strike before the right to strike was excluded for security agents in the 2014 Constitution. Certainly overstepping the line in November 2017, police unions threatened to stop securing Members of Parliament if a highly criticised draft law about the Repression of Attacks against the Armed Forces was not brought to a plenary session within 15 days (Grewal, 2018). Another worrying union action took place on 26 February 2018 in Ben Arous, Grand Tunis. Police unions invaded a courthouse where police officers accused of torture were attending their trial. The unions forced the court to release the officers and clear them of any charges. These demonstrations of strength for which the unions did not have to face any consequences contribute to the climate of impunity of the ISF.

After the revolution, several independent oversight bodies were created by decree in order to establish an external accountability system of the Tunisian security sector. The most important bodies include the National Authority for the Right of Access to Information (INAI), the National Anti-Corruption Agency (INLUCC) and the National Authority for the Prevention of Torture (INPT). Moreover, parliamentary oversight over the security sector was introduced through the establishment of two parliamentary committees in the ARP. The Committee on Administrative Organisation and the Affairs of the Armed Forces (COAAFA) is a legislative committee but few of its draft laws concerned defence reforms, as it is overloaded with its other responsibilities on decentralisation and administrative reforms. The Committee on Security and Defence is an oversight committee that can hold hearings of the Minister of the Interior as well as the general directors. So far, it has been rather reactive and held hearings subsequently to emergencies or public polemics (Mighri, 2018). Moreover, parliamentarians seem to lack necessary information to carry out their oversight task and are exposed to political pressure from different actors (Interviews, Tunis 2018). Therefore, their right to hear high security officials is limited as they are not capable of asking the right questions.

**International Support
for Security Sector Reform in Tunisia**

The concept of SSR was developed in the 1990s to expand the understanding of security beyond pure military dimensions (Gaub, 2013). It is based on the assumption that long-term stability is not possible without democratic control of the security forces. Ideally, SSR should contribute to the improvement of so-called “human security” (in contrast to pure state security) and it results in a security sector that benefits all citizens. According to the OECD Handbook on Security Sector Reform, SSR is defined by four principles: accountability, transparency, democratic oversight and local ownership of security forces (OECD, 2007). The concept of SSR has to be put into the broader context of so-called “securitisation”, a narrative that emerged in the aftermath of 9/11 and that adds “a security dimension to policy areas that, at their core, are unrelated to threat and protection” (Furness, 2018, p. 6). The concept of SSR is increasingly used by development practitioners and contributes to the so-called “security-development nexus”.

Since the revolution, the international community has made particular effort in supporting the Tunisian security sector. The Tunisian government has signed bilateral security agreements with the different European countries, as well as the US, Turkey and Qatar (Bouguerra, 2014). Over the past few years, major donors like the UN, US, (UK) and Japan have integrated the concept of SSR into their development strategies. Some of them are also implementing SSR projects in Tunisia. In addition, Tunisia receives assistance from the EU and the UN. Moreover, organisations with specific SSR expertise, like the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Search for Common Ground and International Alert have opened offices in Tunisia (Interviews, Tunis 2018).

The EU, Tunisia's largest multilateral donor, is at the forefront of international efforts to support SSR in Tunisia. It has allocated a budget of €23 million for the SSR project “Programme d'appui à la réforme du secteur de la sécurité” (PARSS), which is carried out in partnership with the Tunisian Mol. The purpose of the PARSS project is to improve the recruitment and training process of the Tunisian security forces, as well as to establish an independent commission in police ethics in collaboration with DCAF (EEAS, 2017). There have been major delays in the implementation of the project. Due to different understandings of the notion of independence, the commission in police ethics could not start its work (Interviews, Tunis 2019). In addition to the PARSS project, the EU has contributed to three other SSR projects in Tunisia under its Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP). Two of the IcSP projects were implemented by the Danish Demining Group and International Alert: “Border security management in Tunisia's southern borders”, “Preventing violent extremism” and “Enhancing inclusive and democratic security governance of Tunisia's borders” (Interviews, Tunis 2018). The project “Expertise in support of the Tunisian authorities in the fight against terrorism” was implemented by the technical cooperation operator of

the French Ministry of the Interior (CIVIPOL). Moreover, the EU is providing support for an Intelligence Fusion Centre in the Mol, in order to improve Tunisia's decision-making and counter-terrorism strategy (European Parliament, 2018). In 2016 alone, the EU spent € 27.9 million on security-related programmes in Tunisia (EEAS, 2017).

Alongside the EU, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is also working with the Tunisian Mol to support SSR. Since 2014, UNDP's work has focused on the establishment of a community-focused police, creating several pilot police stations throughout the country. The proximity police project accounts for \$7 million, funded by Belgium, Japan, the UK, the US, Canada, Switzerland and Norway. Even though most of its security related financial support to Tunisia is not linked to SSR as such, it is also worth mentioning the US. According to the figures provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Tunisia received US security assistance worth \$473 million from 2011 to 2017, making the US Tunisia's major donor in this field (USAID, 2018).

In contrast to the EU, the UN and most bilateral donors, DCAF does not only work with the Tunisian government but also engages with the media and civil society as important actors to enhance accountability and oversight of Tunisia's security sector. Germany is contributing €3 million to the Trust Fund for Security Sector Development Assistance in North Africa of DCAF (Interviews, Tunis 2019).

Despite this vast international engagement on SSR, different obstacles have prevented Tunisia from achieving a comprehensive reform of its security sector. The lack of the Constitutional Court and a disrupted transitional justice process, facilitates ongoing impunity and police violence, increasing the mistrust between citizens, security forces and the political class even further. Moreover, the political polarisation after the revolution led to a strong politicisation of the security sector, resulting in appointments based on party politics and a high number of changes of leadership positions in the Mol.

In the aftermath of the 2011 revolution, the Tunisian security sector witnessed some limited reforms. The directorate of state security (the so-called "police politique") was dismantled and a number of high-level security officials were dismissed. Experts have, however, stressed that these reforms were rather ineffective and have contributed to a security vacuum (Ben Mahfoudh, 2014). This is also reflected in the White Book on the reform of the security sector published by the Mol in 2011. The strategic document focused only on operational aspects and did not address the broader reforms related to the transformation of Tunisia's security apparatus. At the same time, the National Constituent Assembly (NCA) was suffering from "security illiteracy" (Jebnoun, 2011, p. 59), missing the necessary expertise to

push for reform. Even though some progress has been made, for example the withdrawal of the MoI from the organisation of the electoral process, the window of opportunity for SSR closed when security pressure and political crisis intensified.

Most importantly, the rise of terrorism in Tunisia and the international counter-terrorist agenda have obstructed a broader reform of the security sector. In the post-revolution period, Tunisia was dependent on its existing security forces and their expertise to face serious security threats, while lacking a coherent political security strategy to react to or prevent these threats (Ben Taous, 2016). Terrorist groups continue to operate in the mountains of north-western Tunisia, close to the Algerian border, where nine national guard officers were killed in the governorate of Jendouba in July 2018. This attack reveals more than just a terrorist threat. First, it proves the dysfunction of the MoI, as the casualties could have been prevented if the agents had been driving an armoured vehicle when hitting the explosive, whereas the budget for such vehicles had been allocated since 2015 (Lafrance, 2018a). Secondly, the endurance and territorial anchoring of these terrorist groups in Tunisia's north-west point to their character as an "insurgency rather than a protracted terrorist campaign," rooted in the economic marginalisation and social frustration prevailing in these regions (Herbert, 2018).

The Tunisian government has responded to the growing international terrorist threat by creating a National Commission on Counter-Terrorism and introducing anti-terrorism and anti-money laundering laws. Moreover, it declared a state of emergency in July 2015, which was renewed after the recent attacks in July 2019. So far, the counter-terrorism measures introduced by the Tunisian government seem rather ineffective (Mersch, 2015). Instead, the counter-terrorism policy has hampered a comprehensive reform of the security sector, which kept some of its authoritarian reflexes and illicit practices from pre-revolutionary times. In addition to the government's counter-extremism agenda, Tunisia's socioeconomic challenges are another reason why SSR has not been high on the political agenda.

Tunisian authorities have used the need to fight terrorism to justify the absence of reform (Sayigh, 2016), seeing reform as an obstacle to tackle security challenges rather than an improvement. In this context, the debate about SSR is framed as a policy trade-off, in which a reform of the security sector and an efficient response to terrorist threats are presented as mutually exclusive (Lotito, 2017). This discourse was supported by the police unions, which, since their creation, have been a major obstacle to the reform of the security sector. Instead of supporting reforms, they have supported the adoption of emergency legislation giving greater power to the security forces. In 2015, following

three deadly terrorist attacks in Tunisia, the state of emergency was declared. It is important to point out that the state of emergency is a presidential prerogative. Hence, it is neither decided by the government, nor debated in parliament. The state of emergency is still in place today and allows the Minister of the Interior to restrict certain rights such as the freedom of expression, association, movement and liberty. The abusive use of emergency laws and the excessive duration of the state of emergency while cases of ill-treatment are being reported during the same period have been strongly criticised by human rights NGOs (Amnesty International, 2017). Almost eight years after the revolution, the prospects for a comprehensive reform of the security remain very limited, as the key stakeholders are increasingly reluctant to reform and progressive actors lack the power and support to push for accountability and regulation of the sector in times of increased relevance of counter-terrorism and securitised policies.

Experts have expressed concerns about the fact that most of the international SSR efforts “are rooted primarily in programmes on training and equipping Tunisia’s security forces and antiterrorism units” (Bouguerra, 2014, p. 6). Thus, the Tunisian security apparatus has used the international support in the area of counter-terrorism to resist democratic reforms with the argument that they come at the expense of the system’s effectiveness in combating terrorism. Because the Tunisian authorities have a broad choice of different security assistance programmes, they generally choose technical training over programmes that include a human rights and/or rule of law component (Interviews, Tunis 2018). The Tunisian counter-terrorism law passed in 2015 clearly shows how international anti-terrorism priorities have contributed to supporting the capacity of a relatively repressive Tunisian security sector that “risks spawning extremist reactionaries” (Bouguerra, 2014, p.1) rather than supporting a security system trusted by the citizens that could more effectively combat radicalisation and terrorism in the long run (Mersch, 2015).

Besides the difficulties related to the international counter-terrorism agenda, it remains questionable whether the growing role played by the international community in SSR in Tunisia has led to greater transparency of the Tunisian security sector. The establishment of the so-called G7+ mechanism, a donor coordination framework³ with working groups on specific topics, has helped to coordinate the different security assistance programmes on the ground. Germany is chairing the working group on border security. Yet, given the sensitive nature of the topic and different national interests, external actors do not disclose all the necessary information to the public and are also reluctant to share it with their peers. Moreover, due to colonial history and certain mistrust towards external

interference in domestic issues among the Tunisian population, the Tunisian government tends to be discreet about its security collaboration with external actors. Thus, the Tunisian security apparatus, namely the MoI, continues to centralise all the information. This makes reform efforts very difficult, as the missing knowledge of Tunisian parliamentarians on the security sector is one of the reasons why legislation on SSR has been rare (Mighri, 2018). Moreover, the MoI can use its powerful situation to play one donor off against the other. For this reason, international security assistance to Tunisia generally passes under the radar and consists of “loose and informal cooperation that uses technical arrangements to side-step democratic control and oversight of intelligence activities” (Jebnoun, 2017, p. 62).

³ The G7+ is a coordination framework for security assistance, comprising the G7 countries, as well as Spain, Belgium, the EU, Switzerland, Turkey, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

**Germany's Changing Security Policy
and the Enable and Enhance Initiative (E2I)**

German foreign policy is traditionally described as “reactive, defensive and unimaginative rather than ambitious, creative and risk-taking” (Rotmann, 2018, p. 30) and experts have underlined a certain dilemma. On the one hand, Germany is an economic and regional power; on the other, prudence and restraint have been core values of German foreign policy (Fix & Keil, 2017). Over the past years, calls for a stronger German leadership role have increased, highlighting that Germany could no longer act like a “free rider” by relying on others (notably the US) to safeguard international security. Against this backdrop, experts have started to refer to a paradigm shift in Germany's foreign and security policy to describe the growing consensus among the German political elite to take a greater leadership role and seek more proactive solutions to international security challenges (Fix & Keil, 2017).

Germany's commitment to take on a greater leadership role on the international scene was initially announced at the 2014 Munich security conference, where both the German minister of Foreign Affairs and the federal president declared that Germany was “ready to live up to its responsibility and take leadership” (Hellmann, 2017, p. 340). This was followed two years later by the formulation of a new German defence policy, outlined in the White Paper on Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr. The 2016 White Paper underlines that “in the current crises, Germany is proving that it is assuming its security policy responsibility (including with military means)” and “willing to lead” (German Government, 2016, p. 8). The document also highlights that the German armed forces (Bundeswehr) are an important instrument of German security policy, which is also reflected in the continuous rise of the defence budget (Meiers, 2017). The 2016 document differs significantly from the 2006 White Paper, which already referred to Germany's “new responsibility”, but predominantly defined it in terms of Germany's role in the EU (German Government, 2016).

For a long time, German security policy was largely defined through the EU and its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The launch of Germany's new security instrument the “Ertüchtigungsinitiative” (Enable and Enhance Initiative, E2I), clearly shows the preference of German policy-makers to rely on the EU for greater security engagement. In 2013, Germany advocated the E2I at EU-level. Yet, because the European Commission (EC) insisted on the principle that EU funding may not be used for military equipment, the German government finally decided to pursue the initiative on its own (Puglierin, 2016). Thus, in 2016, the German government launched its own E2I, known as the Ertüchtigungsinitiative. The E2I is an inter-ministerial initiative with an independent title in the federal budget. According to the German government, the new funding mechanism should “bolster partner countries' capacity to safeguard their own

security and stability, as well as regional security and stability" (German Government, 2019, p. 4). Experts have stressed that the objective of the E2I is to export security beyond Europe's borders by enabling "trustworthy partners to manage crisis situations on their own and to take responsibility in their region" (Kiesewetter, 2015, p. 359). The new German instrument is administered by two ministries, the Federal Foreign Office (AA) and the Federal Ministry of Defence (BMVg), which jointly plan the measures on a yearly basis (German Government, 2019). Initially, €100 million was allocated for the E2I. Later, the budget was raised to €130 million in 2017 and 2018 respectively. The E2I is part of the so-called "network approach", which combines civil and military elements for crisis prevention and management. This approach was first formulated by the 2017 guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace (AA, 2017). Because it is funded through an independent budget title, the E2I is much more flexible as compared to other security assistance programmes (Puglieri, 2016).

Despite the innovative aspects of the E2I, experts have stressed several downsides. Most importantly, critics argue that the network approach neglects civil crisis prevention instruments while favouring so-called train-and-equip programmes (Liebich, 2016). Train-and-equip programmes are military solutions that involve the transfer of expertise and material from a stronger military to a weaker ally. They are usually seen as an alternative to fighting a common enemy together. Moreover, there is a lack of transparency and it is rather difficult to gather information about the precise projects funded in the framework of the E2I initiative. The German government does not publish a comprehensive report. Most of the data available is based on written parliamentary questions formulated by the Bundestag, mostly by MPs from the opposition, to the German government (Bundestag 2017a-d, 2018). On this basis, experts highlight that training and equipment for local security forces are at the core of the initiative (Rotmann, 2018).

The E2I is not Germany's only tool for security assistance. Another German security instrument is the Equipment Aid Programme for Foreign Armed Forces ⁴ (AH-P). The AH-P was created in the 1960s as a military instrument. Through the AH-P, Germany mostly supports regional peace-keeping capacities. It is jointly implemented by the AA and the BMVg and follows a four-year project cycle. It is important to underline that, although it is a military instrument, weapons and ammunition are not procured with AH-P resources (German Government 2019). Alongside the AH-P, Germany also has a Police Training and Equipment Aid Programme ⁵ (AAH-P). The AAH-P was established in 2017, building on decades of police cooperation programmes coordinated by the Germany Ministry of the Interior (BMI). It is carried out jointly by the BMI and the AA (German Government, 2019). The BMI provides the technical experts, while the AA is

4 Ausstattungshilfeprogramms der Bundesregierung für ausländische Streitkräfte(AH-P).

5 Ausbildungs- und Ausstattungshilfeprogramm der Bundesregierung für ausländische Polizeikräfte (AAH-P).

responsible for the funding of the specific projects. The AAH-P is a traditional train-and-equip programme, which currently focuses on the areas of the criminal police force, border management and aviation security.

The E2I varies from the other two German security assistance programmes because it has a broader focus and provides more flexibility. Unlike the AH-P and the AAH-P, the E2I can address a wider range of possible partners and is based on shorter planning cycles (Bundestag, 2017b). Moreover, it can include lethal weapons as material support to partner countries.

In terms of its regional focus, the E2I targets primarily MENA and Sahel countries, often referred to as the “arc of crises” in Europe’s neighbourhood (Weißbuch, 2016). Initially, the following five countries were selected for the Enable and Enhance Initiative: Iraq, Jordan, Mali, Nigeria and Tunisia. In 2017, Burkina Faso and Niger were added as priority countries, while some projects were also carried out in Lebanon. In 2016, a major part of the E2I budget was spent on projects in Jordan (€30 million), Iraq (€25 million) and Tunisia (€20 million) (Rotmann, 2018). The support of local security forces is often delivered based on their demands and sometimes embedded in bilateral or multilateral agreements. For example, in 2017, the German government planned to spend €15 million on E2I projects in Niger to enhance the security forces’ mobility in the country’s north within the framework of the EU Migration Partnership (“Bundeswehrtruppe in Niger”, 2016; Bundestag, 2017a). Moreover, E2I funding was also used to foster cooperation with the UN, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) states and the G5 Sahel (Bundestag, 2017c).

A major question is to what extent Germany’s security policy, in particular its Enable and Enhance Initiative, effectively contributes to SSR in fragile countries in the MENA and Sahel region. As mentioned, SSR is based on normative goals such as democratic oversight, accountability and transparency of the security forces. According to the German government, €6.4 and €2.9 million of the E2I budget was spent in 2016 and 2017 in Tunisia and Jordan respectively to foster voluntary engagement in civil protection structures in order to contribute to civilian control over security forces (Bundestag, 2017b). Yet the majority of E2I funding is devoted to pure train-and-equip programmes (Bundestag, 2017b). Most of the training is carried out by German security forces (e.g. technical trainers, police instructors).

So far, the E2I only contributes to a professionalisation of security forces and largely neglects other components of SSR. Because of the prevailing lack of accountability and

transparency of the security forces, the equipment delivered by Germany under the E2I risks aggravating human rights abuses in the partner countries (Friedensgutachten, 2018). Germany's focus on train-and-equip programmes, as compared to other more political elements in support of SSR is also visible when looking at the allocation of the German security assistance funding. According to the German government, a total of €3.7 million was spent on programmes directly aiming at supporting civilian and democratic control of the security sector in 2016/2017 (of which 2 million was spent in Tunisia) (Bundestag, 2017b). This amount is quite unambitious compared to the €63 million spent on the four-year project cycle of the AH-P, which supports various train-and-equip programmes (Bundestag 2017b; Rotmann, 2018).

The establishment of the E2I shows that, despite Germany's commitment to become a more reliable security actor, it has so far not followed an overall political strategy on how to address SSR in fragile states. German SSR support is fragmented because SSR measures are carried out by different bureaucratic actors. Germany's commitment to supporting the security sector of partner countries represents an important field of action in foreign, security and development policy. Thus, SSR measures are carried out by the AA, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Ministry of Defence (BMVg) as it also touches on other aspects, such as the rule of law and internal security. Hence, the German Ministry of the Interior (BMI) and Justice Ministry (BMJV) also implement SSR programmes. Because of the plurality of interests, each ministry is responsible for its own measures. This creates difficulties in assessing the overall German SSR commitment. According to estimates, Germany spent €155 million on various security assistance projects in 2017 that could be labelled Security Sector Reform (Rotmann, 2018).

In order to overcome this fragmentation and strengthen coordination among the ministries, there have been attempts to formulate an inter-ministerial understanding of SSR support. Building on the 2016 White Paper, in 2017 Germany adopted guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace to formulate a cross-ministerial strategy to support SSR processes in partner countries. More recently, the German government published its first inter-ministerial SSR strategy in order to create "a framework for improving coherence among ministries in the planning and implementation of SSR measures" (German Government, 2019, p. 5).

The German Security Assistance to Tunisia

Germany's cooperation with Tunisian security forces started before the revolution. It dates back to the German-Tunisian police cooperation of the 1980s. Between 1985 and 1995, the Tunisian police received training and equipment worth 1 million Deutsche Mark (DM) (Bundestag, 1995). Under the Ben Ali regime, Germany also provided training in internet surveillance to the Tunisian ISF (Bundestag, 2013).

Following the popular uprisings, Tunisia rose in rank on Germany's foreign policy agenda. In 2012, both countries signed an official German-Tunisian Transformation Partnership with the aim of helping Tunisia's democratic transition (Ratka, 2013). In the framework of this new partnership, the German government promised to support SSR in Tunisia (Bundestag, 2014). In order to encourage reforms of the Tunisian security sector, Germany offered both training and material support to the Tunisian government. Germany's Intelligence Service (BND) and its Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV) trained the Tunisian security forces on the different topics such as criminal investigations and intelligence sharing (Bundestag, 2014; "BND und Verfassungsschutz", 2013). Moreover, Germany enhanced its material support to the Tunisian Mol. The German Foreign Office is contributing €4 million per year until 2020 (Bundespolizei, 2018).

In 2016, a Tunisian-German security agreement was signed with the aim of reinforcing the countries' joint efforts in combating organised crime, terrorism and illegal migration. For the implementation of the agreement, Germany's has different funding mechanisms. As outlined in Table 1, these instruments include the E2I, military assistance through the AH-P, police assistance through the AAH-P, police cooperation of the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), as well as development assistance by the BMZ and additional foreign policy funding from the AA.

The BKA offers training in topics like forensics, personal security and detonating explosives to the Tunisian security forces. This training focus on technical issues and tends to neglect topics such as human rights and the rule of law (BKA, 2016). The funds from the BMZ and the AA are often allocated to German aid implementation agencies like the German development agency (GIZ) and German political foundations based in Tunisia (Marzo, 2019; Furness, 2019). These projects tend to encompass broader political elements necessary for SSR.

Figure 1 shows that a majority of Germany's recent security projects in Tunisia have been funded by the E2I alone or by a combination of instruments. In collaboration with the US, in 2016 Germany started to assist Tunisia in the protection of its border with Libya. In the framework of the E2I, Germany provided an initial €7 million for mobile border

surveillance systems, which was later complemented by a fixed electronic border surveillance system worth €18 million (Bundestag, 2018). In the context of another E2I project on biosecurity, a mobile laboratory was offered to support the capacities of Tunisia's Rapid Response Team and to help the country to prepare and react independently to external threats and to curb risks and proliferation of biological weapons (Bundeswehr, 2017). Moreover, the German government provides support to Tunisia in the field of civil protection and disaster response. Since 2012, Germany has supported Tunisia's Office Nationale de la Protection Civile, which was allocated an additional €6.4 million in 2016 under the E2I (Bundestag, 2017b).

Table 1. Instruments of German Security Assistance to Tunisia

Instrument	Projects	Timeframe	Budget
Ertüchtigungsinitiative (E2I)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil protection • Biosecurity • Border security, e.g. Tunisian-Libyan border, Tunisian-Algerian border through support to AAH-P programme • Contribution to the DCAF Trust Fund for North Africa 	Since 2016, annual planning cycle	Around €20 million per year
Police cooperation (funded by the AAH-P)	<p>Mostly border security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tunisian-Algerian border • Integrated border management in Jendouba and El Kef • Training in border policing and document verification • "Train the trainers" on border policing • Support for maritime units of the Tunisian national guard 	<p>- Projects started in 2015, since 2017 they are embedded in the AAH-P instrument</p> <p>- 4-year planning cycle (started in 2017)</p>	Around €8 million since 2017
Police cooperation of the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal investigation techniques, intelligence sharing, counter-terrorism • AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) 	Cooperation since the 1980s	€5.34 million (2014-2018)

Military assistance (funded by the AH-P)	No projects in Tunisia since 2004		
Development cooperation by the BMZ and other financial support by the AA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the “Organisation Mondial Contre la Torture”, in the framework of the German-Tunisian Transition Partnership • Trainings of the Tunisian national guard and the police on the law to combat violence against women with the Centre de recherches, d'études, de documentation et d'information sur la femme (CREDIF), carried out by Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) • Conferences and publications with the “Observatoire Tunisien de la Sécurité Globale” (OTSG), implemented by the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSS) • Conferences and seminars with the “Tunisian Institute for Strategic Studies” (ITES) and the “Al-Kawakibi Democarct Transition Center” (Kadem) implemented by Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) • Project to preventing violence in prisons, implemented by the GIZ 	2018 - 2021	Classified information

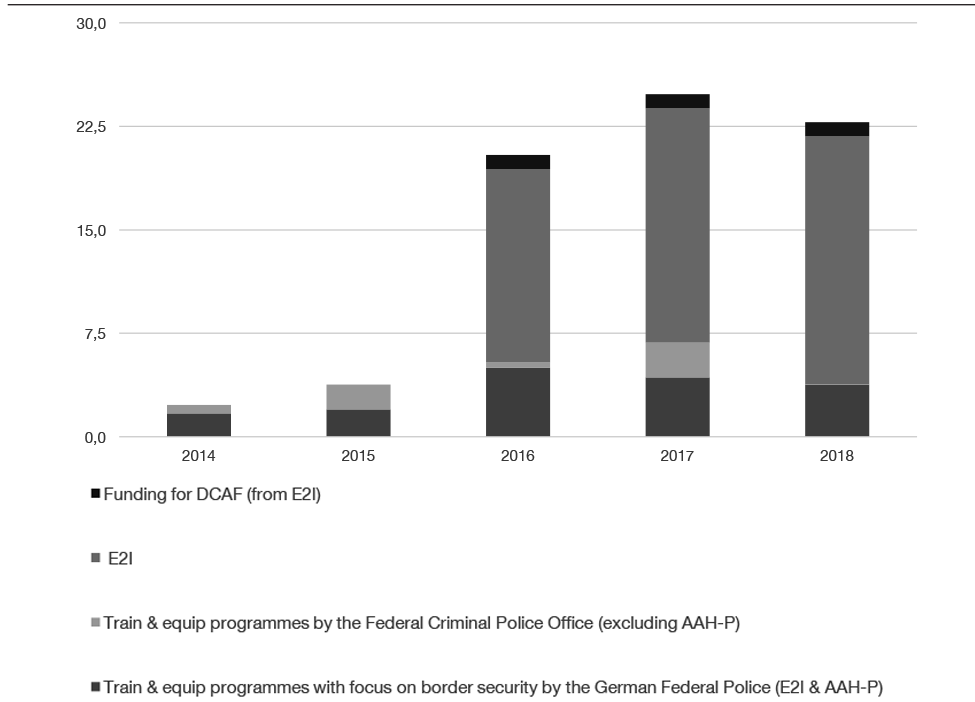
Source: Compiled by the authors, based on different sources.

NB: The table is not exhaustive. Some funding instruments are not exclusive and can overlap.

According to the German government, the Enable and Enhance Initiative represents an innovative instrument for SSR in Tunisia, which is crucial to the country's lasting democratisation. However, it remains unclear if the security projects funded under the

E2I actually contribute to reforming the Tunisian security sector in the long run and thereby help the country's democratic transition.

Figure 1. Funding of German Security Assistance to Tunisia



Sources: Compiled by the authors, based on the following sources: Rotmann, 2018, p. 35 and information provided by the German Mol, the AA and the BKA.

NB: The figures are not exhaustive.

Figure 1 shows that Germany's security assistance to Tunisia follows a narrow understanding of SSR and encompasses mostly train-and-equip programmes. Like the more traditional funding instruments, the E2I is used in Tunisia to support capacity-building programmes of the Tunisian security forces. Only an insignificant portion of Germany's security assistance, through the financial contribution to DCAF, addresses broader SSR issues, such as the democratic oversight of the security system and justice reform.

The focus of the E2I on rather short-term train-and-equip programmes could hamper long-term reforms of the Tunisian security and justice system, as well as the country's overall democratisation process. Considering the fact that ISF have been the main tool of repression under the Ben Ali regime and the absence of reform since the revolution, a mere professionalisation and strengthening of the existing security apparatus could

negatively impact on the democratic control of the Tunisian security forces. There is evidence that after the revolution the Tunisian security forces continue to violate human rights and abuse their power. The Tunisian Organisation Against Torture (OCCT) reported 631 cases of torture in the period from 2013 to 2016 (Attia, 2018). In 2017 and 2018, four men were killed by the ISF, one of them a young football supporter who drowned after being told to jump into a river even though he claimed not to know how to swim, the police officer telling him to learn (Lac, 2018). In all of the four cases, no police officer has been sentenced to this day. Revealing an extreme esprit de corps, the spokesmen of the MoI commented on one of these cases that, “we won't say that we have killed this or that person, our goal is to protect the ours” (Lac, 2018). Some of Germany's capacity-building measures could increase the overall legitimacy of the Tunisian security apparatus and thereby make it more “successful” in resisting reforms and attempts at democratic oversight (Kartas, 2014). As the Tunisian security apparatus remains a “black box”, which is difficult to access and understand, external actors like Germany spend years in building up “good” relations with the security forces. Even though Tunisian security forces are “not clearly committed to reform” because they represent the continuity from the Ben Ali regime (Dworkin & El Malki, 2018, p. 12), external actors like Germany tend to limit their criticism and reform recommendations in order to maintain close relations with their security partners (Interviews, Tunis 2018).

There is also a danger linked to the fact that the E2I allows for the delivery of military equipment to Tunisia, including lethal and dual-use goods. Thus, some civil society activists see the risk that the German military equipment falls into the wrong hands and contributes to an arms race in the region (Interviews, Tunis 2018). Moreover, some members of the German parliament have raised questions regarding Germany's commercial interests behind the E2I. They have highlighted links between the E2I and the German armament industry, stressing that the border surveillance equipment provided to Tunisia was delivered by the company Hensoldt. The German government holds a minimum share in Hensoldt, which is managed by the BMVg.

Germany's support for SSR in Tunisia reflects a general tendency to a securitisation narrative in the MENA region (Furness, 2018). The securitisation perspective creates the risk that foreign actors use development aid and other financial assistance to pursue their own national security interests, such as the fight against terrorism and illegal migration (Brown, Grävingsholt & Raddatz, 2016).

Because instability in the MENA region has consequences for Germany's domestic security, the German government has stepped up its collaboration with Tunisia as a guarantor of

regional security. This is highlighted by the fact that the E2I is “geared towards help to self-help, training, and enabling states or organisations that could serve as anchors of stability in fragile regions” (Puglierin, 2016). Through the E2I, Germany is helping Tunisia to secure its borders with neighbouring countries. Because the conflict in Libya is a major source of instability in the region, the most important E2I project funded by Germany in Tunisia is the fortification of the Tunisian-Libyan border. Like the US, the German approach is aimed at assisting the Tunisian government to bolster the capacity of its security sector to secure Tunisia's borders. Germany pursues a similar strategy in other countries of the Maghreb and the Sahel region, where it implements projects to support border control through GIZ (Andres, 2017; Naceur, 2018). Yet experts unanimously agree that the “securitisation” of the border regions in the MENA region does not prevent the risk of violent spill-overs (Herbert & Gallien, 2018b; Pollock & Wehrey, 2018). They stress that this approach “is unlikely to address the entrenched permeability of the frontier and eliminate the underlying causes of border insecurity” (Pollock & Wehrey, 2018). For Tunisian residents living along the border with Libya, the informal economy represents the only source of income. Thus, smuggling and informal trade has been tolerated by the local authorities and carried out in cooperation between border security guards and smugglers (Hanlon & Herbert, 2015). Hence, Germany's support for border security could lead to a backlash that exacerbates “the pre-existing fault lines in the border regions” (Meddeb, 2017, p. 1), because “hardening the border runs up against deep-rooted socioeconomic realities in the region, where cross-border traffic continues to be a way of life and a substantial source of livelihood” (Pollock & Wehrey, 2018). Depriving the border communities of their economic basis could push them to other forms of criminality and enhance the risk of security forces abusing power (Herbert & Gallien, 2018b).

According to the securitisation narrative, the Arab uprisings have not only destabilised the MENA region but also resulted in uncontrolled refugee and migration flows to Europe, which are framed as a domestic security problem for Europe in general, and Germany in particular. Following the so-called European migration crisis in 2015, characterised by high numbers of people arriving in Europe from across the Mediterranean Sea, Germany and the EU have started to cooperate with countries in North Africa to stop transit migrants from sub-Saharan Africa. Unlike its neighbours, Tunisia is not a major transit country for migrants from sub-Saharan Africa, as most of the migrants leaving from Tunisia are Tunisians (Herbert & Gallien, 2018a). Nevertheless, Germany and the EU consider Tunisia as an important partner to control migration flows. In addition to a close cooperation in the area of readmission, Germany supports the European proposal to establish so-called offshore migrant processing centres in Tunisia and other Maghreb

countries (Burke & Cordall, 2018). While the establishment of these centres has failed so far because of the refusal of the respective countries, the EU has been able to launch an EU immigration liaison officer network in 2004. Its aim is to prevent and combat illegal immigration, reassure the return of illegal immigrants and manage legal migration (Council Regulation No 377/2004). Through the German federal police project office in Tunis, Germany supports the EU immigration liaison officer network. Moreover, Germany is supporting Tunisian security forces to improve the sea surveillance in the Tunisian coastal zone (Bundespolizei, 2018). This also involves strengthening the Tunisian coast guard's ability to stop departures of irregular migrants from its territory. Against this background, the German government considers the E2I as a tool for "the implementation of the federal government's migration policy goals" (Bundestag, 2017d).

Because of the general trend of over-securitisation, Germany has prioritised short-term neoliberal initiatives over more long-term socioeconomic solutions, necessary for Tunisia's lasting stability. In fact, the 2011 uprising leading to Ben Ali's departure was mostly the result of social unrests rooted in Tunisia's poor economic situation. Since the revolution, Tunisia continues to face growing inequalities between people and regions. Tunisia remains very deeply indebted, and the successive governments have not been able to offer economic solutions, especially for young people that suffer from high unemployment (World Bank, 2014). Tunisia's poor economic situation has important implications in terms of Tunisia's democratisation and security. The German government has acknowledged the fact that Tunisia's democratic transition will rely on the country's ability to find solutions for its economic development. Under the German G20 presidency the flagship programme Compact with Africa was launched to promote private investment in Africa. Tunisia is a major beneficiary of the programme. It received a € 165 million loan on the condition of reforming its financial sector and creating an investor-friendly environment. Yet it remains questionable if the current neoliberal economic policy backed by Germany and the international financial institutions presents a long-term solution for the Tunisian population. On the contrary, it could be argued that the neoliberal policy approach intensifies Tunisia's socioeconomic crisis and increases the divide between rich and poor (Aliriza, 2018), as seen in the massive protests in January 2018. Moreover, there are signs that Tunisia's socioeconomic challenges also impact on the country's long-term security. According to some recent evidence, social injustice and unemployment are drivers of radicalisation in Tunisia (UNDP, 2017). The latest suicide bomber attack in Tunis, which was committed by a 30-year-old unemployed university graduate from an unprivileged background, shows how Jihadist organisations skilfully exploit the marginalisation of youths in Tunisia.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The shift in Germany's security policy and its efforts in taking on more responsibility on the world stage, and in the MENA region in particular, is a positive development. Tunisia represents the only post-Arab Spring success story and needs continued international support. Germany should, however, critically assess the impact of its assistance. Evidence presented in this paper shows that Germany's security assistance to Tunisia does not necessarily go hand in hand with Tunisia's democratic transformation. On the contrary, Germany's security involvement in Tunisia could present a risk for the country's long-term stability and democratisation process. Germany should therefore adjust its support for SSR in Tunisia.

1. A comprehensive SSR approach. Germany should make sure that its security assistance to Tunisia follows a broad understanding of SSR

The paper has underlined that Germany's security assistance to Tunisia is based on a fragmented and narrow approach towards SSR. The recent adoption of a cross-ministerial SSR strategy represents a first step in the right direction as it will allow for more coherence in the planning and implementation of SSR measures by the different German ministries (German Government, 2019). At the same time, Germany should put more effort into developing an SSR approach and support measures that go beyond pure train-and-equip programmes. By training and equipping the security sector, there is a risk that Germany supports what some experts describe as "key spoilers in Tunisia's democratisation process" (Jebnoun, 2017). Experts have noted that, unlike other foreign actors, "Germany is considered a legitimate partner by several governments as well as non-government actors in the MENA region" (Furness, 2018, p. 20). However, Germany could lose its reputation as a credible partner, when increasingly cooperating with security forces that repeatedly violate human rights principles and other international principles. This dilemma became evident with the arrest of the German-Tunisian UN expert Moncef Kartas. Despite his status as UN diplomat, he was arrested by the Tunisian government on suspicion of espionage. Germany reminded Tunisia on several occasions that the detention of Mr Kartas was illegal and that Tunisia should respect the diplomatic immunity of UN staff. Nevertheless, the release of Mr Kartas took some months. Hence, Germany's security assistance to Tunisia should focus more on the key components of SSR, namely accountability, transparency and democratic oversight of the security sector.

2. Local ownership. Germany should support a political dialogue on SSR in Tunisia

"Local ownership" has become a buzzword in the field of SSR. The idea was also translated into Germany's E2I and the notion of "enabling". Yet, experts have noted the

opposite effect in Tunisia. They have stressed that international security assistance has led to financial dependencies and internationalisation of intelligence work, which undermines the local accountability of the security forces as their control will not be in the hands of a democratic, civilian or judicial national oversight body but by international partners including Germany (Mickan, 2016). In the Tunisian case, parliamentary oversight over the security sector was introduced through the establishment of two parliamentary committees in the ARP. Following the recent parliamentary elections, Germany should support and strengthen the work and expertise of these two committees in the ARP. In addition to strengthening the Tunisian parliament, Germany should collaborate with other political actors to support judicial reforms related to the security sector in Tunisia, such as the law no. 5 on the right of those taken into police custody.

3. Addressing the root causes of insecurity. Germany should develop a long-term security approach by presenting lasting solutions to Tunisia's socioeconomic challenges

Germany's support for SSR in Tunisia reflects a general tendency to a securitisation narrative in the MENA region and the fact that the international community's response to the Arab uprisings has focused on short-term stability and development aid rather than long-term economic solutions. Lasting solutions to Tunisia's security challenges will require long-term measures to address the country's complex socioeconomic situation. So far, Germany has not paid enough attention to the link between Tunisia's economic development and long-term security. In particular, German policy-makers should consider the economic risks of an approach of over-securitisation of Tunisia's marginalised border regions. The example of the Tunisian-Libyan border region shows that the hard security approach of the Tunisian government, supported by Germany, has deteriorated the economic situation of the local communities and led to despair among youths, thereby undermining Tunisia's long-term stability.

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Annex 1: List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Annex 2: Tentative Mapping of SSR Projects in Tunisia⁶

⁶ Except bilateral German programmes, see Table 1.

Annex I

AA:	Federal Foreign Office (Germany)
AH-P:	Equipment Aid Programme for Foreign Armed Forces (Germany)
AAH-P:	Police Training and Equipment Aid Programme (Germany)
ARP:	National Assembly of the Representatives of the People/ Assemblée des représentants du peuple
BfV:	Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (German domestic intelligence service)
BKA:	Federal Criminal Police Office (Germany)
BMI:	Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (Germany)
BMJV:	Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection (Germany)
BMVg:	Federal Ministry of Defence (Germany)
BMZ:	Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany)
BND:	Federal Intelligence Service (Germany)
CFSP:	Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU
CIVIPOL:	Technical cooperation operator of the French Ministry of the Interior
COAFA:	Parliamentary Committee on Administrative Organisation and the Affairs of the Armed Forces / Commission parlementaire de l'Organisation de l'administration et des affaires des forces armées
CREDIF:	Centre de recherches, d'études, de documentation et d'information sur la femme
DCAF:	Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance
EEAS:	European External Action Service
EFF:	Extended Fund Facility Arrangement

EU:	European Union
E2I:	Enable & Enhance Initiative / Ertüchtigungsinitiative
FES:	Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation
FIDH:	International Federation for Human Rights
GIZ:	German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH
HQ:	Headquarter
HSS:	Hanns-Seidel-Foundation
INAI:	Tunisian Agency for Access to Information/Instance d'accès à l'information en Tunisie
INLUCC:	Tunisian National Anti-Corruption Agency / Instance Nationale de Lutte Contre la Corruption
INPT:	National Authority for the Prevention of Torture / Instance National pour la Prévention de la Torture
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
IcSP:	Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace
IS:	Islamic State
ISF:	Internal Security Forces
IVD:	Truth and Dignity Commission / Instance Vérité et Dignité
Kadem:	Al-Kawakibi Democracy Transition Center
KAS:	Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation
MENA:	Middle East and North Africa
MoD:	Ministry of Defence
Mol:	Ministry of Interior

NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCA:	National Constituent Assembly of Tunisia
OCCT:	Tunisian Organisation Against Torture / Organisation Contre la Torture en Tunisie
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OTSG:	Observatoire Tunisien de la Sécurité Globale
PARSS:	Programme d'appui à la réforme du secteur de la sécurité (EU)
SFDGUI:	Syndicat des fonctionnaires de la Direction générale des unités d'intervention
SNSFI:	Syndicat national des forces de sécurité intérieure
SSG:	Security Sector Governance
SSR:	Security Sector Reform
UGTT:	Tunisian General Labour Union/ Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNSFST:	Union nationale des syndicats des forces de sureté tunisienne
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development

Annex II

Donor	Project Title	Timeframe	Budget
/	Promoting Civilian Engagement in Security Sector Reform Processes in Tunisia	Launched in 2015	/
Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovak Republic, Sweden and Switzerland	Contribution to the Trust Fund for Security Sector Development Assistance in North Africa (TFNA), established in 2012	2011-ongoing (Germany contributed in 2016 and 2017)	Germany (€3 million), total TFNA: about €16.4 million
EU	Programme d'appui à la Réforme et Modernisation du Secteur de la Sécurité de la République Tunisienne (PARSS)	Since 2015	€23 million
EU	Border security management on Tunisia's southern borders, preventing violent extremism	2016-2019	Around €1 million from the Regional programme

Implementing Actor	Tunisian Partner	Project Focus	Additional Information
Search for Common Ground	Centre de Transition Démocratique Kawakibi (KAD-EM)	Supporting civil society efforts aimed at increasing the transparency of and citizen participation in Security Sector Reform	https://www.sfcg.org/tunisia-security-sector-reform-ssr-project/
DCAF Office Tunisia	Various Tunisian partners	/	http://www.dcaf-tfna.org/En/donors-and-key-figures_11_217 https://www.dcaf.ch/trust-fund-north-africa, http://www.dcaf-tunisie.org/En/activite-partenaires/communique-de-presse-l-allemande-renforce-son-soutien-envers-le-fonds-d-affectation-du-dcaf-pour-l-afrique-du-nord-tfna-avec-1-million-d-euros/77/10295
Various actors	Tunisian Mol	3 Priorities: - Reform and modernise the internal security forces (ISF) according to international and human right standards - Support the capacity of the Tunisian state in terms of border security - Support the capacity of the intelligence service of the Mol regarding counter-terrorism	https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58282/premiere-reunion-du-comite-de-pilotage-du-programme-dappui-la-reforme-et-modernisation-du-tr http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/tunisia/documents/press_corner/cp_signature_rss_4nov2015_fr.pdf
Danish Refugee Council & Danish Demining	/	To contribute to an inclusive and democratic security governance of Tunisia's land borders and	http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/egdoc/rep/3/2015/EN/3-2015-8841-EN-F1-1-ANNEX-1.PDF

Donor	Project Title	Timeframe	Budget
			"Euromed Police"
EU	Enhancing inclusive and democratic security governance of Tunisia's borders	2016-2019	Around € 800.000 from the Regional programme "Euromed"
EU	Expertise in support of the Tunisian authorities in the fight against terrorism (LCCT)	2016-2018, it will continue in the project LCCT II (2019-2022)	€2 million for LCCTII

Implementing Actor	Tunisian Partner	Project Focus	Additional Information
Group (DDG)		to counter violent extremism through building more resilient communities.	<p>https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-8-2018-001244-ASW_EN.html</p> <p>https://icspmap.eu/pdf/?format=</p> <p>https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south/stay-in-formed/projects/euromed-police-iv</p> <p>https://www.euromed-police.eu</p>
International Alert		To contribute to an inclusive and democratic security governance of Tunisia's land borders and to counter violent extremism through building more resilient communities	<p>http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2015/EN/3-2015-8841-EN-F1-1-ANNEX-1.PDF</p> <p>https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-8-2018-001244-ASW_EN.html</p> <p>https://www.international-alert.org/projects/enhancing-inclusive-and-democratic-governance-tunisia-borders-algeria-and-libya</p> <p>https://icspmap.eu/pdf/?format=</p>
CIVIPOL	Tunisian Mol, MJ, national guard, General prisons and Rehabilitation Directorate	<p>- Assist the gendarmerie and the justice sector for improved deterrence, investigation, prosecution and adjudication of terrorist crimes</p> <p>- Support the Intelligence Fusion Center in the Tunisian Mol in terms of decision-making, including the country's counter-terror strategy</p>	<p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document//E-8-2018-001244-ASW_EN.html</p>

Donor	Project Title	Timeframe	Budget
EU	Support for civil society for the improvement of detention and reintegration conditions in Tunisia	2018-2021	€ 1 million
EU	Breaking the taboo (Kachef al Maskout Anhou): Fight trafficking in human beings in Tunisia	2016-2018	\$532,068
EU, Canada	Enhancing inclusive and democratic security governance of Tunisia's borders	Started in 2014, new project launched in 2018	Around €1 million (2017)
Netherlands	Preventing Radicalization and Violent Extremism in Tunisian Prisons and Child Detention Centers and Ensuring Sustainable Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Detainees	2015-2017 (Phase I), 2018-2019 (Phase II)	/

Implementing Actor	Tunisian Partner	Project Focus	Additional Information
Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF) Tunisia	Association Tunisienne de Lutte contre les MST et le SIDA	Support the involvement and participation of civil society in justice reform in order to guarantee fair trial, access to justice, better conditions of detention and reintegration for detainees	https://www.civipol.fr/print/pdf/node/148
Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF) Tunisia	Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights (FTDES), International Institute for Nonviolent Action (NOACT)	Strengthen Tunisian civil society in the fight against human trafficking	https://www.asf.be/action/field-offices/asf-in-tunisia/
Danish Demining Group & International Alert	/	Violence prevention, conflict management, youth resilience	https://danishdemininggroup.dk/danish-demining-group/where-we-work/tunisia
Search for Common Ground	Tunisian Directorate General of Prisons and Rehabilitation (DGPR)	Enhance the facilitation skills of prison staff, helping them to address emerging conflicts and bringing together all stakeholders in an effort to achieve long-term solutions to countering violent extremism throughout the prison system	https://www.sfcg.org/tunisian-dutch-officials-against-violent-extremism/

Donor	Project Title	Timeframe	Budget
Norway, Belgium, Japan, UK, US, Canada, Switzerland	Programme in Support of SSR in Tunisia	2012-2019	Around \$7/10 million : Norway (\$105,902), Belgium (\$775,194), Japan (around \$4 million), UK (\$2.5 million), US (\$494 926), Canada (around \$1 million)
Open Society Foundation (OSF)	Security and human rights	2017-2019	€200,534
Switzerland	Programme d'appui à la réforme du secteur de la sécurité	2011-2016	/
UK	Border Security (Tunisia, Algeria), Strategic planning of the MoI	2014-2015	/
UK	Border Security (Tunisian-Libyan Border)	2014-2015	/
UK	Preventing Radicalisation	2014-2015	/

Implementing Actor	Tunisian Partner	Project Focus	Additional Information
UNDP	Tunisian Mol	Community-focused police, establishment of pilot stations throughout the country	https://www.tn.undp.org/content/tunisia/fr/home/operations/projects/democratic_governance/projet-d_appui-a-la-prevention--a-la-preparation-et-a-la-reponse.html
Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF) Tunisia	Forum tunisien pour les droits économiques et sociaux (FTDS)	Contributing to the prevention of violent extremism by strengthening the rule of law and human rights respect within the framework of the Tunisian state's security policy	https://www.asf.be/action/field-offices/asf-in-tunisia/
DCAF, UNDP	/ /		http://jamaity.org/project/programme-dappui-a-la-reforme-du-secteur-de-la-securite-en-tunisie/
Aktis Strategy	Mol, local communities	Community engagement	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-is-the-uk-supporting-tunisia
Danish Demining Group	Communities and security providers	Countering illicit cross-border trade	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-is-the-uk-supporting-tunisia
International Alert	Tunisian University social scientists	Capacity-building for analysis drivers of radicalisation	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-is-the-uk-supporting-tunisia

Donor	Project Title	Timeframe	Budget
UK	Tunisia Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) programme	2017-2018	€3.2 million
UK	Security Sector Reform to increase stability (part of CSS)	2018-2021	€2.4 million
US	Military Training	Ongoing	\$2,160,331
US, Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)	Protecting the rights of pre-charge detainees in Tunisia	2016-2018	\$828,025

Implementing Actor	Tunisian Partner	Project Focus	Additional Information
Research Information and Communications Unit, UNDP, UK MOD, TBC	Tunisian government, ISF	Integrated Strategic Planning, CVE, Border Management	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflict-stability-and-security-fund-middle-east-and-north-africa-annual-review-summaries-2017-to-2018
Aktis Strategy Ltd, Research Information and Communications Unit (RICU), Torchlight, UK Ministry of Defence (MOD), UNDP	/	Strategic planning capabilities, accountability, border security management	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflict-stability-and-security-fund-programme-summaries-for-middle-east-and-north-africa-2018-to-2019
Department of Defense	/ /		https://explorer.usaid.gov/#tab-summary
Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF) Tunisia	Tunisian Bar Association (Ordre National des Avocats de Tunisie, ONAT)	Improve the implementation of the new reform Of the Code of Criminal Procedure in three Tunisian governorates through better access to justice for people in police custody, more public awareness on the issue of rights in police custody, and strengthened capacities of key actors in this stage of procedure (lawyers, judges and state police officers)	https://www.asf.be/action/field-offices/asf-in-tunisia/

Donor	Project Title	Timeframe	Budget
US	Counter-terrorism Partnerships Fund (CTPF)	/	\$5,719,517 (2017)
US	Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA)	2017	\$14,813,905 (2017)
US, Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)	Police Academy	2016-ongoing	\$12 million

NB: The list is not exhaustive.

Implementing Actor	Tunisian Partner	Project Focus	Additional Information
Department of State	/	Capacity-building for criminal justice sector actors	/
Department of State	Training and equipment to law-enforcement agencies		https://www.refworld.org/docid/5bcf1f7813.html , https://www.strategiccapacity.org/projects/tunisia-law-enforcement-academy-modernization
US Institute of Peace (USIP), Strategic Capacity Group (SCG)	Tunisian Mol	Police academy modernisation, curriculum development	https://www.strategiccapacity.org/projects/tunisia-law-enforcement-academy-modernization



EuroMeSCo

Founded in 1996 and comprising 104 institutes from 29 European and South Mediterranean countries, EuroMeSCo (the Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission) is the main network of research centres on politics and security in the Mediterranean, striving at building a community of research institutes and think tanks committed to strengthening Euro-Mediterranean relations.

The objectives of the network are to foster influential quality analysis and reflection on Euro-Mediterranean politics and policies; to serve as a platform for dialogue between the members of the network and key stakeholders to discuss the key trends and challenges on the region's agenda; to increase the impact of think tanks and research institutes and to actively contribute to policy-making through dissemination of research outputs of the network to experts and national, European and international institutions linked to Euro-Mediterranean relations.

The EuroMeSCo work plan includes a research programme with five publication lines (Joint Policy Studies, Papers, Briefs, Spot-Ons and reports), as well as numerous activities, including annual conferences, seminars, workshops, presentations, formal and informal meetings with policy makers on the key political and security dynamics. It also includes communication and dissemination related activities (website, newsletter and targeted institutional dissemination) to raise awareness and promote the work of the network and to stimulate debate on Euro-Mediterranean affairs.

