

## Security Governance: A Case Study in Civil Defense

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**Abstract:** This paper examines how security governance is applied as both an analytical framework and an empirical model in Chinese civil defense. Civil defense, which was originally set up for war defense, is now transforming into an integrated emergency management unit, embracing wartime air defense and peacetime disaster protection. How Chinese civil defense transitioned along this process is a reflection of the security governance paradigm. Nevertheless, the inefficiency of inter-organizational cooperation among civil defense units implies that the integration of various forms of organizations needs further improvement.

**Keywords:** security governance, civil defense, non-traditional security

### 1. Introduction: from Security government to Security Governance

Governance encompasses mutulators' participation and collective decisions made in the public sectors, private sectors, and civil society. The remarkable increase in multi-actor integration, inter-organizational cooperation and non-military negotiation in the past decade has presented a transformation from government to governance. Although there is no explicit boundary between the government and governance in the fields such as public administration and international security, the theory of the former has failed to explain the successful newmanagement practices while the latter show a strong capacity to take full account of the changing security challenges and the rapid rise of trans-organizational networks. In the security studies area, there have been diverse theoretical and empirical findings showing that a transformation of security government to security governance is emerging as an alternative framework (or a paradigm) to address the security problems from the global to the individual level. Meanwhile, the philosophy and applicability of security governance was examined in the formation of regional security regime (typically including ASEAN and NATO).

To simplify, security governance is the application of governance theory in the security sphere. Security has been an attractive topic to observers of diverse fields, with its agenda gaining a redefining process since the late 1970s to 1980s. The unease with traditional security (TS) thinking has also expressed itself in a frequent call for a 'broadening' or 'updating' of the concept of security. Meanwhile, such non-traditional (broadly non-military) threats as environmental degradation, religious conflict, natural disaster, food safety, and so on are being 'securitized' as security problems. Non-traditional security (NTS) departs from military, political, and diplomatic affairs, in that it refers to non-military factors that compose a threat to the existence and development of sovereign states and the whole of mankind. Security governance is becoming a new concept of how we analyse the NTS challenges and also provides alternative ways dealing with NTS issues. On the other hand, no definitions of 'governance' have thus far been agreed upon in academic or policy discourse. Despite of its various definitions, the key components of governance include decentralization, interaction, cooperation, multi-actor participation, mutual dialogue and negotiation. Governance roughly represents 'good government' and 'effective governing'. In brief, security governance is a process during which security capacity can be strengthened through an 'effective governing' mechanism.

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Civil defense is an overall socialized system for disaster defense and civil protection. The purpose of this paper is to take Chinese civil defense as a case of security governance to provide an overview of how security governance is practiced in the area of local emergency management, and through this case study attempt to accommodate security governance theory to a Chinese specific context and suggest directions for future security governance practices in the local emergency area.

## 2. Theoretical framework

Part of the transformation of security policy from its state-centred bias and two central multilateral organizations (NATO and OSCE-Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) towards complex networks of state and non-state actors can be understood in terms of an emerging shift from 'government' to 'governance'. Security governance is enforced by the occurrence of NTS in widespread areas and facilitated by the rapid expansion of the power of NGOs, third party departments and private actors. Security governance is combined with two components: security and governance. The meaning of security has been debated since the end of Second World War. At the central debate was whether and how to widen and deepen the security concept from military sector to non-military sector and from state level to individual level. This study suggests that security is in essence three dimensional - objective (if a real threat exists), subjective (if and how the threat is reflected or interpreted by specific groups), and also inter-subjective (what the threat represents and how the threat is understood by all the actors involved).

The debate and argumentation on the term 'governance' might be even greater than those on security. In terms of governance, Elke Krahnmann stated that it is the degradation of authority and the outsourcing of public policy functions that transatlantic governments had accumulated over the past decades when requires a new discourse (governance). Etymologically, the word "governance" and its cognates were rooted in the Greek term "kybernan", meaning "to steer or pilot a ship". Lynn concluded and evaluated five meanings or models of governance: third-party government, multilevel governance, governance as networks, governance-not-government, and the new governance. Krahnmann suggested a more restrictive definition of the term governance as follows: governance denotes the structures and processes which enable a set of public and private actors to coordinate their interdependent needs and interests through the making and implementation of binding policy decisions in the absence of a central political authority. This paper summarizes that the governance paradigm features "new government" and "the changing locus of public authority" which involves three elements: (1) an expanding role for civil society in providing public benefits, possibly displacing government, and, in many accounts, (2) greater reliance on deliberative, as opposed to representative, forms of democratic participation, and (3) the relationship and boundary between public and private sectors is being redrawn.

Security governance is the combination of 'security' and 'governance'. According to Mark Weber et al., 'security governance' comprises five features: hierarchy; the interaction of a large number of both public and private actors; both formal and informal institutionalisation; relations between actors that are ideational in character, structured by norms and understandings as much as by formal regulations; and, finally, collective purpose. Based on these understandings of security governance, this paper identified six key characteristics of security governance. (1) Actors. Both public and private, governmental organizations (GOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) properly participate into public management and assume responsibilities. Privatization and out-sourcing are encouraged in a proper range. (2) Direction. Orders of authority are distributed in both top-down and bottom-up manner. Traditional top-down administrative line should be changed. The bottom-up approach is a good source of security sector reform and innovation. (3) Channel. Obedience by authority and hierarchical power is now surpassed by mutual trust and joint vision. More efficient security management is realized through a well-agreed goal. (4) Form. Flexible and soft elements are brought into current management style. The traditional strict and formal orders are replaced with inter-personal negotiations and discussion. The established convention that it is top head's responsibility to make decisions of every kind is replaced by multilateral discussions and staff meetings. (5) Model. Security governance has more than one model. It is context-specific. (6) Scope. Security governance can simultaneously find its empirical cases in both the national area and the international and global range. What needs special attention is that the heart of the notion of security governance is not to question the

dominant position of the state, but to highlight the growing capabilities and willingness of participation of NGOs, private corporations, and individuals. This might not be completely grasped by many security studies within the traditional security framework.

Security governance provides a new paradigm of analysis for security capacity building. Security governance as a conceptual framework and as a practice model has been typically realized in Europe and North America, and can also be found in selected cases in Latin America and Africa. This framework of security governance is currently being used in wide areas of international relation, international security, strategy management and public emergency management. The following section explains how security governance is applied by Chinese civil defense and what the insufficiencies of this practical project imply to the future development of security governance.

### **3. An Empirical Application to Chinese Civil defense**

Originally, Civil defense (CD, or 'civil protection' in Europe or 'homeland security' in the U.S) was set up for wartime air bomb defense, created in 1911 when during the Italy-Spain War, Italy became the first country to cast a bomb from the air and subsequently used air detection. CD expanded worldwide during the cold war era, primarily designed for the potential nuclear threat. After the incident of 9/11 attack, CD begins to embrace a task of anti-terrorist attack. Following the transformation from military security to non-military security since the end of the cold war, CD is embracing a new task-disaster management during the peacetime. International Civil Defense Organization is now a global unit organizing civil protection during various emergent situations.

This study found that Chinese civil defense is another good reflection of security governance framework. First, CD is trying to be a necessary part of the national emergency management system. In a perspective of law, Chinese CD is not a lawful unit for emergency response, but a lawful prescription to act in the case of war and execute air defense. As in China, Ministry of Civil Affairs, National Emergency Office, National Committee for Disaster Reduction, State Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters are mainly responsible for emergency management. On the other hand, CD has advantages of resources for peacetime emergency management, such as national defense organization system, professional personnel, bomb shelter, and emergency materials reserve. In 2005 the fifth Civil Defense Conference (CDC) proposed a transformation that CD shift from exclusive air defense to war and disaster defense. In 2006, the sixth CDC demanded that CD make best use of CD resources to strengthen peacetime disaster prevention and further develop its emergency response capacity. This statement implied that CD should be involved into the national emergency system.

Second, CD is reorganizing and reorienting its responsibilities, merging itself to the development of integrated emergency management. Generally, what CD currently takes as its responsibility includes three aspects: war defense, disaster prevention and alleviation and resolution of daily security issues. The three aspects constitute a much more comprehensive security paradigm, which elevates human security protection as its core agenda. One project CD organizations are doing is renaming themselves from the original 'Air Defense Agency' to 'Civil Defense Agency', such as Beijing Civil Defense Agency. The project of renaming is a good reflection of its turn to emergency management. Another project that Civil Defense Agencies are accomplishing is the reorientation of their responsibilities, moving towards disaster prevention and disaster management. As a matter of fact, what CD is transforming across most parts of China is driven by the current international and domestic security reality, which is characterised by cross-national, super-regional and comprehensive security threats, such as large scale natural disaster, global warming and energy insufficiency. This movement shows a tendency that governmental organization transformation for the purpose of human security is a must when responding to the non-traditional security issues.

Third, CD is attempting to interact with emergency management units of other kinds. By implication, governance might imply such descriptive characteristics or qualities as transparency, cooperation, adaptability, deliberation, means for resolving conflicts, structures for consultation, rules of how authority and influence are distributed among actors, and mechanisms for enforcing rules and agreement. Therefore, there is a tendency of decentralization of politics and also an integration of different departments within the framework of security governance. A cooperative, transparent, interactive model among security actors is

expected be created. Inefficient inter-organizational interaction would be always a disadvantage to the emergency responding operation. CD keeps a reliable connection with these parallel units such as Ministry of Civil Affairs (where National Committee for Disaster Reduction is established), Ministry of Water Resources (where State Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters is areset up), Fire Department, National Earthquake Relief Headquarters, and so on. An interactive and cooperative relation between CD and these agencies is being formed.

Fourth, individuals, families, private sectors, and communities are encouraged to participate the education and training program designed by CD. According to disaster sociology, 'self protection' at the first moment when trapped in an emergency situation is critical to survive and alleviate suffering. It is also an integral part of disaster resilience. The resolution of many security issues relies on the first-responder community. Therefore, it is important for citizens, who are always vulnerable to emergencies and disasters, to receive the education and training of the sense and basic skills of self-protection. CD invests large amountsof resources educating and training the staff and citizens about disaster prevention and alleviation. Community members, volunteers, college students, and corporation staff are encouraged to participate into the training course and practice drills. CD has also builttraining schools and education halls, published books on community security, and conducted evacuation practices. There are also evaluation systems to send feedbacks to the CD agencies, informingthem how to improve and update the civil protection work. Education and training for Disaster prevention program is now institutionalized as a regular work schedule of CD agencies in many parts of China.

#### **4. Results and Future Directions**

This study on Chinese civil defense concludes that CD is another form of application of security governance. The fact that CD is reorganizing, transforming responsibilities, strengthening inter-organizational cooperation reflects the basic demands and characteristics of security governance. Additionally, the transformation of CD towards an integrated emergency management system would be beneficial to the overall security governance project. Generally, governance is as synonymous with "good government" or "effective governing" and security governance is a superior alternative model for security capacity building.

On the other hand, this paper also found insufficiencies in terms of security governance in Chinese CD project. One is that there is no Civil Defense Law in China, but Air Defense Law which originated from the war time. Lack of law means that all the security governance practices by CD would be questioned about its legitimacy. Anotheris that there is little distinction in terms of responsibilities between CD and those of other departments. Forexample, what exactly CD and Earthquake Agency areresponsible for during the different stages of earthquake response is still not clear.

This paper proposes that, firstly, for the goal of security governance, Civil Defense Law concerning civil protection and disaster management should have a high priority. In this Civil Defense Law, responsibilities of related departments should be explicitly presented. Secondly, to deepen and widen the CD security governance practices, an integrated emergency management model is expected to establish. It implies that the following aspects should be embraced: (1) emergency management organization and public information; (2) emergency operations planning and communication (3) emergency support services and reporting resource management; (4) detention, altering and warning; (5) continuity of government; (6) shelter protection and evacuation; (7) protective measures; (8) training and education; and (9) exercises and drills. Thirdly, it is of great necessity to properly define the boundary of governmental authority and provide the channel of interaction between GOs and NGOs, which is also critical for decision-making and resources distribution.

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