Achieving safety and security in an age of disruption and distrust

Why collaboration between the public and private sectors is a prerequisite for a safe, secure and prosperous society

Executive summary

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Foreword

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In my career spanning more than 35 years working in defence, it has become increasingly clear that delivering the safety and security that citizens and businesses need to prosper requires ever closer collaborations across borders, sectors and institutions.

I learnt that rebuilding a failed state means realising that everything in a nation is interlinked and that it is all about the hearts and minds of the people. If you want the people to have trust in their society and faith in their future, safety and security in the broadest terms are the prerequisite.

To reach this prerequisite, all segments of society are important. So you need an integral, systematic approach if you want to be effective. But would this apply only for failed states, or is it also applicable to our home countries? In my opinion, such an approach is essential for every society. The real question is how to realise it.

Executive summary

Citizens and businesses want to feel safe — protected from danger, risk or injury.[1] The notion of security — commonly defined as the state of being free from danger or threat[2] — is therefore intertwined with safety.

The purpose of this paper is to set out some of the key challenges facing the leaders of organisations responsible for delivering safety and security in its many forms. These include traditional defence, intelligence and policing roles but go beyond that. We propose a more inclusive approach to collaboration across the public and private sectors, and across borders, to achieve a safer, more secure society. And it underscores the need to act now by highlighting case studies that illustrate how lessons can be learnt. We challenge leaders to assess what they are doing and how their actions can be augmented and strengthened to meet their citizens' needs for a more secure future.

Safety and security lie at the heart of any nation's prosperity.

The notion of security applies to anything we would want to make 'secure' from a perceived risk or threat. This includes digital and data security, national security, border security, food security, water security and social security, to name a few. All these are interconnected. In broader terms, therefore, security can be defined as the "alleviation of threats to cherished values."[3]

Yet today, security is being challenged in many dimensions, including physical, digital and economic. Accepted social norms of behaviour also are being challenged. Added to this is deteriorating trust in public institutions and in leaders who should be a primary source of safety for citizens and businesses.[4] Governance is becoming increasingly difficult, and national and international unity are becoming harder to achieve.[5] As a result, even in stable countries, many citizens say they perceive themselves to be unsafe,[6] and businesses face their own security concerns, too.[7]

In this new reality, security, broadly defined, needs to be front and centre of government agendas — nationally, regionally and locally at the municipal level, as well as internationally — to deliver solutions that make the world a more secure place, so people trust institutions and the services they provide and so they both feel and are safe. Given that the threats come from many areas, this will require a much higher level of collaboration than we see today, both within government departments and among governments. Traditional security services such as the police, intelligence agencies and defence organisations will need to work with non-governmental organisations, businesses and citizens. With so many factors influencing perceptions of security, this type of collaboration needs a breadth of vision that is too often lacking and a level of organisational expertise that challenges current ways of working.

Safety and security lie at the heart of any nation's prosperity.

Notes

1. As defined in the Oxford English Dictionary.
2. As defined in the Oxford English Dictionary.
3. Paul Williams and Matt McDonald, eds., *Security Studies: An Introduction* (3rd ed., Routledge, 2018), p. 1. According to the authors, "Most scholars within international relations (IR) work with a definition of security that involves the alleviation of threats to cherished values." This definition lets us approach security in a meaningful way on all levels of society — public, private and not-for-profit, as well as domestic and international.
4. The Edelman Trust Barometer 2019 found that only 47% of 33,000 respondents from 27 countries had trust in government: https://www.edelman.com/trust-barometer.
5. UK Ministry of Defence, *Global Strategic Trends (out to 2050),* Oct. 2018: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/global-strategic-trends.
6. For instance, Gallup's 2018 *Global Law and Order Report* shows a lot of work remains to be done to achieve "a more peaceful and secure world," particularly in places such as Afghanistan and Venezuela: https://news.gallup.com/reports/235310/gallup-global-law-order-report-2018.aspx.
7. PwC, *22nd Annual Global CEO Survey*, 2019: https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/ceo-agenda/ceosurvey/2019/gx.html.

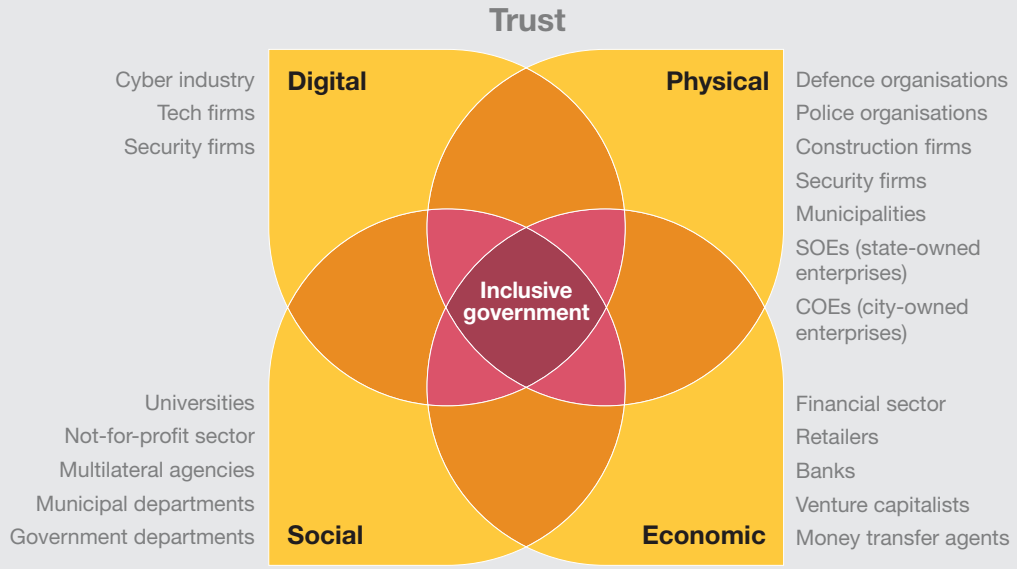
In our view, governments need to concentrate on developing systemic safety and security strategies across the public and private sectors. Leaders in a variety of institutions and organisations need to work together across interconnected areas of responsibility and take actions that make people feel more secure. When they are both believed and seen to be doing this effectively, they will succeed in delivering a more secure and resilient society that can cope with unexpected shocks and in winning back trust in the institutions that are too often seen to be letting down citizens.

A systemic approach to security, with trust and collaboration at its heart

To this end, our approach to security is purposefully broad and inclusive, with collaboration deeply embedded across four interrelated areas (see Figure 1):

- **Physical security:** The physical and institutional security of the state or territory and its administrative apparatus — the classical dimension of national security — and defence.
- **Digital security:** The protection of data and digital networked assets, regardless of whether they are owned by the state, corporations or private individuals.
- **Economic security:** The safeguarding of financial stability, nationally and within the wider global financial system. For the individual, this means, at a minimum, having enough to live on and pay the bills.
- **Social security:** Protection of citizen rights and civil liberties as traditionally defined in each state or territory. This is wider than social security as defined by a typical welfare system, including benefits and pensions; it includes food and water security, environmental sustainability, education and health.

Figure 1: Collaboration across domains to win back trust



Note: The security domains in which individual organisations are present may differ based on their scope and area of operations, and the examples in the figure are only indicative.

Source: PwC

For these building blocks to come together, they need to be built on a foundation of **trust**. Each country and each situation may require different emphasis, but the foundations of trust must be established across institutions and — in areas such as security, defence and intelligence — across borders, too.

These domains overlap and impact each other, which adds to the complexity of delivering security and the need to think holistically across all domains. For instance, economic security in a networked world is intertwined with digital security to protect against cyberattacks and data theft. Similarly, the operation of critical infrastructure is not only an issue of physical security but increasingly requires digital security, too, with a need for collaboration across organisations spanning construction to technology.

Indeed, any organisation can be — and often is — involved in more than one domain, which adds to the challenge of thinking and acting systematically in response to threats. For example, energy, utility and telecoms companies operate across all of the domains to some degree, as do health services providers whether they are private or public.

Organisations that may not have worked together in the past will need to collaborate in the future. Unless these domains are in appropriate balance and people trust their institutions and the organisations those institutions work with on a transnational basis, citizens and businesses won't be safe and secure.

Agenda for action

Making this systemic approach to security work requires specific actions. To illustrate how to put this model into effect, in this report we first discuss the foundations of security and why collaboration is required, drawing on case studies to illustrate how collaboration works in the four intersecting security domains. These real-world examples include anti-terrorist scenario planning between local and national forces in Sweden, cybersecurity defence strategies in Australia, an approach in Luxembourg to upskill workers to avoid the financial and human costs of wide-scale layoffs, the use of blockchain to secure land ownership records in India, and transnational networks to tackle food security globally.

Based on our experience, we have identified six key actions that government leaders at all levels — federal, state and local — need to prioritise now:

Six actions for government leaders

01

Develop approaches to security that are systemic, addressing the interplay of the physical, digital, economic and social aspects and spotting weak links across sectors.

02

Identify the stakeholders needed to **collaborate to develop a joint agenda** and a national safety and security policy that can cascade to the local level, adopting an **inclusive approach to stakeholder engagement.**

03

Identify exactly what each stakeholder needs to provide — for example, backup power or technical support — and **assess the level of interconnectedness** of those who need to be involved, including their critical functions and the infrastructure needed to deliver safety and security.

04

Develop the capacity and capability to deliver security **by having distributed leadership** — people empowered to make decisions — in place across the key stakeholders and sectors.

05

Invest in leadership to understand better how to engage the public and instil trust in the people and the organisations that serve them.

06

Manage carefully the trade-off of security with citizens' rights. This means agreeing to a new relationship between citizens and the state in a way that safeguards an individual's personal data.

Private-sector firms, from multinationals to small companies, and the not-for-profit sector (including civil society) need to address their own set of overlapping challenges:

Actions for business and not-for-profit sectors

01

Work more closely with trusted governments, reviewing how the organisation engages with government on physical, digital, economic and social security.

02

Contribute to building trust and confidence by aligning relevant parts of the organisation's purpose to the broader societal safety and security agenda.

03

Develop the capacity and capability to improve safety and security for stakeholders based on a **collaborative, cross-sector approach** that encourages distributed leadership.

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