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PRISM

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Girls wave and flash victory signs at passing helicopter during a military parade in the western city of Zawiya, Libya, held to mark the anniversary of an uprising last year that cleared the way for the anti-Qadhafi forces' march on Tripoli.

The Arab Spring: Safeguarding U.S. Interests for the Long-Term

BY JAMES A. LAROCCO AND WILLIAM L. GOODYEAR

The “Arab Springs” that are underway throughout the region share some common features, including the yearning and visible desires for a variety of “Freedoms From”: freedom from the oppression of dictators and their stooges, freedom from economic exploitation, and freedom from censorship, to name a few. At the same time, these countries have not even begun the national dialogue on what they want “Freedom For.” Do the peoples of this region want democratic competition or the replacement of one oligarchy for another, market or statist economies, full freedom of expression, or limited national and individual discourse?

In our view, as the United States looks at the region, we need to acknowledge several realities:

- The transitions taking place in the region may well last decades, not simply years;
- Each country will choose its own path;
- The United States and other nations can shape that path, but only through a carefully calibrated set of policies and programs, recognizing that the nations in transition will ultimately assert sovereignty over their own futures;
- The stakes for the United States and its allies are high: while “success” may not provide all the U.S. wants, “failure” would have significant negative long-term consequences for U.S. interests, including vital security interests;
- These transitions are indeed historic, and as such, provide an historic opportunity for the U.S. to shape a new Middle East;
- While U.S. economic opportunities for the future may lie in East and South Asia, threats to the U.S. national security interests will continue, if not increase, in the MENA (Middle East and

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countries under transition have been encouraged by the \$770 million regional fund

North Africa) region. As attractive as pivoting to Asia/Pacific may be, the U.S. must keep a sharp focus on the MENA region for many years to come.

As a new administration takes office, a reset of the U.S. approach to the MENA region is in order. The first step is to reaffirm the values that will guide our policy toward the region, with a clear restatement of those values publicly and privately to both new and older leaders in the region. The second step is to complete a country-by-country comprehensive analysis of its strategic interest to the U.S., its trajectory toward success or failure, and the ability to effect positive change that prevents failure and preserves and preferably enhances U.S. interests. The third step is to develop those policies and programs that will best ensure that failure is avoided and U.S. interests are preserved and sustained. The fourth step is to have a full, straightforward dialogue on the short and long-term values, policies, strategies and programs with Congress and with regional leaders. Unless this program achieves buy-in by both, it cannot be sustained.

Countries under transition have been encouraged by the \$770 million regional fund proposed by the last administration and still under debate in the Congress. That fund should be approved, reaffirming the United States' commitment to shaping a path toward success for the MENA nations in transition. At the same time, how these funds and bilateral programs are developed should be guided by the approach outlined above. Thinking regionally, while acting bilaterally will best serve U.S. interests in the long run.

Part I: The Arab Springs in History

Assessments of the "Arab Spring" by Western scholars and commentators have been extremely divided. Optimists have predicted a paradigm shift in which overthrown dictators will be replaced over time throughout the region by representative democracies that guarantee human rights. At the other extreme, some argue that these movements signal the rise of Islamists bent on establishing societies and polities in strict compliance with Sharia law, with minorities and women in particular losing their rights and freedoms.

Two years on, we have found that nearly all the early predictions – both optimistic and pessimistic – have missed the mark. The failure of Western academics, scholars, and commentators to accurately understand these movements can be partly attributed to a desire among these scholars to see the Arab Spring as a repudiation of the notion of Arab exceptionalism; rather, in their view it proved that Arabs aspire to the same democratic values and institutions as the West.

Yet, in order to truly understand what happened in the Arab world from the end of 2010 and continuing until today, one must look back to the history of the development of nation-states in the region since the fall of the Ottoman Empire.

The lessons of history teach us that throughout the past century, Arab states have suffered from a fundamental absence of legitimacy. Simply put, the peoples of this region will not accept states that do not conform to their national desires and aspirations.

The Arab Spring is only the most recent example of the consequences of this "legitimacy gap." It demonstrates that approaches to the region that are not tailored bilaterally and do not fully take into account the specific political cultures of each country, as well as the region at large, are destined to fail.



Tahrir Square in Egypt

The End of Empire and the Rise of Arabism

1922 marked the end of the over 600-year reign of the Ottoman Empire. Long before that point, elites throughout the empire had criticized the Ottoman caliphate as “backwards” and a source of weakness vis-à-vis European powers. Yet, the Tanzimat reforms intended to transform the empire into a modern state that these elites instituted had the effect of alienating the diverse populations that it governed by disrupting long-established social and economic practices. This alienation grew at the beginning of the 20th century when the Young Turks, under the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), instituted even more extreme reforms that recast the empire as a primarily Turkish national state. These reforms had the effect of eroding the legitimacy of the empire as the state began to disregard the cultural and religious norms that had defined the relationship between rulers and ruled in the region for centuries.¹ The result was a growing gap between the state and its subjects, one in which those who

were ruled felt a progressively weaker connection to those in power. The Hashemites, who led the Arab Revolt against the Turks in order to re-establish the caliphate in the wake of CUP reforms, would eventually exploit this gap.²

Meanwhile, the same ideological forces that had inspired other nationalist movements around the world at this time had already been operating throughout the Arab world. Arab thinkers, both Christian and Muslim, had posited their own unique national identity based on the Arabic language and a shared history that deemphasized religious differences prior to the Arab Revolt.

The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire became an opportunity for Arab nationalists to take a more prominent role in determining the political future of the region. Though Arab nationalists, like Saad Zaghlul in Egypt, were largely suppressed in the colonial period following World War I and lasting until after World War II, the ideology of Arab nationalism successfully spread throughout the region.

The desire for a unity of the Arab umma that reflected the character of the Arab population motivated a number of different political and anti-colonial resistance movements. These movements found their most prominent manifestations in the governments of Gamal Abd al-Nasser and the Ba'thist regimes in Syria and Iraq.

While vastly differing on a number of important issues, Nasserist Egypt and Ba'thist Syria and Iraq shared some common ideological underpinnings. Most important among these was the commitment to the pan-Arab ideal (a single Arab nation-state) and to implementing socialist economic policies. Indeed, the most successful political movements in the Arab world during the middle of the 20th century included some form of these two themes among their ideological pillars. Ultimately, however, the pan-Arabist movement was unable to achieve its lofty goals.

The brief experiment of the United Arab Republic demonstrated the practical difficulties behind actually putting Arab nationalism into practice. Arab nationalists had to contend with the growth of other national identities that built upon the histories of specific parts of the Arab world.

Yet, even more importantly, Arab nationalists failed to adequately improve the livelihoods of the majority of their citizens. Rather than instituting a new form of egalitarian politics and economics, Arab nationalist leaders simply substituted themselves for the Ottoman and colonial class of elites. The disparity between wealthy and poor continued to grow, once again undermining the legitimacy of the state.

The Security State and Islamism

The 1970s and 1980s marked another era of transition for the region. The waning of Soviet power and influence and the repeated failures of Arab states to effectively unify did much to discredit the Arab Nationalist/Socialist ideology. Leaders

in the Arab world were forced to either abandon the policies they had developed based on these ideologies (as in the case of Sadat's Egypt) or to use increasingly repressive measures to enforce them (as in Ba'thist Syria and Iraq).

As these states lost the popular mandate to govern, they often turned to more authoritarian measures to maintain their grasp on power. In many cases opposition parties were banned from participating in the political process and democratic institutions were simply used to rubber stamp decisions made by de facto dictators.

By the 1990s, whatever elements of civil-society that had existed in many Arab states was completely suppressed in favor of an elaborate security apparatus designed to protect the state and enforce the rule of law.

After the failure of radical leftist opposition forces to affect change in the 1980s, the only credible opposition to increasingly authoritarian regimes came from Islamists who had become energized, among other things, by the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran.

Islamists generally took one of two approaches to their opposition to the new security state. The first was to engage in violent resistance to the regimes they operated under. Groups such as al-Jama'at al-Islamiyyah conducted a wide-ranging campaign of terror designed to overthrow these governments and institute Sharia law.

The other approach Islamist groups took was to work through volunteer organizations within the existing system to build social mobilization networks. The Muslim Brotherhood was among the most prominent of these groups.

Through networks of hospital, schools, and charity organizations, the Muslim Brotherhood and similar groups throughout the region were able to generate massive popular support and goodwill. Their activities were designed to

demonstrate the relevance of Islam to contemporary social, economic, and political conditions and provided an obvious counterbalance to the inadequacies of the authoritarian regimes they operated under. Furthermore, attempts to suppress these organizations seemed to only increase their followings. As became evident in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, by the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century these groups were by far the largest and most well organized political groups in the region.

The Arab Spring and State-Society Relationship in the Arab World

If one imagines that the Arab Spring marked the beginning of a new era of state-society relationships in the Arab World one could reasonably ask: What is the ideological basis for that relationship?

While the peoples of the Arab World certainly demonstrated in the Arab Spring what they wanted “Freedom From” (oppression, authoritarianism, and corruption), it is not at all clear what they want “Freedom For”.

Islamists were able to sweep into power in Egypt and Tunisia following the downfall of authoritarian regimes there, but this was due as much to their high degree of organization and experience in social mobilization as it was to any popular mandate to rule.

Meanwhile, the disorganized and fractured secular political groups – key in the downfall of these regimes – were unable to contend strongly in elections.

All this indicates that the messages of these parties were not nearly as important as the vehicles used for disseminating it. That a secular and nationalist government was elected into power in Libya only strengthens this theory. Islamists under Gaddafi had never been allowed to organize locally or nationally and were unable to unite effectively.

Indeed, in answering the question of what the Arab world wants “Freedom For,” it seems as though no single answer will be sufficient. What is clear, however, is that the ideological pillars of Islamism, nationalism and state responsibility for the economy will define the political and economic parameters of the region.

That is to say, in order for states to obtain a popular mandate to rule they will have to employ elements of each of these ideologies. The inherent diversity of the populations of the various states of the Arab world means that each state will interact with these ideologies in ways that are both connected and radically different.

As these ideologies increasingly shape the direction of each country’s domestic and foreign policies, it will become very clear that the most effective way for the United States or any other country to deal with region is to “think regionally but act bilaterally.”

Part II: Thinking Regionally, Acting Bilaterally

What does it mean to think regionally, but act bilaterally? On an operational level, it means using coordinated bilateral agreements and relationships to achieve regional goals and objectives. Putting this into practice, however, is more difficult than it sounds. The region is entering a long and difficult period of transition whose end-state is nearly impossible to predict. Defining regional goals and objectives at this early stage of the transition is almost certainly a futile effort. The United States must remain committed to promoting the values of democracy, human rights and free market economics.

That said, we need to remove the blinders from our eyes. While we Americans view democracy and all this entails as a value, a goal as well as a process, there are many in the Arab Spring who view democracy simply as a process to achieve

goals and put in place values that are inconsistent, if not diametrically opposed, to our concept of what democracy means.

Hamas in Gaza is a vivid example of this. Just six months after coming to power in Gaza via what were judged largely free and fair democratic elections, Hamas leaders staged a successful coup to seize the reins of power. There are those in the Arab Spring countries who have secured seats in parliaments and assemblies through democratic elections who are crystal clear as to their un- and anti-democratic values and goals, while there are others who have yet to demonstrate their commitment to democratic values such as equal rights for all, including women and minorities.

The United States will have to walk a tricky path to maintain its influence in the region, promote our fundamental values while also tailoring policies and programs to deal with each country's specific state of transition. There is no short cut or template and no real historical parallel. We must do the hard work of shaping new approaches to each of these countries.

A practical way of thinking regionally and acting bilaterally in the Middle East during this period of transition calls for the United States to first clearly define and articulate our key strategic interests and equities in the region.

In all our travels throughout the region, we repeatedly hear a common complaint: "We are not sure what U.S. policy and priorities are. It seems to change from day to day. It's human rights one day, basing rights another. It's economic transparency one day, preferences for American investment and exports the next. We therefore find it difficult to shape our own policy to develop the kind of productive relationship we must have: one that respects our sovereignty, identity and interests while achieving common ground with the United States' goals and objectives."

Key strategic interests and equities are those things that, if compromised, would constitute an absolute failure of U.S. foreign policy in the region. They are the things that the U.S. would be willing to take serious and significant actions, even going to war, to defend. It is important for the United States to clearly articulate these interests so that it can craft an approach to the region that allows it to act bilaterally to promote our fundamental values, but without risking our key strategic equities. Doing so will also help our regional allies pursue courses of action that benefit our shared interests.

Matrix of Key U.S. Strategic Interests in the Region

In few regions throughout the world are U.S. interests more intertwined and interconnected than they are in the Middle East. Depicted below is a "matrix" of what we believe to be the United States' most important strategic interests in the Middle East. The matrix demonstrates the hierarchy that exists among U.S. strategic interests as well as the reality of their contingency upon each other. While it may be impossible to define "success" for our strategies and policies for the Arab Spring, being unable to secure any one of these interests would almost certainly spell failure.

Energy Security. Today, the growth of the world economy is heavily dependent upon the availability of cheap and plentiful energy, most especially in the form of oil and natural gas. Oil alone accounts for 33% of total world energy consumption while natural gas takes up another 24%.³ Yet, that 57% does not even begin to tell the full story of how crucial petroleum is to the United States and global economies.

We believe it is fair to assert that with the fall of the Soviet Union and communist ideology, the most prominent existential threat to the U.S. is

Diagram A



the availability of energy in adequate, continuous and sustained volumes at affordable prices.

Petroleum products, and particularly oil, have unique features that make them indispensable to world use. The fact remains that there is no single product that can provide the same amount of energy that oil does while also being as easily transported and converted into as many essential products (gasoline, plastics, fertilizers, etc.). To measure the true importance of oil to the economy, it is generally estimated that a sustained increase of \$10 per barrel to the price of oil will shave 0.2% off the global economy in the following year – this for an economy that only grows by around 3.5% a year in good times.⁴

Still, the economic dimension to energy security is only part of the story. Oil is a military strategic necessity of the highest order. In 2010 alone, the U.S. military consumed 5 billion gallons of fuel in military operations – making it the world’s single largest consumer of petroleum.⁵

Military leaders understand that demand for oil will only increase in the coming years. Thus, the United States will remain committed to ensuring the availability of cheap and

plentiful energy for the global market for the foreseeable future. The U.S. has historically done this either by producing that energy for global consumption, or by working with foreign governments to make energy sources available and keep world prices at a level that does not harm economic growth.

these countries must remain free from foreign interference and domestic unrest

While the United States is certainly working to develop new technologies and sources of energy that will minimize its dependence on oil, the fact remains that until a substitute for oil is found it will continue to be one of the most important strategic resources on the planet.

No other region is more crucial to providing for the world’s energy needs than the Middle East. The region is home to 48% of total world proven oil reserves. Additionally, vast fields of natural gas are present throughout the Gulf (approximately 16% of world reserves) and others have recently been found in the Mediterranean.⁶ For the United States to meet its other foreign policy commitments, support its allies and promote strong global economic growth, it is absolutely crucial that these energy sources remain available to the world market.

Ensuring the availability of these energy sources to world markets means that certain key conditions in the region will have to be maintained. Firstly, countries with crucial energy reserves will have to be secure and stable. These countries must remain free from foreign interference and domestic unrest. The best way to ensure this is by promoting regional economic growth and integration while also combating destabilizing forces like terrorism and nuclear proliferation. If the security of these countries

China, India and other developing countries demand lifestyles more similar to the United States and Europe

is not maintained, then access to their energy reserves will be nearly impossible.

Secondly, the sea-lanes and passageways that these energy sources pass through to reach global markets must remain safe and open. The U.S. Energy Information Administration has identified six key “choke points” at which significant quantities of world oil pass each year. Three of these choke points are in the Arab world – with almost 20% of global oil traded each year passing through the Strait of Hormuz alone.⁷ The closing of any one of these choke points would have a drastic effect on the price of oil and could leave key U.S. allies in Europe and Asia without the oil supplies they need to keep their economies in working order.

Freedom of Navigation. While safeguarding sea-lanes and naval passageways to ensure global energy security is certainly the United States’ number one priority in the region, it is clear that freedom of navigation is also an important strategic interest in its own right. Since 1982, the United States has staunchly maintained that no nation may unilaterally restrict the rights and freedoms of the international community in navigation and over flight and other high seas uses.⁸ Indeed, in many respects, maintaining Freedom of Navigation is one of the fundamental pillars of U.S. foreign policy throughout the globe.

Maintaining the peaceful maritime rights of all nations is crucial to the normal functioning and flow of global commerce.⁹ Over 80% of the bulk and 70% of the value of total global trade is transported over the high seas.¹⁰ The importance

of this trade is only likely to grow in the upcoming years as the global economy becomes more and more integrated pushing people in China, India and other developing countries to demand lifestyles more similar to those of their counterparts in the United States and Europe.

Freedom of navigation is also a key aspect of U.S. global military strategy. In order to promote global stability and security, the United States must be able to maintain a military presence throughout the world. This presence is not possible if countries do not respect the right of innocent passage of foreign warships through territorial waters. This right is so crucial to U.S. foreign policy interests that in 2011 alone, the U.S. Navy conducted operational assertions of freedom of navigation in 14 different countries, often on more than one occasion. Indeed, without this right, it is clear that it would be nearly impossible for the United States to achieve its other strategic objectives, such as non-proliferation and countering violent extremism.

Free and secure maritime passage around the globe is fundamental to the global order. One need only look at the places on the planet where this right is challenged, such as Somalia, to see the consequences of allowing this freedom to be curtailed.

Non-Proliferation. Nuclear non-proliferation has been a primary U.S. strategic objective in the Middle East and around the world since the end of World War II. The destructive capabilities of nuclear weapons are unparalleled in human history. We still do not fully understand the long-term health and environmental consequences of a nuclear attack on a country, its land and its people. The recent environmental tragedy in Fukushima, Japan has further demonstrated that, even in situations where a country has developed its nuclear capabilities

purely for energy generation, the potential for devastating consequences from accidental malfunction is extraordinary.

It is clear that nuclear weapons bring with them a host of dangers even for countries in relatively stable regions and without pressing security concerns. It is even clearer that introducing nuclear weapons into a region as volatile as the Middle East carries with it risks of an even higher magnitude. While the United States is committed to preventing any nuclear proliferation, the most pressing immediate objective is to deny Iran nuclear weapons. Should Iran acquire a nuclear weapon, nearly all of the United States' other strategic interests in the region would be put at risk.

The threat to our allies' security and interests, as well as stability in the region is only one aspect of a nuclear-armed Iran. In our view, the most profound consequence of Iranian development of a nuclear weapon would be closing the curtain on the very principle of nuclear non-proliferation, a principle every U.S. administration has declared a pillar of U.S. values and vision for more than half a century.

It should also be remembered that Iran was an original signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and, should it develop a weapon, it would be the first signatory to break the treaty. In ending the principle of non-proliferation, a nuclear Iran would set off a nuclear arms race in the Gulf that could spread throughout the region and beyond, reversing 50 years of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

Countering Violent Extremism. The last decade of American foreign policy towards the greater Middle East has revolved to a great extent around the issue of combating terrorist activities in and emanating from the region. Terrorism not only threatens civilian lives, but also undermines the legitimacy of states throughout the

region. It slows economic progress and continues the cycle of sectarian violence that has historically kept the region unstable.

Countries undergoing transition are facing ever-escalating threats of terrorist violence as the security regimes of former dictators are eroded. The attacks on the American consulate in Libya are only the most recent and prominent examples of how terrorists are using the instability of transition to consolidate their base of support and conduct attacks on those that are attempting to strengthen state institutions and promote national unity. Even before these attacks, Libya had become a conduit of arms and drugs for terrorist organizations in the Sahel.

Syria is threatening to join Libya as an area in which extremist organizations can operate freely. The initially largely non-ideological opposition has splintered into a number of increasingly radicalized resistance units, many of whom are funded and supported by international jihadists. As the violence there escalates to increasingly horrific levels and the interior of the country becomes more and more ungovernable, it is very possible that terrorist organizations will be able to use the chaos to launch attacks against any number of regional targets.

Terrorist activities extend beyond sectarian or jihadist goals. Pirates in the Gulf of Aden threaten key oil shipping lanes while those in Mali engage in human and drug trafficking. The presence of these organizations in the region undermines the monopoly of force traditionally held by the state. For countries undergoing transition, terrorist organizations pose a serious threat to the state's ability to establish the rule of law or build a civil society.

The consequences of a curtailment of U.S. counterterrorism capabilities could precipitate the failure of a number of other key regional equities. If transitioning countries are unable to contain



NATO Review

Free elections in Tunisia, 2011.

terrorist organizations and activities, the region could face stalled economic growth, increased violence and a breakdown of the social order.

Maintaining Israeli Security. Israeli security is essential to promoting a number of U.S. strategic objectives. At the same time, it has always been clear that U.S. commitment to Israel's security transcends those interests; indeed, it is a moral commitment with deep roots among American society and people.

A comprehensive peace between Israel and all its neighbors, U.S. counterterrorism strategies, and the longer-term goals of regional economic integration all depend upon the continued security of the Israeli state. If Israeli security cannot be guaranteed in the future, then the likelihood of regional conflict will increase significantly and transitioning states, especially Israel's neighbors, will see their hopes dashed for new investment, loans and trade necessary for the economic

development that the youth believe the transitions will bring.

Israelis are understandably anxious over the directions that many of the transitions seem to be taking. The loss of long standing relationships with members of the former leaders of the Arab world have left Israeli leaders wondering how they will be able to reconstruct a security network that had been integral to their national defense.

On the one hand, they worry that the Sinai has become a zone of instability with the constant threat of attacks emanating from there. If this occurs, Israel may be forced to take actions that would almost certainly put them at odds with new leadership in Egypt and elsewhere in the Arab World.

The transit of weapons, including Fajr longer-range missiles, through the Sinai was a pre-requisite of the arming of Gaza and the spike in attacks on Israel that led to Israel's decision to strike Gaza in mid-November 2012. Without

question, the increased flow of arms was a result of transitions within both Egypt and Libya.

In addition to events in the Sinai, the breakdown of order in Syria has provided new opportunities for Hezbollah to expand their operations. If they are able to create a corridor between southern Lebanon and western Syria, they could open up a new front from which to attack Israel. The reprisals that would almost certainly follow could lead to the first regional war in over 3 decades.

Promoting peace between Israel and its regional neighbors has been a priority for the United States since the end of World War II. Allowing for regional conditions to deteriorate to the point that Israeli security is threatened would constitute a major failing of American foreign policy and would seriously jeopardize many of the U.S. most important objectives in the region.

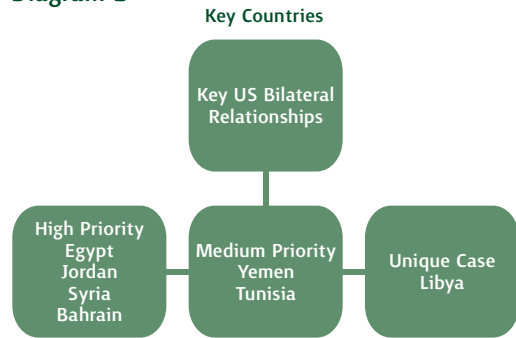
Part III: Creating Conditions for a Positive End-State

The strategic interests of the United States are now in a very precarious position. Middle Eastern countries, and especially those undergoing transition, face a number of serious threats that could jeopardize their security and stability and plunge the region into turmoil. In order to secure a positive end-state for the region, the United States and like-minded regional allies must work together to create the necessary security, political, and economic conditions for success.

Most importantly, as the U.S. by necessity must pursue a more resource-driven policy, choices must be made with care and foresight. Thinking regionally, while acting bilaterally seems unavoidable in order to achieve U.S. goals under the constraints it now faces.

In the following section, we list the key bilateral relationships the U.S. must build and hold to ensure that our vital interests are maintained. It is

Diagram B



also important for the U.S. to recognize the ways in which regional states are interconnected and that the failure to ensure stability in one can easily lead to chaos in another. Thus, the following list indicates the priority of each state to ensuring that U.S. regional strategic objectives are attained.

High Priority

Egypt. Egypt has long been the largest recipient of U.S. aid and funding in the Arab World and for good reason. Egypt holds the primary strategic position among Middle Eastern countries because of its proximity to Israel and the peace treaty that has prevailed for more than a generation, its geographical location straddling two continents and its control of the Suez Canal. A stable Egypt at peace with Israel that helps to maintain free shipping lanes and joins in the fight against terrorism is the single most crucial ally in maintaining U.S. interests among those countries in transition. A destabilized Egypt puts all American interests in the region at risk.

Jordan. Though Jordan lacks any significant natural resources, the country plays an important role in maintaining regional stability. It has provided a safe haven for hundreds of thousands of refugees from Palestine, Iraq and, now, Syria. It maintains a key peace treaty with Israel and is

actively involved in countering violent extremism. Moreover, it has made significant strides towards building a civil society and transitioning towards a more democratic form of government.

there exists a clear potential for a complete breakdown of order in the country

Yet, Jordan faces very serious threats to its stability. It is estimated that it will hold nearly 250,000 refugees from Syria as we enter 2013. Jordan's precarious finances and energy situation have prompted increased unrest with unprecedented public criticism of the government, including the King. Without a rapid and sustained infusion of billions of dollars of support from the outside world, it is not clear how the government will be able to continue to provide for its citizens as well as the refugee population. There exists a clear potential for a complete breakdown of order in the country. If that happens, a cornerstone of American foreign policy efforts in the region will be removed.

Syria. Horrific violence in Syria is continuing to spin out of control, claiming the lives of tens of thousands of civilians and forcing hundreds of thousands more out of their homes and into refugee camps in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. The refugee problem is so severe in fact that some estimate that millions of refugees will be dispersed throughout the region as the conflict could continue indefinitely without resolution. Their presence in countries that are already facing significant refugee challenges could be a tipping point that forces a severe breakdown of law and order in the region. The refugee issue is no longer simply a humanitarian issue; it is now a strategic issue that threatens stability throughout the region.

If Syria continues to breakdown and destabilizing forces are allowed to use the chaos to cause trouble in the rest of the region, the influence of foreign powers like Russia and Iran would likely grow throughout the region. They would be able to provide more support to actors who seek to disrupt democratic transitions and slow economic growth, thereby further dividing an already fractured region.

Yet a stable and secure Syria could offer a whole range of possibilities for achieving U.S. interests in the future. Not only could it curb Iranian influence and weaken terrorist and jihadist groups like Hezbollah, but also it could ease pressures on regional allies like Jordan.

We consider the United States' most urgent and critical decisions in 2013 for U.S. long-term interests regarding Arab Springs must focus on Syria and Egypt.

Bahrain. As home to the 5th Fleet, Bahrain is the linchpin for U.S. energy and maritime security objectives in the Middle East and, in fact, for much of the world. U.S. naval presence there allows the U.S. to protect not only the world's largest oil field to the west, but also the entire Gulf region while ensuring freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, allowing oil to flow securely to world markets. It also will be the point from which the "pivot" to Asia will be most clearly manifested. A continued U.S. presence on Bahrain will be critical to ensuring that the sea-lanes between the Mediterranean and the Pacific Ocean remain open and secure. Furthermore, a stable Bahrain that is an active member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) can help ward off Iranian influence in the Gulf.

In securing our vital strategic interests in Bahrain, the U.S. appears to many to be trampling on our values of democracy and fair

representation. Some claim that our foreign policy of double standards is most clearly illustrated by our stance toward Bahrain. As we secure our interests, we must not forego our commitment to our values. Of all the dilemmas we face in dealing with the Arab Spring, searching for the right formula that will persuade and assist Bahrain in reconciliation is arguably the thorniest challenge to our diplomacy, but the stakes are high for the credibility of our values and principles.

Medium Priority

Yemen. Yemen is geographically located on the periphery of the core Arab states and, as such, is not as intimately linked to U.S. interests as states like Egypt and Jordan. However, Yemen's position at the Bab Al-Mandeb and the Gulf of Aden makes its stability a crucially important factor in maintaining freedom of navigation as well as global energy security. Piracy remains a serious threat to commercial shipping in the area and transnational efforts have been required to contain it.

Additionally, Yemen is home to Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and other jihadist groups that plot attacks against not only the United States, but also its key allies, especially Saudi Arabia. These groups have the potential to disrupt the ongoing transitions throughout the region and are a constant threat to any stability that might emerge in the coming years.

In the case of Yemen, defining success is seemingly impossible, but failure stares at us every day and would have far-reaching repercussions for U.S. interests and those of its allies. The GCC and the Friends of Yemen have played a constructive role in setting Yemen on a path to successful political transition, but recently more pressing issues elsewhere, including Syria and Iran, as well as resource constraints on many of the donor countries, have diverted attention

away from Yemen. U.S. leadership remains key in keeping Yemen high on everyone's radar, including and especially Saudi Arabia and the GCC.

Tunisia. The Arab Spring began in Tunisia in December of 2010. To many, Tunisia is the country with the best odds to transition to a stable democracy. The United States has dedicated more funds to civil society promotion in Tunisia than it has to any other country in the Arab Spring. Indeed, to many in the United States and abroad, Tunisia's ability to integrate Islamism, nationalism and state responsibility for economic policies to provide opportunities for its citizens will be the barometer of success for the Arab Spring.

Unique Case

Libya. Libya stands as a unique case among the major Arab countries in transition. It is the only one of these countries with significant deposits of oil and, as such, has the potential to harness these resources to rapidly build a successful and stable government. Yet, it remains true that a breakdown of the Libyan state would not directly jeopardize the majority of American interests in the region.

Instead, Libya remains critically important because it constitutes a key energy source for U.S. allies in Europe. Moreover, a stable and prosperous Libya could help to stem the tide of migrants from North Africa into Europe and help to promote economic integration and stability in the Trans-Sahel region.

In contrast, a weak and unstable Libya would only serve to exacerbate an already horrific crisis in the Sahel. It provides a porous border through which illegal weapons, human and drug trafficking occur.

While the U.S. initially assumed a limited role in assisting with Libya's transition

and instead looked to the UN, Arab allies and European states to offer guidance, recently there have been new efforts by the U.S. to increase our efforts with Libya. These should be sustained.

Conclusion: Challenges and Opportunities

Western analysts and critics have largely misunderstood the Arab Spring. Until these various revolutions and uprisings are recognized as the unique – though interconnected – phenomena that they are, Western leaders and decision makers will continue to pursue ineffective policies in the region.

By examining the historical trajectory of Arab states, it is clear that these uprisings are yet another in a series of calls by the peoples of this region to be governed by legitimate authorities. While no single group has yet been able to effectively take up that mantle in any of the transitioning countries, it is clear that whoever does will employ an ideological mix of Islamism, nationalism and state responsibility for economic policies.

It is also clear that these transitions may well take decades to reach their end-states. The road ahead will likely be chaotic and unstable. Given that these transitions will be unique from each other, but also intimately interconnected, it is our view that the most effective approach for the United States will be to think regionally, but act bilaterally. With a new administration in 2013, now is the time to reshape American objectives, strategies and policies based on this approach, clearly articulating to each country what the U.S. seek as they move down uncharted paths of their own. **PRISM**

Notes

¹ See Cleveland, William L., *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004), 89-100.

² *Ibid.*, 161.

³ BP Statistical Review of World Energy, June 2012, available at <http://www.bp.com/assets/bp_internet/globalbp/globalbp_uk_english/reports_and_publications/statistical_energy_review_2011/STAGING/local_assets/pdf/statistical_review_of_world_energy_full_report_2012.pdf>.

⁴ "The New Grease?" *The Economist*. March 10, 2012. Accessed November 19, 2012, at <<http://www.economist.com/node/21549949>>.

⁵ "Energy for the Warfighter," *Operational Energy Strategy DoD*. March 1, 2011.

⁶ BP Statistical Review, *op. cit.*, 24.

⁷ "U.S. Energy Information Administration – EIA – Independent Statistics and Analysis." *U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA)*. Accessed November 19, 2012, at <<http://www.eia.gov/countries/regions-topics.cfm?fips=WOTC>>.

⁸ "Maritime Security and Navigation," *U.S. Department of State*. Accessed November 19, 2012, at <<http://www.state.gov/e/oes/ocns/opa/maritimesecurity/index.htm>>.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *World Economic Situations and Prospects 2012*. UN Report, available at <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp_current/2012chap2.pdf>.

“Train as You Fight” Revisited: Preparing for a Comprehensive Approach

BY SEBASTIAAN RIETJENS, PAUL C. VAN FENEMA AND PETER ESSENS

In 1973 General William F. DePuy, first commander of the U.S. Army’s Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), emphasized that it was necessary to expose soldiers to realistic battlefield conditions before they experienced actual combat.¹ Doing this should improve the soldiers’ preparation and thereby, in the long run, their effectiveness and efficiency. DePuy’s belief was widely shared and led to the development of new training methods and a training philosophy that is often referred to as “train as you fight”. Ever since, military training programs have continuously been improved and better shaped towards the real threats that soldiers were facing in the theater. A clear example reflecting the new philosophy was the establishment of the US Combat Training Centers (CTCs). The five pillars upon which the CTC program is based, require (1) that participating units be organized as they would for actual combat, (2) a dedicated, doctrinally proficient operations group, (3) a dedicated, realistic opposing force (OPFOR), (4) a training facility being capable of simulating combat conditions, and (5) a base infrastructure.² This suggests that the main focus in training is to develop a combat ready force that is physically and psychologically prepared to fight and win wars.³ The dominant focus on combat readiness is also mentioned in a 2006 RAND report reviewing for the United States Army its leadership development. The authors concluded that whereas changes in operational environment were identified (e.g. “operations other than war”), “adaptation has centered largely on the more tangible elements and mechanics of war.”⁴

Indeed, as the RAND report mentions, many of today’s crisis operations demand that political, economic, developmental factors besides the security ones have to be addressed simultaneously, because they are highly interrelated.⁵ Since this requires specific expertise and domain knowledge, global interventions are increasingly about coordinated and cooperative approaches of civilian and

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military actors, and state and non-state actors such as international and non-governmental organizations (IO/NGOs): a Comprehensive Approach to operations.

approximately 300 military from the Netherlands, United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Norway and Italy, and 130 representatives of civilian agencies joined the exercise

This new and dynamic constellation of parties and disciplines, an ad hoc social system on its own, requires new competencies and skills in interacting with these diverse perspectives and understanding the complex interrelations. However, in most military training institutes, American and European alike, one observes only very limited incorporation of these new requirements.⁶ In some institutes (e.g. Marine Corps Training and Education Command (TECOM)), cultural awareness has become one of the training objectives,⁷ while in others (e.g. CIMIC Centre of Excellence in The Netherlands) relatively small numbers of dedicated Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) personnel are trained to support the commander's mission. Just as within the CTCs, training focuses mostly on the development of combat ready forces. Readiness for operating in complex environments with civil, military and local actors and effectors is largely ignored, even though this is quite likely demanded in many current and future theaters – in addition to traditional (kinetic) warfare.

Notwithstanding the importance of combat training, this article emphasizes the importance of fully incorporating a comprehensive approach to operations and involving professionals from relevant organizations in exercises. Such efforts are not only highly beneficial but also necessary for military units to properly

prepare for the complexities of modern operations. This comprises coordination and integration with other government organizations, with civil organizations such as IOs and NGO, with representatives of other ministries (e.g. Foreign Affairs, Development Cooperation) and with actors of the host nation such as local authorities.

This article starts by laying down the multitude of actors that are involved in contemporary crisis operations. It then addresses coordination demands and efforts involving these actors with an emphasis on training and mission-specific preparation. The fourth section elaborates on a unique and relatively large interagency exercise, Common Effort. The exercise was hosted in September 2011 by 1 (German/Netherlands) Corps (1GNC)⁸ in Germany. It was organized together with the Netherlands and German Ministries of Foreign Affairs. As opposed to earlier civil-military exercises where subject matter experts role-play, in this project civil organizations exercised themselves in order to learn to better interact, coordinate and cooperate with the military, in addition to other internal objectives. After an extensive preparation period of about one year, approximately 300 military from the Netherlands, United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Norway and Italy, and 130 representatives of civilian agencies (e.g. GOs, NGOs, IOs, Police, Ministries) joined the exercise and were trained working within a comprehensive approach. A fictional scenario centered on the Horn of Africa enabled the participants to train their people, and test their organizations' functioning and interactions with each other for over 5 days. The process and outcome of this exercise is described here and used as an example for future exercises and comprehensive training methods. The article concludes with recommendations for the way ahead.

Challenges of working with a multitude of actors

Most researchers and practitioners support the idea that successfully coordinated or harmonized civilian and military efforts are key to successful stabilization, relief, reconstruction and counter-insurgency efforts.⁹ Coordination and cooperation are imperative to create the best conditions for stability, humanitarian relief, and development. No single actor can address this alone, and it has to be done simultaneously.¹⁰

The relationship and interactions between civil and military actors is however faced with many challenges. A first challenge is to define who coordinates with whom. Within military as well as civilian circles, multiple—and conflicting—stances on the appropriateness of the comprehensive approach are part of everyday reality. Some IO/NGOs are reluctant to be associated with a potentially unwelcome military force and thereby lose their protective patina of neutrality. Stoddard¹¹ refers to these principled organizations as being the “Dunantists”¹² who want to avoid any suggestion of partiality, whereas “Wilsonian”¹³ organizations generally act more pragmatically and therefore interact more easily with military forces.

Secondly, the context of crisis operations is often chaotic, unstable and conflictive. Needs of the local population are high and there is a serious lack of knowledge, finance, and political and legal structures.¹⁴ Another challenge for the civil-military relationship is the temporary nature of the coalition parties involved.¹⁵ Since civil actors and their military counterparts frequently have different objectives and different ways of achieving these,¹⁶ they look favorably on cooperation as long as they expect it to serve their best interests.¹⁷ This can easily lead to opportunistic behavior. Moreover, differences in organizational culture, expertise, methods and objectives between two

sets of actors also contribute to this complexity.¹⁸ An issue particularly influencing the interaction between governmental agencies, such as defense and foreign affairs, is the unbalance in both personnel as well as finances. Operational military organizations mostly have substantial numbers of people at junior levels with numbers decreasing towards the top (pyramid form), whereas civil organizations tend to have relatively small numbers of junior personnel, compared to mid and higher levels (nearly inverted pyramid).¹⁹ If we look at the financial side, the division is just opposite. In most deployed units, civilians are responsible for the majority of the funds to be spent, most often on reconstruction and development projects. In addition, diversity brings barriers for interaction, stemming from a multitude of sources, such as language, style, values, cultures, competencies, structures, methods and resources.^{20 21} Finally, lacking a unified theory of change, the conceptual challenge is to align the often very different opinions about what constitutes change and what instruments to use: what or what combination is most effective at what moment given the conditions, and how can that be measured to demonstrate progress or adjust the approach.²²

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Adding to the diversity is the sheer number of actors in a mission area. In most areas, the main NGO players number in the tens rather than hundreds. However, in extreme and dramatic complex emergencies, NGOs multiply. At the height of the relief operations in Kosovo there were over four hundred NGOs,²³ and it has been estimated that there were between 3,000 to

generalizations on either “the military” or “the civil” community can therefore hardly be accurate

20,000 NGOs operating in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake.²⁴ A similar diversity factor holds for military actors. The number of different units and their sizes vary enormously per mission area. In Afghanistan for example, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) are deployed at the same time, each consisting of many different (national) units operating within their own national caveats. In fact, the ISAF military units have 102 national caveats.²⁵ These include rules on patrolling by daylight only or rules that geographically bound troop deployment. Caveats are necessary for legitimacy in military’s home countries. Yet this further complicates the general stance of civil actors, be they humanitarian organizations, local population or authorities, toward cooperating with the military. How to govern this network of organizations is a daunting and paradoxical challenge: many organizations do not like to be represented by others, yet they also do not want to invest heavily in endless numbers of meetings with other organizations.

Actors involved in crisis operations differ from one another in many different ways. Generalizations on either “the military” or “the civil” community can therefore hardly be accurate. The civil community stands for a broad spectrum of civil parties, comprising governance, human relief, police, justice, economic development roles. Civil-military simplifications may persist from earlier times where the military had a sole actor role in war-like phases of a conflict. But also social identity processes may contribute to these simplifications linked to in-group out-group perceptions, which are strongly connected to stereotyping and prejudice.²⁶

Allport’s Intergroup Contact theory claims that contact between groups reduces the effects of stereotype and prejudice.²⁷ Contact generates learning about the other group, changes behaviors towards the other group, generates person-to-person affective ties (empathy), and reshapes the group’s appraisal of the outside world.²⁸ This development is stronger when certain conditions are met: equal group status within the situation, orientation toward cooperation and common, superordinate goals, authority support, cross-group friendship.²⁹ In addition, reduction of feelings of intergroup uncertainty and anxiety, which developed from concerns about how one is perceived, how one should behave, or whether one is accepted, has shown to be critical to achieve the positive impact of intergroup contacts.³⁰

We propose that a deliberate and structured contact approach should be used as an effective mechanism to improve open orientation towards other parties, increase understanding and building cooperation. Even interaction with a limited set of parties, at best chosen for being representative for and a hub to their network, can improve communication and interaction with other parties that have not (yet) been met. Contact with members of a group transfers its effects to the whole group,³¹ and interaction with one group transfers to other groups of the same kind.³² In conclusion, there is substantial evidence that intergroup interactions—given certain conditions—will lead to improved understanding and a broader orientation toward the diversity of the actors. These findings support a strong argument for organizing interagency interactions in training and preparation exercises. How can we achieve this with the military and civil parties? How can we prepare for better dealing with the complex diversities of military-civil collectives, keeping a check on the amount of effort it takes?

Training and preparation for the comprehensive approach: Moving beyond improvisation

In many operations, civil-military coordination is improvisational, pragmatic, and ad hoc.^{33 34} When meeting on the ground in theater, personnel works out solutions overcoming differences for the common good. As such, coordination evolves over time in response to specific needs on the ground. There is merit in this ad hoc approach. Some argue that every crisis has unique characteristics in which strategies and structures for civil-military relations need to reflect the specific and dynamically evolving circumstances.

That being true, there are at least two reasons to search for constants: to build on experiences and become more effective; and to train and prepare to become more proficient. The gap between the received training and the requirements to establish order on the ground results in a tremendous responsibility of the battalion commanders and their junior officers. As experiences from international missions such as the Balkans and Afghanistan show, commanders had to tailor much of their operations to the unexpected challenges they faced, rather than execute the sort of mission they were tasked, organized, and trained to perform.³⁵ In these conditions civil-military coordination depends strongly on the personalities involved and the qualities they brought to the table, rather than on planning and standard operating procedures.³⁶ As a consequence, many differences occurred within and between rotations and contingents. These differences included priorities, budgets, and involvement of the local population. Such an approach yields inefficient use of limited aid resources, delayed humanitarian relief efforts, enhanced inconsistency between rotations, and leads to conflicting objectives in the post-conflict environment.³⁷ This lack of coherence is one of the factors often

cited as contributing to the poor success rate and lack of sustainability of international peace and stability operations.³⁸

Although there is no single solution to improve civil-military coordination at the local level, the logic of improved preparation is expected to lead to efficiency gains, greater respect for the comparative advantages of civilian and military actors, and enhanced mission effectiveness. However, as was raised in the introduction, most military training and education programs focus on purely military objectives and include the comprehensive approach only to a limited degree.³⁹

lack of coherence is one of the factors often cited as contributing to the poor success rate and lack of sustainability of international peace and stability operations

Over the last few years some of the training and exercises have been improved and partly adjusted to the new dynamics of the modern battlefield. Several armed forces training centers have introduced role-play exercises to allow their personnel to become accustomed with the local situation and civil actors. These exercises, however, have been mostly scripted by soldiers and in most exercises the roles of development workers, diplomats or local powerbrokers are being played by soldiers themselves, or by retired or ex-civil personnel hired for the occasion. Some level of industry has developed around this, with professionalism, but also with good-willed amateurism. Since this is role-playing, there is little assurance of realistic and valid civil behavior and perspectives of the parties that are role-played. In reality, many, often subtle, sensitivities characterize the civil-military interface. Hence, exercises would certainly benefit from structured

participation of a wide variety of civilian actors from the actual professional organizations and communities (e.g. diplomats, IO and NGO representatives). Playing themselves, they could be involved in the preparation of the exercise, define their own training objectives and play their own, real role in the exercise itself. This would enable military as well as civil actors to approach the “train as you fight” philosophy even more realistically, extending it to “train as you interact”. The scenarios should include kinetic and non-kinetic elements, just like real-life operations, creating varying role distributions. Each participating organization can achieve its training objectives and benefit from mutual interaction and synergies. They can effectively bridge their common training background and theater-specific needs. During the exercise they can mutually adjust their mechanisms and concepts to the local situation in a mission area. Precisely the latter approach was taken by the 1(German/Netherlands) Corps (1GNC) in the project and exercise Common Effort in 2011. The next section describes preparation, execution, and outcomes of the exercise.

Design of exercise Common Effort

In September 2010, the German-Netherlands Corps (1GNC) based in Munster, Germany, led by Lieutenant General Ton van Loon, initiated project Common Effort. At the first so-called interagency meeting in November 2010, the idea for a common exercise was embraced by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of both Germany and The Netherlands. Their commitment was deemed essential to bring NGOs and IOs on board.⁴⁰ From the beginning the relationship between 1GNC and the ministries had to be fostered through intensive dialogue. 1GNC stressed that it was not their intent to lead the process but only to facilitate it. As such 1GNC served as a secretariat for Common Effort during the entire process.

During the entire preparation period, the German and Netherlands Ministries of Foreign Affairs committed personnel. For most participating NGOs and IOs however, such commitment was perceived a major obstacle. Unlike 1GNC most civil organizations, including both ministries, had only very limited resources and personnel available for preparing the exercise. Despite this, several more interagency meetings were held to develop the exercise. It was agreed that the “The overarching aim of the exercise is to develop a shared perception of the Comprehensive Approach and a broad understanding of the mechanisms that enable its implementation”.⁴¹

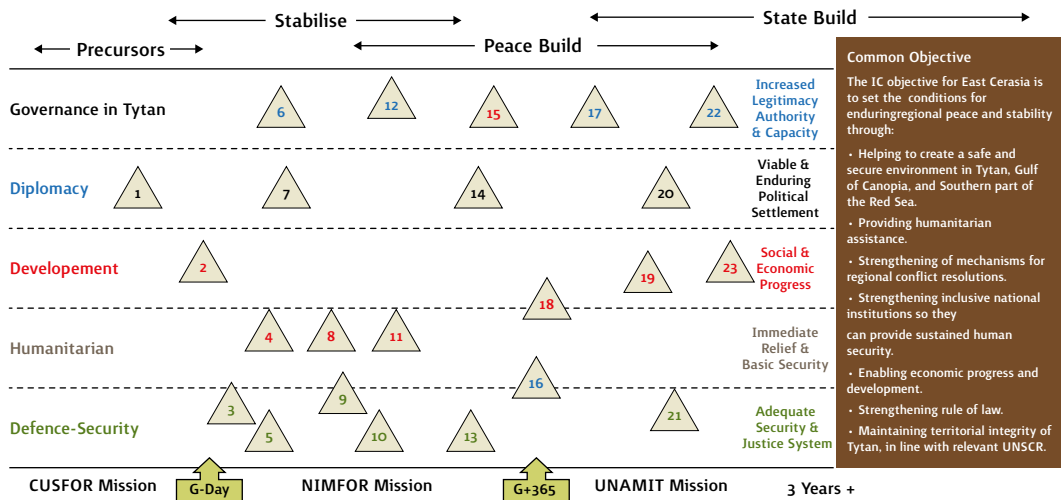
To reach this aim, the exercise participants formulated a staggering number of 161 different training objectives that were finally aggregated into 12 main objectives. Examples of these objectives were to develop and trial:

- Principles and mechanisms to facilitate civil-civil and civil-military information exchange;
- Mechanisms to conduct collaborative Conflict Analysis, Knowledge and Plan Development prior to deployment and in theatre;
- Mechanisms to call upon and deliver (in-extremis) military support;
- Principles and mechanisms to achieve comprehensive operational assessment and strategy review.

Based on these training objectives and in accordance with the capabilities of the participating organizations, a script was developed by a working group comprising experts from the various fields of expertise including foreign policy, development aid, police, UN and the military. Geographically the script was located in the Horn of Africa.⁴² The script resembled many of

Figure 1: Draft Strategic Design for Tytan – Exercise Common Effort

Annex B to Common Effort Comprehensive Design Dated 18 Jul 11



- Key Decisive Conditions for Building Stability in Tytan**
- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Diplomacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 International Support for solution 7 Generate Political Will for SSR 14 Negotiations to end armed opposition. 20 Regional Trade Re-estab & Legitimate <p>Defence – Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Protection of Civilians (SASE) 5 Disrupt opponents of peace 9 Develop SSR Strategy 10 Border security of Tytan improved 13 Maintain territorial Integrity of Tytan 21 Capabilities of TYTAN Security Forces improved | <p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Broad political dialogue established 12 Democratisation - Political Process accepted by all 15 Anti-Corruption Measures Effective 17 GoT under Constitutional Framework 16 SASE for IDP Returns 22 Institution strengthening in Community <p>Development & Humanitarian</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Effective UN led co-ord & funding 4 Free access for Aid agencies 8 Distribution of Aid is Safe & Secure 11 Humanitarian Situation Stabilised 18 Tytan govt co-ord aid response 19 National Recovery and Devt Plan 23 Framework for Long term Devt established |
|---|--|

IC Stabilisation Aim for Tytan

With international partners to create the Conditions for a safe and stable state under which Tytan's territorial integrity is respected and there is a political process aimed at fostering greater regional stability; and internal stability born of effective, representative, transparent and accountable government acting in the interests of the people and the nation, strong institutions (including effective security forces), the rule of law and Respect for human rights; an inclusive and equitable society with a viable sufficient and self-sustaining legitimate economy.'

NB: The details of these Key Decisive Conditions (inputs, activities, measures of effect, and risks) are planning work in progress

the current challenges around which 5 vignettes were developed.

The first was labeled security sector reform (SSR), encompassing e.g. judicial, prison, police and defense reform. In the script the SSR program was critically endangered by a badly handled prison revolt and the statement of a regional power broker who claimed to re-arm militia. Subjects that were considered of importance for the interagency coordination included the development of a multilateral SSR policy and collaboration with host nation officials

The second vignette considered humanitarian assistance. In the script two countries were

in dispute over river water consumption for e.g. irrigation purposes. Interagency coordination subjects that were stressed included a regional political strategy, human security development, and military support to civil organizations.

Disaster relief was played in the third vignette. The area was confronted with an earthquake, causing civilian casualties and large-scale destruction in an already underdeveloped region. A humanitarian crisis developed while infrastructure critical to the relief effort turned out to be damaged or destroyed. As the area was incapable of implementing crisis response mechanisms the international community,

under UN leadership, was to coordinate the disaster relief effort. During the exercise itself this event was not being played as such due to an overburden of some of the participants.

discussions amongst all partners led to the realization that different perspectives of all partners are required to reach a comprehensive assessment

The fourth vignette dealt with anti-piracy. In the story the humanitarian community faced the disruption of resource flows towards the theater when several large shipping companies refused to sail to ports in light of increased piracy. To address this issue the civil-military coordination had to focus on a regional political strategy, a targeting and information strategy, and sea and coastal security.

The final vignette focused on continuous civil-military coordination. The training audience was confronted with institutional requirements for coordination. These requirements emanated from binding commitments, organizational weaknesses, (temporary) capability shortfalls or opportunities for success.

After having developed the script, the partners started the process of a comprehensive situational assessment. This meant defining root causes of the conflict, mapping stakeholders and conflict drivers, and assessing the key factors and trends. Discussions amongst all partners led not only to a common understanding of the situation but also to the realization that different perspectives of all partners are required to reach a comprehensive assessment.⁴³

During a planning conference early May 2011, participants defined common objectives of the mission. This led to a comprehensive campaign design and created a higher level of

identification with one common mission. Figure 1 depicts this design. Five lines of operation are identified: governance, diplomacy, development, humanitarian and defense-security. To reach the end state of a line of operation, milestones were defined, so-called key conditions for building stability in Tytan, the fictitious host nation in the exercise.⁴⁴

Following the comprehensive design, the individual participants continued their internal planning processes. A final conference was held in September 2011 just before the actual start of the exercise, to harmonize the plans of all participants.

The exercise was geographically situated in the Horn of Africa, labeled as East Cerasia in the script. One of the countries in this region, Tytan, is a vulnerable pro-western democracy full of ethnic tensions. The country is very poor, a condition that is compounded by weak government and economic mismanagement. Tytan is the victim of the aggressive policies of its neighboring country, Kamon, to achieve ethnic domination in the region. The deteriorating situation in Tytan and the passing of a UNSC Resolution authorized the deployment of a NATO interim multinational force in Tytan (NIMFOR). 1 (German/Netherlands) Corps (1GNC) has been nominated to provide the land component of NIMFOR and Commander 1GNC has been appointed as Military Head of Mission (MHoM) of NIMFOR. The Governments of Germany and the Netherlands have agreed to coordinate the civilian efforts in support of the NIMFOR mission on a bi-national basis and have appointed a German diplomat to the post of Civilian Head of Mission (CHoM).

In addition, several (non) governmental organizations and UN agencies are involved in the exercise, including Kinderberg, Cordaid, Technisches Hilfswerk, World Food Program (WFP) and the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) is the senior UN Representative in East Cerasia and has the overall authority over the activities of the United Nations.

Observations from Exercise Common Effort

The exercise Common Effort was held in the Air Force barracks in Munster, Germany, September 18-23, 2011.⁴⁵ An evaluation team, led by the not-for-profit, independent research organization, Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) as independent party, performed observations, interviews and a survey in order to assess the civil-military interaction during the exercise.⁴⁶ In their First Impression Report the evaluation team concluded that the first days were characterized by confusion amongst most participants,⁴⁷ with issues such as role unclarity, unwarranted assumptions and stereotypes from lacking knowledge about each other and command structure unclarity. In particular for the civil parties a serious preparation gap was observed, with most people being new to the situation of many different, civil parties, and unknown military culture, work processes, and terminology. The majority of the training audience had not been involved in the partners’ preparation phase meetings, and many participants struggled to catch up with the large read-ahead material. This was unlike the military training audience, who prepared themselves quite well and in most cases showed up 1-2 or more days before the actual exercise started. This observation reflects a structural difference which was commented to be close to reality, and which has implications we will discuss later. A clear example of role unclarity was whether the CHoM and his office were part of the NATO Interim Force and how the role of CHoM related to that of the office of

the UN’s SRSG. After two days it was decided that the CHoM would report through both a German and Dutch national hierarchical line within the respective ministries of Foreign Affairs. However, by then most NGOs and IOs perceived CHoM as an integral part of NIMFOR and treated their interaction with the CHoM as such.

In any case, the challenge is to step over the obstacles and to actively engage in order to resolve the issues via communication and cooperation. It took most civil participants just a few days to understand the relationships and their role. This resulted in a steep learning curve adapting with open mindset, dealing with frictions, and discovering mutual capabilities while building relations. In the final evaluation session most civil parties confirmed that they had a better understanding of the processes of the other parties and how to build communication lines. Moreover, the established social network with personal contacts was seen as highly beneficial for future missions.

in their First Impression Report the evaluation team concluded that the first days were characterized by confusion amongst most participants

A mechanism that was introduced by 1GNC to facilitate the civil-military interface was the so-called Inter-Agency Centre (IAC). This responded to the needs of both 1GNC and the civil parties as they were interested in what structures or mechanism might support the civil military interaction best. The IAC was embedded within the 1GNC military force structure. It provided a selection of military liaison officers and experts (both military and civil) with different fields of expertise, including governance, cultural issues and rule of law. The aim of the IAC was

to support coordination and de-confliction of humanitarian, diplomatic, development and security efforts by linking civil stakeholders to matching military specialists or sections, while at the same time contributing to the military's decision making processes.⁴⁸ Most participants of the exercise appreciated the concept of the IAC as an intermediary. The IAC implementation was an experiment that provided rich information on the dynamics of such a function. The intermediary role also caused issues, such as cumbersome communication channels. As a result (and also because all were located at the same location for the exercise) civil organizations indicated that they wanted to talk to their military counterpart directly, and not via an intermediate such as the IAC.

The location was an issue that highly influenced the outcome of the exercise. As the exercise took place at one location, representatives of the different organizations were in close proximity from one another, and saw each other at the meals and the outside smoking places. This led to many informal interactions, for example between military and civilians. Those interactions would most probably have been impossible in a real crisis due to the distances and the insecurity situation. Moreover, part of the interactions would be deemed undesirable due to the association of civil representatives with the military from NIMFOR.

for smaller size NGOs, having personnel participate during an entire week brought along a severe burden

Despite the many challenges, participants valued the exercise, mainly because of intense exposure to civil and military ways of working and thinking. Those with little or no field experience saw the exercise as an important

opportunity to meet and connect before being deployed. The ratio between the costs and the benefits differed for most participants. For 1GNC, the exercise was generally perceived having a very positive cost-benefit ratio. Through the exercise the corps was able to interact with many civil actors and position itself as an ideal training platform for the comprehensive approach. 1GNC covered almost all the costs related to the exercise with a project budget of approximately 300,000 Euro and committed a large number of personnel.⁴⁹ However, these costs are considered to be relatively low, compared to most traditional military exercises. 1GNC personnel is tasked to train during peacetime, anyway. For most civil organizations the costs were in the absorption of personnel that participated in the exercise. Especially for smaller size NGOs, having personnel participate during an entire week brought along a severe burden. But, also for these organizations the ratio between costs and benefits was generally perceived as very positive.

Conclusions and way ahead

Many of today's crisis operations demand that political, economic, developmental, as well as security factors have to be addressed simultaneously. As a result, the interactive relationships between civilian and military actors are of crucial importance for mission success. This paper has shown that the civil-military relationship is confronted with a wide array of challenges. To arrive well prepared in a mission area it is necessary for both military and civilian actors to be aware of and understand these challenges. Few institutions however seem to put much effort into doing this. Some include courses on cultural awareness or lectures on the UN and roles of IO/NGOs. And in most of the exercises that focus on the comprehensive approach, military personnel or hired civilians play roles of different organizations,

thereby overlooking the often-subtle sensitivities that characterize the civil-military interface.

Exercises moving beyond civilian role-playing such as Common Effort can fill this gap. These cannot solve all the issues that arise in the civil-military interface, but can provide an opportunity to practice styles and behaviours, and evaluate mechanisms for interaction. In such a process military and civilian actors are confronted with each other’s working methods, professional vernaculars and cultures. This can facilitate increased awareness and understanding and reduce the effects of stereotype and prejudice often hampering real-life operations.

Comparing the exercise Common Effort with Allport’s conditions for intergroup contact shows that despite the organizations having individual objectives there was an orientation toward cooperation and common, superordinate goals. The shared appreciation of the situation and the comprehensive mission design were clear examples of this. The group status however differed considerably. Despite the large presence of civil actors, the military far outnumbered the civil actors. The preparation gap that was identified in Common Effort was also a result of the different capacities that both types of actors were able to dedicate to the exercise. In this respect it is important to notice that military organizations are often tasked to train during peacetime. For UN agencies, IOs and NGOs, however, this is not the case, mostly because it is an unaffordable luxury in terms of money and time. Generally these organizations have far smaller budgets and numbers of personnel available to dedicate to such exercises. Such a preparation gap seems not to mirror operational reality and one might even argue that in reality the military is the one facing a preparation gap. In many cases IOs and NGOs are relatively familiar with the local circumstances due to previous activities in that particular area. Military are often

“newcomers” and have therefore less insight in local practice and social power structures. As a result they need the interaction with the present civilian organizations, as well as with actors of the host nation. This stresses the requirement to prepare for effective relation building as part of their operational proficiency.

military are often “newcomers” and have therefore less insight in local practice and social power structures

Exercises like Common Effort require careful management of cost-benefit ratios for those involved. Despite the many obstacles that came up in that exercise, all partners valued each other’s roles and opinions and several cross-group friendships developed during the exercise.

During the exercise feelings of intergroup uncertainty and anxiety could be reduced due to the open environment where one was allowed to make mistakes. This contributed to achieving a positive impact of intergroup interactions. After the exercise one manager of a sourcing organization indicated that while enthusiasm is fine for the exercise, the result should also show in policies (doctrine) to consolidate the benefits at organization level. Indeed, to achieve a positive cost-benefit ratio, experiences should be translated into concrete guidelines, policies, and measures. Dissemination of these policies within participating organizations is most effectively done through seminars and presentations with involvement of the participants themselves using situational narratives and anecdotes.

A “train as you fight” philosophy requires that civil and military personnel prepare to interact in realistic conditions—that is playing themselves, with realistic dilemma’s. Comprehensive training methods and efficient exercise models

following a Common Effort philosophy should be developed to realize that. Conducting (parts of) the exercise without colocation could be an option to improve the cost-benefit ratio. Even stronger would be to have these exercises embedded in the participating organizations' education and training programs. In any case, such deliberate and structured contact exercises should be developed together with civil parties in order to establish high performance before meeting each other in a mission. **PRISM**

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U.S. Navy photo/ Public Domain



The Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy sails the Pacific Ocean on June 15, 2010. Since 1993 the U.S. has responded to some 28 foreign internal conflicts and over 50 humanitarian responses, every year.

Inevitable Conflicts, Avoidable Failures Preparing for the Third Generation of Conflict, Stabilization, and Reconstruction Operations

BY JOHANNA MENDELSON FORMAN AND LIORA DANAN

Foreign internal conflicts clearly remain a permanent feature of the U.S. foreign policy landscape, especially since the United States regularly participates in efforts to stabilize countries affected by conflict and then helps them recover afterwards. Yet U.S. government officials and the American public in general have difficulty accepting the inevitability of U.S. involvement in such efforts.

To ensure lasting progress and security in post-conflict situations, the United States must adjust its approach from a focus on large military operations to preparing adequately for small-scale, long-term interventions. Most U.S. military deployments since the end of the Cold War have been in “small wars” or what the Department of Defense once called “military operations other than war.”¹ Yet the military has usually been more prepared to fight large, technologically advanced wars than smaller contingencies that require greater integration with civilian capacities. As a consequence, each time the U.S. military is deployed to a complex—but “small”—emergency, it has had to relearn lessons on the ground about the best way to manage these types of contingencies. Civilian participation in stabilization and reconstruction efforts is likewise inevitable, but civilian institutions are even less prepared for such work than the military. Lessons learned over the last decade are only recently being institutionalized, through offices like Department of State’s Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) and the U.S. Agency for International Development’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI). In part this is due to bureaucratic politics. But in large part it is because government officials, Congress, and

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the American public do not acknowledge that the civilian expertise and resources needed to do this work is inadequate relative to the demand.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have colored perceptions about whether and how the United States should operate in conflict and post-conflict environments. In many ways, those wars were exceptional: the scale of effort, the number of troops deployed, the number of U.S. casualties, and the amount of money were all far higher than any other U.S. intervention since the war in Vietnam. Many in Washington have concluded that U.S. interventions will not come close to that size any time in the near future, and so the capabilities developed to participate in those conflicts need not be emphasized in future strategic decisions.

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In other ways, however, those conflicts brought to light the key challenges facing the United States as it participates in foreign internal conflicts at any scale. Problems have included civilian-military coordination, international civilian coordination, the inability of civilians to move freely and interact with populations in conflict zones, the inability to measure progress, the difficulty of translating tactical and operational success into strategic success, the desire to do for foreign partners what they should be doing for themselves, and the tendency to take shortcuts. In other words, the pathologies that exist in the U.S. response to the smallest conflicts were shown in high relief in these large-scale conflicts in a way that, in the popular imagination, has reflected poorly on the institutions and

individuals involved in conflict, reconstruction, and stabilization operations.

There is danger, however, to overstating how pervasive these pathologies are. In truth, those institutions and individuals had many successes and made many improvements within Afghanistan and Iraq and in smaller, less-visible conflicts outside of those theaters. In Afghanistan, for example, there has been a 43% reduction of enemy attacks over the past year; Afghan security forces, up 31% from 2010, now lead half of all combat operations; and school attendance rates for girls have increased 67% since 2001.² In Iraq, there has been progress in transforming the security sector, and the decline in attacks on civilians has been noted by the United Nations report on the country situation. Long-term stability, of course, will depend on the government's ability to ensure that these new forces remain part of the governance solution, and not an obstacle to development.³

Still, after nearly two decades of experience in stabilization operations, civilian and military planners continue to face critical questions. Are lessons focused on more efficient engagement? How can incentives be altered so that the United States is prepared for ongoing small-scale crises so that they do not explode into larger, more complex operations that require far more costly military engagement?

This paper highlights the history of U.S. involvement in these activities, the risks of not being sufficiently prepared, and the basic requirements for effective engagement. The first two sections of this report briefly review the first two generations of U.S. engagement in what was then called "post-conflict reconstruction" and later termed "stabilization and reconstruction." The first generation, from the end of the Cold War to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, was characterized by strong interplay

between the United States and multilateral organizations in coordinating to help countries in conflict. The second generation, from 9/11 to the end of the “surges” in Iraq and Afghanistan, was influenced by the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Commission’s work on the essential tasks needed for reconstruction and, later, by new doctrine for counterinsurgency.

After combat operations in Iraq and the end of the “surge” in Afghanistan, we have entered a third generation in which skepticism about the value of and capabilities for doing this work is on the upswing. After a decade of conflict, the public is tired and resources are declining. The report’s third section, therefore, considers the current state of the field in light of the political and economic mood of the United States today. The conclusion section provides broad recommendations based on the lessons of the past decade.⁴

The First Generation: 1989–2001

By the end of the Cold War, the United States had been involved in a significant number of military interventions. A tremendous amount of military activities and civilian efforts were allocated to “catching up” with the frequency of these interventions. During this time frame, the United States was engaged in a rapid-fire series of events, including the unraveling of Somalia in the early 1990s, the overthrow of a democratically elected government in Haiti, a full-fledged hot war in the Balkans, and genocide in Rwanda. The interventions were first characterized as humanitarian ones that were authorized by the UN Security Council, where the United States provided military and civilian support to multilateral operations. The United States was engaged in some overseas operations, then referred to as humanitarian interventions, almost every other year during this decade; lessons learned from one conflict or crisis were rarely applied to the

next. From Central America to the Balkans, the common thread was that eventual peace agreements provided a roadmap for reconstruction. This first generation post-conflict reconstruction efforts were also models of partnerships among the United States, the United Nations, and other international donors, including for reconstruction operations on the ground.

elections were often used as an exit strategy for military operations

During the 1990s, Western donors began a convening process to review the types of challenges that arose from conflicts in weak and fragile states. International development agencies started to focus their attention on how to work in countries where violence threatened to destabilize the status quo. Loss of Soviet support led to the implosion of many African countries that had served as Cold War proxies, with deeper implications for foreign assistance. In Central America, the wars that had plagued El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua were ending due to the discontinuation of Soviet resources to insurgencies. Eastern Europe’s demise also left a funding vacuum, but more importantly, an apparent need to help demobilize militaries, reform the security sector, and integrate former Soviet satellite states into the mainstream of Western Europe. Early humanitarian interventions raised further questions about how to sustain a more stable environment after the initial crisis was subdued. Elections were often used as an exit strategy for military operations, and donors interpreted them as signaling the end of post-conflict efforts.

The World Bank created a Post-Conflict Unit to support both research and short-term funding to help countries overwhelmed by new forms of instability in the absence of former hegemony.

The unit sponsored ground-breaking research by analysts including Paul Collier who created new paradigms for understanding conflict drivers and indicators for potential conflict, which captured the thinking of governments seeking solutions to the challenges of stabilization and rebuilding. Collier's research also found that more than half of the conflicts returned to active fighting within five years, despite reconstruction efforts.⁵

The U.S. government was especially interested in finding a way forward in managing the threat of weak states in a world that had overnight been transformed from a bipolar political environment to one where the United States was the dominant global actor. U.S. government officials began to explore what it would take to equip all relevant government agencies—civilian and military alike—with the necessary tools to transform a society from war to peace, from chaos to a capable state. During this period there was a hope that working with the prevention concept would help the international community to identify the necessary tools to avoid fighting. This rethinking of conflict in the post-Cold War era resulted in a report of the Carnegie Commission on the Prevention of Deadly Conflict in 1996. It opened the way for understanding how the United Nations would become a necessary partner with the large Western donor states in bringing together the operational tools to prevent war.

In the development arena, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was also caught up in the challenge of how to provide humanitarian assistance in countries emerging from conflict that would be quick, effective, and targeted for immediate political needs. Ordinary tools that USAID had for putting in place programs to support development were considered too long term to help places that were coming apart. In 1993, the creation of the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) in the Bureau



UN Photo/Marco Dominio

Two UN Police Officers of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) assist National Police Officers at a checkpoint.

for Humanitarian Response (now the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, or DCHA) marked a departure from conventional approaches to development. OTI's mission was to integrate the immediate needs for political transformation with the tools of development to produce tangible results. The office helped to quickly develop programs and disburse resources in places in transition. OTI's ability to integrate its rapid-response model into the mainstream of development programming, however, remained an ongoing challenge in an agency whose culture was more accustomed to working on long-range development.

Throughout the first generation, approaches to societies emerging from conflict were more of a tactical exercise than the result of any strategic thinking about the field. In spite of some important efforts in the Balkans, Kosovo, East Timor, Haiti, Guatemala, El Salvador, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and Burundi, the tendency of the U.S. government was to throw resources at a problem rather than create a government-wide strategy to address specific needs. This began to change in the Bill Clinton administration with the publication of Presidential Decision Directive 56 (PDD-56), which attempted to codify an interagency framework for coordinating

the U.S. response to post-conflict emergencies.⁶ The immediate result of this effort was a better operational program in the case of Kosovo. On the military side, the increased mission focus on reconstruction projects was creating tension in an institution that was moving away from the traditional war-fighting role towards a broader integration of stabilization projects. This change was not at first embraced by our soldiers. The so-called military operations other than war became a transformative effort for the U.S. military as the evolving nature of warfare led to a growing role for military support in such activities as community development, elections, and police training. This tension would become quite clear after the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The Second Generation: 2001–2011

In 2001, the Center of Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the Association of the U.S. Army began a project to explore a new framework for post-conflict reconstruction that built on the interagency focus of PDD-56. The goal was to layout a set of recommendations based on lessons from the first generation of rebuilding. The Commission on Post-Conflict Reconstruction included important leaders in the field from Congress, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), scholars, and other international agencies. Based on lessons from first-generation efforts in this field, the project team formulated specific recommendations for the field, including a reconstruction task framework based around four pillars: security, justice and human rights, socioeconomic well-being, and governance. Project leaders recognized how difficult it was to implement the framework due to the dispersion of U.S. capabilities across so many government agencies, both military and civilian. The CSIS project research sought to inform a new policy directive that the recently elected administration

of George W. Bush had promised to put in place on reconstruction. But the timing of the work coincided with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the beginning of a new phase in U.S. nation-building efforts.⁷

it was apparent that civilian agencies of government were ill-prepared to manage reconstruction work in a conflict-affected environment

The 9/11 attacks on the United States transformed the U.S. approach to dealing with fragile states. In Afghanistan, government institutions had been greatly damaged by decades of conflict. The Taliban had taken control of the country, allowing al Qaeda forces to grow and Osama bin Laden to plan the 2001 attacks.

At the outset of hostilities, it was apparent that civilian agencies of government were ill-prepared to manage reconstruction work in a conflict-affected environment. In 2002, as the United States prepared for an invasion of Iraq, and with a war ongoing in Afghanistan, the Pentagon argued that in the absence of an agreed-upon framework for nation building, it should become the U.S. government's focal point for reconstruction activities. By January 2003, President Bush issued National Security Directive 24, formally giving DoD primacy in the post-invasion effort in Iraq.⁸ This directive granted the department authority to assert leadership in planning of operations, in spite of misgivings that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld had expressed about nation building. While there were important bureaucratic reasons that DoD wanted the upper hand in planning, the department in practice was at a disadvantage. It lacked the institutional knowledge and capacity to perform many of the essential tasks in any reconstruction program; had no

experience helping build local government; did not have good relationships with either international or local NGOs, except in terms of humanitarian assistance; and lacked a coordinating mechanism for actions with the United Nations and international financial institutions. While DoD sought an advantage in communication and messaging, it was not very successful in competing for Iraqi hearts and minds.

In 2005, the transfer of authority from the Department of State to the Department of Defense for the management of reconstruction efforts was completed when Defense Directive 3000.05 was issued.⁹ This policy committed the Pentagon to develop robust stability operations doctrine, resources, and capacities and defined stability operations in terms of military and civilian activities. While a civilian coordinator for reconstruction and stabilization (S/CRS) had already been created at the State Department a year earlier, in 2004, it was not until 2008 that S/CRS actually engaged in supporting stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The U.S. approach to stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan was at that point firmly established as a military mission. The Pentagon had significant resources for reconstruction activities, but it was also apparent that there would be no short-term fix for stabilizing governance in either Iraq or Afghanistan. This worried military officials who saw their mission as a short-term project.

At the same time that the United States was engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan, other countries were also destabilizing. These situations were being managed by the United Nations, which was conducting its own stabilization operations, but simultaneously undertaking its own review of how it would continue to work with fragile states in a changed political environment. By 2005, the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and

Change came forward with a set of recommendations that included creating a Peacebuilding Commission among a group of states to support the ongoing needs of fragile states after the immediate security and humanitarian needs had been met. It identified a need for the United Nations to address the prevention of mass atrocities as part of its future work. It published its findings in a report by the Secretary General of the United Nations explaining why new, borderless threats were as problematic to security as threats caused by rivalries between states.¹⁰

The 2008 elections brought a change to U.S. policy. The Barack Obama administration, with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in the lead, reasserted civilian leadership in the area of reconstruction. With the war in Iraq almost over, and the war in Afghanistan still unresolved, Clinton undertook a whole-of-government review of how the U.S. government could improve stabilization and reconstruction operations, arguing that a diplomacy, development, and defense (or 3-D) approach was essential. Clinton, however, noted that coordination had still lagged behind, in spite of the growing expertise and capacity that existed inside the government to respond to the rebuilding needs. A Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), which finally appeared in 2010, marked the culmination of thinking on the civilian side for how best to provide policymakers with a means for speaking with one voice in managing the reconstruction and stabilization agenda.¹¹ This review, however, was more a roadmap than an operational framework for civilian leadership.

The Third Generation?

Now, with U.S. troops withdrawn from Iraq and a departure date of 2014 set for Afghanistan, U.S. conflict and stabilization operations may be entering a third generation.¹² The United States is likely



UN Photo/Marie Perchon

A member of the Indian battalion of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic of the Congo (MONUC)

(based on historical experience) to find itself involved in a foreign internal conflict at some point in the near future, and when it does, that involvement will likely trigger a renewed desire to learn and institutionalize the lessons of the past. At the moment, however, this third generation is marked mainly by skepticism including by members of Congress, who fund these activities, and from civilian and military planners, who are still unclear whether the metrics to determine success have reflected the real situation on the ground.

U.S. and international policies and interventions have certainly evolved with mixed results in terms of helping war-torn countries rebuild. Much of this work has not been institutionalized, and the case has not been made to the American public that most U.S. efforts going forward are unlikely to follow the Afghanistan and Iraq model. Nor has the case been successfully made

that the demand for this kind of work is not likely to subside, although the complexity of addressing instability in the future will challenge U.S. military and civilian capacities. Since 1993, the United States has responded in some way to as many as 20 foreign internal conflicts, and twice as many humanitarian responses, every year.¹³ The U.S. capacity for conflict and stabilization operations simply cannot meet this level of demand. If limits cannot be placed on the frequency of intervention, then either the capacity for intervention needs to be increased, or the capacity for prevention needs to be increased. As demand continues, the United States has shown that is not always able to balance this trade-off.

Aside from the regional bureaus at the State Department, which have overall responsibility for U.S. policy in particular countries, and USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, which was created



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Christopher Hammond/Released

Afghan girls pose for a photo in their school classroom during a humanitarian aid supply operation conducted by Afghan soldiers with the 9th Commando Kandak and coalition special operation forces in Nizam-e Shahid district, Herat province, Afghanistan, Nov. 25, 2011.

specifically to address short-term stabilization needs, the key civilian institutions for stabilization and reconstruction are USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) and the State Department's new Bureau for Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), which has subsumed S/CRS. DCHA faces institutional constraints as a result of congressional skepticism toward USAID. CSO is a new institution and inherits S/CRS, which was barely given a chance to succeed, limited both by the regional bureaus and available resources.

Outside of the United States, many other bilateral and multilateral institutions are involved in this work. U.S. agencies have not always succeeded in coordinating with them at the strategic level or in the field. But given the declining resources any individual country is willing to contribute to these efforts, burden sharing in

the future will be essential in many parts of the world. The United Nations has acquired enormous experience in this work in the past decades. The Peace Support Office in the Secretariat has been an added complement to the Peacebuilding Commission, functioning as a coordination arm that integrates the operational components of peacebuilding with the planning and strategies needed for UN agency field activities. But individual states have at times relied on the United Nations to take on missions they themselves have wanted to avoid, and UN capacity is limited as well. Opportunities exist not only to improve coordination with these traditional partners, but also to increase engagement with regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union; with developing countries who are increasingly organizing themselves through

mechanisms such as the G7+ group of fragile states; and with emerging powers such as Brazil, Turkey, and China, who have demonstrated a willingness to participate in these efforts—but who sometimes have global objectives related to conflict-affected states that do not align with U.S. interests.¹⁴

Aside from questions about when to intervene and possible partners for cooperation, experts and practitioners have identified many remaining opportunities for *how* to improve engagement in conflict and stabilization operations. There is a growing recognition of the need to move from a sole emphasis on state building and institution building toward a more pragmatic engagement with *de facto* authority structures, including non-state actors and hybrid political institutions on the ground. This is particularly relevant in conflict-affected countries, where significant territory is often controlled by a non-state actor or a rogue government official. Local and local-national politics in violent and conflict-affected countries, however, are notoriously difficult for outsiders to understand. These types of situations do not lend themselves to military solutions, but require a greater need for police, improved local institutions that manage justice and community-based development opportunities that address fundamental structural needs.

Because civilian development budgets are being reduced, there is also an immediate need to identify strategies and approaches that can do more with less. Experts participating in the CSIS workshops suggested improved engagement with veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq; increased participation of private-sector actors; and better utilization of experts in local environments. And almost all experts cite the need for improved interagency coordination in this work. Over the last decade, new security assistance authorities and programs have been created

there will need to be a more integrated approach to security and development that includes both civilian and military actors

under authorities of the Department of Defense rather than the Department of State, and this “has altered the relationship between the two departments with respect to design, implementation, and direction of U.S. security assistance programming.”¹⁵ Clearly, new tools are needed to manage the structural issues that affect instability in the countries in question, and those tools that already exist must be fully employed in a way that supports the development of weak states.

Recommendations for the Next Generation:

As this brief review demonstrates, the demand for conflict and stabilization operations is likely to remain a constant for the foreseeable future. The transnational nature of many threats to peace and stability will continue to increase the complexity of these operations, and the United States will need to understand the conditions under which intervention can be successful. Whether to prevent conflicts or to respond to them, there will need to be a more integrated approach to security and development that includes both civilian and military actors. Addressing crises in an ad hoc manner all but guarantees that interventions, whether preventative or reactive, will be more expensive in lives and dollars than they need to be. Six recommendations for building upon our knowledge and our current capacity suggest a way forward.

1: Design planning processes around a set of objectives that are commensurate with existing capabilities and resources. Realistic expectations are essential for the future of conflict and stabilization

operations. Being honest up front about what U.S. institutions are capable of achieving and what recipient-country institutions are capable of absorbing is necessary to avoid raising expectations that cannot be met. Realistic planning will improve the likelihood that objectives are met and that Congress, in turn, will approve resources for future operations. Planning for the “army we have” (as it were) rather than the “army we wish we had” is critical for success. The U.S. government should also fulfill the vision articulated in the QDDR—to ensure that civilian capacity for this type of complex work is developed in a way that supports local country needs. This means building up a strong civilian force from government and the private sector that can be rapidly deployed to help sustain security gains. Planning based not mainly on a country’s supposed needs, but on an understanding of that country’s capacity to absorb the assistance, is equally critical. Real success is likely to come in avoiding catastrophes rather than creating great societies.

2: Create a plan to build institutional capabilities for prevention and reconstruction. If the short-term focus is on planning around what is achievable, the long-term focus should be on building U.S. institutions with the capacity for preventing conflict, which would reduce the likelihood of future interventions. But success at reconstruction will be determined not only by what the United States can contribute to the immediate needs, but also by the on-the-ground capacity it leaves behind for rebuilding. State-level institutional reforms are important but insufficient. State building has focused too much on capacity and not enough on stability and local legitimacy. The countries in which the United States is operating face serious sovereignty concerns in a way that was not the case two decades ago. The United States must engage

fragile states carefully, supporting actors that are agents of change instead of trying to be the central agent of change. Serious progress must be made in engaging legitimate local ownership. It is also important to expand the base of partners on the ground to include more local talent. Local leaders not only have better knowledge of the environment, the stakes of mission success are also higher for them.

3: Engage emerging global powers on reconstruction and stabilization. Several emerging powers, including Brazil, Turkey, India, and China, have already expanded their investments in countries emerging from conflict. Their approach to assisting countries in transition may not always coincide with that of the United States, but these rising powers can help support and sustain gains that were made through their own resources and knowledge of different regions. For example, India and Turkey can provide valuable development options for helping to prevent places like Afghanistan from falling back into conflict. Similarly, Brazil has been an invaluable partner in helping to train police and provide security in countries such as Haiti. Its use of trilateral cooperation projects has helped leverage its limited resources with U.S. programs in many parts of Africa. China has also been using its own resources to promote economic development in many unstable regions of Africa, while also sending peacekeepers and police to UN missions. While U.S. leadership is still highly valued, burden sharing can mean more effective engagements.

4: Make the private sector a partner from the outset to promote a more sustainable future. The 40 poorest countries are also the most resource rich. Yet U.S. use of loan guarantees through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation

(OPIC), or the way Treasury Department officials help promote credible financial systems, have often exacerbated the economic challenges these countries face. There is a growing recognition that the United States needs to look to partnerships with the private sector in countries that are fragile, but that could potentially emerge as viable nations if technical assistance were coupled with strong incentives for investment. It has taken far too long for this awareness to enter into the planning of many reconstruction efforts, but the presence of the private sector in the early phases of reconstruction planning is now a given. A better understanding of the private-sector role remains to be developed.¹⁶

Greater focus on local capacity for entrepreneurial endeavors has also led many donors to consider working not only with micro-lending in post-conflict environments, but also in fostering small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as a means of providing jobs and sustainable economic growth.¹⁷ The use of new resources to help local businesses rather than international contractors would be an enormous and constructive change in many weak and fragile countries. The private sector can lead not only with resources, but also in respect for rule of law and good governance. The challenge will be for donors to help balance the needs of local investors with the ongoing requirements for security that enable commerce and industry to flourish.

5: *Improve civilian-military cooperation to respond to complex operations that arise not only from traditional conflicts but from crime and violence as well.* Urban conflict arising from transnational criminal activity accounts for 88% of the lethal violence that countries experience today.¹⁸ Whether it is the gangs of Central America and Mexico, or the *favelas* (slums) of Rio, or the violence associated with trafficking of drugs and

the presence of the private sector in the early phases of reconstruction planning is now a given

people, these types of problems require improved internal security forces—especially policing skills and stronger connections with economic development programs that address job creation and access to education. New types of instability demand a rethinking of how best to prevent conflict through structural changes in the economy and in governance. Lessons learned about rebuilding after war may also help bring local expertise and local voices into the process. Each new problem demands country-specific solutions, and U.S. government officials will need to work effectively with local actors, other donor partners, and international organizations.

6: *Operationalize the lessons from Busan and the World Development Report.* In 2011, the Busan Conference on Aid Effectiveness, held in South Korea, produced a “New Deal for Fragile States.” This initiative, led by 19 of the 40 states categorized as fragile, recommends that institutions such as the World Bank acknowledge that the development of these countries is a critical means for preventing them from falling back into conflict and chaos. The New Deal endorses a common fragility assessment in affected countries; assistance strategies that are locally designed and led; mutual accountability between aid donors and recipients; transparent revenue management by fragile states; and multi-stakeholder dialogue on development priorities in fragile states. It also recognizes the growing voice of the G7+ country ministers, who are now asserting their own demands for development assistance that addresses the specific needs of these poor countries, rather than allowing assistance to be imposed from the outside without adequate regard to individual country needs.¹⁹

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Eric C. Treiter/Released



United Nations police guard the main gate at a medical site in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, during Continuing Promise, August 21, 2011.

The 2011 World Development Report, in considering the particular challenges of development in fragile and conflict-affected states, concludes that development actors must mobilize around a coherent, inclusive plan, rather than focus on various parts of the technical institutional reform process. It will be important to invest in citizen security, justice, and jobs, and to address issues such as crime reduction or civilian protection, rather than only emphasizing issues that are seen as directly affecting U.S. national security, like counternarcotics or counterterrorism.²⁰

These efforts are not the final word on conflict, stabilization, and reconstruction operations, but they are useful for providing two important focal points for efforts to improve practice. The challenge for the United States and other international donors will be to translate their

lessons into operational capabilities. The United Kingdom, France, Canada, and other donors, for example, have been working together to operationalize the World Development Report, and moves such as this should be encouraged among other donors as well.

Conclusion

Since the end of the Cold War, it has become increasingly clear that nation building imposed from the outside is unlikely to create the social capital on the ground necessary for stable institutions. Local leadership, coupled with citizen engagement, has proven the only way to ensure that international investment in stability and reconstruction helps to catalyze sustainable change. Security provision alone is insufficient for rebuilding—the private sector, religious

networks, women's groups, and the international community must all be engaged in creating the foundations for long-term stability. U.S. leadership will continue to be required in the future, particularly when weak and fragile states pose risks to U.S. security. But the future of U.S. efforts in this field may well be focused on addressing new forms of violence, not from wars, but from criminal elements and transnational actors who count on the weakness of states to impose their will on the most vulnerable of citizens in some of the world's poorest places. The recently created interagency Atrocities Prevention Board recognizes the U.S. obligation to prevent nations from committing mass atrocities against their own citizens.²¹ Civilian and military agencies will need to develop new tools to address violence and hopefully prevent it. Continued development of U.S. institutional frameworks, and prioritization of international coordination in these efforts, will make possible successful future engagements. **PRISM**

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Regime Change Without Military Force: Lessons from Overthrowing Milosevic

BY GREGORY L. SCHULTE

*“Gotov je!” (“He’s finished!”)
—Serb resistance slogan, directed at Milosevic*

After a decade of war in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Obama Administration has adopted a new defense strategy that recognizes the need to limit our strategic ends in an era of increasing limits on our military means.¹ The strategy calls for armed forces capable of conducting a broad range of missions, in a full range of contingencies, and in a global context that is increasingly complex. It calls for doing so with a smaller defense budget. Opportunities for savings come from reducing the ability to fight two regional conflicts simultaneously and from not sizing the force to conduct prolonged, large-scale stability operations.

Seemingly missing from the new defense strategy are the types of wars we fought in Afghanistan and Iraq. Both started with forcible changes in regime – the armed ouster of the Taliban and Saddam Hussein from their positions of power. In each case, the rapid removal of leadership was followed by lengthy counterinsurgency operations to bring security to the population and build up a new government. The duration and difficulty of these operations and their cost in deaths, destruction, and debt were not understood at their outset.

Whereas past defense strategies foresaw the prospect of forcible regime change,² the new defense strategy does not. Thus, absent a direct threat to U.S. vital interests, any future endeavors to oust unfriendly leaders are likely to be pursued by non-military means. U.S. military forces may play a supporting role at most. Libya and Syria demonstrate the new defense strategy in action. While regime change has been an objective, the United States has worked through partners and limited or ruled out the use of military force.

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If U.S. policymakers consider non-military regime change in the future, they may wish to look for lessons learned before Afghanistan and Iraq, lessons learned from the 2000 overthrow of Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic. While the circumstances were unique and perhaps uniquely favorable to a democratic transition, many of the lessons are probably enduring.

Deposing a Dictator³

In 2000, Slobodan Milosevic, then president of what remained of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia,⁴ set the stage for his own demise. He did so by calling for elections, seeking to bolster his legitimacy at home and abroad, while miscalculating his own ability to fix the results.

despite instigating ethnic violence and genocide in Bosnia and Croatia in the early 1990s, he had emerged unscathed as leader of Serbia

Personally and politically, Milosevic had survived North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Operation Allied Force, 78 days of air strikes against Serbia and its forces in Kosovo the year before. While longer than the United States or its allies anticipated, the campaign of military strikes and non-military measures ultimately succeeded, compelling Milosevic to halt ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, withdraw Serb security forces, and consent to the introduction of a UN administration and NATO-led force, but leaving Milosevic in place.

Milosevic was a survivor. Despite instigating ethnic violence and genocide in Bosnia and Croatia in the early 1990s, he had emerged unscathed as leader of Serbia and signatory of the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords. Many analysts predicted that the 1999 NATO air strikes would cement Milosevic's grip on power. Instead,

Milosevic was weakened, his political legitimacy tarnished at home and abroad.

Milosevic's confrontation with the UN and NATO isolated him internationally. He also faced growing opposition domestically. In September 1999, opposition rallies in twenty cities in Serbia urged Milosevic to resign. The police and army cracked down, but Milosevic's regime had difficulty suppressing opposition leaders and the student movement OTPOR – Serbian for “resistance.” OTPOR, a loosely organized network of activists trained in peaceful resistance, used a variety of nonviolent tactics to excoriate the regime and build popular support.

In January 2000, OTPOR organized an Orthodox New Year's Eve rally against Milosevic's rule. In April, 100,000 citizens of Serbia gathered in Belgrade to call for early presidential elections. In May, Serbian opposition parties, despite a history of fragmentation and in-fighting, united under the Democratic Opposition of Serbia. They put forward a single candidate for the elections: Vojislav Kostunica.

In July, Milosevic made his mistake, announcing early elections in September. Milosevic probably gambled that he could control the media, divide the opposition, and deny them time to organize and build support. He probably also gambled on stuffing the ballot boxes, particularly those coming over the border from Kosovo, still nominally part of the Yugoslav republic.

The democratic opposition of Serbia stayed united. In August, OTPOR launched a country-wide campaign dubbed “Gotov je!” – “He's finished!” Volunteers pasted “Gotov je!” stickers across Serbia, including over Milosevic's campaign posters.

For the September elections, OTPOR and the opposition recruited, trained, and organized more than 30,000 volunteers to monitor the

DoD photo by Senior Airman Sean Worrell, U.S. Air Force (released)



Former President Bill Clinton speaks to American, British, and French troops deployed to Skopje, Macedonia, on June 22, 1999. Many of the troop will become part of KFOR.

vote. The United Nations (UN) and NATO collaborated to interdict stuffed ballot boxes coming from Kosovo. When the observers announced the victory of Kostunica, the Milosevic-controlled Federal Election Commission called for a run-off. A united opposition refused and called for a general strike.

In October, coal miners – previously among Milosevic’s strongest supporters – went on strike and then led a march on Belgrade, using a bulldozer to push away barricades. Serbia’s police and military, in contact with the opposition, refused to intervene. It seemed that Milosevic had passed the tipping point that all despots fear: when the regime fears the people more than the people fear the regime.

Milosevic acknowledged defeat on October 6 after a private meeting with the Russian foreign minister. Standing before the television cameras, Milosevic looked stunned. His self-confidence shattered, he was finished. “Gotov je!” had gone from slogan to reality.

Under international pressure, the Serbian government arrested Milosevic in April 2001, and then extradited him to The Hague to be tried for war crimes before an international tribunal. The “Butcher of the Balkans” died of a heart attack before his trial could conclude.

Milosevic’s death precluded justice, but his removal from power set the stage for bringing democracy to Serbia and bringing Serbia back into Europe. While NATO’s relations with Russia were severely strained, the interests of the Serb people, the region, and the United States and its allies were well served.

Supporting the Overthrow

The people of Serbia ousted Milosevic, but they had help. Even before NATO’s air strikes, President Clinton and his foreign policy team had decided that Slobodan Milosevic, while a signatory of the Dayton Peace Accords for Bosnia, was an obstacle to peace throughout the region. In September 1998, in the face of anti-Albanian violence in Kosovo instigated by Milosevic, the U.S. Administration agreed to develop and implement a strategy to weaken his rule.

In December 1998, the basic strategy was approved. The first element was to strengthen democratic forces in Serbia, including the political opposition, student movements, and independent media. The second element was to bolster President Djukanovic of neighboring Montenegro, an increasingly independent province of the federal republic, as a counterweight to Milosevic. The third element was to undermine Milosevic’s pillars of power. These were identified as his security services, finances, and control of the media.

This basic strategy, adapted as necessary to changing circumstance, remained in place through the 1999 air campaign, which helped set the conditions for Milosevic’s removal, and through 2000, when Milosevic was removed from power.

Setting the Conditions

NATO’s air campaign, initiated in March 1999, was aimed at protecting the Albanian population

in Kosovo, not at toppling Milosevic. In April, with Milosevic refusing to meet NATO demands, the Administration agreed to a strengthened effort to support his removal. In a major address, President Clinton publically called for a “democratic transition in Serbia, for the region’s democracies will never be safe with a belligerent tyranny in their midst.”⁵

NATO aircraft dropped leaflets reminding the Serbian people of the luxurious lifestyle of Milosevic’s son while their own sons were being sent to Kosovo to fight

As Allied Force extended into May, the Administration broadened its politico-military planning from air strikes backed by diplomacy to a more comprehensive strategic campaign. The campaign encompassed a wide range of diplomatic, information, military, economic, and financial measures and sought to bring pressure directly on Milosevic and his regime. A diplomatic effort, lead by Strobe Talbott, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, was designed to show Milosevic that he was faced with increasing international isolation and a withdrawal of Russian support.

Immediate military objectives of the strategic campaign plan remained focused on reducing Serbia’s ability to conduct operations in Kosovo. However, intermediate objectives now included exacerbating the security forces’ discontent with Milosevic’s leadership, convincing Milosevic “cronies” that a settlement – including through his possible removal – would be better than continued recalcitrance, and building public discontent and opposition with Milosevic’s continued rule.

NATO air strikes began including regime-related targets such as leadership, state-controlled media, and crony assets that met legal targeting requirements. They were complemented

by diplomatic efforts, economic sanctions, and information operations designed to isolate Milosevic and undermine his pillars of support. A “Ring Around Serbia” of radio stations broadcast truthful information into the country, undercutting Milosevic’s efforts to squash reports of defeats and defections. NATO aircraft dropped leaflets reminding the Serbian people of the luxurious lifestyle of Milosevic’s son while their own sons were being sent to Kosovo to fight.

In the final weeks of the air campaign, the United States used the diplomatic end game to keep Milosevic isolated internationally. A newly issued war crimes indictment against Milosevic helped discourage diplomatic free-lancing by outside parties. The goal was to deny Milosevic international recognition that he could use to restore political legitimacy at home. In the end, rather than sending Ambassador Richard Holbrooke to negotiate a settlement with Milosevic, who would have used such a meeting to elevate his standing, a NATO general met with Serbian counterparts to agree on military technical arrangements to codify his surrender.

NATO’s air campaign weakened Milosevic. It also strengthened the resolve of the nineteen NATO allies that Milosevic had to go. This set the stage for a concerted international effort, after the air strikes, to force him out.

Forcing Him Out

In July 1999, a month after the successful conclusion of NATO’s intervention, the President’s foreign policy team agreed to pursue an aggressive democratization program for Serbia. The program continued efforts to undermine Milosevic’s sources of power, including through support for independent media. It also put increased emphasis on building a cohesive and effective opposition. President Clinton publicly announced additional funding to support democracy.

Using that funding, non-government organizations like the International Republican Institute (IRI) and National Democratic Institute (NDI) began providing advice and support to independent civil organizations and opposition parties. IRI helped organize training of OTPOR in strategic non-violence. NDI used polling data to help opposition candidates understand Milosevic's political vulnerabilities and the importance of unifying behind one candidate. With U.S. encouragement, neighboring countries provided a safe place for the opposition to meet, strategize, and train.

Vojislav Kostunica was a committed Serb nationalist and by no means the "U.S. candidate." Indeed, he and his close advisors had a decided anti-American streak. However, the administration believed that Kostunica would abide by his country's constitution and international commitments. Equally important, polling data showed Kostunica was the only member of the opposition who could beat Milosevic. Quiet U.S. engagement, backed with polling data and conditions on electoral support, encouraged the opposition to unify behind him.

With the opposition growing stronger, in February 2000 the President's foreign policy team adopted an updated strategy for regime change. The strategy pressed forward with isolating Milosevic and promoting opposition unity and effectiveness. It targeted sanctions against Milosevic's regime and its supporters and sought to demonstrate that his removal would benefit the Serb people. Finally, the strategy sought to shore up Kosovo and Montenegro against any attempt by Milosevic to foment a crisis to distract from his growing problems in Serbia.

After Milosevic's July call for elections, the administration again updated its plans. The updated plan, agreed in August, aimed at making the elections a referendum on Milosevic – seeking

to discredit him – while fully recognizing that he would spare no effort to rig them. The plan involved supporting the political opposition in presenting a unified challenge and maximizing the cost to the regime of committing electoral fraud. Planning involved efforts to expose cheating, channel public anger, and encourage civil disobedience immediately after a stolen vote.

The administration also developed a plan to deter Milosevic from launching a spoiling attack on Montenegro, concerned that he would do so as a way to interdict support for the opposition or as an excuse to call off the elections. The United States provided diplomatic and economic support to the Djukanovic government and conducted robust information operations based on military activities in the region in order to keep Milosevic and his generals uncertain about a possible NATO or U.S. response to an attack.⁶

The administration also sought to bring Russia on board. The White House urged the Kremlin to support a unified opposition and the removal of Milosevic by the end of the year should the elections be stolen or Milosevic launch an attack on Montenegro. Securing Russian support was a challenge, given Moscow's opposition to NATO's air campaign the year before, but seemed to pay off in the end game, when Milosevic stepped down immediately after a meeting with the Russian foreign minister.

At the beginning of September, with the opposition unified and polling showing decreasing popular support for Milosevic, the President's foreign policy team reviewed its strategy. They agreed on a subtle but significant shift in objective: rather than treating the elections as an opportunity to discredit Milosevic and thereby support regime change over the longer term, the administration would support the opposition in using the elections to achieve his immediate removal.

Concerned that Milosevic would use an active American role to rally nationalists behind him, the President's foreign policy team decided to take cues from the Serb opposition immediately following the elections. It further decided to keep the Europeans in the forefront to showcase the broad based nature of international opposition to Milosevic's rule. It agreed to encourage Moscow to support the opposition publicly, which it did not, and tell Milosevic to go privately, which it possibly did.

Efforts to oust Milosevic came at the end of President Clinton's second and last term in office. There was reason for concern that Milosevic or his supporters could perceive that they would "wait out" the Clinton Administration. With White House encouragement, both Presidential candidates signaled support for Milosevic's removal, and efforts were made to convey their positions to those around Milosevic.

Consolidating the Results

When Vojislav Kostunica assumed the Yugoslav presidency, the United States and European Union (EU) laid out a road map for normalization of relations. President Clinton wrote to Kostunica personally to underscore the U.S. administration's commitment to normalization and the consolidation of democracy in Serbia. U.S. developmental assistance shifted from support for the political opposition to institutional reform.

lifting of UN and other multilateral sanctions helped establish the legitimacy of the new government

The lifting of UN and other multilateral sanctions helped establish the legitimacy of the new government, allowed it to return to international organizations from which it had

been barred, and opened the door to economic recovery through the restoration of trade and investment. Over the longer-term, the prospect of EU accession gave considerable incentive to implementing democratic reform and cooperation with the international war crimes tribunal.

Keys to Success

Success did not manifest itself in a coup d'état or a bullet to the head. Milosevic's decision to step down was his own. No longer alive and a liar when he was, we will never know what motivated Milosevic during his final days in power. Presumably he calculated that his grip on power was about to be lost and that his personal interests – perhaps even his personal survival – were best served by stepping down.

Opposition leaders and student activists played the lead role in putting Milosevic in this position. However, their courage and determination would probably have been for naught without the international effort, organized by the United States, to level the playing field and undermine Milosevic's legitimacy and sources of power.

Keys to success for the U.S.-led international effort included:

- Understanding and undermining Milosevic's sources of power;
- Isolating him and delegitimizing his leadership at home and abroad;
- Quietly uniting, training, and supporting the domestic opposition;
- Preparing to consolidate a transition to a new, democratic leadership;
- Deterring a spoiling attack on Montenegro.

Also key was the international nature of the effort. Secretary of State Madeline Albright and her senior advisors were in regular contact with European counterparts. The EU pointedly

excluded Serbia from a new Stability Pact for Southeast Europe, demonstrating that a democratic Serbia had a place in Europe, but that a Serbia ruled by Milosevic did not. With U.S. encouragement and support, former activists from new NATO members helped train OTPOR, and military officials from NATO partners in the region warned their counterparts in Serbia against support for a falling regime.

Another key to success was the interagency nature of the effort. Senior interagency bodies met regularly to approve strategy and review implementation. A senior advisor to the Secretary of State oversaw strategy development and implementation. An ambassador in a neighboring country coordinated efforts in the field. The staff of the National Security Council coordinated interagency efforts, including sanctions, information operations, and politico-military planning. The Intelligence Community played a critical role in this whole-of-government effort through its analysis of political developments and opportunities within Serbia as well as other supporting activities. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) played a similarly important role through its support for democratization activities through nongovernmental organizations such as the NDI and IRI.

A final key to success – indeed a prerequisite – was a Presidential decision at the outset that U.S. national interests, including peace in the Balkans and the success of our military commitments there, required the removal of Milosevic. Presidential commitment remained essential, including in face of an end game that could have turned violent, but fortunately did not.

The role of the military was limited, though it did play an important supporting role. In 1999, Allied Force did not seek to dislodge, Milosevic but an important secondary objective was to loosen his grip on power. In 2000, the military

played an important role on the periphery of Serbia: stabilizing Kosovo through the establishment of KFOR and deterring a Serb spoiling attack on Montenegro. Thus the main military contribution was to contain within Serbia the struggle for its leadership.

Milosevic, while brutal, never directed at Serbs the same the level of violence used by other regimes

Together these efforts tipped the psychological climate in Serbia in the direction feared by all despots: to the point where the regime feared the people more than the people feared the regime. At first a slogan, “Gotov je!” – “he’s finished” – became reality.

Lessons for Regime Change

Regime change without force succeeded in Serbia, but the context was unique. Milosevic, while brutal, never directed at Serbs the same the level of violence used by other regimes against their own citizens. The Serb opposition was able to use peaceful resistance and the ballot box; other regimes may more ruthlessly suppress any dissent. The United States had strong partners in ousting Milosevic, united through alliance and a shared horror of his atrocities; other regimes might not be so regionally isolated. Europe was able to exercise significant “soft power” through the attractive prospect of EU accession; such instruments might not always be so available or effective. The eventual ouster of Milosevic did not lead to a widespread breakdown in governance and security; this could be a real risk in other cases, particularly if prolonged internal division has weakened institutions or degenerated into sectarian strife. Finally, Milosevic lacked the will or means to lash out against the United States

and EU; other leaders, threatened with overthrow, may be ready to strike the U.S. or allied homelands, or forces with terrorism, cyber attacks, or even weapons of mass destruction.

interfering in a country's internal political structure entails great uncertainty and risk

Thus any consideration of regime change as an end must start with an understanding of the context, to include: the international and regional environment; the country, its people, and its institutions; and the nature and interests of the regime. Is the regime vulnerable to inside and outside pressure? Is there a viable opposition with capacity to govern and values and interests aligned with our own? How might a regime react with its survival threatened? What about third-party reactions? What risks might these pose to U.S. interests? Is there adequate domestic support in the U.S. and partner countries, particularly if the risks materialize? Absent an imminent threat, can the United States credibly defend the legitimacy of what amounts to interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state?

Interfering in a country's internal political structure entails great uncertainty and risk. In the case of Serbia, success was by no means guaranteed. U.S. efforts to oust Milosevic spanned two years. They could have easily spanned two administrations, particularly had not Milosevic misjudged in his call for early elections. Widespread violence in Serbia, a spoiling attack against Montenegro, or renewed fighting in Bosnia or Kosovo were all real risks that were fortunately avoided. A regime change strategy is no sure thing, particularly without the use of military force.

If regime change is deemed desirable and feasible despite these uncertainties and risks,

the experience of overthrowing Milosevic offers some general lessons. Specifically, it suggests a whole-of-government approach to:

- Develop an in-depth intelligence assessment of the regime, its supporters, and its vulnerabilities;
- Identify and undercut key pillars of power (e.g., police, state media, close associates);
- Attack the regime's legitimacy through international isolation and information operations;
- Secure the widest possible international support, particularly in the regime, and use it to show that regime change will lift international isolation and bring benefits to the country;
- Help the opposition to unify, to identify regime weaknesses, to communicate with the public, and to expand its operations;
- Co-opt or marginalize potential spoilers, whether opposition leaders or outside powers;
- Convince the ruler that being out of power is safer for himself and his family than being in power; and/or convince those around him that forcing his departure is essential to their political, economic, or personal survival;
- Block courses of action that the ruler might take to distract the population, undercut the opposition, or fracture international cohesion;
- Lead an international effort, synchronizing the activities of others, leveraging their knowledge and influence, while minimizing U.S. visibility as necessary to protect the opposition legitimacy;
- Prepare to consolidate an expeditious transition to democratic government by extending recognition, providing assistance, lifting sanctions, and otherwise helping to establish its legitimacy at home and abroad;
- Seek and showcase U.S. domestic bipartisan support to discourage the regime from

concluding or suggesting to its supporters that it can outlast a particular administration.

As reflected in the very first step, the role of intelligence is essential. Foundational intelligence for regime change requires collecting against some very hard targets: the perceptions, intentions, and decision-making process of an autocratic leadership and the networks of people, power, and money that cement its grip on power. Intelligence also must play a role in validating or questioning the assumption of policy makers. Will, for example, power transition without violence? Will key institutions hold or disintegrate? Is the opposition capable of effective governance? How are third parties likely to react?

Skillful and knowledgeable diplomacy is also essential. Maintaining cohesion between the U.S. and its international partners is critical. This is a classic role of traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy. However, another type of diplomacy is also required: diplomacy that reaches into the society and its governing structures to develop understanding of the regime and its control mechanisms, to seek out strengths and vulnerabilities, and to build partnerships with the opposition and civil society. This type of diplomacy may be conducted in safe havens in neighboring countries. It may increasingly be conducted in the cyberspace of the country itself. It may be conducted among and through the country's diaspora, including in the United States. It may also be conducted through regional partners with contacts and understanding that exceed our own.

Simultaneously, diplomatic and developmental efforts need to lay the groundwork to help the opposition assume the responsibilities of governance. Plans and capacity for election monitoring, institution building, and security force vetting and reform are important aspects

of this work, as is partnering with other countries that have resources and influence to help consolidate a democratic transition. Whether supporting regime change or preparing for its aftermath, a conscious decision needs to be made about the level of U.S. visibility. In some cases, it is prudent to hide the hand of the United States, or to mask it as part of a larger effort, to avoid tainting the opposition or causing unhelpful reactions by governments supportive of the regime or suspicious of our motives.

the Defense Department might need to conduct planning, exercises, and preventive deployments, preferably together with allies or partners

The military might have a role, but largely in support. Even without strikes from the air or "boots on the ground," the Department of Defense can support intelligence collection directed at the regime and its security forces. It can also help, as appropriate, with providing the opposition intelligence, training, and other support. The Defense Department can contribute to whole-of-government efforts to weaken the regime's sources of power. This might include information and cyber operations to disrupt command and control of security forces, thereby sowing confusion, sapping morale, encouraging defections, and degrading the regime's ability to conduct internal security operations. It might include using military-to-military relationships with countries in the region to contact elements of the regime's security forces and to encourage, facilitate, and even reward defections. Finally, the Defense Department might need to conduct planning, exercises, and preventive deployments, preferably together with allies or partners, to help deter regime military actions and reassure neighboring countries that might otherwise feel threatened.



Former Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica (right) with former EU High Representative Javier Solana at press conference.

Implications for Ousting Assad

A dozen years after supporting a successful change in regime in Serbia, the United States has now committed to non-military regime change in Syria. While some lessons from Serbia may apply, the circumstances are vastly different.

Syria is not Serbia. The sectarian politics and level of violence are completely different. So are the leaders and their opponents. Milosevic, while brutal, never directed at his opponents the same level of violence used by Assad. The Serbian opposition was relatively unified and used peaceful opposition and the ballot box, whereas the Syria resistance is divided and has taken up arms. Milosevic had the diplomatic support of Moscow and Beijing, as Assad does today, but never the active backing of a state like Iran. And Milosevic, unlike Assad, did not have access to chemical weapons.

Regime change in Syria is most likely to come from within. Moreover, the violence and sectarian conflict do not bode well for a peaceful and democratic transition after Assad's removal. Compared to Serbia, the U.S. influence is limited over the violence struggle for power within Syria, particularly given the conflicting interests inside and outside that country. Nevertheless, the United States and its partners may still have some leverage to shape the outcome.

Relevant lessons from the overthrow of Milosevic center around the need to work with like-minded countries to increase opposition unity, undermine Assad's sources of power, and prepare for transition after his ouster. Given the enormous risks of armed intervention, the military role is best kept limited to supporting whole-of-government activities to undermine the morale and cohesion of Assad's security forces

and to working with neighboring countries such as Turkey and Jordan to deter Syrian military provocations and contain the violence to Syria.

Conclusion

In a world of continuing challenges and increasing complexity, regime change will retain its apparent attractions. Ousting a tyrant can seem more attractive politically and acceptable morally than dealing with a despotic regime. Deposing dictators can beckon as a seemingly decisive way to advance our interests and spread our values.

However, the Obama Administration's new defense strategy seems to preclude forcible regime change of the type exercised in Afghanistan and Iraq. This is a reasonable approach as we look back on the unforeseen costs and balance future interests against declining resources. Even non-military regime change may require means that we do not have – such as influence over opposition – or pose risks that we wish to avoid – such as sparking sectarian violence.

Rather than seeking to overthrow a regime, seeking to influence the regime's behavior or contain its impact may be a more prudent approach. The challenge is to influence without bestowing legitimacy, while explaining the purposes of our engagement at home and abroad.

Dealing with the regime in the short term does not preclude sowing seeds of democracy for the long-term. Indeed, encouraging democracy through public diplomacy and support to civil society may be the most effective and sustainable approach to regime change, even if the results are not always immediate.

In those limited cases when a more interventionist approach seems desirable and feasible, the overthrow of Milosevic offers some useful lessons. Foremost among these is the importance of understanding the nature of the regime and its sources of power. As in the case of Milosevic's Serbia,

undercutting these sources of power in partnership with a unified opposition may be the best way to loosen a tyrant's grip on power and ultimately convince him that "he's finished." PRISM

Notes

¹ "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense," January 2012, available at <http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf>.

² The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review called for forces to wage "two nearly simultaneous conventional campaigns" and to be prepared in one "to remove a hostile regime, destroy its military capacity and set conditions for the transition to, or for the restoration of, civil society." See "Quadrennial Defense Review," (February 6, 2006), 38.

³ A version of this section, together with lessons learned, was included in: Gregory L. Schulte, "Overthrowing Milosevic: Lessons for Syria?" (August 15, 2012), available at: <<http://www.the-american-interest.com/article.cfm?piece=1307>>.

⁴ In 2000, following the breakup of Yugoslavia and NATO's intervention in Bosnia then Kosovo, the Federal Republic consisted of Serbia (Milosevic's center of power) and an increasingly autonomous Montenegro (now independent). Kosovo (also now independent) was legally part of the Federal Republic, though formally autonomous and administered by the United Nations. While Milosevic was nominally President of the Federal Republic, his real authority was increasingly limited to Serbia.

⁵ President Clinton's remarks to the American Society of Newspaper Editors in San Francisco, April 15, 1999.

⁶ More about this plan is described in an earlier article by the author. See Gregory Schulte, "Deterring Attack: The Role of Information Operations," (Winter 2002-3), 84-89.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Kaily Brown



A team leader for a U.S. Special Operations Cultural Support Team, hands out utensils in the village of Oshay, Afghanistan.

Changing of the Guard: Civilian Protection for an Evolving Military

BY LARRY LEWIS AND SARAH HOLEWINSKI

Civilian casualties can risk the success of a combat mission. While not new, this is a lesson US defense forces have had to repeatedly relearn. Historically, civilian protection and efforts to address harm became priorities only when external pressures demanded attention. As the Pentagon reshapes its defenses and fighting force for the next decade, continuing this ad hoc pattern in the future is neither strategically smart nor ethically acceptable.

The budget submitted this year to Congress by Secretary of Defense Panetta charts a strategic shift toward smaller and more clandestine operations. Our forces will need to become leaner and more agile, able to take decisive action without the heavy footprint of recent wars. There are good political and economic reasons for this; certainly, maintaining a large military presence around the world is no longer feasible.

Yet, as America loses its military bulk, it cannot afford to lose its memory as well. General Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called upon the military to “learn the lessons from the past decade of operations.” One of those critical lessons is that strategic objectives and ethical leadership are undermined if civilian protection is not integrated into the military’s overall approach. A growing body of research, including that conducted by this article’s authors, shows that civilian casualties (CIVCAS) and the mishandling of the aftermath can compel more people to work against U.S. interests. Indeed, America’s image has suffered for years under the weight of anger and dismay that a nation, which stands by the value of civilian protection in wartime, seemed indifferent to civilian suffering.

Over time, U.S. commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan began to understand this calculus and took action. They began publicly expressing regret for civilian losses and offering amends for civilian deaths, injuries, and property damage, first in Iraq and then in Afghanistan. Military leadership

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realized that they could lower their civilian casualty rates if they recorded casualty statistics as a basis for learning, so they created a tracking cell in Afghanistan to do just that. Pre-deployment training back home began to include seminars on the civilian as the “center of gravity” and consequence management protocols, on top of the basic Laws of Armed Conflict. U.S. commanders made themselves accessible to civil society and, instead of immediately denying incidents of civilian harm, told the media they would investigate and recognize any civilian loss.

These practices are marked progress in mitigating both civilian harm and its impact on the mission, and rise above the conduct of most warring parties in the world, helping to reestablish U.S. ethical authority in wartime. Yet not one of the practices above has been made into standing U.S. policy, despite how important they have proved to our combat strategy and ethos.

As Washington shifts its focus from counterinsurgency to counterterrorism, and from large-scale ground operations to more discrete and oftentimes-unmanned operations, the progress U.S. forces have made on preventing and mitigating civilian harm may soon be lost. Below, we analyze three of the Obama administration’s new military priorities that have real implications for U.S. efforts to avoid civilian harm in future wars: increased reliance on special operations forces (SOF), new technologies including unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), and partnering with foreign allies to conduct combat operations. Applying hard-won lessons of civilian protection and harm response are critical to all three.

Special Operations Forces Out Front

The “smaller and leaner” fighting force of the future will emphasize special operations. SOF personnel are trained to be the best and most discriminate shooters in the world, due to the

requirement to engage hostage-takers and terrorists in the midst of hostages or other civilians. However, some SOF actions in combat theaters can carry significant risk of civilian casualties. For example, network-based targeting of enemy networks in Iraq and Afghanistan, where SOF infiltrate villages nightly to capture or kill combatants hiding within the population, puts them in frequent and direct contact with civilians. Illustrating this, SOF in Afghanistan caused a significant number of the overall civilian casualties between 2007-2009, though they were only a small part of the total force. Battlespace owners and Provincial Reconstruction Team commanders complained about the negative effects of SOF-caused civilian casualties and uncoordinated actions in their areas of operation during this time period.

Adding insult to injury, in the case of clandestine special operations, civilians may have little recourse when harm is caused; the people who caused their losses are nowhere to be found. During operations where conventional military forces are in the same battlespace as SOF and maintain a practice of meeting with community and offering monetary payments to the family for its losses, the required close coordination of SOF and conventional forces does not always occur. As many examples of SOF-caused civilian casualties in Afghanistan show—such as incidents in Shinwar in March 2007, in Azizabad in August 2008, and in Bala Balouk in May 2009—ignoring civilian harm can exacerbate the negative second-order effects of casualties at both tactical and strategic levels, turning the local population away from U.S. and coalition interests. Ironically, it can also lead to increased pressure to restrict the use of force and thus limit overall freedom of action.

At the same time, the high level of professionalism and rapid adaptability of SOF make them uniquely suited to understand the mission risk associated with civilian casualties and

to figure out ways to better avoid causing civilian harm in new, complex environments. As one positive example, in early 2009 SOF in Afghanistan adopted specific tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP) that better protected civilians during their operations. Under this new approach, US SOF greatly reduced their rate of civilian casualties while being more effective in carrying out their mission. That shift in priorities and flexibility is a model for the rest of the force. The lessons learned from this evolving approach should be sustained beyond Afghanistan and applied to the broad range of SOF operations over the next decade and beyond.

Highlighting and institutionalizing lessons like these is even more important as SOF are increasingly both the pointy tip of the spear and also the hand guiding that spear, with growing influence over military strategy and execution. Civilian protection and harm mitigation must become an accepted and expected component in all aspects of SOF training, education, and future procurement.

Specifically, training for SOF should include a focus on minimizing civilian harm through the use of detailed intelligence, incorporation of trained indigenous forces with local knowledge when feasible, and detailed information on how to discriminate between irregular forces and non-combatants. SOF should also include TTP such as cordon operations to isolate target areas, discreet use of precision fire support, and discriminate use of force in and around objectives. Finally, training scenarios should include elevation of civilian casualties as go/no-go criteria for most missions along with empowerment of junior SOF leaders to abort missions if pre-determined CIVCAS conditions are unacceptable.

Lessons for mitigating civilian harm should also be incorporated in SOF doctrine and professional military education. This should include

recent SOF best practices and lessons garnered from missteps in Afghanistan. The Army recently published a handbook on civilian harm reduction and mitigation—Afghanistan Civilian Casualty Prevention (No. 12-16)—that could serve as a template starting point for SOF doctrine with some adjustments to better account for SOF missions and the specific focus areas mentioned above.

SOF tend to have more resources than conventional forces for accelerated fielding of technology, which gives them a technical edge in their high-risk, critical missions. That edge should be used to ensure targets are identified accurately and with full consideration of collateral effects; both efforts can reduce civilian harm and make engagements with an irregular enemy more effective, particularly in wars of propaganda where garnering local support is vital. Additional technologies to aid in the discrimination of individuals or battle damage assessment would better enable SOF to avoid civilian harm and respond appropriately when it occurs. Technology developed for SOF—like Predator UAS and advanced intelligence capabilities—has already spread to conventional forces over time and, in a trickle-down effect, will continue to benefit the larger defense force overall if used in ways that minimize civilian suffering.

Reliance on Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)

America's use of force will increasingly rely on new technologies, including air force capabilities to penetrate enemy defenses and strike over long distances. Unmanned Aerial Systems, sometimes referred to as "drones," saw major use in Iraq and Afghanistan, and are slated for a big leap in funding. The Pentagon called for a nearly one-third increase in its fleet in the years ahead.

The use of UAS can have military advantages for avoiding civilian casualties in armed conflict,

if used with that intent in mind. Their systems feature precision weapons, their sensors have increasingly high-resolution imagery to assess the ground situation, and back in the control room, trained imagery analysts scrutinize a target area prior to engaging, which isn't always possible in a full ground operation.

Such airstrikes appear to have been successful in targeting some senior leaders of enemy networks. For example, in Pakistan UAS strikes reportedly eliminated Abu Yahya, the number two leader of Al-Qaeda, as well as several successive leaders of the militant group Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). But there are also good reasons to question the surgical nature and overall efficacy of these airstrikes outside of traditional combat theaters. Members of the British Parliament recently wrote to the editor of a national newspaper in the UK expressing concern that UAS strikes in Pakistan lead to many unaccounted-for civilian casualties, increase radicalization of the local population, and undermine the sovereignty of Pakistan.¹ Human rights organizations argue that the short-term benefits of UAS strikes may be outweighed by the negative impact of creating a war zone environment in local communities with no visible military presence.

The assumption that UAS strikes are surgical in nature is also belied by research on recent combat operations in Afghanistan. There, UAS operations were statistically more likely to cause civilian casualties than were operations conducted by manned air platforms. One reason was limited training for UAS operators and analysts in how to minimize civilian harm. Adding or improving training on civilian casualty prevention is a resource decision in direct tension with the increasing demand for more UAS and more operations, since additional training on civilian protection means time must be taken from somewhere else including the mission itself. Still, such

an investment in improved training is a critical one, given recent lessons on the strategic impact of civilian casualties.

Clandestine use of UAS by the U.S. government raises significant concerns that civilian casualties will not be properly monitored or investigated, and thus calls into question U.S. accountability for the use of force. Identifying civilian casualties caused by air platforms in particular remains a major challenge no matter the improving resolution or ability to analyze video feeds. Afghanistan assessments are replete with examples of airstrikes followed by a battle damage assessment (BDA) concluding that there were no civilian casualties, and then evidence became available indicating the contrary. This situation had two negative ramifications: first, the U.S. was late in performing consequence management in response to real civilian casualties, thus limiting the effectiveness of any apologies or amends offered for losses and the ability to learn from the incident; and second, American credibility was compromised as it first stated emphatically that there were no civilian casualties until evidence proved otherwise.

This situation can easily describe UAS strikes in clandestine operating theaters, such as Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia as well, and is compounded by the additional challenge of U.S. forces not being present on the scene. While the U.S. has repeatedly stressed how UAS strikes in Pakistan cause very few civilian deaths, this position runs counter to independent investigations. Below are three examples of strikes in Pakistan in which third parties claimed CIVCAS occurred during a time frame when the U.S. stated there was no credible evidence of a single civilian death:

- March 11, 2011: During a strike on a vehicle, a follow-up strike was reported to have killed rescuers that moved onto the scene.

Several reports stated there were civilian casualties, ranging from two to five individuals.

- March 17, 2011: During a strike of a suspected militant compound, Pakistani authorities and news reports stated that the gathering was a jirga (a tribal assembly of elders) intended to settle a dispute at a nearby chromite mine. Reported civilian casualties ranged from thirteen to forty-four. Despite U.S. denials of civilian harm, the government of Pakistan recognized and provided compensation to the families of thirty-nine individuals killed during that strike.

- May 6, 2011: During a strike on a vehicle, multiple organizations reported that six civilians were killed at a nearby religious school (possibly a militant compound) and a restaurant. The U.S. claimed that all casualties were combatant.²

Independent investigations are not always correct in their assessment of civilian deaths; however, the inability of the U.S. to adequately investigate the outcome of its clandestine UAS strikes calls into question official denials of civilian harm. The U.S. has stated that these strikes kill only combatants; however, operations in Afghanistan are replete with examples where all the engaged individuals were believed to be combatants, but a later investigation found many or all were civilians misidentified as combatants.

Even if the U.S. has credible evidence that all the individuals killed in strikes outside Afghanistan were combatants, it has thus far refused to share it to counter potentially false accusations. This, despite the lesson learned in Iraq and Afghanistan that some transparency with the media and allied governments could build credibility and trust, while informing a population wary of U.S. operations. For example, in Operation Unified Protector in Libya, NATO's

continued insistence of having caused zero civilian casualties detracted from the credibility of the overall campaign, even though the air campaign was unprecedented in its discrimination and restraint with respect to civilian casualties.

Incidents of potential civilian harm caused by airstrikes in Afghanistan, including UAS strikes, show that initial U.S. estimates tend to be too low and independent assessments tend to be too high, with the ground truth often found somewhere in-between. Commanders in Afghanistan learned the value—often, though not always—of collaborating with independent organizations that investigate civilian harm, engaging in open dialogue, to get at the truth of the incident.

This practice is not being employed in Pakistan, Yemen, or Somalia, signaling that these lessons from Afghanistan have not been learned. It appears that the use of UAS strikes as a new U.S. counterterrorism strategy is foregoing the prioritization of transparency, accountability, and responding to potential civilian harm caused by combat operations. Insurgents, local armed groups, and terrorists have all become adept at getting to the media fast with their own version of the truth, which is easy for local populations to believe in the absence of any U.S. evidence offered to the contrary. U.S. officials will have to be prepared to contend with more and more accusations of civilian harm—whether they are true or false.

Already criticism over U.S. clandestine UAS operations is putting the Administration on the defensive and growing louder as local populations, particularly in Pakistan, join in protesting the use of UAS. As the U.S. expands its UAS fleet and uses these assets in declared and non-declared theaters of armed conflict, U.S. defense leaders should be willing to objectively examine common assumptions regarding UAS strikes and civilian harm. The US government should undertake a review of the potentially negative impact of



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Matthew Troyer

Navy Lt. Jessica Kazer, provides continuous medical care to two Afghan civilians while awaiting a casualty evacuation.

UAS strikes, both in counterterrorism efforts and with regard to civilian harm. The military portion of the review (there should also be a political cost-benefit analysis) would assess known or projected civilian casualty levels caused by UAS in current clandestine operations and identify lessons and best practices in other operations (e.g., Afghanistan) that could be transferrable. This needn't mean reinventing the wheel. After all, reviews like this are done constantly on other issues of military efficacy. But a key element of U.S. foreign policy such as UAS operations should be informed by available facts and lessons.

Partnering with Local Forces Towards Mutual Goals

Partnering with other nations to conduct combat operations offers many benefits—among them, an alternative to sustaining a large U.S. footprint on the ground and bolstering other nations so they can provide their own security

and counter threats. For decades, U.S. forces have provided technical training, experience, and an overall model of war-fighting for partner nation forces to emulate. A good case in point is the capacity-building approach the U.S. is currently undertaking with Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). When the ANSF can handle its own security and stability operations, the U.S. can reduce its investment in sustaining a large number of troops while, the plan says, providing a more sustainable, long-term solution for Afghanistan.

Host-nation forces have some advantages over their U.S. counterparts in reducing civilian harm thanks to their language and cultural fluency. Discriminating between combatants and civilians in indigenous situations is a big challenge for U.S. forces, but local forces are able to better discern actual hostile intent from behavior that is locally normative. In Afghanistan, operations where international forces partnered with

Afghan forces tended to cause fewer civilian casualties than those conducted independently.

The Philippines offers a positive example of the U.S. partnering with a host-nation. Over the past decade, U.S. forces focused on training and an “advise and assist” role to promote effectiveness of Philippine security forces against terrorist elements in the southern Philippines. While mitigating civilian harm during operations was not an explicit goal of this training, the U.S. ethos was transferred to Philippine forces during close partnering efforts. One Philippine General commented that US Special Forces “...taught us to take care of the people,” laying the groundwork for Philippine security forces to adopt an approach that minimized civilian harm as they pursued terrorist elements. This population-centric approach led to increased cooperation from the population, including valuable intelligence, which contributed to the Philippines’ longer-term and sustainable success in countering terror threats.

While the Philippines offers a positive example of the U.S. partnering with a host-nation, examples abound where partnering efforts have not been as productive. The risk, and often reality, is that local forces will cause civilian harm, thus risking the success of the mission and, in turn, the image of U.S. interventions.

There are two factors that can lead to increased civilian harm in partnered operations. The first is a matter of timing. The U.S. doesn’t always have control over how quickly an operation will move forward with local national forces, which can often translate into poor training for those forces and little to no training on civilian harm mitigation during crunch-time. The second factor is that civilian harm—and its ramifications—often aren’t prioritized in the transactions between the U.S. and local national forces, including in the agreement to conduct joint operations, in commanders’ guidance,

accountability processes (or lack thereof) or in the aforementioned training. For example, the U.S. typically does not track instances of civilian harm caused by the partner nation. This means that any negative ramifications caused by local forces cannot be immediately accounted for or corrected. The U.S. has also overlooked specific instruction to host-nation forces concerning civilian harm, beyond the basic requirements of the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC). LOAC education is critical, but it does not instill such important practices as how to track civilian harm, how to analyze it for lessons learned, how to conduct proper investigations and what to do with the information, or how to respond to an angry public suffering losses. Moreover, the US regularly provides training and instruction only on LOAC as the fundamental framework for operations even when the host-nation security forces should or will be applying more restrictive domestic law as the basis of its operations.

this population-centric approach led to increased cooperation from the population, including valuable intelligence

Given the strategic costs of not instilling civilian protection and harm response lessons into military partnerships, it is a wonder this remains an overlooked issue. When local forces don’t have a civilian protection mindset or ignore losses the population incurs from their conduct, the U.S. suffers equally, if not more, from the public anger and mistrust of the mission. Aside from incidental civilian harm that can occur during an operation, human rights violations by local national forces can trigger legislative restrictions on U.S. programs and bring ongoing partnering efforts to a grinding halt, potentially harming strategic partnerships and

killing the momentum of efforts at the tactical level. To protect the legitimacy of U.S. efforts and promote effectiveness, partnering efforts between the U.S. and local forces should prioritize strategies and tactics to mitigate civilian harm during an operation.

Conclusions

Reducing civilian harm and properly responding to civilian losses in armed conflict is a win-win for America's shifting strategy. What's more, these objectives are entirely possible with leadership, attention, and focus from U.S. government officials.

The Defense Department is rightly concerned about funding, and is thus becoming increasingly resistant to investing in anything beyond what is seen as necessary for America's security. The good news is that measures to integrate civilian protection into the heart and soul of America's military operations—and, importantly, the new security strategy—are as inexpensive as they are critical. Many simply entail putting someone at the Department of Defense in charge of this issue, giving the troops proper training on civilian protection, and establishing policies for responding to harm when it happens—all efforts that can provide a big gain at minimal cost.

Specific attention should be focused on SOE, UAS operations, and operations that use partnered forces. SOF have in some circumstances had a larger propensity to cause civilian harm, but can also better adapt to complicated environments, making them potentially even better at reducing unintended casualties. SOF need training that emphasizes how and why minimizing civilian harm is a strategic imperative. Planned operations should take into account the need to respond to civilian harm when it happens.

Unmanned Aerial Systems are becoming synonymous with U.S. counterterrorism strategy, but

they may not be as surgical an instrument as they have been claimed to be with regard to civilian harm. When used in clandestine scenarios, where there are few boots on the ground, the challenges to civilian protection and harm response are compounded, particularly as thorough investigations and any amends for losses are nearly impossible. Some Pakistani, Yemeni and Somali communities are directing anger toward the U.S., which may be crippling counterterrorism efforts in the longer term. Before fully committing to increased UAS use, the U.S. Government should conduct a thorough examination of the potential and actual negative ramifications of UAS use, specifically analyzing the impact on local civilian populations.

Partnerships with local national forces should be carefully crafted to ensure civilian harm reduction and mitigation is a top priority, including in training, equipping, joint guidance or rules of engagement, and response when civilian harm is caused. These commitments should be noted at the outset of any partnership.

As part of an overarching solution, the Pentagon has an important role to play in ensuring the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan, and other previous and current operations, do not need to be relearned in the future, to the detriment of U.S. goals and interests. There remains no single person, team, or office within the Department of Defense focused solely on civilian protection and harm response. For such an important strategic issue, it is startling to realize that there remains this vacuum in coordinated understanding and action. This vacuum has repeatedly led to missteps and Band-Aid-like corrective action.

For example, in the early days of the Iraq War, while the U.S. Air Force avoided use of cluster munitions in populated areas, the U.S. Army deployed to Iraq with only one effective counter-battery artillery piece, an MLRS system that fired cluster munitions and caused significant civilian

casualties. Throughout the early days of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the military did not keep formal data on civilian casualties caused by its own operations until 2008, when a tracking cell was created by ISAF in Afghanistan. For years into the Iraq War, many troops didn't have the necessary gear to safely administer checkpoints. As a result, these troops could not adequately warn approaching drivers to stop, and often had limited recourse to stop them if they did not respond to those warnings. This deficiency, is illustrated in the shooting of the rescue car of the Italian reporter Giuliana Sgrena: when the speeding car, rushing to the airport after recovering the reporter who had been in captivity for a month, approached a U.S. check point, the car failed to heed warnings to stop and as a result gunfire was used to stop the car. The shooting wounded the rescued reporter and killed an Italian intelligence agent also in the car. Similar incidents with Iraqi citizens resulted in thousands of civilian casualties; the same deficiency was seen with checkpoints in Afghanistan.

The Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis (JCOA) Division of the Joint Staff J7 has conducted multiple in-depth studies of civilian casualties in Afghanistan, but these studies have primarily informed ISAF and pre-deployment training for forces going to Afghanistan. The lessons have not been made required reading for the next generation of military commanders headed to the next conflict. Similarly, training, doctrine, materiel solutions, and policies have not taken these lessons into account for the next conflict. Although training at some bases now incorporates civilian protection principles, this is an ad hoc effort that depends largely on the personality of the commander and not on a standard policy priority. And while it is true that commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan have been able to offer amends via monetary payments to some civilians suffering losses, this is not a standing policy and will need

to be recreated for the next conflict, if the strategic importance of the practice is remembered at all.

To avoid re-learning these lessons in the future, an arduous process detrimental of the mission and our troops, the issue of civilian casualties requires an institutional proponent: a focal point at the Pentagon to advocate progress and coordinate civilian protection best practices and policies across silos, sectors, offices, and branches. Specifically, that focal point would study the lessons of past and current engagements and encourage development and deployment of new weapons and tactics designed to diminish civilian harm once the fighting starts; ensure proper civilian damage estimates are conducted in targeting and combat damage assessments are made after kinetic operations so that tactics can continue to improve; maintain proper investigative and statistical data on civilian casualties; and ensure efficient compensation procedures are in place for unintentional civilian harm—along with whatever new challenges arise regarding civilian harm mitigation in future conflicts.

America's new military must, by design, include a focus on civilians. None of these recommendations is a silver bullet to successfully operate overseas while also minimizing civilian harm, but leadership from top policymakers to inculcate all we've learned over ten years is critical. It would be a shame—and strategically detrimental—to waste such hard-won lessons. **PRISM**

Notes

¹ "Drone Attacks Lead to Terrorism" *Letter to the Editor, The Times, July 26, 2012*, accessed at < <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/letters/article3486743.ece>>.

² "The Civilian Impact of Drones: Unexamined Costs, Unanswered Questions," *Center for Civilians in Conflict*, September 29, 2012, available at <http://civiliansinconflict.org/resources/pub/the-civilian-impact-of-drones>.

Staff Sgt. Edward Braly, USAF



Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) teach mounted infantry tactics to soldiers from the Malian Army in Timbuktu, Mali, as part of the Pan Sahel Initiative.

Building the Capabilities and Capacity of Partners: Is This Defense Business?

BY JAMES Q. ROBERTS

The new defense strategy, “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense,” released in January of this 2012, makes clear the mandate for the Department of Defense to continue, in fact to increase significantly, its abilities to improve the capabilities of partners around the globe. In his cover letter to the guidance, President Barack Obama directs us to “join with allies and partners around the world to build their capacity to promote security, prosperity, and human dignity.” Likewise, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, in his preface, stresses that the department will focus on “strengthening alliances and partnerships across all regions.”

This is not traditional guidance for the Department of Defense. Such guidance usually focuses on how to fight and win the nation’s wars. But after more than ten years of combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and in these times of impending steep fiscal reductions the utility of partners who can share the burden of defending their countries individually, and their regions collectively, has come to the fore. This guidance displays the degree to which the department in general, and the Geographic Combatant Commanders in particular, have come to recognize the value in helping partners improve their capability to govern their own territories.

These efforts to help partners defend themselves, and by extension defend us, are gaining greater acceptance across the defense department, within the Executive Branch, and within the Congress. They are evolving from being considered a collateral duty, or a “nice to do if you have the time” – to becoming a principal component of our Phase Zero military activities. During Phase Zero the department conducts military operations and activities designed to shape the strategic environment, build local solutions to security challenges, and decrease the chances of our having to deploy major force packages later on in the crisis. The strategy parallels the well-proven household adage “a stitch in time, saves nine.”

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Partner capability building is not cheap. But, when contrasted to the costs of deploying U.S. forces for combat operations costs pale by comparison. By way of example, DoD has spent approximately \$2 billion during the six years that Section 1206 resources have been available for equipping and training partners. For the surge in Afghanistan we spent \$30 billion to deploy 30,000 troops for 18 months – or \$1 million per man. Preparing others today to be able to govern and defend their territory may result in our not having to deploy major conventional formations to confront instability or associated threats tomorrow. This approach holds the promise of being far less expensive in both U.S. blood and treasure.

Additionally, the new defense strategy recognizes the continued threat that al-Qaeda (AQ) terrorists and other non-state actor threats represent, and the importance of capable partners in those fights. “For the foreseeable future, the United States will continue to take an active approach to countering these threats by monitoring the activities of non-state threats worldwide, working with allies and partners to establish control over ungoverned territories, and directly striking the most dangerous groups and individuals when necessary.”

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The key goal of this approach is to deny the use of ungoverned spaces to the terrorists and other illegitimate non-state actor networks by enabling the host nation government to expand the footprint of its governance to match the footprint of its sovereignty. If the global footprint of governance could match the footprint of sovereignty there would be no ungoverned territories.

Malign non-state actors could only bed down with the compliance of the hosting government, thereby shifting solutions back to a more traditional foreign policy calculus between states. The strategic objective is to close as many ungoverned spaces as possible – squeezing the malign networks into fewer and ideally less hospitable safe havens.

Recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan make clear that the preferred solution is for partner forces to conduct the lethal component of operations, whenever possible. When the partner takes the shot, he is displaying his sovereignty to his own population and to the enemy. He is seen as governing. When he relies on us to do so, on his behalf, he forfeits his political legitimacy, and permits the enemy to brand him as little more than a puppet of the United States. He is judged incompetent and incapable – easily described by his enemies as unworthy of leading, his claims of legitimacy undercut by his reliance on the U.S. to kill his fellow citizens.

We are recognizing the utility of developing partners who we can equip, train, and enable with a small, tailored U.S. force package. However, once such forces have been built we have also learned that their capabilities tend to atrophy unless the effort can be sustained. In most instances we rely on U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) to conduct these training, equipping and advisory missions. However, we are also discovering that SOF, and the Department of Defense, lack many of the requisite authorities for well-structured capacity building and for providing the necessary strategic enablers to make these advise and assist missions what they could and should be. Although some would argue that the Department of State’s Foreign Military Financing (FMF) authority could meet these requirements, even that program does not include all the necessary tools and flexibility required.

In this post-Cold War era, in which non-state actor threats can attack our homeland from the distant valleys of the Hindu Kush, the building of partner capacity is no longer just a foreign policy nicety. It is becoming an integral component of national defense. Although operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan have severely degraded the AQ core, regional AQ affiliates have grown in scope and capability, taking advantage of ungoverned spaces and weak governments.

Regrettably, the authorities for this capacity building work are lagging behind the requirements. It is time that the Department of Defense and the Geographic Combatant Commanders obtain the requisite tools in their own kit bags. This year the Department of Defense, in close cooperation with the Department of State, requested and obtained from the Congress a new “pooled fund” authority known as the Global Security Contingency Fund.

Advertised as being able to meet current and emerging partner capacity building needs, the fund lacks much of what this article argues is needed. It is top down driven by the Department of State, does not envision long term small scale engagement with partners (it is a 3-year authority now), and lacks many of the key requirements such as minor military construction authority, logistics and service support, and other tools to provide support for the partner. Most importantly, although up to 80% of the funds in the pool will come from DoD; the Combatant Commanders will have little voice in where and when it will be applied.

Therefore, I argue that Combatant Commanders should no longer have to depend on Department of State authorities and resources to serve as the vehicle through which they try to accomplish this emerging core defense task. Nor should we force them to cobble together programs by demanding that they understand

and leverage the two-dozen authorities that could be employed in this mission area. Even when expertly managed, this patchwork of authorities provides incomplete solutions and results in less than optimal, and in some cases dysfunctional, capacity building programs.

authorities for this capacity building work are lagging behind the requirements

This article will describe a more deliberate and complete capacity building model, one that would permit the U.S. military to work hand in glove with partners to develop, deploy, employ, and sustain their capabilities for the years to come. Let’s start with some core considerations.

First, these programs must be multi-year. In fact, some may need to span a decade, or more. The length of the program is directly linked to the nature of the threat, the expanse of the un- (or under-) governed spaces, and most importantly, the ability of the partner to absorb the training, equipment (and its maintenance), the enablers, and the concepts governing the execution this type of network centric warfare against a mobile and morphing non-state actor enterprise. The partner must also demonstrate the political will and skill to unite or reunite his populations.

The desired end state is to build an enduring partner capability, one that he can sustain over time, with only periodic help from us. Understanding his ability to absorb, and tailoring projects to that absorption ability over time, is our current greatest shortfall. None of our current authorities are steady and long term enough to meet this need. Finally, the partner must know that we are serious in this relationship. The program cannot be subject to stops or delays, just because a senior from the State Department needs a “deliverable” for some other

nation, half way around the globe, because we must zero-base our FMF programs each year, or because the Congress can not seem to pass an appropriations bill on time.

assistance must combine defense education, defense institutional reform, personal and governmental accountability, human rights, and counter-corruption lessons

Partnership is all about building a relationship. Relationships require patience, a steady hand, and predictability, from both parties. Security assistance programs that are zero-based each year may seem more efficient from a management perspective. However, telling your partner that you loved them last year, but they did not make the grade for this year's programs is no way to build his confidence, or to indicate that you have their best interests at heart.

Second, strategic patience will be required. Some partners may progress quickly, others much more slowly. Our assistance must combine defense education, defense institutional reform, personal and governmental accountability, human rights, and counter-corruption lessons as well as the training of the tactical forces and the headquarters staffs to manage them. We should provide equipment, maintenance, spare parts, minor associated construction, and training for each of these to ensure the partner can achieve some degree of autonomy. We need an authority to provide a variety of key enablers as well – transportation, services, supplies, intelligence, and the like.

The goal is to leave behind a security sector capability for governance – legitimate governance – that can reach to the far corners of the partner's territory, and can develop and maintain the support of the recipient nation's population. In

standard counterinsurgency terms, these forces must be able to isolate the insurgents (or other malign actors) from the population, by gaining that population's allegiance and support.

Third, each program will be unique – a "one-size fits all" approach will ensure failure. The U.S. forces conducting the programs will need language, regional and cultural skills. They will require political acumen, along with technical and tactical prowess. We are talking about sustained engagement, tailored specifically to the needs and capabilities of each partner. Careful and frequent assessments will be necessary to continually adapt the program, sometimes going over old ground again, because it did not sink in the first time. At other times the team may need to jump forward, or directly provide key enablers, based on tactical conditions or enemy threats or vulnerabilities.

Fourth, regional approaches involving multiple partners may be required. The enemy non-state actor network moves across borders with impunity. To close the empty spaces may require the cooperation of several regional states. They may be disinclined to do so, particularly at the beginning. Success likely will require long-term engagement with each partner independently, and may necessitate the building of a regional structure where none exists. If a regional institution is not feasible then a degree of trust and a pattern of limited cooperation may be all that can be achieved.

Fifth, political will varies greatly between partners, and will ebb and flow within partner national political structures. Only a long term sustained commitment will attenuate the fluctuations and periodic lack of political will. Turning away from the weak-kneed partner only further weakens him, and cedes space to the enemy. We must do our best to set aside frustrations when partners do not behave as we would, or as we

would like them to. Patience and sustained but subdued political pressure are the best approach.

Sixth, we must recognize that good enough is indeed good enough. Our usual approach is to remake the partner in our image – “to be like Mike.” But in reality most partners do not want to, and usually cannot, measure up to our expectations. Nevertheless, in most instances some rudimentary partner capabilities, applied consistently over a long period of time can degrade the threats adequately to keep them localized and incapable of strategic reach. That is good enough for our purposes. Low technology solutions that the partner can sustain (with just a little help) pay much better dividends than high tech systems that cannot be maintained or absorbed.

The next portion of this paper will describe a cycle for the development of partner capability and capacity. Capability is the “what” and capacity is the “how much” of what we are trying to build. This cycle is will require tailoring for each partner – and may require repetition of several, or even many, of its phases. Each phase requires an attendant authority. The focus must be on building relationships between trainers and trainees, while avoiding arrogance and hubris – not easy tasks even for seasoned special operators.

Phase One: Assessment of the Partner Nation’s Forces

This is perhaps the most critical step in the process, for it will determine the pace and content for all of the follow-on activities. During the assessment the Security Force Assistance (SFA) team must judge both what is needed and (most importantly) at what pace the partner can absorb the training, equipment, education, doctrine, and institutional development assistance. The assessment phase will likely require several weeks of concerted effort by a knowledgeable and skilled team with regional, cultural, technical

and language skills. During this phase many partners will inflate their current capabilities, in an effort to avoid embarrassment, and to appear better than they are. Their national leadership will likely focus on the high visibility, high price toys they use as the gauge of their relationship with the United States. “We want F-16’s, because you gave them to our neighbor to the East last year.”

Overcoming these hurdles is not easy, but F-16’s are not of much use against an indirect enemy who is living among the population and mobilizing them to combat the host nation forces and institutions using terrorist and insurgent tactics. Getting buy-in on the nature of the threat and the causes of current instabilities is part of this early phase.

“we want F-16’s, because you gave them to our neighbor to the East last year”

The assessment team must be able to see through these ruses, yet do so without calling the partner’s bluff. At the same time, the team should be evaluating the operational environment, including the weather, terrain, and the society as a whole, and the nature of the enemy or enemies. There are other intangibles that must be collected as well. What is the literacy rate of the population? What is it for officers, non-commissioned officers, and troops of the partner nation forces? What levels of mechanical or technical expertise are the norm? What are the ethnic, tribal, or religious distinctions in the armed forces? In the government? In the society? What is the current public perception of the partner forces? Thugs? Corrupt kleptocrats? A tribe apart? Brutal suppressors of the slightest opposition? All (or none) of the above? Determining which host nation units and organizations are our best bets for partnering is a core requirement of this phase.



DoD photo by Pfc. Brian Chaney, U.S. Army (released)

A U.S. Army soldier assigned to Charlie Company, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division walks with Iraqi soldiers during a road march as part of a training exercise at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, on May 4, 2011.

Phase Two: Basic Training, Equipping, and Educational Engagement

Although our lexicon talks of equipping and training, it is my opinion that we would be better served to start with training, then proceed to equipping. Conducting combined training would permit the team to continue assessing the partner force, round out their views of capabilities and absorption rates, and most importantly create demand for the new equipment. If the partner understands the training concepts, integrating the equipment into the concept is far simpler.

Delivering even minor quantities of equipment in advance of the associated training usually results in neglect of the equipment at best. Worse is immediate graft and corruption by unscrupulous partners who sell end items or

associated spares, tools, etc., for personal gain, or who are directed by their officers or political leaders to do so. Having gear sit in warehouses or parking lots while waiting for the trainers to arrive is dysfunctional and undermines our credibility – from the outset.

The types, technical sophistication, and quantities of equipment we provide must be tailored based on the above assessment results. For many partners, less sophisticated, more rugged, and less complex equipment is far more efficient than trying to outfit them with current models of U.S. gear. As a general matter, our equipment is too high tech and too dependent on fastidious maintenance, to be very useful in much of the Third World. For complex machinery like airplanes and helicopters, using systems with which

the partner is already familiar, is often the most effective way to build or improve a capability. Alternatively, providing them gear we used 20, 30, or even 50 years ago may also be an efficient way to proceed.

As we train units at the tactical level, we should engage in parallel with the partner headquarters and ministry levels. The goal is to ensure the ministry leaders and senior officers understand the intent of our capacity building efforts, and recognize what these forces can and cannot achieve. Ensuring the chain of command appreciates how to employ the new capabilities reduces chances for miscalculations, and may decrease the impulse to disband the units, just because the chain of command does not understand or trust what they have been up to.

Phase Three: Combined Training

Once the partner capability has been developed and can conduct rudimentary operations, we need to increase their understanding and confidence by conducting a series of combined training exercises that test capabilities at increasing levels of sophistication – at the squad, platoon, company, and where possible battalion levels. Advancing from one to the next of these levels of training will require more skill of the officer and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) corps, better planning, better communications and coordination, improved logistics, etc. Once the partner force has displayed skills in these scenarios, we can move on to the next phases.

Phases Four and Five – Advising and Assisting, Providing Strategic Enablers

These are not integral to traditional capacity building programs, but are absolutely essential if we are going to help a partner confront a current threat or instability in his territory or region. At the same time, they represent a shift

away from peacetime engagement and training, to enabling partner military operations. At this point the stakes go up for the partner forces and for the trainers, who now become combat advisors. Providing such advice is an inherently political decision that the President must make, even when the advisors are not intended to participate directly in partner led combat operations.

advising and assisting come naturally and are a normal outgrowth of the combined training they have been conducting with the partner force

It is for these reasons I argue that advising and assisting and providing strategic enablers should not be an integral component of a legislative capacity building authority, although that authority should recognize that these follow-on tasks might be required. Instead, for partners who are under direct pressure from malign actors, the Geographic Combatant Commanders should request authorities to conduct advise and assist missions, or the Secretary of Defense can provide such authorities in advance through the publication of Execute Orders.

Phase Four: Advise and Assist

For the operator, advising and assisting come naturally and are a normal outgrowth of the combined training they have been conducting with the partner force. In many ways combat is what the training has been all about, so from an operator's viewpoint, this is when the fun begins – it is what they came to do.

But for the policymaker such a transition is not to be taken lightly. All of a sudden activities which were in the benign realm of helping a partner improve his capabilities have shifted to hunting bad guys down, and killing them. Additionally, U.S. forces, who formerly were just

part of the training landscape are now on the edge of combat, perhaps in the middle of it. For Washington it is all about risk. So Washington will place appropriate constraints on forces doing the advising and assisting – from the size and types of weapons and equipment they deploy with, to how far forward they may go with their partners. Depending on the environment other constraints can come into play as well. Each advise and assist mission will be subject to a variety of factors. No single model can be prescribed. Some may meet a War Powers notification threshold.

Phase Five: Provide Strategic Enablers

Once the parameters of the advise and assist rules have been developed there is a second set of U.S. resources that must be addressed. I refer to these as the strategic enablers – those capabilities that will serve as combat multipliers to the partner’s basic tactical capability. In this group are such things as intelligence and intelligence sharing, intelligence and operations fusion and coordination, long-range communications, close air support, and tactical and operational airlift. Some partners may not need the full menu, but if the partner does not have a key enabler – or it has not yet been adequately developed – the Combatant Commander needs to provide it.

providing such assets further commits U.S. policy in support of the partner, and comes with its own Washington-based political baggage

Other considerations may include weather and mapping support, medical evacuation and general medical support, employment of unmanned aerial systems, or other key capabilities. As with advising and assisting, these resources need to be tailored to the partner

nation, the threat, their willingness to permit basing, their capabilities, availability of U.S. assets, and other local and regional political military considerations.

Although providing such capabilities is generally not of high risk to the U.S. forces participating, the risk is not zero. Furthermore, providing such assets further commits U.S. policy in support of the partner, and comes with its own Washington-based political baggage. I can hear colleagues from the Hill asking me now, “What? You’ve given these guys all this training and support and they still can’t find Mr. X? Who is incompetent here, them or you?”

Phase Six: Assess Capabilities, Provide Booster Shots

Whether the partner is in combat or just preparing for it, we must improve our ability to assess how we, and they, are doing. Measuring outcomes in this business is not easy. Our system is designed to assess outputs – so we can quickly determine what gear and how much of it we have provided. There are endless annual reports to Executive Branch leaders and Congress on virtually all of these types of programs, describing what we provided to whom, when, and for how many dollars.

But the key question is not what did we give the partner? Instead the questions are: What did he do with it? Could he absorb it? Make it his own? Take care of it? If so, did his capability actually improve? If it did, why? What worked? What didn’t? How can we make it better? How can he? These are all key questions that repetitive and detailed assessments must address.

Part of this assessment process must be determining why and how quickly the partner capability degrades upon the cessation of U.S. support. Such an analysis would allow us to determine a sort of “mean time between failures”

rate for partner capabilities. Once armed with that data, we could design follow-on programs to address shortfalls. This follow-on capability should be integral to the basic train and equip authority mentioned above. The concept is similar to “booster shots” in the medical field.

Once the partner capability has been built, it will (with certainty) begin to atrophy, at various rates, and due to various causes. To think otherwise is naïve. The Geographic Combatant Commanders should have the authority and resources to design a program of revisits, with the intent of sustaining the capability, despite the partner’s inability to do so by themselves.

The revisit may take many forms; specialized training, key spare parts for weapons or support systems, revising tactics, adjusting enablers, replacing combat losses, adapting tactics to enemy changes, et cetera. But it must be tailored to the partner, and timely enough to preclude the capability degrading to the point of requiring a complete redo.

The Bottom Line – What’s In It for Us?

These assessments will help us know how the partner is doing. That is important, for all the reasons I have described. But the most important measurement is somewhat subjective, yet it goes to the core of why DoD should undertake these projects. The important question is what U.S. forces did not have to deploy, because the partner was able (enough) to address threats in his nation and region.

The key measure of effectiveness and of the return on our investment is not what we did for the partner, or what he did on his own. Our key judgment must be what we did not have to do, because he was able to do it for himself, and by extension, for us. These programs are all about reducing risks to U.S. forces, achieving economies of scale, and putting our partners to the front.

the important question is what U.S. forces did not have to deploy

This how they are fundamentally different than traditional security assistance programs, whose intent is to win friends, influence regional politics, and advance U.S. foreign policy. Those programs should continue to be the purview of the State Department. But if we are developing partners to do missions so U.S. forces do not have to, – that should be Defense business – run with Defense authorities. **PRISM**



Secretary of State Hillary Clinton providing remarks at the World Bank, with USAID's Deputy Administrator Don Steinberg and World Bank President Robert Zoellick looking on.

The Uneasy Relationship Between Economics and Security

BY ALEXANDER FERGUSON

The most publicly discussed link between economics and security is the relationship between economic performance and power. The underpinnings for this relationship come from the philosophical approach that sees political power stemming from economic power. Espoused at least since the 17th century by English Civil War philosopher James Harrington,¹ these ideas saw their most well known expression in the philosophy of Karl Marx, who saw economic change driving political change. If economic structures determined politics then the link with security is clear. Carl von Clausewitz's likened war to other areas of conflict within developed societies, such as commerce and politics: "It is a conflict of great interests which is settled by bloodshed, and only in that is it different from others."²

That economic performance can determine military power seems at first glance a given: the stronger the economy, the greater the military power; and the weaker the economy, the weaker the military power. Two examples from the last century illustrate the point: the U.S. defeat of Hitler's Germany and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

In the wishful thinking of Hermann Goering, Nazi Germany's Air Marshall and war economy czar, the United States was not much of a military threat as its economy in 1941 was capable of producing little more than refrigerators and razor blades. He estimated U.S. aircraft production at only one third of what it actually produced in the first year of war.³ Goering and Adolf Hitler over-estimated Germany's potential economic performance and under-estimated that of its opponents. The United States quickly ramped up production and became the so-called "arsenal of democracy", arming its allies while giving its own forces an overwhelming advantage in weaponry and supplies.

Ronald Reagan may have depicted an evil empire that threatened the world, but the Soviet Union was by the 1980s in deep economic trouble. Shackled by central planning, burdened by

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huge inefficiencies, suffering revenue declines as resource prices plumbed new depths, the Soviet economy was at most a third⁴ of the size of the U.S. economy and supported a bigger population in which life expectancy was declining and child mortality rising.⁵ As Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze noted, the Soviet Union could no longer afford the Cold War: “By remaining stuck in the old positions, we would never stop the arms race, which was bleeding our already anemic country.”⁶ The Soviet economy ailed at a time of big advances in computerization and industrial productivity that left the Communist world behind. This threatened Soviet military power because Western superiority manifested itself in the development of whole weapons systems that outclassed anything the Communist world could produce.

if countries are willing to ignore the welfare of their citizens, then they can pose major military threats despite poor economic performance

Some argue that an appreciation of the linkage between economic performance and power has long been fundamental for U.S. leaders. Alexander Hamilton, the first U.S. Treasury Secretary, urged President George Washington to “cherish credit as a means of strength and security.”⁷ It was this link that Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney raised in his third debate with President Barack Obama. “In order to be able to fulfill our role in the world, America must be strong,” Romney said. “America must lead, and for that to happen, we have to strengthen our economy here at home.”⁸ Romney noted that Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had described the U.S. debt burden as “the single

biggest threat” to U.S. security and that its enemies had noticed America’s economic problems. “How long can a government with a \$16 trillion foreign debt remain a world power?” Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad asked. “The Americans have injected their paper wealth into the world economy and today the aftermaths and negative effects of their pseudo-wealth have plagued them.”⁹

But the relationship between economics and security is not as obvious as these statements imply – and that is particularly true in today’s economic and security context. The greater complexity in the relationship between economics and security has occurred in recent years as power has become more diffuse. New powers have emerged since the end of the Cold War, with developing countries in recent years accounting for more than half of global economic growth. New security threats – terror networks and nuclear-armed rogue states – have emerged to replace the big power, state-on-state conflicts of the last century.

Economic strength may afford military strength, as the example above of World War Two shows, when industrial output can bring victory in a war of attrition between states. But military power is not totally dependent on economic success. The lack of economic power can be compensated for through the willingness to take casualties, especially against a foe who lacks the same willingness.

North Vietnam’s economy was reputedly so woefully developed that the United States air force had trouble finding enough targets to bomb. Supplied by Russian and Chinese allies and willing to suffer colossal casualties, North Vietnam fielded conventional forces to challenge U.S. and South Vietnamese troops as well as supplying an insurgency by the southern-based Viet Cong. The United States clearly had superior

economic and military power. But the North still prevailed in overcoming the South.

The relatively recent phenomena of second or third rate powers acquiring nuclear weapons and the risk of sharing them with terrorists has further changed the relationship between economic and military power. If countries are willing to ignore the welfare of their citizens, then they can pose major military threats despite poor economic performance. North Korea has an economy that has to import food to prevent starvation. Yet it threatens the world with a nuclear program. Iran's economy has buckled under the weight of sanctions. Yet it persists with a nuclear program and support of terrorism that poses a global threat. Pakistan was vanquished on the battlefield by India in the 1970s but now challenges South Asia's behemoth through its possession of nuclear arms and covert support for insurgents.

Military power can persist amid economic decline. The Soviet Union, despite its economic woes, remained a military threat right up until its 1991 break-up. Some argue that its demise shows how U.S. supremacy in the military and economic spheres forced the Soviet Union into a race it could not win. The arms race of the 1980s, argued U.S. Senator Richard Lugar, drove the Soviet Union "to the wall economically in an unsuccessful attempt to match the United States militarily."¹⁰ Rebutting this thesis, George Kennan said, "no great country has that sort of influence on the internal developments of any other one."¹¹ Others have pointed out that Soviet defense spending was already a huge burden on the economy and it did not increase in response to the Reagan arms build-up. Nor was defense spending a major factor in the Soviet economy's collapse.¹² It is therefore unclear whether the U.S. arms build-up was the deciding factor in the fall of the Soviet Union, with bungled reforms by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev

China may be the world's second largest economy and is predicted to overtake the United States within the foreseeable future to become the world's biggest economy

competing as a major cause for the Communist empire's unraveling.

Even if U.S. dominance in security and economics deterred the Soviet Union, it is no guarantee against asymmetric threats. These threats can come from actors that are militarily and economically insignificant. The 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington cost Al Qaeda between \$400,000-\$500,000 to execute,¹³ but they cost the U.S. economy trillions of dollars if one includes the Afghanistan and Iraq wars as part of the response.¹⁴ The economic and security superiority of the United States has enabled it to seriously degrade Al Qaeda, deploying drones and special operations to decapitate its leadership. But the threat remains a significant one. U.S. President Barack Obama's hosting of the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C., focused primarily on the security of nuclear material in an effort to counter the threat of nuclear terrorism.

Economic success does not bring lock-step dominance in security. China may be the world's second largest economy and is predicted to overtake the United States within the foreseeable future to become the world's biggest economy. But it is a long way from challenging the United States militarily. Germany and Japan are among the world's top five economies. For historical reasons, they have not pursued prominence in the security field even though they have economies that could support this ambition.

Germany and Japan have focused their global influence in the so-called "soft power" fields. These include trade, development, ideas,



Dod photo by Staff Sgt. Suzanne M. Jenkins, U.S. Air Force (released)

Staff Sgt. Samantha Yanez (center), of the 746th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, carries a package from a U.S. Central Air Force's C-130 as part of a humanitarian relief mission to Kerman, Iran, on December 28, 2003.

diplomacy, culture and institutions. If economic performance and power are assessed, then this is mostly in terms of hard power. But wars, and therefore the need for hard power, have been on a historic downtrend for decades and soft power was seen in the ascendant already at the end of the Cold War.¹⁵

U.S. economic problems are seen as taking a toll on a broader swathe of American influence than just security, including many spheres of so-called “soft power”. This is affecting the ability of the United States to project power in many dimensions. “The United States will lose its

identity on the global stage if it loses its economic dynamism,” said Former World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick. “Therefore, the United States must address the fundamentals of its economic strength – because that power touches every dimension of influence – from markets and innovation, to ideas and international politics, to military strength and security.”¹⁶

The increasing complexity of the relationship between economics and security means that issues of economics, finance, energy, trade, climate change, and security – to name but a few – are closely intertwined with implications for

domestic politics and international relations. Two examples from today's headlines illustrate the point: the Euro crisis and the reshaping of U.S. energy supplies.

The Euro crisis registered barely a mention in the U.S. election campaign even though it has huge implications for major U.S. allies. The architects of European integration had hoped that a currency union would lay the foundations for political union. Yet the currency union's strains are causing political and social tensions that threaten the whole edifice of European unity. European initiatives in the economic-security area have foundered amid the persistent crisis. The collapse in October 2012 of the BAE-EADS defense deal, which could have formed a European-wide arms group, is not just the failure of yet another corporate merger. The deal was being watched closely as a test of European resolve to remain an actor in global defense. There are fears that its failure will cause further tensions between France, Germany, and Britain.¹⁷

The prediction by the International Energy Agency that the United States can be "almost self-sufficient in energy, in net terms, by 2035,"¹⁸ has wider implications than just the cost for Americans of heating their homes and fueling their cars. The U.S. military footprint in the Middle East is at stake. In this era of budget cuts, there will be pressure to scale down the U.S. military presence. At the same time, U.S. policymakers will have to remember that oil supplies also fuel the economies of Asia and that the sea-lanes to these economic powerhouses will need protecting. This could not only affect the relationship with China, but also allies such as Japan and South Korea.

Economic Blind Spots

The discipline of economics has a patchy record in strengthening security. Having generally shied

a general criticism of economic theories of conflict is that economists forget that they are dealing with human beings

away from explaining conflict, there began in the 1990s a proliferation of economic models of conflict in parallel with a wider expansion of economics into the social sciences.¹⁹ A primary example was the so-called "greed vs. grievance" work by economists Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler. Investigating the causes of civil wars from 1960-1999, they argued that access to primary commodity resources and a large diaspora were more significant in causing conflict than grievances triggered by ethnic and religious divisions, political repression and inequality.²⁰ A specific criticism of Collier's later work by economist William Easterly and others is that the data collected does not back up his conclusions and confuses causation with correlation.²¹

A general criticism of economic theories of conflict is that economists forget that they are dealing with human beings, no doubt because human behavior is often unpredictable and perplexing. Human nature, as theologian Reinhold Niebuhr observed, is so complex that it supports any hypothesis on man's character and therefore too on what motivates him to war and acts of violence.²²

Keynes identified the problem of unpredictability when he drew the distinction between measurable risk and irreducible uncertainty. Too much of the economic theory of conflict presumes to measure risks that are in fact uncertainties because they often involve choices by individuals. As C. Cramer states in his critique of economic models of conflict: "... I argue that rational choice theories of conflict typically lay waste to specificity and contingency, that they sack the social and that even in their individualism

they violate the complexity of individual motivation, razing the individual (and key groups) down to monolithic maximizing agents."²³

The complexity of human decision-making is acknowledged in the World Bank's World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development. The report represented a significant attempt by the world's leading development institution to integrate economics with security. World Bank President Zoellick gave the impetus for the report through his belief in "securing development", reflecting his concern that development experts and military planners must do more to work together in order to succeed in fragile and conflict-affected states. The report places people at the center of how to tackle repeat bouts of violence in developing countries. It argues, "that strengthening legitimate institutions and governance to provide citizen security, justice, and jobs is crucial to break cycles of violence."²⁴

Tunisia had scored better than many other countries in the region on competitiveness even though the business environment was plagued with corruption

But the economic advice given by the World Bank and others to developing countries has not always been effective in preventing outbreaks of violence. Often, governments have deliberately ignored it because the changes recommended would threaten power structures.

One problem is that economic theory has emphasized getting the fundamentals right while the specifics of what is happening in an economy are less noticed. This is understandable. The fundamentals are important. Economic growth is seen as fundamental to achieving prosperous and stable societies. Poverty reduction usually occurs

with economic growth as the rising tide that lifts all boats. This belief is reflected, for example, in the sensible tenets of the so-called "Washington Consensus" of economist John Williamson,²⁵ and in the Growth Report led by Nobel Laureate Michael Spence.²⁶ Yet the lesson from recent events in the Middle East and North Africa is that getting the fundamentals right is not enough.

In Tunisia, for example, economists praised the country's economic performance. The World Bank's 2010 country brief bemoaned high unemployment but reported "Tunisia has made remarkable progress on equitable growth, fighting poverty and achieving good social indicators." According to World Bank measures, Tunisia had scored better than many other countries in the region on competitiveness even though the business environment was plagued with corruption.²⁷ The report refrained from saying anything about the repressive political system and the widespread corruption that put the ruling family in charge of lucrative businesses. As Financial Times journalist Roula Khalaf noted, the brief looked surreal when read later in light of the revolution that soon followed.²⁸

The fact was that much of the progress being made by Tunisia and other countries in the region was on paper alone. Governments signed up for reforms yet often failed to implement them. Governments in the region ignored – and in Egypt, stopped circulation of – an earlier World Bank report that pointed out the urgency of creating more jobs to respond to a youth bulge, and citing nepotism as a major constraint to opportunities. Egypt had a team of ministers under strong man Hosni Mubarak that was widely praised by western donors. It pushed through privatization and other reforms but Egypt remained a society where university graduates became waiters unless they had the right connections. Tunisia's national economic progress masked large regional

differences; with the coastal cities growing while the interior stagnated.

It was in the stagnating interior of Tunisia where street seller Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire after being harassed by police. All he wanted to do was to earn a living. Yet the police working for the corrupt regime would not even let him do that. His death sparked a revolution in Tunisia and across the Arab world that no one had anticipated.

Bouazizi's death spoke volumes about the lack of opportunity in an economy once lauded by France and other western governments. Tunisia's economic growth may have been fine. But the numbers ignored bigger problems. This economic growth was not inclusive enough. It did not give enough opportunity to people in Tunisia's interior, to the young, and to women. The country's governance problems, with the corrupt regime handing out jobs and businesses to its family and cronies, stifled opportunity.

The crisis in the Middle East and North Africa revealed a major disconnect between economics and security caused by a blind spot in the economics profession. According to the economic models, the countries in the region were enjoying economic growth and should have been stable societies. But the lesson is that while economies grow, this growth can hide huge inequalities and marginalized communities that harbor grievances waiting to explode. An older name for the discipline of economics was "political economy". Ignoring the "political" in "political economy" has serious consequences.

Security and Development

How can economists better contribute to understanding security issues? One area is in anticipating the problems caused by security for the economy and being aware of the interconnections between

international donors to warn of the impending consequences and to suggest strategies to cope with them

the two. This has the potential to strengthen security and promote economic activity.

In Afghanistan, the World Bank team raised an issue in 2011 that few had given thought to as they prepared for the 2014 withdrawal of foreign troops: would the Afghan economy be able to provide for the country after the foreigners left? This was no an idle question. Without a viable economy, there would be little hope of Afghanistan ever paying for its own police and military; little prospect of its government becoming legitimate in the eyes of its people through providing services; and little chance of providing the jobs and opportunities to draw recruits away from the insurgency.²⁹

Boosted by military spending flowing in to construction and services as well as by a strong harvest, the Afghan economy is forecast to grow at around 10 percent in 2012 compared to 7.3 percent the year before.³⁰ But this progress could come undone with an abrupt withdrawal of military spending and donor support. Military spending was estimated from 2010 to 2011 at more than \$100 billion, while spending on aid could have been as high as \$15.4 billion compared to an economy worth around \$16.3 billion.³¹

Anticipating that the drawdown would hurt most in construction and services, particularly transportation, distribution and security, the World Bank team reached out to the military and international donors to warn of the impending consequences and to suggest strategies to cope with them.

Their first recommendation was that militaries and donors should do more to increase spending within Afghanistan. Much of the

military and other aid was spent outside the country. They urged shifting more funding to local contractors and suppliers to bring spending to Afghanistan and to employ more Afghans. Even with a decline in military spending, this could soften the effect significantly.³²

A second recommendation was to channel more aid through the Afghan government. Only 15 percent of aid went through the government's budget. Putting more aid through the budget was another way to raise the share of contracts won by local businesses. This was not an easy argument to make, given Afghanistan's poor reputation for governance and corruption. In arguing for this step, the World Bank also worked with the Finance Ministry to build capacity within the Afghan government, including rigorous anti-corruption safeguards.³³

A third recommendation was to get the Afghans to pay for more themselves. The World Bank said that reforms by the Afghan government could increase domestic revenue by 16 percent a year, growing to around 13 percent of GDP by 2019. These reforms included progress in customs reforms, a new value-added tax in 2014 and collection of mining revenue.³⁴

A final recommendation was to do more to promote the private sector so that it could become a more significant provider of jobs and tax revenue. Afghanistan ranks near the bottom in the World Bank's Doing Business report, which measures the ease of doing business across the globe. Apart from security and corruption, businesses in Afghanistan must contend with expensive and unreliable power, no proper land registration system and weak legal structures. With private investment to help fund exploration, improve capacity and build appropriate infrastructure, mining, oil and gas could boost the country's economic development. Agriculture can also be improved. More

investment will be needed in irrigation and across the production chain to get produce to domestic and foreign markets.³⁵

These recommendations were discussed at international meetings on Afghanistan in Bonn, Chicago and Tokyo and have become part of the planning for the country's future after foreign troops withdraw.

They show how economics – when used to anticipate problems caused by security – can play a key role in helping bolster security. The road ahead though, for Afghanistan, is likely to be a difficult one even if these measures are fully implemented.

Conclusion

There is still a long way to go before economics is successfully integrated with security.

In its National Security Strategy, the Obama administration has said that it focuses on "a commitment to renew our economy, which serves as the well-spring of American power."³⁶ The State Department's chief economist has said that the administration has moved to fully integrate economics into the national security framework.³⁷ This may be happening at the State Department. But it has to happen across all the pillars of government for it to have a real effect. In particular, lawmakers and the White House need to understand that confrontations over the debt ceiling or fiscal cliff influence U.S. power globally from "hard" to "soft" power.

There is now a greater need than ever for economists to understand how to support security. The global financial crisis has shown that economics based on mathematical assumptions can be a poor way to understand reality. Banks relied on risk models that were abruptly junked when markets collapsed. Economists have to get their fingernails dirty in understanding what

is really going on in an economy. They need to understand that an economy is made up of people making millions of individual decisions. The economic fundamentals are important but they are not enough. Indicators of inclusiveness, openness, transparency, and opportunity in a society can be more important guides to stability and security.

Conflict in our era has shifted from state-on-state violence to intra-state conflict, much of it in developing countries. It is in these states that understanding the interplay between economics and security can make huge differences. Economists should do more to anticipate problems caused by security. Military planners need to take more account of the economic effects of their actions. More needs to be invested in bringing economic and security planning together. The economic and security problems of fragile and conflict affected states may seem insignificant to many in developed countries. But they can become home to anyone from terrorists to drug gangs to pirates that threaten global security. They can spawn killer diseases with world reach or contribute to global climate change when illegal logging denudes forests.

The relationship between economics and security has become more complex since the end of the Cold War. This greater complexity has revealed shortcomings in our understanding of the interplay between the two. These are shortcomings we ignore at our peril. **PRISM**

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Three Design Concepts Introduced for Strategic and Operational Applications

BY BEN ZWEIBELSON

Many discussions on design theory applications within military contexts often revolve around a small population of design practitioners using complex terms and exclusive language, contrasted by a larger population of design skeptics that routinely demand a universal, scripted, and complete examples for “doing design right.”¹ Design, a form of conceptual planning and sense making, continues to gain traction in strategic political and military institutions, yet faces misunderstanding, disinterest, and outright rejection from military strategists and operational planners for a variety of reasons. This article aims at moving this discourse toward how several design theory concepts are valuable for strategists and decision makers, and how select design concepts might be introduced and applied in a simple language where military practitioners can traverse from strategic intent into operational applications with tangible results. As a lead planner for the Afghan Security Force reduction concept and the 2014 (NTM-A) Transition Plan, I applied design to strategic and operational level planning using these design concepts as well as others.²

This article takes three design concepts that do not exist in current military doctrine, provides a brief explanation on what they are, and how military practitioners might apply them in strategic planning and military decision-making efforts drawing from real-world applications in Afghanistan. Design theory, as a much broader discipline, spans theories and concepts well beyond the boundaries of any military design doctrine.³ I introduce these non-doctrinal concepts intentionally to foster discourse, not to provide a roadmap or checklist on how to “do design” by simply adding these to all future planning sessions. What may have worked in one planning session on reducing Afghan security forces beyond 2015 may be an incompatible design approach for influencing Mexican drug cartels this year, or appreciating yet another emergent problem in Africa. Complex, adaptive problems demand tailored and novel approaches.

Major Ben Zweibelson recently returned from Afghanistan where he served as an operational level planner for NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) and was a lead planner on projects such as the Afghan Security Force Reduction beyond 2015 and the 2014 NTM-A Transition Plan.

Diplomats, strategists and operational planners across our military and instruments of national power might use these concepts, along with other useful design approaches, in their efforts to fuse conceptual and detailed planning in uncertain conflict environments.

Narratives: A Different Way to Think about Uncertainty and Complexity

Both our military and political institutions uses the term “narrative” in a literal sense within traditional planning lexicon and doctrine, whereas design theory looks to the conceptual work by literary historians and theorists such as Hayden White as a useful alternative.⁴ One definition does not substitute for the other; the military’s tactical version is distinct from the post-modern one introduced here. We shall call these “design narratives” to make the distinction clear. These design narratives are not included in any military doctrine, which helps illustrate how incomplete our individual service efforts to encapsulate design are for military planners.

White proposes that a design narrative is something beyond the direct control of an organization or society. We do not construct our narratives as a story unfolds, nor do we often realize that we perceive reality through powerful institutional filters that transpose symbols, values, and culture onto how we will interpret events unfolding.⁵ Instead, design narratives pre-configure (form in advance) how and why a series of events will form into a story.⁶ These stories have particular and often enduring meanings and structure that resonate within an organization or group due to shared values and culture. While the details within the narrative will contain the familiar specifics such as facts, information, plot structure, and the sequence of events that unite the information into a contained “story”, they do not establish the overarching explanation.

Instead, our organization pre-configures the information as a narrative unit, or genre, often regardless of the information as it unfolds in time and space. One might quip, “Don’t let the facts get in the way of the story.” This is important for political and military applications in that your organization may be unaware of their predilections when they seek to make sense of a situation and conceptualize strategic options.

White provides a series of narrative genres that build the overarching structure or theme that assists in explaining them. However, every society or institution will generate their own genres based on shared values and concepts. Consider your own organization for a moment, and think critically about what values, concepts, and cultural aspects resonate strongly. For example, we already construct categories for film, literature, and other entertainment where stories occur. “Romance”, “satire”, “tragedy”, and “comedy” comprise White’s narrative genres in his examples, although design theory would not limit narratives to merely these. The organizational culture of a group or institution such as a military unit, specialized department of government, or political party acts as a forcing function by pre-configuring narrative genres before we even observe something occurring in the environment. Our societies and organizations pre-configure sequences of events by attaching those genres to the information while it unfolds, thus design narratives exist and operate prior to actions occurring in a conflict environment. Critically, different cultures, groups, and organizations interpret the same event in profoundly different ways.⁷ Being able to recognize and understand the various narratives of rival groups within the environment is what provides value to this design concept for military planning.⁸

Consider some of the narratives on the Intercontinental Hotel attack on 28 June 2011, which erupted in downtown Kabul’s green zone.

Some media covered it with an overarching tragic or satirical narrative (hopeless or hapless situations), while both coalition military and political leaders preferred the romantic narrative (optimistic story where the protagonist inevitably triumphs). Are there any narrative themes from articles on the attack below, and do they reflect institutionalisms that attempt to explain the very same incident differently?

"Our muj entered the hotel," said Zabiullah Mujahid, the Taliban spokesman for northern and eastern Afghanistan, "and they've gone through several stories of the building and they are breaking into each room and they are targeting the 300 Afghans and foreigners who are staying." His claims could not be immediately confirmed.

- Alissa Rubin, Rod Nordland, The New York Times, 28 June 2011.⁹

"As the transition draws near, the attack on the [Intercontinental] hotel has only reinforced the belief of Afghans and foreigners that Afghan forces are not ready to take over security responsibilities."

- John Wendle, TIME Magazine, 29 June 2011.¹⁰

"[ISAF] joins President Karzai and the Ministry of the Interior in condemning the attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul last night..." This attack will do nothing to prevent the security transition process from moving forward," said Rear Admiral Beck."

- ISAF Headquarters Public Affairs Office release, 29 June 2011.¹¹

"Afghanistan's culture is too polite and fatalistic to take security seriously- plus Afghans are in denial over the roots of terrorism...first, there's

the widespread belief that terrorism has nothing to do with Afghans but is something outsiders do to Afghans...[this] denial [of] terrorism in Afghanistan...might be a reflection of a desperate psychological need to believe in Afghanistan as a good and safe homeland which owes all its problems to foreign interference..."

- Nushin Arbabzadah (Afghan reporter), guardian.co.uk, 30 June 2011.¹²

Mr. Amiri said he saw police officers running, too, tightly gripping their own AK-47s as they raced away from the gunmen. "I said, 'Why don't you shoot? Shoot!' " he recalled. "But they just said, 'Get away from them.' And we all ran together... now we are hearing about a security transition to Afghan forces...if they give the security responsibility to the current government at 10:00 a.m., the government will collapse around 12 noon. They cannot live without foreigners."

- Alissa Rubin, The New York Times, 29 June 2011.¹³

"The insurgent movement sometimes issues highly exaggerated statements that reflect what its commanders would consider a best-case scenario for an assault...In this case, the Taliban version included a wildly overblown death toll.

- Laura King and Aimal Yaqubi, Los Angeles Times, 29 June 2011.¹⁴

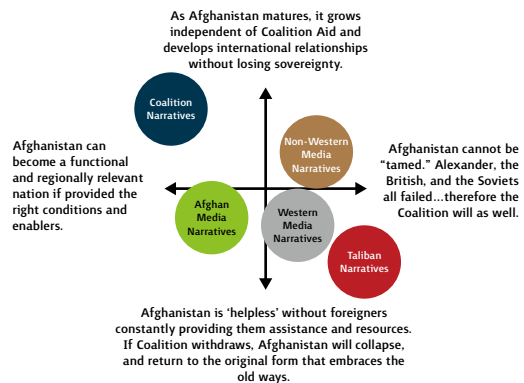
Narratives reflect powerful internal forces within an institution, and this design concept offers deeper explanation for an organization seeking to make sense of complexity as it occurs. This provides explanation through context and holistic appreciation of other perspectives than relying on the preferred one of our organization, institution, or society. Pop-culture such as, "The Daily Show" and late-night entertainment might

weave a comedic story with the same details on the same incident, while other media outlets and organizations apply different themes to match the preferred social construction of their respective audiences.¹⁵ The same event or objective in Afghanistan might be told within a satirical, tragic, or romantic design narrative depending upon what organization or society produces the story. The Taliban mirror coalition romantic design narratives, although they take an opposing position and swap the protagonists with the antagonists. Coalition forces might downplay the casualties or effectiveness of the attack, while the Taliban exaggerate the same details. Thus, even before a spectacular attack occurs and regardless of whether it is effective or not, the Coalition and rivals such as the Taliban as organizations pre-configure their narratives so that as the incident unfolds, their narratives establish the overarching meaning regardless of the information.¹⁶

Rival groups produce dueling narratives that battle to shape and influence our perceptions while comprised of the same details, actors, and plot. Only the genres and organizational preferences differ, which produces drastically different results despite containing the same information.¹⁷ Figure 1 illustrates one way our NTM-A operational planners attempted to frame the conflict environment for establishing deeper understanding after the hotel attack.¹⁸ As a conceptual planning product, it reflected the appreciation that those planners gained when studying the various narratives. Operational planners incorporated narrative concepts into the NTM-A transition plan for 2014 as well as the reduction plan for Afghan security forces beyond 2015.¹⁹ Although the competing narratives of rival forces in military conflicts might be visualized in many different ways, the critical reflection and holistic perspective of narrative tensions applied in these cases did offer military planners deeper

explanation and appreciation of the adaptive, complex environment. This provides deeper meaning and understanding to subsequent detailed planning.

Figure 1: Dueling Narratives within Afghan Conceptualization



White's narratives concept applied as a design tool is not a "stand-alone" planning process, nor does it fit neatly into a militarized procedure or doctrinal step. Understanding design narratives alone is not "doing design", nor will adding design narratives to a step within traditional military decision-making processes make existing planning "better." A senior political or diplomatic staff will not necessarily function better by mandating narratives as step five of their current planning process either. Design just does not work that way.

Design narratives aid political and military professionals with making sense of ill-structured problems by developing customized staff understanding and explanation during planning sessions. As the lead planner for the NTM-A design team for recommending reduction of the Afghan Security Forces from the current 352,000 to a planned 228,000 after 2015, we used narrative concepts (Figure 2) to build multiple scenarios for our Joint and interagency planning team to war-game all of our courses of action.²⁰ This

directly led to our planning concept, which senior policy makers, the Afghan government, and the coalition ultimately approved in April 2012.²¹ Whether this reduction continues or not is dependent upon future planning, however for an initial conceptual planning initiative, design theory directly contributed to these results.

Figure 2: Narratives in Action-the Future Afghan Scenario Planning for Proposed Force Reductions 2015



Figure 2 illustrates a quad-chart using elements of scenario planning and design narratives to help planners anticipate likely threat environments expected in Afghanistan beyond 2015. Dueling narratives and other design concepts helped build various threat environments for coalition planners to subsequently conduct extensive “war-gaming” sessions in with different combinations of Afghan Security Forces. The Afghan planning reductions represented a conceptual planning output, which will ultimately lead to further detailed planning efforts in the

future as political, strategic, and battlefield conditions continue to evolve.

While narratives might be less applicable in future planning, they were highly useful for these initial conceptual planning efforts where we needed to abandon our institutional predictions to avoid abstraction and uncertainty. These abstract considerations are part of what makes design theory resistant to any assimilation into military doctrine and practices, as each environment requires its own tailored approach. Using design tools such as design narratives often provide a richer environment for military planners to gain deeper understanding of complex, highly adaptive conditions, and breaks your team out of dangerous institutionalisms and “group-think” that often compounds existing planning shortfalls.

Assemblages: How Strategic Forces Influence Tactical Action, and Vice-Versa

Post-modern philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari offer the next design concept for military planning consideration, which they refer to as “assemblages.”²² Like design narratives, an assemblage is a design concept that does not integrate into a sequenced checklist or proceduralization within existing military doctrine. Where and when to apply them rests in the judgment and creativity of the strategist or planner.

While narratives rely on a pre-configuring process that later fits the facts into a collective theme that relates to group values and tenets, assemblages work on a grander scale using a vast range of items and concepts, often from the micro to the macro-level. This concept relies on the design term “synergy” along with the component of scale. Synergy is quite different from merely the sum total of the components, which may be, for example, a pile of automobile parts and liquids.²³ Synergizing the parts creates a

functional car that is more than just those components—something special happens when we assemble it completely. Yet, cars are constructed for a transportation need, with significant cultural and social forces at work at abstract levels well beyond the nuts and bolts of the actual vehicle. Explanation need not include every single detail, but it does require a synergist perspective to see the overarching behaviors and meanings.

Assemblages work in a similar fashion, and scale from the extremely abstract and broad down to the detailed nuances of sub-components within things we normally regard as “whole.” The relationship within an assemblage is adaptive, dynamic, and truly non-linear. The linkages between things blur, and many interrelated and transformative components span across what the military terms “strategic level” down to minute processes at the tactical level.²⁴ For a military example, we shall use the current “drug war” in Mexico to demonstrate an assemblage. To begin, it is useful to start with the large-scale or abstract end of an assemblage.

Western governments recognize and define drug activities as a component of the larger illicit commodity or illegal economy where profitable yet illegal items traffic from a source zone (cocaine production in Colombia) through transit zones (Mexico, trans-ocean routes) to the arrival zone (North American and European consumption).²⁵ Our government and military agencies tend to break the drug organizations down into extremely detailed components with various cartels, corrupt officials, and the exchange of money, power, violence, and influence across fixed geography populated by human societies.²⁶ Societies pass laws, and take actions that attempt to curb the numerous destabilizing effects of narco-criminal enterprise at the operational level, with tactical actions occurring at the tactical level throughout all three zones. At the local level, drug

production techniques and the micro-economic and social forces that drive farmers, cartel members, and new consumers also compose the vast, interconnected assemblage. It unifies the entire complex and adaptive “western narco-criminal” system into something that is greater than the mere sum of its parts.²⁷ To illustrate this, consider the abstract relationships between legal and illegal, and valued and non-valued as depicted in Figure 3.

Can we take all items within the western hemisphere and place it somewhere on the abstract spectrum of belongings that our collection of societies value, and belongings that we tend not to value? Can we also do this with items that are generally legal, and items that are not? Take these two abstract paradoxes arranged along a quadrant model, and consider Figure 3 below. Can you think of items that, at a broad level, do not fall into a quadrant? Also, notice how these questions guide a strategist towards abstract, conceptual planning instead of into reductionist, tactical considerations.²⁸ Categorization leads towards more details, whereas conceptualization leads towards explanation.

Figure 3: Quadrants and Abstract Phenomenon-building an Assemblage

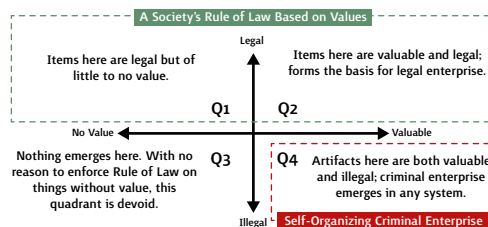
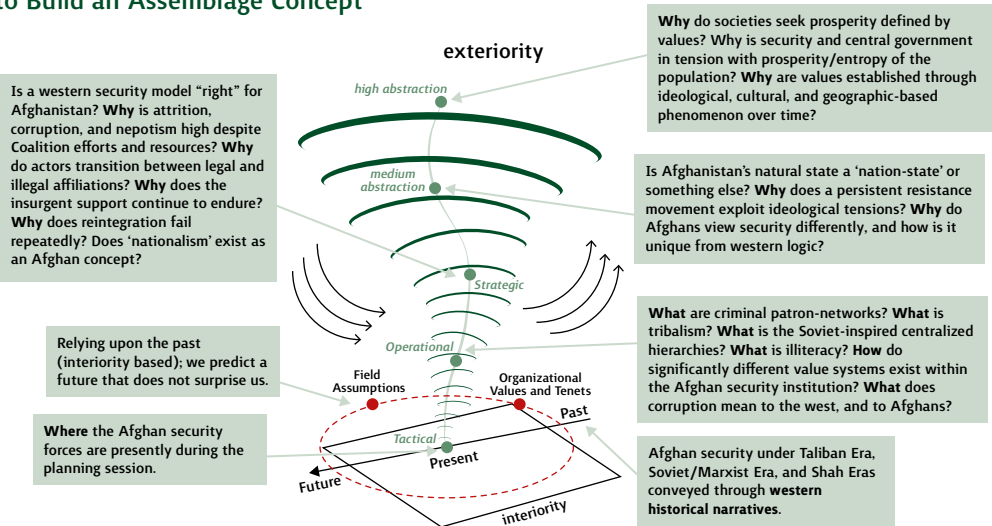


Figure 3 helps illustrate the highly abstract end of the forces that drive the western narco-criminal assemblage; yet why does something so abstract even matter to the strategist or planner? Military planners should not use assemblages to focus only on the tactical details of how

Figure 4: Using a Tornado Metaphor to Build an Assemblage Concept



a drug cartel links command and control within a particular section of key terrain. Instead, all of the tactical details that our military institution often finds engrossing are an interrelated part of the heterogeneous "soup" that composes the entire assemblage. We cannot become so engrossed with the details that we lose sight of the big picture.²⁹ This means that military professionals might explore non-linear linkages and complex relationships that extend from any particular tactical detail, up to the abstract levels where operational and strategic phenomenon influence the emergent state of the entire system.

In the reduction of Afghan Security Forces planning event, NTM-A planners used assemblages in early conceptual planning using a tornado metaphor as shown in Figure 4. The tornado moves along the familiar linear axis of time, with tactical and detailed elements occurring at the surface while greater levels of abstraction swirl upwards into the larger and transforming cloud mass. Critically, the flat plane upon which the tornado swirls is termed the "interiority", which is a concept that Deleuze and Guattari use

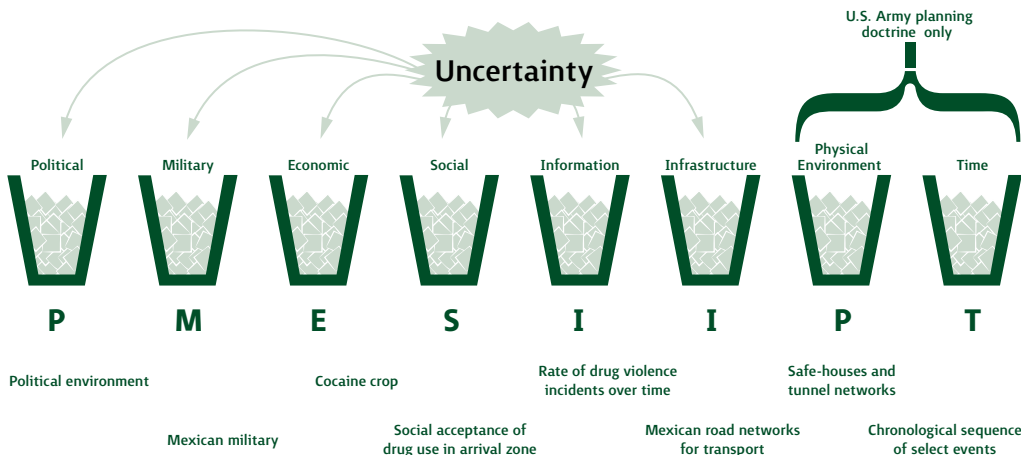
with assemblages.³⁰ The concept of interiority represents how an organization bounds what it knows about the world, with everything unknown and undiscovered remaining outside in the "exteriority."

Thus, what the military says a terrorist organization is motivated by exists in our interiority as planners, while those motives that are unknown, rejected, ignored, or undiscovered exist in the exteriority—a place that many are prevented from traveling to due to organizational resistance.³¹ This application of an assemblage helped NTM-A operational planners appreciate overarching tensions within the Afghan environment, which later shaped the scenarios and war-gaming of various options, although much of the initial conceptual work remained within small planning circles and was not briefed to senior decision-makers.

Drawing a tornado on a white board will not necessarily help anyone visualize how the concept of assemblages dynamically links the many elements of a complex environment into a transforming, adaptive phenomenon that transcends

Figure 5: Categorization Approaches in Operational Planning for Mexican Cartel Violence Problems

Military planning doctrine directs strategists and planners to categorize complex systems into “bins”- we seek to reduce complexity through scientific approaches, reductionism, and structure. This breaks down relationships, destroys linkages across scale and time, and through over-simplification promises a false reduction of uncertainty.



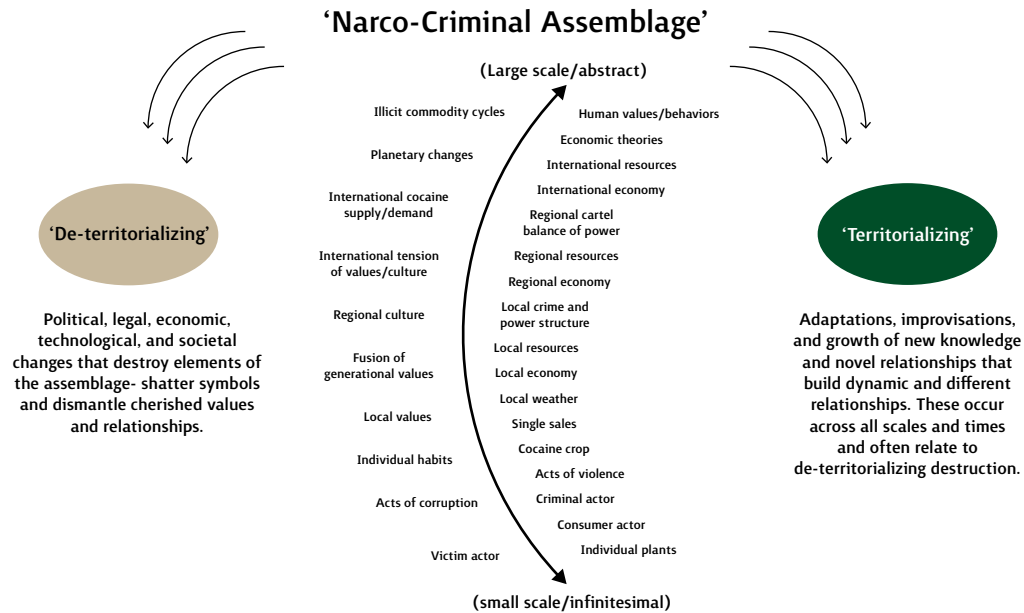
time and scale. Presenting such a drawing to senior policymakers or military leaders will also result in unfortunate outcomes—these conceptual products are not intended as deliverables. They are concepts that aid planners in gaining the understanding so that they can then build planning deliverables that are the result. There are important reasons why early abstract work must not be confused with final products. However, early abstract work must be done effectively so that later products emerge as clear, explanatory, and holistic.

Consider the difference between using metaphoric content that implies fluidity, change, and complex relationships and the traditional linear planning approaches where simplistic “lines of effort” or similar planning products chart out the future in predictive, lockstep formats. Uncertainty and change are two elements that we traditionally seek to reduce or eliminate; yet these are two essential aspects for building assemblage

concepts. Traditional military decision-making procedures and military doctrine exploits the tangible things- places, events, actors, and details. This eliminates the tornado form and the swirling interrelated process where forces often unseen continue to influence an environment in ways that we quickly describe as unpredictable, chaotic, or crazy.

Instead, consider the intangible components of the assemblage such as cultural values, economics, climate change, politics, and population changes over time, and avoid simply categorizing them within traditional reductionist approaches such as “political”, “social”, and “economic” categories. Categorization fractures the assemblage and renders explanation meaningless for planners seeking design explanation.³² Routine categorization ignores linkages across scale and beyond narrow boundaries of groupings.³³ Even our administrative concepts of task and purpose within an assemblage appear meaningless, where

Figure 6: One of Many Ways to Visualize Aspects of an Assemblage



Constantly transforming; cannot be 'framed', 'bounded', or categorized...the assemblage moves in unexpected directions while creating novel, unseen formations...cycles of creation and destruction.

the task to type a key has the purpose to form a word, which links to forming a sentence, and so on. Typing is linked in a long series of tasks and purposes up to an abstract level of influencing a society on an anti-drug policy; yet our traditional reductionist approach in military planning wants us to shatter the linkages and reduce complexity.³⁴ The next figure illustrates the traditional, categorizing approach that military doctrine prescribes for making sense of uncertain environments.

Instead of categorizing, strategists and operational planners that apply the design theory "assemblage" concept may avoid the pitfalls of breaking dynamic linkages, or ignoring the importance of scale, time, and transformation within an uncertain and volatile system. All of these tangible and intangible actors and forces interrelate in the dynamic and adaptive

assemblage where tactical components connect, disconnect, and establish new relationships within a non-linear web of operational and strategic developments.³⁵ While there are many ways to illustrate an assemblage such as previous Figure 4, Figure 6 continues with the narco-criminal example to offer yet another way to help planners visualize this useful design concept.

Skeptics may take the assemblage concept and say, "that may be interesting for conceptual planning, but what good does the assemblage concept bring to military decision making or diplomacy?" Design planning with assemblages helps draw your staff out of the standard over-tactical emphasis where we immediately seek to reduce and categorize a problem into more manageable "chunks" whether at the strategic or operational level.³⁶ In the NTM-A transition-planning group for 2014, our planning team was tasked to

design a unified plan to transition all bases and facilities over to the Afghan security forces by 2014. Using assemblage concepts in the initial conceptual planning phase, our team determined that the institutionalisms of our own military organizations as well as those of the Afghan security forces were far more significant than they appeared. Although the final deliverable was a highly detailed plan for military action over time, the initial conceptual planning avoided simply building a large checklist for transitioning facilities over to the Afghans. Instead, due to assemblage constructs highlighting the myriad tensions between ISAF military forces, the NATO forces, and the various Afghan ministries and different security forces that occurred across different scales, times, and processes, our planning team sought solutions to deeper problems.

Instead of treating symptoms, design approaches help identify and influence the underlying and often pervasive problems. Or, it hardly matters to hand an instillation over to Afghan control based on a calculated date if we fail to appreciate the tensions preventing higher elements in the Afghan ministries from transferring resources. If our own advisors in the ministry do not appreciate what advisors on the ground in a sister organization or agency are also doing, how can another associated element execute if no one gains a holistic picture and identifies the key tensions?

Assemblage thinking not only channels your staff to “seek the big picture” but helps drive explanation by seeking WHY-centric inquires instead of WHAT-centric behaviors.³⁷ Returning to the cartel example, leaders can encourage abstract and non-linear conceptualization on what motivates a cartel, and whether eliminating any particular drug cartel will “end” the drug problem, or merely influence a different adaptation where future drug cartels emerge able

to avoid their predecessor’s demise. Why does our society glamorize drug use? Why do farmers plant drug crops over legal ones? Why is a secured border so symbolic in political realms? Why do cartels adapt ahead of legitimate government action? Where is the next illegal and profitable commodity going to emerge from, and why? These are inquires that help make sense of an assemblage, and prevents over-simplification of uncertainty.

Problematization: Actual Critical Thinking Threatens Institutionalism

In order to encourage comprehensive assemblages that include our own military organization, strategists and planners may find a third design theory concept called “problematization” useful for its critical reflection on how we think, and how we think about thinking. This concept permeates all major design actions and was a cornerstone in my own design efforts in Afghanistan as an operational planner linking strategic guidance to tactical applications.

This third design concept comes from the work of philosopher Michel Foucault.³⁸ Foucault uses the term “problematization” to explain the unique interrelationship between an organization and a person within the organization that risks thinking critically and creatively. Risk is a key element of Foucault’s concept because the “problematizer” often confronts his own organization with painful truths and “destructively creative” approaches to improving how the organization functions.

To problematize is not just another cumbersome design term, but also a critical concept that has neither synonym nor equivalent in existing planning doctrine or military lexicon. One does not only critically reflect and question, for the problematizer fuses creativity and novel approaches to appreciate complexity and

deliver explanation that generates substantial change. Of course, he that dares to tell the king that he is naked does risk the sword. More importantly, a problematizer threatens the institutional tenets by not only revealing to the king that his is currently nude, but also delivers explanation on why the king was unable to see this before now, why his staff feared to disagree, and how he might improve his organization to prevent such reoccurrences. Critical reflection coupled with explanation and novel discovery becomes key in problematizing.

Problematizers risk alienation, marginalization, or elimination when the organization rejects their novel perspective, regardless of whether they are correct. Many visionary thinkers and military pioneers challenged the tenets and rigid concepts within their own institutions, only to be vindicated later when a military paradigm shift validates their original advice and understanding. Consider the following questions that an interagency or military organization might consider with significant narco-violence spilling over the southern border between America and Mexico. Which of these would be readily accepted by some organizations, but quickly rejected by others? Which are “off limits” due to institutionalisms or cultural tenets, and thus would not even be explored in any conceptual planning efforts?

- Should a military operation led by the Army secure the border?
- Should a military operation led by the Navy secure the border?
- Should the military work under Federal Law Enforcement at the border?
- Should religious organizations such as the Catholic Church be engaged to assist?
- Should American military and state assets work under Mexican control?
- Should Mexican military and law enforcement pursue criminals into American territory?
- Should we value American casualties over Mexican ones?
- Should our nation legalize the drug in question? Should other nations do this?
- Should we increase drug penalties and expand our penal infrastructure?
- Should we consider censorship of drug glamorization in order to reduce use?
- Should we coordinate with one Cartel in order to eliminate the others?
- Should we encourage more Cartels, in order to weaken existing ones?
- Should we allow the local territory to fall under Cartel control so that they become centralized and easier to target?
- Should our police gain greater military capabilities and resources?
- Should our military assume a police role and modify the rules of engagement as such?

Many of the above questions trigger strong reactions, depending upon which institution, branch of government, or society the reader associates with most. Also, with every answer a question generates, the problematizer must follow up with asking why this is. It is the “why” that helps explain our institutionalisms, and aids a planner in reaching a holistic picture that breaks through internal barriers, biases, and other institutionalisms that bound the interiority of an organization’s knowledge.

Consider that all of the questions will generate healthy discourse during conceptual planning sessions, yet our own organizations might inhibit contemplation due to our own institutionalisms. As a modern military organization in the 21st century, we need to encourage problematization within our organizations, and realize when our own institutionalisms are blinding us as the

world changes around us. The more that conflict adapts, the stronger the desire for military services to return to historic and traditionally defining behaviors and actions—we seek to fight tomorrow’s conflict with last year’s successful action, particularly if it enhances institutional self-relevance.³⁹ No military force remains the same, yet once we symbolize an item or behavior, we attach values and assumptions about ourselves to them that inoculate them as resistant to critical inquiry or adjustment.⁴⁰ Non-military government organizations should also value this concept, as it aids in confronting problematic actions by military services.

Organizational theorist Mary Jo Hatch proposes that we cycle through these actions gradually over time, assigning symbols within our organizations.⁴¹ Only through a gradual rejection of our original assumptions, often over periods that exceed traditionally constructed military campaigns, do we de-symbolize structures, items behaviors. Often, our military holds onto behaviors, techniques, and systems that we consider “traditional”, “self-defining”, or “universal in combat” despite their irrelevance in the current conflict.⁴² If we symbolize military tools and techniques and therefore require greater periods to de-symbolize them, then the military problematizer must foster change and adaptation against these institutional forces while often battling their own institution in the process.

However, “naked kings” in your organization usually seek to kill any truth-tellers that come offering insight because transformation of the institution might promote greater uncertainty than sticking with reliable, although ineffective approaches and behaviors. For example, the original NTM-A planning guidance for our team to tackle the 2015 Afghan Security Force reduction featured several requirements that largely reflected our own institutionalisms. Our final

proposals had to include an Afghan Air Force, all of the fielded systems provided to the Afghan forces, and retain relative structures that the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense were accustomed to in terms of command and control. Since NTM-A had a large Air Force element that built and integrated into the Afghan Air Force, our own institution was not going to entertain questions on whether Afghanistan even needed an Air Force after 2015 at that time. Similar questions on whether the Afghans required special police tactics teams, special forces assets, or armored vehicles all were dismantled due to existing institutional tenets within ISAF and NTM-A where eliminating a major program represented the “defeat” of values or concepts that an organization defined self-relevance with. Additionally, our planners were unable to question the overarching ISAF Campaign Plan with respect to whether the enemy’s strategic center of gravity remained valid.⁴³ Such engagements with superior staff met with a quick dismissal, because changing centers of gravity requires extensive revisiting of the entire overarching counterinsurgency plan. When practicing design, one must rise above one’s own institutionalisms, appreciate them, and seek abstract, holistic contemplation of complex environments in order to better understand why they are adapting as they are.

Instead of reaching back into traditional, familiar processes and concepts, problematization is destructively creative to an organization because we question whether a future conflict or operation requires the very things and concepts that our organization symbolizes and seeks self-relevance with currently. The Air Force might resist discussing eliminating the Afghan Air Force, while Military Intelligence might resist eliminating information collection systems. Special Operations ties the local militia forces to their self-relevance with respect to foreign internal

defense, thus the Afghan Local Police should not just be exempt from reductions, but expanded.⁴⁴ It is in the best interests of the organization to silence a member that promotes contrary ideas, which identifies the primary danger of becoming a problematizer. The problematizer is one that both belongs to the organization, and critically considers beyond these symbols to focus on what is healthy within the institution and what potentially is not.

Destructive creativity reinforces the earlier concept of assemblage and the constantly adaptive heterogeneous conflict environments labeled complex or “ill-structured.”⁴⁵ Nothing is sacred or off-limits, yet if a problematizer threatens his organization by seeking to destroy a cherished value or core tenet, Foucault, as well as scientific philosopher Thomas Kuhn warn that the self-interests within an institution will strike out at those that usher in revolutionary change, even at the expense of clinging to an outdated or inferior concept.⁴⁶ RAND analyst Carl Builder also echoes the dangers of military problematization in *‘The Masks of War’* by arguing that military services may jeopardize the security of the nation in pursuit of self-interests and continued military relevance. A problematizer on your staff will challenge your organization, and break a staff out of “group-think” and other institutionalisms that often obscure our understanding of the true nature of an ill-structured problem whether strategic or operational in form.

Conclusions: Design Theory cannot be Caged; It Remains a Useful Free-Range Animal

Design theory remains its own assemblage of sorts, continuously transforming and ushering in new combinations and fusions of different disciplines, concepts, vocabulary, and ideas. This is perhaps the most frustrating aspect of design

theory for military organizations and strategists dealing with senior policy makers! It is hard enough to grapple with military professionals that use a wide lexicon of terms and concepts unique to military organizations without also requiring the even more abstract concepts, terms, and approaches that design offers. Most military professionals remain confused on design theory, so how can we expect interagency and other national-level members to engage in real design discussions? Part of this relates to how there is no overarching planning approach or shared concepts across all of the military services that could be called “design” without encountering rival institutional interpretations.

adaptive concepts, language, and approaches resist codification into handy executive summaries or PowerPoint presentations

While major military organizations continue to produce their own versions of design with a variety of monikers, self-relevant logic and shared values, we cannot expect to find any final or complete “design” answer for military planning within a service doctrine or school course. This frustrates policy makers as well as our military practitioners. Adaptive concepts, language, and approaches resist codification into handy executive summaries or PowerPoint presentations for mass consumption. Our professional military education system should not conduct a quixotic quest for a better design doctrine chapter or improved planning checklist, nor should policy makers and strategists shy away from design due to these uncertainties. At a minimum, we might seek “social knowledge production” methods such as a Wikipedia-style process to share and discuss design theory—yet this does not marginalize the need for discourse on novel

design approaches such as the three examples in this article.⁴⁷ Perhaps a shared understanding of design theory across all service branches and major federal departments might produce a flexible and adaptive body of concepts and terms where it is less important where you come from but why you are seeking explanation of a complex environment. Additionally, the further we get away from internal languages, acronyms, and 'military-jargon' that break down and eliminate inter-agency and inter-governmental communication, the better we can achieve true "shared understanding" of these complex, adaptive environments that demand foreign policy decisions.

transformation will occur whether we lead in that change or our rivals drag us there through competition or defeat

Codifying one narrow interpretation of "how to do design" into doctrine produces a similar output where planners are expected to innovate and be creative, but still have to "follow the rules" as established by the individual service. This is a terrible contradiction, and likely fosters much of the current confusion and frustration with fusing design with military decision-making today between rival services, policy makers, and other governmental appendages.

Instead of attempting to domesticate design theory into doctrine or "paint-by-numbers" procedures, this article takes several useful design theory concepts that do not appear in military doctrine and demonstrates their utility in strategic and operational planning. All three of these concepts were successfully applied in design deliverables for planning Afghan security reductions beyond 2015 as well as the 2014 transition of security missions from NATO to the Afghans.⁴⁸ Design theory features a higher degree of artistry,

which is something that makes military hierarchical organizations rather uncomfortable. Despite our inherent resistance to improvisational and unorthodox approaches, modern military operations demand a fusion of conceptual and detailed planning to forge tactical applications from usually indistinct strategic guidance. Strategists and operational planners struggle with precisely how to accomplish this.

Assemblages, narratives, and problematization come from different disciplines and fields that are often not associated directly with military planning considerations. Just because something comes from a completely non-military discipline or field, we should not dismiss it as quickly as we often do. While we cannot waste time and resources aimlessly wandering in an intellectual journey without a destination, we also cannot expect the narrow gaze of institutional doctrine and our desire to retain all of our traditional behaviors and concepts prevent us from transforming into the next military form. This transformation will occur whether we lead in that change or our rivals drag us there through competition or defeat.

Some opponents of design argue that until the military regain proficiency on traditional planning and best practices for full-spectrum operations, we should not "waste time on design." This sounds of naked kings demanding that their attendants find better mirrors or glasses so that they can join him in admiring his imaginary garments. Design theory is not an intellectual boogie man, but it may provide the holistic vision for your organization to visualize the real monsters lurking in the fog and friction of war-particularly the ones that most threaten the relevance of cherished traditions, techniques, and favored systems.⁴⁹ These three design concepts demonstrate the utility of a methodology that operates beyond existing military doctrine

and sequential planning procedures that attempt to reduce uncertainty through reduction and categorization.⁵⁰ Leaders, whether military or political, that promote critical and creative thinking through various design theory approaches may guide their organizations more effectively through the inevitable transformations that the military institution must undergo as time marches on. PRISM

Notes

¹This article uses "Design Theory" to avoid institutional pitfalls of service-unique terms such as "Army Design Methodology" or "Systemic Operational Design." See: United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, *Field Manual 5-0; The Operations Process* (Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2010), Chapter 3, "Design". See also: United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, *Field Manual-Interim 5-2; Design (Draft)* (draft under development-Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2009) for examples of U.S Army design doctrinal approaches.

²Ben Zweibelson, "Military Design in Practice: A Case from NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan in 2012," *Small Wars Journal*, (June 4, 2012), available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/military-design-in-practice-a-case-from-nato-training-mission-afghanistan-in-2012>>. See also: Ben Zweibelson, "Does Design Help or Hurt Military Planning: How NTM-A Designed a Plausible Afghan Security Force in an Uncertain Future, Part I and II," *Small Wars Journal*, (July 9, 2012), available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/does-design-help-or-hurt-military-planning-how-ntm-a-designed-a-plausible-afghan-security-f>>.

³Design introduces a challenging series of concepts to incorporate into military fields; this article cites a variety of post-modern philosophy and other sources that serve as a good starting point for those interested in how design differs from traditional military planning and decision-making doctrine.

⁴Hayden White, "The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory," *History and Theory*, 23, no. 1, (February, 1984), 1-33.

⁵Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967). Berger and Luckmann make the case that all knowledge is socially constructed within groups and societies, and

over time are institutionalized into vast, complex, and expanding bureaucracies.

⁶Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse; Essays in Cultural Criticism*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1978), 6. "Rational or scientific knowledge was little more than the truth yielded by reflection in the prefigurative modes raised to the level of abstract concepts and submitted to criticism for logical consistency, coherency, and so on."

⁷Berger, Luckmann, *op. cit.*, 138-147. "There are also the more directly threatening competing definitions of reality that may be encountered socially." Berger and Luckmann discuss how societies construct their own social constructs complete with different role-specific vocabularies, institutionalisms, and symbols that are perpetually maintained, modified, and defended against rival social constructs of reality.

⁸Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1973), 7. "The arrangement of selected events of the chronicle into a story raises the kinds of questions the historian must anticipate and answer in the course of constructing his narrative." White explains in *Metahistory* the construction of narratives so that humans relay information through conceptual constructs that relate to language, society, period, and intent. See also: Paul Ricoeur (translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer), *Time and Narrative, Volume 3*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 107.

⁹Alissa Rubin, Rod Nordland, "Raid by Afghan Forces and NATO Ends Attack on Hotel in Kabul," *nytimes.com*, June 28, 2011, available at <<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/29/world/asia/29afghanistan.html>>.

¹⁰John Wendle, "The Kabul Intercontinental Attack: The Taliban's Clear Message," *Time Magazine*, June 29, 2011, available at <<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2080498,00.html>>.

¹¹ISAF Headquarters Public Affairs Office 2011-06-CA-007 (for immediate release), "ISAF Joins President Karzai in Condemning Insurgent Attack & Praising Afghan Security Force Response," June 29, 2011, available at <<http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/isaf-joins-president-karzai-in-condemning-insurgent-attack-and-praising-afghan-security-force-respon.html>>.

¹²Nushin Arbabzadah, "The Kabul Hotel Attack was Destined to Happen," *guardian.co.uk*, June 30, 2011, available at <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jun/30/kabul-hotel-attack-afghanistan>>.

¹³Alissa Rubin, "Attack at Kabul Hotel Deflates Security Hopes in Afghanistan," *The New York Times*, June 29, 2011, available at <<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/30/world/asia/30afghanistan.html?page-wanted=all>>.

¹⁴ Laura King and Aimal Yaqubi, "Afghan Taliban Sends Message with Hotel Attack," *Los Angeles Times*, June 29, 2011, available at <<http://articles.latimes.com/print/2011/jun/29/world/la-fg-afghanistan-security-20110630>>. See also: MSNBC.com news services, "Everybody was shooting: 18 die in Kabul hotel attack," *MSNBC.com online*, June 29, 2011, available at: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/43572981/ns/world_news-south_and_central_asia/t/everybody-was-shooting-die-kabul-hotel-attack/>. The MSNBC article also prominently features the Taliban perspective and makes a lone warning to the reader that the Taliban "often exaggerate casualties from their attacks."

¹⁵ Clarence Jones, *Winning with the News Media: A Self-Defense Manual When You're the Story* (Clarence Jones: Winning News Media, Inc. 2005), 5. "Many story ideas are thought up by the editor, not the reporter. Remember, all of us view the world from our own, isolated cubicles. Editors are no different."

¹⁶ I discuss this topic at length concerning Afghan narratives in 2011 on various attacks within Kabul. Depending on the organization, the same attack gets a completely different narrative. See: Ben Zweibelson, "What is Your Narrative, and Why?," *Small Wars Journal*, (October 15, 2011), available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/what-is-your-narrative-and-why>>.

¹⁷ Mats Alvesson, Jorgen Sandberg, "Generating Research Questions Through Problematization," *Academy of Management Review*, 36, no. 2 (2011), 255. "A key task is...to enter a dialectical interrogation between one's own and other meta-theoretical stances so as to identify, articulate, and challenge central assumptions underlying existing literature in a way that opens up new areas of inquiry."

¹⁸ As an operational planner for NTM-A, I wrote an unclassified document on dueling narratives based on both the International Hotel attack and the assassination of Karzai's brother to assist our organization in planning future operations. See: Ben Zweibelson, *What is Your Narrative, and Why?*, op.cit.

¹⁹ Refer to footnote 2 of this article. This meta-narrative approach was modified and applied in different contexts as I led various planning teams for the ANSF reduction plan and the NTM-A 'Unified Transition Plan'.

²⁰ Ben Zweibelson, "Does Design Help or Hurt Military Planning: How NTM-A Designed a Plausible Afghan Security Force in an Uncertain Future, Part I and II," *Small Wars Journal*, (July 9, 2012), available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/does-design-help-or-hurt-military-planning-how-ntm-a-designed-a-plausible-afghan-security-f>>. Figure 2 comes directly out of this unclassified summary of design applications for this strategic planning initiative.

²¹ Thom Shanker, Alissa Rubin, "Afghan Force Will Be Cut After Taking Lead Role," *The New York Times*, April 10, 2012. "The defense minister...noted that the projected reductions beyond 2014 were the result of "a conceptual model for planning purposes" of an army, police and border-protection force sufficient to defend Afghanistan." See also: AFP, "West to Pay Afghan Military \$4bn a Year" *The Times of India*, March 22, 2012, available at <<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/West-to-pay-Afghan-military-4bn-a-year-Karzai/articleshow/12370336.cms>>. Although the article confirms that nothing was final about the future ANSF, President Karzai's public acknowledgement of the plan to build a sustainable and affordable security force demonstrates the acceptance of the NTM-A planning proposal as a conceptual model. See also: Matthias Gebauer, NATO Members Spar over Post-Withdrawal Financing, *Spiegel.de*, April 19, 2012, available at <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/nato-members-are-sparring-over-funding-for-afghanistan-a-828627.html>>.

²² Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, (translated by Brian Massumi) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

²³ Gerald M. Weinberg, *Rethinking Systems Analysis and Design*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982), 12. "If our previous experience with systems analysis proves anything, it proves that anyone who tries to use *all* the information- even about the simple systems existing today- will be drowned in paper and never accomplish anything...The synthesist is someone who makes very specific plans for action, and more often than not stays around during the execution of those plans to adjust them to ongoing reality."

²⁴ Deleuze, Guattari, 360. "The State-form, as a form of interiority, has a tendency to reproduce itself, remaining identical to itself across its variations and easily recognizable within the limits of its poles..." Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of interiority and exteriority form assemblages which constantly interact. "It is in terms not of independence, but of coexistence and competition *in a perpetual field of interaction*..." The state-form correlates to the military institution, whereas their assemblage concept termed a "war machine" relates to the meta-themes of human conflict and force of will through violence or obedience/submission.

²⁵ Source, Transit, and Arrival Zone terminology reflects current U.S. government illegal drug enforcement doctrine and protocol. "Transit Zone Interdiction Operations," *Office of National Drug Control Policy*, accessed at <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/international/factsht/transit_zone_interdic_op.html>

²⁶ Gerald M. Weinberg, *Rethinking Systems Analysis and Design*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982), 121.

"Reduction is but one approach to understanding, one among many. As soon as we stop trying to examine one tiny portion of the world more closely and apply some close observation to science itself, we find that reductionism is an ideal *never* achieved in practice."

²⁷ Huba Wass de Czege, "Thinking and Acting Like an Early Explorer: Operational Art is Not a Level of War," *Small Wars Journal*, March 14, 2011, available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2011/03/operational-art-is-not-a-level/>>. Wass de Czege discusses how tactics "operates in a system that can be assumed "closed" within a time frame of planned tactical actions...strategy operates in a system that we must assume to be "open" within the time frame we are exploring."

²⁸ Shimon Naveh, Jim Schneider, Timothy Challans, *The Structure of Operational Revolution; A Prolegomena* (Booz, Allen, Hamilton, 2009), 88. According to Shimon Naveh, Army Design doctrine demonstrates repetitive *tacticization* where military institutions "are inclined to apply knowledge they have acquired from their tactical experiences to their operational functioning sphere. In such cases, they either reduce the operational inquiry of potential opposition into a mechanical discussion or completely reject the need for a distinct learning operation."

²⁹ Fritjof Capra, *The Web of Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1996), 29. "In the analytic, or reductionist, approach, the parts themselves cannot be analyzed any further, except by reducing them to still smaller parts. Indeed, Western science has been progressing in that way." See also: Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *The Black Swan*, (New York: Random House, 2007), 16. "Categorizing always produces reduction in true complexity."

³⁰ Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, (translated by Brian Massumi) *A Thousand Plateaus; Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 360. "The State-form, as a form of interiority, has a tendency to reproduce itself, remaining identical to itself across its variations and easily recognizable within the limits of its poles..." Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of interiority and exteriority form assemblages which constantly interact. "It is in terms not of independence, but of coexistence and competition in a perpetual field of interaction..."

³¹ Naveh, Schneider, Challans, Naveh, Schneider, and Challans state that military planners are "confined to the 'shackles' of inferiority determined by institutional paradigm, doctrine, and jargon...[they] are cognitively prevented, by the very convenience of institutional inferiority...because the 'shackles' of ritual hold them in place."

³² See U.S. Army, "Army Doctrine Publication," (ADP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (2012) for military operational variables consist of political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment,

time (PMESII-PT). See also "Army Doctrine Reference Publication" (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (May 2012) for additional information.

³³ Gary Jason, *Critical Thinking: Developing an Effective System logic*, (San Diego State University: Wadsworth Thomson Learning, 2001), 337. "People tend to compartmentalize: they divide aspects of their lives into compartments and then make decisions about things in one compartment without taking into account the implications for things in another compartment." See also: See also: Valerie Ahl and T.F.H. Allen, *Hierarchy Theory: A Vision, Vocabulary, and Epistemology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 1. "In all ages humanity has been confronted by complex problems. The difference between then and now is that contemporary society has ambitions of solving complex problems through technical understanding."

³⁴ Herbert A. Simon, "The Proverbs of Administration," *Public Administration Review*, 6, no. 1, (Winter 1946), 59. "Processes, then, are carried on in order to achieve purposes. But purposes themselves may generally be arranged in some sort of hierarchy."

³⁵ Deleuze, Guattari, *op. cit.*, 361. "The model is a vortical one; it operates in an open space throughout which things-flows are distributed, rather than plotting out a closed space for linear and solid things."

³⁶ Design pioneer Shimon Naveh terms this behavior 'tacticization' and charges that military organizations are unable to break free of this compulsion to measure and compartmentalize things into the procedures and categories that our doctrine dictates. See: Naveh, Schneider, Challans, 88.

³⁷ Ervin Laszlo, *The Systems View of the World; a Holistic Vision for Our Time*, (New Jersey: Hampton Press, 1996), 16. "Systems thinking gives us a holistic perspective for viewing the world around us, and seeing ourselves in the world." See also: Valerie Ahl and T.F.H. Allen, *Hierarchy Theory: A Vision, Vocabulary, and Epistemology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 18. "Meaning, and explaining the "why" of a phenomena, come from the context. The lower-level mechanics, the "how" of the phenomena, have nothing to say about "why."

³⁸ Michel Foucault, *Discourse and Truth: The Problematization of Parrhesia*, (originally covered in six lectures given by Michel Foucault at the University of California, Berkeley in October-November, 1983), Available at <<http://foucault.info/documents/parrhesia/>>.

³⁹ Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War; American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 11-17. Historian Carl H. Builder argues in *The Masks of War* that military institutions are generally motivated towards institutional

survival, evoking “golden eras” of past wars, and the continued idolization of self-defining behaviors, traditions, and structures.

⁴⁰ Mats Alvesson, Jorgen Sandberg, “Generating Research Questions Through Problematization,” *Academy of Management Review*, 36, no. 2 (2011), 257. Alvesson and Sandberg identify “field assumptions” and “root metaphors” as unquestionable theoretical concepts within an organization’s preferred manner of viewing the world that are “difficult to identify because “everyone” shares them, and, thus, they are rarely [questioned] in research texts.”

⁴¹ Mary Jo Hatch, Ann Cunliffe, *Organization Theory, Second Edition* (Oxford: University Press, 2006), 210-211. Hatch adapts her model from Pasquale Gagliardi and uses a cycle of assumptions, values, artifacts, and symbols where a society rotates through each of the processes and eventually changes them.

⁴² Shimon Naveh, *In Pursuit of Military Excellence; The Evolution of Operational Theory* (New York: Frank Cass Publishers, 2004), 220. “Due to a traditionally non-systematic approach in the area of learning and assimilation of operational lessons, field leaders and staff officers lacked uniform conventions in both planning and analysis...in most cases the learning process focused exclusively on the tactical field and technical issues.”

⁴³ Chris Papparoni, *The Sociology of Military Science; Prospects for Postinstitutional Military Design* (New York: Bloombury, 2013), 188-189. Co-Authors of chapter 6, Grant Martin and Ben Zweibelson, discuss institutionalisms and design in practice. Zweibelson describes how his planning team’s higher headquarters rejected their adjustment of a center of gravity because they were unwilling to entertain that their plan might not be relevant anymore.

⁴⁴ Nick Walsh, “U.S. Admiral Endorses Expanding Number of Armed Afghans Paid to Protect Villages”, *CNN*, December 11, 2011, available at <<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/12/11/world/asia/afghanistan-nato/index.html>>. “The head of America’s special operations troops has endorsed a likely controversial plan to boost the numbers of armed Afghans paid by NATO to protect their villages under a plan once described as “a community watch with AK-47s.”

⁴⁵ Deleuze and Guattari use the terms “territorialization” and “de-territorialization” to explain the creation and destruction of social constructions of reality; for brevity I use the simpler yet less accurate term “destructive creativity.”

⁴⁶ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, 3rd ed.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Kuhn warns of how during a paradigm shift within a field, those that cling to the old system will either strike out against the new transformation, or attempt to continue

in old methods. Over time, these practitioners will self-exile due to loss of relevance in the new paradigm.

⁴⁷ Paris Tech Review Editors, “It’s a Wiki Wiki World, Wikipedia and the Rise of a New Mode of Production,” *Paris Tech Review*, February 18, 2011, available at <<http://www.paristechreview.com/2011/02/18/wiki-world-wikipedia-new-mode-production/>>. The editors of this article use the term “social production model” to define how social networks collaborate anonymously to generate new knowledge in a self-organizing non-hierarchical fashion.

⁴⁸ AFP, “West to Pay Afghan Military \$4bn a Year,” *The Times of India*, March 22, 2012, accessed at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/West-to-pay-Afghan-military-4bn-a-year-Karzai/articleshow/12370336.cms>. Although the article confirms that nothing was final about the future ANSF, President Karzai’s public acknowledgement of the plan to build a sustainable and affordable security force is a direct reference to the approved NTM-A reduction plan. Planners used these design concepts to deliver the final recommendations.

⁴⁹ Qiao Liang, Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare* (Beijing: People’s Liberation Army Literature and Arts Publishing House, February 1999), 13-14. “Some of the traditional models of war, as well as the logic and laws attached to it, will also be challenged. The outcome of the contest is not the collapse of the traditional mansion but rather one portion of the new construction site being in disorder.”

⁵⁰ Weinberg, *op.cit.*, 121. See also: White, *op.cit.*, 6. “Rational or scientific knowledge was little more than the truth yielded by reflection in the prefigurative modes raised to the level of abstract concepts and submitted to criticism for logical consistency, coherency, and so on.”

Sri Lanka's Rehabilitation Program: A New Frontier in Counter Terrorism and Counter Insurgency

BY MALKANTHI HETTIARACHCHI

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE), sometimes referred to as the Tamil Tigers, or simply the Tigers, was a separatist militant organization based in northern Sri Lanka. It was founded in May 1976 by Prabhakaran and waged a violent secessionist and nationalist campaign to create an independent state in the north and east of Sri Lanka for the Tamil people. This campaign evolved into the Sri Lankan Civil War.¹ The Tigers were considered one of the most ruthless insurgent and terrorist organisations in the world.² They were vanquished by the Sri Lankan armed forces in May 2009.³ In order to rehabilitate the 11,664⁴ Tigers who had surrendered or been taken captive, Sri Lanka developed a multifaceted program to engage and transform the violent attitudes and behaviours of the Tiger leaders, members and collaborators.⁵ Since the end of the LTTE's three-decade campaign of insurgency and terrorism, there has not been a single act of terrorism in the country. Many attribute Sri Lanka's post-conflict stability to the success of the insurgent and terrorist rehabilitation program.

Globally, rehabilitation and community engagement is a new frontier in the fight against ideological extremism and its violent manifestations – terrorism and insurgency.⁶ Following a period of captivity or imprisonment, insurgents and terrorists are released back into society. Without their disengagement and de-radicalization, they will pose a continuing security threat. The recidivist will carry out attacks and politicize, radicalize, and militarize the next generation of fighters. Furthermore, they will become a part of the insurgent and terrorist iconography. To break the cycle of violence, governments of countries that suffer from terrorism must build partnerships with communities and other stakeholders in maintaining peace and stability. Working with communities, the media, academic circles, and the private sector, governments should invest time and energy into mainstreaming the thinking of those who have deviated into ideological extremism and violence.

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Sri Lankan Rehabilitation Program in Context: Global Rehabilitation Programs

As every conflict differs, there is no common template applicable to all rehabilitation programs. Nevertheless, there are some common principles of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is about changing the thinking and behaviour of offenders. Prior to the reintegration of former terrorists into mainstream society, offenders must move away from violent extremist thinking. If the

rather than adopting the classic retributive justice model, Sri Lanka embraced the restorative justice model

mindset is locked into an ideology of intolerance and violence against another ethnic or religious community, strategies must focus on changing their thinking patterns. In order to facilitate a shift within the offender, to a non-violent lifestyle, the violence justifying thought patterns must be identified, as well as the mechanisms that introduced, nurtured, and reinforced these thought patterns. To facilitate this transformation of thinking, genuine and continuous engagement is required in both the custodial rehabilitation and community rehabilitation phases.⁷

Global rehabilitation programs can be characterized as developed, developing, and defunct programs. The most developed programs are operating in Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. The developing programs are in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Colombia, while defunct programs are in Egypt, Yemen, and Libya.⁸ Although publicizing their model as uniquely Sri Lankan, the program benefited from drawing practical lessons and applicable concepts from existing rehabilitation programs. For example, the concept and term “beneficiary,” used in Saudi Arabia to refer to terrorists undergoing rehabilitation, was

recommended by Singapore to visiting Sri Lankan officials, who adopted it and subsequently shared it with Pakistani counterparts.⁹

In the process of creating a program that was applicable to Sri Lanka, existing global programs in Asia, Africa, and Latin America were reviewed. Through emphasizing national ownership, the rehabilitation staff and advisors helped to indigenise the best practices of other programs. Singapore’s rehabilitation model, considered one of the best global programs with its large number of psychologists and religious counsellors, was particularly instructive. The six modes of rehabilitation developed in the Singapore rehabilitation program were indigenized, adapted, and developed to a high standard in Sri Lanka. The founders of the Sri Lankan rehabilitation program named it the “6+1 model.” It consists of the following modes of rehabilitation and community engagement:¹⁰

1. Educational
2. Vocational
3. Psychosocial and creative therapies
4. Social, cultural, and family
5. Spiritual and religious
6. Recreational
- +1: Community rehabilitation

Rehabilitation Program in Sri Lanka

The Sri Lankan spirit itself was conducive for embracing rehabilitation. Rather than adopting the classic retributive justice model, Sri Lanka embraced the restorative justice model.¹¹ The then Attorney General Mohan Peiris crafted the legal framework for rehabilitation. Sri Lanka drew from its own rich heritage of moderation, toleration, and coexistence – communities in Sri Lanka have lived side by side for centuries.¹² Sri Lanka also has a history of rehabilitating violent youth after the insurrections in the south in 1971 and 1987-1989. Sri Lanka’s first experience in rehabilitation



Photo by Indri Samarajiva on Flickr

53 former LTTE cadres were married in Vavuniya. They are being moved to family houses, but still kept in the rehabilitation program.

was after security forces defeated the Peoples Liberation Front (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna), a vicious Marxist-Leninist group that adopted Maoist tactics, in 1971. Although the programs were not as robust as the contemporary program, there was hardly any recidivism among the participants.¹³ After a period of incarceration, the state did not oppose and at times facilitated the re-entry of some of the key players of Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna into the political mainstream.

The Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation (BCGR) was founded as the special state authority responsible for the

rehabilitation and reintegration program following the defeat of LTTE in 2009. Even before the fighting ended in May 2009, the BCGR managed rehabilitation centers in Ambepussa in the south, and Thelippale in the north for Tiger captives.¹⁴ These centers were named Protective Accommodation and Rehabilitation Centers (PARCs), accommodating nearly 11,500 cadres that either surrendered or were identified while masquerading as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) at the end of the conflict.

Approximately 254 staff¹⁵ work within Sri Lankan rehabilitation centers, attending to the

welfare requirements of the beneficiaries as well as facilitating the rehabilitative input provided by several agencies. This figure does not include security staff dedicated to perimeter security. The Sri Lankan Government has spent USD 9,136,370¹⁶ to manage rehabilitation centers. The amount spent annually fluctuates based on the number of beneficiaries within the system, and does not include the costs associated with complementary efforts of individual “specialist programs,” charities, national non-governmental organizations, international and local non-governmental organizations, government institutions, ministries and well-wishers.

The rehabilitation process was aimed at reintegrating the former LTTE leaders, members, and collaborators into the community. During the process, beneficiaries within the PARCs were supported to engage in a range of activities and through these activities reconnect to all aspects of individual and communal life, including familial, social, cultural, and religious. The beneficiaries were supported to shift their thinking away from the narrow hate-filled ideology targeted towards the Sinhalese, Muslims, and national and international figures that opposed the LTTE agenda. Upon reflection on their actions and experiences, the former terrorists and insurgents found new meaning in their lives. They were transformed into champions of peace with values of moderation, toleration, and co-existence replacing hate, anger, and the mono-ethnic single narrative.¹⁷

The majority of the beneficiaries were reintegrated within the 24-month mandated period and as of November 2012 approximately 11,044¹⁸ beneficiaries had been reintegrated. 594 child beneficiaries¹⁹ were reintegrated within the stipulated one-year rehabilitation period for children. The reintegration of students, the disabled, and the aged were prioritised, and the BCGR engaged the community to enlist their support

for rehabilitation. As of November 2012, the BCGR remains responsible for the rehabilitation of approximately 800 remaining beneficiaries.

The government faced many challenges. Although the public in the south, which had been targeted and suffered from LTTE terrorism, supported rehabilitation, northerners shunned the return of the rehabilitated terrorists into their midst. In the North, the LTTE had forcibly recruited children, extorted funds, and induced untold suffering on civilian populations, which earned the resentment and anger of northern families. In the last phases of the fight, the LTTE left their village bases and took nearly 300,000 Tamil civilians as hostage. They were the sons and daughters of the northern Tamil community and this suffering made the northerners reject the former LTTE cadres and their separatist ideology.

The BCGR encouraged contact with the community through visits, letters, and phone contact, among other means. Furthermore, the reintegration ceremonies – the transfer of the beneficiary back to their families and communities – were conducted publicly with community participation. After organizing a mass marriage ceremony of fifty-three former LTTE cadres, the BCGR organized for the couples to live within a specially built peace village.²⁰ Responsibility for guiding, mentoring, and mainstreaming former cadres was gradually transferred to their local communities.

As the state itself lacked sufficient funds, the Sri Lankan private sector played a role in supporting both custodial rehabilitation and community reintegration. Sri Lankan blue chip companies²¹ supported vocational training to build skills and later employ former LTTE cadres. A number of international organizations and non-governmental organizations, notably the International Organization of Migrants (IOM), which had access to the rehabilitation centers, also assisted and advised the government.²²

Categorization of the Detainees

The rehabilitation phase was aimed at working towards the successful reintegration of the beneficiaries through reconciliation and resettlement. The first step in the process was to categorize the surrendered and apprehended insurgents and terrorists. Utilizing interviews and background information, law enforcement authorities and intelligence agencies categorized former insurgents based on their depth of involvement, period of involvement, and activities conducted during involvement. They were labeled as high, medium, or low risk, and allocated to detention and PARCs accordingly. Assessing the risk level of the detainees enabled the state to categorize them into A, B, C, D, E, and F groups.²³

Serious insurgents were categorized into the A and B groups. They were frontline leaders and members. These prisoners were allocated to detention and not rehabilitation, and forced to go through a judicial process. Following the findings of the investigation and assessments of the detainees' levels of cooperation, and based on those findings, the detainees were offered the option of joining the rehabilitation process or the judicial process. The moderate group (category C and D) were assessed and allocated to either detention or to one of the twenty-four PARCs. The low risk group (category E and F) was allocated to the PARCs.

A baseline survey was conducted to assess the changing attitudes and opinions of the beneficiaries. To determine their degree of radicalization, the survey results were assessed by University of Maryland psychologists Arie Kruglanski and Michele Gelfand. There was a significant decline in the levels of radicalization following the beginning of rehabilitation interventions and the way in which the staff interacted with the beneficiaries.²⁴

Modes of Rehabilitation

Six modes of rehabilitation were utilized at the PARCs: educational, vocational, spiritual, recreational, psychosocial, and familiar, social, and cultural.

- **Educational rehabilitation:** The Tamil Tigers recruited from a cross section of society, but mostly from poor and under-aged groups. Many of the terrorist cadres had either not completed their education or failed to achieve the country's national standard of completing the General Certificate of Education, Ordinary Level Examination (requiring ten years of study). Given that one of the main aims of the rehabilitation program is education, the BCGR focused on promoting academic education. Between ten to twenty-five percent of the beneficiaries needed help with reading and writing in the Tamil language, and the majority spoke neither the national language of Sri Lanka, Sinhalese, nor the link language, English.²⁵ The rehabilitation program created a space for providing formal education to those beneficiaries less than eighteen years of age within a residential school environment. Adult supplementary education was provided for adults in need of literacy and numeracy skills. Informal education also took place in groups within each rehabilitation centre. Beneficiaries identified as having teaching skills conducted informal classes to facilitate learning to read and write Tamil, as well as to learn English, Sinhala, and math.

- **Vocational rehabilitation:** According to survey results, almost every ex-cadre was keen to be employed. Follow-up surveys indicated that beneficiaries' desire for vocational training and employment gradually increased as their period in rehabilitation progressed.²⁶ The

BCGR therefore facilitated vocational training. Based on the beneficiaries' interests, their families' traditional vocations and businesses, and regional vocational opportunities, the beneficiaries were divided into centers for agriculture, carpentry, masonry, motor mechanics, beauty-culture, and the garment industry, among others. Members of the different industries' business communities were also involved in the program and eventually pledged training and jobs in their factories to the cadres in rehabilitation. Forty-two vocational training programs were conducted within rehabilitation centers and externally by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), International NGOs (INGOs), private businesses, state ministries, and volunteer organizations.²⁷ The different business communities provided residential facilities for the beneficiaries to engage in vocational training programs on-site with mainstream populations. The beneficiaries received all company benefits accessed by the mainstream interns. The vocational training also helped to gradually develop beneficiary confidence in using their own skills to carve out a livelihood instead of following orders. The beneficiaries were motivated to engage in vocational training that would help them secure future financial stability and dignity by engaging in a vocation that would help themselves, their families, their communities, and their country.²⁸

- **Spiritual rehabilitation:** Throughout the course of rehabilitation, many beneficiaries were faced with the realities of their actions. They felt the need to spiritually reconcile with their past and look forward to the future. The Brahma Kumari spiritual group from India conducted yoga and meditation for beneficiaries that relaxes the mind and nurtures a healthy balance between inner and outer

worlds. The Goenka Vipassana program from India provided, "mindfulness training." This training involves developing self-awareness of emotions and thoughts.²⁹ Those beneficiaries trained in mindfulness supported their peers to practice this method of meditation. Different religious organizations, including leaders from the Hindu, Satya Sai, and Christian traditions, also conducted religious ceremonies, rites, and rituals based on each person's faith. Finally, praying and chanting constituted a large part of spiritual rehabilitation with each PARC constructing Hindu temples or *kovils* for prayer and faith practice.

- **Recreational rehabilitation:** Most LTTE cadres put on weight during their period of rehabilitation. It was therefore vital that all the beneficiaries exercised both their minds and bodies. Cricket, volleyball, traditional sports, and other sports activities were conducted at every centre on a daily basis. Specific sports programs conducted included "Cricket for Change," regional athletic meets, inter-center cricket and netball matches, sports meets, and New Year Festival activities. Board games such as carom were also popular. Gardening was also conducted in small plots within the centers.

- **Psychosocial rehabilitation:** Enhanced interpersonal interaction contributed to beneficiaries expanding their skills in relating and engaging with people at a social and community level. Beneficiaries were observed to have undergone a significant transformation in their attitudes and behavior towards the Sinhalese, Muslims, and security forces personnel over the course of the first seven months of rehabilitation. This cognitive transformation appears to have taken place through informal interpersonal engagement with the center staff. The beneficiaries built an excellent rapport with the staff and engaged in meaningful discussion

related to the future and desire to build peace. The thinking espoused was that there are no winners and losers in war but tragic loss of life on every side. Beneficiaries focused on how they can now build a life for themselves.

Having the opportunity to share their thoughts with the staff, the interpersonal interactional initiatives were a large part of the rehabilitation program because they allowed beneficiaries to engage in discussions cultivating their thinking in terms of family, future, and peace building. Less time was spent with thoughts of violence and hatred. Engaging in discussion related to society, social responsibility, and contributing towards the economy helped to cultivate a sense of citizenship.

The BCGR conducted training sessions for their center staff on counseling and advanced psychosocial skills training. Staff training sessions were conducted by a clinical psychologist, a counseling psychologist, counselors, therapists, a community mental health worker and a psychology lecturer in the different PARCs to build in-house capability for counseling.

The ongoing mentorship programs are essential to shift beneficiary thinking away from violence and separatism. A group of successful and well-respected persons in the Tamil community acted as mentors, reflecting a sense of responsibility and of a future that is achievable through unity rather than divisions. They motivated the beneficiaries to work hard and to build a successful future.³⁰ These business people, film stars, and athletes were testimony to the ability of people from the region to make a successful life with the opportunities available in Sri Lanka.

Other psychosocial rehabilitation programs included Girl Guide and Boy Scout programs, creativity therapy programs, and

art therapy. The Sri Lanka Girl Guides and Boy Scouts conducted Girl Guide and Boy Scout programs.³¹ These programs were aimed at building a sense of social responsibility and comradeship among young people in rehabilitation. Creative therapy rehabilitation provided effective ways for participants to express their inner thoughts and feelings through indirect means. Creative therapies can have a healing effect on large groups of people. Examples of creative therapy conducted in the centers included theatre, drama, and music programs designed to help beneficiaries communicate and transform their audiences (who were also beneficiaries).

the thinking espoused was that there are no winners and losers in war but tragic loss of life on every side

Art work and art therapy provided a medium for expression and assessment. The beneficiaries engaged in artwork to give expression to issues close to their hearts. They expressed their desires for family life, freedom, peace, and unity. Creative writing exercises included poetry, short stories, and booklets related to the themes of freedom, loss, appreciation of rehabilitation, new thinking, future plans, and development.

Anoja Weerasinghe and her team trained those beneficiaries that expressed an interest in dance and music.³² The performing arts included not only music and dance but also drama. Drama therapy included productions of plays that reflect unity. The beneficiaries had access to short stories, articles, and historical words of wisdom that promote peace and unity. Narrative and Bibliotherapy involved the recitation and reading of historical and

contemporary texts that promoted reflection. Beneficiaries engaged in making jewelry, soap carvings, cards, knitting caps, and baby clothes. Opportunities to make handicrafts, especially ornaments using coconut shells, were especially appreciated. Some were purchased by visitors to the centers and exhibited at popular community events that gave pride and recognition to the work.

■ **Social, Cultural and Family Rehabilitation:** Social and educational tours were conducted for beneficiaries to provide experience of seeing the different parts of Sri Lanka, hitherto having had no access due to the Tamil Tiger control of the north and east of the country. The majority of beneficiaries (estimates are as high as 99 percent) have not travelled in their lifetime out of the conflict area of the northeast to witness social and cultural life in the rest of the country. The Tamil Tigers had fought a war based on the propaganda, without ever having met their “enemy” the Sinhalese that they targeted for thirty years. The beneficiaries who were ready to receive this exposure witnessed a part of their own country developed, that was not held by the grip of terrorism. It was vital for them to see all ethnic communities living together in the rest of the country, the inter-marriages, working together, studying in university, in schools, partaking in sports and all walks of life. The beneficiaries realize that it is possible to develop and grow in strength in the absence of violence and terrorism.

A welcoming, relaxed and warm atmosphere enabled family or next of kin to visit the beneficiaries. The relatively relaxed atmosphere prevailing within the PARCs enabled the redevelopment of family bonds. The level of perimeter security was low as the beneficiaries were engaged well within the PARCs. Family visits

were encouraged and staff engaged with family members if required to facilitate the family engagement process. The LTTE functioned as a pseudo-family, with the terrorist cadre commitment and loyalty to the group instead of responsibility towards family. Often young people joined the terrorist group against the wishes of their family. There was reluctance to face the families some of the beneficiaries had defied and left behind in order to join the LTTE. Therefore the restoration of fragmented family bonds was an essential part of the rehabilitation process to ensure the individual nurtures family relationships instead of idolizing the terrorist group.³³

Although the beneficiaries had no access to personal phones, they had the opportunity to call their families. The beneficiaries also could write and receive letters. The beneficiaries also had opportunities to visit their home in the event of a celebration, illness or a death. Social, cultural and family rehabilitation brought the beneficiaries close to their family and prepared the LTTE cadres for reintegration into society.

Effectiveness of Rehabilitation

The assessment phase involved four pillars to obtain a broad understanding of the individual. First, interviews with the beneficiary; second, reviewing past records; third, observations noted by the staff working day to day within the PARCs documenting beneficiary response to a range of activities and programs; and fourth, formal assessment using psychometrics where possible. This assessment method ensures a comprehensive process to overcome deception. Assessment should be conducted in a safe and secure environment where the beneficiaries are free to engage in discussion and express their thoughts openly without fear of reprisal.



EU 2012 - EG/ECHO Anjun Claire

A young girl in Kurunjipadi camp, Tamil Nadu

Interviews with former LTTE cadres gathered as the fighting ended in May 2009, reflected uncertainty and fear of reprisal. Assessment therefore should be an ongoing process, to capture beneficiary attitudes and opinions as they change. The de-radicalization profiling in December 2009, when compared with initial profiling soon after the cadres gave themselves up, indicated some inconsistencies. However, with greater confidence in the process the beneficiaries provided more accurate and detailed information. Some surrendering LTTE cadres who had heard of the Thelippale rehabilitation center – which was operational well before the end of the war – remarked, “we knew the government will treat us well.”³⁴ These cadres encouraged others to surrender. Therefore timely and ongoing assessment was an important part of the program.

Engaging the Beneficiaries

Engagement is the key to understanding the individual mindset. Thought patterns are intangible. Whilst thought patterns can be accessed by using interviews, paper and pencil tests, one must consider aspects such as deception and social desirability. Particularly in the case of the LTTE, both ruthlessness and deception were a part of the training. Considered masters at deception,³⁵ a few in the terrorist cadres that entered rehabilitation did not disclose the full extent of their involvement. Similar examples are found in Iraq and Afghanistan, where former terrorists of the Al Qaeda movement worked with the US military and other agencies but without revealing their true intentions. In the Sri Lankan case, there were only a few that attempted such deception because the conflict had come to an end.

Over time beneficiaries understood the rehabilitation process. They became less anxious and more confident about the process. As the beneficiaries reflected on their past, they rejected violence and embraced peace. They voluntarily provided more accurate and more detailed information. There were few instances of information contaminated with peer opinions and theories or information doctored to gain early reintegration. There was evidence of deception in the creation of a phantom individual and projecting one's role onto another individual and/or denial of own actions. At the same time the beneficiaries who disclosed their own information accurately, also informed the interviewers of those that hid their involvement within the terrorist movement.³⁶

effective engagement requires staff training, guidance and discipline

Some senior members of the terrorist movement within the PARCs attempted to maintain a senior position.³⁷ Without mingling, they attempted to get the junior members to do their chores.³⁸ Another aspect noted was that with time, the beneficiaries were more open to speaking about their activities when working with the terrorist group.³⁹ These changes occurred within the PARC atmosphere that was relaxed with no fear of reprisals. These disclosures were taken as part of the healing process. However those beneficiaries who lied at the assessment or withheld information were detained for further investigation.⁴⁰ Deception and resistance would occur when one believed that the information provided by the beneficiary would result in negative consequences and/or when the beneficiary does not wish to transform. Therefore it is vital that the staff engaging the beneficiary not function in an investigative capacity. It was necessary to keep

the investigation and rehabilitation processes separate to ensure effective engagement.

The military personnel that engaged the beneficiaries developed an attitude different from other military personnel. These service personnel engaged with beneficiaries by looking into their welfare and supporting the rehabilitation service providers to deliver an effective service. The military personnel responsible for the security of the perimeter did not interact with the beneficiaries. Officers in charge had a clear understanding of what was required at each level. Effective engagement requires staff training, guidance and discipline. Although some staff were naturally oriented towards engagement and did not require training, staff guidance and discipline was considered imperative.

Investigation

Within the Sri Lankan context, the role of the investigating arm of the state and the rehabilitative role of the BCGR were separated. The information shared by the beneficiaries within rehabilitation did not have a negative impact on the beneficiaries. This ethos helped to minimize resistance and deception, as it is important to engage the beneficiary genuinely and consistently.

Investigation and reinvestigation have occurred when new information is received on those who have not disclosed their actual in-depth involvement in LTTE activities. In some cases, those living in the community disclosed greater depth of involvement of identified Tamil Tigers and those that had not entered rehabilitation. The Tamil community living in the villages expressed their anger towards the former cadres who held them hostage and persecuted them through a rule of law unto themselves. The anger towards the LTTE was reflected among the displaced Tamil population within internally displaced persons (IDP) centers.⁴¹ IDPs

temporarily remained within these centers, until the terrorist cadres were identified and villages were cleared of mines to enable resettlement.⁴² Tamil civilians suffered much at the hands of the LTTE. A civilian remarked that during the final stages of the war “they knew they were going to lose, so why keep us as a shield for them to be protected? They did not care about us; it was all about what they wanted.”⁴³

Staff working within the PARCs engaged in a caring and supportive role and assessed risk. Deception and resistance would occur when beneficiaries believed their revelations would be used against them – that concern often resulted in unwillingness to shed the violent extremist attitude. Therefore, it is vital that the staff engaging the beneficiary do not function in an investigative capacity.

Ethos of Rehabilitation

The ethos of the center staff reflected professionalism, compassion, and discipline. Security concerns related to rioting or running away were virtually absent, with a relatively small number of security personnel guarding the perimeter both in June 2009 and December 2009. There were isolated incidents reported where beneficiaries requested to go to hospital and then ran away. The ethos was to treat the ex-combatants with care and respect, and help them return to society. The approach within the centers was one of care and respect. With these guiding principles the beneficiaries settled quickly and began to appreciate the rehabilitation initiative and admired the military that conducted the rehabilitation. This is evident in the positive ratings reported by the ex-combatants of the rehabilitation center staff (96.43%),⁴⁴ the rehabilitation center (70.14%)⁴⁵ and the rehabilitation center guards (94.57%).⁴⁶

The rehabilitation centers' treatment of beneficiaries has been commended. In a message

the ethos was to treat the ex-combatants with care and respect, and help them return to society

to mark America's Independence Day, the U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka Patricia Butenis, said, “The government has also made great progress with the rehabilitation of ex-combatants.”⁴⁷ Several LTTE cadres today are championing peace initiatives.⁴⁸ Some have returned to the rehabilitation centers following reintegration to reside and follow courses. LEADS, a National NGO facilitated “pre-school training” for a group of reintegrated beneficiaries who opted to return to the Vavuniya PARC. Most beneficiaries moved on to employment and self-employment in sectors ranging from the garment industry to the film making industry, or worked with NGOs, INGO's and with government.⁴⁹

Effective Management and Engagement

The Sri Lankan military managed the centers but civilians staffed the rehabilitation intervention programs. The Sri Lankan military was trained in a way that they would acquire skills required to manage a vast number of former LTTE cadres. The Sri Lankan state including the Army commenced the process of rehabilitation with limited knowledge of how to rehabilitate. Neither political leaders nor military officials in charge of rehabilitation had any previous relevant experience. They had limited access to literature on rehabilitation and exposure to rehabilitation programs conducted overseas. For example, Minister Milinda Moragoda, the Minister of Justice and Law Reform, who was in charge of the rehabilitation program was keen to learn and he received briefings from the specialist staff engaged in rehabilitation at Singapore's International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR). Similarly, General Daya Ratnayake, the

General Daya Ratnayaka managed to steer the rehabilitation process chartering new territory with sound leadership

Commissioner General of Rehabilitation (CGR) visited Singapore and Colombia and received guidance on the modes of rehabilitation. They quickly embraced the idea of rehabilitation, drew from the key concepts, and practical lessons. Although formal knowledge on how to rehabilitate terrorist cadres was useful, the Sri Lankan rehabilitation program developed largely through a commonsense approach. Sri Lankan military personnel acquired many of the qualities essential to engage communities during their training and service. They also learned how to approach and work with beneficiaries at the rehabilitation centers.

Rehabilitation Staff

In many ways, the CGR established a standard through his own conduct towards beneficiaries. The first Commissioner General of Rehabilitation, General Daya Ratnayaka, overcame several challenges from funding to a legal framework. He managed to steer the rehabilitation process chartering new territory with sound leadership. Following the end of the Sri Lankan conflict, Colonel Manjula Gunasinghe was the Coordinator for Rehabilitation in Vavuniya since the inception of rehabilitation. He worked with four consecutive Commissioner Generals of Rehabilitation; General Daya Ratnayake, General Sudantha Ranasinghe, General Chandana Rajaguru and Brigadier Dharshana Hettiarachchi. He provided the highest quality of leadership and managed 24 PARCs that housed male, female and child beneficiaries without a single incident. He harnessed his staff and provided the required care and facilitated rehabilitation intervention

programs without compromising safety or security. Managing staff and beneficiaries of multiple centers was no easy task. His commitment to staff training was high and his ability to work with a range of INGOs, NGOs, volunteer professionals, corporate sector entities, and Ministries to implement rehabilitation interventions received praise.

It was observed that the military training following clear guidance helped the staff at the ground level to effectively engage with the ex-combatants. An officer conducting rehabilitation Captain Aluthwala stated, "When we give 100% to the beneficiaries it is a combination of 50% from our head and 50% from our heart." He elaborated further to say that they would be mindful, alert and also compassionate. Other officers described, "the importance of understanding the person from within their context, to be able to help them adjust to a new reality."⁵⁰ Still others said that though they are all injured and the injuries were sustained during the battle with the terrorist cadres, that, "I don't want my children to grow up with terrorism," and, "I don't want to leave terrorism to be faced by the next generation."⁵¹

The rehabilitation personnel received their guidance and supervision from within the hierarchical structure and from among their peer group. Formal trainings arranged for staff were few and far between. The staff learned from practice and applied commonsense to situations, and the compassion instilled within the culture and religion was extended to the beneficiaries. A rehabilitation staff member, who had lost 7 of his family members in the civil war, expressed his perspective on working with the former LTTE cadres in rehabilitation. He stated that, "I don't want my children to see another war;" pointing to a beneficiary he added, "I want my children to be able to play with his children and in that way we won't have another war."⁵² His words

captured the essence of the motivation of the security forces personnel working tirelessly within the rehabilitation centers. Sri Lanka's rehabilitation program does not have the luxuries of the Saudi Rehabilitation Program, the facilities of the Singapore model, nor the funding of the Pakistani program, but it is rich in commitment, compassion and genuine in its effort.⁵³

Almost every citizen in the country has lost someone in the thirty-year war. The Tamil Tiger cadres inflicted many casualties and indeed most staff conducting rehabilitation had been wounded, and carried embedded shell pieces; others were aware first hand of the LTTE terrorism having seen massacred border villagers, and still others have had their friends die in battle. Most stated that they did not know how they could work with the former insurgents, but gradually they realized the importance of guiding them onto a peaceful path. Most stated that the LTTE cadres were made to believe in a different reality.

De-Radicalization

The individual has to de-radicalize to be able to disengage from violence and re-engage in harmonious living.⁵⁴ Rehabilitation is the method to achieve this end. The LTTE leadership developed the mastery of indoctrinating the masses, especially the youth. LTTE leaders groomed and motivated their members to sacrifice themselves in suicide attacks and to sacrifice the wellbeing of one's own kith and kin in the pursuit of a violent radical ideology. Radicalization was the tool used to engage and sustain its membership. Therefore a multifaceted rehabilitation program was necessary to engage the surrendered and apprehended detainees' hearts and minds to facilitate de-radicalization.

Those detained for rehabilitation includes male and female adults, adolescents and children who were members, helpers and supporters of the

tales of heroism were concocted to motivate cadres and recruit by generating anger, hatred and lust for revenge

LTTE. Detainees were both injured and non-injured, and battlefield (insurgent) and off the battlefield (terrorist) fighters. An ethno political conflict radicalized and militarized a generation of youth in Sri Lanka during the thirty years of initially sporadic and later sustained violence.

The impact of radicalization and the importance of rehabilitation in the transformation of thinking were articulated by a 16-year-old child soldier groomed by the Tamil Tigers;

"As vultures that eat dead bodies and hands that stretch out to beg

Terrorism destroys communities and destroyed our wellbeing until the end.

Loosing and separating mother and child,

Communities bore the tears of the people,

They trapped us by giving false hopes saying

even death can become life, the tombstone

*an Epic."*⁵⁵

She refers to terrorism preying upon and thriving on the dead, and on the unsuspecting poor. The LTTE used powerful narratives of those that died while conducting acts of terror. Tales of heroism were concocted to motivate cadres and recruit by generating anger, hatred and lust for revenge. LTTE leaders also exploited the vulnerable poor who were more easily recruited and given significance, power and a means of livelihood to ensure unquestioning loyalty.

The impact of terrorism on communities has been devastating; splitting the family unit, the loss of the child groomed into death. The LTTE policy of recruiting one member of each household led families to give their under age children

whilst the rehabilitation program is considered a success, the state has not been able to market its success effectively

in marriage to older men for protection, or got them pregnant to prevent recruitment. Children were also turned against their family members to demonstrate their loyalty to the insurgency. The indoctrination of cadres with the perception that through suicide terrorism one achieves continued life as martyrs was prevalent. LTTE leaders promoted suicide terror by justifying and glorifying the act of mass murder by suicide attacks.

Challenges of the Rehabilitation Program

Sri Lanka's rehabilitation program faced many challenges. First, the personnel assigned to staff the program had to be both formally and informally trained. While most of the staff was committed to the idea of rehabilitation, some needed convincing that this was the way forward. Second, the program lacked resources from its inception. This led to the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation having to work with a range of state and private sector partners. These funding challenges however led to building a low cost program with greater participation from the community. Third, the criticisms aimed against the state initiatives were largely due to the restriction of international agency participation or access particularly to the ICRC, with the exception of IOM. This led to heavy criticism and undue suspicion by the international community. Fourth, had Sri Lankan diplomats improved their communication with the international community that would likely have led to greater understanding, reduced negativity⁵⁶ and improved funding for the programs. Finally, whilst the rehabilitation program is considered a success, the state has not been able to market its success effectively.

Conclusion

Sri Lanka succeeded in rehabilitating the bulk of the leaders and members of one of the world's most dangerous terrorist and insurgent groups, the LTTE. When communities are radicalized into violence, individuals are transformed from within and the mindset is locked into a violence justifying ideology. The radicalizing ideology becomes a vehicle and the person wishes to live by it, promote it and die for it. Sri Lanka's rehabilitation efforts centered on reaching the hearts and minds of the beneficiaries through several activities that are transformative. Within rehabilitation, the radicalization process is reversed and the beneficiary is transformed from within by engaging in a range of salutary activities. The beneficiary re-engages with self, family and society, and the need for violence is delegitimized. The beneficiaries are supported to move away from violence towards peaceful co-existence.

Some of the essential components identified in the success of Sri Lanka's rehabilitation program are the political will and the confidence of the leadership that rehabilitation was the right way forward. The Presidential Amnesty⁵⁷ provided the hope and opportunity for beneficiaries to engage in the civilian process. The Presidential message was to "treat them as your own children."⁵⁸

It was essential that parallel to the process of rehabilitation, a clear message be given that terrorism is a grave offence and punishable by law. This was demonstrated through the indictments and required prosecutions of the most criminally culpable LTTE cadres.

Sound leadership provided at every level is vital to maintaining standards and the security of each facility. The ethos of the rehabilitation centers was similar to a residential training center where individuals engage in a series of life

skills to develop self and promote peace and harmony. The beneficiary gradually begins to see the “other” as non-threatening, observing in the “other” behavior and values to emulate, thereby invalidating the distorted images propagated and maintained of the “other” by the propaganda.

Rehabilitation and community engagement is a counter-terrorism strategy that is long lasting and sustainable. Former combatants who are rehabilitated and have returned to their home communities remain vulnerable to recidivism. The community is the base from which terrorists are recruited. Therefore rehabilitation and the de-radicalization of former terrorists is an ongoing process. It is essential to continuously assess rehabilitation programs and the progress made by the former combatants. The aftercare process of the reintegrated beneficiary is a vital aspect to ensure smooth transition into community life. While within rehabilitation the beneficiaries are supported to de-radicalize and re-engage in community, it is essential to conduct ongoing Community Engagement Programs⁵⁹ to prevent re-radicalization of the reintegrated beneficiaries, as well as to build community resilience as a counter terrorism and counter insurgency strategy. PRISM

Notes

¹ “Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam,” *Wikipedia*, available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberation_Tigers_of_Tamil_Elam>.

² Tamil Tigers are among the most dangerous and deadly extremists in the world. For more than three decades, the group has launched a campaign of violence and bloodshed in Sri Lanka, the island republic off the southern coast of India¹ retrieved in November 2009. “Taming the Tamil Tigers: From Here in the US,” *The FBI website*, available at http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2008/january/tamil_tigers011008.

³ Members of the LTTE are identified as the “Tamil Tiger Terrorists”.

⁴ Commissioner General for Rehabilitation, “Defense Seminar,” April 2011 and August 2012, and “Workshop at the Lakshman Kadiragamar Center,” July 2012.

⁵ Rohan Gunaratna, “The Battlefield of The Mind,” *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, 21 (October 2009). Professor Rohan Gunaratna is from the International Center for Political Violence and Terrorism Research and is the advisor for global terrorism programs including Sri Lanka’s rehabilitation program.

⁶ A.W. Kruglanski, M.J. Gelfand, and R. Gunaratna, *Aspects of De-radicalization*, in “Terrorist Rehabilitation,” ed. L. Rubin and R. Gunaratna (New York: Routledge, 2012). A.W. Kruglanski, M.J. Gelfand, and R. Gunaratna, *Terrorism as Means to an End: How Political Violence Bestows Significance*, in “Meaning, Mortality and Choice,” ed. P.R. Shaver and M. Mikulincer (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2012).

⁷ Rehabilitation that occurs within a Custodial or secure setting and within the community setting, upon reintegration.

⁸ Mohamed Feisal Bin Mohamed Hassan (Associate Research Fellow, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research), interview by author, July 21, 2012.

⁹ “1st Strategic Workshop on Rehabilitation & De-radicalization of Militants and Extremists,” *FATA Secretariat*, (FATA Capacity Building Project, May 18-19, 2012).

¹⁰ Brigadier Dharshana Hettiarachchi, *Terrorist Rehabilitation in Sri Lanka*, (National Workshop on Terrorist Rehabilitation, Lakshman Kadiragamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies, July 21, 2012). Brigadier Dharshana Hettiarachchi is Commissioner General of Rehabilitation.

¹¹ The retributive justice model involves punishment by sentencing. The restorative justice model promotes repentance and transformation.

¹² “The LTTE is responsible for forcibly removing, or ethnic cleansing of Sinhalese and Muslim inhabitants from areas under its control, and using violence against those who refuse to leave. The eviction of Muslim residents happened in the north in 1990, and the east in 1992.” “Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam”, *Wikipedia*, available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberation_Tigers_of_Tamil_Elam. Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious nation. During the period of the entire conflict Tamil people have lived in the South of the country amongst the Sinhalese and Muslims. Prior to the conflict all ethnic groups have lived side by side for centuries and fought together to gain independence from British rule. Today the ethnic distribution of Colombo is equal due to increasing number of Tamil people settling in Colombo. The schools

in Colombo and the Sinhala and Tamil medium classes are testimony to this fact.

¹³ There was no recorded evidence of those who participated in the rehabilitation program returning to violence.

¹⁴ The author visited Ambepussa in June 2009 and interviewed staff and beneficiaries of the rehabilitation centers at Ambepussa all centers on the island including Thelippale, Jaffna.

¹⁵ The staff working directly with the beneficiaries are primarily from the Army Cadet Corps – who are trained professional educators (school teachers).

¹⁶ Sri Lanka's rehabilitation program costs from 01 January 2009-31 September 2012, BCGR.

¹⁷ The Tamil tigers promoted a mono-ethnic separatist agenda that was weaved into a "single narrative" away from diversity, peace building, and community cohesion.

¹⁸ Statistics provided by the Bureau for the Commissioner General for Rehabilitation, 22 November 2012.

¹⁹ BCGR statistics from 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 were presented at the Sri Lankan Defense Seminar, Sri Lanka in April 2011 and 2012.

²⁰ Jason Burke, "Sri Lankan Tamils Tie the Knot in Mass Detention Center Wedding: 53 Couples Married in Detention Center as Government Tries to Rehabilitate Former Tamil Tigers," *The Guardian*, June 13, 2010, available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jun/13/tamil-tigers-sri-lanka-mass-wedding>.

²¹ Leading private companies and businesses both provided training within rehabilitation centers or provided residential training within their training centers in the community and offered employment to those who wished to return. See www.bcgr.gov.lk to see the 40+ partnerships formed to conduct rehabilitation programs.

²² "Norway Backs IOM Reintegration of Former Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka," *International Organization for Migration*, accessed at http://www.iomsrilanka.org/iom/?page_id=1554.

²³ BCGR, "Action Plan," (March 2010). This action plan provides the framework for the rehabilitation process based on DDR (Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Rehabilitation).

²⁴ Arie W. Kruglanski and Michele J. Gelfand, *Rehabilitation of Former LTTE Cadres in Sri Lanka: A Preliminary Report*, (University of Maryland, College Park, 2011).

²⁵ In December 2009, approximately ten to twenty-five percent of beneficiaries were taught to read and write in each rehabilitation center.

²⁶ Follow-up surveys indicated greater aspirations by beneficiaries to engage in vocational training and

self-employment. KAC Karunarathna, *Transformation in Thinking on Aspirations for Employment* (report, June 22, 2012).

²⁷ General Sudanatha Ranasinghe, "Defence Seminar 2012: Towards Lasting Peace and Stability," *Bureau of Commissioner General Of Rehabilitation*, August 8, 2012 Available at <http://www.bcgr.gov.lk/news.php?id=209>.

²⁸ Beneficiaries were found to have a greater sense of citizenship and developed a sense of belongingness and desire to contribute to the development of the country through employment. KAC Karunarathna, *Transformation in Thinking on Aspirations for Employment* (report, June 22, 2012).

²⁹ Beneficiaries were reported to gradually express remorse for their own actions and express gratitude for the second chance in life through rehabilitation. KAC Karunarathna, *op. cit.*

³⁰ Mr Eswaran, a Tamil Business Entrepreneur (Eswaran Brothers), motivated and supported individuals to live their lives on a basis of ethical principals.

³¹ "Former LTTE Child Combatants Turn Girl Guides & Boy Scouts," *Ministry of Defence and Urban Development of Sri Lanka*, December 12, 2010, available at http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20100509_05.

³² Shamindra Ferdinando *From Vanni to Cinnamon Grand: Ex-fighters display dancing skills at IOM reception* (The Island, Sri Lanka, May 24, 2011).

³³ Interviews with former LTTE cadres revealed that a "good cadre" was one that would not go home and would not maintain family ties. The aim was to maintain the person within the group and even married to members of the terrorist group, to keep the loyalty within group.

³⁴ Interview with a beneficiary, January 1, 2010.

³⁵ Some of the Terrorist cadres that entered rehabilitation did not disclose their involvement within the LTTE. "Master of Deception-Colombo's Praba' Exposed," *Tamil Tigers Activities Exposed*, available at <http://tamiltigeractivities.wordpress.com/2012/09/07/masters-of-deception-colombos-praba-caught/>.

³⁶ Interviews with rehabilitation officials, May 15, 2010.

³⁷ Interview with a beneficiary, January 1, 2010

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Interviews with rehabilitation officials, May 15, 2010.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ IDPs identifying LTTE cadres in Lanka refugee camps: Army, ANI, May 25, 2009.

⁴² "In Pictures, Inside Sri Lanka's Vast Refugee Camps," *BBC News*, October 8, 2009, available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8297760.stm.

⁴³ Interview with a IDP, July 12, 2011.

⁴⁴ "Rehabilitation of the Tamil tigers," assessment conducted by Prof. A. Kruglanski. This study is ongoing since 2009. Perception of being treated fairly, with dignity, staff level of helpfulness, staff level of understanding of their problems and ability to trust staff.

⁴⁵ Perception of whether rehabilitation is helpful, if they feel there is an improvement in their situation, and rating on the conditions of the center.

⁴⁶ Perception of whether guards are respectful and treat beneficiaries with dignity.

⁴⁷ "Remarks for the July 4th Celebration by Ambassador Butenis," *United States Embassy in Sri Lanka and Maldives*, July 4, 2012, available at <<http://srilanka.usembassy.gov/sp-4july12.html>>.

⁴⁸ Shanika Sriyananda, "Ex-LTTEer Reborn in Selvam: Gokulan Takes to Acting," *Sunday Observer, Sri Lanka*, December 4, 2011 available at <<http://www.sundayobserver.lk/2011/12/04/fea10.asp>>.

⁴⁹ "Abhina drama for Trauma Therapy," accessed at <http://www.abhina.com/events.html>.

⁵⁰ Interviews, Rehabilitation Centre, Vavuniya, April 12, 2012.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Personal observations of the author on studying the global programs and observing the manner in which the staff works on the Sri Lankan program.

⁵⁴ Cadres are likely to disengage but not deradicalize.

⁵⁵ Extract from a booklet written by an 16year old former female LTTE child soldier during her period of rehabilitation, entitled: *New life in a rehabilitation centre* (unpublished).

⁵⁶ Shenali Waduge, "Sri Lanka International Defense Seminar 2012 – An Impressive show of Achievements," *Asian Tribune*, August 12, 2012, available at <<http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2012/08/11/sri-lanka-international-defense-seminar-2012-%E2%80%93-impressive-show-achievements>>.

⁵⁷ A Presidential Amnesty was provided to the Tamil tigers that entered rehabilitation, 2009.

⁵⁸ Presidential briefing on how to conduct rehabilitation to the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation, May 2009.

⁵⁹ International Center for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, Singapore, held its first International Conference on Community Engagement (ICCE), September 21, 2011.

In October 2011, General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, issued a call to “make sure we actually learn the lessons from the last decade of war.”¹ In response, the Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis (JCOA) division of the Joint Staff J7 undertook its Decade of War study, reviewing the 46 lessons learned studies it had conducted from its inception in 2003 through early 2012. More than a “decade of war,” the 46 JCOA studies covered a wide variety of military operations—including major combat operations in Iraq, counterinsurgency in Afghanistan and the Philippines, and humanitarian assistance in the United States, Pakistan, and Haiti—as well as studies of emerging regional and global threats. The synthesis of these studies’ 400 findings, observations, and best practices yielded 11 strategic themes or categories of enduring joint lessons.

JCOA’s analysis was further refined by subject matter experts from across the Department of Defense during a weeklong Joint Staff–sponsored Decade of War Working Group in May 2012. The final Decade of War study represents the culmination of those efforts, and while significant, is only the initial step in turning these critical observations into “learned lessons.” The work of integrating the findings and recommendations into a continuous joint force development cycle will serve to build a more responsive, versatile, and affordable force.

Lieutenant General George Flynn, Director for Joint Force Development, Joint Staff J7, for release and dissemination without caveat. Lieutenant General Flynn has also endorsed the summary of this important effort for the readers of PRISM.

—Lieutenant General George Flynn, USMC
Joint Staff J7
Director for Joint Force Development

¹ General Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to Lieutenant General George Flynn, “Chairman Direction to J7,” official letter, October 6, 2011.

Decade of War: Enduring Lessons from a Decade of Operations¹

SUMMARIZED BY ELIZABETH YOUNG

The year 2001 began with the inauguration of a U.S. President deliberately aiming to shift the use of the military away from the numerous humanitarian and peacekeeping interventions of the 1990s toward responding to and defeating conventional threats from nation-states. The mood was optimistic, with the new U.S. National Security Strategy, recently put in place by the departing Clinton administration, citing widespread financial prosperity and conveying no sense of an imminent threat to the homeland.² But this situation proved fragile: the events of a single day, September 11, 2001, altered the trajectory of the United States and the way it used its military over the next decade. A nation focused on countering conventional threats was now confronted by an enemy that attacked the homeland with low-tech means in asymmetric and unexpected ways—individuals armed with box-cutters using hijacked civilian aircraft.

In the decade following 9/11, it became evident that the Cold War model that had guided foreign policy for the previous 50 years no longer fit the emerging global environment. Key changes included:

- A shift from U.S. hegemony toward national pluralism
- The erosion of sovereignty and the impact of weak states
- The empowerment of small groups or individuals
- An increasing need to fight and win in the information domain.

In the midst of these changes, the United States employed its military in a wide range of operations to address perceived threats from both nation-state and terrorist groups; to strengthen partner nation

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militaries; to conduct humanitarian assistance operations; and to provide defense support of civil authorities in catastrophic incidents such as Hurricane Katrina. This wide range of operations aimed to promote and protect national interests in the changing global environment.

the U.S. approach often did not reflect the actual operational environment

In general, operations during the first half of the decade were marked by numerous missteps and challenges as the U.S. Government and military applied a strategy and force best suited for a different threat and environment. Operations in the second half of the decade often featured successful adaptations to overcome these challenges. From our study of this “decade of war,” we identified 11 overarching, enduring themes that present opportunities for the nation to continue to learn and improve. In this article, we briefly summarize each of these themes.

Lesson 1: Understanding the Environment

In operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, a failure to recognize, acknowledge, and accurately define the operational environment led to a mismatch between forces, capabilities, missions, and goals. The operational environment encompassed not only the threat but also the physical, informational, social, cultural, religious, and economic elements of the environment; each of these elements was important to understanding the root causes of conflicts, developing an appropriate approach, and anticipating second-order effects.³ Despite the importance of the operational environment, the U.S. approach often did not reflect the actual operational environment, with different components of the

government undertaking different approaches. In addition, a nuanced understanding of the environment was often hindered by an intelligence apparatus focused on traditional adversaries rather than the host nation population.

There were a number of examples where separate elements of the U.S. Government undertook different approaches based on their views of the nature of the conflict and operational environment. In Iraq in 2003, military plans included assumptions regarding the rapid reconstitution of Iraqi institutions based on the understanding that national capabilities had to be rebuilt to promote governance and stability. Yet the first two orders issued by the civilian Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) unexpectedly removed both host nation security forces and midlevel government bureaucrats, crippling Iraqi governance capacity and providing fuel for the insurgency.⁴ These actions created a “security gap” that lasted for years and widened over time, reducing the effectiveness of the reconstruction effort, causing the population to lose trust in the coalition and Iraqi government, and allowing terrorist and criminal elements to thrive. Two years later, civilian- and military-led reconstruction and development efforts still had different missions and perceived end states, which led to large expenditures with limited return, as well as missed opportunities for synergy.

A complete understanding of the operational environment was often hindered by U.S. intelligence-gathering that focused on traditional adversary information, neglecting “white” information about the population that was necessary for success in population-centric campaigns such as counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. Local commanders needed information about ethnic and tribal identities, religion, culture, politics, and economics; however, intelligence products primarily provided information about enemy

actions. This problem was exacerbated by shortages of human intelligence personnel and interpreters needed to capture critical information from the population, as well as a lack of fusion of this intelligence with other sources of information. Furthermore, there were no pre-established priority intelligence requirements or other checklists or templates that could serve as first-order approximations for what units needed to know for COIN. As a result, processes for obtaining information on population-centric issues tended to be based on discovery learning and were not consistently passed to follow-on units.

Other intelligence capabilities and platforms proved valuable to understanding the environments in Iraq and Afghanistan but were in short supply—eventually, their numbers surged in both countries as their value was recognized. For example, manned expeditionary intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) platforms were developed and fielded (for example, Task Force Odin and Project Liberty) in response to growing recognition of an unmet requirement.⁵

Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) operations similarly required an understanding of the operational environment for success. Timely initial assessments were critical for an effective response. These assessments were used to determine command and control requirements, estimate damage (including the status of critical infrastructure), gauge the size and type of required military response units, and establish deployment priorities. In natural disasters, these assessments were often difficult to achieve due to limited availability of assets. While the U.S. military had significant capability for performing these assessments, the assets used for these assessments (usually air) were typically in high demand for delivering aid and performing search and rescue missions.

In the latter part of the decade, forces learned to overcome challenges, gradually developing innovative, nontraditional means and organizations to develop a more nuanced understanding of the operational environment. These means included direct interaction with the local population through patrols, *shuras*, and key leader engagements; the creation of fusion cells that coupled operations and intelligence information; the expanded use of liaison officers to facilitate communication and coordination; and the practice of all-source network nodal analysis to guide actions and engagements. These efforts were supported by senior leaders and organizations that assumed risk to fully share information among U.S. forces, interagency partners, host nation forces, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), industry, and academia. Senior leaders came to rely upon these nontraditional sources of information to increase their understanding of the operational environment and glean insights as to what approaches were successful.

Forward presence helped the United States achieve an accurate understanding of the environment. In areas where U.S. forces were not based in significant numbers, even a modest forward presence enhanced situational awareness and deepened relationships. For example, when U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) moved from its Panama headquarters and robust presence in the region to Miami and a more modest presence in the region, it worked to maintain forward locations and basing arrangements to sustain U.S. presence and access. Similarly, U.S. forward presence in the Philippines proved useful well beyond the narrow U.S. counterterrorism (CT) focus of its post-9/11 mission. Resultant relationships with host nation forces at multiple echelons provided for improved exchange of information and strengthened understanding.

Lesson 2: Conventional Warfare Paradigm

Major combat operations in Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 confirmed the ability of the United States to conduct such operations rapidly and surgically.⁶ While it is critical that the United States retain this capability, *conventional warfare approaches often were ineffective when applied to operations other than major combat, forcing leaders to realign the ways and means of achieving effects.*

The conventional warfare paradigm is exemplified by fighting in World War II, Korea, and Operation *Desert Storm*; it is characterized by the use of direct force against adversaries, with centralized command and control to support the massing of resources against the enemy center of gravity—that is, a nation-state’s uniformed military forces.⁷ However, the past decade saw many operations other than conventional warfare and major combat, such as COIN, stability, CT, HA/DR, antipiracy, and counternarcotics operations. In addition to Iraq and Afghanistan, past operations conducted in locations such as Panama, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Somalia, Colombia, the Philippines, Sudan, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, South Sudan, and Yemen, suggest that operations other than conventional warfare will represent the prevalent form of warfare in the future.

In conventional warfare, forces employ a direct approach, using force against an enemy military to achieve objectives. Over the past decade, in contrast, forces learned to combine both direct and indirect approaches for generating effects. The combination of these approaches leveraged a broad set of tools including the use of precise force, money as a weapons system, information operations, and key leader engagements to address threats both directly and indirectly. In particular, the indirect approach was able to focus on the underlying root causes of terror and/or insurgency.

At the same time, the use of force continued to be a critical tool in operations. Moreover, the use of precision engagements and avoiding collateral damage, especially noncombatant civilian casualties, became paramount in preserving necessary freedom of action. Efforts to be precise and discriminatory in engagements were aided by increasing availability of precision air- and ground-based weapons. In addition, units had increasing quantities of ISR support to determine positive identification and screen for potential collateral damage. Finally, leaders pressed units to take additional steps to avoid civilian casualties beyond those required by international law, such as tactical patience and looking for tactical alternatives (for example, employing a sniper instead of using an airstrike against enemy taking refuge in civilian homes). Forces in Afghanistan discovered that there were win-win scenarios for the use of force and limiting collateral damage: forces could maintain or increase mission effectiveness while also reducing civilian casualties. Conversely, U.S. forces found that insurgent groups were strengthened and U.S. freedom of action was curtailed when its forces caused civilian casualties.⁸

Conventional warfare features a hierarchical top-down command structure to manage forces and support the massing of major military elements against the center of gravity of enemy forces. Information and intelligence gained by tactical forces are fed back to the top where adjustments are made to the overall scheme of maneuver. In contrast, for other kinds of operations in the past decade, especially those featuring fleeting targets and population-centric campaigns, forces found this arrangement ineffective. Rather, flexibility and empowerment at the lowest appropriate level promoted success in these kinds of operations. Leaders deliberately decentralized authority and capabilities; they provided intent and then allowed subordinates the freedom to innovate

and explore tactical alternatives within given left and right limits.

Unlike conventional warfare, success in many of the operations over the past decade depended on building local capacity and sustaining gains that were made during operations. This focus on capacity-building taxed the military and the U.S. Government overall, as they were often not prepared for these tasks, especially on the scale demanded in Iraq and Afghanistan. For example, the task of creating Iraqi military and police forces, along with their accompanying institutions, created a severe burden on both U.S. military and civilian organizations. This burden was magnified by the initial lack of preparation for this mission and compounded by the semi- to non-permissive security environment in which civilian agencies and departments could not typically operate.

Conventional warfare and operations other than major combat had different means (“the use of force” versus “broader effects combining direct and indirect approach”) and ends (“capitulation of a military force” versus “sustainability and capacity-building”). Because of these differences, operations other than major combat required a broader response than the military alone was prepared to provide, necessitating an effort that combined the strengths and capabilities of multiple U.S. departments and agencies, as well as coalition partners and, in some cases, NGOs. Best practices and challenges regarding interagency unity of effort are discussed below in Lesson Seven, Interagency Coordination, and for coalition operations in Lesson Eight, Coalition Operations.

Lesson 3: Battle for the Narrative

Over the past decade, U.S. adversaries realized that victory on the battlefield was not the only way to meet their overall objectives: by

influencing *perceptions* on a local or global scale, they could also achieve victories. The United States and its allies had an interest in shaping perceptions, and this resulted in a competition in the information domain. We call this effort to influence perceptions “the battle for the narrative.”⁹ Over the past decade, *the United States was slow to recognize the importance of the battle for the narrative in achieving objectives at all levels; it was often ineffective in applying and aligning the narrative to goals and desired end states.*

In major combat operations, the United States was successful in employing military power; however, other instruments of national power (diplomatic, information, and economic) became more important as operations shifted away from major combat. In particular, the U.S. Government was challenged with providing accurate and timely information to proactively win the battle for the narrative, partially because of a lack of necessary resources and leadership emphasis on this aspect of operations.

The proliferation of the Internet, social media, and personal electronic devices caused the paradigm of communication to shift. It was no longer possible (or desirable) for the military to attempt to tightly control most information. While the military was slow to adapt to these developments, the enemy was not, developing considerable skill in using these new means of communication to their own ends. In addition, the enemy was frequently unconstrained by the need to tell the truth; for example, they could feed false information to the media through the use of news stringers on fast-dial from an insurgent/terrorist cell phone. This allowed the enemy to make the first impression, an impression that could be difficult or impossible to overcome, even when false. For example, advances in communication technology had a direct impact on Israel during and after the 2006 Lebanon War. Initially,



U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Daniel Bohmer/Released

Mine resistant ambush protected vehicles are lined along Highway 1 near Haji Sultan, Zabul province, Afghanistan, Feb. 16, 2012.

the Israeli military response to Hezbollah rocket attacks was widely seen as justified. However, as time progressed and Hezbollah successfully manipulated print, broadcast, and online media, the world increasingly saw images of civilian casualties (both doctored and real) and the tide of public opinion turned. There was widespread negative international sentiment regarding Israel's "disproportionate response," and Israel was not successful in turning this tide.

The United States eventually recognized the need to be more proactive in the battle for the narrative and developed innovative means to do so. For example, Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF-I) created a communications cell that monitored both national and international

media to understand trends and issues, an effort that was emphasized and supported by senior leaders. Similarly in Afghanistan, the Presidential Information Coordination Cell was established to manage communication and information between the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Afghan government. The coordination cell was often successful in resolving potentially negative issues before they became public.

Finally, while managing information was critical in the battle for the narrative, the past decade showed that words alone were not sufficient; they had to be consistent with deeds. The image of the United States was frequently tarnished by tactical actions that contradicted American values or strategy. The Abu Ghraib

scandal in Iraq, for instance, documented in photographs that were widely disseminated, undermined the mission and significantly marred the image of the United States. Years later, terrorists in Iraq and Afghanistan cited the Abu Ghraib incident as their motivation for striking the United States. Similarly in Afghanistan, the burning of Korans in spring 2012 created significant backlash. In that case, U.S. personnel were taking actions to remove a variety of documents, including some religious texts, which had been altered by detainees. The context—that Korans had been cut up and written in by detainees in part to convey messages—was not communicated clearly, and U.S. actions were roughly perceived as religious persecution rather than countering insurgent efforts.

Lesson 4: Transitions

All operations in the past decade featured important transitions, such as the transition from Phase III to Phase IV in Iraq, the transfer to Iraqi sovereignty (performed in two steps in 2004 and 2005), the transition to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) leadership in Afghanistan in 2006, and the transition to host-nation responsibility during numerous HA/DR events (for example, the Pakistan earthquake of 2005).¹⁰ Transitions between phases of operations offered opportunities for advancing U.S. strategic interests if they were managed well; alternately, they were opportunities for the enemy or for the failure of our intended objectives if they were not. In the first half of the decade, *failure to adequately plan and resource strategic and operational transitions endangered accomplishment of the overall mission.*

Transitions were often poorly planned and trained; in particular, plans for transitions did not include well-developed branch plans for contingencies. In Iraq, while Phase III

combat operations were meticulously planned and trained extensively, Phase IV post-major combat operations were not. In addition, pre-deployment training focused on major combat tactics and maneuver of large-sized forces, not contingency or stability operations. Noncombat skills, to include civil affairs, were not adequately rehearsed alongside combat, war-winning skills until late in the campaign.

In addition, the post-major combat plan for Iraq was reliant upon civilian elements of the U.S. Government and based on assumptions of a stable security environment and a capable Iraqi government and security force. Despite the significant role that U.S. civilian elements had to play, they were not significantly involved in early planning efforts. This contributed to major disconnects between planning assumptions used in military- and civilian-led efforts; as previously described, these disconnects were exacerbated by Coalition Provisional Authority actions in the summer of 2003, as well as divergent military and civilian reconstruction approaches over the following several years.

Similarly, during the transition to NATO leadership in Afghanistan in 2006, military planning assumed that the chief duties of ISAF would be reconstruction and the provision of humanitarian aid. This faulty assumption caused a mismatch between ISAF policies and actual, on-the-ground mission requirements.

Often, planning assumptions were based largely on U.S. expectations that were inconsonant with those of the host nation. For example, the planned end state for Afghanistan was envisioned to be a strong central government, despite no record of such a government in Afghan history and lack of broad popular support for that system of governance. Another was the lack of anticipation of operations shifting from a military Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) framework

to a warrant-based law enforcement framework as host-nation sovereignty increased.

These faulty assumptions led to mismatches in approaches that were later overcome by adaptation; for example, the approach that envisioned a strong central government in Afghanistan was later combined with efforts to develop local governance and security (for example, Village Stability Operations/Afghan Local Police), while the transition from a LOAC framework was addressed through ad hoc approaches to requirements for warrants and evidentiary support.

humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations also demonstrated the importance of unity of effort to successful transitions

Transitions tended to be poorly resourced and lacked adequate numbers of personnel with sufficient expertise or training. For example, shortly after the end of major combat operations in Iraq in 2003, the V Corps commander arrived in theater to assume command of Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) 7, having trained for division-level combat operations and not as a joint task force that would lead a national reconstruction and stabilization effort. His staff was not manned, equipped, or resourced to accept these responsibilities. Additionally, civilian manning for the Coalition Provisional Authority remained low throughout 2003. Over the next few years, Embassy and Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) partners gradually increased in number, but they often lacked the necessary expertise and experience.

Lack of unity of effort between civilian and military organizations tended to be a key component of transition challenges.¹¹ The rapid transfer from military to civilian leadership in

Iraq in summer 2003 repeated a lesson seen from previous operations over the history of the United States: premature transition to civilian agencies.¹² Similar challenges were observed in the handover of sovereignty to Iraq in June 2004 when the two senior U.S. leaders were replaced simultaneously: General George Casey, USA, succeeded Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, USA, and Ambassador John Negroponte succeeded Ambassador L. Paul Bremer. Several critical organizations were also created during this time, including MNF-I, Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq, and the U.S. Embassy. These changes in key leaders and organizations during the transition added to the challenges.

Politically–driven transition timelines exacerbated the lack of resources. For example, in Iraq in 2004, civilian and military organizations had only just sorted out their respective responsibilities for training, equipping, and supporting the Iraqi security forces when the United States executed the transition to Iraqi sovereignty. The transition pushed the Iraqi security forces into a role for which they were not yet ready, degrading security and further challenging the effort to build these forces.

Many of the transition challenges described above were remedied during important transitions in the latter half of the decade. Leaders learned critical lessons and worked to understand the operational environment; they designed transitions to be more conditions-based to reflect this understanding. Likewise, an awareness of specific weaknesses of host-nation militaries and governments facilitated the use of tailored enablers to prop up host-nation capabilities and promote success during key transitions. Transitions were planned and resourced appropriately, with key staff retained through the critical transition periods.

Humanitarian assistance disaster relief operations also demonstrated the importance of unity of effort to successful transitions. For example, in Haiti peacekeeping operations in 2004, USSOUTHCOM benefited from preexisting relationships with interagency partners that helped overcome the challenges arising from the ad hoc nature and wide variety of participants in the operation. Within days of the deployment of U.S. troops to Haiti, USSOUTHCOM leveraged its joint interagency coordination group to provide a forum for discourse between the various U.S. Government elements involved in the region. Again, after the Haiti earthquake of 2010, the robust integration of interagency representation at USSOUTHCOM gave the command an enhanced ability to gain situational awareness and provide focused aid, which promoted successful transition of responsibilities to a variety of civilian agencies and international organizations working on behalf of the Haitian government.

Lesson 5: Adaptation

Adaptation is an essential part of the military profession and of military operations. At the same time, adaptation must be balanced with the requirement to appropriately train and equip forces for current operations. During the first half of the decade following 9/11, *Department of Defense (DOD) policies, doctrine, training, and equipment were revealed to be poorly suited to operations other than major combat, forcing widespread and costly adaptation.*

During the early years of the decade, doctrine voids were exposed, as evidenced by the amount of important doctrine that was created in the second half of the decade to compensate.¹³ Similarly, forces were trained to win against another nation's armed forces, and were not prepared to combat adaptive insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan.

the challenge of inadequate preparation was matched by widespread and often successful adaptation

Equipment suited for conventional war was not always suited for COIN or stability operations, resulting in many urgent operational needs voiced in theater for required capabilities.

Fortunately, the challenge of inadequate preparation was matched by widespread and often successful adaptation at all levels. Forces on the ground learned from challenges and adapted their approaches to compensate, developing new organizations and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP), rapid fielding initiatives, adaptive leadership approaches, and agile workarounds for the passing of and acting upon lessons. While these adaptations were generally successful, they were costly in terms of time and resources.

Since forces were primarily organized for major combat operations, there was a necessity to develop new types of organizations at all echelons to address the changed environment. In Iraq, these organizations included the Force Strategic Engagement Cell that worked at the strategic level to reconcile insurgents, the PRTs that worked at the regional level to extend governance capacity, and the Human Terrain Teams that worked at the local level to understand human factors. In addition, forces developed in-theater initiatives such as the COIN Academy, which provided near-term, tailored training to fill identified gaps while the schoolhouses adjusted their curricula to better match the operational missions. At the same time, advisor and lessons learned organizations were used to identify and overcome tactical and operational shortfalls across a broad set of missions.

Forces also adapted their TTP to promote success. One example was the "find, fix, finish, exploit, analyze, and disseminate" (F3EAD)

targeting approach. Special operations forces (SOF) used the F3EAD approach in their targeting of insurgents, and over time this TTP was increasingly used by conventional forces in their targeting operations as well. As host-nation judicial systems matured, forces again adapted their targeting approach toward a warrant-based approach in order to reinforce rule of law and model law enforcement for the host nation. Yet another new organizational structure, fusion cells, provided a means by which TTP could be shared and learned. Other tailored and adaptive TTP in Iraq and Afghanistan included key leader engagements, sensitive site exploitation, and civilian casualty battle damage assessments (geared toward identifying the presence and scope of civilian harm).

success required a change in focus from understanding the threat to understanding the environment

The fielding of new equipment aided the innovative TTP described above. For example, as new ISR assets were fielded in increasing numbers, they could then be provided to lower echelons to better find and fix terrorists/insurgents, minimize civilian harm during engagements, engage with the population, and pursue reconciliation efforts. Other equipment was fielded to provide enhanced force protection against asymmetric threats (for example, Mine Resistant Ambush Protected [MRAP] Vehicles and electronic countermeasures). While providing needed capability rapidly, challenges with accelerated development and rapid fielding included forces not being able to train on these capabilities prior to deployment, as well as the possibility that vulnerabilities, interoperability problems, and maintenance issues were not identified.

Leaders acknowledged successful adaptation by tactical forces to modify their overall approaches. One example was the reconciliation initiatives in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. After then-Lieutenant General Raymond Odierno, USA, heard of the successes that coalition forces were having in Al Anbar, he broadened and adapted reconciliation efforts into an Iraq-wide movement. Underlying this expansion was the recognition that success required a change in focus from understanding the threat to understanding the environment.

Sometimes, adaptation led to the discovery that the old model was preferable. For example, USSOUTHCOM adapted a functional organizational model that departed from the Napoleonic “J-code” structure. This new model was not successful in responding to the crisis of the Haiti earthquake in 2010, so USSOUTHCOM quickly reverted back to its original J-code organization, confirming the value of this organizational construct.

While units learned and adapted to their operating environments, their experiences, best practices, and lessons were not always shared, either within theater or with larger DOD institutions. Although there were many Service lessons learned organizations with active data collection efforts operating in Iraq and Afghanistan, their efforts tended to stay in their respective stovepipes and were rarely integrated across the joint force. Service lessons learned efforts generally supported adaptation at the Service tactical level, which was their chartered mission, but joint tactical-, operational-, and strategic-level lessons were often unaddressed unless specifically requested by commanders. The smaller, more agile, and better-resourced SOF lessons learned organizations tended to be more focused, and their processes were designed for a quick turnaround to forces in theater. A number of ad hoc mechanisms were

established to improve the effectiveness and timeliness of the lessons learned process, including the Army's Operation *Enduring Freedom* Lessons Learned Forum and the Joint Staff CIVCAS (Civilian Casualties) Working Group. These mechanisms helped provide focus and sharing of lessons for key operational challenges.

Lesson 6: SOF-GPF Integration

In Iraq and Afghanistan, *multiple, simultaneous, large-scale operations executed in dynamic environments required the integration of SOF and general purpose forces (GPF), creating a force-multiplying effect for both.*¹⁴ Initially SOF and GPF experienced friction operating together, but through effort and experience, they developed means of effective integration that enhanced the collective mission sets of both.

In post-2003 Iraq, SOF were not always well coordinated with GPF. This led to situations where GPF, as the battlespace owners (BSOs), were left managing the second-order effects of special targeting operations. GPF complained about not receiving notice of impending operations, not receiving intelligence that came from SOF, and significant disruption of their battlespace in the aftermath of those operations. Similar complaints were made by GPF in Afghanistan through 2008. For Combined Joint Special Operations Task Forces (CJSOTF) in Iraq and Afghanistan, one factor in this poor coordination was the Theater Special Operations Command being unable to provide effective representation at senior levels. This was later addressed in Afghanistan through creation of an in-theater, flag-level command, Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command–Afghanistan, to better integrate SOF activities into an overall strategic campaign.

Over time, SOF and GPF elements worked to integrate and take advantage of SOF capabilities

and GPF capacities. An early example of this integration was among Task Force Freedom and SOF operating in Mosul, Iraq, in 2005. These elements combined assets and target lists to create an integrated force to combat the enemy. This approach was later expanded into other areas of Iraq and institutionalized into Intelligence Fusion Cells. These cells allowed expansion of the total set of actionable targets—a set that was too large to be handled by a single force—as well as a synergistic approach to those targets. By the end of 2008, dramatic progress in security had been made: attack levels were the lowest since the summer of 2003. The integrated targeting effort between SOF and GPF was a significant component of this success.

In Afghanistan, SOF and GPF integration improved considerably from 2009 to 2010. SOF were better coordinated with BSOs and consequence management efforts were mutually reinforcing. At the same time, communication about targeting increased, and SOF focused more on targets that hindered BSO freedom of maneuver. In 2011, SOF began conducting pre-deployment training with GPF to accelerate integration when in theater.

SOF and GPF also contributed to developing host-nation security forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. All forces moved to a partnered approach to operations, collectively boosting host-nation security force capability. GPF focused on the regular army and police forces, while SOF focused on host-nation SOF and army and police CT units. Collectively, SOF and GPF combined to address training and partnering requirements that were beyond the scope of what was manageable by either force independently.

While an early example of progress, operations in Mosul in 2005 were accomplished through cooperation at the working level, and many of the later improvements were driven

U.S. military and civilian staffs learned to leverage each other's strengths

by SOF senior leaders as they emphasized the importance of integration with GPF. The creation of fusion cells in Iraq involved a commitment of SOF personnel and ISR resources; in both Iraq and Afghanistan, SOF also used their resources to create a network of liaison officers to provide a direct conduit to improve communication and collaboration.

Lesson 7: Interagency Coordination

Across the wide range of operations conducted over the last decade, *interagency coordination was uneven due to inconsistent participation in planning, training, and operations; policy gaps; resources; and differences in organizational culture*. Similarly, the military was challenged by the need to work with NGOs, a type of organization that interacted frequently with some elements of the U.S. Government, but less commonly with the military.

Initially in Iraq and Afghanistan, interagency unity of effort was a resounding failure.¹⁵ During the first half of the decade, the United States consistently failed to harness the strengths and resources of its departments and agencies. Of note, several Joint Center for Operational Analysis studies reported that the biggest lesson for the United States from the first five years of war in Iraq was “the inability to apply and focus the full resources and capabilities of the [United States] in a concerted and coherent way.”¹⁶ Despite the criticality of unity of effort, it was slow to develop and was largely personality dependent. In fact, the notable unity of effort that was finally achieved in Iraq was largely due to the initial, deliberate, and personal efforts of General David Petraeus, USA, Ambassador Ryan Crocker, and their immediate staffs in late 2007.

U.S. military and civilian staffs learned to leverage each other's strengths and communicate more effectively over time, lessening the need for leadership to be a forcing function for collaboration. Nevertheless, these efforts still had to overcome institutional barriers to cooperation such as disparate organizational authorities, roles, missions, and cultures; different levels of resources; an absence of interagency “doctrine”; security concerns; and varying levels of training and education. Despite these challenges, an increasingly expeditionary and collaborative mindset has become resident in a number of U.S. organizations. This progress may be temporary, however, since it is based on experiences and personalities and not on any institutional imperative for integration derived from current law or policy.

For some specific missions such as counterterrorism and countering weapons of mass destruction, the United States created action plans that described roles and missions for specific elements of the government. While these were useful for laying out how different departments and agencies interacted in general, they lacked specificity. Overall, there was a lack of interagency “doctrine.” Joint Interagency Task Force–South (JIATF-S) provided a model for how such interagency guidance could be created: JIATF-S brought together a group of personnel from different U.S. departments and agencies, each accustomed to its own terminology and approach. JIATF-S then created a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the organization that established common terminology and TTP to be used by all interagency team members.¹⁷ This SOP also clearly delineated authorities, rules of engagement, and restrictions on roles during operations. Similar efforts for the interagency community could provide a foundation for unified effort in future operations.¹⁸

The U.S. military was also challenged by the need to work more closely with NGOs over the

past decade. While some elements of the U.S. Government routinely work with NGOs, the military often lacked experience working with those organizations, further complicating DOD coordination efforts. While coordination between the U.S. military and NGOs was generally beneficial to American efforts, these relationships were hindered by a mutual lack of understanding, the military's tendency to try to direct NGO activities, and the desire of some NGOs to retain a perception of neutrality to maintain humanitarian space to conduct their operations.

A common challenge in working with inter-agency partners and NGOs was information exchange, where unity of effort was often hindered by limited or no access to DOD communications networks. The use of a non-DOD network to facilitate needed information exchange helped to overcome this. One example was the use of All Partners Access Network (APAN), a collaborative network established on a non-DOD domain used by organizations contributing to the 2004 tsunami disaster relief effort. Similarly, USSOUTHCOM employed APAN during disaster relief operations in Haiti in 2010. These IT solutions fostered information exchange and collaboration between the U.S. Government (including, but not limited to, DOD) and other nations and organizations that did not have access to DOD systems and networks.

Lesson 8: Coalition Operations

While the United States was involved in a number of coalition operations in the past decade, *establishing and sustaining coalition unity of effort was a challenge due to competing national interests, cultures, policies, and resources. In addition, the enduring challenge of information sharing impeded coalition effectiveness.*

Coalition operations were influenced by the national interests of participating nations.

Different nations had differing interests that affected the missions they chose to conduct, as well as how they conducted them. For example, France had financial interests in Iraq that were a disincentive for its involvement in major combat operations in 2003. Similarly, Japan and Norway chose roles in Afghanistan that focused on reconstruction instead of the larger COIN mission because of their national interests.

national caveats were a significant challenge in all of the major coalition operations of the past decade

In addition to national interests, participating nations had cultural differences that influenced both the roles they would play and the way that they would conduct their given missions. In Afghanistan, individual nations valued different elements of the overall campaign strategy. The net effect was the conduct of differing sub-campaigns in different geographic areas, limiting complete implementation of the theater strategy. In addition, some nations were more willing than others to conduct offensive operations. Since offensive targeting was an integral element of the campaign plans for Iraq and Afghanistan, this uneven approach within the coalition impacted the conduct of these campaigns.

National caveats were a significant challenge in all of the major coalition operations of the past decade. Participating nations limited their potential actions and missions based on policy decisions in the form of national caveats. Collectively, these caveats became a patchwork of rules that both confused forces and limited overall unity of effort.

Some operational restrictions were formal policy caveats, while others were effective differences in how a nation operated, but not

captured formally as a caveat. One illustration of this was the U.S. self-defense criteria in the standing rules of engagement in Afghanistan. This policy effectively served as a national caveat since it was a departure from ISAF rules of engagement, but it was not reflected in compilations of national caveats.

Disparate resources also complicated coalition operations. Different nations brought different and uneven levels of capabilities, often as part of intentional alliance decisions about the development of complementary, not duplicative, military capabilities. For example, in Libya operations, the United States had the majority of certain valuable types of ISR assets as well as precise, low-collateral damage weapons. The lack of these assets in other coalition countries limited the scope of their contributions. Similarly in Afghanistan, some partner nations lacked ISR capabilities and airpower, which limited both their mobility and responsiveness to threats.

Another challenge to coalition operations was differing training and TTP. Coalition forces often used their own unique TTPs and approaches, so that coalitions did not interface with host-nation militaries or populations uniformly. For example, in Afghanistan, different nations employed differing escalation of force TTP, which could lead to civilian casualties. Afghan civilians, accustomed to TTP from one ISAF nation's forces, would travel to a different area of Afghanistan where another nation employed different TTP and the Afghans were often confused and uncertain how to respond. Compensation policies for civilian harm were also different for different nations, resulting in nonstandard treatment and frustration among the population.

Interoperability was another challenge of operating within a coalition. Use of different and non-interoperable systems limited the utility of

available capabilities. For example, digital data links in Iraq did not consistently exchange information between coalition nations, leading to incomplete operating pictures, reduced battlespace awareness and, increased risk to forces. Friendly fire was observed to result in cases where data on friendly force location were available but not presented to operators due to lack of interoperable systems.

Information-sharing policies and systems hindered effective and efficient coalition operations. Non-U.S. members of coalitions frequently cited restrictions that limited (or even precluded) their inclusion in planning and execution of operations. Classification issues and lack of coalition-wide secure information systems limited the ability to share needed information and intelligence. Over-classification and slow foreign disclosure processes also contributed to these challenges.

Eventually, the United States learned to operate more effectively within coalitions, accruing multiple benefits that included:

- enhanced force levels and resources
- political credibility and legitimacy
- different sets of ideas on how to confront problems and the ability to leverage the respective strengths of different nations¹⁹
- increased experience and proficiencies of national partners.²⁰

These benefits provide compelling reasons to suggest that the United States will continue to operate in a coalition environment in the majority of future operations.

Lesson 9: Host-nation Partnering

In many of the operations over the past decade, *partnering was a key enabler and force multiplier and aided in host-nation capacity building. However, it*

was not always approached effectively and was not adequately prioritized or resourced.

Partnering between the United States and host nations was essential for achieving strategic goals and promoting a number of key objectives. First, partnering enabled the host nation to develop a sustainable capacity to provide security and counter threats. This provided an exit strategy for the United States and offered an alternative to sustaining a large American footprint on the ground. Second, partnering enhanced the legitimacy of U.S. operations and freedom of action. Finally, partnering built connections between the United States and host-nation security forces, increasing opportunities for influence both within respective militaries and with other sectors of government and society. Partnering offered the United States a way to advance its objectives through influence rather than through direct action.

While security force assistance (SFA), foreign internal defense, and building partner capacity were essential to strategic goals and offered alternatives to a large U.S. footprint, these activities were not adequately planned, prioritized, or resourced. Partnering was an inherently inter-agency activity, but there was an overall lack of unity in these efforts. In Iraq, the scope and mission of SFA needed in light of the Coalition Provisional Authority decision to disband the Iraqi security forces were not anticipated in planning. Sufficient institutions to address the SFA requirements were not established until the following year, and resources were slow to arrive, both in terms of trainers and needed equipment. For example, weapons for the Iraqi forces were difficult to procure because of U.S. export legislation that did not consider large-scale urgent SFA requirements.

Working with host-nation security forces on partnered operations brought both advantages

one challenge was a propensity for the U.S. Government to shape host-nation institutions after its own image

and challenges. Host-nation forces tended to have an increased awareness of cultural cues that helped them to discriminate between threats and noncombatants and to communicate more effectively with the local population, who tended to be more responsive to host-nation forces. However, challenges encountered in partnering with host-nation forces in Afghanistan included a lack of proficiency and experience, as well as corruption, infiltration, lack of accountability to international norms for the use of force, and resource constraints.

The United States faced further challenges that complicated partnering. One challenge was a propensity for the U.S. Government to shape host-nation institutions after its own image, rather than allowing the host nation to make such decisions consistent with its own history, culture, and traditions. Another was a lack of strategic patience, where a desire for quick results at times drove the United States to lead the partnering relationship, rather than operating by, with, and through host-nation forces to build long-term capacity. Last, forces did not always respond positively to cultural differences of the host nation, leading to poor partnering and advisory relationships.

Partnering relationships tended to change over time as host-nation capabilities matured. For example, partnering in Iraq and Afghanistan transitioned from U.S.-led operations, with Iraqi or Afghan forces being mentored during those operations, to partnered operations where host-nation forces participated in planning and execution alongside American forces. This then transitioned to host nation-led operations where the United States or coalition countries

provided key enablers that the host nation did not possess, such as air support, logistics, or ISR capabilities. Similarly, in the Philippines, early U.S. partnering focused on tactical operations and later transitioned to operational-level support as Philippine security forces became more tactically proficient.

Resourcing for foreign internal defense and SFA was complicated by a number of different and partially overlapping authorities and funding streams. In Iraq and Afghanistan, diverse elements of building partner capacity were conducted by different organizations with distinct missions and little integration of their efforts.

in Operation Enduring Freedom–Philippines, the mission was limited to targeting terrorist organizations that were affiliated with al Qaeda

In some case, narrowly defined missions limited the utility of U.S. partnering efforts. For example, in Operation *Enduring Freedom–Philippines*, the mission was limited to targeting terrorist organizations that were affiliated with al Qaeda (for example, Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf). U.S. support did not extend to Philippine efforts to address the foremost threat to the Philippine government, the Communist Party of the Philippines New People’s Army, because they were not affiliated with al Qaeda. This restriction created friction between Philippine and U.S. forces and also limited the ability of the United States to promote host-nation capacity to achieve long-term security.²¹

Despite these challenges, U.S. partnering efforts improved the host nation’s ability to provide security and advance American objectives. In Iraq and Afghanistan, these efforts were essential both to provide near-term security in order to set the conditions for longer term stability and to

develop host-nation security forces that could sustain security in the absence of U.S. and coalition forces. In other countries such as the Philippines, small investments of U.S. SOF served as enablers to enhance host-nation effectiveness.

Lesson 10: State Use of Surrogates and Proxies

After the United States demonstrated its ability to quickly and effectively conduct major combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, other *states sponsored and exploited surrogates and proxies to generate asymmetric challenges* through a variety of means.

Surrogates and proxies gave nation-states options for indirectly opposing U.S. interests and objectives. For example, one nation funded and supplied insurgent groups in Iraq with technical capabilities beyond their original reach, challenging the coalition and causing greater U.S. casualties. Similarly, in order to oppose Israel, a nation supplied Hezbollah with advanced weapons capabilities, including a missile inventory that rivaled that of many nation-states. In Afghanistan, other nations similarly opposed ISAF by providing resources and support to terrorist and insurgent groups operating there.²²

Throughout the decade, the overlap of crime, terror, and nonstate actors continued to increase. The movement of money and contraband, a specialty of criminal elements, also benefited terror groups acting as proxies, and the latter could leverage these criminal elements for a price. To counter this, the overlap had to be addressed: for example, JIATF-S focused on countering narcotics-trafficking, but it also included countering terrorist activities because of the significant overlap between drug and terrorist networks and finances.²³ However, despite the global importance of law enforcement and nonmilitary organizations in combating proxies and surrogates,

the military lacked authorities to train or provide information to these nonmilitary entities. In addition, a regional focus on these issues—especially when different departments and agencies used differing geographic boundaries—created gaps and seams that the enemy could exploit.

Because of U.S. overmatch in military capability, the enemy tended to shift to the use of inexpensive, low-technology approaches and/or TTP (often provided by sponsor nations) to foil high-technology U.S. capabilities that had been designed to counter conventional peer-on-peer threats. One example was the wide use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) against coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. While coalition armored vehicles were designed to resist significant damage even when fired upon by similarly designed vehicles, they were vulnerable to IEDs exploding underneath the vehicle; with simple tools and at a low cost, insurgents and terrorists could cause significant casualties and damage to U.S. vehicles.

In some cases, the United States successfully worked with partner nations to develop their capabilities to counter internal and regional threats. In effect, this amounted to the creation of U.S. proxies. Through training, provision of key enablers, and additional measures such as the Rewards for Justice Program, partner nations were increasingly effective at countering threats to U.S. objectives.²⁴

Lesson 11: Super-empowered Threats

Terrorism has long been characterized by individuals or small groups exerting disproportionate influence through their actions. However, in the past decade *individuals and small groups increasingly exploited globalized technology and information to expand their influence and approach state-like disruptive capacity.*

Commercial technologies made weapons of mass effect achievable by small individuals or

groups—for example, DNA sequencing equipment to create lethal viruses such as smallpox or the influenza strain that resulted in the 1918 pandemic. Critically, the cost of these technologies has decreased by orders of magnitude over time, and access to these technologies is much easier. Coupled with transnational criminal networks, these technologies could enable individuals or small groups to generate mass casualties and disruption.²⁵

As discussed, the risk is compounded by external sponsors, either national sponsors or other terror groups that provide advanced technologies and capabilities to insurgent groups and terrorist organizations. One national sponsor provided advanced IED technology to terrorist organizations in Iraq and Afghanistan, allowing them to penetrate armored vehicles and cause casualties beyond their original capabilities. Hezbollah also benefited from support from a national sponsor, thus approaching the disruptive capabilities of a nation-state. Similarly, Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines benefited from members of Jemaah Islamiyah who provided material support for terrorist attacks.

Rapidly advancing communication technologies also had significant impact, adding to the super-empowerment of nonstate entities. These groups excelled at rapidly transmitting images to the media as well as their own forums, creating the first impression on the world stage. At the same time, these groups were largely unconstrained by the truth and could adapt the facts to further their cause. In fact, some groups manufactured evidence or doctored images (“fauxtography”) to further their own objectives. For example, during the 2006 Lebanon War, Hezbollah used a single corpse at multiple Israeli strike locations to provide “evidence” of Lebanese civilian casualties and a disproportionate response by Israel.²⁶

The Internet served as a further enabler for super-empowerment, facilitating recruiting, training, financing, and command and control for terrorist individuals and groups. Insurgent web sites offered propaganda, training materials, and guidance to direct and encourage other attacks. Financing was accomplished both through Internet sites and other nontraditional banking mechanisms.

Conclusion

Over the last decade, many tactical lessons were institutionalized at the Service level through the work of the Center for Army Lessons Learned and the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, among others. As a complement to those efforts, the Decade of War study sought to identify overarching joint, strategic lessons. As important as it was to identify and understand these enduring lessons, the goal remains for these lessons to be institutionalized in the joint force.

If the solution to any of these problems was purely a materiel one, the process would be relatively straightforward.

Instead, institutionalizing these lessons requires changing education, training, doctrine, leadership development, and other nonmaterial areas. Developing these nonmaterial solutions falls to the Joint Staff J7, the directorate for Joint Force Development. The process of institutionalizing these joint lessons—prioritizing which lessons must be addressed immediately, determining which organizations will spearhead the effort and which will support, and developing actionable solutions—is neither easy nor quick. The scope of the lessons identified in this report is broad, and many of the ideas are difficult to translate into concrete action. Yet we now have a window of opportunity to think about and act on issues that can define and prepare a more adaptable and agile joint force. Future generations will

determine whether we made the best use of this window and if we actually learned the lessons taught by the last decade. **PRISM**

Notes

¹This article is a summary of the “Decade of War” study undertaken by the Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis (JCOA) division of the Joint Staff J7. The full report can be accessed at: <http://blogs.defensenews.com/saxotech-access/pdfs/decade-of-war-lessons-learned.pdf>.

²A *National Security Strategy for a Global Age* (Washington, DC: The White House, December 2000).

³The *operational environment* is defined in detail in Joint Publication (JP) 2-01.3, *Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, June 16, 2009).

⁴Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) Order 1, issued May 16, 2003, removed all Iraqi government employees associated with the Ba’ath Party from current and future employment with the Iraqi government. CPA Order 2, issued May 23, 2003, dissolved the Iraqi army and associated elements.

⁵Task Force Odin was established in 2006 as an expeditionary aviation battalion for providing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR). Project Liberty featured modified C-12 aircraft with ISR capabilities. These aircraft were first fielded in 2009.

⁶Initial operations in Afghanistan could be regarded as a hybrid of major conventional war (because of the high intensity) and irregular operations (because of the low density of ground forces, many of them host-nation guerilla-type forces).

⁷Martin van Creveld, “Modern Conventional Warfare: An Overview,” *National Intelligence Council Workshop*, May 25, 2004.

⁸These events could create anger within the population, fueling insurgent or terror elements either directly by taking up arms or indirectly through the provision of shelter or money.

⁹Under this definition, the *battle for the narrative* encompasses strategic communication and its key elements: public affairs, public diplomacy, and information operations.

¹⁰Phase III refers to major combat operations, while Phase IV refers to post-major combat operations.

¹¹Hindrances to unity of effort included unequal tour lengths of civilian and military personnel lack of comprehensive, preparatory wargaming for the

whole-of-government team; institutional barriers; and lack of understanding of counterpart cultures and bureaucratic processes. This issue is discussed in more detail in Lesson Seven, Interagency Coordination.

¹² Defense Secretary Henry L. Stimson, "If there is one outstanding lesson to be gained from prior American experiences in military government, it is the unwisdom of permitting any premature interference by civilian agencies with the Army's basic task of civil administration in occupied areas. . . . [I]n those important American experiences in military government (Civil War, Philippine War, and WWI) where civilian influence was permitted to be exercised, the results were, respectively, demoralizing, costly, and ludicrous." See Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1992).

¹³ For example, JP 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, October 5, 2009); JP 3-07, *Stability Operations* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, September 29, 2011); and JP 3-26, *Counterterrorism* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, November 13, 2009). Each of these doctrinal publications had significant updates during this time period.

¹⁴ The Decade of War study uses the non-doctrinal term *general purpose forces* instead of the doctrinal term *conventional forces* (CF) due to common usage and potential confusion over CF (which is also read as "coalition forces").

¹⁵ The challenge of interagency operations is not a new lesson. A Joint Staff memorandum from 50 years ago pointed out this lesson: "In the past it has been extremely difficult to achieve interdepartmental planning. . . . these inhibitions of other governmental agencies must in some way be overcome." Joint Staff Memorandum, March 20, 1961.

¹⁶ *Transition to Sovereignty, Joint Lessons Learned for Operation Iraqi Freedom*, JCOA Report, April 2007.

¹⁷ Military units and embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq also created joint action plans called Unified Command Plans to guide their collective actions. The development of such interagency plans is a best practice, whether in the field or in support of larger institutions.

¹⁸ At the same time, Joint Interagency Task Force-South (JIATF-S) is a special case. All participants have both a common mission and statutory authority to accomplish that mission—elements that are not always present in other interagency efforts.

¹⁹ For example, the United Kingdom brought a wealth of experience from its experiences in Northern Ireland, which informed reconciliation efforts in Iraq as well as their counterterrorism operations in Helmand Province. Similarly, Italy led the development of the Afghan police due to its experience with its own Carabinieri.

²⁰ For example, the Georgian military gained considerable combat experience from its deployments in support of the International Security Assistance Force.

²¹ This friction was mitigated through personal relationships and multiple training events. See David Maxwell, "Foreign Internal Defense: An Indirect Approach to Counter-Insurgency/Counter Terrorism, Lessons from 'Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines' (OEF-P) for dealing with Non-Existential Threats to the United States," December 6, 2011.

²² For example, "Extremist organizations serving as proxies of the government of Pakistan are attacking Afghan troops and civilians as well as US soldiers." Statement of Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Afghanistan and Iraq, September 22, 2011.

²³ "JIATF-S focuses on the planning and execution of operations to interdict narcotics smuggling and human trafficking *as well as terrorist-related activities.*" Emphasis added. "JINSA Group Visits U.S. Southern Command and the Joint Interagency Task Force South," September 3, 2008, available at <www.jinsa.org/events-programs/regional-programs/florida/jinsa-group-visits-us-southern-command-and-joint-interagen>.

²⁴ This is a program operated by the Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security. This program offers "rewards for information that leads to the arrest or conviction of anyone who plans, commits, or attempts international terrorist acts against U.S. persons or property, that prevents such acts from occurring in the first place, that leads to the location of a key terrorist leader, or that disrupts terrorism financing." Available at <www.rewardsforjustice.net/index.cfm?page=Rewards_program&language=English>.

²⁵ One example is the Aum Shinrikyo subway attack in 1995. This organization had over \$1 billion in assets and developed its own capability to manufacture sarin gas and other biological agents. The mailing of anthrax bacterium in the United States in 2001 also displayed the disruptive effect the use of such materials can have.

²⁶ "The Israeli-Hezbollah War of 2006: The Media as a Weapon in Asymmetrical Conflict," *Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government*, February 18, 2007.

Photo by Graig Collier



Lion's Square in Rusafa

Interagency Rebuilding Efforts in Iraq: A Case Study of the Rusafa Political District

BY STUART W. BOWEN, JR., AND CRAIG COLLIER

From 2004-2012, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) conducted 387 inspections and audits of U.S.-funded projects and programs that supported stabilization and reconstruction operations in Iraq. Most of SIGIR's reviews focused on large-scale projects or programs. In a recent special report, SIGIR accomplished a novel study examining a particular part of the rebuilding effort. That report reviewed the remarkably diverse spectrum of programs and projects executed in a crucial geographic area in Iraq, the Rusafa Political District, delving into who built what and at what cost.

The nature of this new report opens the door to deeper perspectives on what was actually achieved – and how it was achieved—by various U.S. government agencies operating during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). SIGIR elicited seven lessons-learned from the study, which conclude this article.¹

The primary source for our information on Rusafa's programs and projects came from the Iraq Reconstruction Management System (IRMS). As noted in previous SIGIR reports, the IRMS database, although the best available informational record on Iraq rebuilding, is gravely incomplete. IRMS contains but 70 percent of the programs and projects carried out by the United States in Iraq.

To remediate this gap, SIGIR ferreted out additional data from the U.S. Army Center for Military History, the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) implementing partners, the Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams' (ePRT) weekly reports, and personal records provided by individuals. Further, we interviewed Army brigade and battalion commanders who served in Rusafa, Army staff officers tasked with managing projects within the district, and civil affairs officers and ePRT members who served in the area. This gallimaufry of operator insights provided us with a useful bounty of primary-source testimonial evidence on Rusafa's rebuilding outcomes. Finally, we travelled to Iraq to interview two Iraqis who served on the Rusafa District Advisory Council. They provided a crucial continuity of insight that was missing from the U.S. side, given that U.S. personnel rarely served for much

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more than a year in Iraq. The varied assemblage of interviews we obtained collectively amplified and added to the IRMS database's conspicuously weak project information.

The Rusafa Political District

Located in the heart of Iraq's enormous capital city, the Rusafa Political District is one of eleven of the metropolis's political districts. With a population of approximately 435,000, the district is almost as populous as Atlanta, Georgia. Most of Rusafa's residents are Shia Muslims. Indeed, Shia comprise a majority of the residents in 40 of the district's 44 neighborhoods, with Sunni Muslims amounting to a majority in the other 4. The few Christians residing in Rusafa are clustered in isolated enclaves across the district.

Rusafa houses ten Government of Iraq ministries, including the Ministry of Defense, and two major universities. It is also home to several large markets, most notably the sprawling Shorja Market, Baghdad's largest. The area is diversely marked by light industry, warehouses, slums, parks, ethnic ghettos, busy boulevards, dozens of Sunni and Shia mosques, and several Christian churches.

U.S. Government Entities that Operated in Rusafa

From April 2003 until Operation Iraqi Freedom ended in September 2010, at least ten different Army battalions operated in Rusafa. Some were present for as few as 5 months, while a few served for nearly 15. The first ePRT in Rusafa opened at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Loyalty (located just outside the borders of Rusafa in an area called "New Baghdad") in May 2007, and the last one closed in March 2010.

"ePRTs" were an Iraq-unique innovation developed to improve interagency coordination on rebuilding programs. They generally were considered effective, but, as with the standard

PRTs, their success commonly depended upon the quality of the team leader. Each ePRT operating in Rusafa included a Department of State (DoS) team leader and a USAID deputy. Additional DoS and USAID support for the district came directly from the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad or from the Provincial Reconstruction Team/Baghdad. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) maintained an office at FOB Loyalty, providing contract oversight for the district's numerous projects.

Analytical Limits

SIGIR's research identified at least 1,303 projects executed in Rusafa during the seven-plus years of OIF, amounting to a total value in excess of \$153 million. This number most assuredly is low, in part because of IRMS's inherent shortfalls and in part because of missing project records. Of considerable note, we found that projects executed during the initial stages of OIF were very poorly documented, if at all. Moreover, the 1,303 figure does not include 228 projects valued at \$93 million that were Baghdad-wide, embracing Rusafa as well as other political districts.

We recognize that analyzing relief and reconstruction outcomes from the Iraq program is dauntingly difficult due to the inconsistent IRMS database, the incredible range of projects accomplished, the burdensome lack of common project definitions among U.S. agencies, and the paucity of information on project results. Notwithstanding these manifold obstacles, we carried out this special project to explore the effects of the Iraq program's ad hoc interagency management structure as revealed in one notably important locale. To simplify our analysis, we divided the projects into two types: construction and non-construction; and we charted them according to the ten reconstruction categories established by the Congress.²

Table 1. Total Number of Projects and Amounts by Agency in Rusafa, April, 2003-September, 2010

	Army		USACE		USAID		State		Unknown		Total	
	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*
Construction	86	\$49.5	43	\$67.6	60	\$4.3	–	\$0.0	–	\$0.0	189	\$120.4
Non-Construction	266	\$16.4	2	\$0.2	825	\$12.7	20	\$0.6	1	\$3.3	1,114	\$33.2
Total	352	\$65.9	45	\$67.8	885	\$17.0	20	\$0.6	1	\$3.3	1,303	\$153.6

*: Million US

Who Built What at What Cost?

Of the 1,303 projects carried out by U.S. government agencies in Rusafa, the Army accounted for 352 (27%), USACE accounted for 45 (3%), USAID accounted for 884 (68%), and DoS had 20 (2%). (See Table 1)

Regarding money expended in the district, the Army spent almost \$66 million (43%), USACE spent \$67.8 million (44%), USAID spent \$17 million (11%), and DoS spent \$638,000 (0.4%). Regarding categories of projects in Rusafa, 187 or 14% were construction projects that collectively cost over \$120 million. The other 1,114 projects or 86% were non-construction projects that collectively cost over \$33 million. Although construction projects amounted to 14% of the total number of projects, they accounted for 78% of the money spent in Rusafa.

Construction Projects. SIGIR's analysis found that 86 of the 352 projects executed by the Army were construction projects, built at a cost of over \$49 million (See Table 2). The largest number of projects (17) fell into the water resources and sanitation sector; but by far the most costly set of projects was in the security and law enforcement sector (\$27.3 million). The most expensive single project constructed by the Army was "Commando Site 4," a project completed for the Iraqi police in 2006 at a cost of \$14.8 million.³

USACE spent over \$67 million on 43 construction projects, with 28 projects falling into three sectors (education, refugees, human rights and governance; electricity; and justice, public safety, infrastructure and civil society). These projects accounted for 56% of USACE construction expenditures or \$38.4 million. Although USACE supervised a much smaller number of projects than either the Army or USAID, USACE projects generally cost more. The single most expensive USACE project was the Wathba Water Treatment Plant, built at a cost of \$21,813,851.16. The most widely known project in Rusafa was also a USACE project: the Rusafa Central Courthouse, which cost \$10,593,716.43. Prime Minister Maliki formally opened the courthouse in September 2008.

USAID spent over \$4.2 million on 60 construction projects in Rusafa. More than 60% of the projects (38), amounting to \$2.5 million in expenditures, were for school repair or refurbishment. The Department of State did not directly fund any construction projects in Rusafa.

Non-Construction Projects. The Army spent \$14.6 million on 122 non-construction projects (See Table 3). 85% of Army non-construction projects and 90% of Army spending on non-construction projects (\$13.2 million) fell into four sectors: education, refugees, human rights and governance; private sector development; security and law enforcement; and water resources and

Table 2—Construction Projects and Amounts by Agency and Sector in Rusafa, April, 2003-September, 2010

	Army		USACE		USAID		State		Total	
	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*
Education, Refugees, Human Rights, and Governance	12	\$3.10	8	\$15.92	38	\$2.51	-	-	58	\$21.54
Electricity	13	\$3.52	9	\$9.05	2	\$0.16	-	-	24	\$12.73
Health Care	5	\$1.80	5	\$1.86	4	\$0.20	-	-	14	\$3.86
Justice, Public Safety Infrastructure, and Civil Society	8	\$6.56	11	\$13.42	2	\$0.29	-	-	21	\$20.26
Oil Infrastructure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Private Sector Development	9	\$1.75	-	-	1	\$0.00	-	-	10	\$1.75
Roads, Bridges, and Construction	8	\$3.96	-	-	11	\$1.04	-	-	19	\$5.00
Security and Law Enforcement	14	\$27.30	5	\$4.86	-	-	-	-	19	\$32.16
Transportation and Telecommunications	-	-	2	\$0.21	-	-	-	-	2	\$0.21
Water Resources and Sanitation	17	\$1.52	3	\$22.28	2	\$0.07	-	-	22	\$24.33
Total	86	\$49.51	43	\$67.60	60	\$4.27	-	-	189	\$121.38

*: Million US\$

sanitation. USACE managed just two non-construction projects, both for security guards at USACE-constructed projects.

USAID spent more than \$10 million on 824 non-construction projects in Rusafa. The majority of USAID non-construction projects (709) were in private sector development. These included USAID micro-loans designed to provide small business owners with cash to grow their businesses. Another 78 projects worth \$2.8 million fell into the education sector. Most of these projects funded classes for students at various colleges and universities in Rusafa. USAID also spent more than \$2.9 million on 18 projects in the water resources and sanitation sector. Most of these projects were for area clean-up programs.

USAID often provides money to “implementing partners” and non-governmental organizations to execute projects. In Iraq, these included peace-promotion camps and Iraqi soccer tournaments. The most expensive projects were three “awareness campaigns” run by the USAID implementing partner International Relief and Development. Each campaign cost \$195,000 and covered three Rusafa neighborhoods.

The Department of State spent \$639,787 on 20 non-construction projects in three categories, the largest being private sector development.

Sector Concentrations of Rusafa Projects

Security and Law Enforcement. The United States expended the largest share of taxpayer dollars

Table 3—Non-Construction Projects and Amounts by Agency and Sector in Rusafa, April, 2003-September, 2010

	Army		USACE		USAID		State		Total	
	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*	# of Projects	Dollars Spent*
Education, Refugees, Human Rights, and Governance	18	\$0.56	-	-	78	\$2.81	5	\$0.10	101	\$3.46
Electricity	3	\$0.53	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	\$0.53
Health Care	7	\$0.23	-	-	14	\$0.83	1	\$0.00	22	\$1.05
Justice, Public Safety Infrastructure, and Civil Society	5	\$0.18	-	-	4	\$0.06	11	\$0.10	20	\$0.34
Oil Infrastructure	-	-	-	-	1	\$0.12	-	-	1	\$0.12
Private Sector Development	32	\$1.74	-	-	709	\$3.92	3	\$0.45	744	\$6.11
Roads, Bridges, and Construction	3	\$0.25	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	\$0.25
Security and Law Enforcement	29	\$8.79	2	\$0.16	-	-	-	-	31	\$8.96
Transportation and Telecommunications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Water Resources and Sanitation	25	\$2.38	-	-	18	\$2.94	-	-	43	\$5.33
Total	122	\$14.66	2	\$0.16	824	\$10.69	20	\$0.64	968	\$26.15

*: Million US\$

spent in Rusafa on the security and law enforcement sector. The Army and USACE expended \$41 million (27%): \$32 million on 19 construction projects and \$9 million on 31 non-construction projects. This sector accounted for some of the most expensive projects, including training facilities and bases for Iraqi Security Forces and “T-wall” barriers to protect critical infrastructure. All of the non-construction projects were for security guards or the “Sons of Iraq” program.

In general, interviewees perceived security and law enforcement projects as effective. As one battalion effects officer commented: “I think that the [Sons of Iraq] had, in some locations, a positive effect...[where] they provide security, violence is down. If you asked people on the street, it

was security they were concerned about. Security first, services second.”

Trash Clean-Up (Water Resources and Sanitation Sector). Trash cleanup was an early priority in Rusafa and, somewhat ironically, one of the last set of projects completed before American units departed the area. From April 2004 to January 2010, the U.S spent at least \$4,281,579 on 33 projects for trash removal, paid for by either Army units (19 projects) or USAID (14 projects). Although many officers and civilians initially believed that the Iraqis should fund and execute their own trash clean-up programs, they came to understand that these projects were a force protection issue, because trash piled along the sides of roads was commonly used to hide improvised explosive devices.

Education Projects (Education, Refugees, Human Rights, and Governance Sector). The U.S. spent \$8,421,160 on 80 education projects in Rusafa (19 Army, 57 USAID, 3 USACE, and 1 DoS), mostly involving school repair or new school construction. This sector was prone to waste. Based on data review and the interviews, it appears that most of the schools in Rusafa were refurbished *at least twice*. We found two secondary schools that the Army or USAID refurbished *at least three times*. When asked whether the same project

the interviewees addressed poor interagency coordination, and fraud, waste, and abuse

was accomplished multiple times, the Iraqis we interviewed from the Rusafa District Advisory Council responded: “Of course, by the Army and [International Relief and Development].”

The cost for school refurbishment dramatically increased over time, from as little as \$8,960 in March 2005 to as much as \$407,455 in September 2008, although it was not possible to determine from the available data the scope of work of each school refurbishment project.

Micro Grants and Micro-Finance Loans (Private Sector Development Sector). The majority of projects in the Private Sector Development category constituted micro-grants or micro-loans awarded to individual businesspeople for economic expansion. We found it difficult to determine the total amount spent on micro-grants, because units often drew from “bulk funds” to dole them out. IRMS identified a total of 15 projects, including bulk funds, specifically for micro grants, with total expenditures from them amounting to \$102,800. Moreover, individual records we obtained reveal that substantially more was spent on micro-grants than indicated in the IRMS database.

USAID spent at least \$3,567,319 on 668 micro-loans in Rusafa, chiefly for small businesses, such as cart sellers, operating in the sprawling Shorja/Mutanabi/Sadria market complex. IRMS indicated 38 USAID micro-loan entries for which no amount was noted.

The Army-funded micro-grant and USAID-funded micro-loan programs drew significant criticism from several interviewees. One battalion effects officer’s comment was typical: “I think the micro-grants were...like a drip of water in an ocean. What actual improvement does it have...for the country? I am fully confident that there were some guys who spent \$100 and pocketed \$4,900 dollars [of the \$5,000 we gave them].”

Perceptions of the Rusafa Rebuilding Effort

SIGIR conducted formal interviews with 23 U.S. military and civilian personnel as well as two Iraqis who had worked extensively with Americans while serving on the Rusafa District Advisory Council. The interviewees provided discursively insightful descriptions on the nature and effects for the Rusafa rebuilding efforts. Among other things, they addressed poor interagency coordination, what worked and what did not, and fraud, waste, and abuse.

Here is a sampling from their observations:

There was nothing systematic about assessments or results reporting – it was more anecdotal since we didn’t really have the capacity or resources to do rigorous assessments. I, at least, tried to report both good and bad results, though the process tended to highlight good news, rather than bad. (ePRT leader)

To some extent, one of the challenges was not going too fast...the first month I was at [the ePRT], I think \$30 million was obligated

in thirty days and that was just across the three districts [in the brigade's operational environment] and that was a remarkable amount of money, and it was like money was bullets so shoot some more, and that's not necessarily [good].

(USAID deputy on ePRT)

You walk into a neighborhood and ask 'Do you want food? Do you want water?' They would say 'We want electricity.' And my higher-ups said they're working on this grid thing and it will be ready in 8 years and you're like great... so you spend \$50,000 and buy a generator and the next time you go into the neighborhood you're a rock star. People have electricity, they can cook. Big bang, little buck.

(Army battalion commander)

Some projects, they would finish it, but it wouldn't work. It would be complete but they would have no use for it. It was as if never happened.

(Rusafa DAC member)

Seven Lessons Learned

Based on our interviews and analysis, SIGIR identified seven lessons for consideration.

Successful projects in stabilization and reconstruction settings depend upon properly identifying local need, securing local government support, ensuring continuity of execution, and administering meaningful oversight.

As a rule, successful projects in Rusafa were completed by the unit that started them. Further, the Iraqis needed these projects, and the Iraqi government supported them. Ultimately, effective oversight was crucial to project success.

Effective information management systems supporting reconstruction and stabilization operations will reduce waste.

Army micro-grants, in turn, commonly conflicted with USAID's micro-loan program

Securing reliable information about what had been built was difficult for incoming battalions in Rusafa. Except for the unit that immediately preceded them they usually did not know what previous units assigned to their operational environment had accomplished. This weak system led to redundant rebuilding efforts and the consequent waste of resources. Further, it caused USAID repeatedly to duplicate projects that the Army had funded. Army micro-grants, in turn, commonly conflicted with USAID's micro-loan program. All of these failures stemmed from the lack of an accurate and effective project database.

The Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team (ePRT) initiative improved the coordination of interagency stabilization and reconstruction efforts, which reduced waste.

Army commanders and staff officers, civil affairs officers, ePRT leaders, and USAID representatives all praised the ePRT concept, because it reduced the duplication of effort and cut down on waste. One brigade commander's comments were typical: "Once [the] ePRT got plugged in we finally had transparency on projects – also showed us we had lots of fratricide between CERP, USAID and even USACE."

Using the speed of money spent as a metric for progress in a stabilization and reconstruction operation is fundamentally counterproductive.

Interviewees described an environment, especially in the later stages in OIF, wherein reconstruction managers felt pressured to spend as much as possible, as quickly as possible, on any reconstruction project. This led to fraud, waste, and abuse. As one battalion effects officer put it: "...it becomes a race to spend as much

money as possible. There's no investment to get the maximum return for the government."

The Department of Defense should judiciously limit the regulations governing the use of CERP for small-scale rapid-response projects.

Battalion commanders, effects officers, and civil affairs officers all complained about the bureaucratic requirements required for CERP use

Battalion commanders, effects officers, and civil affairs officers all complained about the bureaucratic requirements required for CERP use. They felt it defeated CERP's purpose as an emergency, non-lethal funding tool that commanders could use for "quick wins." A battalion effects officer said to us: "There was a time [where] you could turn a project around from concept to approval in a couple days. Near the end you couldn't turn a project around in two weeks." DoD should consider modifying restrictions on low-cost rapid-return projects that could be executed quickly to address immediate local needs or establish relationships.

Involve the host nation in planning and executing stabilization and reconstruction projects from the beginning.

Units performing stabilization and reconstruction missions should ensure that the host nation is involved in project selection, supervision, and sustainment from program inception. This would help manage expectations, would ensure that all projects are "needed" projects, and would promote project sustainability. As one Rusafa DAC member opined: "Americans don't know how things work in Iraq. I imagine that 50% was lost to corruption. We never got to audit or inspect the projects. Americans in the beginning gave projects to anyone at any price... [it was] the main reason corruption spread."

Stabilization and reconstruction projects should only be undertaken if a unit or agency has the capacity to monitor and measure them.

A consistent theme raised by those involved in managing stabilization and reconstruction projects in Rusafa was that they often could not or did not monitor a project nor could they ascertain whether the project achieved its intended outcome. Starting too many projects at once in an insecure environment created this problem. Micro-grants and micro-loans, in particular, were repeatedly cited as being too difficult to monitor both for measures of performance and measures of effectiveness.

Conclusion

SIGIR's Rusafa case study provides encapsulated insights for future leaders interested in learning from the U.S. rebuilding experience in Iraq. As one ePRT leader commented, "Soon enough [the lessons] are forgotten. I wish somehow I'd had the smarts back then to think I might want an archive of this in one place." PRISM

Notes

¹The full report, along with a graphic series showing project locations and costs by agency over time, is available at <http://www.sigir.mil/publications/specialReports.html>.

²Congress passed the "Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense and for the Reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan for Fiscal Year 2004." In it, Congress allocated \$18.4 billion to the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF 2) and divided the money among ten sectors.

³The Rusafa report lists all of the 1,301 projects in appendices at the end, by agency and date of completion.

An Interview with Maria Otero



As the senior State Department executive responsible for civilian security and human rights, what are the biggest challenges you face?

Otero: We face a variety of challenges. Some are external to the State Department, while some are internal. Before I describe some of these, though, let me put them in context. Essentially, part of Secretary Clinton's vision for 21st century statecraft consists of bringing together all of the bureaus in the State Department that in one way or another address the question of civilian security, or how we help governments and other elements of a democratic society strengthen institutions and legal frameworks that ultimately protect

citizens from a range of modern threats. This includes bureaus that address the hard security issues of counterterrorism and war crimes, to those that handle what are considered soft security issues: human rights, democracy, rule of law, and humanitarian assistance. If we look at the Department as a whole, there are five bureaus and three offices that in some way respond to civilian security. These eight bureaus and offices handle a total of about 4.5 billion dollars in resources, and manage hundreds of employees around the world.

So the vision that Secretary Clinton had for creating a balance between civilian security and military security and for designing a civilian response to situations of conflict is expansive. It therefore brought with it several challenges. One internal challenge is to ensure that all of these diverse bureaus and offices that have previously worked independently now see that what they're doing is part of the larger whole with a coherent purpose and a set of objectives that extend beyond their respective mandates. This means getting these bureaus to collaborate, to join forces and to proceed with a collective response to a situation or country, be it Burma, Syria, Kenya, or Honduras. This

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challenge is typical in any bureaucracy where bureaus or offices operate in a vertical rather than horizontal fashion.

Perhaps the biggest external challenge is to ensure that we communicate effectively with other U.S. government agencies to show them the advantages and benefits of coordinating and collaborating with the newly established “J family” of bureaus and offices. This challenge extends from one of the key directives of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) which calls for a whole of government response to preventing and responding to crisis, conflict and instability. And then, of course, we face the challenge of how to most effectively draw on the varied toolkits available within our range of bureaus and offices to design and define the most robust policy response suited to each crisis situation we encounter. And when I say we, I mean the Bureaus of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) led by Assistant Secretary Frederick “Rick” Barton; Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) led by Assistant Secretary Michael Posner; International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) headed by Assistant Secretary William Brownfield; Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) led by Assistant Secretary Anne Richard; and Counterterrorism (CT) led by Coordinator Daniel Benjamin; as well as the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP) headed by Ambassador Luis CdeBaca; the Office of Global Criminal Justice (GCJ) led by Ambassador-at-Large Stephen Rapp; and the Office of Global Youth Issues (GYI) headed by the Secretary’s Special Adviser for Global Youth Issues, Zeenat Rahman.

If we might parse some of those challenges a bit further, let’s talk first about the internal challenges within the State Department. You have within the “J family” five bureaus and

three offices each with a different lineage. Are there mechanisms in place for coordination and collaboration within the “J family?”

Otero: We have done a few things in that regard, because you are absolutely right, that is the first and most important challenge. Some of the things that I’ve put in place to increase coordination have been, from the very beginning, to develop a broader strategic mission statement with the assistant secretaries of the J bureaus so they can see what they are each doing as part of a larger whole. Second, I meet with my assistant secretaries once a week and give them an opportunity to talk about the things they are focusing on, but also give them the opportunity to interact with each other on various issues that emerge where they might not otherwise see connections immediately. Sometimes at these meetings we focus on a specific country or a given issue so we can discuss what each bureau is doing in those areas. A third element of this coordination takes place at the staff level. My staff regularly convenes all bureaus at various working levels to discuss and better understand how each element of the “J family” is playing out in a given country or crisis situation. For example, yesterday we held one such meeting on the transition in Afghanistan. I want all of the “J” bureaus to understand what the others are doing to ensure that they plan accordingly and eventually develop a more coherent policy. One other way in which we’re trying to improve bureau collaboration is by developing an inter-bureau detailee mechanism within the “J family,” enabling mid-level staff from each bureau or office to move to another bureau for six months. By fostering inter-bureau collaboration, we are strengthening our approaches and developing strong linkages that can only help enhance the “J family” performance on the ground.

Sounds like the Goldwater-Nichols inter-service requirement for the military.

Otero: That's right, and certainly the Department of Defense (DoD) has done some very interesting things in their efforts to change structure in support of improving process. This is what these bureaus and offices – collectively known as J – have been doing since J's formation earlier this year. Working closely with the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), we created a three-day course on "civilian security tradecraft" – the first of its kind for the Department. It was J bureaus and offices that provided content and case studies for the course, and J acted as convener and facilitator of the collaborative effort. Our "J family" team has done a terrific job, and FSI has commended us for it. The 3-day training was developed and conducted in mid-October this year. Many attendees came from the J bureaus and offices and most of them echoed the sentiments of one colleague who declared every member of a J bureau/office should take the course. The next step, of course, is to engage the regional bureaus and assist them in discovering the benefits of better understanding the work of their J colleagues. This effort of collaboration is not an end in itself; it is a means by which this family of diverse bureaus and offices can support the regional bureaus and the Department, broadly, more effectively, and hand-in-hand to achieve the Secretary's goals for U.S. foreign policy.

Do you have additional mechanisms in place to improve coordination between the "J family" bureaus and offices and the regional bureaus?

Otero: Yes. Perhaps the most obvious is that, as we increase our collaboration among the "J family" and with the regional bureaus, the regional bureaus see more clearly the benefits to them of working with us. In this way, a regional bureau

experiences the efficiencies resulting from well-sequenced and leveraged functions of the "J family" bureaus and offices. To use Syria as an example, J bureaus and offices have worked closely with the regional bureau and Syria desk. DRL (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor), CSO (Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations), and PRM (Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration), as well as the Office of War Crimes, now the Office of Global Criminal Justice (GCJ), have all brought their specialized expertise to bear in Syria. From humanitarian issues, to human rights and accountability efforts, to support for the opposition, "J family" bureaus and offices support the efforts of the regional bureaus at State. Our colleagues from the Near Eastern Affairs regional bureau recently praised the critically important work of the "J family" in Syria by saying our contribution makes it easier for them to do their work. Of course, this does not mean that everything is perfect, and that everybody always works together in a coordinated way. But that is why we now have a full range of bureaus and offices reporting to an Under Secretary who has the wherewithal to make sure she can help set everyone on the proper path when inter-bureau/office problems arise. I can also provide similar support and guidance as our bureaus and offices engage other agencies (such as USAID or DoD), international partners or foreign governments. The fact that we have these functional bureaus and offices working together strengthens our own voice and our overall effect.

Let's go back to one of the individual bureaus, in particular what used to be the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization; does the realignment of that office, now reporting to an Undersecretary—you—as opposed to directly to the Secretary, indicate a reevaluation within the State Department of the importance of reconstruction and stabilization?

Otero: The answer to that is yes, and the major difference is the greater emphasis on stabilization and preventing conflict rather than reconstruction. You will note that reconstruction is no longer in the bureau's name; it is the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO). The fact that the organization is now an independent bureau rather than an office is a statement of how central conflict prevention is to the Department. It demonstrates the Department's understanding that mitigating conflicts, addressing them before they hit us between the eyes, has become a core objective of the State Department. More and more we see countries affected by crises that span all sectors, as in Syria, and nothing could be more serious or difficult to deal with than that type of situation. Kenya, for example, recently experienced violent ethnic conflict following a disputed election. A possible role for the "J family" might be to engage in such a situation well in advance of the vote to help mitigate some of the potential and emerging conflict, using a range of local-level resources and tools. The "J family" provides the ground support that backs up the Chief of Mission and helps create a new way of doing what's needed. The new CSO bureau smartly identified a relatively small group of priority countries – Syria, Kenya, Burma and Honduras – in which to do this initially to establish its credibility, if you will, as a key resource for the regional bureaus. As a result, we're seeing CSO's re-conceptualization receive many positive receptions, including from Secretary Clinton, who has recognized its work publicly and ensured its importance.

There seems to have been a very substantial reevaluation of the value of what we five years ago called the civilian response capability; the civilian reserve corps has been abandoned, and the active and stand-by response corps seem to be refocused. What can you tell us about that?

Otero: The first thing I must refer to is resources. As you know, the resources made available for this bureau now are more limited than we would have liked; but that's just the reality of the world in which we're operating. The second thing is that in creating the bureau, we really had to evaluate everything that was being done to determine whether there was a more effective and cost efficient way to achieve it. The reduction in size of the Civilian Response Corps is not a decrease in the bureau's ability to do its work, but a redirection of resources to enable doing it in a more agile way. I think that is really the key issue. Because the question of civilian response is not only important but very central to what the State Department does, we took resources devoted to Washington activities and pushed them into the field.

But you believe you have within the "J family" of bureaus sufficient civilian resources to meet those needs?

Otero: Remember, some of the resources come from the "J family" of bureaus and offices but we can draw from other parts of the government as well. The more important reality is that even if you you had a civilian response capacity that could focus on many countries at once, you would still require a comprehensive and strategic approach. If you look right now how many countries have some kind of crisis or conflict in them, you're easily looking at 50 – 55 countries around the world. We certainly lack the resources to reach all of them. In truth, we would not want to spread our diplomatic resources so thinly. And so we have made decisions that, with the resources we do have in the "J family," we will ensure we are linked to and supporting some of the key priorities of the Department and the Administration.

One of the things that DoD does well is identify, articulate and disseminate the lessons learned through experience. Are there any formal procedures or plans in the State Department for identifying, articulating, disseminating, and institutionalizing the lessons its people have learned from the diplomatic element of national power over the last ten years that would be equivalent to the Chairman Martin Dempsey's Decade of War project?

Otero: Knowledge management, lessons learned, is a most crucial component of the “J family” collaboration on civilian security. Formalizing and institutionalizing this is a process that has begun and is under consideration. We will put in place a mechanism to achieve this. It will necessitate a Department-wide knowledge management effort to accomplish what you’re suggesting. The new CSO bureau documents and shares input and lessons from work being done throughout the Department on conflict and this work is already sharpening the way we engage, for example through interagency exercises that help test our capacities.

Wouldn't there be some value to creating such a learning and dissemination capacity within the “J family” of bureaus all dedicated to civilian security?

Otero: Yes indeed, that’s in the works but that’s all I’m going to tell you. You’re hitting on something we believe is very important and we are developing something that will help us achieve this. We have taken the important steps of consolidating these bureaus, of facilitating their ability to collaborate and we are developing a new way of interacting among them that is not fully mature, but it’s quite advanced. In Syria, we have really collaborated very well; learning

from past experience, for example, we’ve worked well with USAID. The ability to capture these lessons, to understand how things happened, to understand whether we have the right mechanisms in place to succeed in the future and to share it among “J family” bureaus and offices and the Department, that piece is part of the process which we’re trying to create.

In this process, are you trying to develop skill sets that are appropriate for preventing and responding to conflict, as opposed to the more traditional State Department skills sets like observing, reporting, negotiating?

Otero: Absolutely, and the toolkit available for conflict prevention is fairly large and well developed. We do, of course, expect to develop additional skills and tools, especially given the new technologies available to us now. For the most part, though, if we decide to address a given crisis situation, we already have an array of methodologies we can choose from to carry out our work. These include engaging religious actors to encourage them to be proactive in preventing conflict, working with local organizations to strengthen community relationships, and many others. For example, we’re working to expand government capacity in Honduras, where investigation of crimes, identification of suspects, and carrying through with prosecutions are weak, resulting in a big gap in civilian security. To help close this gap, J bureaus and offices are drawing on the skills of experienced law enforcement officials from places like Philadelphia and Houston to mentor local Honduran police. We are tapping into the expertise of local-level, Spanish-speaking officials to provide the kind of agile response I mentioned earlier. Burma is another interesting case. In Burma, the “J family” of bureaus and offices is collaborating with our regional bureau to implement de-mining

programs as a basis for encouraging local efforts at reconciliation and advancing peace.

Turning back to Syria, does the United States have a responsibility to protect civilians in Syria from the brutality of the regime and the conflict that's going on, and if you believe we do have a responsibility to protect, how do we exercise that responsibility?

Otero: Syria poses a very challenging situation because it's hard to get resources into the country. One thing is clear, however – we have made a concrete commitment to support Syrians' aspirations for a free and democratic Syria that protects the rights, the dignity, and the aspirations of all Syrians and all communities. One way the "J family" contributes to that is by providing non-lethal aid to the opposition and training them to use it through a variety of means. We've found that communication technologies are extremely helpful, especially as the opposition is working to create a protective environment. Along with our humanitarian assistance to those affected by the crisis provided through PRM – which reached 72 million dollars over the past 15 months – we are also providing medical assistance to those in need and are working to get that into areas that are under the control of the opposition. In total, PRM and USAID, working together, have put almost 210 million dollars towards humanitarian assistance for Syrian refugees. This is an excellent example of two U.S. government organizations working together in a crisis situation. In addition, we are providing robust support to the opposition's efforts to document and investigate atrocities so that, in the future, they can make sound decisions concerning accountability and reconciliation. We are also conducting "Planning and Civil Administration Training" with local civilian leaders from inside Syria so that they can

better provide local government, particularly in areas where the Assad regime now has only limited influence. We will continue to carry out this kind of work, but our limited access to the country constrains our ability to expand the scope of our efforts.

How does the State Department plan with other agencies to prevent conflict? I'm always troubled by the "proving a negative" paradox.

Otero: You're right, it often seems that no one recognizes when a conflict has been prevented. I like to use the example of elections. The only time you hear about elections is when people have been killed, when riots and fires break out, when things are an absolute mess. Few, on the other hand, hear about elections when they go well. Take the last elections in Nigeria, for example. Not much has been said about them because they were credible, transparent, and recognized as being far better than previous elections. It took an enormous amount of work for all involved to achieve that, though, and it took conflict prevention work. It's been very difficult to claim the recognition of that success, however, and to acknowledge it publicly. As for us, the "J family" – especially CSO – works on conflict prevention directly with the regional bureaus helping to identify potential indicators of conflict and deciding which crisis situations we should address and what responses are most appropriate.

In your opinion, is interagency planning for conflict stabilization and prevention, sufficient or do we need to improve interagency planning and if so, how?

Otero: Part of the QDDR vision involves a strong focus on whole-of-government responses to challenges around the world and so this concept

of interagency collaboration is a very important one. Clearly, we have the interagency mechanisms in place to assess difficult situations and to address them together. In some cases, though, we may need additional mechanisms to be able to provide the quality of coordination required. In these cases, a lot of different government agencies may be involved. We tend to coordinate most often with USAID, Defense, and Justice. I think we've come a long way towards enhancing our coordination. For example, I just came back from visiting two Combatant Commands. I have met with almost all of the Combatant Commands in order to help them understand what we're doing in the "J family," and to understand where there are potential synergies so that we can develop a robust relationship. In addition, I have a Colonel on my staff who maintains and enhances those connections. With USAID, I hold a monthly meeting with Deputy Administrator Donald Steinberg to review the areas in which we're collaborating, where we're working together well, and where we are not working together as well. This allows us to intentionally strengthen or shift our emphasis.

A lot of the world's contemporary conflict is spurred by actions of transnational illicit organizations and networks. Some people talk about the convergence of transnational organized crime, terrorism, insurgencies, etc. How can the diplomatic element of U.S. national power best be deployed against that particular national security threat?

Otero: That's a tough one, especially when you start combining transnational criminal organizations with terrorism. We need to recognize the enormous importance of being able to apply resources to address this challenge. When it comes to countering narco-trafficking, we have a strong record and we've already achieved some success

in Colombia, for example. We are also addressing these issues in Central America and Mexico, where we still need to do a lot more. A major part of our effort is enhancing the capacity of governments and civil society in these countries to address these issues themselves. We do this by providing resources and training. This is essential.

One other piece that is essential – and this comes in to play more with trafficking in persons, for example – is to demand from countries a more affirmative and resolved response. We do that through our annual trafficking in persons report, our ranking of countries in tiers, and by providing assistance in developing national plans of action to address trafficking. We've made quite a bit a progress on that front. In fact, you hear about the issue a lot more than you did two years ago. Part of this is due to the enormous effort Secretary Clinton has personally made to highlight the issue, including raising awareness through the participation of high-profile figures and celebrities. You know that when you run into someone like Will Smith at an event on foreign affairs and trafficking that the Secretary's efforts are having an effect. That said, we still have a great deal of work to do on combating this scourge.

The Secretary created the new Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) recognizing that fighting terrorism, especially in some parts of the world, is a primary objective of the U.S. government. CT is also part of the "J family." A lot of our work on counterterrorism involves helping countries develop their own capacity to combat terrorism, allocate their own resources toward it and collaborate with each other more effectively. We have created the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), which brings more than 30 countries together, precisely to do this. And we've created, or are in the process of creating, several other robust institutions to help certain countries fight terrorism on their soil.

One of the regions of the world most troubled by the challenges you just described is Latin America. In January the President released, “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership; Priorities for 21st Century Defense,” which describes a pivot, a geographical pivot towards Asia, and the Far East. Do you detect anything similar taking place within the State Department?

Otero: Absolutely. Secretary Clinton gave a major speech late last fall – “America’s Pacific Century” speech—on the importance of our presence and interaction with the countries of the Pacific, published an article in *Foreign Policy* and subsequently discussed it with key interlocutors in many countries she visited thereafter. I specify the Pacific because it’s not just Asia. You have many countries that border the Pacific as does the U.S. So it includes Peru, Chile, and other countries that make it a broader effort. Clearly, these countries are of enormous importance in the work that we’re doing and harnessing the growth and dynamism in the Asia-Pacific region stands central to U.S. economic and strategic interests. Indeed, our strategic “rebalance” reflects a desire to strengthen long-standing security, economic, and people-to-people ties. That said, the pivot to Asia will not come at the expense of U.S. national security interests in other regions. Other regions remain vitally important, and we will continue to coordinate closely with like-minded countries and institutions from all regions to welcome an Asia capable of upholding a rules-based international order and helping to solve global challenges that impact U.S. national interests.

You’ve mentioned “whole-of-government approaches” several times. Others refer to this as the comprehensive approach and the Secretary called it the 3D approach (Diplomacy, Defense, Development). Is there any prospect for a

QDDDR (Quadrennial Diplomacy, Defense, and Development Review) in the future?

Otero: It’s conceivable that such collaboration might be possible, but it would have to stem from the QDR and QDDDR. It is imperative to be able to ensure collaboration across the government with a larger number of agencies/departments, and that is clearly the objective of the National Security Council. These components of government, though, are complex and any effort to bring them closer together would be challenging. For its part, the QDDDR provides a vision of the U.S. government, with its many agencies, operating as a unit around the world. The presence of our government in other countries is concentrated in our embassies, which function under the President’s representatives – i.e., the Chiefs of Mission, our Ambassadors. Our Ambassadors are responsible for carrying out all of our combined initiatives in countries around the world, and are the sole representative of the President in a given country. It is the Ambassador’s responsibility to ensure that all the pieces of the U.S. government operating in a given country are collaborating and coordinating under her oversight. This is something that Secretary Clinton has made very clear, something that the President also has made very clear. But it increasingly is an enormous task. In big embassies, there are sometimes 30 different agencies in a country that are all reporting to the Ambassador. Therefore, the effort you’re suggesting, of whole-of-government, is something that has to happen at the embassy level first and foremost. **PRISM**

Book Reviews

In the Whirlwind of Jihad

By Martha Brill Olcott
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace,
2012
300 pp., \$19.95
ISBN-13: 978-0870032592

REVIEWED BY JOHN HERBST

Understanding the underlying dynamics of political and social life is not easy in any society and particularly in authoritarian ones. The challenge is even greater when the society in question is remote and has been isolated for decades as Central Asia was under Soviet rule. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan emerged as reluctant independent states in 1991 when the Soviet Union dissolved.

We knew very little about these countries at that time. Our knowledge of Central Asia has certainly increased since. This is evident in the large number of books and articles authored each year on the region; and also in the multiplication of Central Asian centers at universities across the Western world. Despite this, we still have only a rough idea of the factors that produce political

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decisions and the motivations that drive the peoples of the region. Much Western commentary on Central Asia is framed by our own political and societal experience: specifically the historic movement from a faith-based social order to a secular one and from monarchies to democracies. Much writing on political life in Central Asia focuses on the region's struggle toward an open and democratic society and seeks to explain the absence of progress.

The significant issue of the emergence of Islam in Central Asia is at times presented as an adjunct to this question. The growing influence of Islam in especially Uzbekistan and Tajikistan is often presented as a consequence of the harsh authoritarian rule in Tashkent and its weaker variant in Dushanbe. By this interpretation, the crackdown on the secular opposition in Uzbekistan is the decisive reason – or at least the one we harp on – for the growth of political Islam, because the mosque provides the most effective channel for dissent. The fact that this analysis is also applied in the Arab world gives reason to pause and ask if this analysis is more about a paradigm in the mind of the analyst than the reality of the diverse regions being studied.

For this reason, any study that moves beyond our own paradigm in examining Central Asian society is valuable; and any study that gets a handle on the internal dynamics of the region is critical. Martha Brill Olcott's *In the Whirlwind of Jihad*, a study of Islam in Uzbekistan, is the rare book that does that. In a career that began in the late 1970's, Olcott has established herself as the dean of American scholars on Central Asia.

In the Whirlwind of Jihad takes the reader on a tour of the development of Islam in Central Asia and especially Uzbekistan. She starts with the Islamic conquest of Central Asia early in the 8th century in order to underscore the point that Central Asia has been a critical part of the Islamic

world and a center of Islamic learning from nearly the beginning. Many luminaries of Islamic thought hailed from Central Asia including hadith scholar Imam Bukhari, and the philosophers Al Farabi and Avicenna. Olcott notes that the relatively liberal Hanafi school of jurisprudence has predominated in Central Asia and Sufism has exerted a profound influence. In short, a tolerant version of Islam took root in the region. Of particular relevance to our subject, the Hanafi school accepted the idea that Muslims could be ruled by non-believers or infidels so long as Muslims could maintain their faith unhindered and had access to sharia (Islamic law).

This line of thinking made it easier for the Muslims of Central Asia to accept Russian rule in the 19th century, as it left the Islamic community free to practice its faith. The establishment of Soviet rule in the 20th century was a different matter because of its suppression of traditional religion. Indeed the Soviet period exerted a critical influence on the Islam that has emerged in post-Soviet Uzbekistan. The repression of religious practice had several important consequences: it drove practicing Muslims underground and a small but influential community of Uzbeks out of the country, some of whom settled in Saudi Arabia and prospered; it isolated Muslims in Central Asia from the wider Islamic world; it secularized Central Asian society at least in the major cities.

Olcott's work is particularly strong describing the development of Islamic thought during the Soviet and Independence periods. While anti-religious Soviet policy drove much religious life underground, Islam did not disappear. Islamic preachers remained active, at least after Stalin's death. The Hanafi school maintained its leading position in the region in part thanks to the work of Muhammadjon Hindustani, who, after his release from jail following Stalin's death, worked at Dushanbe's Oriental Institute

of the Academy of Sciences, preached in a local mosque and gave illegal religious instruction in hujra's (classes) outside of the mosque. Through these hujra's he became a major influence on the imams prominent in Uzbekistan at independence. Interestingly, the Soviet period witnessed the introduction of salafi influences in the region with the settling in Tashkent of Shami Al Tarabulsi in 1919, a religious thinker educated at Al Azhar in Cairo and who had spent much of his life in Xianjiang. Under his tutelage, the groups Ahl-i-Hadith and Ahl-i-Quran emerged, opposed to Hanfai teachings and Sufi practices and calling for a return to Islam based on hadith and the Quran.

Not all of Hindustani's students remained members of the Hanafi school. Influenced by Salafi thinkers Sayid Abul Ala Maududi and Sayid Qutb, Rahmatulla-alloma and Abduvali Qori preached that certain Central Asian religious practices – venerating "saints," reciting certain verses from the Quran at funerals, or paying for recitation of the Quran – were "un-Islamic." In addition, they pushed for a return to the hijab (head covering for Muslim women). It is worth noting that these developments took place before the Soviet Union fell.

The importance of these developments was evident when the Central Asian states became independent. Abduvali Qori's influence was strongest in the Ferghana cities of Andijan and Namangan, where his followers took over local mosques. In Namangan, Islamic militias appeared – Islom Adolat and Islom lashkarlari – who openly challenged secular authorities by seeking to establish a Sharia-based society. As part of this effort, they forced merchants to stop selling alcohol and to close their shops during the Islamic call to prayer. By 1990, Tohir Yuldoshev and Juma Namangani – the future leaders of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)– had emerged

as key players in *Islom Adolat*. In short, an energetic and radical Islam appeared in Central Asia at independence because of developments in Islamic thought in the region – partly reflecting imports from elsewhere in the Islamic world.

Olcott also pays significant attention to the policies toward Islam of the Uzbek President Islam Karimov. She notes Karimov's recognition that, as a major element of Uzbek culture and tradition, Islam would play an important role in post-Soviet Uzbekistan, and how he agreed to the opening of many mosques. She provides a good account of Karimov's reaction to the challenge of radical Islam in the Ferghana Valley and a description of his famous meeting with Yuldoshev and other Islamic leaders in Namangan in December, 1991. These developments heightened his already well developed sense that Islam must play a major role in independent Uzbekistan, but also that it must be contained. Individual preachers or activists could not be permitted in the name of Islam to challenge the authority of the state. To deal with this challenge, Karimov launched a crackdown on *Islom Adolat* and the mosques advocating the establishment of a shariah-based society.

Karimov's policy toward Islam was also influenced by the outbreak of civil war in neighboring Tajikistan with the prominent role of the Islamic Renaissance Party in the opposition. Following Karimov's repression of radical Islam in the Ferghana Valley, Namangani and other Uzbek Islamists went to Tajikistan to fight with the opposition. With the ceasefire in Tajikistan, Yuldoshev, Namangani and their followers were ready to return home, newly organized in the IMU, dedicated to the overthrow of the Karimov government and the establishment of a shariah-based society.

This set the stage for a decade of IMU-organized or inspired terrorist attacks – starting with the February, 1999 assassination attempt on Karimov – and government crackdowns

on radical Islam. Government sweeps against Islamists were not limited to the IMU. They were directed also against *Hizb It Tahrir* – a radical group that, while eschewing violence at this stage of historical development, wants to re-establish a caliphate to rule the Islamic world – and other groups that pursued Salafi goals.

Olcott demonstrates that despite the strong-arm tactics of the Uzbek government, there remains a “marketplace of ideas” in Uzbekistan where traditional Hanafi beliefs compete with their Salafi rivals, and the government must adjust its policies to the realities of an evolving situation. This is evident in the government's treatment of Uzbekistan's most prominent cleric, Muhammad Sodiq Muhammad Yusef, who headed the Muslim Spiritual Administration of Uzbekistan at the time of independence. Karimov removed Muhammad Sodiq in 1993 for not containing Islamic radicals and he went into exile. Yet Muhammad Sodiq returned from exile in 2000 because the Karimov government thought that his presence might be useful in containing the growth of radical Islam.

Olcott's discussion of controversial developments is fact-based and nuanced. In treating the violence in Andijon in 2005 concerning the *Akromiyya* movement, she notes that Uzbek authorities believed that the attack on the armory and the prison break proved their point that radical Islamic thought promotes terrorism. Even while Uzbek officials may have privately agreed that their harsh response -- the indiscriminate shooting of protestors -- went too far, they could not understand why the United States and other Western powers condemned only the Uzbek response and not the initial violence of the protestors.

Olcott has produced a serious work on a major topic that is all too often simplified in public discussion of Uzbekistan. *PRISM*

Great Game, Local Rules and the New Great Power Context in Central Asia

By Alexander Cooley
Oxford University Press, USA, 2012
272 pp., \$29.95
ISBN-13: 978-0199929825

REVIEWED BY JOHN HERBST

In *Great Game, Local Rules the New Great Power Contest in Central Asia*, Alexander Cooley develops an excellent analytical framework for looking at the activities of China, Russia and the United States in Central Asia. Cooley offers three broad arguments. First, he observes that the three big powers have pursued different goals in Central Asia, which has meant that their interests do not necessarily conflict. China's main objective has been to stabilize Xinjiang by ensuring cooperative relationships on Xinjiang's border. This prompted Beijing to resolve border disputes with Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan on favorable terms for its Central Asian neighbors. The U.S. has sought to stabilize Afghanistan by establishing supply and base arrangements in Central Asia. Despite the ups and downs with Tashkent which led to the closing of the U.S. base at Karshi Khanabad in 2005, Washington has largely achieved its objectives in the region. Russia has sought to remain the major power or hegemon in the region. Despite this ambitious goal, Moscow has been willing to accept efforts

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by the U.S. to establish bases in Central Asia because it also is interested in containing, if not defeating the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Cooley's second point is a corollary to the first. Even as competition among the three in Central Asia has intensified in the past decade, it has not become a zero sum game. Given the differing objectives of the parties, the great powers have not seen a need to try to expel one another from the region.

Cooley's third point is one that international relations scholars long ago spotted in relations between great and small states. With the three powers vying for influence in Central Asia, the local states can pick and choose among them, accepting what meets their needs, rejecting what they do not want. This means increased leverage for the locals.

Politics of the American bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan provide good examples of local leverage. President Karimov was delighted to provide the U.S. a base at Karshi Khanabad in 2001 to help conduct its operations in Afghanistan. But tensions in the bilateral relationship over such issues as human rights and internal reform came to a head in 2005, following Washington's criticism of Uzbekistan's crackdown in Andijon and the "Colored Revolution" in Kyrgyzstan which overthrew President Akayev. Turning to the Russians at that time, Karimov kicked the United States out of Karshi Khanabad. Yet a few years later, loathe to get too close to the Russians, Karimov was ready to partner with the United States in delivering supplies to Afghanistan through the Northern Distribution Network.

Cooley also provides a thorough account of Russian, Kyrgyz and American maneuverings surrounding the 2009 renewal of the agreement for the U.S. to use Manas airbase to supply Afghanistan. In brief, Moscow offered then Kyrgyz President Bakiyev various economic

incentives to close Manas to American use. Bakiyev used this offer to negotiate more generous terms for using Manas. Considering themselves betrayed, Russia used its media presence in Kyrgyzstan to weaken Bakiyev, who was driven from power in yet another “Colored Revolution” in 2010.

An important theme that emerges from Cooley’s analysis is the rise of China in Central Asia. He points out that by 2008 China had surpassed Russia as Central Asia’s leading economic partner. China may have initially turned to Central Asia in order to help pacify Xinjiang, but its economic dynamism and focus on long term interests are making it the major outside player in the region. Of particular importance is China’s investment in oil and gas pipelines from Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan to China. In addition to helping China secure hydrocarbons for its growing economy, these investments have been decisive in breaking Russia’s near monopoly control over the marketing of Central Asian energy.

I have one bone to pick with the author or, more likely, the publisher of this excellent book. That is, the title, or more precisely the use of the phrase the “great game.” In point of fact, the original “great game” – the shadow war between Britain and Russia in the 19th century -- was not so great. It was a geopolitical backwater, as the major arena of international diplomacy was in Europe and then, with the emergence of Japan in the late 19th century, also the Far East. When Russia and Great Britain faced a major geopolitical challenge – the rise of Germany – they reconciled their “great game” differences with the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907.

Living in an age of public relations, we can understand how the Great Game came by its reputation. It had excellent publicists – British military officers who knew how to write and, of

course, Rudyard Kipling. It also had an interesting story to tell and an exotic locale. But the great game of nations was played elsewhere in the 19th century. What was true in the 19th century is no less true today. Central Asia is a fascinating region where major powers have legitimate interests. In pursuit of those interests they interact and even find points of friction. But Central Asia is not the primary place of their interaction. The current debate in Washington is whether it was premature for the Obama Administration to move its strategic focus from the Middle East (and Europe) to East Asia. The issues that dominate the international agenda today are not in Central Asia. This is not to say that Central Asia was never the central arena in international affairs. From the 6th century establishment of the Turkic Khanates, through the establishment by Ghengis Khan of a Pax Mongolica to the emergence of Tamerlane in the 1th century, Central Asia was often the greatest game. **PRISM**



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