

AIR WAR COLLEGE

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SELECTIVE SECURITY COOPERATION:
A PROPOSED INDEX TO MEASURE THE VALUE OF PARTNERS
AND FOCUS INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

by

A.J. Werner, Lieutenant Colonel, United States Air Force

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Advisor: Dr. Jacqueline Whitt

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Biography

Lieutenant Colonel A.J. Werner is a student at the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. The Air War College is the United States Air Force's senior professional military education institution. He studies alongside 245 colleagues representing all US military services, various US governmental agencies, and 45 allied nations.

Colonel Werner graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 1993. As an Air Force pilot, he has flown the T-37C Tweet, the T-38A Talon and the U-2S Dragon Lady. He served as the first-ever Olmsted Scholar in Bulgaria, the Executive Officer to the Director of Operations (J3) at United States Central Command and the Commander of the 1st Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron. In his previous assignment, Colonel Werner directed the United States Air Force's International Affairs Specialist Program for the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs. He is a European Regional Affairs Strategist and speaks Bulgarian and German. Colonel Werner has flown over 100 combat missions and 4,200 hours in US and Bulgarian Air Force aircraft. In addition to a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from the United States Air Force Academy, he earned a Master of Arts Degree in International Political Relations and Security Studies from Sofia University.

Abstract

As resources diminish within the US Department of Defense (DoD) and the individual services strive to develop “light footprint” forces while rebalancing to the Pacific, the United States finds itself relying on partners at a level last witnessed during World War II. Security Cooperation (SC) is the DoD’s mechanism of choice for engaging with potential allies. As a critical enabler, SC must be deliberately and thoughtfully concentrated. Scarce resources should be focused on specific partners and regions based on a predictive, standardized formula balancing economic opportunity, access, political alignment and human capital. A broad engagement strategy is simply not possible given shrinking budgets and competing programs: when SC initiatives overreach, they risk irrelevance. *The solution is a more focused methodology.*

The crux of such a methodology lies in fairly evaluating targeted partners with an agreed-upon tool. By weighting factors via a standardized index, the United States can prioritize and invest accordingly in potential allies. Fortified by guidance and vision contained in the *National Security Strategy*, the *Air Force Global Partnership Strategy* and the DoD’s *Guidance for Employment of the Force*, the Security Cooperation Index (SCI) outlined in this paper utilizes a formula capable of providing policy makers and senior leaders with a jumping-off point for evaluation and prioritization. As engagement and cooperation continue to be pursued as means for dealing with shrinking budgets, the application of SC programs must be correspondingly measured. The SCI is a tool to assist in bridging this gap. By helping to re-focus American resources in the SC arena, the SCI enables the promotion of US interests abroad and the pursuit of global stability.

Introduction

The idea of international cooperation is nothing new to the United States. Americans often looked to foreign powers for assistance and alliances during their formative years. At the same time, these early American leaders also envisioned their country as a unique model, a landmass with enough resources to be potentially self-reliant and self-sufficient. This dichotomy has historically led to opposing periods of engagement and retrenchment, with reversals of course often linked to the pervading views on capitalism at the time. The United States stands once again at a crossroads. As capitalism and free trade have flattened the world over the last twenty years, American engagement and cooperation abroad has soared. At the same time, war overseas has shown the United States to look inward and act unilaterally when necessary. As a result of both phenomena, the United States now relies on partners and allies at a level last witnessed during World War II. With a multitude of tools at its disposal (both hard and soft), the United States is fortunate to have options when engaging with partners.¹ From the Department of Defense's (DoD) perspective, Security Cooperation (SC) is the mechanism of choice, and this critical enabler must be deliberately and thoughtfully concentrated. Scarce SC resources should be focused on specific partners and regions based on a predictive, standardized formula balancing access, influence, political value and economic potential.

Political and defense cooperation have long been key in promoting US policies and interests abroad. These efforts go well beyond military engagement and span across the diplomatic and political arenas into the information and economic fronts. All are generally synchronized with one goal in mind: to further US interests abroad while enlisting the right partners to help in this endeavor. As the *National Security Strategy (NSS)* states, "the belief that our own interests are bound to the interests of those beyond our borders will continue to guide

our engagement with nations and peoples.”² Citing the effects of a “global economic crisis, violent extremism, shifting regional balances of power, and the proliferation of advanced technologies,” the USAF in its *Global Partnership Strategy (AFGPS)* acknowledges the unlikelihood “for any one nation to address every global challenge and priority alone.”³ This certainly rings true for the United States, and while finding the right partners with which to cooperate may be the most challenging task in the SC business, the DoD has a solid record of prospering with partners once connected. The key is identifying and developing partners before conflict makes them essential. Across the entire security spectrum, from protecting free market economies to conducting combat operations, the future of successful US security operations will be based upon partners and allies.

Those unconvinced of this premise need only look to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel’s comments from February 2013: “I’ve always believed that America’s role in the world has been one that should engage...we must lead with our allies. No nation...can do any of this alone. We renew old alliances. We reach out and find new alliances based on common interests.”⁴ Of course, during times of unlimited resources, this sort of partnering is easy: engage with anyone and everyone. And for a significant portion of the last thirty years, this has been exactly the sort of engagement practiced by the United States. But as budget cuts take hold, a more responsible approach is required. The *AFGPS* touts four distinct “ends” in the partnering game, but all beg the question: “Exactly where and precisely with *whom* is the United States focusing?”⁵ *Finding the right partners with which to engage is essential.*

The Role of Security Cooperation in US Government and Department of Defense Initiatives

By interacting with target nations and organizations via multiple security activities, the DoD's objective is to keep partners ready, willing and able for whatever the United States may need of them. The Department does this through SC, which "involves all DoD interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific US security interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide US forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation."⁶ This description covers a lot of territory. At the national level, SC is meant to fit into part of the broader context of the *National Security Strategy (NSS)*, the *National Defense Strategy (NDS)* and/or the *National Military Strategy (NMS)*. SC acknowledges an attempt to exploit opportunities and leverage relationships. While great nations look to establish hegemony, smaller nations also have goals linked to effective SC: they often seek partnering opportunities as ways to gain credibility, cover for shortfalls and/or leverage unique assets and capabilities. One of the US military's primary references on multinational operations describes this environment as one in which states "seek opportunities to promote their mutual national interests, ensure mutual security against real and perceived threats, conduct foreign humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, and engage in peace operations."⁷

While the *NSS* provides broad guidance on partnering by identifying important regions (such as the "rebalance to the Asia-Pacific"), it does not necessarily spell out targeted countries.⁸ High-level regional engagement is generally carried out by the geographic combatant commands (GCC). From an SC perspective, the GCCs execute cooperative initiatives with specific partners. SC is a "key element of global and theater shaping" and is the means by which GCCs

encourage and enable “countries and organizations to work with the United States to achieve strategic objectives.”⁹ An overarching, national SC intent is ideally relayed via the DoD’s *Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF)*, a product intended to provide “guidance on building partner capacity and capability, relationships, and facilitating access.”¹⁰ If planned, resourced and executed correctly, SC activities “lessen the causes of a potential crisis before a situation deteriorates and requires coercive US military intervention.”¹¹ As US Army doctrine stresses, “assistance often improves access to key regions. Security cooperation also communicates (US) position to potential adversaries in that region.”¹² Additionally, the individual services have distinct roles in SC: the DoD directs the military departments to maintain a capability to “organize, train, equip, and advise foreign military forces,” as well as “support the development of the capability and capacity of host-country defense institutions and ministries.”¹³

The service level is generally where resources become tight. While *building partnerships (BP)* is one of the USAF’s 12 core functions, it is combined with two other core functions (*special operations* and *personnel recovery*) to account for only 3% of the Air Force’s 2014 budget request.¹⁴ And while recognized as a key enabler during times of austerity, *BP* is not immune to budget cuts: the Air Force’s proposed 2014 *BP* budget is down 50% from 2012 (from \$580 million to approximately \$290 million).¹⁵ One reason: SC is simply not as glamorous as weapons system procurement and technology upgrades, and pales in accounting comparison to personnel and readiness programs. To be fair, the core functions ranked ahead of *BP* in the USAF’s 2014 funding request are significant. *Agile combat support, global precision attack, rapid global mobility* and *space superiority* account for 68% of the Air Force’s \$114 billion budget: they are not cheap and they are not accomplished by anyone else.¹⁶ It is not

surprising, then, that a traditional, broad engagement strategy is simply not possible with shrinking budgets and competing programs: when SC initiatives overreach, they risk irrelevance. *The solution is a more focused methodology.*

Certain key partnerships will continue to support large US force presence (such as Germany and South Korea). Where “boots-on-ground” is not possible, however, the strategy should focus on enabling choice partners to engage regionally. If the United States cannot afford (or is unable) to project presence with traditional resources and force structures, partners should be able to represent US national interests, and even act as America’s proxy if necessary. Of course, an underlying objective should be to create political consensus, and to empower partners as true regional leaders.

A framework for implementing this sort of strategy is already afoot. As a means to deal with diminishing defense budgets, the DoD has adopted what some call a “light footprint strategy” (LFS).¹⁷ While this approach is not solely budget-driven (it capitalizes on the advancements of high-tech systems, precision weapons and streamlined processes), it potentially complements a shrinking force. As opposed to the large presentation of forces throughout Europe and Asia after World War II, the United States is moving toward a mix of smaller, tailored forces. This model is driven in part by the necessity to recover from two costly wars. The LFS favors modes of warfare that can move in and out of theaters quickly, and relies heavily on special forces and high-tech enablers such as remotely piloted aircraft (RPA).¹⁸ While not all military initiatives associated with the LFS are meant to enable a kinetic solution, the general idea is clear: create a technologically-superior force capable of intervention, while avoiding the entanglement of nation-building.

President Obama articulated this idea during the Libya intervention in 2011 by stating his goal “was not to police the world but, in places where America’s interests were remote, to create the conditions and coalitions for others to step up.”¹⁹ As President Obama has embraced this strategy, he has also seemed to acknowledge critiques of the “light footprint” approach: “that his reluctance to intervene sent a message that the United States was withdrawing from the world.”²⁰ Whether interpreted as isolationist or not, a key tenet to this strategy is the ability to partner. In the case of the LFS, virtual presence is indeed the preferred alternative to actual absence. And whether the strategy for a given region entails enabling partners, utilizing proxies or gaining permission to “get-in and get-out,” SC provides the foundation.

Another key SC linkage in the *NSS* is the rebalance to the Pacific. Citing “Asia’s dramatic economic growth,” “connection to America’s future prosperity, and its emerging centers of influence,” the *NSS* highlights “the substantial steps” taken by the administration “to deepen (US) engagement in the region.”²¹ Such a shift in strategy presents challenges. Due to “vulnerability problems and/or excessive distances to (potential) operating locations,” the Rand Corporation has assessed “current main operating bases in Japan and the Republic of Korea are unable to address the full range of potential demands” on the military.²² This means partners who may not have been traditional staples in America’s Pacific defense posture (such as Vietnam and Indonesia) now become prime targets for engagement. With a fixed amount of defense force, any rebalance brings an inherent cost and implies movement of assets, energy and capital. Equally consuming of SC resources and effort are the regions from which the US “rebalances.” Whether or not forces follow as US interests move toward Asia, partners in Europe, the Middle East and Southwest Asia will continue to face security dilemmas. Regional issues such as immigration, weak or failing states and control of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) will not

disappear, and the United States will expect and rely more on European and Middle Eastern allies to fill voids left behind.²³ For all players involved in a rebalance, SC initiatives will provide the bedrock for successful security endeavors.

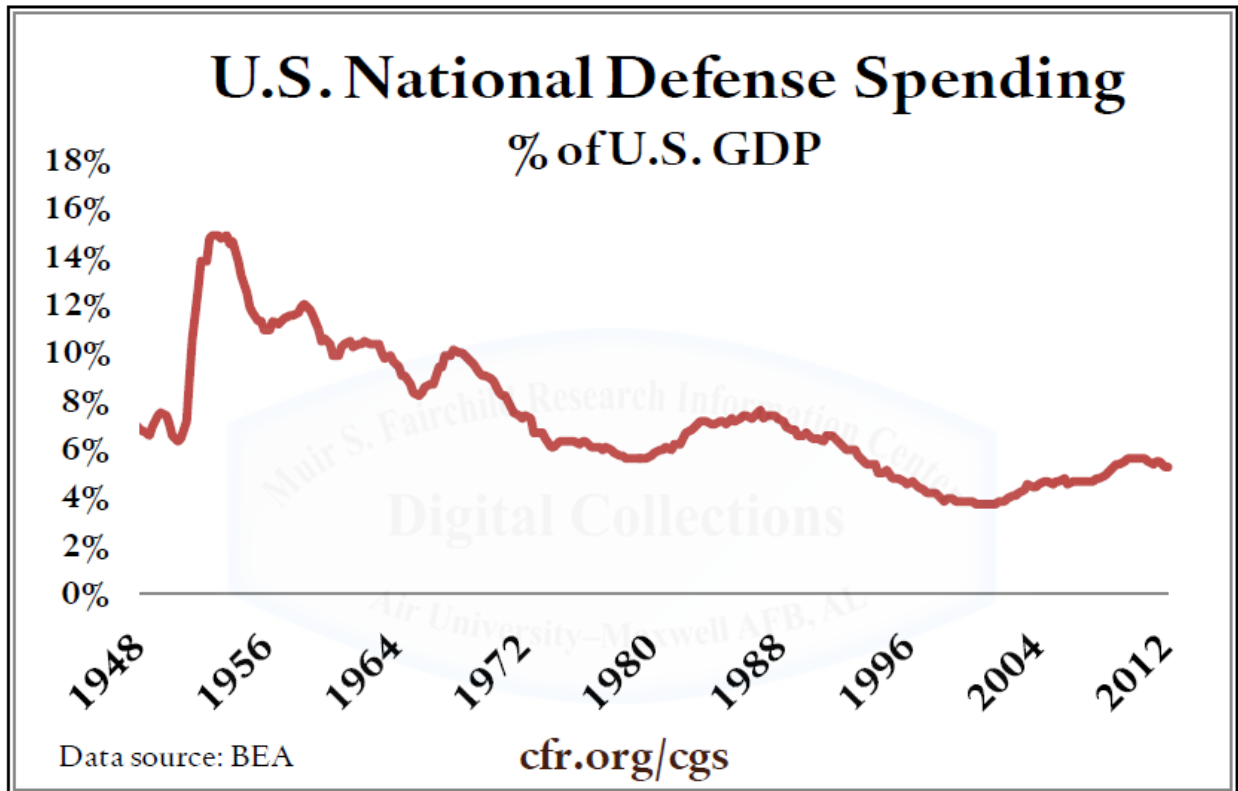
The Traditional Implementation of Security Cooperation

Resources are clearly diminishing within the US government (USG), specifically within the DoD.²⁴ Following a prescription for isolationism could help save money, at least in the short term. As President Obama has stated, “the burdens of a young century cannot fall on American shoulders alone – indeed, our adversaries would like to see America sap our strength by overextending our power.”²⁵ While this statement does not prescribe retrenchment, it does allude to a deliberate application of power. Achieving balance is difficult, however. While the United States cannot afford to engage too broadly, an over-correction to isolationism would jeopardize the inevitable dividends of engagement. According to author Robert Kagan, “the myth of America’s ‘isolationist’ tradition is remarkably resilient. But it is a myth...the ambition to play a grand role on the world stage is deeply rooted in the American character.”²⁶ Even when the United States has exhibited periods of retrenchment, it has eventually reversed itself. As George H. W. Bush said after 9/11, “just as Pearl Harbor awakened this country from the notion that we could somehow avoid the call of duty and defend freedom in Europe and Asia in World War II, so, too, should this most recent surprise attack erase the concept in some quarters that America can somehow go it alone in the fight against terrorism or in anything else for that matter.”²⁷

Engagement, however, must match the realities of a twenty-first century defense drawdown. Consistent with the Budget Control Act, the DoD intends to reduce spending by

\$259 billion by 2018, and \$487 billion by 2023: such an uncertain security environment places America's partners and allies front and center.²⁸ SC tools must therefore be tailored appropriately.

Figure 1. US Defense Spending



Reprinted from Council on Foreign Relations, "Trends in US Military Spending"²⁹

In the case of the USAF, SC costs must be balanced with commitments to ongoing procurement efforts. Dedication to the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, Long Range Bomber and KC-46 Tanker programs are paramount and account for a significant portion of the USAF budget.³⁰ Again, this is a case where the appeal of weapons system procurement pushes SC initiatives to the backburner. Complicating the equation, not all of these programs are chosen by the services or the DoD. Service chiefs may desire to pay for and commit to certain SC programs, but such

efforts are generally trumped when Congress forces weapons systems on the services: cases such as the RQ-4 RPA are unfortunate.³¹ While most senior leaders fully understand the necessity of proper SC funding, budgets are simply shrinking. The current Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF), General Mark Welsh, has stated that “when you’re having trouble with resources, when you really need to rely on partners, you hug them closer, you don’t push them away. So that’s the approach we’re going to be taking.”³² Easier said than done, especially when senior leaders are faced with must-pay bills for weapons systems, manpower and benefits.

Some traditional SC programs are well suited for this fiscally challenging environment and do not significantly cost the services or DoD. Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programs actually make money for the US defense industry. In general, the United States provides this sort of military assistance in order to help partners acquire US military equipment and training. According to the DoD’s *Security Assistance Management Manual*, the “FMS Program is that part of Security Assistance authorized by the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) and conducted using formal contracts or agreements between the United States Government (USG) and an authorized foreign purchaser.”³³ The manual goes on to point out that FMS programs “support US foreign policy and national security objectives.”³⁴ Serving as both an engagement tool and a business mechanism, FMS is fairly easy to measure in absolute terms and is often used as a primary index in comparing SC among partners. Congress traditionally appropriates approximately 12% of foreign aid as military assistance (\$4.7 billion in 2010).³⁵ Two additional SC programs are administered by the Department of State and implemented by the DoD. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) is a grant program that enables governments to receive equipment from the USG or to access equipment directly through US commercial channels. The

International Military Education and Training program (IMET) offers military training on a grant basis (\$108 million in 2010) to foreign military officers and personnel.³⁶

The Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), which oversees these programs for the DoD, is quick to point out they “are not in the business of selling equipment, but rather are promoting military-to-military relationships with international partners.”³⁷ But there is clearly a profit to be made in the SC business.³⁸ The data in figure 2 does not include Saudi Arabia’s record F-15 purchase in 2012, but it does portray certain countries as very reliable defense customers and business partners.

Figure 2. Leading Purchasers of U.S. Defense Articles and Services (in current U.S. dollars, rounded to nearest 10 million or 10th of a billion)

Worldwide Agreements 2003-2006	Worldwide Agreements 2007-2010	Worldwide Agreements 2010
1 Egypt \$4.5 billion	1 Saudi Arabia \$13.8 billion	1 Taiwan \$2.7 billion
2 Saudi Arabia \$4.2 billion	2 U.A.E. \$10.4 billion	2 Egypt \$1.8 billion
3 Poland \$4.1 billion	3 Egypt \$7.8 billion	3 Saudi Arabia \$1.5 billion
4 Australia \$2.9 billion	4 Taiwan \$6.6 billion	4 Australia \$1.3 billion
5 Japan \$2.9 billion	5 Australia \$6.4 billion	5 U.K. \$1.2 billion
6 Greece \$2.6 billion	6 Iraq \$5.6 billion	6 Israel \$1.1 billion
7 South Korea \$2.4 billion	7 Pakistan \$4.1 billion	7 Iraq \$840 million
8 Kuwait \$2.1 billion	8 U.K. \$4.0 billion	8 Jordan \$650 million
9 Turkey \$2.1 billion	9 Turkey \$3.8 billion	9 South Korea \$640 million
10 Israel \$1.6 billion	10 South Korea \$3.8 billion	10 Singapore \$530 million

Reprinted from Congressional Research Service, “U.S. Arms Sales”³⁹

While not as lucrative as FMS, FMF is also a key SC tool.⁴⁰ But neither of these programs necessarily direct with whom the United States should engage. And the roles these programs play are changing as the global defense environment evolves: the days of the United States cornering weapons markets are slowing. DSCA sees more pressure from traditional arms

competitors such as the United Kingdom, France and Russia, as well as emerging competitors in China, India, Brazil, South Korea and the European Union (EU).⁴¹ With this in mind, the USG must ensure it has a plan for SC targeting that is not linked solely to sales and loans.

Senior leaders also play a major role in engagement and traditionally wield significant influence in the focusing of SC efforts. Many US and foreign senior officers have met one another at some point in their careers, either via military professional exchange programs, professional military education opportunities or coalition operations and exercises. As DSCA's general counsel points out, IMET "has been a significant aid to the United States over the last 30 years in terms of helping build relationships with those who later go on to be senior members of partner militaries."⁴² The exposure of these officers to one another in schools such as the Air War College (AWC) is invaluable for many reasons, but the underlying intent is to indoctrinate future senior leaders in the "American way" so they might have a sense of allegiance (or at least a full Rolodex).⁴³

Potential negative implications should also be acknowledged when valuing the human element of SC. If partners become too comfortable with one another, especially over an extended period, *status quo* relationships can develop. Particularly in a fixed-resource environment, these relationships should be scrutinized so they do not exist at the exclusion of potentially valuable partners. Entrenched dialogues or relationships resulting in limited dividends may require adjustment lest they risk potential irrelevance. Bi-lateral agreements, treaties and relationships between Air Chiefs and Chiefs of Defense should certainly be encouraged and recognized for their potential. But they must be constantly analyzed so as to not unduly influence the choice of SC partners.

Security Cooperation Factors: The Basis for Normalizing Values

So what does the United States value in partners? Only after defining such traits can a predictive SC formula be developed. While it may be difficult to completely codify a partner's security value, a standardized set of criteria can at least provide a baseline for assessment. The *AFGPS* does an excellent job of imparting strategies for engagement once a partner is identified.⁴⁴ It does not, however, prescribe or adequately assist the GCC or service in establishing a prioritization of partner nations. By weighting four key factors – *economic opportunity, access, political alignment* and *human capital* – via a standardized index, potential partners can be prioritized accordingly.

As previously highlighted, access and influence are often by-products of successful relationships. The ability of the United States to project power into regions without US presence; utilize turnkey facilities, ports and airfields; or rely on allies for political support will become even more valuable as US presence abroad diminishes. Whether driven toward this approach by the availability of technologically-enabled forces or forced into it by shrinking budgets, influence and access are essential to the success of a light footprint model. According to the RAND Corporation, “although main operating bases are likely to remain vital, their role is evolving and, in some cases, likely to diminish...all trends suggest continued DoD emphasis on expanding access arrangements in the spirit of ‘places not bases.’”⁴⁵ Exercises and training events are exceptional building blocks for this premise.

Just as senior leader relationships often lead to commitments and agreements between military forces, relationships at lower levels can also result in fruitful outcomes. Many long-term professional associations have grown from exposure at war or staff colleges, whether hosted by the United States or as exchange opportunities for US officers abroad. The importance of this

force multiplier is not lost on current military leadership, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) recognizes leveraging these opportunities may help mitigate receding budgets.⁴⁶

The CJCS appreciates the requirement for regionally-savvy, culturally-nuanced officers to develop valued relationships. He also realizes the next generation of CJCS-to-Chief of Defense or CSAF-to-Air Chief relationships are likely to spring from early exposures: these senior officers are “developing the next generation of commanders – our reliefs.”⁴⁷

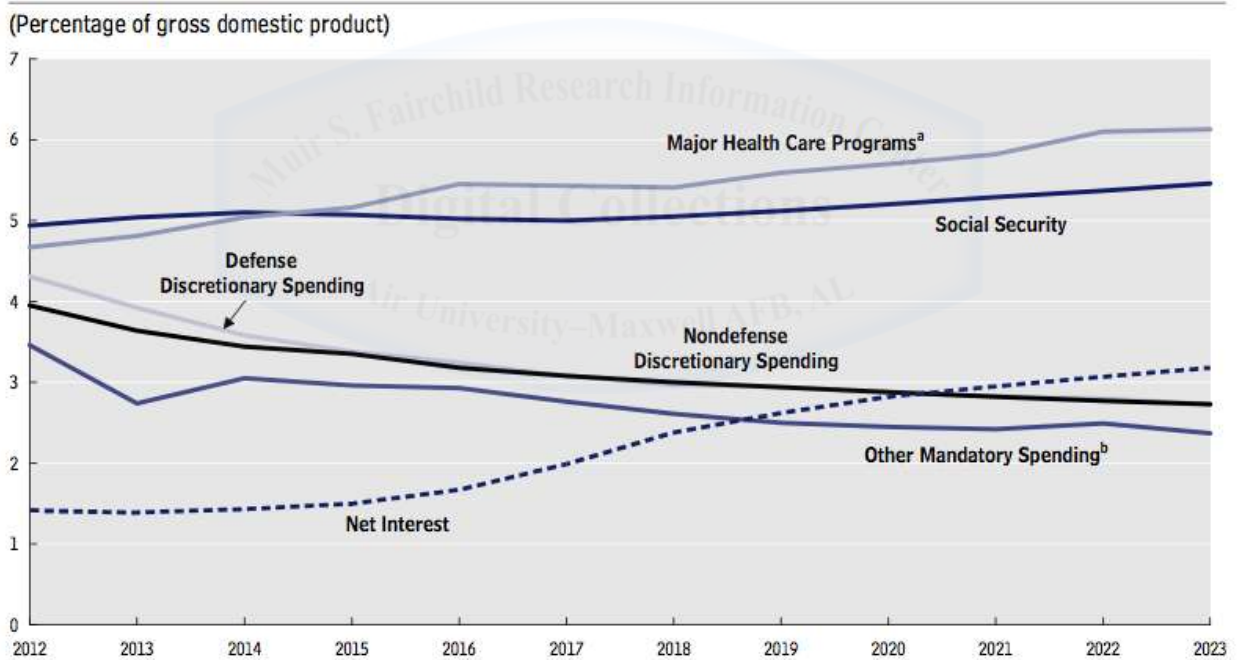
Past relationships, political posture, investment in American technology, exercises with US forces or attendance at US service schools are all representative of traits valued in partners. But they do not individually provide ample direction as to where the United States should focus *future* engagement. Past performance must be recognized and the steadfastness of certain allies is invaluable: countries such as the United Kingdom, Japan and the United Arab Emirates deserve special consideration for their level of commitment to shared values and interests. But if engagement with traditional partners occurs at the expense of underdeveloped, unproven or at-risk potential partners, the United States may neglect the very countries most requiring security assistance. These same countries may also contain the operational environments in which the United States is forced to confront future security threats, extremism and unchecked aggression.

Evaluating partners in such a sensitive manner cannot be accomplished without relying on nuance and intangibles to a certain degree. Return on investment and the excess capacity proven partners may possess must also be accounted for. An effective SC formula should capture all of these variables, and must acknowledge the realities commerce and trade play in American defense policy. Utilizing the four key factors above, a balanced equation can be used to evaluate partnerships past, predict the value of partnerships future and account for the possibility of change.

A Proposed Security Cooperation Value Index

Multiple high-level reviews of American SC efforts already exist: geographic combatant commanders (GCC) coordinate with the CJCS and chiefs of mission around the globe to “assess and prioritize the needs of foreign security forces and supporting institutions.”⁴⁸ So why is it necessary to address the manner in which the DoD currently measures the value of partners? *The simple answer is money.* With budgets decreasing, the United States can no longer afford to overstretch limited SC dollars.

Figure 3. Projected Spending for Major Budget Categories



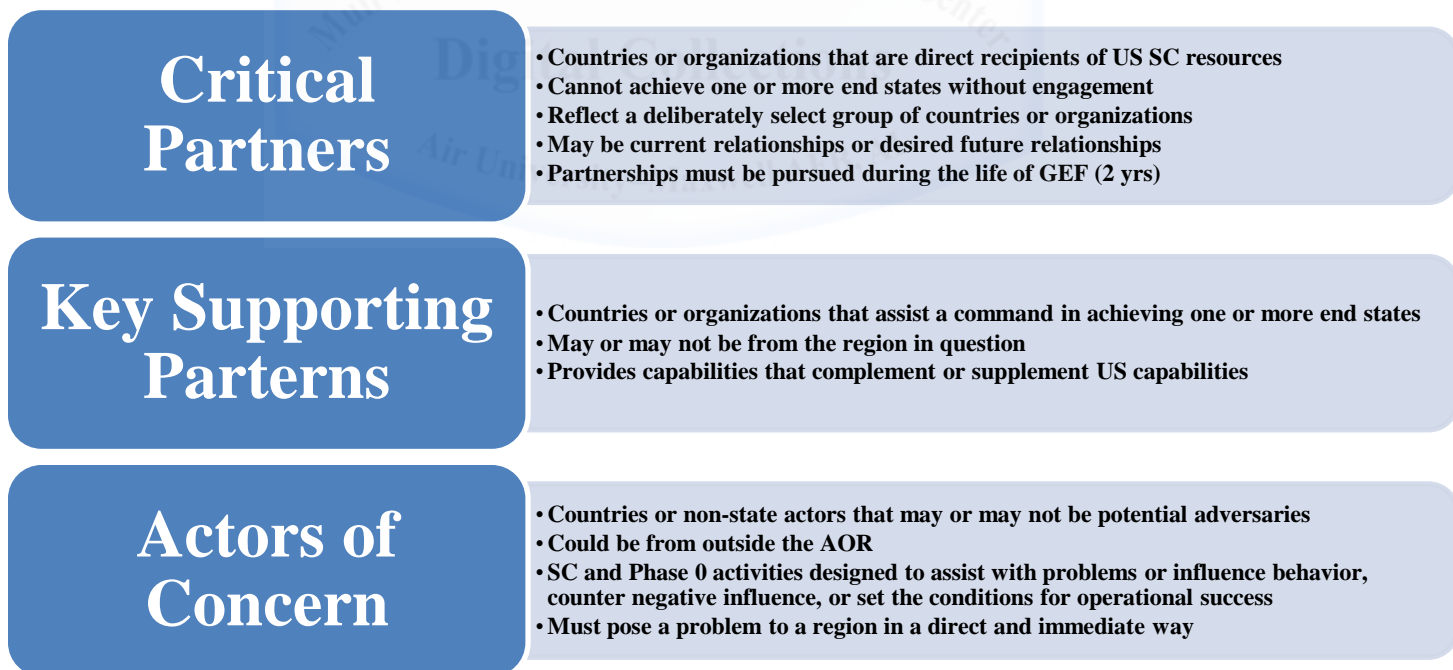
Source: Congressional Budget Office.

- a. Includes Medicare (net of receipts from premiums), Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and subsidies offered through new health insurance exchanges and related spending.
- b. Other than mandatory spending for major health care programs and Social Security.

Reprinted from Congressional Budget Office, "Updated Budget Projections: Fiscal Years 2013-2023"⁴⁹

As the senior military entity responsible for incorporating “Security Force Assistance into theater plans,” the GCC has a primary role in planning and executing SC for a given region.⁵⁰ But whereas the GCC reigns supreme in executing national security strategy per the *Unified Command Plan (UCP)*, service chiefs are legally obligated to organize, train and equip their respective engagement forces, and should therefore also inform policy. A common understanding of how partners are evaluated is critical in ensuring all parties utilize limited resources in a focused and responsible manner. Such an index can guide services, industry and policymakers, and will ultimately influence the GCCs’ *GEF*-driven priorities. Basic guidance for *categorizing* SC target nations already exists (figure 4).

Figure 4. GEF Grouping of Nations and Organizations



***KEY POINT:** Depending on context, a nation or organization can fall into all 3 categories**

Adapted from Professor Patrick C. Sweeney, “A Primer for: Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF), Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP), the Adaptive Planning and Execution (APEX) System, and Global Force Management (GFM)”⁵¹

The campaign planning priorities specified within a GCC's engagement plans contain target nations and organizations. The *GEF* directs GCCs to identify target nations within the following priorities: 1) Critical Partners, 2) Key Supporting Partners, and/or 3) Actors of Concern.⁵² But by simply compiling the six GCCs' preferred target nations, a strategic dilemma still exists: what are the *global* priorities? Which partners are truly "critical" at the national level? A common index will help to answer these questions.

The Security Cooperation Index (SCI) proposed in figure 5 uses a 10-point scale and provides a reliable and standardized evaluation of target nations by utilizing key factors previously presented: *economic opportunity, access, political alignment* and *human capital*. These factors are clearly weighted in a manner reflecting today's fiscal realities, but the formula appropriately recognizes the importance of relationships and *realpolitik*. While the SCI favors the financial aspect of SC, it breaks down its economic variable into past and future elements – all in the spirit of the formula's balanced approach. Various additional economic, historical, geopolitical and humanitarian factors were considered in the development of the SCI, but ultimately discarded: the four factors contained therein adequately address the DoD's description of SC.⁵³ The foremost challenge in developing a formula such as the SCI is to make it detailed enough to account for the complexity of partner valuation, but not so complicated policy-makers hesitate to apply it as a guideline. The SCI is an attempt to find such balance, and to provide a baseline formula for DoD policy experts to utilize in dialogue. Finally, and most importantly, the SCI addresses the dichotomy of potential partners: its formula balances and recognizes past performance and commitment while opening doors to those countries or organizations possessing capacity and sharing US security interests. While the SCI as proposed

is unclassified, it stands to reason a classified version may be developed in order to safeguard sensitive projections (similar to the *AFGPS*' classified Domain Engagement Strategies).⁵⁴

Figure 5. Proposed Security Cooperation Index (SCI)

$$\text{SCI} = f(\text{Fiscal Commit (FC)} + \text{Access (A)} + \text{Political Commit (PC)} + \text{Human Commit (HC)})$$

$$\text{FC} = f(\text{Previous Year FMS* (0.0 – 2.0)} + \text{Defense Spending/GDP (0.0 – 2.0)})$$

0.0 (≤\$300M)	0.0 (≤0.5%)
0.5 (>\$300M – 600M)	0.5 (>0.5% – 2.0%)
1.0 (>\$600M – 900M)	1.0 (>2.0% – 3.5%)
1.5 (>\$900M – 1.2B)	1.5 (>3.5% – 5.0%)
2.0 (>\$1.2B)	2.0 (>5.0%)

* *FMS = FMS Deliveries Concluded (not Agreements Concluded)*

- A** = 3 (Usable mil facilities [airfield(s), training ground(s) and/or port(s)])
 2 (Building usable mil facilities [airfield(s), training ground(s) and/or port(s)])
 1 (Agreement to build usable mil facilities [airfield(s), training ground(s) and/or port(s)])
 0 (Official denial/declination of access)

- PC** = 2 (Formally aligned w/ US; voted w/ US on UNGAR/SCR(s))
 1.5 (Formally aligned w/ US; voted opposite US/abstained on UNGAR/SCR(s))
 1 (Seeking formal alignment w/ US; voted w/ US on UNGAR/SCR(s))
 0.5 (Voted w/ US on UNGAR/SCR(s); Non-Aligned Movement [NAM] or non-US ally)
 0 (Voted opposite US on UNGAR/SCR(s); NAM or non-US ally)

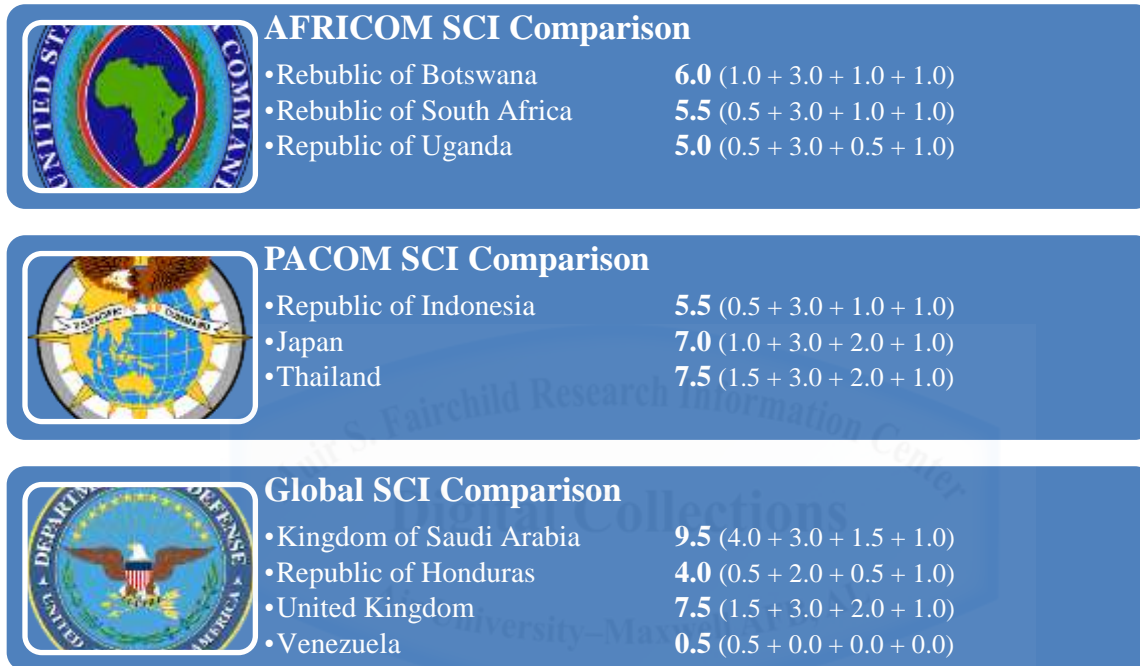
- HC** = 1 (Completed, attending or formally requested IMET Pgm(s))
 0.5 (IMET Pgm intent unverified/unsolicited)
 0 (Declination of IMET Pgm)

Maximum SCI Value = 10
(e.g., FC (4) + A (3) + PC (2) + HC (1) = 10)

Applying the SCI to a group of partners within the areas of responsibility of both US Africa Command (AFRICOM) and US Pacific Command (PACOM) offers snapshots of products useful in prioritizing future engagement (figure 6). In AFRICOM, the Republic of

Botswana, the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Uganda score 6.0, 5.5 and 5.0, respectively.⁵⁵ In PACOM, the Republic of Indonesia, Japan and Thailand score 5.5, 7.0 and 7.5, respectively.⁵⁶

Figure 6. Security Cooperation Index (SCI) Comparative Examples



Derived and adapted from the Security Cooperation Index (SCI) Formula (figure 5) and data from The World Bank, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, and the United Nations⁵⁷

In the PACOM comparison, it may be surprising that Thailand scores higher than Japan. This example, however, highlights the utility of the SCI: it is not intended to re-affirm the United States' strongest or richest partners, but rather to identify those countries most ripe for engagement. Thailand is not necessarily more regionally significant to US security interests or policy than Japan, but it certainly represents an opportunity for engagement worth prioritizing accordingly. The same can be said for the comparison of Botswana and South Africa. In any case, the SCI provides a standardized protocol for codifying the value of a partner. While these

examples compare regional players, the SCI has the benefit of being just as useful for global prioritization.⁵⁸

Aside from these academic comparisons, the SCI proposed herein is wholly untested. While financial transactions, access potential and human capital commitments are fairly easy to measure, the most nuanced of the four factors used in the SCI is political commitment. United Nations voting records are but one method to interpret political intent: informal or burgeoning relationships develop quickly in this day and age, and must therefore be constantly evaluated.⁵⁹ The political protocol utilized by the SCI does gauge a nation's alignment, however. There is no easy solution to managing, measuring and committing to partners and allies. What the SCI succeeds in doing is straightforward: it provides a common vernacular and trusted index with which defense policy makers and planners can commence a dialogue.

Conclusion

Until you are in a time of need, measuring the value of a partner can be difficult. When that partner is a sovereign nation, such an endeavor can also be quite sensitive. Aligning with the right partners, however, has never been more important as a pillar of US national security than it is today: partnering is instrumental in accomplishing security and diplomatic objectives. As the line between conflict and concord continues to blur, and while economic interest and national security increasingly intertwine, the need for trusted allies is essential. The United States can no longer afford to expend resources on an excessively wide range of partners in the hope they will be available should the United States come calling. At no point in the last 60 years has it been more appropriate than the present to seriously prioritize partners, and then invest accordingly. A formula capable of providing policy makers and senior leaders with a line

of departure for evaluation and prioritization is invaluable. The Security Cooperation Index (SCI) allows for such focus.

The SCI is but a single initiative aimed at focusing American resources. It is intended to bring continuity to a difficult subject. If developed and applied with rigor, however, it can assist the United States in reconstituting elements of its armed forces, re-assessing its global roles, developing appropriate relationships and repositioning assets accordingly. Selective application of Security Cooperation (SC) via the SCI simply assists in hedging against the downside of difficult prioritization decisions: it is an attempt to maximize SC “bang-for-the-buck.” And while the SCI is meant to provide a jumping-off point, it establishes an important milestone in focusing American SC efforts: its formula represents a predictive method for focusing dwindling SC resources on specific partners and regions in a standardized manner. After all, it takes time to develop relationships and to build the trust necessary to implement shared visions and interests. There is no time to waste, and lost ground cannot be made-up overnight. As General Phil Breedlove, the Commander of US European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, stated at the Air War College in 2013: “You cannot surge trust. You cannot surge relationships.”⁶⁰

The time for building focused relationships is now and the SCI can help to ensure the foundation of these partnerships is built to endure – confidently, steadily and responsibly.

Notes

¹ The White House, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2010), 11.

² *Ibid.*, 3.

³ US Department of the Air Force, *Global Partnership Strategy (GPS)* (Washington, DC: Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force (International Affairs), December 2011), 1.

⁴ US Department of the Air Force, *International Affairs Specialist (IAS) Strategic Message Summary* (Washington, DC: Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force (International Affairs), September 2013).

⁵ US Department of the Air Force, *GPS*, 16.

⁶ Joint Publication 3-16 (JP 3-16), *Multinational Operations*, 16 Jul 2013, ix-x.

⁷ *Ibid.*, ix.

⁸ When it has highlighted specific countries in the past, it has done so in a manner identifying those in a “less-than-favored status” (the “axis of evil” in 2002: Iraq, Iran, Syria). See Tom Donilon, “The United States and the Asia-Pacific in 2013,” remarks (The Asia Society, New York, NY, 11 March 2013), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/03/11/remarks-tom-donilon-national-security-advisory-president-united-states-a>.

⁹ JP 3-16, *Multinational Operations*, 16 Jul 2013, I-4.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, I-4.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, I-4.

¹² Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) No. 1, *The Army*, 17 September 2012, 1-2.

¹³ Department of Defense (DOD) Instruction 5000.68, Air Force Instruction 16-122, *Security Force Assistance*, 10 February 2012, 3.

¹⁴ US Department of the Air Force, *Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Overview* (Washington, DC: Office of the Under Secretary of the Air Force (Financial Management and Comptroller), April 2013), 32.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹⁷ “Generation Kill,” interview with Stanley McChrystal, *Foreign Affairs*, 11 February 2013, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/discussions/interviews/generation-kill>.

¹⁸ When President Obama refers to the “light footprint,” it is usually via “a series of allusions” indicating a desire for a force able “to fight its wars stealthily, execute its operations with the speed of the bin Laden raid, and then avoid lengthy entanglements.” See David E. Sanger, *Confront and Conceal* (New York, NY: Broadway Paperbacks, 2013), xviii.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 421.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 423.

²¹ The White House, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 2010), 43.

²² Alan J. Vick and Jacob L. Heim, *Assessing U.S. Air Force Basing Options in East Asia* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), xiv.

²³ As the editor-in-chief of *The Economist* describes President Obama's second term, "wherever America has stepped back – Latin America, eastern Europe, Africa, the Middle East – it has created an unhealthy vacuum." See John Micklethwait, "Your chance, Mr Obama," *The Economist*, *The World in 2014* (30 October 2013): 20.

²⁴ US Department of the Air Force, *Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Overview*, 4.

²⁵ Barrack Obama, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2010), iv.

²⁶ Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), 86.

²⁷ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *The Paradox of American Power* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002), xv.

²⁸ US Department of Defense, "DOD Releases Fiscal 2013 Budget Proposal," news release (Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), Washington, DC, 13 February 2012), <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=15056>.

²⁹ Dinah Walker, "Trends in U.S. Military Spending," Council on Foreign Relations, 12 August 2012, <http://www.cfr.org/defense-budget/trends-us-military-spending/p28855>.

³⁰ The F-35, Long Range Bomber and KC-46 represent 41.9% of the USAF's Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation Budget. See US Department of the Air Force, *Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Overview*, 17.

³¹ According to the Congressional Research Service, the RQ-4 Global Hawk was originally pitched at \$35 million per copy, but over time has risen by 284% to \$220 million per copy. In spite of pressure from the USAF, Congress passed legislation ordering the USAF to purchase this high-altitude surveillance RPA, a program the USAF canceled nearly two years ago. As Loren Thompson of the Lexington Institute explains, "when the military customer began to doubt its desire for these unmanned systems, Northrop turned to Congress, (and) tried to use congressional leverage as a way to stop those programs from losing their funding." In other words, \$31 million in lobbying and an additional \$4 million from Northrop's political action committee (PAC) to congressional campaign coffers have de facto pushed the Global Hawk to the front of the USAF's budget sheet, at the potential expense of SC (and other program) funding. The question of one USAF officer regarding this phenomenon is representative of SC advocates who are left with skeleton programs: "Why are they making us spend money on something we don't want or need?" See Matt Bewig, "Congress Overrules Pentagon to Fund Northrop Grumman Drones," *AllGov.com*, 11 November 2013, <http://www.allgov.com/news/where-is-the-money-going/congress-overrules-pentagon-to-fund-northrop-grumman-drones-131111?news=851636>.

³² US Department of the Air Force, *IAS Strategic Message Summary*.

³³ Department of Defense (DOD) Manual 5105.38-M, *Security Assistance Management Manual*, 3 October 2003, 85.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 85.

³⁵ Curt Tarnoff and Marian Leonardo Lawson, *Foreign Aide: An Introduction to U.S. Programs and Policy*, CRS Report R40213 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 10 February 2011), 10.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

³⁷ Cheryl Pellerin, "U.S. Foreign Military Sales Promote Security Cooperation," *American Forces Press Service*, 18 September 2013, <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=120815>.

³⁸ 2012 was a banner year for DSCA with \$69.1 billion in FMS. Of this staggering sum, a single deal with Saudi Arabia accounted for almost half of this. According to Derek Gilman, DSCA's general counsel, "\$29 billion of that is from the sale of 84 F-15s to Saudi Arabia, along with weapons and training and basing." See Pellerin, "U.S. Foreign Military Sales."

³⁹ Grimmett, Richard F., *U.S. Arms Sales: Agreements with and Deliveries to Major Clients, 2003-2010* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 16 December 2011), 3.

⁴⁰ Representing \$1.1 billion in 2012, the bulk of this grant money goes to Israel and Egypt. Both of these programs are traceable and reported to Congress annually via the AECA. See Pellerin, "U.S. Foreign Military Sales."

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ On certain occasions, US foreign policy may benefit from these relationships in a manner far outweighing a simple arms deal: Egypt's Minister of Defense (and First Deputy Prime Minister), Field Marshal Abd Al Fattah Al Sissy, is a graduate of the US Army War College class of 2006. Al Sissy's professional training in the United States may take on particular importance in the near future as he has taken the first formal step to become Egypt's next president. See Arabic Republic of Egypt, "Ministry of Defense and Military Production," State Information Service, <http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Templates/Articles/tmpArticles.aspx?ArtID=68083> and David D. Kirkpatrick, "Egypt's Ruler Eyes Riskier Role: The Presidency," *The New York Times*, 27 January 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/28/world/middleeast/egypt.html?ref=world&_r=1 (accessed 29 January 2014).

⁴⁴ The AFGPS prescribes a method for helping "partner nations establish, improve, or sustain air, space, and cyberspace capacity and capabilities; build partner relationships; and establish or sustain access." See US Department of the Air Force, *GPS*, 10.

⁴⁵ Alan J. Vick and Jacob L. Heim, *Assessing U.S. Air Force Basing Options in East Asia* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2013), 1-2.

⁴⁶ In talking specifically about an "Asia-Pacific Hands Program" which supports "the development, synchronization, implementation, and assessment of policy, strategic guidance, and

support of our efforts in the Pacific,” General Martin Dempsey has asked the DOD’s most senior leaders to “look at your Service or Combatant Command to see where and how we currently identify and educate our command-path officer, and how we expose them to regional issues.” See GEN Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to Chiefs of the Military Services and Commanders of the Combatant Commands, memorandum, 5 December 2013.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Department of Defense (DOD) Instruction 5000.68, Air Force Instruction 16-122, *Security Force Assistance*, 10 February 2012, 16.

⁴⁹ Congress of the United States, *Updated Budget Projections: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2023* (Washington DC: Congressional Budget Office, May 2013), 12.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 16.

⁵¹ Professor Patrick C. Sweeney, *Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF), Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP), the Adaptive Planning and Execution (APEX) System, and Global Force Management (GFM)*, Primer NWC 2061B (Newport, RI: The United States Naval War College, 2011), 3.

⁵² Ibid., 3.

⁵³ Factors considered during development of the SCI include defense spending (percent of GDP) on *non-US* products or programs; exposure to or participation in regional conflict; exposure to terrorist events; type and/or make-up of government; and historical demand for humanitarian assistance. See JP 3-16, *Multinational Operations*, 16 Jul 2013, ix-x.

⁵⁴ US Department of the Air Force, *GPS*, 10.

⁵⁵ The World Bank, “Military Expenditure (% of GDP),” <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS> and US Department of Defense, *Historical Facts Book* (Washington, DC: Defense Security Cooperation Agency, 30 September 2012), 18-20, http://www.dsca.mil/sites/default/files/historical_facts_book_-_30_sep_2012.pdf.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 23-25.

⁵⁷ See The World Bank, “Military Expenditure (% of GDP),” <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS> and US Department of Defense, *Historical Facts Book* (Washington, DC: Defense Security Cooperation Agency, 30 September 2012), http://www.dsca.mil/sites/default/files/historical_facts_book_-_30_sep_2012.pdf and United Nations Bibliographic Information System, “Status of Palestine in the United Nations,” United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ga/documents/voting.asp> (accessed 27 January 2014).

⁵⁸ Applying the SCI formula to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Honduras, the United Kingdom and Venezuela provides scores of 9.5, 4.0, 7.5 and 0.5, respectively. See The World Bank, “Military Expenditure (% of GDP),” <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS> and US Department of Defense, *Historical Facts Book* (Washington, DC: Defense Security Cooperation Agency, 30 September 2012), 16-21, http://www.dsca.mil/sites/default/files/historical_facts_book_-_30_sep_2012.pdf.

⁵⁹ United Nations Bibliographic Information System, “Status of Palestine in the United Nations,” United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ga/documents/voting.asp> (accessed 27 January 2014).

⁶⁰ Gen Phillip Breedlove, commander, US European Command (address, Commandant’s Lecture Series, Air War College, Maxwell AFB, AL, 29 August 2013).



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