

# Shaping the Security Environment: Incorporating Human-Centered Design Within Security Cooperation Planning

A Monograph

by

MAJ Michael L. Casiano  
US Army



School of Advanced Military Studies  
US Army Command and General Staff College  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

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Security Cooperation is conducted within a complex environment against innovative and adaptive adversaries. Reduced barriers to access of advanced weapons such as drones, enhanced munitions, and computer technology have increased the will of US adversaries to contest US resolve in multiple domains. These variables in combination with access to social media create a formidable enemy network that has resulted in an increased enemy capacity to conduct anti-access and area denial (A2D2) of US and partner forces. Additionally, this approach allows enemies and adversaries of the United States to accrue strategic gains while avoiding direct conflict with the US military. This competitive arena that exists below the threshold of war is often referred to as the gray zone.

Security Cooperation (SC) activities build partner capacity that promotes US security interests and directly and indirectly shapes this complex environment. This monograph examines the incorporation of human-centered design as a way to enhance US Army SC activities to shape the security environment and achieve strategic goals. This method works within the Army design methodology (ADM) and demonstrates a way to create unity of effort for activities with unified action partners that mutually support US goals. Utilizing the Plan Colombia case study demonstrates how United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) and United States Special Operations Command South (USSOCSOUTH) SC achieved enduring results applying a human-centered design approach.

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## Monograph Approval Page

Name of Candidate: MAJ Michael L. Casiano

Monograph Title: Shaping the Security Environment: Incorporating Human-Centered Design Within Security Cooperation Planning

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_, Monograph Director  
Alice Butler-Smith, PhD

\_\_\_\_\_, Seminar Leader  
Jeffrey S. Davis, COL

\_\_\_\_\_, Director, School of Advanced Military Studies  
James C. Markert, COL

Accepted this 24<sup>th</sup> day of May 2018 by:

\_\_\_\_\_, Director, Graduate Degree Programs  
Robert F. Baumann, PhD

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## Abstract

Shaping the Security Environment: Incorporating Human-Centered Design Within Security Cooperation Planning, by MAJ Michael L. Casiano, US Army, 70 pages.

Security Cooperation is conducted within a complex environment against innovative and adaptive adversaries. Reduced barriers to access of advanced weapons such as drones, enhanced munitions, and computer technology have increased the will of US adversaries to contest US resolve in multiple domains. These variables in combination with access to social media create a formidable enemy network that has resulted in an increased enemy capacity to conduct anti-access and area denial (A2D2) of US and partner forces. Additionally, this approach allows enemies and adversaries of the United States to accrue strategic gains while avoiding direct conflict with the US military. This competitive arena that exists below the threshold of war is often referred to as the gray zone.

Security Cooperation (SC) activities build partner capacity that promotes US security interests and directly and indirectly shapes this complex environment. This monograph examines the incorporation of human-centered design as a way to enhance US Army SC activities to shape the security environment and achieve strategic goals. This method works within the Army design methodology (ADM) and demonstrates a way to create unity of effort for activities with unified action partners that mutually support US goals. Utilizing the Plan Colombia case study demonstrates how United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) and United States Special Operations Command South (USSOCSOUTH) SC achieved enduring results applying a human-centered design approach.

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## Acronyms

A2D2	anti-access/area-denial
ADM	Army design methodology
ADP	Army Doctrine Publication
ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
ATP	Army Technical Publication
BPC	building partner capacity
BRIM FUDRA	Mobile Infantry Brigade Rapid Reaction Forces
CCAI	Coordination Center for Integrated Action
CCOPE	Colombian Joint Special Operations Command
CMSE	civil-military support elements
CNP	Colombian National Police
COESE	Colombian Army Special Operations Command
COLMIL	Colombian military
CONVIVIR	Community Associations of Rural Vigilance
DSCP	Democratic Security and Consolidation Plan
DSDP	democratic security and defense policy
ELN	National Liberation Army
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FM	Field Manual
FMF	foreign military financing
GCC	geographic combatant commander
ICS	Integrated Country Strategy
IDAD	internal defense and development plan
IMET	international military education and training
INCLE	International Narcotics Control Law Enforcement
JCET	Joint Combined Exchange Training

JP	Joint Publication
JPP	joint planning process
JTF	Joint Task Force
MDMP	military decision making process
MEDCAPS	medical civic action programs
MILGRP	Military Group
MIST	military information support teams
NADR	non-proliferation, anti-terrorism, demining, related programs
NMS	National Military Strategy
NSDD	National Security Decision Directive
NSPD	National Security Presidential Directive
NSS	National Security Strategy
ODAs	Operational Detachment Alphas
PATT	Planning and assistance team
PDD	Presidential decision directive
PMESII-PT	political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
RIME	Military Intelligence Region
SC	Security Cooperation
SFAB	Security Force Assistance Brigade
SFG (A)	Special Forces Group Airborne
UAP	Unified Action Partners
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSOCSOUTH	United States Special Operations Command South
USSOUTHCOM	United States Southern Command
WOG	Whole-of-Government

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## Introduction

To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.

—President George Washington

The current security cooperation environment is filled with complex problems presented by state and non-state actors. Reduced barriers to access of advanced weapons such as drones, enhanced munitions, and computer technology have increased the will of US adversaries to contest US resolve in multiple domains. These variables in combination with access to social media create a formidable enemy network that has resulted in an increased enemy capacity to conduct anti-access and area denial (A2D2) of US and partner nation forces. This network collaboration facilitates state and non-state actors with time, space, and intellectual exchange venues to develop new dilemmas and challenge to US Government interest. Russia, North Korea, and Iran and non-state actors continue to challenge American power, influence, and interests to accrue strategic gains while avoiding direct conflict with the US military.<sup>1</sup> According to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff this current environment is one of the most unpredictable of the past forty years.<sup>2</sup>

The recent *National Security Strategy* states that the US military must strengthen long-standing military relationships and encourage the development of a strong defense network with our allies and partners through a whole of government (WOG) approach.<sup>3</sup> Security cooperation (SC) provides policy makers and military leaders options to strengthen the US defense network. This is because security cooperation activities build networks and relationships with partners to

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<sup>1</sup> Donald J. Trump, *National Security Strategy 2017* (Washington, DC: The White House, December 2017), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2015* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2015), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Donald J. Trump, *National Security Strategy 2017*, 47.

shape regions, keep day-to-day tensions between nations or groups below the threshold of armed conflict, and maintain US global influence.<sup>4</sup> In addition to deterring conflict, SC sets the conditions for the United States and its partners to be postured in a position of relative advantage when threats arise.

The increasing need to understand the utility of security cooperation for shaping this complex environment has increased Army leadership's interest in this topic. In the 2017 list of Army Warfighting Challenges, "Shape the Security Environment," is the Army's second priority. This category stresses issues such as creating a common picture of security cooperation activities among unified action partners (UAPs), creating unity of effort, and assessing activities. This highlights both the positive effects Army leaders have gleaned from security cooperation actions and the need to improve this capacity. As recent as 2009 Army leaders were beginning to realize that military actions alone could not achieve US objectives in this complex environment. It was in 2009 at a security conference in Munich that then-Commander, US Central Command, General Petraeus stated, "...there are no purely military solutions in Afghanistan."<sup>5</sup> This was a recent reminder that planners needed to take a whole of government approach to shape environments in which they operate.

Like most organizations the US military approaches problems with what is familiar, proven, and knowable. It is a race to gather as much information as possible, take it out of its context, and place it into a category, such as: Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, or Infrastructure. However, this can result in planners missing variables that are new or that have changed in the operational environment.<sup>6</sup> More importantly it does not account for what those

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<sup>4</sup> US Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2017), 1-1.

<sup>5</sup> GEN David Petraeus, "The Future of the Alliance and the Mission in Afghanistan," Lecture. 45<sup>th</sup> Munich Security Conference, Munich, Germany, February 8, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> Roger Martin and Jim Euchner, "Design Thinking," *Research Technology Management* 55, no. 3 (May 2012), 10.

terms actually mean to the societies from which they are extracted. This approach does not respect the concepts, values, and goals of stakeholders affected by planned military actions.<sup>7</sup>

This limited approach to solving problems is not an issue that plagues only military planners. It is what Daniel Kahneman would attribute to instinctive human behavior that results in an over reliance on “system one” thinking.<sup>8</sup> That is to say that humans tend to go with intuitive thought because deliberate “system two” thinking requires more work.<sup>9</sup> It is only natural that individuals develop heuristics over time, especially within a profession, because they have served them well. When a user forgets that heuristics are not perfect answers but rules of thumb then those heuristics become dangerous.<sup>10</sup> The difficulty is knowing how to recognize that a deliberate shift into system two thinking is required.

For operational planners this realization needs to be triggered when they are confronted with an ill-structured problem such as security cooperation.<sup>11</sup> If not, planners will design operational approaches that focus on what they understand without considering the broader context. Typically this means a security focused approach with intermediate objectives that focus on host nation security force capacity. This can have counterproductive consequences that weaken the civilian sector and other government institutions. For example, overdevelopment of

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<sup>7</sup> Klaus Krippendorff, *The Semantic Turn: A New Foundation For Design* (CRC Press, 2006), 64.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011), 13. Kahneman’s goal is to “improve the ability to identify and understand errors of judgment, by providing a richer and more precise language to discuss them.” Key to Kahneman’s concept is to question the default mindset that the human mind is rational and logical. Kahneman posits that human judgments and decisions are guided directly by feelings of liking and disliking, with little deliberation or reasoning because of system 1 dominance over system 2.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>10</sup> Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *Antifragile: Things That Gain From Disorder* (New York: Random House, 2012), 11.

<sup>11</sup> US Department of the Army, Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 5-0.1, *Army Design Methodology* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2015), 4-2. An ill-structured problem is complex, nonlinear, and dynamic and is the most challenging to understand and solve. Unlike well or medium-structured problems, leaders disagree about how to solve ill-structured problems, what the end state should be, and whether the desired end state is achievable.

security forces without a counter balance in government institutions can result in a military state. Also, by not linking the security force elements to government, economic, and social programs missed opportunities for shared understand occur.

The Army's field manual on security cooperation states that the operational environment is comprised of complex interconnected systems of systems.<sup>12</sup> Yet, many of the planning tools provided to planners are linear in their logic. This is a problem because parallel lines do not intersect and therefore do not convey the interconnected nature of the security cooperation environment.<sup>13</sup> The narrowing effect of doctrine on military planners and the operational approaches they develop is not new. In Vietnam, for example, Field Manual (FM) 31-16, *Counter guerrilla Operations* had the same narrowing effect on military solutions to complex problems. Wording such as: "continues pressure," "vigorous combat patrol," and "aggressive" action littered the manual.<sup>14</sup> Thus, military planners figured establishing security would stabilize the government and address population grievances. Ultimately this parochial operational approach did not achieve US strategic objectives.

Operational planners face some of the same doctrinal dilemmas today when they apply the Army design methodology (ADM). This is in part due to planning frameworks such as MDMP and JPP fostering a technical approach to design. Even when incorporating the operational variables of political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time (PMESII-PT) planners are still just gathering and categorizing data. They are looking for answers and not useful relevant questions. This data collection does not require planners to reach out to other stakeholders within the operational environment and understand

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<sup>12</sup> US Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-22, Army Support to Security Cooperation (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013), 3-10.

<sup>13</sup> Gregory Daddis, *Westmoreland's War: Reassessing American Strategy in Vietnam* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 121.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

what these variables mean to them. Military planners would be well-served to incorporate stakeholders in their planning, make antagonists supporters, negotiate diverging perspectives, utilize outside experts, and trust that stakeholders will help move plans forward.<sup>15</sup> Doing this would facilitate development of a common operation picture of SC activities among unified action partners and increases unity of effort to achieve US goals.

The purpose of this monograph is to determine whether taking a human-centered design approach can produce a comprehensive, and what Nicholas Taleb would call antifragile, operational level plan to shape the security environment. Comprehensive in this monograph refers to the US Army definition which is: “An approach that integrates the cooperative efforts of the departments and agencies of the United States Government, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, multinational partners, and private sector entities to achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal.”<sup>16</sup> The lens through which the hypotheses were developed is that of Klaus Krippendorff’s human-centered design theory.

This topic is relevant because security cooperation is the heart of US forces’ efforts to stabilize forward theaters with our unified action partners.<sup>17</sup> In accordance with Joint Publication 3-20, Security Cooperation (SC) activities promote US interests by “supporting the implementation of national and theater strategies and is a key element of global and theater shaping activities that support stabilization, as well as building security relationships, building partner capacity, and providing access.”<sup>18</sup> Security cooperation strengthens America’s network of

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<sup>15</sup> Krippendorff, *The Semantic Turn*, 65.

<sup>16</sup> US Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 1-02, Terms and Military Symbols (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), 1-20.

<sup>17</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2015* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2015), 10.

<sup>18</sup> US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-20, Security Cooperation (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2017), II-1. Key to note throughout this monograph is that both joint and Army doctrine are utilized. This is due to the fact that SC is inherently joint and this monograph captures this natural interplay and overlap.

global allies and partners by increasing their security capacity. Additionally, security cooperation facilitates collective action with responsible partners and prevents the growth of violent extremism and radicalization that drives increased threats.<sup>19</sup>

This is significant because it disrupts enemy capacity to threaten US interests on a global scale. Furthermore, it provides the US military with forward access to address emerging threats in a timely manner. The US military's ability to respond to threats in a timely manner and from a position of advantage is significantly enhanced by effective security cooperation. It is this access and enhanced partner capacity that allow military leaders to provide a wide range of options to policy makers and strategic leaders.

## Literature Review

Three sections comprise this literature review and establish a framework for this study. In these sections concepts, frameworks, and key terms utilized throughout this study will be explained. This will facilitate shared understanding by establishing a common lexicon for this monograph. In the first section human-centered design is reviewed through the lens of a leading theorist within the field. This is done to explain the foundational theory of this paper and provide the reader with an understanding of how human-centered design is a shift from an industrial approach to design. The second section examines Nassim Nicholas Taleb's theory of antifragility. The US military and its network of security partners will be tested in a global arena of persistent competition. Taleb's theory of antifragility offers insight into how the US military can build a security network that gets stronger when attacked and denies enemies and competitors of their objectives. Finally, section three discusses the Gray Zone and hybrid warfare. The current National Security Strategy (NSS) makes multiple references to the space just below military conflict being exploited by enemies and competitors of the United States. Because SC activities are conducted in this space and offer solutions to countering this threat it is important to have an

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<sup>19</sup> US Joint Staff, JP 3-20, (2017), II-1.

understanding of this concept. These theories, frameworks, and key terms were chosen for two reasons. First, they provided a way to overcome the binary mindset warned against in the current NSS and embrace the concept of continuous competition.<sup>20</sup> Second, collectively they addressed 80 percent of the learning demands associated with the Army warfighting challenge of “Shape the Security Environment.”

## Human-Centered Design: Transformation thru Designing Discourse

A central theorist to this monograph is Klaus Krippendorff. In his book, *The Semantic Turn: a New Foundation for Design*, Krippendorff introduces a new way to conceptualize design. In this book and in subsequent research articles the author makes the case for why design must shift from the traditional mindset of industrial design to fill universal needs to a human-centered approach.<sup>21</sup> In doing so Krippendorff argues that designers can design artifacts, material or social, that make sense and have social significance to all stakeholders.<sup>22</sup> This turn toward inclusive design that incorporates the idea of considering meaning to stakeholders is what is meant by semantic turn.

The reason for choosing Krippendorff as the central theorist for explaining human-centered design is threefold. First, he is a pioneer in this field of study. Beginning in 1984 Krippendorff was publishing articles on developments in design such as cognitive meaning, symbolic functions, and cultural histories of form.<sup>23</sup> Recognition of this design shift led him to lay the ground work for framing human-centered design and developing it through collaboration with notable designers in his field. The result is a thorough understanding of the relationship that

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<sup>20</sup> Donald J. Trump, *National Security Strategy*, 28.

<sup>21</sup> Krippendorff, *The Semantic Turn*, xvii.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, xvii.

<sup>23</sup> Krippendorff, Klaus, and Reinhart Butter, "Product semantics: Exploring the symbolic qualities of form," *Innovation* 3, no. 2 (1984): 4.

exists between designers and other stakeholders. Second, Krippendorff fundamentally shifted how we think about and understand design of products and how we produce them. Third, Krippendorff provides a detailed framework of human-centered design concepts that facilitates a detailed level of shared understanding. This comprehensive and detailed framework provides a baseline lens with which to view design and provide analysis. More importantly, Krippendorff's framework allows for application of human-centered design in security cooperation.

Human-centered design is an inclusive approach to developing solutions to physical or social problems. It was originally conceived by Krippendorff in his quest to take design of objects within the technology-centered field to the design of artifacts in the human-centered approach. Human-centered design is interested in the meaning of the artifact not the production of the artifact itself. This shift in thinking about design acknowledges that all stakeholders give meaning to the use and application of the end product. Therefore, human-centered design derives its criteria from the community of stakeholders in which designers seek to achieve a desired outcome.<sup>24</sup> This is much different from the traditional technology-centered or industrial approach to design whereby solutions are developed by experts and imposed on end users.<sup>25</sup> Human-centered design is a move away from universal and culture-free solutions to a design approach that incorporates language, team work, users, and stakeholders.<sup>26</sup> The idea is that the future condition the designer envisions is achieved and endures because it is accepted by the stakeholder it seeks to impact.

The semantic turn toward meaning by stakeholders is important. This forces designers to look beyond the plans, proposals, and arguments being made to realize their desired outcomes

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<sup>24</sup> Krippendorff, *The Semantic Turn*, 31.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

through finding relevance.<sup>27</sup> The semantic turn requires designers to look for solutions that achieve a desirable result for the stakeholders involved. Here is where military operational artists should ask, “What does what I am trying to achieve look like to the stakeholders I am attempting to impact?” For example, what does economic prosperity mean and look like to indigenous people living in the target area? What programs are my unified action partners taking in this area to develop economic conditions? Krippendorff argues that meaning matters more than function and leads to his axiom: “Humans do not see and act on the physical qualities of things, but on what they mean to them.”<sup>28</sup> Krippendorff provides this axiom so that designers can utilize it to “conceptualize their aims, organize their work, and make compelling arguments for their designs.”<sup>29</sup>

Army design methodology (ADM) endeavors to acknowledge the role of human-centeredness within military operations. In fact, military operations are described as human endeavors characterized by the continuous, mutual adaptation of give and take, moves, and countermoves among all participants.<sup>30</sup> How the Army imposes its will on the enemy has a direct correlation with how it is perceived and therefore received by other stakeholders within the operational environment. The results of these interactions are often unpredictable and in many instances uncontrollable.<sup>31</sup> To mitigate some of this unpredictability Krippendorff offers human-centered design thinking and approach.

Human-centered design methods share three features that facilitate the design process. First, they expand the possibilities of proposals and then refine them down to arguable ones.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Krippendorff, *The Semantic Turn*, 77.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> US Army, ATP 5-0.1, (2015), 1-1.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Krippendorff, *The Semantic Turn*, 230.

Through this process you bring forth proposals that have a better likelihood of achieving desirable future states. Second, designers must be concerned with how stakeholders assign meaning because ultimately meaning cannot be taken away from those affected by design, its stakeholders.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, according to Klaus Krippendorff human-centered designers must “weave available knowledge of how meanings arise within relevant stakeholder communities into the design process in order to assure that a design encourages the meaning that leads to reliable interfaces.”<sup>34</sup> This is one more way that human-centered design works to mitigate undesired outcomes and their effects if they do occur. Third, design proposals should be empirically testable to facilitate evaluation of the plan at a later point in time.<sup>35</sup> Because the proposed future cannot yet be observed it is important to know what the designer stated the outcome should be.<sup>36</sup> It is against this that analysis can be conducted to glean lessons learned.

In addition to these three features of human-centered design Krippendorff offers three design principles to facilitate achieving desired future states. The first principle of design semantic is the meaning invoked must be consistent with what the design output actually affords doing.<sup>37</sup> In other words do not over promise and under deliver. It is better to under promise and over deliver. Consistency creates trust and facilitates follow on opportunities. Second, designs should not focus on just creating desired outcomes for stakeholders but simultaneously discourage interpretations that, if acted upon, would create undesired outcomes.<sup>38</sup> Third, design semantics cannot assume that current conditions are static.<sup>39</sup> It should leave space to absorb

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<sup>33</sup> Krippendorff, *The Semantic Turn*, 230.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 231.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

different interpretations by stakeholders and facilitate mitigation measures to bring about desirable outcomes. As Army Technical Publication (ATP) 5-0.1 states, ADM is iterative in nature and understanding and learning within one activity may require revisiting the learning from another activity.<sup>40</sup> How a stakeholder reacts to a given output is not guaranteed. This is because stakeholders derive meaning from their experiences, culture, and how they interface with the world around them.<sup>41</sup> However, Krippendorff argues that designers can limit usability of an artifact or output and prevent certain meanings from being created and enacted.<sup>42</sup> Examples of restricting usability are fire truck lanes to prevent blockage of key emergency access points or hand rails to prevent people from falling from elevated platforms.

## Antifragile: Benefiting From Shock

The Army is globally engaged and regionally responsive; it is an indispensable partner and provider of a full range of capabilities to combatant commanders in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational (JIIM) environment. As part of the joint force and as America's Army, in all that we offer, we guarantee the agility, versatility, and depth to prevent, shape and win.

—2012 Army Strategic Planning Guidance

The idea of antifragility, developed by Nassim Taleb, refers to the quality of “things that benefit from shock; they thrive and grow when exposed to volatility, randomness, disorder, and stressors.”<sup>43</sup> US Army doctrine recognizes that the security environment is complex, competitive, and unpredictable and that it will remain so for the foreseeable future.<sup>44</sup> As the dominant land domain power the US Army engages in complex relationships with competitors and partners

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<sup>40</sup> US Army, ATP 5-0.1, (2015), 1-4.

<sup>41</sup> Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 19.

<sup>42</sup> Krippendorff, *The Semantic Turn*, 231.

<sup>43</sup> Taleb, *Antifragile*, 3.

<sup>44</sup> US Army, FM 3-22 (2013), vi.

across the globe.<sup>45</sup> At any moment events can occur that move a situation from security cooperation to crisis response or even large-scale combat operations on the conflict continuum.<sup>46</sup> A recent historical example of this was the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York City. It was a Black Swan event: an outlier, with extreme impact on society, and that many have tried to explain post factum as if it were predictable.<sup>47</sup> This event shocked the world and led the US military into its longest war; the global war on terror. This is the emergent possibility that operational artists in the security cooperation environment must consider when planning.

Antifragility challenges the idea that being resilient or robust is desirable.<sup>48</sup> Taleb argues that "resilient things resist shock but stay the same; while antifragile gets better."<sup>49</sup> Operational artists that arrange actions to achieve the strategic goal of strengthening the US global system of partners through security cooperation should strive to achieve this. Building an antifragile system denies enemies a position of advantage when they use shock against the United States and its allies. Instead enemies will be met by a system of partners that quickly and decisively transitions from steady state to crisis response or combat operations. Security cooperation activities shape the environment for employment of the elements of operational art such as: basing, establishment of lines of effort, and operational reach.<sup>50</sup> An ability to employ these elements with global partners allows military leaders to strike enemy formations on multiple fronts and deny them the

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<sup>45</sup> US Army, FM 3-22, (2013), vi.

<sup>46</sup> US Army, FM 3-0, (2017), 3-2.

<sup>47</sup> Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *The Black Swan: The Impact of The Highly Improbable* (New York: Random, 2007), xvii.

<sup>48</sup> Taleb, *Antifragile*, 3.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> US Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 5-0, *The Operations Process* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 2-4.

ability to regain their operational equilibrium.<sup>51</sup> This is an example of what inclusion of antifragile theory can bring to security cooperation design.

One of the keys to achieving this antifragile network of partners is ensuring partners have “skin in the game.” In other words they are investing their valued resources into security cooperation activities and are assuming the same risk. This investment can come in the form of resources such as: security forces, equipment, infrastructure, finance, or influence. Taleb argues that lack of “skin in the game” is the greatest fragilizer and the greatest generator of crisis.<sup>52</sup> It would be antithesis to the goals of security cooperation to not account for this. RAND Corporation found a strong correlation between partners that invest resources to maintain their capabilities, conduct training, or in maintenance programs and successful capacity building.<sup>53</sup> It is also a good indicator that the United States is aligning its efforts with those that are a priority to the partner force.

Another component of establishing an antifragile system is mitigating self-imposed complexity. Nicolas Taleb warns against establishing complicated systems and regulations and interactions to manage complex systems.<sup>54</sup> Because security cooperation is conducted within an decentralized operational environment of interactively complex systems this is an applicable aspect of antifragile theory.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Shimon Naveh, *The Cummings Center Series*, vol. 7, *In Pursuit of Military Excellence: the Evolution of Operational Theory* (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 16.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>53</sup> Christopher Paul, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill, Stephanie Young, Jennifer D. P. Moroney, Joe Hogler, and Christine Leah, *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2013), 69.

<sup>54</sup> Taleb, *Antifragile*, 11.

<sup>55</sup> US Army, FM 3-0, Operations, (2017), 3-10.

Taleb argues the simpler the system the less opacity and thus greater visibility for those managing it.<sup>56</sup> Lack of simplicity has been identified as one of the hindrances to current security operations.<sup>57</sup> This is because security cooperation is executed by multiple government agencies with complicated bureaucratic systems to manage and oversee operations. Developing complicated bureaucracies to manage security cooperation has resulted in inefficiencies in funding, harmonization, authorities, de-confliction, and timeliness.<sup>58</sup> Even Steve Jobs acknowledged that “you have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple.”<sup>59</sup> Overcoming this tendency towards complication is difficult, especially in a bureaucracy, where self-preservation is accommodated.

Optionality is another key concept in Taleb’s theory of antifragility. Taleb states that when you have options you have an asymmetrical advantage over things that stress your system.<sup>60</sup> Planners that ensure leaders have options to deal with complexities and stressors within SC are providing a factor that allows them to gain a marked advantage over their enemies. Taleb states that this is no different from day to day life. When confronted with a problem or multiple problems in a complex adaptive system those with the most options can overcome them and achieve their objective.

In security cooperation assessment is key to ensure actions being taken are achieving, in part or in whole, strategic objectives. Therefore, a way to conceptualize and assess the antifragility of a security cooperation system is discussed here. In their work “Antifragility Analysis and Measurement Framework for Systems of Systems,” Johnson and Gheorghe provide

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<sup>56</sup> Taleb, *Antifragile*, 11.

<sup>57</sup> Walter L. Perry, Stuart Johnson, Stephanie Pezard, Gillian S. Oak, David Stebbins and Chaoling Feng, *Defense Institution Building: An Assessment* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2016), 108.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 109-112.

<sup>59</sup> Taleb, *Antifragile*, 11.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 178.

a framework for analyzing and measuring antifragility.<sup>61</sup> This analyses tool is based on a system of systems concept. This tool can be utilized to qualitatively assess the antifragility of a given complex adaptive system. Security cooperation systems are a complex adaptive system because they do not just respond to the environment around them but have the ability to learn from experience in it.<sup>62</sup> Additionally, security cooperation systems are adjusted by what is learned and creates new emergent structures with updated rules to adjust to new dynamics within the security environment.

To demonstrate how these tools can be utilized Johnson and Gheorghe created a simulated analysis of the impact an extreme stress or X-event would have on a simulated US smart grid. The following are the results of their simulation. In table 1 below an example of weighted analysis is given and figure 1 plots the results on the antifragility curve. In this simulated example the US power grid is found to be overall fragile. This is just one example of a way planners in security cooperation can move from the conceptual to the detailed aspects of assessing their complex system. This example is significant because it provides a way to visualize how planners can utilize antifragility to evaluate strategies, operational approaches, plans, and other outputs based on system attributes.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> John Johnson and Adrian V. Gheorghe. "Antifragility Analysis and Measurement Framework for Systems of Systems," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science* 4, no. 4 (January 2014): 159, accessed November 1, 2017, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1652944835?accountid=12085>.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 164.

Table 1: Summary of the US smart power grid system analysis

Attribute	Analysis	Impact
<b>Entropy</b>	Efficiency of information in the power grid system declines as the interconnectedness and the number of components increase. Given the growing interconnectedness, the increasing demand curve for power and the entrance of new suppliers as a result of deregulation there appear to be indications of growing entropy. Therefore, a space weather X-Event will likely still cause the system to degrade.	-8
<b>Emergence</b>	Significant efforts are being made to increase the system's robustness through component improvements. These attempts are not likely to work as space weather is complex and not reducible to a predictable vector for which component design criteria can be established. Consequently, a space weather X-Event will likely cause the system to degrade.	-7
<b>Efficiency vs. Risk</b>	Reducing power usage far below the capacity of the system would create power reserves that could be transferred to damaged areas of the grid in the event of a power interruption. However, the trend in the power industry is in the other direction toward: greater capacity consumption, reductions in safety margins, increased efficiencies, and therefore increased risk. A space weather X-Event will likely cause the system to degrade.	-7
<b>Balancing Constraints vs. Freedom</b>	Regulations promote safety in the power grid system by controlling who can distribute power, and standards for how power is distributed. As the industry moves toward greater deregulation there will be more distributors, fewer controls on standards for use, and greater opportunities for dangerous practices that make it easier to break the system. These practices make the system more fragile. A space weather X-Event will likely cause the system to degrade.	-6
<b>Coupling</b>	Integration of internet technologies is increasing the coupling of components and agents in power grid systems. However, temporary interconnectivity and the implementation of Intelligent Electronic Devices (IEDs) are among the strategies to lessen the likelihood that cascading failures will occur. A space weather X-Event will likely have little to no impact on the system.	-1
<b>Requisite Variety</b>	Privatization of the utility industry through deregulation is increasing the variety of suppliers in the power grid system and decreasing the variety for the U.S. government as a controlling body. This puts the system at risk of not having enough controls to keep the power grid system stable. A space weather X-Event will likely cause the system to degrade.	-7
<b>Stress Starvation</b>	There is no evidence that e.g. the United States has a practice of intentionally exposing its power grid system to regular and sustained stress in an effort to build its resilience. In fact, our technologies are intended to reduce uncertainty and make the system less exposed to stress. A space weather X-Event will likely cause the system to degrade.	-8
<b>Redundancy</b>	Technology has been used to create multiple paths to transport power, and process information. If one subsystem fails, power can be diverted to or from another source. However, the redundancies are only good if the X-Event does not exceed the excess capacity they create. A space weather X-Event will likely have little to no impact on the system.	-1
<b>Non-Monotonicity (Learning from Mistakes)</b>	The transparency created by the openness of U.S. society creates an opportunity for society to learn from its mistakes. The free market economy creates motivation to learn from past mistakes and create profitable business opportunities. Innovations are created based on these mistakes and the prospects of profiting from innovation. A space weather X-Event will ultimately have a positive impact on the system.	+4
<b>Absorption</b>	Advanced materials in smart grid power systems help make transformers, transmission lines, and circuits more resistant to spikes in electromagnetic currents. The components allow the design margins to be increased, which improves the system's ability to withstand stress from space weather. A space weather X-Event will likely have no impact on the system.	-2

Source: John Johnson and Adrian V. Gheorghe. "Antifragility Analysis and Measurement Framework for Systems of Systems," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science* 4, no. 4 (January 2014): 166, accessed November 1, 2017, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1652944835?accountid=12085>. This table is depicted as it appears in the work of Johnson and Gheorghe.

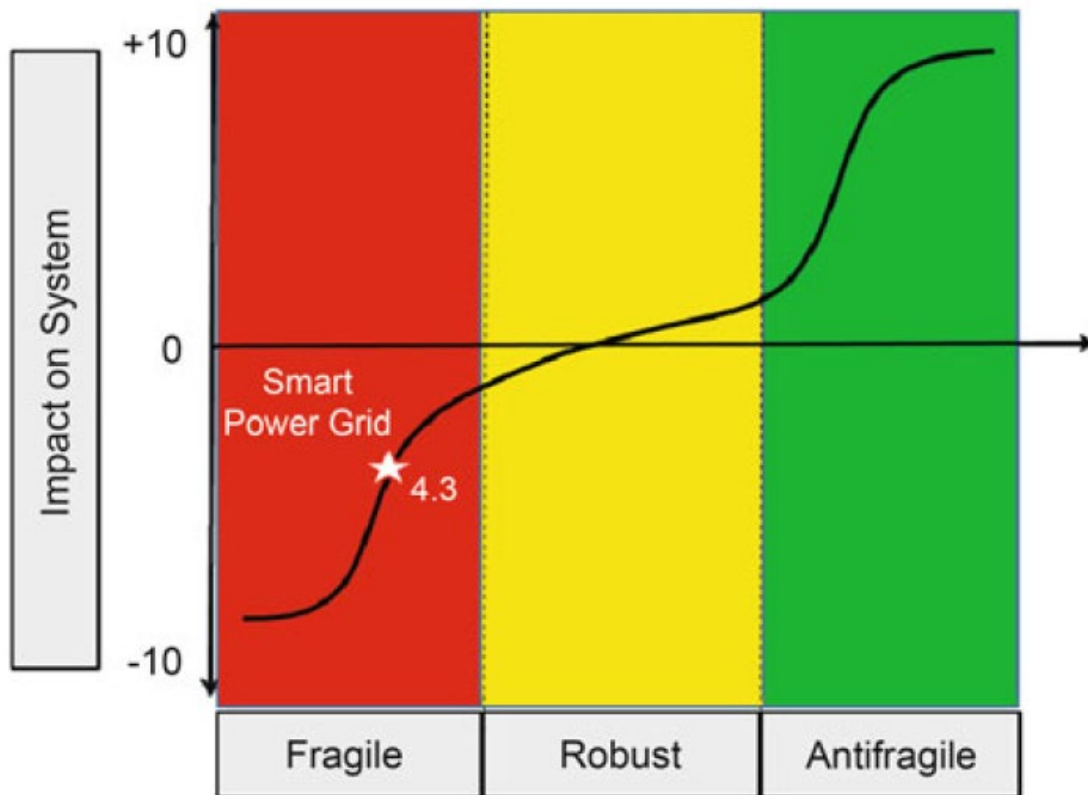


Figure 1: Smart grid antifragility analysis for e.g. the United States, "Antifragility Analysis and Measurement Framework for Systems of Systems," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science* 4, no. 4 (January 2014): 166. This figure is depicted as it appears in the work of Johnson and Gheorghe.

### Gray Zone: The Domain of Continuous Competition

This term is significant because as the recent NSS states, actors exploit this operating space just below the thresh-hold of military conflict to challenge the United States, its allies, and its partners.<sup>64</sup> This space is often referred to as the gray zone. State and non-state actors utilize this space to develop approaches that achieve strategic objectives gradually over extended periods of time.<sup>65</sup> Actions taken by actors in this space are typically designed to be ambiguous and deniable.<sup>66</sup> The goal of these actions varies but generally it is conducted to set conditions for

<sup>64</sup> Donald J. Trump, *National Security Strategy 2017*, 3.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

future operations, test the resolve of the target government, and avoid decisive engagements. This blending of state and non-state actions to achieve objectives within the conflict continuum is referred to as hybrid conflict in the 2015 *National Military Strategy* (NMS).<sup>67</sup>

The 2015 NMS acknowledges that an interstate war would result in greater consequences than gray zone threats to national security.<sup>68</sup> However, it assesses the probability of interstate war to be low and gray zone threats to be the immediate threat to transregional security.<sup>69</sup> Recent examples of actions within the gray zone are provided by China, Russia, and North Korea. Dr. Michael Mazarr, a Senior Political Scientist at RAND and former Associate Dean at the US National War College in Washington, D.C., has conducted extensive research within this field. In his work *Mastering the Gray Zone: Understanding a Changing Era of Conflict* he examines how revisionist intent, strategic gradualism, and unconventional tools are being utilized to achieve strategic aims.<sup>70</sup> In it he finds that enemies and competitors exploit this space across the conflict continuum to achieve positions of advantage over the United States.

This is significant because SC activities are also conducted across the conflict continuum.<sup>71</sup> By understanding how SC activities within TCPs, limited contingencies, crises responses, or major operations can be arranged to achieve cross-domain effects planners provide commanders with the ability to consolidate gains and achieve desired end states across domains. Understanding the gray zone provides a lens through which planners can view these

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<sup>67</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2015*, 4.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Michael J. Mazarr, *Mastering the Gray Zone: Understanding a Changing Era of Conflict* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College Press, 2015), 4.

<sup>71</sup> US Joint Staff, JP 3-20, (2017), II-8.

opportunities. Furthermore, it allows planners to move beyond the binary lens of war or peace and view the world as, the current NSS states, an “arena of continuous competition.”<sup>72</sup>

## Methodology

A structured focused method is utilized to assess a case study of Plan Colombia to support the thesis of this monograph. This method is applicable because it extracts useful knowledge from a historical experience that is relevant to a problem facing military planners today.<sup>73</sup> The researcher used Klaus Krippendorff’s eight design principles to develop hypotheses to answer the research question posed in this monograph. Additionally, the structured questions developed by the researcher facilitate testing of the human-centered design theory.<sup>74</sup>

The purpose of this monograph is to determine whether taking a human-centered design approach can produce a comprehensive, and what Nicholas Taleb would call antifragile, operational level plan to shape the security environment. Klaus Krippendorff’s human-centered design theory is the lens through which the hypotheses were developed. The qualitative research is conducted utilizing a stand-alone case study, Plan Colombia, as opposed to a comparative analysis of two or more case studies. This was a deliberate decision because US military involvement did not rise to the level of large-scale combat operations during its support to Plan Colombia. Therefore, it facilitates understanding from the US Army perspective within the conflict continuum of security cooperation. In doing so the primary questions are addressed from the US Army perspective at various echelons. By giving context to the strategic, operational, and

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<sup>72</sup> Donald J. Trump, *National Security Strategy 2017*, 28.

<sup>73</sup> Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005), 67-72. This method is structured because the researcher utilized a general set of questions that reflect the objective of the monograph and these questions can be asked of other case studies to standardize data collection. This structured approach leads to systematic comparison and accumulation of data. It is focused because it deals only with certain aspects of the historical case or cases examined.

<sup>74</sup> George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social*, 75.

tactical level this case study develops linkages that facilitate application of the findings from this monograph.

This is significant as the US Army is developing an enduring emphasis on SC operations, as demonstrated by the creation of its new Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFAB). The core mission of the SFAB is security cooperation; making it the first permanent unit of its kind in the Army.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, the Army created a Military Advisor Training Academy at Fort Benning, Georgia to produce well trained soldiers capable of succeeding in this complex environment.<sup>76</sup>

Analyzing this particular historical case, utilizing the structured focus approach, should assist planners in developing operational approaches to SC operations. Utilizing operational art and the elements thereof is the military lens through which the structured focused questions were developed.

Klaus Krippendorff's design principles are utilized to analyze this case study and test the hypotheses of this monograph.<sup>77</sup> The following are the hypotheses derived from these methods and principles:

H1: Meaning is the only reality that matters.

H2: Design must be delegated.

H3: Plans are created in a network of stakeholders.

H4: Plans thrive in heterarchy, not in a hierarchy.

H5: Design is informed by explorations, not re-search.

H6: A science for design must be a second-order science.

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<sup>75</sup> U.S. Army Public Affairs, "Army Creates Security Force Assistance Brigade and Military Advisor Training Academy at Fort Benning," Last modified February 16, 2017, accessed December 21, 2017, <https://invitations.afit.edu/inv/index.cfm?i=372573&k=0166400C7C54>.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Klaus Krippendorff, "Principles of Design and a Trajectory of Artificiality," *Journal of Product Innovation Management* 28, (3): 412-8, accessed August 21, 2017, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/10.1111/j.1540-5885.2011.00814.x/abstract>.

H7: Plans survive or fail in language.

H8: Professional design advances with its design discourse.

Seven structured focused questions were developed to ensure data gathered tested the eight hypotheses. Additionally, these questions can be utilized to derive comparable data from similar case studies. These questions are grounded in and reflect Krippendorff's theory of human-centered design and are guided by the research question posed in this monograph.<sup>78</sup> The structured focused questions guiding this case study are:

Q1: Was partner nation culture considered to ensure meaningful actions were taken to achieve US strategic objectives in part or in whole?

Q2: What laws, policies, and constraints existed that shaped SC activities?

Q3: What actions were taken to develop a common operating picture and ensure unity of effort among unified action partners?

Q4: What role did host nation counterparts play in the planning process?

Q5: How long did this conflict last?

Q6: What other conflicts occurred during this time frame?

Q7: What force structure enabled persistent engagement to develop shared aims, goals, and objectives?

These questions will guide the study, ensure the research is focused on answering the primary research question, and test Klaus Krippendorff's human-centered design theory. The first question seeks to determine if Colombian culture was considered in the planning process. This is significant because it is linked to Krippendorff's irrefutable axiom of design: "No artifact can survive within a culture without being meaningful to those that can move it through its defining

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<sup>78</sup> George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 71.

process.”<sup>79</sup> By not considering the culture of the environment you are trying to affect Krippendorff argues you will most likely fail in achieving your desired end state.<sup>80</sup>

The second question seeks to determine the effects laws, policies, and constraints had on shaping SC activities conducted by the US Army in support of Plan Colombia. The purpose of this is it illuminates how laws, policies, and constraints must be incorporated into the development of an operational approach and supporting objectives. The third question examines what actions were taken to develop a common operating picture and ensure unity of effort among unified action partners. Specifically this question involves analyzing the activities conducted and whether they supported the Integrated Country Strategy (ICS), geographic combatant commander (GCC) goals, and partner nation goals.

The fourth question addresses the role partner nation forces played in the planning process. This addresses hypothesis seven and the science of second-order understanding. It examines whether or not US military planners incorporated Colombian counterparts in the planning process. If not, how did they account for how Colombians would receive and implement activities outlined in proposed plans? Question five addresses the duration of the conflict to give context to Plan Colombia in time and space. Without this the case study would be devoid of context and discount important elements of operational art and design. There was conflict before Plan Colombia and after. Understanding the effects of change in the operational environment facilitates a better understanding of the iterative nature of design.

The sixth question will look at what other conflicts occurred during this time frame, specifically, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the Global War on Terror, overall. Question seven addresses what force structure enabled persistent engagement to develop shared aims, goals, and objectives. During this timeframe special operations forces

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<sup>79</sup> Krippendorff, “Principles of Design and a Trajectory of Artificiality,” 413.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

maintained persistent engagement with their Colombian partners. Due to competing demands other organizations did not have the capacity to maintain persistent engagement. The effects of this and recommendations to overcome shortfalls will be drawn from the findings related to this question.

The following section presents the Plan Colombia case study. Once again the decision to utilize a stand-alone case from which to draw was deliberate. This case study facilitates empirical analysis from the tactical actions on the ground linked by operational level units up to the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) or GCC level. Additionally, this case study is bounded by and provides analysis of US Army actions within the SC spectrum of conflict, therefore, offering a specific environment through which the hypothesis of this monograph is analyzed. It also enhances the structured focused approach taken in this research to test Klaus Krippendorff's human-centered design theory.

### Case Study: Plan Colombia and Human-Centered Design in SC

This section presents the case study of the US Army's involvement in support of Plan Colombia through SC. Utilizing qualitative analysis of the empirical evidence this case study assists in answering the primary research question: Can taking a human-centered design approach produce a comprehensive, and what Nicholas Taleb would call antifragile, operational level plan to shape the security environment. The research tests the hypotheses by answering the seven structured focused research questions. This case study is broken down into three parts. The first section is an introduction and overview of the case study. This provides historical overview and context to the problem set in Colombia during the Plan Colombia time frame. Section two is the overview of the seven structured focused questions as they relate to US Army involvement in Plan Colombia. The structured focused approach was utilized to extract useful knowledge from a historical experience to provide planners with relevant information to addressing problems they currently face. The third and final section summarizes the case study.

In order to understand how Colombia regressed into a failing state at the hands of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and transnational criminal organizations you must begin with *La Violencia*. *La Violencia* was an undeclared civil war that took place from 1948-1958. It began after the assassination of the Liberal party leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitan on April 9, 1948 and grew into a conflagration when the Conservatives won the election to replace him in 1949.<sup>81</sup> The victory was all but certain due to Liberal Party members' boycott of the election. The undeclared civil war that ensued between these political entities claimed over 200,000 lives during this ten year period.

Colombia's political Conservative and Liberal elite stemmed from the institutions established during Spanish colonial rule. These institutions were designed to be extractive and did not create economic incentive for lower class citizens.<sup>82</sup> Liberal party members consisted of the export and mercantile class and the Conservative party consisted of the agricultural land-owning elite. Both parties cemented their power in economic institutions that extracted from the lower class that had no representation.<sup>83</sup> It was this lack of inclusiveness that turned the unrepresented masses to Marxist-inspired guerilla groups. These groups were prevalent throughout the Cold War period because they offered the disenfranchised power and inclusion they had been denied for so long.

The two guerilla groups at the forefront of the Colombian insurgency were the FARC and National Liberation Army (ELN). Like other Communist insurgencies during this time frame these organizations were led by intellectuals and manned by a base of poor disaffected farmers.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Angel Rabasa and Peter Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 23.

<sup>82</sup> Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* (New York: Crown Business, 2012), 372.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 401-402.

<sup>84</sup> Mark Moyar, Hector Pagan, and Wil R. Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, JSOU Report 14-3, (MacDill Air Force Base, Florida: The JSOU Press, 2014), 3-4

The leaders of these organizations were able to convince the base that the solution to their grievances was armed revolution, effectively pulling Colombian citizens into a civil war by establishing various zones of control.<sup>85</sup> Stathis Kalyvas describes the zones created by these insurgents as zones 3, 4, and 5 of civil war. Zone 3 is an area controlled equally by both sides, zone 4 is primarily controlled by the insurgent, and zone 5 is an area that is in complete control by the insurgent.<sup>86</sup> The ultimate goal of the Colombian government was to change zones 3 to 5 into zones controlled by the government.

The FARC was established by Manuel Marulanda Velez, also known as Tirofijo. Marulanda's guerrilla career began in 1949 when he joined a Liberal guerrilla group in the Tolima department of Colombia. Tolima was an ungoverned space that was suited to exploitation by insurgent groups. It was here that Marulanda was able to establish a communist oriented guerrilla republic.<sup>87</sup> Marulanda was the FARC's first chief of staff and he eventually became its commander. Although the Colombian army destroyed this organization in 1964 Marulanda was able to reorganize it in 1966 under its new name, the FARC.<sup>88</sup>

From 1966 through the 1980s the FARC utilized guerrilla tactics to attack military units operating in areas that were sparsely populated. The purpose of these attacks was to capture military equipment, gather supplies, take hostages for financial gains, and punish informers.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> US Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, Tactics in Counterinsurgency, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009), 2-4-2-5.

<sup>86</sup> Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 196. Kalyvas broke up geographical space into five zones of control ranging from 1 to 5. Zone 1 is an area completely controlled by the incumbent and zone 5 is an area under total insurgent control. Zones 2 to 4 are contested areas where control varies. Zone 2 is primarily controlled by the incumbents (dominant incumbent control), zone 3 is controlled equally, and zone 4 is primarily controlled by the insurgent.

<sup>87</sup> Rabasa and Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability*, 24.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

This approach allowed FARC to consolidate gains and expand its network into other departments. In 1969 it established a second guerrilla front in Magdalena valley. This valley was another under governed space of strategic importance because it straddled the seams between Boyacá and Santander departments. Then in 1971 it established its third front in the Darien gap between Panama and Colombia. This area not only linked Colombia to Central America, but also provided access to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Following this in 1974 the FARC established a general staff and a secretariat to provide a cohesive political direction.<sup>90</sup>

In 1982 the FARC held its Seventh Guerrilla Conference to discuss a transition in its operational approach. The result was an eight year expansion plan that shifted the FARC from the operational defense to the operational offense.<sup>91</sup> The inability of the Colombian government to impose its influence beyond the Cordillera Oriental, which is the eastern spur of the Andean range, set the conditions for FARC expansion. The FARC expanded in size, gained territory, and increased its revenue streams. By 2000 the FARC had grown to an estimated 15,000-20,000 fighters and established over seventy fronts. These fronts were broken down into seven FARC blocs that created a presence in almost every department within Colombia. The FARC was not the only insurgent group to take hold during this time frame.

The ELN was founded in 1964 and modeled itself according to the Cuban revolutionary model, unlike the FARC, which was aligned with the Soviets and the Moscow-line Colombian Communist Party.<sup>92</sup> Another point of divergence was the composition of the ELN. The ELN leadership was drawn from the students and graduates of the University of Santander.<sup>93</sup> FARC

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<sup>90</sup> Rabasa and Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability*, 24.

<sup>91</sup> Robert D. Ramsey, III, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008* (Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009), 7.

<sup>92</sup> Rabasa and Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability*, 30.

<sup>93</sup> Rabasa and Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability*, 30.

leadership came from the peasant farmer class. ELN utilized local religious beliefs of social justice and blended them with their ideology to form a mixed ideology. The result was a liberation-theology influenced by Catholic priests.<sup>94</sup> This approach considered the culture of the operational environment and blended it with the ELN's goals; resulting in very effective recruitment. One of the most notorious recruits was Father Camilo Torres. Aside from being a priest he also came from a prominent Colombian family.

The ELN operated in northeastern Colombia. Unlike the FARC, which focused its attacks on the military, the ELN focused its attacks on infrastructure. Additionally, the ELN focused on developing its political base before its guerrilla capacity. To gain revenue the ELN conducted extortion activities and kidnappings, and hijacked aircraft.<sup>95</sup> Although the Colombian military reduced the ELN's numbers to approximately seventeen members in 1973, by 1998 the ELN had reconstituted to a strength of 5,000 members. This serves as another example of the Colombian government's inability to definitively deal with the insurgent threat. As a result civilians began taking matters into their own hands.

This manifested itself in the form of *autodefensas* or paramilitary groups. Paramilitary groups, also known as militias, are part of most insurgencies and serve primarily as a political counter to the insurgents rather than a military one.<sup>96</sup> This was the case with paramilitary groups in Colombia. Colombia first incorporated these militias into its defense strategy under Plan Lazo which used local militias to hold ground cleared by Colombian military (COLMIL) forces.<sup>97</sup> A more controversial step taken by the Colombian government occurred in May 1965 with the

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<sup>94</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 9.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 107.

<sup>97</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 9.

signing of Colombian Presidential Decree 3398. Presidential Decree 3398 authorized the arming of *autodefensas*; so long as it was done under COLMIL supervision.<sup>98</sup> This decree became law in 1968 and became the legal framework for establishing and resourcing counter guerrilla units for more than two decades.<sup>99</sup>

The role and size of the paramilitary groups peaked under President Ernesto Samper. His signing of Presidential Decree 356 in 1994 led to the creation of Community Associations of Rural Vigilance (CONVIVIR). This resulted in over 500 civilian defense units being created, with 10,000 armed members, and little government oversight.<sup>100</sup> Inability to oversee and control these organizations compounded the pressure the Colombian government was receiving from internal and external stakeholders in regards to *autodefensas*. In 1999, because of mounting pressure President Pastrana put an end to this law.

*Autodefensas* working in conjunction with Colombian National Police (CNP) had great security success. Most notably was the role *autodefensas* played in facilitating the destruction of the Medellin and Cali drug cartels.<sup>101</sup> Paramilitary effectiveness should not be underestimated but it is important to note that they are not a permanent military solution. They typically serve as a stop gap measure while governments develop formal security force capacity. The danger is that they tend to become massive and uncontrollable with proven track records of committing atrocities no matter where they are formed.<sup>102</sup> Such was the case of Colombia's paramilitary groups. As Table 2 below indicates sanctioning of the CONVIVIRs seems to have facilitated an increase in these atrocities. By 1998 the Colombian government reported that paramilitaries

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<sup>98</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 9.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 107-108

committed 70 percent of human rights violations. That year it was also reported that paramilitary and guerrilla funding totaled \$551 million from drugs, \$311 million from extortion, and \$236 million from kidnapping.<sup>103</sup>

Table 2. Noncombatant deaths and forced disappearances by group

	1993	1995	1996	1997	1998
Guerrillas	28%	38%	36%	23.5%	21.3%
Security Forces	54%	16%	18%	7.5%	2.7%
Paramilitaries	18%	46%	46%	69%	78%

Source: Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008* (Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009), 10. This table is utilized as it appears in *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience*.

It was in this environment that narcotics traffickers grew unchecked and ultimately undeterred. By the second half of the 1970s narcotics began to pose another threat to Colombia's security. The FARC initially opposed the illegal drug trade, however, once they realized the profit potential of this lucrative business they changed their stance. Forming alliances with drug traffickers allowed the FARC to fund its revolution at levels unattained previously. By taxing drug traffickers the FARC was able to entice recruits, increase the scope and scale of its military operations, and bribe government officials.<sup>104</sup> Successful anti-narcotics operations in Peru and Bolivia solidified the FARC merger with narcotics traffickers.

By the 1980s illegal narcotics were destabilizing the region and becoming a national security threat to the United States. To address this threat President Ronald Reagan enacted National Security Directive Decision (NSDD) 221 in May 1986. In NSDD 221 President Reagan outlined the nature of the threat and the anti-narcotics actions authorized by US organizations.<sup>105</sup> In this directive President Reagan identified the nexus between narcotics traffickers and terrorist

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<sup>103</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 11.

<sup>104</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 7.

<sup>105</sup> Ronald Reagan, National Security Decision Directive 221, "Narcotics and National Security," National Archives, (April 8, 1986): 1-5, accessed December 28, 2017, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6879807>.

organizations that were destabilizing democratic institutions within the Western Hemisphere. This was significant because President Reagan was a proponent of the democratic peace theory.<sup>106</sup> An attack on democratic institutions was paramount to an attack on US global interest. President George H.W. Bush followed his predecessor's lead and implemented the National Drug Control Strategy of 1989. This action allocated \$1 billion to security forces in the Andean region.<sup>107</sup> Counter narcotics activities conducted in support of Peru and Bolivia under these plans met with great success. Success came at a cost as those operations moved from Peru and Bolivia into the southern and eastern regions of Colombia. This is often referred to as the balloon effect. Simply put the balloon effect occurs when successful measures against eradication occur in one place and displace those operations to another location, similar to squeezing a partially inflated balloon.

In addition to being a permissive security environment this region of Colombia was more conducive to coca production. The soil content and climate allowed coca growers to produce and cultivate four crops a year totaling 300,000 acres. The table below shows that until 1997 Peru and Bolivia combined to produce the majority of the world's cocaine base and then shipped it to Colombia for processing and distribution. By 1999 Colombia became the number one grower and producer of cocaine in the world.

Table 3. Shift in Cocaine Production (Metric Tons.)

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<sup>106</sup> Azar Gat, "The Democratic Peace Theory Reframed: The Impact of Modernity," *World Politics* 58, no. 1 (2005): 73, accessed December 29, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40060125>. The democratic peace theory states that democracies rarely go to war with each other. Instead of war democratic nations look to resolve their disputes through diplomatic means other than war. According to this theory this leads to a more peaceful and stable world. This liberal democratic theory was most recently espoused by President George W. Bush as demonstrated in his policy decisions regarding the war on terror.

<sup>107</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 8.

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
<b>Peru</b>	460	435	325	240	175
<b>Bolivia</b>	240	215	200	150	70
<b>Colombia</b>	230	300	350	435	520
<b>Totals</b>	930	950	875	825	765

Source: Gabriel Marcella, *The United States and Colombia: The Journey from Ambiguity to Strategic Clarity* (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, 2003), 32. This table is utilized as it appears in *The United States and Colombia: The Journey from Ambiguity to Strategic Clarity*.

Although the nexus between the FARC and narcotics traffickers was clear it was not enough to convince President Clinton to provide the COLMIL the support it needed. President Clinton faced political pressure to avoid drawing America into another Vietnam.<sup>108</sup> This weighed heavily on his decision to support aid packages and assistance to law enforcement agencies in Latin America and not military units. To ensure compliance with this distinction and that alignment with law enforcement not, military initiatives, President Clinton issued Presidential Decision Directive 14 (PDD 14).<sup>109</sup> The distinction between counter-drug activities and counter-insurgent activities was a political one that hindered the US Army’s ability to build COLMIL capacity to engage with and defeat the FARC. A senior Colombian official expressed Colombian frustration with this approach when he stated, “We can’t accept such a stupid dichotomy that the two have nothing to do with each other. It is absurd.”<sup>110</sup>

With the increase in production and control of the entire coca process the merger between the FARC and narcotics traffickers resulted in a true threat to Colombia’s sovereignty. In 1996,

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<sup>108</sup> Karen DeYoung, “Clinton Pledges to Keep U.S. Out of Colombian War,” *The Washington Post*, August 31, 2000, accessed December 30, 2017, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2000/08/31/clinton-pledges-to-keep-us-out-of-colombia-war/8e7282a7-6dd7-447b-b334-92eda0387add/?utm\\_term=.db95da1aad62](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2000/08/31/clinton-pledges-to-keep-us-out-of-colombia-war/8e7282a7-6dd7-447b-b334-92eda0387add/?utm_term=.db95da1aad62).

<sup>109</sup> William Clinton, Presidential Decision Directive 14, National Security Council and National Security Council Records Management Office, “PDD-14 - U.S. Policy on International Counternarcotics in the Western Hemisphere, 11/3/1993,” *Clinton Digital Library* (November 1993): 2-5, accessed December 21, 2017, <https://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/items/show/12742>.

<sup>110</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 27.

with revenue generated from this illicit activity, the FARC was able to go on the operational offense. In April they launched a successful ambush against a Colombian army convoy along the Trans-Andean oil pipeline, near the Ecuador border, killing thirty-one soldiers and wounding eighteen.<sup>111</sup> Then in August an 800 man FARC force overran a regular infantry company in Putumayo and for the first time defeated a unit of this size.<sup>112</sup> They were engaging in decisive battles and defeating both Colombia National Police and COLMIL units. No longer was the idea of Farclandia beyond the realm of the possible in the minds of policymakers in the United States, Peru, Brazil, and other Western Hemisphere nations.<sup>113</sup> To make matters worse the human atrocities committed by Colombian paramilitaries were being called into account by the global community.

Under pressure from human rights organizations, the international community, and US citizens the Clinton Administration decertified Colombian aid in both 1996 and 1997. The movement to reconcile these atrocities also resulted in the passage of the Leahy Laws in 1997.<sup>114</sup> No longer was the public willing to allow the US government to provide aid to the corrupt administration of President Ernesto Samper and organizations that committed human rights atrocities. During this time the only military training allowed was Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) activities by SOF.<sup>115</sup>

Leahy Laws prevent US funding to military units if there is “credible evidence that such unit has committed gross violations of human rights.”<sup>116</sup> The Colombians took this as an insult

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<sup>111</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 26.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>114</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 12.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 13.

and a sign that the United States did not understand the nature of the conflict. Policy makers in Washington, DC and Ambassador David Passage, the Department of State's Director for Andean Affairs, echoed these sentiments. As Ambassador Passage put it, "It is almost irrational to expect that a country fighting for national survival should be able to quickly or easily achieve the truly prodigious transformation necessary to live up to accepted norms for human rights and civil liberties."<sup>117</sup>

In 1998, heeding the warnings from senior diplomats from both Colombia and the United States, President Clinton waived the restrictions that had been placed on support to Colombia. He justified this action by acknowledging the threat to national security the FARC and narcotics traffickers had become. This shift in strategy coincided with the election of Colombia's new president, Andres Pastrana. President Pastrana and his Conservative Party won in large part due to the inability of his predecessor and the Liberal Party to deal with the narcoinsurgents.<sup>118</sup> To create unity of effort in attacking the insurgents President Pastrana's administration developed Colombia's new strategy, Plan Colombia. Plan Colombia was the first step in gaining US support to fund the COLMIL in the fight against illegal narcotics.

Plan Colombia called for a smart power approach to attacking the narcoinsurgency Colombia faced.<sup>119</sup> US support to Plan Colombia included support to crop eradication and interdiction efforts on one end and support to economic development and social programs on the other. Plan Colombia was a WOG approach that allowed effective interoperability among various stakeholders. According to Colombian Army leadership Plan Colombia "brought campaign

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<sup>117</sup> David Passage, *The United States and Colombia: Untying the Gordian Knot* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2000), 7.

<sup>118</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 15.

<sup>119</sup> Joseph Nye, *The Future of Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), xiii. In his book Joseph Nye describes smart power as the combination of hard and soft power. Hard power is the use of coercive force or payment to achieve an objective and soft power is the use of persuasion or attraction to achieve an objective.

planning, operational designs, modernization or transformation programs to the table.”<sup>120</sup> To fund this effort Colombia agreed to raise \$4 billion via a new tax and requested \$3.5 billion in international support. The importance of Plan Colombia to US policy makers is evident in the fact that only Israel and Egypt received more aid during this time frame.<sup>121</sup> It was the largest aid package ever given in support of a Latin American country.

Initially President Pastrana tried peace negotiations with the FARC through the use of demilitarized zones and other concessions.<sup>122</sup> Ultimately the FARC utilized this time and space, as they did in the past, to consolidate gains and seek positions of advantage through coercion of the populace. President Pastrana handed over an area the size of Switzerland to the FARC. Immediately, the FARC ousted judicial authorities and government officials, and implemented a totalitarian type government.<sup>123</sup> The human rights atrocities, detention of police and military members created in these demilitarized zones sealed the FARC’s fate. Colombians and the international community alike supported President Pastrana ending the peace talks and a shift to hard power.

President Pastrana’s Plan Colombia created more dialogue between unified action partners and generated new solutions to combating the FARC and narcotics traffickers. Ultimately it did not completely overcome the United States will to acknowledge the nexus between the COIN fight and the narcotics traffickers. It was not until the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 that the line between insurgents and drug dealers was all but eradicated. This change in America’s world view allowed for new authorities to be granted and greater shared

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<sup>120</sup> Alberto Mejia, *Colombia’s National Security Strategy, A New “COIN” Approach* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2008), 20.

<sup>121</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 16.

<sup>122</sup> Myles R. Frechette, *Colombia and the United States-the Partnership: But What is the Endgame* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 13.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

understanding between the Colombian government and the United States. In February of 2002 President George W. Bush requested a counterterrorism supplemental bill with new authorities to assist Colombia in its fight against terrorists.<sup>124</sup> The new authorities allowed units funded solely for counternarcotics missions to now be utilized to fight narcoterrorists. This important step further aligned US and Colombian government efforts and increased shared understanding.

Under the new authorities requirements for human rights vetting and personnel caps remained the same. However, the new legislation authorized \$35 million for counterterrorism operations in the form of \$25 million for non-proliferation, anti-terrorism, demining, related programs (NADR) for CNP and COLMIL; \$6 million in foreign military financing (FMF); and \$4 million in International Narcotics Control Law Enforcement (INCLE) funding for CNP to regain lost ground.<sup>125</sup> This assistance was coming at the end of President Pastrana's time in office. He attempted one more peace settlement, "The Road towards Peace and the Counterterrorism Strategy," but it failed due to heavy fighting that would not subside. In an address on July 20, 2002 he took public account of what he accomplished regarding increases to military end strength. This included a seventy-five percent increase in soldiers from 75,000 to 140,000; a Strength Plan that allowed for 10,000 soldiers to be added per year through 2004; UH-60 inventory growth from four to sixteen; and transport helicopter increase from 75 to 176.<sup>126</sup> These accomplishments plus the creation of the rapid reaction force (FUDRA), four mobile infantry brigades (BRIMS), the counter drug brigade (BRCNA), twenty-four riverine combat elements, and the Joint Intelligence Center (JIC) established a good start point for his successor, Alvaro Uribe.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 79.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

President Uribe won a landslide victory on a platform of destroying the FARC and reestablishing security for all Colombians. According to General James T. Hill, then-Commander US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), President Uribe was seen as a window of opportunity that could consolidate gains made through increased support through SC activities.<sup>128</sup> Under President Uribe Plan Colombia remained the strategic framework for advancing peace from a position of strength.<sup>129</sup> Unlike his predecessor he believed the Colombian government could regain control of 100 percent of its territory and extend democracy to all Colombians.<sup>130</sup> President Uribe believed a comprehensive approach to combat terrorists in previously ignored regions of Colombia was the answer. This included educators, doctors, security forces, and other needed government agencies to address drivers of instability. President Uribe called this approach “democratic security.”<sup>131</sup> A key difference in his democratic security and defense policy (DSDP) approach from previous administrations was that security was the first priority of work.

In his book, *No Lost Causes*, President Uribe described meeting President George W. Bush less than a year after the September 11, 2001 attacks. In his book he stated that no one understood the nexus between terrorists and transnational criminal organizations like President Bush.<sup>132</sup> It was during this first meeting that the two leaders talked face to face about the problems facing Colombian and US interests. During this conversation President Bush expressed his approval of President Uribe’s move away from appeasement of terrorists that Colombian leaders had taken in the past. Shortly after this first conversation President Bush called Anne

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<sup>128</sup> Dario E. Teicher, *The Decisive Phase of Colombia’s War on Narco-Terrorism* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: 2005), 7.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>130</sup> Alvaro Uribe, *No Lost Causes* (New York: Celbra, 2012), 121.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> Uribe, *No Lost Causes*, 177.

Patterson, US Ambassador to Colombia, and expressed that he wanted to support President Uribe.<sup>133</sup>

Following the 9/11 attacks President Bush declared the Global War on Terror. It was a paradigm shift from his predecessor President Clinton who believed that insurgents, terrorists, and criminal organizations had no nexus. PDD 14 best demonstrated President Clinton's belief that terrorists and criminals were separate entities. PDD 14 ensured US security force assistance to Colombia went to law enforcement conducting counter-drug operations and not to Colombian military forces combating terrorist insurgents.<sup>134</sup> President Bush's shared understanding with President Uribe changed this and aligned national interests between the two countries. This is demonstrated in National Security Presidential Directive 18 (NSPD18), Supporting Democracy in Colombia. This directive was passed in November of 2002 and officially recognized the link between narcotics traffickers and terrorist groups in Colombia.<sup>135</sup>

This policy shift had a profound effect on then USSOUTHCOM Commander General James T. Hill's ability to achieve US national objectives. In his 2004 statement to the House Armed Services he expressed that the expanded authorities he was given under NSPD 18 allowed him to effectively build partner nation capacity in Colombia that dealt with narcoterrorists.<sup>136</sup> Other policy measures were taken that increased the ways and means US government organizations could increase support to Colombia's WOG. For example, on August 2, 2003 President Bush signed a supplemental funding law that provided training for the Colombian 18<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Uribe, *No Lost Causes*, 178.

<sup>134</sup> William Clinton, Presidential Decision Directive 14.

<sup>135</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 95.

<sup>136</sup> US Congress, Testimony of General James T. Hill, Commander, United States Southern Command, *Hearing before the House Armed Services Committee: Fiscal Year 2005 National Defense Authorization Budget Request*, March 24, 2004, 12.

Brigade responsible for infrastructure and oil pipeline security in Arauca.<sup>137</sup> In November the Intelligence Authorization Act was passed and it allowed intelligence sharing and funding to increase Colombia's intelligence capacity to target narcoterrorists. As Joint Publication (JP) 3-20 Security Cooperation states, strategy is shaped by policy and SC provides both ways and means in accordance with policy, to reach strategic objectives.<sup>138</sup>

This evolution in policy also corresponded with President Uribe's military campaign plan, *Plan Patriota*, to regain territory long held by guerrillas.<sup>139</sup> *Plan Patriota* helped identify where the US military could best apply its resources to build Colombian security force capacity by identifying capability gaps. It served as a key component of Colombia's internal defense and development plan. This new shared understanding resulted in increased force caps, budgets, and equipment allocation to the Colombian military. At the request of President Bush the US force cap authorization increased from 400 military and 400 contractor members to 800 military and 600 contractors. This signaled commitment to COLMIL partners and allowed USSOUTHCOM to adequately partner with Colombian security forces.<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, President Bush authorized the assistance of specialized equipment, such as night vision goggles, weapons, and communication equipment to the Colombian Army.

*Plan Patriota* was a three phase operation. Phase 1 was to secure Bogota and Cundinamarca department, Phase 2 secure the FARC rear area in Caqueta department, and Phase 3 secure the Antioquia department. Throughout these phases US military support remained in the realm of advising and training. It was the expanded authorities granted by the Bush

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<sup>137</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 96.

<sup>138</sup> US Joint Staff, JP 3-20, (2017), I-9.

<sup>139</sup> Connie Veillette, *Plan Colombia: A Progress Report*, Latin American Affairs, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 2006), CRS-3.

<sup>140</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 110.

Administration that increased the scope and effectiveness of military actions in support of *Plan Patriota*.

During phase 1 of *Plan Patriota* the United States invested \$99 million in the Colombian Army (COLAR) to conduct counter-terrorism activities against the FARC. The purpose of phase 1 was to secure Bogota and protect the Cano Limon-Covenas Oil Pipeline in Arauca. This was the first time the United States funded non-counterdrug activities in support of the COLAR.<sup>141</sup> This resulted in the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade in Arauca, BRCNA at Larandia, and the commando battalion at the Toleraida training base receiving equipment, helicopters, and increased training from 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (A).<sup>142</sup>

During this time frame United States Special Operations Command South (USSOCSOUTH) was building on activities conducted in Colombia through persistent engagement. SOCSOUTH utilized its Advanced Operational Base (AOB) in Colombia to identify gaps and develop capacities of institutions such as the Colombian Army Special Operations Command (COESE) and the Joint Special Operations Command (CCOPE).<sup>143</sup> CCOPE is the Colombian equivalent of the US Joint Special Operations Command. The 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group Airborne (SFG (A)) conducted training to build partner capacity in small unit tactics, night operations, reconnaissance, and airmobile operations.<sup>144</sup> In 2003 7<sup>th</sup> SFG (A) began training the newly formed Lancero Battalion. The Lancero Battalion was similar in its composition to a US

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<sup>141</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 100.

<sup>142</sup> Scott Wilson, "U.S. Moves Closer to Colombia's War; Involvement of Special Forces could Trigger New Wave of Guerrilla Violence," *The Washington Post*, February 07, 2003, accessed January 30, 2018, <https://lumen.cgscarl.com/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/409517566?accountid=28992>.

<sup>143</sup> Brian S. Petit and Eric Thor Olson, *Going Big By Getting Small: The Application of Operational Art By Special Operations In Phase Zero* (Denver, CO: Outskirts Press, Incorporated, 2013), 129.

<sup>144</sup> Jeffrey D. Waddell, *US Army Special Forces Support to "Plan Colombia"* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College Press, 2003), 15.

Army Ranger Battalion. The Lancero Battalion was designed to conduct hostage rescue and operations against high-value targets.

The Colombian military succeeded in securing Bogota and pushing the FARC further into the jungle.<sup>145</sup> These operations ended the FARC's chance of attaining their strategic objective of seizing the Colombian capital. The COLMIL's activities in Arauca also were successful. The 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade reduced oil pipeline attacks from the 2001 record level of 170 to just 24 attacks in 2003.<sup>146</sup>

During phase 2 USSOUTHCOM used its expanded authorities to increase the offensive capacities of Colombia's first joint command, Joint Task Force (JTF) Omega. This phase lasted from January 2004 to 2006. During this phase Colombia employed 17,000 soldiers to take the fight to the FARC in the departments of Caqueta, Guaviare, and Meta. JTF Omega consisted of three mobile infantry brigade rapid reaction forces (BRIM FUDRA), three SF BDEs, six BRIMs, Military Intelligence Region 8 (RIME 8), Army aviation, a counterdrug battalion, a logistics company, a medical evacuation company, seven Navy riverine combat elements, and an Air Force component.<sup>147</sup> USSOUTHCOM utilized embedded planning and assistance team (PATT) members with Colombian BRIM units to develop a common operating picture and identify capability gaps with the partner force.

In addition to this 7<sup>th</sup> SFG (A) was conducting a wider range of training engagements during this time frame. These engagements included the development of infrastructure security units, Colombian navy and air force special operations, and facilitated interagency training between Colombian security forces.<sup>148</sup> By developing trust and mutual respect through persistent

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<sup>145</sup> Veillette, *Plan Colombia: A Progress Report*, CRS-9.

<sup>146</sup> Teicher, *The Decisive Phase of Colombia's War on Narco-Terrorism*, 13.

<sup>147</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 108-109.

<sup>148</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 31.

engagement 7<sup>th</sup> SFG (A) was able to bridge the gap between COLMIL and Colombian National Police (CNP). By taking this approach Special Operations Forces were achieving both US and Colombian national objectives. President Bush and President Uribe wanted a strong and sustainable security network in Colombia with advanced skills. With these skills both governments understood that the Colombians could achieve a position of advantage over the narcoterrorists.

Establishing interoperability increased shared understanding and established a foundation that allowed US training to move into advanced training. For example, Special Forces Operational Detachment Alphas (ODAs) began enhancing Colombian partner capacity to conduct planning, establish secure communications, and intelligence gathering and dissemination.<sup>149</sup> Through joint training US forces built trust and interoperability within the Colombian security force network and set the conditions for successful joint operations. Utilizing this approach resulted in devastation for the FARC as they saw their numbers drop from 16,000 to 12,600 armed terrorists.<sup>150</sup> During this time frame the FARC was not the only element to suffer defeat. Across the board Colombia was reducing terrorist and criminal activity and reducing drivers of instability. As figure 2 below demonstrates, from 2002 to 2006 homicides fell by almost fifty percent, kidnappings dropped from 1,789 to 282, and mayors could begin working from offices within their municipalities.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 32.

<sup>150</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 113.

<sup>151</sup> Mejia, *Colombia's National Security Strategy, A New "COIN" Approach*, 25.

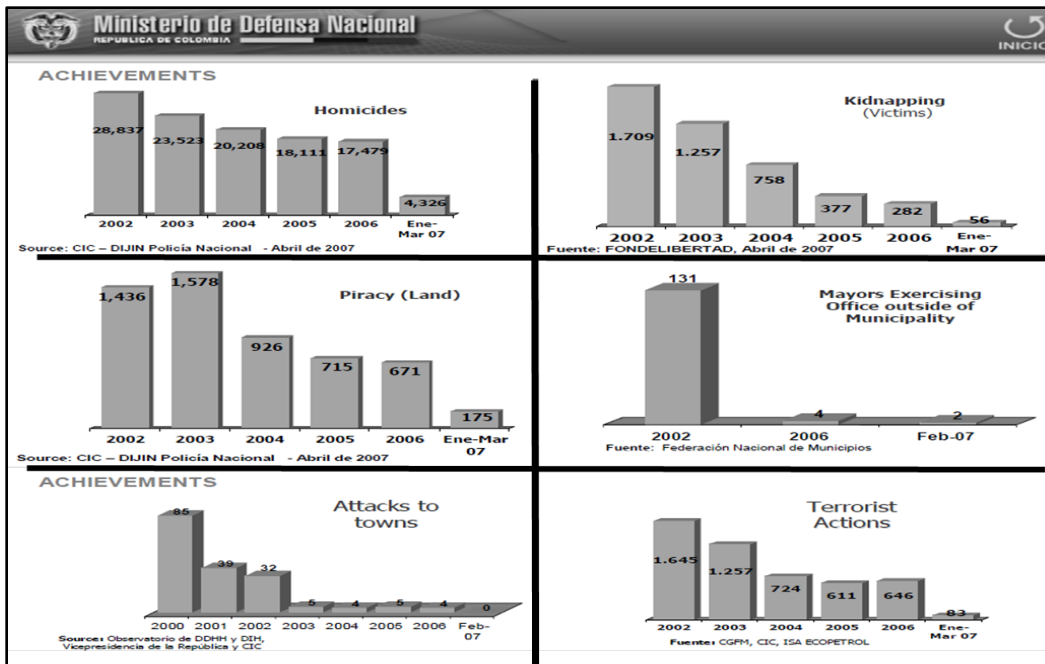


Figure 2: Colombian Ministry of Defense DSDP Achievements Report, Alberto Mejia, *Colombia's National Security Strategy, A New "COIN" Approach* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2008), 25. This figure is depicted as it appears in the work of Alberto Mejia.

In addition to facilitating interoperability between security forces USSOUTHCOM supported President Uribe in his development of the Coordination Center for Integrated Action (CCAI).<sup>152</sup> CCAI created a joint ministry that was permanently manned to conduct civil affairs operations such as: judicial reform, economic development, and populace reintegration. CCAI created unity of effort across multiple government ministries to address drivers of instability by reestablishing local government and social programs. By 2006 over 32,000 internally displaced people returned home and over 16,000 *autodefensa* members began the reintegration process.<sup>153</sup> These accomplishments stemmed from the military group (MILGRP) working with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other country team members to support Colombia's whole of government approach to combating narcoterrorists. The MILGRP is a

<sup>152</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 111.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 113-121.

component of the country team and its function is to coordinate DOD efforts within a given country to create unity of effort in achieving USG SC objectives. In Colombia the MILGRP commander was an Army colonel with experience in the region, language skills, and a special operations or foreign area background.<sup>154</sup>

The success of phase 1 and phase 2 of *Plan Patriota* propelled President Uribe into his second term in office. This opportunity brought with it a reframe of the operational environment for the US and Colombian governments. President Uribe and his administration recognized the security gains made could be lost if other drivers of instability were not given the same impetus for success. In 2006 President Uribe transitioned from his DSDP strategy to his Democratic Security and Consolidation Plan (DSCP). The DSCP strategy took into consideration the need to expand beyond the physical recapturing of territory into a “social recovery of territory.”<sup>155</sup> This marked a transition in the WOG approach for the Colombians. With this transition came a new defense plan named Plan Consolidation which employed the strategy of clear, hold, consolidate. Plan Consolidation outlined how the COLMIL would work with its unified action partners (UAPs) to conduct operations that supported licit markets, addressed social issues, and enabled functioning justice system. By working with UAPs the COLMIL was able to identify and exploit windows of opportunity during operations in narcoterrorist safe havens to converge capabilities and achieve desired effects against their networks.<sup>156</sup> Figure 3 below demonstrates how the Colombian Minister of Defense conceptualized its strategy in support of the DSCP.

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<sup>154</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 24.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>156</sup> US Army, FM 3-0, (2017), 1-6.

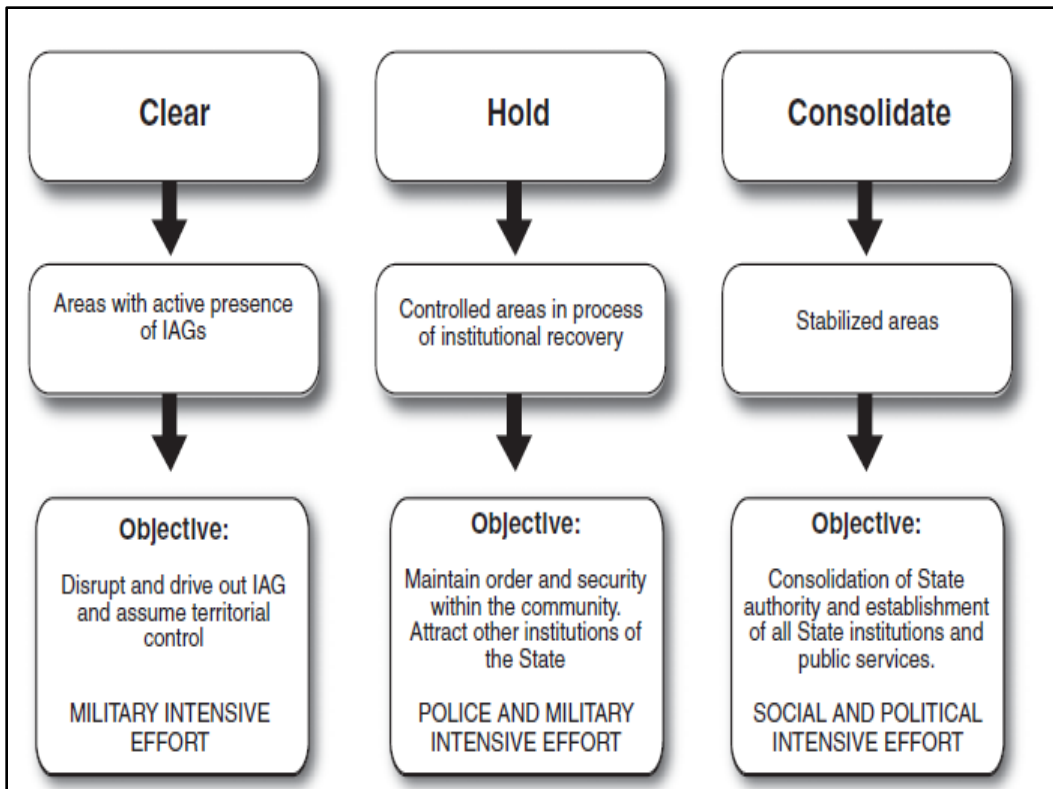


Figure 3: Colombia’s Clear, Hold, and Consolidate Strategy, US Government Accountability Office, *Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance*, GAO-09-71 (Washington, DC: October 6, 2008), 13, accessed February 15, 2018, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-09-71>. This figure is depicted as it appears in GAO-09-71.

The US government recognized the gains made during the first term of President Uribe and decided to continue investing in countering narcoterrorist threats in Colombia during his second term. This resulted in the US government committing \$4 billion dollars over six years to the new consolidation plan.<sup>157</sup> Funding for both counternarcotics and counterinsurgency operations increased as did funding for social programs in 2007. As table 4 below indicates 2008 marked the year that the US began implementing its process to transition programs and funding responsibilities to the Colombian government. From 2000 to 2008 the US government had spent over \$6 billion on military and nonmilitary aid to Colombia. During that time DOD efforts resulted in the development of mobile COLMIL units and Joint Special Forces units that could

<sup>157</sup> GAO-09-71, *Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance*, 12.

take the fight into FARC safe havens. Specifically, mobile Army Brigades, such as Joint Task Force Omega, which conducted counterinsurgency operations in central Colombia and Joint Special Forces Command with a commando unit and hostage rescue unit.<sup>158</sup>

Table 4. U.S. Assistance to Colombian Military and National Police, Fiscal Year Appropriations 2000-2008

Dollars in millions										
Service/fiscal year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008 (Est.)	Total*
<b>Colombian Military</b>	<b>\$683.5</b>	<b>\$192.8</b>	<b>\$257.1</b>	<b>\$443.4</b>	<b>\$445.5</b>	<b>\$394.7</b>	<b>\$382.8</b>	<b>\$373.5</b>	<b>\$268.4</b>	<b>\$3,441.7</b>
Army Aviation	"	"	78.0	140.8	155.2	127.5	143.2	129.6	69.7	\$844.1
Army Ground Forces	"	"	9.7	6.3	18.1	13.4	22.2	17.7	16.4	\$103.7
Infrastructure Security	"	"	6.0	93.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	0.0	\$115.0
Air Interdiction <sup>b</sup>	No program	No program	14.0	8.0	7.1	0.0	4.6	18.8	10.0	\$62.5
Coastal and River Interdiction	"	"	0.0	0.0	26.2	11.8	19.1	19.2	13.0	\$89.3
Other <sup>c</sup>	134.9	190.9	149.4	195.4	234.8	238.1	189.7	184.4	159.2	\$1,676.8
Not allocated <sup>d</sup>	548.6	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	550.5
<b>Colombian National Police</b>	<b>\$134.3</b>	<b>\$40.0</b>	<b>\$138.8</b>	<b>\$164.5</b>	<b>\$172.2</b>	<b>\$190.9</b>	<b>\$204.5</b>	<b>\$217.6</b>	<b>\$155.0</b>	<b>\$1,417.8</b>
Eradication	"	"	37.4	63.7	44.2	82.5	81.7	82.0	66.5	\$457.9
Air Service	"	"	67.5	62.3	71.2	70.0	70.5	69.0	52.5	\$463.0
Interdiction	"	"	24.3	21.0	41.0	16.9	16.5	16.5	16.5	\$152.7
Police Presence in Conflict Zones	No program	No program	4.8	15.5	13.8	20.1	19.4	18.7	0.0	\$92.1
Other <sup>c</sup>	18.7	0.0	4.9	2.0	2.0	1.4	16.4	31.5	19.5	\$96.4
Not allocated <sup>d</sup>	115.6	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	\$155.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$817.8</b>	<b>\$232.8</b>	<b>\$395.9</b>	<b>\$607.9</b>	<b>\$617.7</b>	<b>\$585.6</b>	<b>\$587.3</b>	<b>\$591.1</b>	<b>\$423.4</b>	<b>\$4,859.5</b>

Source: US Government Accountability Office, *Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance*, GAO-09-71 (Washington, DC: October 6, 2008), 28, accessed February 15, 2018, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-09-71>. This table is depicted as it is presented in GAO-09-71.

Training and assistance to develop COLMIL security capacity from 2000 to 2008 resulted in concrete examples of employment of security cooperation activities that nested with US objectives. Two examples are the successful protection of the 500 mile-long Caño Limón-Coveñas oil pipeline from terrorist attacks and the hostage rescue of Ingrid Betancourt and three US citizens. In the first example given the United States invested \$30 million to provide 1,600 COLAR soldiers with equipment and training from US Special Forces to protect the Caño Limón-Coveñas oil pipeline.<sup>159</sup> In addition to this training the US provided UH-60 and UH-119 helicopters, logistical support, and ground facilities.<sup>160</sup> This combined equipment and training package

<sup>158</sup> GAO-09-71, *Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance*, 34.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

resulted in attacks dropping from 170 attacks on the pipeline in 2001 to one in 2007. The attacks in 2001 resulted in \$500 million in lost revenue for Colombia and degraded its ability to fund its own government. SC activities facilitated COLMIL capacity to secure the pipeline and increase revenue to the Colombian government. This in turn facilitated reduction in US aid to Colombian security forces starting in 2008.

The second concrete example experienced during this phase of Colombia's DSCP was the hostage rescue of Ingrid Betancourt, three American hostages, and eleven security forces personnel on July 2, 2008. *Operation Jaque* (Checkmate) was a Colombian planned and led rescue operation that achieved the US national interest of protecting its citizens abroad. In 2006 Admiral James Stavridis, then USSOUTHCOM Commander, stated that rescuing the American hostages was his "first and foremost priority."<sup>161</sup> Years of partner capacity building facilitated this operation. In security cooperation the pinnacle of security force capacity building is a host nation force that can secure its country and has interests that align with US goals and objectives.

In 2008, because of successful security force capacity building by USSOUTHCOM, USSOCSOUTH, and other US agencies, the US began shifting funds from COLMIL and CNP to non-military programs. This resulted in a drop of \$170 million for COLMIL and CNP support and an increase of \$85 million for non-military social programs. President Uribe's plan to dismantle the FARC was succeeding. With US support the FARC was reduced to 9,000 fighters, less than half its peak strength.<sup>162</sup> It was not just FARC reductions that improved. During this time frame judicial reforms took hold, assassinations of mayors fell by sixty-seven percent, councilmen by eighty-seven percent, and journalists by ninety percent. Revenue streams from

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<sup>160</sup> GAO-09-71, *Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance*, 34.

<sup>161</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 128.

<sup>162</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 36.

kidnapping fell as well due to that rate falling from 2,882 kidnappings per year to 213.<sup>163</sup> Illegal narcotics cultivation and production also fell from 162,510 to 68,025 hectares being cultivated and annual cocaine production dropped from 550 to 410 tons.<sup>164</sup> Overall the support provided by the United States to Colombia during this time frame resulted in a strong partnership in the United States fight against terrorism and drivers of instability in the Southern Hemisphere.

The first research question asks: was the partner nation culture considered to ensure meaningful actions were taken to achieve US strategic objectives in part or in whole? By working to support Colombia's internal defense and development plan (IDAD), Plan Colombia, the United States demonstrated that it was considering partner culture. In JP 3-20 an IDAD is defined as the full range of measures taken by a nation to promote its growth and protect itself from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to its security.<sup>165</sup> The documentary record indicates that the United States did not create a plan for the Colombians and instead worked to nest their efforts within Plan Colombia. Figure 4 below demonstrates how Department of State (DOS), DOD, USAID, and the Justice Department supported Colombian efforts to counter narcoterrorists, address drivers of instability among the populace, and provide judicial reform. It also demonstrates how the United States viewed its whole of government approach to building Colombian capacity to defeat the FARC, reducing the flow of illegal narcotics into the United States, and addressing root causes driving this problem.

Figure 4 below exhibits how the US government assigned objectives to address drivers of instability within Colombia. Programs to return internally displaced personnel, alternative development, and democracy and human rights under DOS and USAID efforts align with Colombia's DSCP strategy. These efforts attacked the physical and physiological domain that

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<sup>163</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 37.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> US Joint Staff, JP 3-20, (2017), I-10.

provided the FARC with recruits and safe havens. US Civil Affairs (CA) and Psychological Operations (PSYOP) soldiers conducting activities through civil-military support elements (CMSE) and military information support teams (MIST) were instrumental in building Colombian capacity to execute these programs.<sup>166</sup>

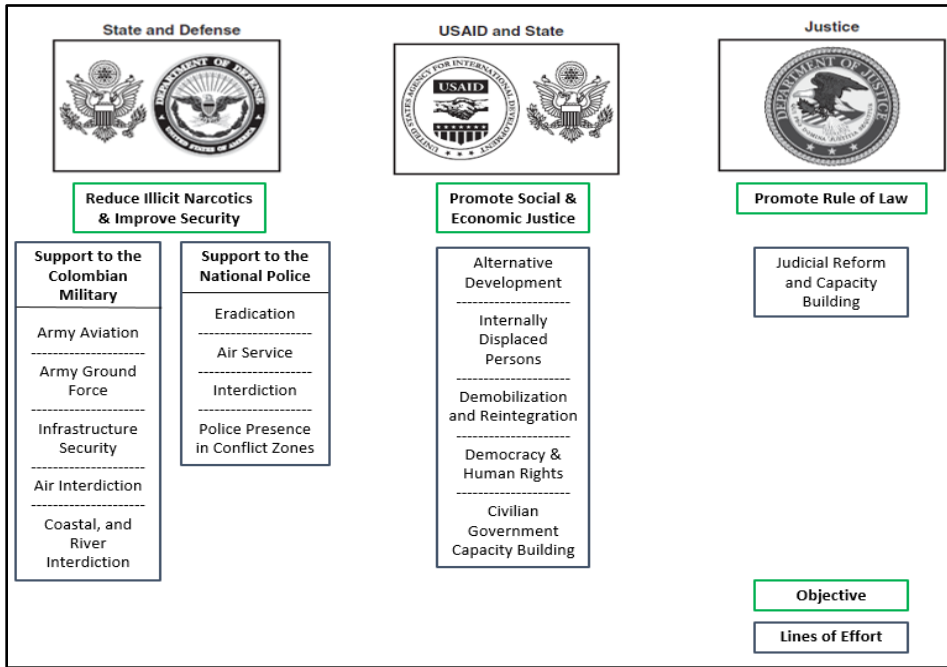


Figure 4. Program Assistance Objectives in Colombia, *Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance*, GAO-09-71 (Washington, DC: October 6, 2008), 12. This diagram is modified by the author to depict the objectives and lines of effort from the figure presented in the GAO report.

By working by, with, and through Colombian partners USSOF soldiers were employing Krippendorff’s design axiom of ensuring culture was utilized to move meaningful actions through the defining process.<sup>167</sup> Actions taken to demonstrate Colombian governance being extended to previously ignored population centers were done in a culturally astute manner that resulted in the desired interpretation leading to desired effects. An example of this were medical civic action

<sup>166</sup> Janice Burton, “ARSOF in Colombia: 50 Years of Persistent Engagement,” *Special Warfare*, Volume 25, issue 4 (October-December 2012), 30.

<sup>167</sup> Krippendorff, “Principles of Design and a Trajectory of Artificiality,” 413.

programs (MEDCAPS). Colombian citizens viewed MEDCAPS as the Colombian government intended them because they were executed by, with, and through community and government leaders. Prior analysis and engagement ensured resources allocated to MEDCAPS met the needs of the people because their concerns were thought of during the planning process. This resulted in the information domain being contested with words and actions as the government was extending services and security into previously ignored populations.

These actions countered the FARC narrative which was a critical requirement to facilitating freedom of action. MIST teams developing COLMIL information operations capacity to counter FARC narratives resulted in an enduring solution within this problem set. MIST capacity building activities resulted in culturally nuanced information campaigns that resulted in FARC members demobilizing.<sup>168</sup> By contesting the narcoterrorist in the physical and cognitive domain the United States and Colombia began to dismantle the network that provided the FARC with basing, lines-of-communication, and recruits. Additionally, these actions allowed for the collection of fine-grained information that provided Colombian forces with a marked advantage over the enemy.<sup>169</sup>

Question two asks what laws, policies, and constraints existed that shaped SC activities? This question focused on the role of policy and national level leadership in shaping lines of effort and supporting objectives within an operational approach. From 1999-2008 presidential leadership changed and this offered unique insight into the role of national level leadership in shaping lines of effort and supporting objectives within an operational approach. During his presidency President Clinton did not acknowledge the nexus between narco-traffickers and insurgents. His PDD 14 ensured that DOD efforts in security cooperation (SC) were focused on

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<sup>168</sup> Burton, "ARSOF in Colombia: 50 Years of Persistent Engagement," 30.

<sup>169</sup> Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 173-174. According to Kalyvas the most effective way to collect fine-grained information is the ability to solicit it from the populace. Information is key to irregular warfare in linking either belligerent's strength to the other's weakness.

counter-narcotics activities.<sup>170</sup> This constrained planners to lines of effort tied to counternarcotics tasks and missions designed to achieve national objectives of reducing illegal narcotics flow into the United States and establishing regional stability. The election of President Bush and the events of 9/11 changed this approach. Following 9/11 President Bush and his administration conducted a reframe of the US approach to defending its interests near and abroad. In the USSOUTHCOM AOR this resulted in authorization of new authorities under NSPD 18 which acknowledged the nexus between illegal narcotics traffickers and terrorists. NSPD 18 is significant because the authorities provided in it were requested and influenced by the DOD.<sup>171</sup> It demonstrated how persistent engagement, assessments, and updated running estimates can be utilized to capitalize on windows of opportunity to achieve US national objectives. The impact of this request was significant for two reasons, first it filled essential gaps that strengthened the Colombian government and second it prevented a request for US military intervention.<sup>172</sup>

Question three of seven asks what actions were taken to develop a common operating picture and ensure unity of effort among unified action partners? To accomplish this USSOUTHCOM embedded PATTs with Colombian units. The PATTs worked with the MILGRP, which was co-located with Colombian Minister of Defense and Colombian Army Special Operations Command (COESE), to leverage USSOUTHCOM resources. This resulted in COLMIL overcoming resource shortfalls and maintaining sustained operations against the

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<sup>170</sup> William Clinton, Presidential Decision Directive 14, National Security Council and National Security Council Records Management Office, “PDD-14 - U.S. Policy on International Counternarcotics in the Western Hemisphere, 11/3/1993,” *Clinton Digital Library* (November 1993): 2-5, accessed December 21, 2017, <https://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/items/show/12742>.

<sup>171</sup> Alan G. Whittaker, Shannon A. Brown, Frederick C. Smith, and Elizabeth McKune, *The National Security Policy Process: The National Security Council and Interagency System* (Washington, DC: Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, US Department of Defense, August 15, 2011), 53.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

FARC.<sup>173</sup> By increasing the operational reach and ability of COLMIL to control operational tempo the United States provided the COLMIL with a marked advantage over the FARC.

In 2007 USAID and DOD invested \$28.5 million in support of two programs that supported Colombia's DSCP strategy of "Clear, Hold, and Consolidate."<sup>174</sup> The Regional Governance Consolidation Program and the Initial Governance Response Program supported the Coordination Center for Integrated Government Action (CCAI). CCAI integrate and coordinated COLMIL, CNP, and civilian agency activities with national-level efforts to reestablish governance in areas that previously did not have it.<sup>175</sup> USAID worked closely with these UAPs to design, implement, and manage programs that provided stability in regions previously controlled by narcoterrorists. These efforts helped develop a common operating picture of security cooperation activities among UAPs and created unity of effort for activities that mutually supported the integrated country strategy and USSOUTHCOM goals.

The fourth research question asks what role host nation counterparts played in the planning process? In the case of Plan Colombia the Colombians took the lead in the planning process. Plan Colombia allowed greater dialogue between unified action partners that resulted in identification of resource and capabilities gaps. Capability gaps such as US military trainers and equipment shortfalls. In response the US military presence increased from 160 advisors on the ground to over 400 with an additional 400 contractors.<sup>176</sup> This resulted in the US Army identifying and overcoming resource shortfalls to get the COLMIL into the fight. The military training and assistance resulted in the development of three counter-narcotics battalions, that were

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<sup>173</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 109.

<sup>174</sup> GAO-09-71, *Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; U.S. Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance*, 58.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 16.

then equipped with sixteen UH-60 Black Hawks and thirty UH-1H Huey transport helicopters.<sup>177</sup> To fund the helicopters Department of State utilized its emergency funds and the DOD paid for aviation infrastructure and fuel.<sup>178</sup> The CNP received two Black Hawks, twelve Huey helicopters and funding packages for civic outreach programs. In these packages \$68.5 million was allocated to alternative economic development programs, \$10 million for farmers displaced by eradication operations in southern Colombia, and \$51 million for human rights improvement.<sup>179</sup>

The fifth research question asks how long the conflict lasted. This question highlights the importance of understanding the history of a conflict before injecting a plan or set of activities into it. The FARC was officially established in 1966. Since then the Colombian government has been in an ongoing struggle to purge the terrorist insurgent group from its soil. Throughout that time the US government has worked with the Colombian government to defeat the FARC. Under President Uribe the FARC was reduced to 9,500 members, less than half its peak man-power, FARC desertions were up, and over twenty FARC fronts had been destroyed.<sup>180</sup> The FARC operated in 377 of 1,100 Colombian municipalities in 2002 and by 2010 that number was down to 142.<sup>181</sup> President Uribe's actions in partnership with the United States brought the FARC to its knees. This set the condition for his successor and former Minister of Defense, President Juan Manuel Santos, to enter into peace talks with the FARC from a position of strength. The official framework was announced on August 27, 2012 and peace talks are currently ongoing.

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<sup>177</sup> Rabasa and Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability*, 63.

<sup>178</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 17.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 131.

<sup>181</sup> Pat Patterson, *Conflict Resolution in Colombia* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 2013), 12.

The sixth research question asks what other operations occurred during this time frame? During this time frame America began its war on terror. The competing demands of Iraq and Afghanistan resulted in degradation to US efforts and resources in Colombia. For example a helicopter delivery to the BRCNA was delayed from April of 2004 by over a year.<sup>182</sup> Special Forces ODAs from 7<sup>th</sup> SFG (A) were reduced from seven in 2004 down to three during 2005.<sup>183</sup> This resulted in the MILGRP taking up a larger role in advising the Colombians and a shift to logistical and operational level planning capacity building.<sup>184</sup>

The seventh research question asks what force structure enabled persistent engagement to develop shared aims, goals, and objectives? At the operational to strategic level the MILGRP maintained a presence at the Colombian Ministry of Defense. This allowed the MILGRP to develop plans and objectives that nested with the theater campaign plan (TCP), Plan Colombia, and Plan Patriot. PATTs worked with Colombian units and provided assessments and feedback to the MILGRP which in turn informed USSOUTHCOM. At the operational and tactical level USSOCSOUTH employed Advance Operational Bases (AOB) headquarters and SOC-forwards. This allowed SOF to maintain persistent engagement with institutions such as the Colombian Army Special Operations Command (COESE) and the Colombian Joint Special Operations Command (CCOPE). The SOF construct of regionally aligned forces facilitates organizational understanding across the assigned force. Regional alignment also allowed SOF units to develop and sustain relationships in communities of interest among security practitioners and national security establishments, especially in defense.<sup>185</sup> Shared aims, goals, and objectives could be achieved by these organizations due to these key engagements. The main difference is that SOF

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<sup>182</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 101.

<sup>183</sup> Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, 16.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> US Joint Staff, JP 3-20, (2017), A-5.

provided a regionally aligned force with advanced training, cultural, and language skills that had a persistent presence in the USSOUTHCOM AOR. The MILGRP had to work through the obstacle of employing a force that consisted of temporary duty personnel on short tours from the guard and reserve forces.<sup>186</sup>

This case study was conducted to gather data utilizing seven structure-focused questions to answer the primary research question and test Klaus Krippendorff's human-centric design theory. In the following section the data will be utilized to test the eight hypotheses derived from Klaus Krippendorff's human-centered design principles.

### Findings and Analysis: Klaus Krippendorff's Theory of Human-Centered Design is Valid in SC

In this section the hypotheses are analyzed against the evidence presented in the case study to determine if they support, do not support, or are inconclusive in accordance with each hypothesis. The evidence comes from the answers to the seven structure-focused questions utilized to analyze Plan Colombia. This data will determine the validity of Klaus Krippendorff's theory of human-centered design and if a human-centered approach to planning can produce a comprehensive anti-fragile operational approach to security cooperation.

Hypothesis one stated that meaning is the only reality that matters. From this hypothesis Krippendorff derives his axiom of "No artifact can survive within a culture without being meaningful to those that can move it through its defining process."<sup>187</sup> This hypothesis is supported by the successful implementation of Plan Colombia. Prior strategies and plans to combat the narcoterrorists did not include actions that addressed drivers of instability in a meaningful way. Therefore, they never garnered populace support in achieving Colombia's

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<sup>186</sup> Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, 107.

<sup>187</sup> Krippendorff, "Principles of Design and a Trajectory of Artificiality," 413.

desired end state. By accounting for this aspect of human-centered design President Uribe was elected twice by the highest margins of any president in Colombian history. The people appreciated what he was doing through Plan Colombia so much they voted on a constitutional amendment that allowed him to run for a second term. This historical event allowed President Uribe to achieve many of the objectives he set forth in his DSDP and DSCP strategies, respectively. His DSDP and DSCP resulted in actions that were meaningful to the people and they allowed these strategies to be implemented. Supporting an IDAD developed by Colombians was key to the US approach to combating narcoterrorist in Colombia.

The second hypothesis states that design must be delegated. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that Plan Colombia was designed by Colombians with US planners producing conceptual plans in support of mutual interests. US planners provided plans that allowed for disciplined initiative. An example of this from figure 4 above is the US objective of “Reduce illicit narcotics and improve security” with the line of effort “COLAR aviation.” Planners allowed Colombian and US partnerships at operational and tactical echelons to inform what this meant. As a result the United States did not force an ineffective and unsustainable force structure onto a Colombian problem set.

With this hypothesis Krippendorff is stating that people affected by and utilizing outputs from a plan are better designers of those plans than professionals.<sup>188</sup> By facilitating partner interaction with an underspecified plan to develop or fill in gaps enables partners to develop enduring solutions to their problems. Krippendorff states that “the point of professional design lies not in insisting on being experts but in enabling others to design their own world.”<sup>189</sup> Assuming you know what works best within another stakeholder community can result in actions that increase tensions and challenges within the area of operation (AO).

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<sup>188</sup> Krippendorff, “Principles of Design and a Trajectory of Artificiality,” 413.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

Hypothesis three states that plans are created in a network of stakeholders. This hypothesis is supported. US plans in support of Plan Colombia were created with UAPs to produce a comprehensive approach to combating narcoterrorism in Colombia. USSOUTHCOM utilized participatory design with DOS, USAID, Colombian partners, and other stakeholders to reduce points of friction that could lead to increased challenges to their efforts. Drawing on different knowledge domains facilitated shared understanding. As JP 3-20 states, with a shared understanding of objectives, normally articulated through the TCP, and knowledge of PN requirements, the security cooperation organizations (SCO), Service/SOF components, and other applicable stakeholders in the joint planning and execution community can collaboratively develop, list, and prioritize SC activities (and SC investments) as approved by the chief of mission (COM). This approach was in line with the current security cooperation planning framework demonstrated in figure 5 below. However, it does not emphasize PN plans as an input into country plans, the TCP objectives and activities, or step planning with the partner nation. As a stand alone, the visual aid does not prompt planners to consider PN plans as an input. National level policy and strategy and USSOUTHCOM plans and efforts during this case study support taking a more human-centered approach to planning to achieve desired end states.

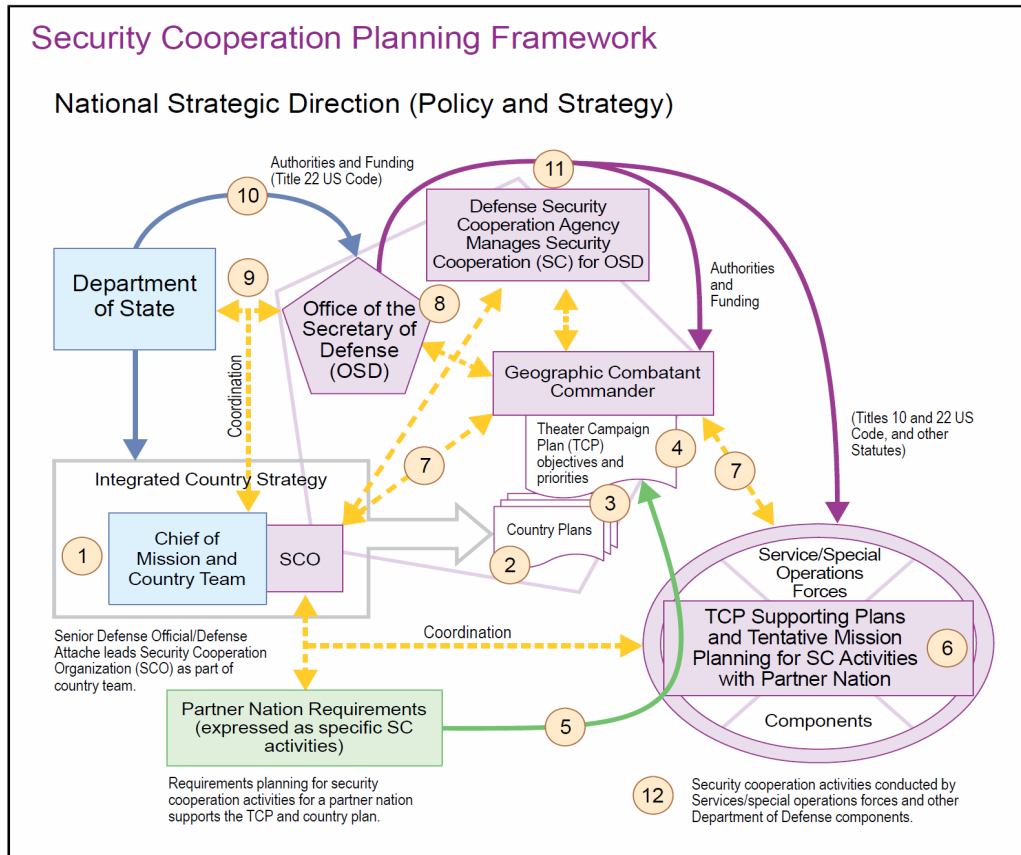


Figure 5. Security Cooperation Planning Framework, US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-20, Security Cooperation (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2017), III-9.

Hypothesis four states that plans thrive in heterarchy, not hierarchy. This hypothesis is supported. Plans within SC are by their nature produced in a heterarchy. A heterarchy is a network of actors, each of which may be made up of one or more hierarchies, that is typically depicted in a diagram format of links and nodes with no single node permanently at the top. TCP and supporting SC plans do not establish authorities over all UAPs within the operational environment. They exist within a network of actors and when synchronized with UAP efforts can mitigate friction and increase the potential for unity of effort.

Hypothesis five states that design is informed by exploration, not re-search. This hypothesis is supported by the research conducted. Krippendorff uses this design principle to remind designers that they are attempting to create new futures through actions in the present.

The hyphen in re-search is deliberate. It is there to remind designers that the etymology of research is to re-examine data carefully and repeatedly to ensure nothing was overlooked.<sup>190</sup> It is not conducted to find answers to current problems. Designers must explore their current environment and understand operational variables within it and fuse it with new authorities, resources, and capabilities to achieve desired end states. Military planners must search for justifiable and desirable futures for stakeholders that have to live in them and for courses of action that motivate enough stakeholders to work towards realizing them in the face of adversity. President Uribe took an approach to fighting narcoterrorists that no one before him envisioned. He did not cede time and space to allow groups to gain terrain and resources like previous administrations. This approach was supported by President Bush for precisely this reason.

Hypothesis six states that a science of design must be a second-order science. This hypothesis is supported. Second-order understanding is an acknowledgement that stakeholders might have a different interpretation of a plan and what actions should be taken in support of achieving objectives and desired end-states. At each echelon USSOUTHCOM and SOCSOUTH placed elements to assess operations and provide feedback to their respective HQs. This mitigated friction and ensured defeat and stability mechanisms employed to achieve supported objectives worked towards achieving desired conditions along respective lines of effort. USSOUTHCOM emplaced PATTs and SOCSOUTH emplaced liaisons at the operational to tactical level to provide an understanding of the context, conditions, partner capabilities, and requirements to inform SC planning and implementation.<sup>191</sup> They did not take a first-order approach that assumed their plan was written in a manner that would be interpreted the same by every stakeholder that was affected it by it.

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<sup>190</sup> Krippendorff, "Principles of Design and a Trajectory of Artificiality," 416.

<sup>191</sup> US Joint Staff, JP 3-20, (2017), IV-3.

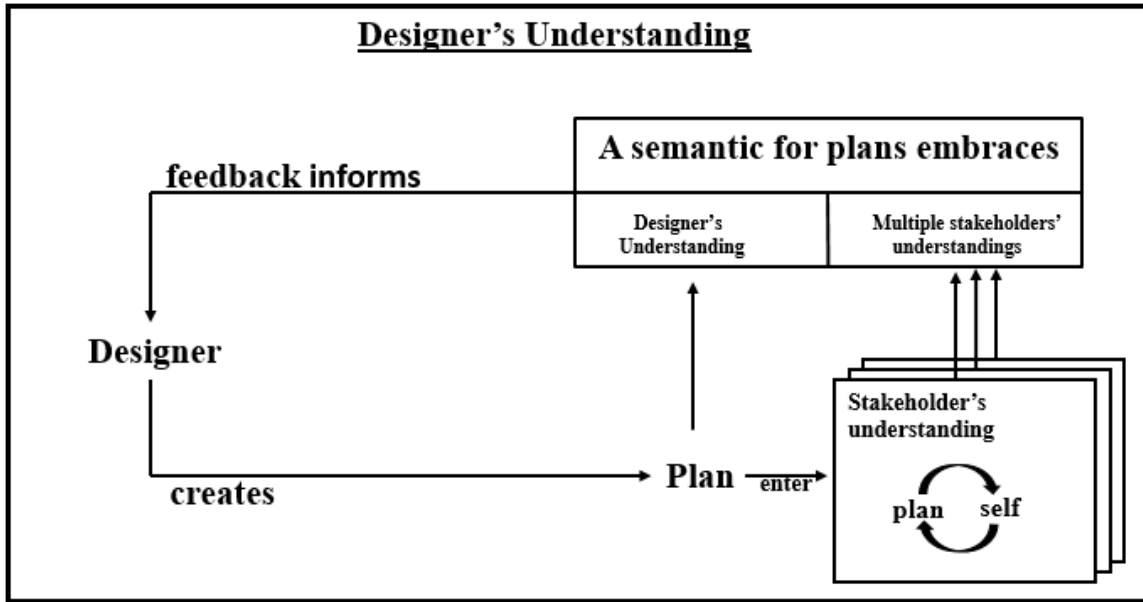


Figure 6. Design semantics as a second-order understanding, Krippendorff, *The Semantic Turn*, 67. This diagram is a modification by the author to Krippendorff's depiction of second-order understanding.

Hypothesis seven states that plans survive or fail in language. This hypothesis is supported. Krippendorff is stating that artifacts, in this case plans, are subject to multiple narratives being created to make sense of them. An example of this is peanut butter. It is food to most people; however, to a person with a peanut butter allergy it is a life threatening substance. These interpretations and perceptions lead to different actions in response to all artifacts. Human-centered design recognizes this and emphasizes the importance of narrative to setting the conditions for the desired interpretation. This aligns with the emphasis placed on narrative in JP 5-0, Joint Planning, with regards to the commander's communication synchronization process. This is the process to coordinate and synchronize narratives, themes, messages, images, operations, and actions to ensure their integrity and consistency to the lowest tactical level across

all relevant communication activities.<sup>192</sup> Krippendorff warns that if an artifact is to succeed it must survive in language or it will fail.<sup>193</sup>

The final hypothesis states that professional design advances with its design discourse. This hypothesis is supported. Krippendorff is stating that designers do not create “products-industrial, commercial, or social, but professional drawings, models, arguments, and presentations, which suggest futures that others need to find attractive and propose paths that their addressees are willing to take, convinced that they lead to improvements of their lives.”<sup>194</sup> Operational artists can not make sense to only one another; they must be able to communicate with and justify their plans to the stakeholders who are to see their plans through.

The analysis of Plan Colombia in this monograph was utilized to determine if Klaus Krippendorff’s human-centered design theory could be utilized to develop anti-fragile SC plans. The research conducted suggests that Krippendorff’s human-centered approach to design is capable of producing such plans. As the US Army increases its emphasis on SC activities, as evidenced by the creation of SFABs, human-centered design offers a viable lens to view supported objectives, desired conditions, and end states. Human-centered design aligns with the current National Security Strategy (NSS) which states that the United States is not going to impose its will on others but rather form “Our alliances, partnerships, and coalitions built on free will and shared interests.”<sup>195</sup> Human-centered design posits that acknowledgment of stakeholder free will facilitates the design of more enduring solutions. Solutions that endure by incorporating the interests of stakeholders that can accept or reject the achievement of a desired end state.

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<sup>192</sup> US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, Joint Planning (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), xvi.

<sup>193</sup> Krippendorff, “Principles of Design and a Trajectory of Artificiality,” 417.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Donald J. Trump, *National Security Strategy 2017*, 37.

This section provided the analysis associated with the case study and structure focused questions using utilizing the lens of Krippendorff’s human-centered design theory. The eight hypotheses derived from Krippendorff’s design principles were supported by the research. This is significant as the current NSS states that the United States “must lead and engage in the multinational arrangements that shape many of the rules that affect US interests and values.”<sup>196</sup> In this case study planners from USSOUTHCOM and USSOCSOUTH accomplished this with enduring results. When the events of 9/11 occurred the institutional capacity they developed was able to absorb increased responsibility as US forces flowed to the US Central Command AOR. This emergent event did shock the system; however, because USSOUTHCOM and USSOCSOUTH developed an anti-fragile partner network it did not fail. This monograph argues that this is the type of partner network the US Army is seeking to develop in support of the current NSS and future SC strategies.

### **Conclusion: A Human-Centered Design Approach Can Produce Antifragile Comprehensive Operational Approaches to Security Cooperation**

The purpose of this monograph is to validate whether taking a human-centered design approach can produce antifragile comprehensive operational approaches to security cooperation. The research, results, and analysis in this monograph suggest that applying human-centered design to SC planning can produce plans with antifragile comprehensive operational approaches. Therefore, Army planners can utilize this research in development of their operational approaches within SC planning. This is relevant because security cooperation is the heart of US forces’ efforts to stabilize forward theaters with its unified action partners.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Donald J. Trump, *National Security Strategy 2017*, 40.

<sup>197</sup> US Department of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2015* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2015), 10.

The current NSS states that the US Joint Force must remain capable of deterring and defeating the full range of threats to the United States. It charges the Department of Defense to develop new operational concepts and capabilities without having dominance in all domains to include those operations that exist below the level of conventional military conflict.<sup>198</sup> This area is often referred to as the Gray Zone. Enemies conduct unconventional actions in this space to achieve their objectives to avoid US strengths and increase tensions between the United States and its partners.<sup>199</sup> SC allows the United States to contest enemies in this space by supporting the implementation of national and theater strategies, conducting global and theater shaping activities that support stabilization, building security relationships, building partner capacity, and providing access.<sup>200</sup>

SC consists of a wide range of options that facilitate activities to build and sustain relationships with partners that allow the United States to maintain access. Incorporating elements of human-centered design allows planners to identify ways and means that maximize these relationships and access to achieve US objectives. Even when constraints are placed on planners human-centered design facilitates approaches that maintain persistent engagement and posture US forces to anticipate future opportunities. It does this by guiding the development of alternative approaches that consider ways and means available within the constrained environment to conduct the most meaningful actions available within that culture. More importantly it provides options to the commander that allow him or her to achieve their desired end states. This is what Taleb calls optionality and it is a key attribute of antifragility.

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<sup>198</sup> Donald J. Trump, *National Security Strategy 2017*, 29.

<sup>199</sup> Joseph Votel, *The Posture Statement of U.S. Central Command*, House Armed Service Committee, March 15, 2017, accessed February 17, 2018, <http://www.centcom.mil/about-us/posture-statement/>

<sup>200</sup> US Joint Staff, JP 3-20, (2017), II-1.

The Plan Colombia case study demonstrated this. When the Clinton administration constrained DOD to BPC of Colombian National Police and counter narcotics operations, engagement with Colombian military units was not lost. Although it created a point of tension between Colombians and US personnel in Colombia it did not result in loss of access. USSOUTHCOM worked with DOS to utilize programs such as international military education and training and other programs to sustain relationships with COLMIL. Utilizing JCETS SOF forces were able to conduct training with COLMIL which allowed persistent engagement that set the conditions for future operations when this constraint was lifted. These programs allowed US forces access to basing within Colombia that allowed them to provide feedback and posture for unexpected opportunities they could exploit. This is exemplified when President Bush lifted this constraint through National Security Presidential Directive 18, Supporting Democracy in Colombia. US forces had identified gaps with partner forces and were postured to transition efforts when this constraint was lifted.

USSOUTHCOM and USSOCSOUTH planners did not allow a constraint to result in culmination of SC activities or loss of influence. Instead they employed the joint elements of operational design and elements of operational art to maintain tempo in pursuit of strategic objectives by arranging tactical actions in time, space, and purpose with available resources and authorities. They did so in a way that considered all stakeholders and identified actions that achieved mutual interest. This resulted in enduring solutions such as BRIM and SF units, establishment of lines of communication, and identification of gaps in resources and authorities. By building feedback mechanisms at echelon within their approach USSOUTHCOM and USSOCSOUTH planners were able to report successes and request needed resources and authorities to address root problems of instability. As a result US leaders such as Ambassador David Passage and General Hill requested these resources and authorities from policy makers. This resulted in a decisive point policy change being achieved with NSPD 18 authorizing counter terrorist activities. Conditions set by USSOUTHCOM and USSOCSOUTH planners allowed US

forces with UAPs to seamlessly make this transition and act on this decisive point to achieve a marked advantage over narcoterrorist in Colombia.

As the research indicates human-centered design theory is a tool planners can utilize to develop enduring solutions to drivers of instability. The research also indicates that human-centered design can produce comprehensive antifragile operational approaches to security cooperation. History has demonstrated that enemies of the United States exist within an adaptive network of partners that constantly seek to degrade US influence globally and gain competitive advantage over them. SC allows the United States to retain overmatch in key areas around the globe through a comprehensive approach that includes strengthening partner capacities and working with partners to achieve shared interests. SC does not culminate, it continues along the conflict continuum and requires operational artists who are constantly seeking a position of continuing advantage.<sup>201</sup> Human-centered design is a tool planners can utilize to shape the security environment in the never ending competition to preserve peace and achieve the interest of the United States.

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<sup>201</sup> Everett Dolman, *Pure Strategy: Power and Principle in the Space and Information Age* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 6.

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