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14. ABSTRACT
Can the United States do a better job building international partners and allies through a concept called shared logistics? Can the current assets and efforts of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of Defense (DOD) be combined to develop infrastructure in Africa? These questions are explored to provide a viable option to compete with Chinese predatory lending through their Belt and Road Initiative. The paper explores a method to employ members of the State Department, USAID, and the DOD to foreign lands specifically for nation building. A suggested structure for this deployment is presented in a new organization referred to as the Logistics Task Force (LOGTF). Agency members would train partner nation representatives for sustainable growth.

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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

Great Power Competition: Developing Foreign Partnerships Through Shared Logistics

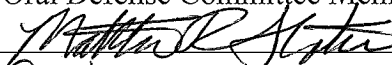
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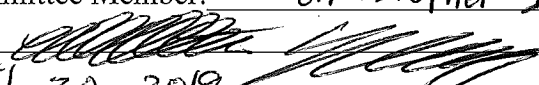
Maj Durette, Jeremy B., USMC

“If the West is jealous of China, we should say to them, Train our people and give them a bigger role in your companies. Don’t complain about the Chinese. Help us move up the value chain. Do this, and we will love you.”

Albert Osei, Ghanaian national
Country Director, World Bank Guinea and Burkina Faso

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Executive Summary

Title: Great Power Competition: Developing Foreign Partnerships Through Shared Logistics

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Thesis: This paper seeks to advocate for a new process in nation building that allows the United States to compete against Chinese influence on the African continent. It will explore the possibility of increasing global security by improving relationships with partners and allies utilizing a concept referred to as shared logistics.

Discussion: The United States and our partner nations need to develop a strategy to compete with Chinese global influence through their Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). BRI loans are enticing for developing third world countries because China offers large capital loans with “no strings attached.” What most developing nations fail to realize before it is too late is the fact that China has extended a loan agreement under BRI development with multiple strings attached. These “strings” could more aptly be defined as “ropes” with which the developing nation will hang itself in decades of debt bondage to the terms of a BRI loan. China typically offers a BRI loan under three main pretext, first all labor for infrastructure development in the third world country must be conducted by Chinese owned companies, second the infrastructure project in the third world nation must be one that develops China’s global reach through the BRI, finally default on a BRI loan will result in the third world nation forfeiting a national asset to Chinese control for time periods typically between forty and ninety-nine years, depending on the loan default agreement and settlement. The combined effect of each of these terms ensures Chinese funding is invested directly back into China stimulating their growth and doing very little to encourage the growth and development of the third world nation that accepts the terms of the BRI loan.

Conclusion: United States foreign policy should undergo a robust campaign to compete with predatory Chinese BRI loans. The United States and allies should first seek to inform potential BRI nations of the threats to sovereignty that result from accepting a BRI loan and then develop a plan to assist foreign partners rise in the value chain through shared education, logistics, and sustainable development. Impressing the idea that several million dollars retained within developing African nations from foreign investment is beneficial in the long run to African growth and development, opposed to billions of dollars invested by the Chinese that go directly back to the Chinese government for their growth and development. African partner nations as well as all potential world BRI nations should be made aware of China’s malicious lending practices and offered a better alternative to infrastructure development that benefits the third world developing nation as well as the nation offering the long-term capital loan.

DISCLAIMER

THE OPINIONS AND CONCLUSIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE THOSE OF THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF EITHER THE MARINE CORPS COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE OR ANY OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY. REFERENCES TO THIS STUDY SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOREGOING STATEMENT.

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List of Illustrations

Map of Africa: Conceptual Strategy for Shared Logistics

Appendix A

Acknowledgements

The first acknowledgement must go to Doctor Matthew Slater of the Marine Corps University Staff. Doctor Slater provided a wealth of insight in problem framing analysis and dealing with complex solutions that impact various aspects of any problem. Identifying and addressing “the wicked problem” has become a realization that all political and military leadership should be keenly aware of. The inherent complexity of human nature and interaction with the natural world around leads one to realize that addressing a problem in one aspect of society could inevitably lead to stress on a completely different aspect of society. It is the role of modern day leadership to identify this complexity in problems that face society and develop balanced solutions to that will not disturb the overall system as a whole. If a solution to the most pressing aspect of a problem will cause a disturbance in other aspects of the system leadership should develop a plan to address the system imbalance to prevent the overall system from collapsing.

The second acknowledgement goes to Doctor Christopher Yung of the Marine Corps University Staff. Doctor Yung offered outstanding advice to the student body of Command and Staff College explaining how we should view great power competition. His insight and expertise on viewing China through the lens of a great power competitor vice an enemy of the state assisted greatly in understanding China’s actions throughout the globe and their struggle to survive in a modern world economy.

The final acknowledgment is attributed to Doctor Bradford Wineman of the Marine Corps University Staff. Doctor Wineman provided valuable insight throughout the course of the year on the history of human conflict. His emphasis on war as an extension of politics and the importance of national leadership evaluating the question “What do you want?” assisted greatly in understanding human conflict from the time of Frederick the Great to the Gulf War. The evolution of warfare has lead the human race to develop new technology to wage war making war an everchanging aspect of human existence, but one aspect of war throughout history is pervasive, the willingness of groups to fight for ideas or beliefs. Ideas and beliefs drive human passion and develop a resilient will against an opposing force. Terminating the will to fight for an idea or cause will bring the conflict to an end before decimation of an opposing government through advanced weaponry. National leadership should always ask “What do we want?” before engaging an opposing nation in armed conflict. Through the study of eastern theorist it is also possible to fathom that conflict can be avoided by changing an oppositions mind through other means. Winning a conflict without resorting to bloodshed is the sweetest form of victory and requires strategic thought and adaptability of strategy by national leadership.

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Introduction

This paper seeks to advocate for a new process in nation building that allows the United States (US) to compete against Chinese influence on the African continent. It will explore the possibility of increasing global security by improving relationships with partners and allies utilizing a concept referred to as shared logistics. Shared logistics is the systematic stimulation of a third world nation's economy by providing education, training, and resources through a developed partner nation that possesses the logistics capacity to assist a developing nation in need. This body of work will explore the potential of utilizing a new organization for shared logistics, the Logistics Task Force (LOGTF), to assist third world countries in developing infrastructure, education, and economic independence that will promote the rise of the third world nation in the global value chain.

The organization of this argument will first be explored by detailing China's international investment schemes through their Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Next this argument will present the history of interaction with Africa by European powers and the skepticism of African leadership that exists in modern times due to the concept of Pan-Africanism. The discussion will then move into current interaction between the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), under the State Department (SD), and the Department of Defense (DOD). Lastly the argument will present a potential solution that combines US and international efforts for a better form of development within African nations that rivals the malicious lending practices of the Chinese and seeks to educate and train African partners to conduct infrastructure development internally and eventually share their success with neighboring African countries.

The whole-of-government approach to nation building is stressed in the National Security Strategy (NSS) and the National Defense Strategy (NDS). The combined themes of these two documents provide overarching guidance to US government officials for US interaction abroad. Combining the themes of both documents is essential in developing national strategy that competes with China's BRI. This paper will focus on the potential to build strong allies and partners with African nations by utilizing multiple aspects of national power. The NSS and the NDS will be explored further to obtain a better understanding of what the US seeks obtain and provide to international partners and allies.

The National Security Strategy outlines key concepts relative to the United States and prospective third world nations that seek to partner with the United States. One key concept is the message that we will not impose our values on others. Alliances and partnerships should be built on free will and shared interests. This underlying fact allows the United States to establish policies that enable it to achieve its goals while at the same time our partner nation is able to establish policies that lead to their internal goal achievement.

The United States is aware that China is investing billions of dollars in infrastructure across the globe. The United States does not support the Chinese method of state-directed investment. This form of investment typically leaves developing countries in a position of disadvantage. The US would like to provide an effective alternative to Chinese state-directed investment. The United States wants to pursue strategies that focus on unlocking the potential of partner nation citizens; assisting them in entrepreneurial reform, infrastructure improvements, promotion of property rights, and projects that help people earn their livelihoods. Through this method of development the US feels it can play a catalytic role in promoting private-sector-led economic growth. It is believed this method will help aspiring partners develop from within and

eventually become international trading partners and security partners.¹ The National Security Strategy highlights three aspects of national power to assist with the development of partner nations; diplomacy, information, and economics. The military aspect of national power and its role in securing partnerships is covered in greater depth through the National Defense Strategy.

The National Defense Strategy contains a nested message that amplifies the content of the National Security Strategy. The National Defense Strategy recognizes China as “a strategic competitor using predatory economics to intimidate its neighbors while militarizing features in the South China Sea.”² The National Defense Strategy also highlights the fact that inter-state strategic competition is once again the primary concern with relation to national security. It states that the Department of Defense seeks to focus on three elements in the development of partnerships and alliances. First, an echoing sentiment that partnerships are built on free will and shared responsibility. Second, new partnerships will be developed around shared interests to reinforce regional coalitions and security cooperation. Third, the US will seek to accelerate foreign partner modernization through integrated training and the sale of military equipment to increase interoperability. The National Defense Strategy recognizes that foreign partners provide complementary capabilities, security forces, unique perspectives, regional relationships, and information that aids in the operating environment.³ The National Defense Strategy places a heavy emphasis on the interaction of partner nation forces with elements of the Department of Defense utilizing two elements of national power, the military and information, to accelerate the growth of third world partner nations.

Together the National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy reflect Wilsonian Idealism, the belief that as democracy spreads in a region collective security will follow. As an element of logic, collective security diminishes violence in a region and sets the

ground for peace and economic prosperity. The economic prosperity leads to an improved quality of life for all citizens of the nations within the secure regions. The improved quality of life for the citizens in the region serves as an example to nations outside the region of what they may obtain if they adopt the concepts of democracy and collective security.⁴

This paper does not dispute the concepts presented by Wilsonian Idealism, the National Security Strategy, or the National Defense Strategy. There is a firm belief that as the United States encourages nation building around the globe it gains long term trade partners and security partners. This paper will attempt to present a better concept for employing the elements of national power; diplomacy, information, military, and economics; to accelerate development in third world nations around the globe.

R. Craig Nation argues in the globalized world of the 21st-century, conventional military power has lost relevancy as an element of statecraft. He goes on to state that economic competition has become far more important as a driver of international competition.⁵ This paper will address the gap that strategists are failing to couple all elements of national power in every nation building mission. The US DOD should be tightly coupled with USAID to consolidate national resources and increase the desired effect of nation building missions to enhance infrastructure, economic, information, and internal security development with third world partner nations in Africa.

Combining the efforts of USAID and the DOD have the potential for synergistic effects that result in a greater sum than the combination of the independent parts. When the US does not couple all elements of national power together toward the achievement of a common goal national treasure, assets, and time are wasted. By employing a more effective national strategy toward partner development, coupling USAID with the DOD, the US could find itself in a

position to make longstanding partnerships and compete with expanding Chinese influence on the African continent.

China's Growing Influence in Africa

According to Nadege Rolland China adapted a national strategy for development based off a European idea from the 1960s. This strategy is currently referred to internationally as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The overarching concept is to connect China to the rest of the world through a system of roads, railroad networks, and sea lanes that will stimulate infrastructure development and trade for the benefit of China. Decisions for BRI are made from the top levels of Chinese government. The central government does not view BRI as just a means to spur economic development through infrastructure development. The Chinese government views BRI as a method to integrate people of various cultures, monetary systems, and trade agreements.

Rolland states that it is China's grand strategy to grasp economic and political power from BRI with the preponderance of the benefits falling toward China. China recognizes they do not have the military might to gain influence over the vast regions of land and sea that BRI covers so they are attempting to win global economic and political power wielding their economy. Rolland also notes that the US and our allies should be working together to counter China by providing BRI nations with an alternative to China's infrastructure development practices.⁶

Funding for BRI comes from Chinese "policy lenders", namely the China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China (Exim Bank). Together these banks have committed over an estimated one trillion dollars to BRI globally. African development has a subsidiary controlling agency, the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, with a capital base of one hundred

billion dollars. Chinese President Xi Jinping found favor with many African leaders for BRI investment with his statement that "...inadequate infrastructure is the biggest bottleneck to Africa's development." When top Chinese leadership states they are willing to lend to a potential BRI nation and that nation agrees China's "policy lenders" generate a loan agreement. Due to government corruption or a lack of education in capital lending BRI nations often enter into a loan agreement that is not in their national best interest. China typically enters into BRI loans under stipulations of mandatory contracting of a Chinese work force, strict repayment schedules, and asset seizure in the event of loan default. BRI contracts across Africa have led to the influx of more than 200,000 Chinese citizens on the African continent. This in turn stimulates the Chinese Communist Party to expand military forces in BRI nations to protect Chinese nationals working abroad.⁷

Asset seizure has been the most heavily scrutinized portion of BRI loans. The lack of transparency with this clause has caught several nations by surprise and raised concern throughout the international community on China's encroachment on sovereignty through the economic element of national power. Several examples of Chinese asset seizures are found globally in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Uganda, and Kenya.⁸

In 2017 Sri Lanka was forced to sign over the Hambantota Port to Chinese state owned companies on the terms of a ninety-nine year lease after defaulting on an infrastructure loan. Pakistan was forced to hand over the Gwadar Port on a 40 year lease along with an arrangement for its Chinese partners to retain ninety percent of port revenues for the duration of the lease as part of a loan default agreement. In January of 2019 Uganda's auditor general warned that the country's ballooning debt and risks placed on the nation by the conditions of its BRI loans have created a threat to the nations sovereign assets. Kenyan parliament opened a probe that returned

findings in February of 2019 that the strategic port of Mombasa on the Indian Ocean was used as collateral for a BRI loan the previous Kenyan regime secured from Exim Bank. This finding was significant because it highlights the strategic seizure of assets not associated to a particular BRI loan. The loan was secured for the infrastructure development of the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway, but the collateral for loan default is a strategic asset of greater importance to the Chinese government and their desire to control sea lines of communication.⁹

To further emphasize this point the US Treasury Secretary Stephen Mnuchin cautions potential BRI countries from taking China's money. He notes that their lending practices lack transparency and that BRI nations that do take China's money find themselves in a debilitating cycle of debt. The US and allies are beginning to understand the lure and trap behind China's BRI loans. The international community is beginning to understand the principles of good governance that are championed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The problem that is most difficult to address for the US and allies is the gap that exists for a developing nation that fails to meet the requirements of the IMF or World Bank. When the international community does not show interest in a nation that wishes to develop that third world nations will seek out local actors or large foreign investment with "no strings attached".

According to Evan Feigenbaum the US and allies should not "complain and whine" on the international stage over China's BRI lending practices.¹⁰ The US and allies should develop a method to outperform the Chinese. Develop a comprehensive strategy to leverage strengths against China's predatory lending practices; such as, sharing technology, innovation ecosystems, STEM education, connection to the global capital markets, etc. Feigenbaum thinks the best adaptation to Chinese BRI lending practices is a stronger international offense, not a perpetual defense.¹¹ This paper is in agreement with Feigenbaum's analysis and thinks a valid form of

competition exists for the US in the pairing of USAID with the DOD to train long-term, sustainable, internal development. To combat African skepticism toward western interaction one must fully understand the roots of Pan-Africanism and its effects on modern African leadership.

History of Western Civilization in Africa

The exact date that western civilization began to interact with the African continent is not known. It is believed that Phoenician explorers crossed the Mediterranean Sea around 1550 BC and landed in the northern portion of Africa known today as Tunisia. Initial expeditions and settlements were small. The Phoenicians founded the city of Carthage around 814 BC, establishing a dynasty and culture distinct from the native peoples of Africa and their ancestral homeland in the vicinity of Lebanon.¹²

The Carthaginians ruled coastal areas of northwest Africa for more than 660 years until they were overthrown by the Roman Empire in 146 BC. In 149 BC elements of the Roman army sailed across the Mediterranean Sea and laid siege to Carthage over a three year campaign. When the Romans finally gained entry to the city of Carthage they entered a six day killing spree slaughtering men, women, and children. The Roman army completed its conquest of Carthage by selling 50,000 Carthaginian citizens into slavery and setting the city of Carthage ablaze. The Romans renamed the former land of the Carthaginians Provincia Africa, named after a Berber tribe known as the Afri. The region became very prosperous under Roman rule and occupation. Rome garrisoned a sizable force in the province and established a protectorate over the region to ensure shipments of grain made it to Rome.¹³ The Roman Provincia Africa marks one of the first Western colonies established on the African continent. It also established the origin of the name Africa by which the entire continent is referred to in today's modern times.

The history of colonization by Western powers continued until after World War I. In 1930 a concept known as Pan-Africanism began to rise and find popular support among the people of Africa. The concepts of Pan-Africanism shaped political discourse for European colonization, awoke a sense of black consciousness, and spurred people of African descent into activism against oppression, inequality, neo-colonialism, and European systems of governance.¹⁴ The concept of Pan-Africanism led directly to liberation movements across Africa between 1950 and 1975 with a majority of African nations winning their independence from colonial rule.

Howard French described the newly found freedom for African nations as such, “the prize of independence was a booby trap, an eagerly awaited gift that would explode just as it was being unwrapped.”¹⁵ French makes this statement to draw attention to the fact that European masters did not prepare African people for the burdensome task of managing a European-style nation state. The African educated elite had little to no experience managing the complexities of international politics and domestic politics simultaneously. They also lacked skill in managing national economic structures or schools for academic enrichment that lead to a vibrant and productive population. African nations that won their independence often slid into civil war due to a lack of good governance that caused grievances between political groups.

Grievances between political, ethnical, or religious groups turned into unresolved political disputes that quickly turned into violent conflict. A portion of African nations find themselves mired in internal conflict to this day over issues of good governance and the inability to understand the two level game of politics, domestic and international political management.¹⁶

Understanding the history of European colonization in Africa assists with understanding and conceptual framework behind Pan-Africanism. Understanding Pan-Africanism assist strategic planners in the development of programs that offer a better means for infrastructure

development in Africa and a means to combat the neo-colonialism of Chinese BRI loans being offered to African nations.

Current Interaction in Africa-US Department of State and US Department of Defense

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) assisted forty-seven sub-Saharan African countries in 2015, providing more than eight billion dollars in assistance through thirty-three regional and bilateral missions in Africa.¹⁷

USAID uses a tool known as a country roadmap to assess a nation's self-reliance. This country roadmap consists of seven major grading areas comprised of seventeen publicly-available third-party metrics. The seven major grading criteria for evaluating a nation's capacity are government, civil society, citizens, economy, openness and accountability of government, inclusive development, and economic policy. USAID monitors the seven major grading criteria to determine if their capacity building efforts are producing results in partner nations. The seven grading criteria are made up of seventeen matrices that assist in the evaluation of increased capacity they are as follows: liberal democracy, open government, social group equality, economic gender gap, business environment, trade freedom, biodiversity and habitat protections, government effectiveness, efficiency in tax administration, safety and security, civil society and media effectiveness, poverty rate, education quality, children's health, gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, information communication technology, and export diversification.¹⁸ Monitoring these seventeen matrices assists USAID in the evaluation of good governance and partner capacity improvement.

USAID Administrator Mark Green describes the agencies role best by stating "We provide development assistance to help partner countries on their own development journey to self-reliance. We look at ways to help lift lives and build communities."¹⁹ USAID possesses an

outstanding mission and performs great work on behalf of the US State Department. This paper does not disagree with the mission of USAID but thinks potential exists for USAID to increase the catalytic effect of their development efforts by coupling their capability with the capability and capacity of the US Department of Defense (DOD).

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2006 permitted the DOD to utilize Title 10 funding rather than Department of State Title 22 funding to support Building Partnership Capacity of foreign militaries.²⁰ US Armed Forces currently interact with African nations through United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) that was formally created in 2008.

The relatively new nature of this command presented obstacles, in the form of national policy, to the vision of integration between US service members and African partner nations.²¹ In 2010 Secretary of Defense Robert Gates presented his concept of security cooperation stating, “This strategic reality demands that the U.S. government get better at what is called ‘building partner capacity’: helping other countries defend themselves or, if necessary, fight alongside U.S. forces by providing them with equipment, training, or other forms of security assistance.”²²

Later that same year the Government Accounting Office (GAO) conducted an audit of AFRICOM to assess its establishment as a new command element and its integration with African nations for security cooperation efforts. The report filed by the GAO was less than favorable, listing three major areas of concern.

First, the GAO stated AFRICOM lacked two major overarching strategies, Combatant Command Campaign Plans (CCCP) and individual partner country cooperation plans. Without the overarching CCCPs to guide the command and the individual partner plans to solidify incremental details that would feed into the larger CCCPs it appeared that AFRICOM existed without a defined purpose. Secondly, the GAO identified that AFRICOM lacked a method for

capturing long-term effects of their activities. Without this assessment tool AFRICOM was unable to decipher if their training plans were gaining ground with partner nations or if they were ineffective and needed to be revised to produce a better outcome that produced results for the individual partner country plans. Finally, the GAO reported a lack of training with regards to funding management within the AFRICOM staff. The AFRICOM staff was not applying proper funding source information to the activities they were conducting throughout Africa. This skewed the assessment apparatus for the command, making it difficult to determine the cost effectiveness of resources and training teams disbursed throughout the African continent.²³

Chaney puts forth four recommendations to fix the problems found in the 2010 GAO audit. First, AFRICOM should institutionalize new processes. The command needs to identify security cooperation events nine months in advance of the new fiscal year. This will ensure the funding is allocated to an event and allow the DoD entity providing manpower for the event to plan in advance for personnel departures in support of security cooperation events. Secondly, AFRICOM should institutionalize all programs in the CCCP. The CCCP needs to include all State Department programs and DOD units that will work together to integrate with African partner nations in a specific area of operation (AO). This will formalize a standard relationship between the Department of State and DOD that allows them to apply a whole-of-government approach to the security cooperation efforts throughout Africa. Next, Chaney recommends that AFRICOM reduce the number of events within the African continent. He affirms that AFRICOM is trying to do something in every country resulting in wasted efforts with little results. He proposes that AFRICOM should plan fewer events that are longer in duration, include more personnel from the DOD and Department of State, include greater synchronization between the US government and the African country gaining assistance, and should include more

expected outcomes from the partner nation. Finally, the recommendation to increase training for AFRICOM staff. The command should create one training plan required for every service member that attaches to AFRICOM, rather than each branch conducting independent training for their service members departing for a security advisor role with an African nation. This would provide a measure of uniformity within the AFRICOM staff that allows them to operate under one common picture toward a unified goal.²⁴

Modifications to current strategic interaction with African nations is required to compete with China's method of gaining influence in the African continent. The current shortfall within the US strategy is that it is failing to maximize growth potential by combining efforts of USAID and AFRICOM. To achieve better effects and increase growth potential the US should modify its strategy with a consideration for Chaney's recommendations of integration of all State Department programs and DOD units operating within Africa. The US strategy should shift to focusing on security cooperation and infrastructure development within fewer nations to improve synchronization of efforts that have the potential to increase effects for AFRICOM and USAID.

Modification to this mindset would allow USAID and the DOD to mass resources and produce greater effects in a shorter time with an African partner nation. Once that nation is on their path to development USAID and the DOD could look to redeploy joint efforts to another African nation in need of development assistance. It would also be wise as part of the grand strategy for African development to encourage a nation that has been assisted by USAID and the DOD to reach out to a neighboring African nations and stimulate trade and development within Africa. Growth potential rests on two factors a population of capable workers and productivity.²⁵ If the combined efforts of USAID and the DOD can teach African leadership these two important factors then the US can stimulate a nations economy with far less funding than what is

provided by Chinese BRI loans. The key is training the African partner nation to retain the funding provided by USAID within their nation to keep their population employed and productive. Once those factors are met they should be able to produce goods and services to neighboring nations to stimulate trade that is beneficial to both African countries. See Appendix A for graphic concept.

Recommendation for Improvement: Establishment of the Logistics Task Force (LOGTF)

To better understand how USAID could couple with the DOD it is important to understand some of the framework utilized by the DOD to combine multiple units for synergistic effects in deployments overseas. To illustrate this concept the pairing of the US Navy along with the US Marine Corps will be used as an example as military power projection from the sea.

The current structure of US power projection from the sea relies on the US Navy protecting the sea line of communication for delivery of the US Marine Corps to a foreign shore or port. Operations on land centers around the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF). The standard forward-deployed MAGTF structure is the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). The MEU is centered around a battalion landing team (BLT) augmented by composite detachments of ground forces, such as, a platoon of tanks, a platoon of light armored reconnaissance vehicles, a battery of artillery, and combat engineers. This combination of ground units is referred to as the ground combat element (GCE). The GCE is further complimented by an air combat element (ACE) and a logistics combat element (LCE). The GCE, ACE, and LCE are controlled by the MEU Command Element (CE). The CE provides objectives and guidelines for the MEU to complete its range of missions while forward deployed.²⁶

This structure provides a great deal of operational capability and world wide power projection from the sea.²⁷ While this structure is good for dealing with hostilities and

contingencies on foreign soil it does not offer much in the form of nation building and development with third world partners and allies.

A counter argument exists in the fact that the current structure of the MEU does interact with foreign partners. MEUs are called on from time to time to provide assistance in security training through integration with host nation militaries. This function of the MEU is great national asset to the US and should be sustained since it offers national leadership a flexible package that is rapidly deployable throughout the world.

The gap in national strategy exists in the fact that the majority of third world nations do not need military training as badly as they require education and training in the basic fundamentals of population sustainment through infrastructure development and process improvements that lead to growth in gross domestic product (GDP). Utilizing a “whole-of-government” concept to employ the LOGTF has the capability to demonstrate that the United States is committed to improving the quality of life for partners and allies if they harbor a true commitment to peace and prosperity in their region of the world.

The introduction of the LOGTF has the potential to cement a strong bond with allied nations and prove to them that the United States is truly interested in developing symbiotic relationships with sovereign nations. As previously stated in the NSS and the NDS strategy, the United States has no desire to force a partnership or an alliance with a foreign nation. We desire partnerships that create a beneficial relationship to all parties involved. We do not want to create partnerships that place our partner in state of debt bondage for multiple generations. We want our cultures and societies to intermix out of respect for one another. The LOGTF has the potential to increase this symbiotic relationship. A simple analogy comes to mind. When a family moves into a new neighborhood they tend to build strong friendships with current

residents that assist them and help them get settled into the neighborhood. A simple act of kindness opens the door for a long term friendship. The United States should extend an offer of assistance to developing nations if they request assistance with infrastructure development through established channels and an established process.

The LOGTF should be centered on logistics or engineering units and sent to African nations that request assistance with infrastructure development through the United Nations (UN) to the US State Department. Based on the task required the State Department should host a planning session with the partner nation, USAID, the DOD, and other members of the interagency (IA) capable of assisting in the solution set.

The initial planning meeting between these agencies should involve detailing the scope of work required with the partner nation, providing recommendations for the best type of unit suited to take part in the infrastructure project, and establishing the training criteria expected from the partner nation that will develop internal capacity for future use. Once the primary unit is identified that unit would be allowed to pick attachments from other units that augment its capabilities in the development of the project. The State Department should automatically attach teams from USAID to act as the integration and contracting arm of the US government.

USAID would be established as the long term continuity to the project ensuring that the partner nation provides able bodied workers to learn and work in conjunction with the logistics unit and their equipment set. USAID could then contract from the partner nation or neighboring nations materials and services required to complete increments of the project that the LOGTF does not bring with it. This would inject a source of finance into the African continent to boost the economy and encourage the circulation of money that leads to further growth.²⁸

Utilizing USAID as the contracting arm will mitigate risk by preventing corruption or favoritism from the host nation government. USAID should publish specific directives in each partner nations regarding the percentage of employment it seeks to produce from the range of diversity within the partner nation.

To effectively address Chaney's recommendation to increase capacity through long-term interaction with partner nations the LOGTF could be swapped out with units in garrison on a one year or six month rotation plan. To save funding for the US it would be wise for the LOGTF to leave the gear set in place as units rotated for dwell time back to the US. This process of personnel rotation on a common gear set should be utilized until completion of the project, or another national order is given to move the gear set based on the approval of another UN vetted project.

The proposal of the LOGTF has the potential for multiple benefits. First, it has the potential to build stronger relationships with third world partners by assisting them with infrastructure development that can assist in GDP growth. Second, the employment of the LOGTF benefits US service members in gaining real world experience in construction projects and nation building, areas the DOD is lacking in but consistently asked to provide as part of exit strategy in modern conflicts. Third, the US will engage in the training and education of third world citizens to assist them in becoming self-sustaining with the development and maintenance of infrastructure projects. Lastly, the nation trained through this process should be encouraged to assist their neighbors and build a network of African states fueling African growth and development.

The proposed construct of the LOGTF is suggested to build a competitive edge against China and their predatory investment schemes under the BRI.²⁹ China has gained political

influence and economic power throughout Eurasia with the BRI by investing close to 150 billion dollars a year over 68 countries along the old Silk Road that links China to Europe.³⁰

China is attempting to gain similar political influence throughout Africa by offering capital loans to African nations seeking investors for infrastructure projects. China's current scheme of offering large capital loans to African nations for infrastructure development are laced with a disproportion of risk versus reward. China has everything to gain by issuing predatory BRI loans and very little to lose, besides reputation costs, as discussed earlier in the section on China's influence in Africa.

Developing and deploying the LOGTF has the potential to put the US at a competitive advantage against China and their predatory loan practices. Once African nations realize they have a viable option to infrastructure development that will benefit their country in the long run they will be more inclined to work through the process to get a LOGTF to their region rather than accepting the terms of a Chinese BRI loan. The LOGTF offers the United States the opportunity to compete in the grey zone with China.³¹ They are securing long-term access to key infrastructure throughout the world by exploiting the lack of international laws behind predatory lending practices. It is time that the US State Department recognize this gap and present a means to compete with China in the developing world. Finding a way to compete and presenting better alternatives for sustainable development by creating win-win scenarios for both nations has the potential to stop China from exploiting the gray zone gap of predatory capital investment. Modifying the US strategy to combine the capabilities of the DOD and USAID in Africa has the potential to place Africa on a path to rise within the global value chain.

In a time of great power competition the nation must find a way to exercise all elements of national power. Exercising national means of diplomacy, information, military, and the

economy (D.I.M.E) simultaneously in every partner building event gives the US a competitive edge over Chinese competition.³² If the United States deploys a logistics capability to a foreign nation for the purpose of infrastructure development under a few pretext; such as, no internal conflicts or deliberate action to end political disagreement with mediators, then the United States will be assisting in conflict resolution as well as nation building.

This aspect of the agreement would require direct coordination between the US State Department and the partner nation, consistently exercising diplomacy to build a stronger relationship. Once national leadership from both sides have discussed the prerequisites to receiving a LOGTF they would be able to begin the detailed planning through information sharing. The US State Department and USAID would need to stress the importance of identifying different ethnic, religious, and political groups in the region of the infrastructure project. Fair hiring practices are critical in ensuring the project does not create an outgroup that could lead to an insurgency. Fearon and Laitin assert that political unrest that leads to state violence is typically caused by a weak central government that creates favoritism toward one particular group. This favoritism creates an outgroup devoid of political power, developing an insurgency that resorts to violence as a means to gain a political voice.³³ With the assistance of the State Department, USAID, and the DOD a partner nation could sustain an environment where information is constantly being shared to keep infrastructure projects on track and an equal distribution of income is monitored to prevent civilian unrest from an outgroup.

The US military as well as the host nation military have a role to play in the deployment of a LOGTF. Specific units, such as Marine Wing Support Squadrons, should be selected that specialize in construction and possess the required equipment set for the project. Military units capable of construction will be the main effort and interface directly with the host nation military

and civil servants responsible for the construction project. Attachments to the primary unit will be dictated in the planning process based off the anticipated needs of the construction managers. For example, the construction unit may not possess enough lift capacity to haul debris away from the construction site. It would be incumbent upon them to identify that shortfall and request an attachment of units that possess heavy lift assets for transportation needs. They may also identify a need for security forces to guard the vehicles and camps associated to the construction project. This shortfall could be filled by a detachment of military police or an infantry company. The US security element could work hand in hand with the host nation police or similar units training best practices to the host nation.

Every attempt should be made to integrate US citizens with partner nation citizens to share information, knowledge, and skills with one another. The LOGTF planners would need to consider all the requisite support required to keep the construction units on task and not distracted with ancillary tasks. Responsible and ethical economic development of the host nation should be the overarching goal of the LOGTF. It would be wise to incorporate a robust general education program for economic development that supports the technical skills presented to the partner nation. The partner nation employees hired to complete the project should be educated on the concept of the economic multiplier and the importance of their role in stimulating the economy within their country. They should be encouraged to purchase goods and services from their local economy and assist in the circulation of money within their nation. This will help fuel other sectors of the economy and stimulate employment in broader regions of the country. Once the national banking system has a good measure of the monetary circulation they can base their loans and capital investment off the rate of employment and money moving within the economy.

Successful completion of projects that lead to growth and development for the partner nation will gain notoriety and the information will spread that the UN and US is willing to assist countries that wish to develop and join the international community as long as they meet the stipulation that we will only send a LOGTF to nations that have their internal conflicts under control. If the US is willing to educate and train the partner nation for self-sustainment by engaging in all four elements of D.I.M.E. simultaneously the world gains the potential to decrease violent insurgencies as well as put an end to Chinese predatory loan practices in developing African countries. The combined knowledge, skills, and education of the DOD and USAID can be shared with partner nations to educate them on simple infrastructure development and concepts that are critical to long term population support and economic growth. The following sections will highlight some of the possibilities of shared logistics. Harnessing the national assets of the US education system, military training programs, and national industrial base to build capacity and capability abroad. Sharing the logistical infrastructure of the US could provide a catalyst to growth that will allow the partner nation to develop economically and reinvest the economic gains for further growth.

Infrastructure Development-Transportation Network

Infrastructure development can become complicated and difficult to discuss. There are bound to be many differing opinions on the priority of what should be built and in what specific order. Infrastructure development deals with people and politics and as such planning the developments becomes a “wicked” problem.³⁴ Each element of a system work in an intermingled web. Decisions that impact one variable in the system have a very likely chance to effect other variables within that system. The state making a decision to build a particular piece of infrastructure in a region could displace a local population, upset another population, cause

massive amounts of migration from one region to another, or cause political conflict based on a perceptions of favoritism related to companies hired to complete the project. The identification of the fact that infrastructure development is a “wicked” problem is important.

This acknowledgement is a key reason the petitioning state should be vetting their requested project through the UN. In doing so they should be instructed that the world community is going to assist them with their problem. The world community in turn expects that reconciliation has taken place at the local level to ensure the construction project can begin as soon as the workers and equipment arrive. The international community should not be placed in a position to deal with civil unrest within the partner nation.

Infrastructure development with respect to assigning priorities to projects is debatable. Some would argue that projects leading to economic stimulation should be prioritized first. Others could argue that projects leading to population sustainment should be completed then economic development should follow. When viewed from both perspectives neither viewpoint is wrong. Economic sustainment and population sustainment are tightly coupled. If the international community assists in the development of economic growth but does little to develop infrastructure that leads to population sustainment potential exists for industrial waste to become a problem in a nation that is not equipped to dispose of the byproducts of industry.

If economic growth is selected as the priority it would be wise to consider industries that have waste streams that contribute as input to adjacent industries. This would assist in the disposal of waste as well as educate and train the host nation on the intricacies of city planning and an efficient production processes. In contrast if population sustainment becomes the selected priority it would be wise to consider industries that form a complete system. It would be detrimental to build irrigation systems for crop yield if adequate renewable water resources are

not in the immediate area. Similar to industrial industries infrastructure developments for population sustainment should take into consideration the most efficient processes for yielding goods to the population as well as waste management to maximize resources and prevent environmental pollution that will have a negative impact on future years growth potential.

Lines of communication are vital for the transportation of industrial manufactured goods as well as harvested goods for population support. An efficient means of transportation to get goods to market stands out as a vital necessity for any developing nation. Navigable rivers and tributaries leading to the larger rivers also aid in the transportation of goods for trade. The LOGTF could be used to assist in developing a third world partner nation's internal lines of communication. These road networks should be planned out to link industrial centers and agriculture collection points. Logistics units within the military structure possess earth moving equipment such as bull dozers, graders, scrapers, fuel tankers, and flat bed hauling trucks required to level earth and transport construction material to various work sites.

In an effort to compete with China and their investment schemes in Africa the United States should offer African partners a better deal related to infrastructure development. If the UN approves the project and the World Bank offers assistance in financing the African contractors, with the vetting of a responsible procurement arm such as USAID, we face the possibility of stopping China from engaging in their unfair loan practices. The proposed structure listed above would also mitigate corruption. Developing infrastructure, increasing opportunities for trade, and working hand and hand with an African partner would be severely undermined if corruption drove a wedge between the general population and the African government we are seeking to bolster.

Trust and confidence will grow once the African people see that the public works projects are for their benefit and that every qualified citizen has the opportunity to gain training and employment in the development of their nation. Interaction with a host nation in this manner will be a long-term affair. The State Department and USAID will need to be prepared to spend upwards of a decade mentoring and training their host nation counterparts with infrastructure management. The various LOGTF teams from the Department of Defense will need to be prepared to work overseas for six to twelve months and ready to educate and train their counterparts in the construction industry with best practices for quality infrastructure development.

One of the primary keys to competitive economic stimulation resides in an assisted African nation being capable of replicating the development process with a friendly neighbor. Encouraging neighboring nations to assist one another will help the development process spread faster throughout the African continent, will increase the bond of trust between African countries, and will allow the LOGTF to be repositioned by the State Department to focus on another region of the African continent that is in need of assistance.

Infrastructure Development-Water Management

Management of water resources is critical to the longevity and survivability of any population. The LOGTF could be used in conjunction with USAID to assist African nations in the development of infrastructure that focuses on water management. Water management is critical to so many aspects of human life. Teaching developing partner nations the importance of water management has the potential to produce stability in a water basin and impact multiple countries at once. Educating African leadership on the management of water systems will

provide the means to support the population through agricultural development and industrial processes.

When properly educating leadership within a nation on water management it will be important to ensure several concepts are articulated in detail; sanitation, earths ecological system of evaporation, the importance of forests and vegetation in the water cycle, virtual water, and efficient irrigation techniques. If leadership within developing countries does not understand the importance of water management they run the risk of harming their nation and all nations within their water basin. A great case study for this point would be China and their pollution of the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers in their northeast industrial and agricultural region.³⁵ Presenting developing nations with case studies that stress the importance of water management and the multi-system approach required to sustain economic growth, wellbeing of the population, and good relationships with downstream riparian nations will assist in educating for long-term sustainable growth within the country.

Water Sanitation

Clean water plays a vital role in supporting a population. The three largest consumers of clean water within a state are agriculture, industrial manufacturing, and domestic household consumption.³⁶ Unfortunately each of these consumption streams take in clean water and return a contaminated waste product to the planet. Water consumed in domestic areas is returned to the earth as sewage. Cities in the United States have a centrally planned sewer system that is designed to move the water away from population areas and filter the sewage through waste water treatment plants or leach bed systems. This is not always the case in third world countries. Some developing nations in Africa have sewer systems in major cities, but they are slowly eroding since they were put in place by European colonial nations and have not been a focus of

spending for independent African governments. Often times no means of waste water management exists for rural inhabitants.

The LOGTF has the potential to assist third world partners in the development of waste water run off systems that feed water purification plants. The development of water purification plants would best be handled by contractors sourced with the assistance of USAID, but significant cost reduction could be realized in utilizing the LOGTF to assist in the waste water canals and sewers that feed the water purification plant. The LOGTF could also assist in the preparatory ground clearance and shaping for modern water production plants required to recycle a populated area's clean water supply, significantly reducing the cost of the project for the contracted firm. The LOGTF has the potential to serve a diverse set of roles, training and education of a partner nation workforce, infrastructure development that benefits a partner nation, and significant cost savings to contracted infrastructure projects in a developing nation.

Protecting the Ecological Cycle

Protecting the ecological cycle is vastly important. Implementation of training programs that educate national leaders, business developers, and the individual citizens on the importance of waste management can assist developing nations. The national leaders of third world countries should be exposed to multiple case studies from industrial nations that harmed the environment through water pollution. The course mentor should be able to articulate the level of damage caused by the ecological contamination and the overall impact the contamination caused on the regional population. Development is important. Economic stimulation is important. A strong agricultural base is important. None of the former amount to much if the Earth is rendered uninhabitable. Developing nations should be armed with the information and experience of the past to prevent contamination of their water source. The "Great Stink" of

London³⁷, Chinese contamination of the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers³⁸, Soviet destruction of the Aral Sea³⁹, and the destruction of Lake Peigneur⁴⁰ in the United States. These are all fantastic case studies of poor water management that damaged the environment to such an extent that societies were threatened for their indifference to the ecological system in their region.

The Importance of Trees and Vegetation

Educating developing nations on the specific roles of trees and vegetation in the ecosystem, specifically the impact of trees and vegetation to the water system, is important to highlight individually.

Occasionally developing nations feel it is necessary to clear forested regions for the development of agriculture. In some instances they elect to burn the forest down because they lack the heavy equipment to harvest the trees and the industrial base to mill the trees into building material. The process of deforestation should be discouraged as much as possible. Burning large areas of the forest leads to temporary air pollution. If forest areas must be cleared it should be encouraged to harvest the trees for another industry that assists in the further development of the nation's GDP. The two most harmful side effects of deforestation come from soil retention and the impact on the Earth's evaporative cycle.

The forest and vegetation play a large roll in top soil retention. When trees and vegetation are removed their root systems are not present to trap moist soil from flowing downhill under gravity's effect. This runoff of topsoil leads to damaging erosion and harmful sediment deposits into the water supply. In highly agricultural regions this runoff is often accompanied by pesticides and fertilizers that are toxic in the water stream. The addition of the sediment, pesticides, and fertilizers to the clean water supply could render the water toxic for future use. This phenomenon could be avoided with detailed planning related to the clearance of

land for agricultural production, the use of less fertilizers through crop rotation, and efficient irrigation techniques.

Deforestation has another impact on the ecosystem in that it disrupts the Earth's natural evaporative cycle. Trees and vegetation absorb excess ground water and release water vapor back into the atmosphere as part of the photosynthesis process. This water vapor accumulates in the atmosphere in the form of clouds and yields rain that replenishes the lakes and streams of a region. If large portions of forest are removed the ecosystem is impacted in a very negative way. The process of photosynthesis is disrupted producing less oxygen and less water vapor in the atmosphere. Less oxygen leads to increased carbon dioxide which traps heat and causes a dryer climate in a region. Less water vapor in the air disrupts the rain cycle in a region leading to a more arid climate. As the arid region grows it pushes cooler cycling air away from the arid region decreasing the chance of rain. Crop land that was once fertile and plentiful with rain can be rendered useless over the span of a few decades if the water becomes contaminated and rain ceases to fall naturally.⁴¹ These problems can be avoided through educated agricultural management and protection of the ecosystem. Working in conjunction with nature to produce a bountiful harvest should be the educational aim shared with our developing friends and partners.

Virtual Water

The concept of virtual water is important for every developing nation to understand. In summary the concept takes into account the amount of water required to produce agricultural or industrial goods. Based on the available fresh water in a region a nation will only be able to produce the amounts of goods that do not exceed their water supply. If national decision are made to produce goods beyond their fresh water supply they will need to find water from outside sources or live with the scarcity created by producing beyond their water capacity. The concept

of virtual water allows leaders to set incentives to produce within a nations capabilities and seek external trade for goods outside of their production capacity.⁴² Without a good understanding of virtual water national leadership often leans towards the idea of producing everything that will make their country self-sufficient. The concept of self-sufficiency is good, but often leads to overutilization of the nation's water resource and harm to the environment. In some cases nations chose to pump a vast water supply from underground aquifers. This practice is discouraged because underground aquifers do not have the same recharge rate. Often times once an underground aquifer is depleted of its fresh water resource salinity seeps into the aquifer rendering it useless.⁴³ Problems can be avoided in developing nations by understanding the concept of virtual water and the limits to a nations water resources. The understanding of this concept also stresses the importance of diplomacy and international trade. We want our partners to be strong and independent sovereign nations that work with each other through free trade. Understanding the concept of virtual water will help assist them in plotting a path to long term productivity and growth.

Efficient Irrigation Techniques

Educating developing nations on the most efficient practices for irrigation is vastly important. Many developing nations do not have an abundance of fresh water and cannot afford to waste water. Agriculture consumes seventy percent of the worlds fresh water supply.⁴⁴ Highly inefficient means are usually used to irrigate fields that overwater plants and waste water that could be utilized for other means. Flood irrigation should be frowned upon. While it is a less labor intensive means of irrigation it is the most wasteful method of irrigating crops. Flood irrigation is also the most damaging since it causes erosion and runoff of topsoil and fertilizer. Spray irrigation is one of the most efficient techniques, unfortunately the infrastructure required

to set up the pumps, pipes, and sprayers make it less attractive to developing nations. A low technology option available to developing nations is bucket irrigation. Nations with a large unemployment rate and the desire to stimulate employment could offer daily wages to field workers that manually deliver water to crops. This would likely be a short term solution until the farmer could afford to invest in spray irrigation through profit reinvestment. Instructing developing nations on the various means of irrigation and their benefits will reinforce other concepts of water management and equip them to make the best decisions to spur economic growth.

Water management is a vastly important topic for developing nations. If water resources are protected and utilized properly they will benefit the nation as a renewable resource for generations. Ensuring that fresh water is available for economic development and population support should be on the forefront of every developing nations plan for national security. The LOGTF and a whole of government approach to educating and training the best water management processes could assist the US in building strong allies and partners throughout the globe.

Education

Education and training play a critical role in the development of third world partners and allies. Albert Osei, a Ghanaian national that served as the country director for the World Bank in Guinea and Burkina Faso, made the following statement that sums up education in Africa well, “Train our people and give them a bigger role in your companies. Don’t complain about the Chinese. Help us move up the value chain. Do this, and we will love you.”⁴⁵ This fact should be interwoven throughout every aspect of our interaction in developing our partners and allies. To this point so far this theme has been repeated numerous times over in building the national

leadership and working with supervisors as the partner nation works with the State Department, USAID, and members of the LOGTF.

Education and training programs should be instituted to ensure that host nation workers and LOGTF workers are receiving the same training together on a periodic basis. This could be performed best as the LOGTF units rotate out. The project manager should establish a plan to integrate training on a regular basis and empower low level supervisors to conduct training relative to their job functions as often as they see fit. Establishing a good example to our host nation partners that education and training are continuous will stress the value that we place on the concept of life long learning.

Another aspect of education comes directly from the State Department and their interaction with the host nation to develop a system of public schools that will start educating children from a young age on the subjects of math, science, reading, and writing. A heavy emphasis needs to be placed on the importance of education and the role it plays in sustaining a nation. An educated populace leads to a more productive nation. Educated people will choose their career field and work to produce goods or services that sustain their family. In sustaining their family they will fuel other industries to provide goods and services required for living. If the developing nation does not have a means to start public schools the State Department may be able to assist them with help from the US Department of Education.

The LOGTF would be more than capable of building small schools for rural villages if the partner nation identifies the regions in need. Education and training are the key factors in making the nation development sustainable. The education effort should be focused on every member of the partner nation that has direct interaction with the LOGTF at first and spread to a

wide base to encourage ideas and opinions from multiple ethnic groups and sects within the host nation society.

It would be wise for the State Department to encourage visits to the United States from the host nation in order to witness a model state school and how it operates on a daily basis. Great possibility exists for an international exchange program that allows educators to spend time abroad while our partner nation sends educators to the United States to teach and learn. A national education system focused on developing citizens for a wide range of occupational fields should be a goal of the partner nation and the US State Department. Expectation management should be shared up front, this goal is going to require a long-term commitment on behalf of both nations.

Developing an education system that produces productive citizens that can solve the nations problems and manage complex systems will take between fifteen and twenty years to start producing graduates that can be employed in a field of study. The concept of a national education system should be another asset the State Department encourages a partner nation to share with its surrounding neighbors. When our partner nation develops a system of schools that train their human capital to deal with national problems they should be encouraged to share their methods with their neighboring countries. This will accelerate the growth and development of African nations and lead to collective security at a much quicker rate than if each nation waits for direct interaction with the United States. It will also encourage interstate cooperation and the mentality that neighboring nations have it within their power to raise the quality of living for their fellow African citizens.

Alternate Courses of Action and Assessments

The proposal presented in this paper to find a competitive edge against China's BRI is one of many courses of action available to the US and allied nations. The number of options is only defined by the imagination of the nation that chooses to compete on a global scale with a malign power. This section will detail possible alternative courses of action available that may be used independently or in conjunction with the deployment of a LOGTF and the concept of shared logistics.

The US and allies could develop a constructivist message, the idea that the actions of a state should be aligned with its identity, against China's BRI loan practices.⁴⁶ Inform every nation that has the potential to be a BRI borrower to refuse the terms of China's loans if clauses exist in the loan that demand Chinese only labor contracts or seizure of assets for loan default. Potential BRI nations need to be aware that their nation gains very little from accepting a large BRI loan if their people are not allowed to gain jobs and keep the money within their nation as part of the BRI loan. Detailing the terms of Chinese asset seizures under a BRI loan should demonstrate to other nations China's malicious intent to seize property under loan default. Defaulting on a BRI loan typically means a borrowing nation loses a sovereign asset to China that contributed to the BRI nation GDP. China's dubious lending practice secures a major piece of BRI infrastructure for China and allows them to seize an income producing asset from a BRI lender. A constructivist message detailing China's true intentions in issuing BRI loans could provide enough information to potential BRI nations that dissuade them from accepting a BRI loan with malign clauses that only benefit China.

The US could exercise the option to launch a worldwide campaign to boycott all Chinese goods and services. Inform the world of China's malign BRI lending and persuade the world the

only way to stop China from being a malign actor is to boycott their economy. China currently operates with an estimated debt to GDP ratio of two hundred fifty-seven percent.⁴⁷ A long term boycott of their economy would lead to deflation and possible collapse of their society from within. The Chinese government would not be able to keep their people employed if they are unable to sell their goods on the world market and with a debt to GDP ratio as large as theirs they would not be able repay their debts without a world export market. A global boycott of Chinese goods and services would force China into loan default for all of their debt creating the opportunity for world leaders to negotiate the return of sovereign assets China seized from other nations under loan default. It also informs China that the world is watching their actions and they cannot continue their malign lending practices without enraging the international community.

Assessing the alternate courses of action listed above along with the option of deploying a LOGTF lead to the question “What does the US want?”, this should be heavily considered before any course of action is taken.⁴⁸ Choosing the constructivist message alone could be interpreted as US whining over China gaining an upper hand in international investment. It also has the potential to give pause to nations before they accept a BRI loan if they see they will lose an element of their sovereignty if they default in the loan agreement. This course of action may be completely ineffective against corrupt government leadership who care little about sovereignty and more about what they can take from the BRI loan to build their own wealth.

The course of action calling for a world boycott of Chinese goods faces difficulty. Many nations rely heavily on Chinese imports due to their low cost on the world market. China has also been smart enough to diversify their portfolio and take on debt from multiple western nations. This means that if their economy begins to decline they could call on loans held by

more stable regions such as the US and EU. Boycotting Chinese goods to influence them towards changing BRI loan structuring could hurt multiple national economies throughout the world. World leaders will need to evaluate what they want and what they are willing to go through in order to influence change with China. Boycotting Chinese goods across the world would only be possible for nations that are capable of being completely self-sustaining. If this course of action is taken it has the potential to hurt the Chinese economy, but more than likely will not lead to a full collapse of their society. National leadership must evaluate the possibility that a world boycott of Chinese goods may prove effective to influence change, but will more than likely not be sustainable for all nations across the globe for a prolonged period of time.

In retrospect it is highly encouraged that the US and allies consider a multi-level approach to competing with China. A constructivist message combined with a better form of competition stands out as the most logical approach to end China's malicious lending practices. If the US and allies educate partner nations on the threat to sovereignty posed by accepting a BRI loan with clauses that only favor China then nations may become enlightened to the threat and demand terms that are more favorable to the development of their nation if they accept a BRI loan from China. The hard fact still remains that a constructivist message alone does not build the infrastructure needed for African nations to become competitive in the world market. It would be wise to couple the constructivist message with an example of how to develop for future growth. This is what is being proposed by the employment of the LOGTF, a means to share the US education system and logistics network with a partner nation to set an example of how development and growth transpire if a nation is patient and disciplined to develop the productive potential of their citizens and retain capital within their country for continued reinvestment.

Conclusion

The concepts presented in this paper have stressed the importance of infrastructure development, education, and economic development through a concept referred to as shared logistics. Shared logistics is presented as a whole-of-government approach method for interacting with a developing partner nation. The proposed method for shared logistics was the deployment of elements of USAID and the DOD to train and educate partner nations on how to develop internally and fuel future growth through reinvestment into their own nation and neighboring nations.

Economic security is critical to the growth potential of developing nations. It is of great importance to educate national leadership on the concepts of sustainable growth that does not destroy natural resources. Two cases presented China and their national decisions to choose economic growth over the health of citizens or the sustainment of renewable resources. The State Department and USAID should consistently educate and train developing partner nations on the means to build capital over time that can be utilized to fuel the economy by creating new industries or services that will create jobs and fuel growth. Developing partner nations should be discouraged from signing loans from foreign investors that include clauses such as ninety-nine year leases, seizure of infrastructure as collateral, mandatory hiring of foreign contractors, and steep initial payments that cause immediate loan default. Educating our African partners to build capital on their own that can assist in the lending process will help them from signing bad contracts with predatory lenders. The US should encourage the habit of analyzing all loan structures prior to making a deal and stress the importance of utilizing the loan to create jobs within the African nation to take advantage of the economic multiplier that arises when funding is retained within the country.

It makes no sense to sign a two billion dollar loan for an infrastructure project if the construction cost and the national asset wind up in the hands of the lender. The more the US can influence our developing partners to avoid this predatory practice the quicker they will become capable of establishing a stronger economy from within and at the same time secure their independence rather than becoming resigned to debt bondage under a foreign nation.

Newly developed African nations should be encouraged to assist neighboring countries with infrastructure development and building a strong economy by encouraging trade between neighboring countries. Great potential exists to execute meaningful change and foster sustainable growth on the African continent if the United States adapts to the current competitive environment and wins partners and allies within developing nations by offering them symbiotic relationships that offer a training opportunity and a production capability in one package. The LOGTF or structures similar to it have the potential to turn the tide against Chinese predatory lending and gain an improved network of collective security in Africa. Education and training provided through LOGTF interaction with a partner nation has the potential to increase the quality of life within the partner nations as well as aid the partner nation in rising on the value chain within the global economy.

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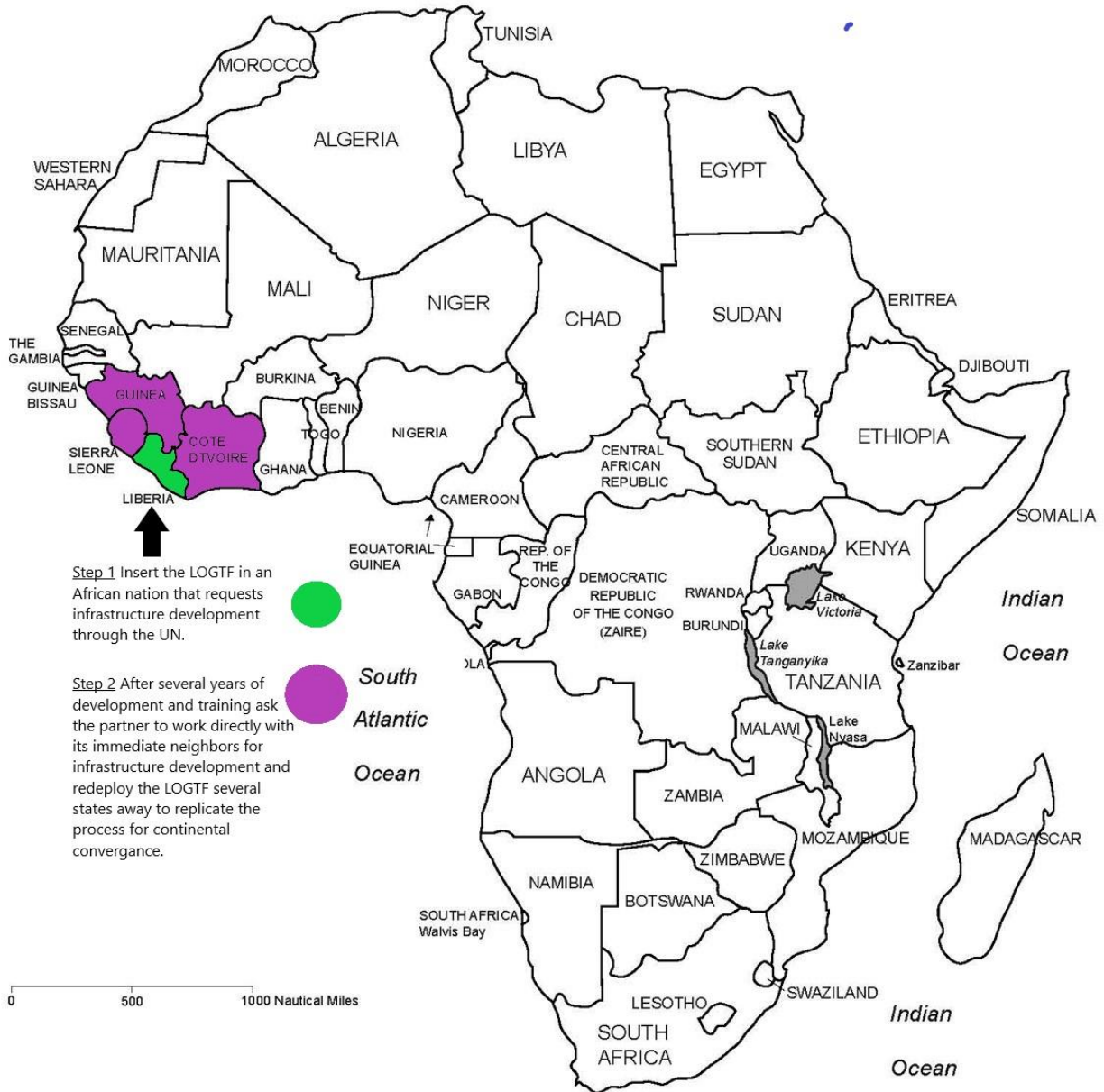
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Conceptual Strategy for Shared Logistics

Africa



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