

Preparing Soldiers to Help Foreign Partners Meet 21st Century Challenges

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PHOTO: Bert Braun, a Department of State civilian team leader with the Kunar Provincial Reconstruction Team, and U.S. Navy CDR Mark Edwards, the team's commander, speak with an Afghan worker at the Bahrabat school in Kunar Province, Afghanistan, 13 September 2010. (U.S. Air Force, SSG Ashley Moreno)

THE FIRST HALF of the 21st century will not be like the last half of the 20th. Then, we faced a peer competitor who would provide unambiguous notice of hostile intentions against which we could deploy massive amounts of conventional forces alongside similarly trained and equipped forces of allied nations. Today and tomorrow, we face a more uncertain threat, posed by a much wider range of actors who, before they attack us directly, must expand their power and influence over populations whose governments ignore legitimate needs and aspirations and whose security forces fail to protect them from the depredations of radical groups espousing extremist ideologies.

Security cooperation, an umbrella term for Department of Defense (DOD) programs designed to build capacity in and relationships with foreign nations, was developed in the 20th century but was little used by a military largely focused on a major land conflict. However, it is exactly the right kind of tool for developing partner capacity and long-term relationships in the 21st century.

We had little knowledge or practice of counterinsurgency when we began Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, and in the past the Army had little knowledge and paid scant attention as a service to security cooperation. Other than in special programs for foreign area officers and those bound for specific security cooperation missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, we dedicated little effort to this important task in our professional military education system. Moreover, Army security cooperation remains stove-piped as policy rather than integrated as doctrine. This may explain why the techniques of planning and executing security force assistance missions are not in the core curriculums of our educational institutions. We must reverse this trend by integrating security cooperation into our training, doctrine, and education, or we risk repeating the mistakes that left us unprepared for the current strategic environment.

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Adjustment to a Changing World

Several global trends are shaping the international security environment: globalization, readily available technology, population growth, urbanization, increasing demand for resources, climate change, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This conflux of trends is pressuring governments to satisfy their citizens' legitimate aspirations for justice, prosperity, and economic opportunities. Governments unable to meet these expectations face friction from actors espousing extremist ideologies and risk losing their ability to govern. Ineffective governance creates conditions that extremist groups exploit to spread their radical ideologies. Ultimately, these circumstances suggest persistent conflict through the first half of the 21st century. The protracted confrontations of states, nonstate actors, and individuals willing to use violence to achieve political and ideological ends will define the strategic environment.

U.S. forces will likely have four predominant tasks:

- Prevail in protracted counterinsurgency campaigns.
- Engage other nations to build capacity and assure friends and allies.
- Support civil authorities at home and abroad.
- Deter and, if necessary, defeat enemies in future conflicts.

While the second task, engagement, has long been a component of U.S. national strategy, only episodically has the nation relied upon its military forces to take a significant role. Our limited engagement to build other nations' capacity is partially the result of the past threat posed by peers, the moderate level of international stability ensured by competing superpowers, and the low level of threat posed by extremist groups. Today, the U.S. military must accept this engagement role as part of a balanced strategy to ensure continued security. If the threat is persistent, so must be the response.

Security Cooperation

Security cooperation—DOD interactions with foreign defense establishments to build their capacity and capability, facilitate access, and build relationships—complemented by similar activities by other federal agencies, provides the framework for persistent engagement, the first line of defense against persistent conflict.¹

Security cooperation builds the capacity of foreign nation defense forces and institutions to enable them to—

- Secure their territory and govern their populations.
- Export security capacity-building efforts to assist other nations.



DOD, Chief MSgt. Richard Simonsen

U.S. Army SPC Christopher Gearhart, left, assigned to the Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team security force, leads members the Department of State and U.S. military to the agriculture center in Nangarhar, Afghanistan, 18 November 2010.

- Interoperate with us across the spectrum of conflict.

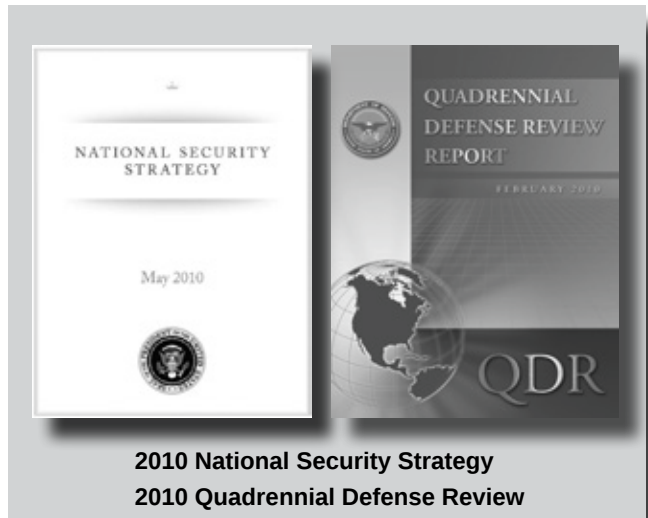
These efforts also help establish the long-standing relationships that assure access, cooperation, support, and assistance.

DOD security cooperation efforts, as described within the 2010 *Guidance for Employment of the Force*, reinforce other federal agency efforts generally conducted or coordinated by the Department of State to improve another nation's governing, economic, and informational capabilities.² The military is the primary instrument for building the capacity of other nations' military forces and institutions, and it supports other agencies in building partner nations' nonmilitary security forces and institutions through security force assistance.³ Additionally, the military has supplementary roles helping other U.S. government agencies build the governance capacity of partner nations. Security cooperation, which includes security force assistance, can gain the cooperation of those partner nations across the spectrum of conflict.

How Will the Army Conduct Security Cooperation?

High-level strategic documents such as the 2010 *National Security Strategy* and DOD's 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review* guide U.S. security cooperation efforts. At all levels, security cooperation is a major task for the Army. General George Casey anticipated its growing importance when he wrote that engaging with partner nations to build their capacity will "help in preventing future conflicts by increasing the capacity of other nations' security forces."⁴ That view led to the inclusion of his guidance in the 2010 *Army Security Cooperation Strategy*, which frames security cooperation authorities, resources, processes, sustainment mechanisms, programs, and initiatives in terms of ends, ways, and means in order to guide Army support priorities.⁵ This new structure is intended to bring order to this evolving and critical mission set.

It is clear from the *Army Security Cooperation Strategy* that security cooperation is a whole-of-Army effort. The Department of the Army (DA) is building a campaign support plan that will guide the generating force in support of Army component command security cooperation engagements and prioritize and establish processes for distributing engagement resources.



Army component commands will translate geographical combatant command end states and objectives into requirements that DA can help satisfy. Those plans will link security cooperation shaping activities such as security force assistance with the geographical combatant command end states. Then the Army component's security cooperation division will manage the execution of those activities by working with Army operating and generating forces.

Army operating forces are requested and tasked through the global force management process which will eventually align brigade combat teams with Army component commands during their train-ready phase of the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process.⁶ The brigade combat teams will conduct security cooperation activities in support of end states or objectives, such as security force assistance to partner military forces for peacekeeping operations.⁷

Building Security Cooperation Competency

The *Army Security Cooperation Strategy* pumps new life into the Army's whole-of-force security cooperation efforts. This emphasis on security cooperation prompted a comprehensive review of Army doctrine, training, and education, leading to programs that best prepare our soldiers for 21st century security cooperation. The increased importance and larger scale of security cooperation missions requires the Army to place greater emphasis on developing the skills and knowledge sets needed to plan and conduct such tasks.

The skills required are significant. Operators must know how to manage the security cooperation life cycle—that is, to assess the environment, understand the objectives, develop a plan, execute it, and evaluate its success. Writing a theater campaign plan and an Army campaign support plan takes considerable knowledge and proficiency in contracting, negotiating, and reporting requirements, as well as language skills and expertise in building relationships with foreign partners.

These critical skill sets need to be inventoried for each Army security cooperation position. Then the Army needs to wrestle with two questions. First, what security cooperation skills and knowledge are taught and where? Secondly, what should be taught and by whom? Furthermore, the Department of Defense recognizes that security cooperation is a Joint mission, so there will likely be Joint or department-level solutions to these questions, as well. The services and the Office of the Secretary of Defense have begun the work to ensure that these educational gaps are addressed without creating four service programs when one Joint program might do the job.

In 2004, then-Army chief of staff General Peter Schoomaker testified, “We train for certainty, and we educate for uncertainty.”⁸ Simply put, education imparts knowledge, while training involves the acquisition of skills. The Army does too little of both when it comes to security cooperation.

Security Cooperation Training and Education

General Casey said, “Army training and education programs must be dynamic and adaptive, instilling full spectrum capabilities in the operating force while keeping pace with constantly evolving doctrine and operational requirements.”⁹ That is especially true for the early 21st century, which portends the conduct of security cooperation missions of a frequency, duration, and scope significantly greater than what was required in the latter half of the 20th century.

The Army’s lone current formal security cooperation training is exclusively for those deploying to Iraq or Afghanistan to become advisors for security force assistance engagements. Last year, the Army created the 162nd Infantry Training Brigade at Fort Polk, Louisiana, to conduct tactical-level advisor training of Joint, multi-functional, foreign-area transition teams. The unit is “adaptive as fights change,” according to the command.¹⁰ Flexibility is critical because, as the Army receives new security force assistance missions, the 162nd will expand its training expertise to provide training that is globally relevant.

Army personnel designated to become security cooperation officers (formerly security assistance officers) or to fill security cooperation billets are normally given the opportunity to attend the Defense Security Cooperation Agency’s two- or three-week “overseas course.”¹¹ The Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management focuses the course on security assistance policies since most security cooperation funds are executed using security assistance management procedures. Security cooperation already has the endorsement of senior military leaders, and Congress may include emerging missions like security cooperation in professional military education.

Twenty years ago, the House Armed Services Committee reviewed professional military education and concluded that, although many of its individual courses, programs, and faculties are excellent, the system must be improved to meet the needs of the modern professional at arms.”¹² The U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations updated that 1989 report last year. The subcommittee’s April 2010 report struck the same tone as the 1989 report: professional military education “must continuously evolve in order to imbue service members with the intellectual agility to assume expanded roles and to perform new missions in an ever dynamic and increasingly complicated security environment.”¹³

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U.S. Air Force TSgt. Laura K. Smith

A member of the International Security Assistance Force provides security at a local boys' school during a volunteer community relations visit in Kabul, Afghanistan, 18 September 2008.

There is no doubt security cooperation is one of those “expanded roles” that warrants significant attention in military education. The most recent capstone concept for Joint operations supports this view. It states, “The future is unlikely to unfold as steady state peace punctuated by distinct surges of intense conflict. Rather, the major initiatives of U.S. foreign policy—major war, strategic deterrence, foreign humanitarian assistance, security cooperation, and so on—are all likely to unfold against a global backdrop of chronic conflict.”¹⁴

The growing significance of security cooperation is also evident in the Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman’s special areas of emphasis for Joint professional military education. Two of the chairman’s nine areas for academic year 2010-2011 were building partnership capacity and security force assistance—both elements of security cooperation.¹⁵ One of the areas for academic year 2009-2010 was, “Building Partnership Capacity is a preventive strategy to build the capacity of foreign partners to counter terrorism and promote regional stability.”¹⁶

Some special areas of emphasis make their way into the *Officer Professional Military Education Policy* (CJCSI 1800.01D) as a Joint requirement.¹⁷ The presence of security cooperation-related topics in the special areas of emphasis two years running and the importance given the issue by the 2010 *National Security Strategy*, the 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review*, and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates’ writings suggest the issue is gaining importance and might become a future Joint requirement.¹⁸

We should update the Army’s professional military education system to educate soldiers on security cooperation at appropriate levels, and include some knowledge about security cooperation at every level for both officers and noncommissioned officers. Junior officers and sergeants must make security cooperation work at the unit-engagement level while senior personnel do the planning and resourcing.

Army professional military education does include some security cooperation material. The

Army War College's core curriculum for academic year 2009-2010 included a 3.5 hour lesson, "Theater Strategy and Campaigning," an introduction to theater strategy and theater security cooperation. The lesson focuses on how a combatant commander translates national strategic direction through a theater strategy into a theater security cooperation plan. The core curriculum and the Joint Warfighting Advanced Studies Program include readings, discussions, and exercises that involve theater security cooperation. The college also offers two security cooperation-related electives: "Strategy and Military Operations in Failed States" and "The Role of Security Sector Reform: A Whole-of-Government Approach."¹⁹

The Army's Command and General Staff College has a one-hour core lesson that considers four topics, one of which is security cooperation's role in U.S. strategy. The college also offers both a classified and an unclassified security cooperation-related elective course. Both elective courses consider interagency, congressional, coalition, and host nation influences on security cooperation and require the student to present an assessment of a security cooperation topic or country engagement program.²⁰

Much Remains to be Done

Everyone has a stake in properly addressing the issue of security cooperation, which includes integrating security cooperation throughout Army doctrine, providing more training opportunities for soldiers destined for security cooperation-related positions, and including more material in Army educational core and elective curricula.

The Army should integrate security cooperation throughout its doctrine, especially for operations at the mid- to low-end of the spectrum. Army Regulation 11-31, *Army International Security Cooperation Policy*, governs security cooperation, but the Army is just beginning to develop security cooperation doctrine for the large swath of the force that has already participated in security cooperation engagements.²¹ The Army should also reinforce this doctrine via shaping exercises at the combat training centers.²² These exercises should task critical security cooperation skills that support combatant command end states for operations and contingencies.

The Army should create an elective series with an additional skill identifier to educate leaders on security cooperation principles and programs and teach them how to execute them. Soldiers and DA civilians assigned to security cooperation divisions at each Army component, geographical combatant command security cooperation planners and country team personnel, and staff members of brigades and battalions engaged in security cooperation missions need this specialized training.

Finally, the Army should be aggressive about including security cooperation courses across all military educational institutions, beginning with blocks of instruction that help captains and senior noncommissioned officers understand more than theory. These soldiers need to understand how to use an interpreter and the tactical steps supporting the big security cooperation picture—that is, how to engage with partner nations to build the capacity of their security forces. This will lay the foundation for and stimulate an interest in language and cultural awareness training. Most importantly, company grade officers and noncommissioned officers need to know how to train partners, which is the skill they will apply in unit-level security cooperation engagements. Company grade officers (who will populate the commands and staffs that execute the plans and conduct security force assistance missions) require grounding in the fundamentals of security cooperation as well as instruction in security force assistance execution.

Junior field grade officers (who will populate the staffs of Army service components writing theater campaign plans and the staffs of DA, Army commands, and direct reporting units that provide much of the resources to execute them) must learn how to plan and conduct security force assistance missions, develop campaign plans for establishing and maintaining security and stability, and understand the theater strategies that guide those campaign plans.

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The U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ought to make security cooperation a much larger part of its core curriculum. Security force assistance mission planning and execution, as a key element of stability operations, is as important as counterinsurgency and major combat operations. Students must understand the interagency processes, the capabilities involved, and how security cooperation supports U.S. foreign policy. Students should draft a theater security cooperation strategy and plans that support combatant command end states and objectives.

The Command and General Staff College should also offer electives that address a security cooperation program that builds capacity and maintains relationships within a specific country or region. Another elective should address how to link stability requirements with resources to leverage existing capacity-building programs, including those of other federal and international organizations.

Senior field grades (who populate the staffs of the combatant commands, the Joint staff, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense that develop these strategies, and of the institutional Army that develop the capabilities and acquire the resources to execute them) must learn how to develop those strategies at theater and national levels. Thus, the Army War College should devote significantly more time to security cooperation. It ought to include security cooperation steady state/shaping activities in a contingency planning exercise that begins with a combatant command's strategy.²³ It should

offer security cooperation-related electives such as building a relationship with foreign partners, designing campaign support plans, learning the technical aspects of foreign military sales, understanding equipment transfers and defense cooperation, executing security force assistance, and conducting brigade combat team assessments of security cooperation engagements with an interagency component.

21st Century Security Cooperation

The first half of the 21st century will feature a strategic environment completely unlike that of the last half of the 20th. Employing security cooperation to build partner capacity plays as great a role in the era of persistent conflict as deterrence did against hostile state actors during the Cold War. Our professional military education system is every bit as important in educating our leaders in security cooperation skills to prevent conflict as it was in educating leaders on fire and maneuver skills so vital against a different foe.

To defend against the extremist groups that seek to ignite persistent conflict into perpetual war, the capacity of other nations' security forces, their directing institutions, and their governing institutions are the first line of defense. Leaders trained and educated on the principles of planning and executing security cooperation, security force assistance, and building partner capacity are essential in order for freedom-loving nations to stand together and ensure a stable and secure world. **MR**

NOTES

1. U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), *2010 Guidance for Employment of the Force* (draft 30 April 2010) (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], TBP), 166. Security cooperation is defined as "All DOD interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests, develop allied and partner military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide US forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation."

2. Ibid. The *Guidance for the Employment of the Force* consolidates and integrates DOD planning guidance related to operations and other military activities into a single, overarching document.

3. U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-07, *Stability Operations*, (Washington, DC: GPO, 2008), <http://downloads.army.mil/docs/fm_3-07.pdf>, G-2. Security force assistance is defined as "The unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host-nation, or regional security forces in support of legitimate authority."

4. George W. Casey, Jr., "The Army of the 21st Century," *Army*, October 2009, 30.

5. DOD, *Army Security Cooperation Strategy* (draft 6 May 2010) (Washington, DC: GPO, TBP).

6. DOD, *2008 Army Posture Statement*, available at: <http://www.army.mil/aps/08/addenda/addenda_e.html> (29 June 2010). "The ARFORGEN process is used to manage the force and ensure the ability to support demands for Army forces. ARFORGEN sequences activities for all active and reserve Army units to include: Reset, Modular conversion, Modernization, Manning adjustments, Soldier and leader training and education programs, Unit training, Employment; and Stationing decisions."

7. *Guidance for Employment of the Force*, 2010, 25-27. There are 10 security

cooperation focus areas in this document: (1) operational capacity and capability building, (2) human capacity/human capital development, (3) institutional capacity/security sector reform, (4) support to institutional capacity/civil-sector capacity building, (5) combined operations capacity, interoperability, and standardization, (6) operational access and global freedom of action (U.S. defense posture), (7) intelligence and information sharing, (8) assurance and regional confidence building, (9) international armaments cooperation, and (10) international suasion and collaboration.

8. Peter Schoomaker, statement to the House Committee on Armed Services, *Army Transformation: Implications for the Future Part II*, Hearing, 21 July 2004, available at: <http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/security/has203000.000/has203000_of.htm> (8 June 2010).

9. Casey, 36.

10. DOD, *Modular Brigade Augmented for Security Force Assistance Training*, briefing by 162nd Infantry Brigade, Fort Polk, LA, 2009.

11. DOD Instruction 5132.13, *Staffing of Security Cooperation Organizations (SCOs) and the Selection and Training of Security Cooperation Personnel* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009), <<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/correspdf/513213p.pdf>>.

12. House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations, *Another Crossroads? Professional Military Education Two Decades After the Goldwater-Nichols Act and the Skelton Panel*, report prepared by Lorry M. Fenner et al., 11th Cong., 2010, Committee Print 111-4, vii.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid., 3.

15. DOD, The Joint Staff, *Memorandum, Minutes of the 4 February 2010 Military Education Coordination Council (MECC)*, signed by Lloyd J. Austin, III (Washington, DC: GPO, 2010).

16. DOD, The Joint Staff, *Memorandum, 2009 Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Special Areas of Emphasis (SAEs)*, signed by James E. Cartwright (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009).

17. DOD, The Joint Staff, *Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP) CJCSI 1800.01D* (Washington, DC: 2009), <http://www.dtic.mil/cjcs_directives/cdata/unlimit/1800_01.pdf>.

18. Robert M. Gates, "Helping Others Defend Themselves," *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2010): 6. Secretary Gates writes "Helping other countries better provide for their own security will be a key and enduring test of U.S. global leadership and a critical part of protecting U.S. security, as well. Improving the way the U.S. government executes this vital mission must be an important national priority."

19. Ben Leitzel, "Lesson TSC-06 Theater Strategy and Campaigning" (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2008).

20. U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, "Lesson C203 Strategic Environment" (Fort Leavenworth, KS, undated).

21. The Army has security sector reform doctrine in FM 3-07, chap. 6, and security force assistance doctrine in FM 3-07.1. See endnote 3 for link to FM 3-07. For FM 3-07.1, *Security Force Assistance* (Washington: GPO, 2009), go to <<http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/Repository/FM3071.pdf>>.

22. Department of the Army, *Combat Training Center Program*, Army Regulation 350-50 (Washington, DC: GPO, 2003), <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/cac-t/documents/r350_50.pdf>.

23. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations* (as amended through 22 March 2010) (Washington, DC: GPO, 2006), <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_0.pdf>, IV-27.



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