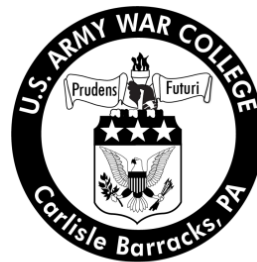


Securing America through Security Force Assistance

by

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United States Army War College
Class of 2012

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

SECURING AMERICA THROUGH SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE

by

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Our National Security Strategy identifies the need bolster failing states and to continue to build on the strong relations we have with our world partners. In the strategy, the President strongly emphasizes that the failure of other governments to provide a secure environment for their people has a global impact that directly threatens the American people. The Department of Defense must continue to develop flexible options to meet the strategic security ends of our civilian leaders. The Department has, and will have, a wide range of means to apply to the ways of security force assistance. Security force assistance delivery and execution will differ in part from past methods. Security force assistance will, however, provide our nation with the ability to shape the global security environment for the better and secure Americans, American interests, and America. This paper will analyze, compare, and contrast historical case studies with strategic guidance and doctrine. This research project will analyze the various recommendations for conducting SFA in the 21st Century and conclude with a feasible recommendation on the way ahead to achieve our security goals.

SECURING AMERICA THROUGH SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE

Our military will continue strengthening its capacity to partner with foreign counterparts, train and assist security forces, and pursue military-to-military ties with a broad range of governments.

—President Barrack H. Obama¹

Throughout time, many great nations existed in one form or another. The ability to influence their populace and control territory was common to all. Well trained competent security forces provide governments the ability to exert their authority. Furthermore, in a secure environment, nations extend their influence and provide for the necessary needs of their people. In a secure environment, the exchange of goods, services, and ideas flourish. When security forces fail, governments fail. When security forces fail, all of society fails.

Since the United States assumed the role of a leading security provider after the end of World War II, the Defense Department worked actively to build the defense capacity of allied and partner states. Doing so has also given the U.S. Armed Forces opportunities to train with and learn from their counterparts. These efforts further the U.S. objective of securing a peaceful and cooperative international order.²

Army doctrine defines security force assistance as “the unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host-nation, or regional security forces in support of a legitimate authority.”³ Army doctrine defines building partner capacity (BPC) as:

...the outcome of comprehensive inter-organizational activities, programs, and engagements that enhance the ability of partners for security, governance, economic development, essential services, rule of law, and other critical government functions.⁴

Security forces for purpose of reference include all branches of the military, the police forces, border forces, and all associated type forces. The United States to one

degree or another, has implemented security force assistance as part its security and foreign policy apparatus since the mid 20th century.

The National Security Strategy of the United States specifically addresses security force assistance as a method to safeguard our nation and to shape the world-wide security environment.

The United States must improve its capability to strengthen the security of states at risk of conflict and violence. We will undertake long-term, sustained efforts to strengthen the capacity of security forces to guarantee internal security, defend against external threats, and promote regional security and respect for human rights and the rule of law.⁵

The National Security Strategy also addresses risk to the United States and security force assistance as a means to mitigate the risk:

The inability or unwillingness of international partners to support shared goals or provide access would place additional operational risk on U.S. forces and would threaten our ability to prevail in current or future conflicts. Building the defense capacity of allies and partners and ensuring that the U.S. Armed Forces are able to effectively train and operate with foreign militaries is a high-priority mission. Conducting security force assistance operations is an increasingly critical element of building partnership capacity.⁶

The National Defense Strategy objectives nest with the President's objective of building partner capability. The recent National Defense Strategy specifically states:

We will support, train, advise, and equip partner security forces to counter insurgencies, terrorism, proliferation, and other threats. We will assist other countries in improving their capabilities through security cooperation, just as we will learn valuable skills and information from others better situated to understand some of the complex challenges we face together.⁷

Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan brought security force assistance to the forefront of Department of Defense doctrine, operations and the American perception of war. Direct security force assistance operations terminated in Iraq in December 2011, and current policy directs termination in Afghanistan in 2014. In spite of the drawdown

of this capability, the department will use security force assistance into foreseeable future.

All geographic combatant commanders agree on the importance for security force assistance and building partner capacity in their respective commands. Africa Command “protects and defends the national security interests of the United States by strengthening the defense capabilities of African states and regional organizations...”⁸ General Carter F. Ham, in testimony before congress stated: “We follow two main lines of effort: building the security capacity of our African partners and preparing for a wide range of potential crises.”⁹ He further states: “Our primary effort for increasing stability and deterring conflict is focused on building partner capacity.”¹⁰

General Frasier, Commander, U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) further emphasizes the need for security force assistance to reach his security objectives. SOUTHCOM, with very few assigned forces, has the mission of “supporting U.S. national security interests, and with our partners, fostering security, stability and prosperity in the Americas.”¹¹ General Frasier, in testimony stated: “U.S. Southern Command envisions sustaining a shared partnership for the Americas... our ability to work with partner armed forces enhances the capabilities of our partners to confront regional security challenges.”¹²

United States European Command, once the combatant command with the largest number of assigned forces, now faces conditions of a greatly declining number of assigned forces while maintaining a difficult mission. The mission of the U.S. European Command is “to conduct military operations, international military engagement, and interagency partnering to enhance transatlantic security and defend

the United States forward.”¹³ When faced with these conditions, Admiral Stavridis states: “Because relationships are so important... building partnership capacity is the centerpiece of all that European Command does and is clearly the command’s top priority.”¹⁴

United States Central Command serves as the main effort in today’s fight. General Mattis commands the largest number of assigned forces and has direct access to the Secretary of Defense and the President. Despite these advantages, he sees the critical need to build partner capacity. During congressional testimony, General Mattis stated: “CENTCOM remains committed to supporting the efforts of our military counterparts and to strengthening the security partnerships that have proven critical during this period of political unrest.”¹⁵

Strategic Guidance, Defense Department Policy, Army doctrine and combatant commander requirements do not alone determine the U.S. military strategy. The United States experienced a major economic recession commencing in late 2008. Since then, the President and Congress have worked to restructure the business practices of the U.S. Government. The Defense Department portion of the discretionary budget will now face the greatest reduction in decades.

The Defense Department’s current strategic guidance was driven by the approaching end of a decade of war, a changing technological and geopolitical landscape, and the national security imperative of deficit reduction. The Budget Control Act reduces Defense Department future expenditures by approximately \$487 billion over the next decade or \$259 billion over the next five years.¹⁶

Furthermore, combatant commanders will no longer be able to depend on large sized forces to conduct their building partner capability strategy. The President in recent guidance to the Department of Defense very specifically directed “No longer size active

forces to conduct large and protracted stability operations while retaining the expertise of a decade of war.”¹⁷

The evaluation of past security force assistance (SFA) efforts provides valuable insight for developing a strategy to conduct future security force assistance. The U.S. government and the Department of Defense did not always execute successful security force assistance operations. Security force assistance forces and direct action forces have not always worked in harmony with each other, nor have either worked in harmony with the efforts of the other government/non government entities. U.S. efforts in Vietnam provide a case study of poorly executed security force operations.

The birth of security force assistance in Vietnam began prior to the main American effort in the war. A small Military Assistance and Advisory Group (MAAG) arrived in Vietnam in 1950 to evaluate the current French strategy and methods of training Vietnamese Soldiers, and to assess the readiness of the Vietnamese Army.¹⁸ American advisory efforts proved ineffective, primarily due to the commander of French forces, General Jean de Lattre. Rather than working with the MAAG on a collaborative strategy, General de Lattre dealt directly with the military and political leaders in Washington.¹⁹

The MAAG next emerged in 1956, when the United States assumed full responsibility for the training of the South Vietnamese Army and undertook a program to build the army into an effective force.²⁰ Military historians commonly refer to this as the advisory phase of the Vietnam conflict. Combat advisors represented the sole U.S. military presence in the country. South Vietnamese forces conducted direct action missions against insurgent forces under the guidance of their American advisors. The

U.S. did not execute a comprehensive military campaign against the insurgency.

President Johnson did not send major combat forces to Vietnam for another nine years.

This shaped the conditions for a disjointed Security Force effort with the efforts of the combat forces during the zenith of American involvement in the conflict.

Late 1964 to early 1965 became the pivotal period in escalation of the Vietnam War. During this time, the President altered U.S. commitment by sending the first U.S. combat troops to South Vietnam. The administration chose General William C. Westmoreland to lead the U.S effort in Vietnam. As commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam from 1964-1968, his would seem to have been the perfect face aesthetically; Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara once said that Westmoreland looked as if he had come right from central casting.²¹

From 1965 through 1968, the US military buildup absorbed the attention of Military Assistance Command – Viet Nam (MAC-V). As US combat strength increased “from 184,000 in 1965 to 385,000 in 1966 to a maximum of 550,000 in 1968–69”, MAC-V transitioned from building partner capacity, into an operational entity “fighting the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and main force Viet Cong units rather than on fighting the insurgency.”²² The Republic of Viet Nam Armed Forces (RVNAF) digressed to a secondary security role and units were not under the operational control of U.S. Army commanders.²³

If the goal of the President was to assist South Vietnam in order to deter the communist North, Westmoreland was not on the same agenda. According to biographer Lewis Sorley:

Westmoreland always claimed he was giving high priority to support for South Vietnamese forces. There was no substance to that claim. He did little or nothing for them. Many, many other officers then remarked that we wasted three or four years when we could have been developing them much earlier and they could have taken over far more responsibility for the security of their country much sooner.²⁴

Westmoreland insisted on implementing his search and destroy approach to find and kill NVA forces. This misguided focus proved disastrous to RVNAF forces.

Westmoreland assigned the ground combat missions to U.S. forces while the South Vietnamese were deprived of sufficient support and "relegated to support pacification," which he felt to be a mission of little importance.²⁵

MAC-V expected field advisors to improve the combat effectiveness of RVNAF units or to implement pacification efforts in provinces and districts. Without a combined commander making demands on both MAC-V advisors and RVNAF commanders to produce results, advice often was not acted on. Most advisors found themselves combat support or pacification support coordinators and liaison officers to US and allied units rather than tactical or pacification advisors to their counterparts.²⁶

Lack of clear direction doomed the Vietnam effort from the start. Westmoreland failed to synchronize direct action forces with the security force assistance units and the host nation forces. In the end, our military leadership attempted to rectify the situation, but in fact, acted too late to turn the tide of the conflict. Westmoreland's replacement, Gen. Creighton Abrams, revitalized efforts of rebuilding the South Vietnamese forces, but the U.S. lost the war because Washington failed to follow through on promises to support the government in Saigon once U.S. troops left.

"In South Vietnam, the United States faced its largest, longest, and most costly advising effort. It consumed the best efforts of the US military for a generation."²⁷ In the post Vietnam era U.S. military, efforts focused on defeating the Soviet Union. The U.S. military lost its advisory lessons learned, and the capability to conduct security force assistance operations.

Despite this history of advising foreign forces, the Army found itself unprepared to assume its SFA responsibilities in Afghanistan. It had a limited pool of trained and ready personnel, no organizational structure for conventional forces, nor any prepared doctrine or even tactics, techniques, and procedures to provide to soldiers assigned to advisor

duties. Organizing for SFA has undergone several revisions in Afghanistan since the effort began in 2002.²⁸

I served as a combat advisor to an Afghan National Army Brigade from June 2005 to July 2006. Task Force Phoenix directed the security force assistance mission with a higher headquarters of the Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan (OMC-A). OMC-A transitioned to the Office of Security Cooperation-Afghanistan and later transitioned to the Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A). Just as the name of the headquarters changed in a little over one year, the operational integration of advisory forces, host nation forces, and coalition combat forces also changed.

In the first four months of my experience, Afghan National Army (ANA) maneuver unit missions consisted of specific Afghan national missions directed by the Ministry of Defense. These missions focused on population protection or security of Afghan key infrastructure. The U.S. command placed Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in only a small number of Afghan provinces. Also, the U.S. command provided PRT commanders limited capabilities and limited strategic guidance. Conventional combat forces focused on finding and fighting anti-government forces.

In the fall of 2005, Army Special Forces detachments began working with 3rd Brigade, 201st Corp (3/201) ANA maneuver units. Special Forces teams would integrate Afghan platoon and company sized elements as cordon forces, and as a way to bolster the legitimacy of Special Forces efforts by working among the population. However, Marine Corps and Army maneuver battalions would not work with Afghan Army forces despite repeated attempts from my advisory team to develop mission sets.

In early 2006, the 3/201 ANA, worked with an Operational Deployment Team – Alpha to plan a battalion (+) sized counterinsurgency (COIN) mission in the enemy controlled Tagab Valley of Kapisa Province. The importance of this operation was that it was the first time the Afghan Army conducted a mission of battalion sized; that it expanded the influence of the central Afghan Government; and that the ODT-A could develop intelligence collection in the valley. Also, the security conditions in the valley allowed US Forces to establish a Provincial Reconstruction Team to bring assistance to the people and government of that area.

In early 2006, the 3rd Brigade 10th Mountain Division assumed the U.S. mission as the operational commander in Regional Command East. From the initial day in theater, COL John Nicholson insisted on establishing coordination with BG Zamari, commander, 3/201 ANA, and U.S. Commanders of the PRTs in his area of operation. This coordination and planning effort led to an integrated COIN effort culminating with a dual US/ANA brigade Operation Mountain Lion. COL Nicholson's efforts reflected the thrust of all the U.S. efforts throughout the country.

The scale of Mountain Lion was unprecedented in Operation Enduring Freedom, as was the unity of effort among all players. Joint, interagency, and coalition partners—equals all—worked seamlessly, maximizing their complementary capabilities. ...The embedded teams operated directly with Afghan units, providing both tactical advice and access to coalition artillery and air. Their use enabled two ANA corps to fight effectively alongside U.S. forces.²⁹

As stated in the Quadrennial Defense Review,

In these contested environments, partnered COIN, in which Afghan...units operate in tandem with U.S. forces, is an effective way to train and advise forces while conducting combat operations against insurgents. These partnered host-nation units have the advantage of knowing the terrain, language, and local culture...Efforts that use smaller numbers of U.S. forces and emphasize host-nation leadership are generally preferable to large-scale counterinsurgency campaigns.³⁰

Since 2006, efforts in Afghanistan have grown into a whole of government comprehensive approach. The campaign plan of the United States Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A) reflect this change of mindset. In this campaign plan, the Commander, USFOR-A states the following:

The strategic goals of the U.S. are that Afghanistan is: 1) never again a safe haven for terrorists and is a reliable, stable ally in the War on Terror; 2) moderate and democratic, with a thriving private sector economy; 3) capable of governing its territory and borders; and 4) respectful of the rights of all its citizens³¹. The campaign focuses on the strategy on four lines of operation: Security, Governance, Reconstruction and Development, and Counternarcotics.³²

On November 12, 2009, the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) Joint Command (IJC) reached Full Operating Capacity (FOC). The IJC, a subordinate command to ISAF, is responsible for the day to day operations of coalition forces in Afghanistan and conducts embedded partnering with fielded Afghan forces. The NATO Training Mission, Afghanistan (NMT-A), merged with CSTC-A, officially activated on November 21, retains force generation and initial institutional training requirements and exercises command and control of the re-named Combined Task Force Phoenix (CJTF Phoenix). Under the plan, CJTF Phoenix retains operational control (OPCON) of Embedded Transition Teams (ETTs) and Police Mentor Teams (PMTs). The regional commands have tactical control (TACON) of these teams.³³

Forward progress in Afghanistan and achieving our strategic goal depends on a well established security apparatus. “An unstable security environment degrades public faith in the government and rule-of-law, discourages investment and other economic enterprise, and diverts resources that could otherwise be devoted to more constructive purpose.”³⁴ Security force assistance provides policy makers the critical means to reach our strategic goals in Afghanistan.

“As U.S. forces draw down in Afghanistan, our global counter terrorism efforts will become more widely distributed and will be characterized by a mix of direct action and security force assistance.”³⁵ Secretary Panetta directed for the Defense Department to

“develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives, relying on exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities.”³⁶ Two schools of thought emerged over the past 5 years that address the Secretary’s vision.

An earlier school of thought concentrated on the premise of a standing advisory capability in our force structure, with units tailored specifically for Security Force Assistance. On such idea came from Army retired Lieutenant Colonel John A. Nagl – considered by many in the counterinsurgency arena as a pioneer and innovator. Under Nagl’s plan:

A force of 20,000 personnel, broken down into 750 teams of 25 advisors each. The corps would have three divisions with eight division advisor teams, each with five subordinate brigade advisor teams, which in turn, would each have five battalion advisor teams. The corps commander would have the dual role of being responsible for the doctrine, training and organization for the advisor mission as well as being an adviser to combatant commanders for SFA or even as the senior advisor to a host nation Ministry of Defense.³⁷

A second school of thought emerged several years ago focused on a mixed force structure under the existing Brigade Combat Team (BCT) system. In this system, Advise and Assist Brigades (AAB) would exist, but only be a small part of the BCT system. For example, a division-sized unit would consist of one AAB for every four BCTs. “These augmentees are assigned to the BCT during the Train/Ready and Available cycles of the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model.”³⁸

The third school of thought does not relate to establishing security force assistance units, whether standalone forces or augmented with existing combat forces. This school of thought focuses on using existing organizations to conduct security force assistant missions. In the case of the Army, a brigade combat team, with or without augmentation, could conduct security force assistance, regardless of the threat or

environment. “The inherent flexibility of the BCT allows it to shift from security operations to counterinsurgency to major combat...There is no need for wholesale force structure redesign.”³⁹

Current Army doctrine supports the latter school of thought:

The BCT augmented for SFA retains the capability to conduct full spectrum operations—offense, defense, and stability. Any of the three modular BCTs—heavy, infantry, or Stryker—can support SFA. Battalion-sized maneuver, fires, reconnaissance, and sustainment subordinate elements of the BCT support foreign security forces (FSF).⁴⁰

Furthermore, pending force structure reductions brought about by a new budget make dedication of units to specific mission sets untenable. In this budget, the size of the active Army reduces from “570,000 in 2010 to 490,000”, and the active Marine Corps from “202,000 to 182,000.” The Army plans to reduce at “least eight Brigade Combat Teams.”⁴¹

The Army model using BCT or BCT-like structure served as the lens in the previous examples. Simplistically, security force assistance is a mission, not an organizational structure. Regardless of unit size, service component, or function, building partners’ capacity for security and governance will remain a mainstay of the U.S. Military. General Dempsey’s latest guidance to the Joint Force supports that position:

Our aim should be a versatile, responsive, and decisive Joint Force that is also affordable. This Joint Force must excel at many missions while continuously adapting to changing circumstances. It means building and presenting forces that can be molded to context—not just by adding and subtracting, but by leaders combining capabilities in innovative ways.⁴²

The Army, however, is postured by its core competencies to play a major role in future security force assistance operations. According to an assumption of current Army Doctrine, “[t]he Army will be resourced appropriately to lead or support unified action to

enhance the ability of partners for security, governance, economic development, essential services, rule of law, and other critical government functions.”⁴³

The Department of Defense has a full range of means to apply to the ways of security force assistance. The means of delivery will change by organizational capability, operational phase and by the level of operational and strategic risk.

SFA occurs in the framework of full spectrum operations....SFA is not just a stability operation, although it is a key contributor to the primary stability tasks of establish civil security and establish civil control....U.S. forces accompany foreign security forces (FSF) in combat....SFA can be conducted across the spectrum of conflict, from stable peace to general war.⁴⁴

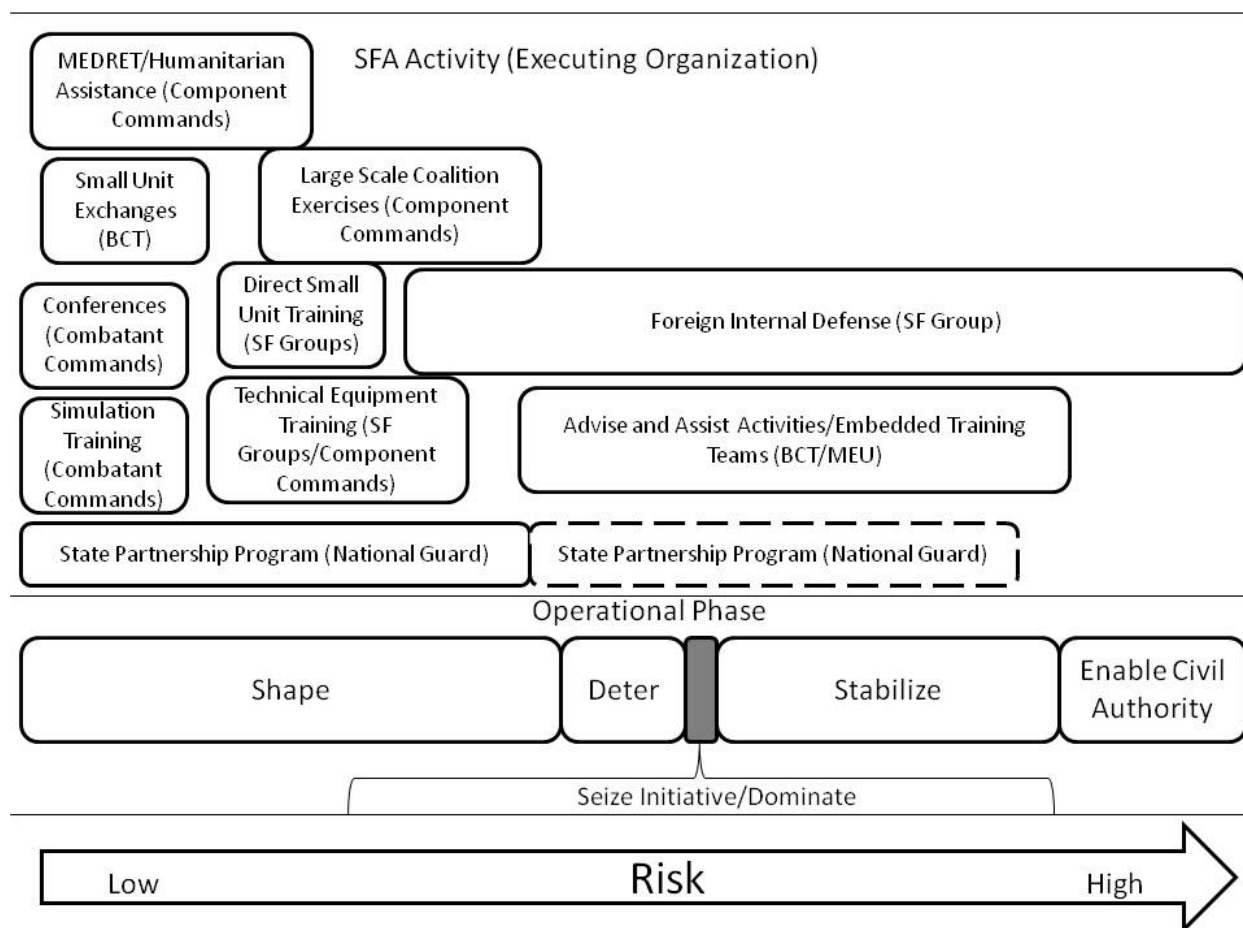


Figure 1:– SFA Activity by phase, organization and risk

At the lower end of the risk scale and during shaping operations, combatant commanders have the direct means to conduct security force assistance through high level conferences. In his latest defense budget guidance, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta addresses establishing “Five Regional Centers for Strategic Study that provide relationship-building opportunities to international students.”⁴⁵

One such example is European Command’s George C. Marshall Center.

The mission of the Marshall Center is to create a more stable security environment by advancing democratic institutions and relationships, especially in the field of defense; promoting active, peaceful security cooperation; and enhancing enduring partnerships among the nations of North America, Europe and Eurasia.⁴⁶

Admiral Stavridis praises the return on investment of the center:

The George C. Marshall Center has hosted thousands of participants from numerous nations to promote dialogue and understanding. For this command the Marshall Center demonstrates the primacy that building partnership has in our mission. We cannot surge trust, and we do not want to try to build relationships and seek capabilities after a crisis has started.⁴⁷

At the immediate lower level of command, service component commanders control a very strategic engagement tool. As the executors of the combatant commander’s Theater Security Cooperation Plan, the service component commanders execute the Joint Exercise Program. This program ranges in scale from command post exercises to large multi-component, multinational exercises based on regional security plans.

One example of this is the United States Southern Command exercise of PANAMAX. Over the past 10 years, the PANAMAX exercise involves nearly every naval force in the area of operation. In the same time period, the U.S. increased its operability with all hemispheric navies/militaries, built enduring relationships at the midgrade and senior levels, and opened relationships with other governmental agencies.

Medical Readiness and Training Exercises, Humanitarian Assistance, and like exercises/operations fall under the primary purview of the component commander. These exercises present slightly more operational risk by deploying forces into austere and sometimes less than permissive environments. Despite the risk, these exercises provide a high return on investment, especially by leaving a positive impression of the U.S. with the populace of a country. A second, but even more valuable return is the positive impression of the local security forces and host government with the populace. “Over 200,000 citizens a year benefit from MEDRETEs in the SOUTHCOM AOR alone.”⁴⁸

The National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) provides the Department of Defense with a “wild card” option in the security force assistance strategy. “The SPP started in the Baltic region of Europe in 1993 after the collapse of the former Soviet Union, focused on matching U.S. states with former Soviet satellite nations.”⁴⁹ “The SPP grew significantly since its beginning and currently the individual states’ National Guard have partnerships with 62 countries across the globe.”⁵⁰

“The program supports military theater security cooperation efforts for each of the regional Combatant Commands and embraces the ‘whole of government’ approach by aligning with the efforts of the U.S. State Department as well as other agencies.”⁵¹ The partnered U.S. states conduct this program during shaping, deterring, and stability phases of the joint operations construct. This low cost program builds bonds between U.S. and Host Nation Forces forged in peace and executed in combat.

This effort led to a transition to a collaborative multinational deployment into a combat environment. The National Guard, through the relationships developed in the SPP, is a strong participant in NATO International Security Assistance Force’s (ISAF) OMLT program. This program is an

important part of the NATO-ISAF mission to develop the Afghan National Army (ANA). When a National Guard state partner nation agrees to participate in an OMLT, that nation often requests a team from the partnered National Guard state to deploy to Afghanistan with them. Together, the Guard and partner nation forces provide training and mentoring to the ANA.⁵²

Foreign Internal Defense (FID) operations occur across the entire operational spectrum. Optimally, special operations units conduct FID. “Additionally, the gradual drawdown of the post-9/11 wars will release more Special Operations Forces (SOF) capacity to partner in other regions.”⁵³ FID moves operations further along the operational risk continuum toward the highest levels. Units conduct FID to “free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency.” The military instrument of foreign internal defense includes “indirect support, direct support and combat operations.”⁵⁴

Advise and assist activities, like operations with Iraqi and Afghan security forces, constitute operations of higher risk and higher cost. The U.S. President recently directed the Department of Defense to “[n]o longer size active forces to conduct large and protracted stability operations while retaining the expertise of a decade of war.”⁵⁵

The Department of Defense possesses great flexibility in existing force structure to conduct the advise and assist role, while keeping with the directive of the President. The BCT, with its inherent capability, can conduct these operations in permissive and non-permissive environments. The BCT also can conduct these operations across the full spectrum of operations.

The Department of Defense published in recent budgetary guidance in ... “the gradual drawdown of the post 9/11... the Army will align Brigade Combat Teams with each regional Combatant Command – establishing language and cultural expertise to

better shape the security environment.”⁵⁶ This gives combatant commanders a gamut of flexible deterrence options to execute his theater strategy.

The National Guard Agri-business Development Teams (ADT) give combatant and component commanders still more flexible options. These teams, deployable into the shaping, deterring, or stability phase of the operation, combine security forces with “agri-business experts.” This action increases the economic capability of rural based economies, extends the governance of the host nation, builds the security capability of local security forces, and most importantly, builds the bond of trust between the host nation and its population.⁵⁷

The ADT effort in Afghanistan provides a recent example that can serve as a model for like SFA operations in the future. “Through this innovative use of smart power, the National Guard has created a whole of government approach, leveraging the Guard’s 25-plus years of experience in providing similar support to South and Central America.” The senior National Guard members leveraged their civilian connections “with U.S. Land Grant Universities, such as the University of Missouri and Texas A&M, various Farm Bureau organizations, and the Cooperative Extension Services throughout the United States.”⁵⁸ This allowed NATO-ISAF to apply a whole of government approach in the Afghanistan counterinsurgency.

The security force assistance example in Vietnam differed significantly from the security force assistance operations in Afghanistan. In Vietnam, General Westmoreland ran a conventional campaign that conflicted with security force assistance efforts. South Vietnamese troops dealt with antiquated equipment, corrupt leaders, and were not the main effort. Afghan National Army forces receive the newest fleet of NATO equipment

and are the main effort. Concerted U.S. and coalition effort focus on countering corruption in the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) as well as Afghan governing institutions.

Lessons learned from combat experiences in Vietnam and Afghanistan proved commanders at all levels must synchronize direct action forces with the security force assistance units and the host nation forces. Based on these experiences, all security force operations must be synchronized throughout all operational phases.

Our National Security Strategy identifies the need to bolster failing states and to continue to build on the strong relations we have with our world partners. In the strategy, the President strongly emphasizes that the failure of other governments to provide a secure environment for their people has a global impact that directly threatens the American people. The Strategy identifies that “building the capacity necessary for security, economic growth, and good governance is the only path to long term peace and security.”⁵⁹

Through the National Security Strategy and recent strategic documents and guidance, the President calls on the Department of Defense to conduct security force assistance. SFA operations will continue to occur throughout the full spectrum of operation. The methodology by which we conduct these operations may change through time. Reducing manpower and fiscal support will force a change in security force assistance from the models of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Department of Defense must continue to develop flexible options to meet the strategic security ends of our civilian leaders. The Department has, and will have, a

wide range of means to apply to the ways of security force assistance. Security force assistance delivery and execution will probably differ in part from past methods. Security force assistance will, however, provide our nation with the ability to shape the global security environment for the better and secure Americans, American interests, and America.

Endnotes

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