

PREPARED STATEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today about how the Department of State is strengthening the capacity of the U.S. Government to address reconstruction and stabilization (R&S) crises.

The hard lesson that we have learned in the post-Cold War world is that failed states and instability within countries far distant from our shores can pose a national security threat to the United States. Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, East Timor, Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Haiti – crises such as these are an inevitable feature of the world we live in and have very real consequences for American interests. The issue is not *whether* similar crises will occur, but when, where, and how will we respond?

When facing a stabilization crisis, we must, as a government, determine the most effective approach, and then ensure that we have the corresponding tools, resources, and capacity to respond quickly and follow through to success.

As the Secretary of State's Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, my office is charged with two tasks. The first is to ensure that the entire U.S. Government is organized to deal with reconstruction and stabilization (R&S) crises, and that civilian and military plans are harmonized. The second and equally important task is to build the U.S. civilian capacity to staff these missions so that when the President and Secretary call upon us to respond we can put the right people in the right place, with the right skills, doing the right things, at the most critical time.

Since S/CRS was established in 2004 we have built up a modest rapid response capability within the State Department and a growing cadre of civilian planners in our office of 80 experts. We are an interagency office with detailees over the past 3 years from USAID, Defense, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Treasury, Justice, Homeland Security, Labor, the Intelligence Community, and other parts of State. Our team is currently providing planning, operations or assessment assistance in Afghanistan, Sudan, Haiti, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Kosovo, and Liberia. We also have an officer detailed to AFRICOM and another to SOUTHCOM.

Over the last two years, we have piloted new concepts and engaged in important planning operations. We opened the U.S. office in Darfur's capital of El Fasher and helped coordinate assistance on the ground in Lebanon for the Ambassador. We sent teams to Afghanistan, as well, to facilitate planning at U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Teams. These engagements have proven the value of our approach, but this is not enough. The civilian agencies need to be a true partner to the military in stabilization crises or, even better, to take on these challenges in a significant way so that armed forces do not have to intervene. This requires a major, perhaps even a revolutionary, change in the way the U.S. Government approaches and resources conflict response. Just as the military underwent tremendous reform in the 1980s following the passage of Goldwater-Nichols legislation, we are proposing shifts across our civilian agencies that will bring all elements of national power to bear in the defense of America's vital interests.

The costs of ignoring weak and failed states are potentially enormous. As we have learned, states and regions in chaos can become breeding grounds for terrorism, weapons proliferation, trafficking in humans and narcotics, organized crime, and humanitarian catastrophes. The U.S. Government does not have to police these situations alone, but we do have to be ready to demonstrate leadership and engage effectively when help is needed most and when our national security interests are at stake. If we can intervene in time, we may be able to help put in place the necessary building blocks for lasting peace and good governance. To accomplish this, the U.S. Government must resource civilian post-conflict capacities at a level commensurate with national security priorities. In sum, we must reform our national security architecture.

INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PRESIDENT'S DIRECTIVE FOR R&S

Over the last year, we have been working together across 15 civilian and military agencies to answer President Bush's 2005 call in National Security Presidential Directive 44 (NSPD-44) to significantly improve the management of U.S. Government reconstruction and stabilization operations. The Presidential Directive puts the Secretary of State in charge of integrated U.S. efforts to prepare, plan for, and conduct these activities, and calls on the Secretaries of State and Defense to harmonize civilian and military efforts so that civilians are planning and operating with the military from the start of any operation.

This unprecedented process has brought experts from the NSC, DOD, USAID, State, Justice, Agriculture, Commerce, Treasury, Transportation, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, OMB, OPM, Energy, and the Intelligence Community to sit together and honestly determine the U.S. civilian capacity needed to succeed in a stabilization operation. It was an extraordinary commitment of staff and expertise.

This group's intense examination of U.S. responses in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, East Timor, and Lebanon independently identified the same needs that are highlighted in S.613, the "Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act," proposed by Chairman Biden and Senator Lugar. This important legislation calls for an Active Response Corps of up to 250 first responders from civilian federal agencies, a Standby Response Corps of up to 2000 existing government officials, and a Civilian Reserve Corps drawn from private sector experts and state and local government officials from across the United States. Congressmen Farr and Saxton have proposed companion legislation in the House of Representatives (H.R. 1084).

However, identifying and recruiting the people we need is only a first step. This gets us the right people, with the right skills, at the right time. Making sure that these experts are doing the right things, synchronized between civilian and the military leadership on the ground, according to one strategic plan; that is the most complex and interesting task of NSPD-44. The Directive charges us to develop a unified interagency management system for planning and operations. When I came to this role a year and a half ago, I can honestly say that I was not sure that we would see the Interagency Management System, or IMS, in my tenure. Over the last year, however, the IMS was finalized by an interagency committee, approved at the highest levels, and is being exercised with the military. We are now well on our way to realizing this new system as the mechanism we will use to respond to the next stabilization crisis.

CREATING A FRAMEWORK FOR FASTER, MORE EFFECTIVE RESPONSE

In a stabilization crisis, a wide range of actors within the U.S. Government needs to be part of any effective response, and their work must be integrated. If we work at cross-purposes, with unclear guidance or conflicting missions, we will cripple our efforts from the start and lead to ineffective use of resources, people and time. More importantly, it will lead us to miss the window of opportunity for change for those most in need on the ground. The new approach I alluded to above, called the Interagency Management System (IMS) for Reconstruction and Stabilization, integrates these efforts through three inter-linked elements:

Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group (CRSG): Essentially a reinforced Policy Coordinating Committee, this is a Washington-based decision-making body at the Assistant Secretary level, including representatives from all agencies involved in a particular R&S mission. It focuses only on the crisis at hand and its core purpose is to facilitate effective and timely decisions, planning, and mobilization of resources. Each CRSG will have a Secretariat, which provides a full time staff to plan, unify effort, resolve disputes, and maintain a 24-7 common operating picture across all agencies. The Secretariat oversees creation of the unified strategic plan taking account of all U.S. Government capabilities that may be required in the crisis.

Integration Planning Cell (IPC): This is a civilian planning cell deployed to the relevant Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) or multinational headquarters to harmonize civilian and military planning, processes, and operations. It will generally consist of civilian planners and regional and sector-specific experts from across the U.S. Government.

Advance Civilian Team (ACT): This consists of one or more rapid response teams that deploy to the field to support the Chief of Mission in developing and implementing the U.S. R&S strategic plan. If a U.S. Embassy is present, the ACT will integrate with Embassy and USAID mission structures, under the authority of the Chief of Mission. If the U.S. does not have a diplomatic presence in country, the ACT can help establish one. The ACT can further deploy Field Advance Civilian Teams (FACTs), similar to the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) that have been operating in Iraq and Afghanistan, to coordinate R&S programs at the provincial or local level, with or independently of a military or international peacekeeping effort.

The value of the IMS is that it links an agreed whole-of-government planning and management process with integrated operations on the ground. It clarifies roles, responsibilities, and processes for interagency R&S planning and operations. The IMS is flexible and scaleable to the situation and can integrate personnel from all relevant agencies. This system is designed for highly complex crises and operations, and is not intended to respond to the political and humanitarian situations that are regularly and effectively handled through current organizations and systems.

We have been partnering with other civilian agencies, the military, and international partners to test the IMS, working out systems and potential challenges in the exercise environment, so that we will be ready to activate immediately the IMS when the next crisis erupts.

HOW IT WORKS

When the next crisis does occur, the Secretary of State, the NSC, and Principals from DOD and other agencies, will consult and determine if we should stand up a Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group. If the system is activated, the CRSG Secretariat would be staffed immediately by my office and regional bureaus at State, pulling in representatives from other federal agencies. The CRSG would then plan with these agencies and the Embassy, mobilize human and logistical resources, jumpstart contracts, and establish the common operating picture necessary to ensure all U.S. actors have the information they need to plan and respond. The CRSG would work closely with other civilian or military task forces.

If the crisis requires military involvement or support, an Integration Planning Cell comprised of country and sector experts would be sent from the CRSG to the relevant military combatant command. This team would ensure that military planning is harmonized with strategic planning in Washington and the Embassy, and that there is open communication.

If the Embassy needs immediate assistance, either for planning or response, or if an official U.S. presence does not exist, an Advance Civilian Team could be deployed. With Active Response Corps members standing by, the first part of this team could depart within 48 hours to contribute to R&S planning, assessments, reporting, program proposals, and basic assistance, as required. Part of the team will be highly expeditionary, able to base themselves at the provincial or regional level and/or with military forces, or independently. These Field Active Civilian Teams (FACTs) will include civilian personnel with a range of specialties and agency backgrounds and the necessary training and R&S expertise.

The ACT, Embassy, and FACTs on the ground will engage in an implementation planning process with Washington and the Combatant Command that enables agencies to focus and synchronize contracts, programs and activities to greatest effect. These civilian experts can do on-site assessments, informing the contracting process and speeding up time from concept development to execution on the ground. This strong civilian presence also allows for effective monitoring and oversight of programs. The goal is to develop flexible programming that can meet the needs of the changing environment. The common implementation plan allows for constant monitoring of progress across all areas of the mission to allow us to change course quickly as necessary across agencies and ensure that we are using our resources well.

BUILDING CIVILIAN CAPACITY FOR DEPLOYMENTS

The effectiveness of the IMS relies heavily on the quality, experience, and commitment of the civilian experts involved. Civilian officers from across our government have served and continue to serve our nation honorably in troubled places around the world. But the reality is we simply do not always have the appropriate skill-sets or equipment available to deploy rapidly in the immediate aftermath of a crisis when we can have the greatest impact on stability.

Hence, my second task – building a U.S. civilian response capability that is trained, equipped and prepared to deploy in a crisis. This requires not just improving the recruiting, training, and expectations of our workforces but also ensuring we can call-up adequate resources when needed. We have devised a new three-tiered system to get civilians on the ground quickly in a

stabilization mission. Together, this civilian response corps will have the skills necessary to operate collaboratively in a country with a weak or non-functioning government.

Active and Standby Response Corps

The first tier of the new U.S. civilian R&S response capacity is the Active Response Corps, which is made up of federal employees whose full-time job is to work in support of R&S activities, ready to go in 48 hours if necessary for deployments of up to 6 months. They spend their time training, preparing, and deploying to crisis spots. Our eleven current ARC officers, all of whom are in the State Department, have already served in Sudan, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Haiti, Chad, Liberia, Iraq, and Kosovo.

The Active Response Corps is followed by the second-tier Standby Response Corps (SRC). These are current U.S. Government employees with full-time jobs and relevant specialties who have volunteered to undergo training and to be considered for deployments of up to six months on 30-45 days notice. The SRC currently has 90 members who are full-time employees and 200 who are retirees, all of whom have been drawn from the State Department.

The goal for the future is to significantly expand the Active and Standby Corps to reflect the U.S. Government interagency with civilians from USAID, Justice, Treasury, Commerce, Agriculture, HHS, and DHS. In FY 2008 these agencies have agreed to build and train a pilot interagency SRC of 500.

Civilian Reserve Corps

The third tier is the U.S. Civilian Reserve Corps. Stabilization and reconstruction environments require larger numbers of available, skilled, and trained personnel and a broader range of expertise than the U.S. Government has on-staff in adequate numbers – from police trainers to engineers to city planners. That is why the President called for the creation of the Civilian Reserve Corps in his 2007 State of the Union address. Such a corps creates a pool of experts on call, without the expense of bringing them on as permanent U.S. Government employees. As we have seen in Iraq, such experts play a critical role in reconstruction and stabilization, and quicker access to them can contribute to the overall success of a mission. When deployed, members of the Reserve Corps provide technical assistance to the host government. The reserve system would provide two advantages over relying solely on contractors: faster response and greater accountability. While the Reserve Corps would provide immediate expertise in the field, we would still need to use grants and contracts with implementing partners to deliver long term assistance.

The Civilian Reserve Corps has been approved at senior levels, and funded in the FY 2007 supplemental appropriations act (P.L. 110-28). This funding would allow us to recruit, hire, and train elements of the first 500 members of the Civilian Reserve Corps and to pre-position equipment so that they are fully prepared to deploy. However, funding provided was restricted and made subject to authorizing legislation, such as S.613 and H.R. 1084. These are important pieces of legislation, and the Administration hopes that they soon can be turned into law.

The approach we are taking on the Civilian Reserve Corps has garnered support from many corners, including the Special Inspector General for Iraq. SIGIR has consistently made the point

that we do not have contracting procedures flexible enough for contingencies, nor sufficient personnel trained to oversee contracts in the field. In SIGIR's July 2006 report on Iraq Reconstruction, it called for the creation of "a deployable reserve corps of contracting personnel who are trained to execute rapid relief and reconstruction contracting during contingency operations," which it says could be coordinated by S/CRS as part of the Civilian Reserve Corps.

The State Department is ready and eager to take on the challenge of building civilian response capacity. In late April, the Department formed an interagency task force that was charged with tackling the final questions for the design of the Civilian Reserve Corps. The task force was led by S/CRS, with staff detailed from across the U.S. Government. Once necessary authorities are received to make the funds available, I am confident that the State Department can have the first group of civilian reservists prepared and ready to deploy within twelve months. If the United States builds the U.S. civilian response capacity described above, we would be able to put close to 1200 trained and skilled civilians into the field within the first eight weeks of a crisis. This is a significant capability, and one our nation needs.

It is important to understand that the capability we are developing can be used in all kinds of environments. It can be deployed alongside the military when the conditions are non-permissive, deployed instead of the military to prevent a crisis from escalating, or deployed with our international partners in UN or NATO-led missions, for instance.

A GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

The challenges we face in weak and failed states are recognized around the world. We share a commitment with our international partners to prevent states from failing and to resolve both the causes and consequences of violent conflict. There are offices or positions similar to mine in London, Ottawa, Berlin and the United Nations. We have reached out to all of our partners in those offices as well as to colleagues in France, Japan, NATO, the European Union, Norway, Finland, and South Korea, among others. We are looking for as many partners as possible so that we can develop global capacity. From the creation of S/CRS-type offices to the signing of the G-8 statement on commitment to cooperation on R&S, we are seeing signs of progress.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that fragile and failing states present an on-going threat to our national security. We cannot continue to make do with a resource imbalance that leaves the Pentagon as the only part of our government capable of undertaking sustained, large-scale reconstruction and stabilization missions. This is true not only because most of the critical R&S tasks are civilian in nature and require a civilian lead, but also due to the burden placed on our armed forces, which detracts from our overall military readiness.

Building U.S. civilian capacity will ensure that we are able to partner with the military when necessary for the challenges that lie ahead and to deal with some crises without having to invoke U.S. military power. This is the right and the smart thing to do. The effort we make – and the expenses we incur – to develop a strong, fast U.S. civilian response capability will reduce the

cost we ultimately pay, both in dollars and in lives, to manage the national security dangers arising from failed and destabilized states.

Thank you.

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