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## Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations: Learning from the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Experience

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### INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today to address the Department of State's efforts to build civilian capacity for reconstruction and stabilization crises.

Weak and failed states pose a serious security challenge for the United States and the international community. They can become breeding grounds for terrorism, weapons proliferation, trafficking in humans and narcotics, organized crime, and humanitarian catastrophes. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has been involved in or contributed significant resources to more than 17 reconstruction and stabilization operations. And the challenge persists. RAND recently reported that in this same time period, the pace of U.S. military interventions has risen to about one every two years. If the U.S. Government is going to meet these threats, we must adapt our national security architecture. The Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, or S/CRS, is part of that effort within the Administration.

S/CRS was established in 2004. Starting with just a handful of staff, the office has now grown to over 80. While S/CRS is based in the State Department, it has been designed as an interagency office. During the past three years, we have had staff detailed from other parts of State, USAID, Defense, Treasury, Justice, Homeland Security, CIA, Labor, and DIA. We now have a modest rapid response capability and a growing cadre of civilian planners.

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 affecting U.S. national interests, to include harmonizing civilian and military activities. The second and equally important task is to build the civilian capacity to staff these missions when called upon to respond.

These tasks are simple to describe, but not so simple to achieve. It requires a major, perhaps even a revolutionary, change in the way the U.S. approaches 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 similarly promote unity of effort so that we best leverage limited resources, and avoid working at cross-purposes.

### **S/CRS' MANDATE: IMPLEMENTING THE PRESIDENT'S DIRECTIVE FOR R&S**

In December 2005, President Bush issued National Security Presidential Directive 44 (NSPD-44) to improve management of reconstruction and stabilization operations. The Presidential Directive states that the Secretary of State is responsible for leading and coordinating integrated U.S. efforts to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities. Depending on the situation, these operations may be conducted with or without U.S. military engagement. It further tasks the Secretaries of State and Defense to harmonize civilian and military efforts so that civilians are planning with the military from the start. In 2005, the Pentagon released Defense Department Directive 3000.05, "Military Support to Security, Stabilization, Transition and Reconstruction," which complements NSPD-44.

The goal of NSPD-44 is to provide senior policy-makers with a comprehensive picture of existing capacity, needs, gaps, and priorities to enable civilian agencies to respond to conflict and effectively partner with the military in R&S operations. It also lays out the vision for how we build up the capacity of the U.S. Government to ensure this unified effort.

Implementation of the directive is a priority for the Secretary of State, and I have been tasked with making it happen. S/CRS has been working with more than 20 agencies and bureaus including USAID, DOD, DHS, HHS, Treasury, Justice, DNI, Commerce, and Agriculture, and a number of bureaus in State to fully implement NSPD-44. The Defense Department's participation alone included representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, Army Corps of Engineers, the Army's Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, the Department of the Army, U.S. Joint Forces Command, and participants from several Geographic Combatant Commands.

We have made significant progress on implementing the NSPD, and the pace has only accelerated in the past eight months.

### **A NEW WAY TO ORGANIZE FOR S&R: INTERAGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The U.S. Government has many capable entities that are responsible for various parts of foreign assistance and engagement; these all play important roles in responding to any crisis and must be integrated for maximum effect. We have reached interagency agreement for how the U.S. Government should organize itself to deal with a stabilization crisis. The new approach, called the Interagency Management System (IMS) for Reconstruction and Stabilization, consists of three inter-linked elements:

*Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group (CRSG):* A Washington-based decision-making body at the Assistant Secretary level. All agencies involved in a particular R&S mission will have members in the CRSG. This is a typical structure managed by the NSC, but it is created to focus exclusively on a single country or regional crisis. However, there is a critical additional function that we have learned is necessary to be effective – a full time staff to collect all interagency interactions and integrate them. To facilitate its operations, a Secretariat run by S/CRS will be established for each CRSG. The Secretariat ensures that there is a single channel for providing information, helping to formulate options, and monitoring the implementation of policy decisions. The Secretariat oversees the writing of a unified plan taking account of all U.S. Government capabilities that will be used in the crisis.

*Integration Planning Cell (IPC):* 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 sectoral experts from across the U.S. Government.

*Advance Civilian Team (ACT):* One or more rapid response teams that deploy to the field to support the Chief of Mission in implementing the U.S. R&S strategic plan. If a U.S. Embassy exists, the ACT will operate under Chief of Mission authority and be integrated with existing Embassy and USAID mission structures. In the absence of an existing U.S. diplomatic presence, the ACT will help stand it up. If necessary, the ACT can deploy Field Advance Civilian Teams (FACTs), to provide maximum capacity to implement R&S programs at the provincial or local level, similar to PRTs that have been operating in Iraq and Afghanistan. Depending on the situation, FACTs can integrate with U.S. or other military forces to foster U.S. and coalition unity of effort.

The value of the IMS is that it clarifies roles, responsibilities, and processes for mobilizing and supporting interagency R&S operations. It provides the tools to ensure unity of effort, guided by whole-of-government planning. The IMS is flexible and scaleable to meet the particular requirements on the ground and can integrate personnel from all relevant agencies. It can also be used in engagements with or without military operations.

The IMS is designed to provide coordinated, interagency policy and program management for highly complex crises and operations that:

- Are national or security priorities,
- Involve widespread instability,
- May require military operations, and
- Engage multiple U.S. agencies in the policy and programmatic response.

The IMS is not intended to respond to the political and humanitarian crises that are regularly and effectively handled through current organizations and systems. As a country situation evolves over time, these groups can be absorbed into more routine Embassy structures and the responsibilities for assistance will be cycled back into normal planning and budgeting cycles.

Testing the IMS, including the establishment of civilian-military cooperation, is an important part of our work. We have been using Unified Action, an interagency experiment similar to a military exercise and supported by Joint Forces Command (JFCOM), to do that. Unified Action is part of the JFCOM-led Multinational Experiment series. It is the first civilian-driven experiment of its kind to test and refine the planning and coordination processes necessary to implement NSPD-44 via the Interagency Management System. It is designed to improve U.S. whole-of-government capacity to plan for and execute integrated conflict and crisis prevention, mitigation or response operations.

## **BUILDING CIVILIAN CAPACITY FOR DEPLOYMENTS**

Civilian officers from across our government have served and continue to serve our nation honorably in Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, Kosovo, and numerous other troubled places around the world. But the reality is we simply do not have sufficient resources to meet the needs arising from states in peril. Hence, my second task – building a 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 additional resources when needed. We have devised a three-tiered system to get civilians on the ground quickly in a stabilization mission. It too has been approved at senior levels of the U.S. Government, but the requisite legislative action to authorize all departments and agencies fully to staff these new positions has not been enacted. Together, this civilian response corps will have the skills necessary to operate in a country with a weak or non-functioning government.

### *Active Response Corps*

The core of U.S. civilian R&S response capacity is the Active Response Corps, or ARC, and our Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) rapid responders at USAID. ARC officers are federal employees whose full-time job is to work in support of reconstruction and stabilization activities, which includes training and preparing to deploy immediately to crisis spots. Seventy-five percent of the ARC is deployable at any given time for up to six months. Currently, we have ten ARC officers, all of whom are in the State Department. They have already been sent to such places as Darfur, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Haiti, Chad, Liberia, Iraq, and Kosovo. For FY08, the President is requesting funding to triple the size of the ARC to 33 and to add staff positions in S/CRS to provide the necessary planning and deployment support for them. USAID and Treasury also have a small dedicated capacity for deployment and we need to build a similar capacity across government. Having on-staff personnel who are dedicated to this purpose ensures that they can deploy quickly without leaving other critical work unstaffed.

#### *Standby Response Corps*

The second tier of rapid responders is the Standby Response Corps (SRC). These are existing U.S. Government employees with a range of skill-sets and expertise. They have full-time jobs but 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, all of which have been drawn from the State Department. Over 200 retired State Department employees have signed up, as well.

One of the most important aspects of the SRC is that it widens the pool of available personnel and skills so that we can identify just the right person to meet the needs of a specific mission. We have already begun deploying SRC officers. Last year, one served in Darfur and another in Eastern Chad to monitor the refugee situation across the Sudanese border.

Given the challenges we will face in the coming years, it is essential that the U.S. Government grow both the ARC and SRC not just in State but in USAID and throughout the other civilian agencies involved in R&S efforts, such as Justice, Commerce, Treasury, and Agriculture, hence the need for a comprehensive legislative approach. We hope to work with Congress to ensure that necessary authorities to enable other departments and agencies to gain the personnel and other resource requirements needed to effectively provide support to the Department of State to execute these missions. We will expand the size and training requirements as resources allow with a goal of 500 on the rosters by the end of FY 2008.

#### *Civilian Reserve Corps*

An enhanced civilian capacity within the U.S. Government for reconstruction and stabilization is essential. But these environments require larger numbers of available, skilled, and trained personnel and a broader range of expertise than the U.S. Government would be likely to have on-staff in adequate numbers – from police trainers to engineers to city planners. That is why the President called for the creation of a Civilian Reserve Corps in his 2007 State of the Union address. Such a corps will allow us to have a pool of experts on call, without the expense of bringing them on as permanent U.S. Government employees. They would be able to work on a range of R&S projects for State, USAID, Justice and other agencies. 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, reservists would provide management capacity to the Embassy and technical assistance to the host government. Having this capability through a reserve system would provide two advantages over relying solely on contractors for additional response: faster response and more accountability. While reservists 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 generosity and patriotism of the American public is beyond doubt. Following 9/11 we saw ordinary citizens channel their grief into service – they joined the military or looked for ways to volunteer in their communities. The Civilian Reserve Corps gives Americans another way to share their skills with people in need while serving their country. The Civilian Reserve Corps would be comprised of Americans from outside federal agencies who, as with military reservists, have careers in state and local government or the private sector. We are talking about people like a police officer in Chicago, a city administrator in Atlanta, a civil engineer in Denver, or an accountant in San Francisco who all share a desire to work overseas for their government in a challenging environment for a short period of time, and then return to their previous life.

Interested individuals would sign up on a voluntary basis as reservists for four years, with an obligation to deploy for up to twelve months during that period. While on reserve status, they would train for two to three weeks every year, and become U. S. Government employees only when activated for training and deployment. We estimate that at full strength, we could deploy up to 25 percent of the CRC at any given time. We understand that calling up private citizens for service in the CRC would be a serious decision, as it would have implications for families, communities, and employers. Therefore, a call-up would require a Presidential decision and we anticipate this only occurring for major R&S efforts in which the United States is engaged.

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 tough questions for the design of the CRC. The task force was led by S/CRS, with staff detailed from across the U.S. Government. Once necessary authorities are received and the funds are available, I am confident that the State Department would have the first corps of reservists prepared and ready to deploy within twelve months.

What would this inaugural corps look like? The CRC task force has carefully identified 121 different career skill categories needed in R&S missions. They broke down the first 500 slots accordingly. The initial priority would be for public security and rule of law specialists, with a proposed 350 positions being allocated for those functions. On the public security side, we would recruit for police trainers, patrol police, customs and immigration advisors, evidence and forensics experts, criminal investigators, counter-terrorism and explosives experts and a range of administrative trainers who can assist in rebuilding a government's law enforcement capability in countries torn apart by conflict. To help reestablish the rule of law, we would recruit corrections experts, prosecutors, judges, defense advisors, court administrators, and specialists in trafficking in persons, organized crime, and war crimes. The remaining 150 reservists would have skills in essential services, transitional economics and business development, as well as democracy and governance.

We appreciate Congress making available up to \$50 million for the CRC in the FY 2007 supplemental appropriations act (P.L. 110-28). This level of funding, would allow us to recruit, hire, and train the first 500 CRC reservists. It will also allow us to pre-position equipment so that they are fully prepared to deploy. In order to use this funding, we need authorization legislation. Senators Lugar and Biden and Congressmen Farr and Saxton have proposed such bills (S.613 and HR 1084, respectively). These are important pieces of legislation, and the Administration hopes that they soon can be turned into law.

Multiple outside experts have analyzed the need for civilian personnel and proposed various numbers of staff to respond to international requirements. S.613 legislation calls for an Active Response Corps of 250 and a 2000 person Standby component. The CRC task force has proposed an initial civilian reserve of approximately 2000. This level is premised on the historic need to respond in any given year to 1-3 operations – a small, medium, and large scale operation. If we had those numbers of personnel on board and with the proposed levels of deployment availability, 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. Future capacity levels will be determined based on our experiences with initial cadres and funding available.

### *Training*

The military would never consider sending soldiers to a conflict zone without proper training and exercises. And neither should we. S/CRS established a training working group that brings together representatives from the State Department, USAID, Defense, Justice, Commerce, USDA, HHS, DHS, Treasury, and the U.S. Institute of Peace. This group fosters collaboration among participating agencies to develop the training necessary to prepare officers for reconstruction and stabilization operations. The training working group is building on and leveraging existing resources. It is therefore connected with the National Security Education Consortium, the Security, Stabilization, Transition, and Reconstruction Senior Leaders Roundtable activities, and many other interagency training venues. This effort supports the President's May 2007 Executive Order on National Security Professional Development.

To better prepare those engaged in R&S issues, S/CRS has been working with the State Department's Foreign Service Institute to offer seven courses in conflict transformation, with two more on the way. In FY 2007, we trained 432 government employees – 196 from the State Department and 236 from other agencies. S/CRS officers have also contributed to courses designed for those deploying to PRTs, assisted in the development of courses for Joint Knowledge Online to promote interagency understanding, and presented at the National Defense University and the Army, Navy and Air War Colleges to senior level staff from across the U.S. Government.

All Active Response Corps members attend the full spectrum of S/CRS courses, as well as additional training available through the military, other civilian agencies, international counterparts, and outside organizations. Moving forward, we are looking to expand and formalize training opportunities for Standby Response Corps officers.

## **INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION**

Through the Transformational Diplomacy initiative, Secretary Rice has called on the State Department "to work with our many partners around the world to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people – and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system." Moreover, NSPD-44 instructs U.S. agencies, with the State Department in the lead, to work with international partners on early warning, conflict prevention and conflict response.

Building civilian capacity for S&R is not just a U.S. priority. We share a commitment with our international partners to prevent states from failing and to resolve both the causes and the consequences of violent conflict. From the beginning, S/CRS has strived to build close working relationships with international partner organizations ranging from the United Nations, to NATO and the European Union, and partner countries like the United Kingdom and Canada. We are also reaching out to other countries such as Australia, Germany, Japan and South Korea. Our work with these international partners has spanned both collaboration on civilian activities and understanding how civilians and militaries can plan and operate together more effectively.

A good example of our multifaceted international engagement can be found in our collaboration with U.S. Joint Forces Command. The JFCOM-led Multinational Experiment (MNE) series aims to improve civil-military cooperation among international partners in a crisis. MNE-4, held in March 2006, brought together eight countries and NATO, with the UN and EU observing. Planning for MNE-5 is underway.

Whether through these kinds of multilateral exercises, or through bilateral efforts, S/CRS consistently strives to increase global capacity to deal with the threats posed by failed or failing states, as well as with the human causes and consequences of conflict. We do this by developing and sharing tools with partners to help ensure we can work together more effectively and efficiently on the ground in a conflict environment.

## **CONCLUSION**

Building civilian capacity for reconstruction and stabilization is essential to our national security and I have no doubt that the U.S. Government will have this capability in the next ten years. The Defense Department has been tremendously supportive of S/CRS' efforts and has been arguably our greatest advocate. We have benefited greatly from their advice and expertise. The military understand better than anyone how critical R&S capacity is for troops on the ground. But it is also critical that the leadership for coordinating R&S operations and civilian capacity-building remain on the civilian side of the U.S. Government. Civilian leadership facilitates engagement with international and NGO partners who will be looking for – and quite frankly expect – a civilian interlocutor in the field.

Truly building civilian capacity ensures that we are able to partner with the military when necessary for the challenges that lie

ahead and to be able to deal with some crises without having to invoke U.S. military power. A civilian R&S capacity would also help relieve the U.S. military of post-conflict activities, and allow our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines to focus on their primary mission. We still have a long way to go to achieve this, but I can assure you there is strong support for this effort in the Administration. I am confident that with Congressional support, in the next two or three years we will be able to create the response capacity our country needs and our civilians and military in the field deserve.

Thank you.

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