Aligning "Soft" with "Hard" Power

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Last November, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates gave a speech that was described as "groundbreaking" in the manner in which it addressed the role of development and defense in meeting the national security challenges facing the United States. "One of the most important lessons of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is that military success is not sufficient to win," Secretary Gates stated:

> Economic development, institution-building, and the rule of law, promoting internal reconciliation, good governance, providing basic services to the people, training and equipping indigenous military and police forces, strategic communications, and more—these, along with security, are essential ingredients for long-term success.[1]

This article will address the importance of collaboration between American development agencies and the US military, the new means of driving that collaboration deeper into the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the interagency process, and the ways USAID will evolve in its relationship with the Department of Defense in the twenty-first century; especially as related to the role of development in achieving national security imperatives. Few subjects could be timelier or more important.

A New Relationship

While Secretary Gates sees development playing an essential role in the success of his organization's overall mission, USAID in turn has come to realize how fundamental security is to the success of its mission in the fragile and failed states that make up the core of its development portfolio. Recognizing the need for closer collaboration with DOD, USAID established an Office of Mili-

tary Affairs in the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance in 2005. Uniforms in the corridors of the Ronald Reagan Building that houses USAID are now so commonplace they are not even noticed. This is not the way things used to be, even a few short years or months ago. While relations between the military and USAID have evolved, stereotypical views outside the Agency's walls, including in Congress, have not. This may prove to be one of the chief impediments to the Agency's future effectiveness.

The Agency now has assigned military liaison officers from five regional Combatant Commands—US Africa Command (AFRICOM) and Special Operations Command are expected to assign officers shortly. At the same time, USAID Senior Development Advisers have been attached to the Pentagon, US Africa Command, and US European Command, and by August 2008 advisers will be in place at Special Operations Command, Central Command, Southern Command, and Pacific Command. USAID personnel have been deeply involved in the creation of AFRICOM and will eventually install five personnel in the command, each occupying key positions on that staff.

USAID has trained more than 2,000 military personnel in conflict assessment and helped prepare them to manage stability and reconstruction projects in environments of war and state failure as well as in humanitarian emergencies. The Agency has been the key architect of a rigorous training program for interagency personnel who are part of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan.

USAID and PRTs

PRTs represent the cutting edge in civilian/military operations and provide a test case of those interventions that are likely to remain prominent national security challenges well into the future. More than half a century of foreign assistance practice has shown that development does not move forward, nor is it sustained, without host governments taking the lead. Iraq and Afghanistan are no exceptions in this regard. Local ownership and buy-in of development project objectives are essential, just as important perhaps as actually constructing a school or paving a road.

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Examples of effective PRT programs where the locals buy-in include efforts to provide adequate supplies of clean water, functioning utilities, safe recreational facilities, solar power generation, road improvements, and management training for administrators of cities, towns, and regions. The combined efforts of the interagency teams that implemented these projects helped to build and nurture technical capacity within the region, while fostering economic development. They established practices that teach the rudiments of democratic decisionmaking helping to promote reconciliation within communities, including across tribal and religious lines.

In Iraq, USAID's Local Governance Program has been instrumental in drafting provincial development strategies. The strategies are developed with input from a collection of stakeholders, including citizens, elected officials, and ministry representatives; and have provided a point of reference for PRT activities. Given the short duration of assignments for PRT personnel, this collaboration will save time and ensure that teams are not constantly reinventing the wheel.

In Afghanistan, USAID has more than 20 field program officers and eight development advisers assigned to Coalition and International Security Assistance Force PRTs, task forces, and regional commands. As USAID's primary representative in the provinces, field officers help assess, plan, implement, and monitor US reconstruction and development efforts in the PRT area of responsibility. Field program officers also work to build relationships with local leaders in an effort to identify needs, and then coordinate with the USAID mission in Kabul and USAID's implementing partners to design and execute projects. Program officers also help military colleagues understand the range of civilian reconstruction and development projects in each province, so military- funded projects and activities complement and strengthen civilian efforts.

In Iraq, 26 program officers serve as USAID representatives on PRTs, embedded PRTs, and Provincial Support Teams. The officers serving on embedded PRTs are co-located with military units and work at the subprovincial level to provide direct contact with brigade and regimental combat team advisers providing USAID programming in support of local counterinsurgency strategies. Additionally, a USAID development adviser serves with the Multi-National Corps, in Iraq.

A three-week interagency Afghanistan PRT predeployment training program conducted at the State Department Foreign Service Institute and Fort Bragg, North Carolina, brought together active and reserve military members who commanded the PRTs during the last rotation in April 2008. Trainees were provided with the basic skill sets required to form cohesive interagency and civilian/military teams in pursuit of various stabilization and development projects.

This classroom training is followed by a week of individual skills training for civilians, including combat lifesaving, basic security, force protection guidelines, and other practical skills required to be successful and secure at the various PRT sites. The training culminates with a weeklong Capstone Exercise simulating the experiences and challenges PRT members will face during their deployment. The interagency PRT training courses continue to evolve with representatives of the Department of State working to inculcate "lessons learned" into the broader assessment framework. Civilian and military trainees on orders to Iraq receive an additional week of training designed and executed by the interagency team at the Foreign Service Institute.

Record of Success

Provincial Reconstruction Teams have achieved significant and encouraging results. A fall 2007 Iraq PRT report includes several noteworthy accomplishments.[2]

● Microfinance lending has been established through PRT support in 18 provinces. The current loan portfolio consists of more than 25,000 outstanding loans totaling over $33.5 million with a 98 percent payback rate.

● The Community Stabilization Program employs more than 54,000 Iraqis, and has provided over 7,000 Iraqis with vocational education and established apprenticeships for an additional 2,000 Iraqis. Over 1,400 community associations have been established in 18 provinces. More than two million days of employment and 33,000 long-term jobs had been created. Additionally, $276 million was made available for some 5,930 projects; Iraqi communities have contributed more than $73 million in support of these missions.

● Disbursements of Iraqi government funds are shifting to the provinces. The Ninewa PRT recently assisted the provincial government in executing $241 million of Iraq reconstruction and infrastructure improvement funds. The Baghdad PRT worked with the governor to improve essential services and with the Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committee to award 42 construction projects valued at $81 million.

The Afghanistan PRT program, which began in 2003, has moved from a focus on quick-impact programming designed to meet immediate needs to more transitional programming designed to support Afghanistan's longer-term development objectives. From 2003-06, USAID implemented the Quick Impact Project managed through the PRTs. During this period, more than 400 projects were completed, mostly small infrastructure projects that employed a substantial number of Afghans.

The main objective of the new USAID PRT program, Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD), is to help Afghanistan, in partnership with local communities, develop capacity for identifying and addressing

key issues related to development, governance, and security in outlying provinces. Development, governance, and security are three distinct missions with one common objective, a stable and prosperous Afghanistan.

The LGCD was inaugurated in 2006. It created a shift in PRT program activities in an effort to encourage communities to play a more active role in their own development while incorporating provincial and local government officials in the delivery of services. The overall objective is to build the capacity of local governments and better understand the root causes of instability. This focus has helped Afghanistan reach a critical point in its post-conflict development, a point where national government officials can connect with their constituents and deliver services at the subnational level.

Field program officers working through the LGCD program facilitated the development of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and the subnational consultation (SNC) process this past summer. This program provides workshops for provincial officials regarding ANDS, the SNC process, and other government initiatives in 14 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces. This assistance was critical because the SNC process is how the Afghan government determines its provincial needs as well as ensuring plans and strategies developed as part of the ANDS process meet the needs of the Afghan population. As one Afghan participant stated, "The overall process . . . will rebuild trust and improve the relations between government and the public . . . because for the first time we are involved in this practice with government officials."

Additionally, the LGCD has 172 projects under way. Dozens of projects have already been completed:

● In Kandahar Arghandab, a district center upgrade that permits local officials to maintain a central planning and decisionmaking organization within the local government providing access for local citizens.

● In Paktya Gardez, training has been provided for province-based provincial district committee facilitators. These facilitators are key interlocutors between the provinces and Kabul for the development of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy.

● In Khost Bak, the LGCD established a program for emergency medical technician training.

Great progress has been made in establishing mechanisms for fostering interagency planning and decisionmaking. Quarterly conferences between USAID and the US command at Bagram have increased information sharing and contributed to harmonizing USAID and military programming. Another effective interagency tool has been the assignment of military liaison officers to USAID in Kabul. There is no denying that civilian and military organizations are distinct, but there are now proven ways to bridge these cultures.

The current development successes have been made possible through a USAID-led initiative that was Afghanistan's and America's overriding priority following the ouster of the Taliban, the restoration of the Kabul-Kandahar Road. More than two decades of war left the road devastated, like much of the country's infrastructure. It was no more than a broken strip—bombed, mined, and pockmarked by neglect. Very little moved along the "lifeline" that heretofore had provided the Afghan people with their means of livelihood as well as access to health care, education, markets, and places of worship.

Today, goods move to markets along this road, girls walk along it to go to school, and expectant mothers now have increased access to clinics. Indirectly, the highway has made possible unprecedented advances in the decline of the world's worst infant mortality and maternal death rates. The road has economic, social, psychological, as well as strategic dimensions and exemplifies the kind of integrated planning necessary to restore life in moribund societies.

Earlier this year, USAID signed a $100 million contract to build a branch off the Ring Road that will significantly reduce travel time from Kabul to border areas near Pakistan's tribal region of North Waziristan. Loren Stoddard, the director of USAID's Agriculture and Alternative Development Program in Afghanistan, asserts that the poor condition of the road on the Afghan side of the Pakistan border has left Afghanistan's Khost region economically dependent on the volatile tribal regions. "The Khost area has long been isolated from the rest of Afghanistan," Stoddard said. "Khost has a fairly vibrant economy because of its closeness and interaction with the Pakistan economy, but it has always been somewhat of a regional economy that has been tied more to Pakistan than to the rest of Afghanistan. What we expect with this road is that Khost's economy will then begin to be somewhat more oriented toward the rest of Afghanistan, which is new."[3]

Because it borders an area that serves as a base for al Qaeda-linked militants and pro-Taliban fighters, Khost has enormous strategic as well as economic significance for Afghanistan. The North Waziristan region continues to be a staging ground for cross-border attacks. US military officials in Afghanistan have said that building secondary roads that connect the Ring Road with provincial capitals, such as the Khost highway project, is critical to reinforcing counterinsurgency operations. Such operations now overly depend on air strikes; the roads, when complete, will complement airpower and allow for the deployment of rapid-reaction forces overland.

Pakistan

USAID has worked closely with the US military in Pakistan to address a series of unforeseen needs and to plan long-term development pro-

jects designed to bring peace and stability to the country and provide greater hope for its people.

On 8 October 2005, a massive 7.6-magnitude earthquake struck the mountains of northeast Pakistan, killing 73,000 people and leaving 2.8 million homeless. Within 48 hours, the first of 20 US heavy-lift Chinook helicopters began arriving at the military airfield in Islamabad, just 65 miles from the epicenter of the earthquake. USAID dispatched a 25-member Disaster Assistance Response Team to the earthquake zone, flying and driving into remote regions in an effort to assess damage and determine what was required to save lives and reduce suffering. This was the beginning of the world's largest humanitarian helicopter airlift and resulted in the evacuation of thousands of injured. The combined effort of the US military and USAID is credited with averting an estimated 200,000 additional deaths from hunger and disease.[4]

The post-disaster reconstruction of the area laid the groundwork for further development. The United States pledged $200 million over four years for a wide range of activities designed to rebuild the area. Individual projects were undertaken to clear rubble, help the homeless find housing, rebuild schools and health facilities, improve health conditions, and increase rural incomes. Systemic changes were also targeted to improve the health and education systems, and to increase economic activity assisting in industrial expansion and job growth.

These experiences have proven to be an invaluable testing ground for long-term plans addressing the needs of the strategically vital Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA), home to 3.2 million people, a desolate place where women remain veiled, access to modern amenities is nonexistent, and smuggling of opium and other contraband is routine. USAID has allocated approximately six percent of funding for fiscal years 2002-07 to activities in the FATA. The United States also plans to increase spending, allocating $750 million of aid into Pakistan's tribal areas over the next five years.

The goal is to help the government of Pakistan integrate the people of this strategically critical region with the rest of the country, economically, socially, and politically; to give the people of the FATA a stake in Pakistan's development; and to help them experience the economic growth, social benefits, and services that come with integration. Most importantly, this program will strengthen the capacity of local government institutions in the FATA to address the needs of their citizens.

USAID designed a comprehensive program for the region addressing the major constraints that impede development, with an emphasis on promoting economic growth through the development of small and medium enterprises; along with markets, education, job training, health care, and

community development. By providing the FATA with the same basic human services and infrastructure as the rest of Pakistan, the people of FATA will be less likely to tolerate al Qaeda and the Taliban.

Beyond Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan

USAID and the US military are coordinating efforts in other areas of the world beyond the Near East. The Agency shares the "frontlines" with the military in some of the most inhospitable, dangerous, and threatening environ-ments around the globe. Violent attacks (killings, woundings, and kidnappings) against groups providing humanitarian assistance grew to 837 incidents between 2003 and 2007, compared to 437 incidents tallied between 1997 and 2002. Su-dan (115 incidents), Afghanistan (87), Somalia (74), and Iraq (51) had the high-est numbers of attacks.[5] Last December, the Agency buried a foreign service officer and a foreign service national brutally gunned down in the Sudan. While USAID is actively involved with the US military in a number of failed states and post-conflict environments, the Agency is also actively tracking and defusing the potential conflicts. "Indeed, having robust civilian capabilities available could make it less likely that military force will have to be used in the first place, as local problems might be dealt with before they become crises."[6]

In April, USAID's Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance published its *Alert Lists* for 2008, which ranks more than 160 coun-tries according to key indicators of fragility and the likelihood of experiencing violent conflict.[7] The greatest concentration of states facing the highest risk of instability and the most serious challenges to effective and legitimate gover-nance is found in Africa, and includes Angola, the Central African Republic, Chad, and the Cote d'Ivoire. In fact, the top-20 "hot spots" are found in Africa, with the exception of Haiti. This marks a dramatic shift in geostrategic threats facing the United States that makes the launching of AFRICOM both timely and urgent. USAID's publication of its report coincides with the Brookings In-stitution publication of its own index, *State Weakness in the Developing World*, an indication that the academic world shares some of these concerns.[8]

Interagency efforts in Mindanao (Philippines) and Colombia are prime examples of working together to defuse conflict and implement effec-tive counterterrorism programs. In Mindanao, a collaborative effort involv-ing USAID, the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Assistance Group, and the Joint Special Operations Task Force civil affairs section has worked to build access to isolated areas in the province once dominated by criminals and serving as a sanctuary for terrorists. The Liguasan Marsh consists of about 280,000 hect-ares and includes parts of four provinces in Mindanao, with a population of 650,000 people. For decades, it has been a sanctuary for terrorists, bandits,

and various groups on the run. It is where most kidnap victims are held until a ransom is paid.

USAID is constructing a network of roads, boat landings, and harbors that will facilitate movement of security forces into and within the Marsh area and bring economic opportunity to isolated inhabitants. The goal is to build the capacity of the local populace to resist insurgency through alternative programs.

As in the Philippines, the government of Colombia is taking steps to reinforce stability in areas formerly controlled by insurgent organizations. It is establishing a civilian/military operations center, with support from US Southern Command and USAID, whose area of operation includes six municipalities in Meta, the historic insurgent heartland and a major area of coca cultivation. The tools for engagement are municipal assemblies, which bring together local government, police, and the military, as well as a cross section of the community to analyze and prioritize projects for funding. The program features a set of rapid interventions, including quick, high-impact alternative livelihood activities that the government of Colombia offers to local communities.

The Way Ahead

As the contours of the geostrategic challenges that face our nation have become clearer, they demonstrate the importance of institutionalizing and reinforcing collaboration between the Department of Defense and USAID. This importance can only grow as American agencies work together in Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa, and conflict-ridden regions around the globe. In the past USAID was viewed as a bit of a "stepchild" in the family of foreign policy institutions that comprise America's national security apparatus. The present Secretary of Defense does not see it this way. A realistic foreign policy requires that America "focus our energies beyond the guns and steel of the military . . . on the other elements of national power that will be so crucial in the coming years," Secretary Gates said last November. This means that "the nonmilitary instruments of America's national power need to be rebuilt, modernized, and committed to the fight."[9]

During the Vietnam War, USAID boasted a staff of 15,000. That number was reduced to around 3,000 in the 1990s. Today the Agency has fewer than 2,000 foreign service officers, a number that is clearly inadequate to meet the challenges of the post-9/11 world given the significant increase in USAID management responsibilities. A reversal of these trends actually began this year with USAID's Development Leadership Initiative. Announced in the President's Fiscal Year 2009 Budget, this request includes $92.1 million to hire 300 additional foreign service officers in fiscal year 2009, a 30 percent increase. This will move USAID toward its goal of a 100 percent increase in deployable staff during the next three years. This is the beginning of

what is hoped to be a sustained effort toward the rebuilding and modernization of the Agency that our national security requires.

Looking to the future, USAID continues to be fully engaged with the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization in its effort to carry out National Security Presidential Directive 44 which designated the Secretary of State to coordinate and lead US Government efforts to prepare, plan, conduct, and assess reconstruction and stabilization activities. President Bush requested funding for a Civilian Reserve Corps, which will build a governmentwide cadre of skilled, trained civilian experts prepared for immediate deployment with or without the military.[10] As proposed, the Civilian Reserve Corps would draw from a pool of Americans with expertise in such areas as engineering, medicine, and policing, to be identified for specific deployments. The corps would be deployed globally to assist nations emerging from civil war or to mitigate circumstances in failed states that might lead to conflict. This organization would be backstopped by a roster of 2,000 additional federal volunteers with language and technical skills standing by as a ready reserve.

The Building Partnership Capacity "Roadmap" in DOD's most recent Quadrennial Defense Review is encouraging. Positive developments include a shift in emphasis from vertical structures and processes to more transparent and horizontal integration, and a call for the establishment of dynamic partnerships in a "whole of government approach" to national security challenges. Closer integration of DOD with civilian agencies is critical for the security of our and other nations around the globe.

Two decades ago, the Goldwater-Nichols Act began dismantling cultural and operational barriers to interoperability among the uniformed services. The transition to "jointness" is widely credited as a prime factor in the American success in the 1991 Gulf War.

Today the spirit and practice of "jointness" may be seen throughout the national security and international relations institutions of the US government. This year the Director of National Intelligence, Michael McConnell, made joint duty one of his highest priorities for improving performance within the intelligence community. In an analogy to Goldwater-Nichols, he has ordered that civilians in any agency of the intelligence community serve at least one assignment in a different intelligence agency as a condition for promotion above the GS-15 rank.[11]

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has taken a similar initiative with diplomacy.[12] "Our aim is to reposition American diplomats from an excessive concentration in European capitals to a stronger presence in the developing world, including in regional centers outside of capitals." Secretary Rice observes that "the allocation of American diplomatic resources still has vestiges of our Cold War posture." She has called for a dramatic increase in

joint duty, placing more foreign service officers as political advisers to military commanders. The Department of State is transforming the US diplomatic service in an effort to make it a more effective instrument for the promotion of security and prosperity around the world.

Putting this vision into practice represents a cultural change as dramatic—and as salutary in terms of national security—as what Goldwater-Nichols wrought with the military. Closer cooperation between the military and the nation's chief development agency is a present fact and an essential partnership for the future, not simply a temporary phenomenon of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Integrating and synchronizing DOD theater security cooperation plans, State Department mission performance plans, and USAID strategic country plans will be permanent features of a coherent national security strategy.

To meet the national security challenges the nation now faces, the United States needs to apply all the resources of American power—hard and soft. Development assistance, when joined arm-in-arm with the Departments of Defense and State in the National Security Strategy, has an important story to tell and a critical role to play in the coming decades. The Agency has taken giant steps in preparing itself to play this role and will continue to work to ensure that collaboration is as effective as humanly possible in the future.

NOTES

1. Robert M. Gates, "Landon Lecture" (Manhattan: Kansas State Univ., 26 November 2007).

2. US Agency for International Development, *Iraq PRTs* (Washington: USAID, 2007). An Arabic translation of the brochure appeared in 2008.

3. Ron Synovitz, "Afghanistan: Key Road Toward Pakistan to Improve Trade, Security," *RFE/RL Newsline*, 29 April 2008. Stoddard's remarks are quoted there.

4. See US Agency for International Development, *Pakistan Quake Relief* (Washington: USAID, 2006).

5. The Overseas Development Institute's Humanitarian Policy Group has provided the latest raw data. In May 2008, the group published their findings in a comprehensive report on violence against aid workers in the field.

6. Gates.

7. US Agency for International Development, *Alerts List* (Washington: USAID, 2008).

8. Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick, *Index of State Weakness in the Developing World* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2008).

9. Gates.

10. President George W. Bush called for a volunteer Civilian Reserve Corps in the *State of the Union Address*, 23 January 2007. "Such a corps would function much like our military reserve," he said. "It would ease the burden on the Armed Forces by allowing us to hire civilians with critical skills to serve on missions abroad when America needs them. And it would give people across America who do not wear the uniform a chance to serve in the defining struggle of our time." *The National Security Strategy* of 2006 called for the establishment of an Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization to improve "our capability to plan for and respond to post-conflict and failed state situations." When operational, "it will integrate all relevant United States Government resources and assets in conducting reconstruction and stabilization operations." (George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* [Washington: The White House, 2006], 44.)

11. Director of National Intelligence Michael McConnell signed the implementing instructions for the Intelligence Community's Civilian Joint Duty Program on 25 June 2007 and called joint duty "one of the most important elements of the Community's transformation."

12. Condoleezza Rice, "Transformational Diplomacy" (Washington: Georgetown Univ., 18 January 2006).