

## Chapter 19

# Cooperation with Allies and Coalition Partners

One of the most remarkable achievements in diplomatic history was the creation of the network of multilateral, regional, and bilateral institutions and alliances that built, preserved, and solidified peace, prosperity, and stability for the United States and its partners following World War II. Arising out of a shared conviction that only cooperative action could defeat the totalitarian threats posed first by Nazism and later by communism, such bodies as the United Nations (UN), the Bretton Woods financial institutions, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the European Coal and Steel Community not only endured and evolved, but also spawned similar organizations around the globe and, moreover, shaped the way that much of the world instinctively views international relations.

As power shifts and a complex array of threats and opportunities emerges, the question arises as to the future shape of successful multinational and alliance cooperation. Clearly, the security challenges posed by a globalized world—in which the most serious threats are often not from rival states but from radical organizations and transnational criminal gangs, or arise from impersonal, inchoate trends such as global warming and new, evolving forms of pandemic disease—are very different from those of the era of bipolar superpower confrontation. Ever since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union 2 years later, NATO has been grappling to define a new relevance for itself. The end of the Cold War combined with the emergence of North Korea as a nuclear weapons state has also led to changes in



United Nations Headquarters

the shape of U.S. alliances in East Asia. Meanwhile, the Middle East—arguably the most dangerous of the world's regions given that it is the convergence point of many pressing transnational threats and the locus of active conflict involving American forces—remains without any formal alliance structure around which to organize U.S. involvement.

Cooperation with other countries in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will inevitably take a variety of forms, from multilateralism at the global level down to local, ad hoc cooperation with selected coalition partners that will develop as situations demand. The global economic and financial crisis has accentuated the importance of emerging powers, underscoring the opportunity for new multilateral cooperation even while possibly adding national pressures on existing institutions and alliances. This chapter examines a spectrum of this rich set of possibilities for security cooperation.

### Multilateralism

Multilateralism is becoming ever more important in organizing international cooperation on the shared problems facing the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Yet its misuse over the years has eroded confidence in international organizations. The United States has a strong interest in revitalizing multilateral institutions, but if the Obama administration is going to increase U.S. effectiveness in this important aspect of foreign affairs, it will need to strengthen international law, improve interagency planning, and make significant investments in personnel.

#### *A Globalizing Strategic Environment*

After a century of championing international organizations from the Pan American Union to the United Nations, many Americans, who perhaps look for results rather than processes and relationships, have become increasingly skeptical about multilateralism. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger put it succinctly in his 1994 book *Diplomacy*: “The United Nations did provide a convenient meeting place for diplomats and a useful forum for the exchange of ideas. It also performed important technical functions. But it failed to fulfill the underlying premise of collective security—the prevention of war and collective resistance to aggression.”

U.S. leaders responded to the failures of the United Nations by avoiding it when they needed to deal with critical issues. To some extent, they focused on regional organizations and military alliances such as NATO. But primarily, U.S. leaders relied on bilateral arrangements supplemented as needed by unilateral

measures. Even in trade matters, for instance, where the United States has long used multilateral mechanisms to advance its interests—first the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and now the World Trade Organization—the trend has been to pursue regional and bilateral agreements.

As confidence in global multilateralism has declined, regional and subregional organizations have taken on new life, often explicitly building on the advantages of neighborhood. Smaller groupings dealing with narrower agendas are more capable of achieving quick consensus. Furthermore, when disagreements hamper action, it is easy to devolve to even smaller coalitions whose members can agree among themselves to take action.

Under the impact of globalization, however, most problems that affect the security and welfare of the American people no longer respond to unilateral solutions or even to the efforts of narrow ad hoc coalitions. Such coalitions may be preferable to the anarchy of unilateralism, but they lack the broad legitimacy of decisions reached multilaterally within a structured organization, the kind of legitimacy that is necessary to deal effectively with many of the issues that require cooperation beyond U.S. borders: natural disasters, terrorism, arms smuggling, trade, energy, drug trafficking, financial flows, migration, democracy and human rights, development, fragile states, and rising powers. These issues vary widely in their nature. In each case, their management starts at home unilaterally but must become multilateral to succeed.

#### *Why Multilateralism?*

Despite its cumbersome nature, multilateralism provides certain advantages that do not accrue through unilateralism or less inclusive forms of international cooperation. Most notably, it creates frameworks for long-term cooperation based on shared principles and precedents that go beyond the bilateral. True multilateralism is more than the temporary agreement of three or more countries on a specific problem; it is, as political scientist Patrick Morgan has defined it, cooperation based on “generalized principles of conduct, rather than . . . considerations linked to specific situations or particular conditions and concerns.”<sup>1</sup> When such broad agreement on generalized principles of conduct is turned into a treaty ratified by individual countries, the resulting framework becomes the basis of international law. Today, the UN Charter and the World Court are the cornerstones of global order based on law. Multilateral action under the umbrella of such

organizations thus enjoys a special legitimacy in the eyes of many.

Multilateral institutions also have strong potential as means of mass persuasion. The United Nations has been called the “parliament of man” for its presumed ability to embody world public opinion. As Teddy Roosevelt said of the American Presidency, multilateral institutions can serve as “bully pulpits,” or as Argentine President Carlos Menem put it in speaking of the Organization of American States (OAS), as *cajas de resonancia*—“sounding boxes.” Even if agreement in these forums is not reached, when heads of state and other leaders address key issues in multilateral forums, people listen.

Multilateral forums also play a useful role as consensus-building deliberative mechanisms. The views of the strong and the weak alike can be aired, with the latter often more willing to accede to the needs of the former if they are certain their concerns have been heard. Debates can identify areas of convergence among countries with otherwise different interests. As frustrating as they sometimes are, the delays on action imposed by these debates can also gain time for more carefully considered responses, including ones that are eventually carried out below the multilateral level. Even providing cover for governments to defer problems that cannot be immediately resolved can be useful in international interactions.

Multilateral diplomacy can also lend durability to international agreements, especially in the area of dispute resolution, in ways difficult to achieve on a purely bilateral basis. The multilateral process tends to ensure that the interests of the various parties, whether conflicting or convergent, are identified and reflected in the agreement, thus increasing the likelihood of compliance. Moreover, this process, along with the moral stature generally attributed to multilateral institutions, enhances mutual confidence that all parties will abide by the agreement. It was to capture this sense of moral ratification that the Panama Canal treaties were signed at an OAS meeting in the presence of the hemisphere’s heads of state and government; all concerned believed this would discourage cheating on the treaties’ provisions.

State-building and economic assistance programs are often both more palatable and more effective when carried out on a multilateral basis. The fragile states most in need of such assistance are also highly vulnerable to charges that bilateral donors exert excessive influence on internal policymaking, further reducing their perceived legitimacy. They can thus benefit from the kind of long-term institutional

support that can be provided impartially through international organizations.

The same applies even to less inherently intrusive forms of assistance. For example, intrinsic tensions in the U.S.-Mexican *Plan Mérida*, an initiative aimed at enhancing cooperation against drug trafficking and other criminal activity, arise out of differing perceptions of whether the nature of the program is assistance or cooperation. Pursuing a similar initiative that would mix assistance and commitments to cooperation in a multilateral rather than bilateral framework might have permitted the participants to finesse or even harmonize such conflicting points of view.

ISAF



Royal Marine Commandos patrol in Helmand Province, Afghanistan during operation to stabilize and increase security

International organizations have long helped to establish common standards that make possible everything from the mails and trade to the safe operation of flights across borders. The International Telecommunication Union, World Intellectual Property Organization, World Health Organization, and World Bank are all multilateral entities whose neutrality and impartiality enable them to share information and manage technical matters in ways considered relatively free of national biases. Cooperation delivered through international bodies is often better accepted and more effective than assistance through bilateral aid agencies.

On occasion, multilateral institutions are even capable of action to meet threats to the peace. Iraq’s August 2, 1990, invasion of Kuwait provided a rare



instance. The UN Security Council condemned Iraq's action the very same day as "a breach of international peace and security," and demanded the withdrawal of Iraqi troops. On November 29, 1990, the council authorized the use of "all necessary means to uphold and implement" the previous resolution. Collective security worked quickly and effectively in this case because Iraq had violated a general principle of conduct so vital that no responsible sovereign state could ignore its breach.

### *The Limits of Multilateralism*

In the Kuwait case, as in Korea before that, multilateral authorization provided increased legitimacy at home as well as abroad for U.S.-led military action and facilitated the important contributions made by other countries. The resolutions enabled easier access to the battlefield and better intelligence. This, of course, has not always been the case. Decisive action has sometimes been obstructed by delays or approved only at the cost of giving others influence over U.S. military operations and complicating their implementation. Throughout most of the Cold War, the United Nations was paralyzed by the superpower rivalry. More recently, it has been reduced to peace-keeping missions so weak and numerous that the optimism once associated with the presence of Blue Helmets has been dissipated.

Despite the special moral status that popular opinion in most countries grants to multilateral action, states often give only lip service to the ideal of multilateralism when it comes to practical action. Big countries often worry that working to get broad agreement will delay and interfere with what they believe must be done. Working multilaterally is inconvenient and bureaucratic. The same public opinion that values multilateral consensus tends to dismiss the debates necessary to build that consensus as utopian-chasing talk shops rather than real problem-solving forums.

The numerical prevalence of smaller countries in multilateral forums opens the door to claims that multilateralism is nothing more than the trade unionism of the weak and otherwise irrelevant. The United Nations, when not being characterized as inefficient, corrupt, and anti-American, is particularly vulnerable to this charge. As Eric Shawn put it, the United Nations "opposes and criticizes the U.S. at every opportunity." Roger Cohen of *The New York Times* said much the same thing: "Too often the UN can be no more than the weak lowest common denominator of our collective will, an umbrella that packs up when the storm rises."<sup>2</sup>

Criticism of the United Nations for being too weak on the one hand and for being too strong and overbearing on the other stems from the error of thinking



Session of the Organization of American States Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

of it and similar organizations as having an existence independent of their member states. It is true that multilateral organizations can sometimes articulate common principles in ways that make them the voice of an international community larger than those of its individual member states. But operationally, the UN or the OAS can reflect only what its members are actually willing to do. Sovereign states are still the key units of world politics and thus retain the right to say no. The sovereignty that ensures consideration of the rights and interests of all countries is the same sovereignty that ultimately permits states to opt out or, in the case of the five permanent members of the Security Council, to block action by others. Thus, the suggestion that the solution to the UN's weaknesses lies in giving it the capacity to act independently of its members—such as by acquiring its own independent intelligence-gathering capability—is both unrealistic and inconsistent with the real nature of multilateralism. In that sense, the deficiencies manifested by the United Nations may reflect a need to revise its members' policies more than a need to reform the institution itself.

### *Making Multilateralism Work*

Despite multilateralism's admitted shortcomings, it is increasingly obvious that more and more problems have dimensions that can only be addressed effectively through multilateral diplomacy. Most countries, however, still do not habitually think much, if at all, beyond the bilateral. The United States is among the most culpable in this regard. For much of the recent past, U.S. opinion leaders assumed that they knew what needed to be done and how to do it better than anyone else. That assumption no longer holds true, if it ever did. More than ever before, we must understand and respect the perspectives and interests of those with whom we must cooperate; going it alone cannot suffice for the common effort made possible through multilateral cooperation.

*Rule of Law.* To some degree, the ineffectiveness of multilateral institutions is the self-fulfilling result of the prevalent U.S. belief that multilateral institutions are inherently ineffective. As the most powerful country in the world, U.S. support for international institutions is essential for them to function effectively, and particularly for them to restrain through international legal norms the behaviors that are most destructive of the peace and stability necessary for the fulfillment of U.S. objectives. Unfortunately, for more than a decade, the United States has shunned or opposed key international agreements, including

the Kyoto Protocol, Ottawa Treaty, Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and Law of the Sea Convention. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor commented insightfully that “the decision not to sign on to legal frameworks the rest of the world supports is central to the decline in American influence in the world.” Ironically, this lack of U.S. support for international legal agreements not only weakens the capacity of international organizations, but also, by undermining the perceived moral legitimacy of American actions, has the effect of limiting American operational flexibility in interactions with other countries, even in a bilateral setting.

To help restore its credibility, the United States is working to close the Guantanamo Bay prison by the end of 2009, but it could also consider ending sanctions against countries that join the International Criminal Court and ratifying the American Convention on Human Rights and the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials. It has already signed both; the Senate should ratify them, with reservations if necessary, because the impact of unimplemented resolutions and unenforced laws is not neutral, but actually negative. Even so, multilateral agreements are not self-enforcing; their implementation depends on the actions of sovereign states. Harmonization of national practices with international law takes time, not merely because of different legal systems and traditions, but because national needs and sovereignty concerns must be satisfied.

### *Institutional Capacity for Multilateralism.*

Multilateral approaches are often shunned because the United States believes it lacks the people with the training and expertise to make them work. It is not alone in this concern. But for multilateral solutions to work, sufficient human capital must be invested in them, not only at the high political level of plenary meetings but also, more importantly, at the operational level. Activities involving several countries are inherently complex. They function best when relationships are maintained across countries by a network of professionals who know how to work together. Such networks are the lifeblood of international secretariats: they can both provide early warning of and move to contain issues that might otherwise escalate into problems. In effect, these professional networks serve as valuable insurance policies for progress and peace.

Many studies that have examined interagency processes in the United States have identified a need

for an interagency cadre of national security professionals with experience in intelligence, diplomacy, and defense. We need to go beyond that. Every U.S. department and agency should have a corps of public servants who spend part of their careers working in the UN, the OAS, or other international organizations. Stealing a page from the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act, which requires military officers to have experience and training in joint operations as a prerequisite for promotion to flag rank, a tour working as an international public servant should be a requirement for promotion to the Senior Executive Service or the Senior Foreign Service. Not only would U.S. agencies then be staffed by individuals with international experience, but the international organizations themselves also would be strengthened by the presence of U.S. personnel.

Common standards and training for experts in drug control, terrorism, transnational crime, human rights, civil emergencies, and the mitigation of natural disasters should be greatly increased. All countries should reserve places in their diplomatic and military academies and other advanced schools of public service for counterparts from neighboring countries. In the Western Hemisphere, multilateral training could be increased by creating a new Inter-American Academy of Public Administration, with students nominated by member states. Such international professional training should not be considered foreign aid, but rather a necessary measure to build the technical capacity for effective diplomacy that yields practical, sustainable results across national borders to the benefit of all concerned.

*A New Model of Multilateral Security Cooperation.* Today's increasingly multipolar world has shifted the focus away from formal alliances based on automatic collective security guarantees toward cooperation in response to specific crises. The multilateral response to the 1995 conflict between Ecuador and Peru may provide a useful model for future cases. To prevent the escalation of fighting, four countries—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and the United States—acting together as guarantors of an earlier peace treaty, each contributed soldiers to a military observer mission for which the two belligerents shared the costs. The guarantors not only ensured the preservation of the ceasefire, but also shared intelligence, listened to each party's views, and eventually, after 3 years, succeeded against most expectations in hammering out a solution all could support. Close adherence to local, regional, and international laws, respect for

military discipline, and intimate diplomatic-military coordination were the keys to success.

### *Participation: The Key to Maximizing Power and Stability*

The Obama administration must make an urgent start on rebuilding multilateral capacity if the United States is to expand its options for dealing effectively with the era of globalization. The world needs a “diplomatic surge” to revalidate legal frameworks, and a “consultation surge” to forge standards and relationships that will enable the United States to calibrate the application of its power with and toward others. Effectiveness will require participation: without U.S. political participation in the building of consensus and the implementation of decisions, multilateralism cannot live up to its potential.

### **Enhancing Cooperation among the Atlantic Allies**

The post-Cold War transatlantic goal of integrating a Europe that is “whole and free” has been largely accomplished, though with serious ongoing challenges in the Balkans and former Soviet states. Indeed, aggressive Russian behavior in Georgia in summer 2008 elevated NATO concerns about the need to bolster its core function of collective defense. Nevertheless, operating in multinational military coalitions with allies and partners, as in the Balkans and Afghanistan, remains an American security priority. A central challenge is whether NATO will take the lead in organizing these coalitions, or will be limited to laying the political and planning foundations for “coalitions of the willing.” Evolving concepts of how coalition operations should look will present both a challenge and an opportunity for President Obama as he seeks to enhance alliance relationships.

### *The Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan Experiences*

While the militaries of NATO's 28 members remain under national control, the Alliance's integrated military command has provided doctrine and planning for collective military operations for nearly 60 years. During the Cold War, operational guidance concentrated on territorial defense; since 1991, operations have focused on force projection in the Balkans and Afghanistan. While member states make operational decisions via consultation and consensus that reflect shared transatlantic interests, the expansion of NATO's political objectives, membership, and operational mandates has made agreement on the

conduct of coalition operations more difficult. NATO can, nonetheless, make multilateral coalitions more effective through an integrated command structure, joint training and exercising, shared intelligence and communications, enabling capabilities, and a culture of common military experience and defense planning.

NATO has transformed its command structure in conjunction with the U.S. realignment of its own troops deployed in Europe to provide a foundation from which to project power beyond the Alliance's area of responsibility. NATO members have built new forces, including a 25,000-member Response Force, and have developed nascent operational ties between NATO and the European Union (EU). The Alliance now emphasizes rapid deployment, sustainability, and jointness in multinational operations that may include any combination of land, maritime, and air assets. Its ability to engage in coalition operations has been forged and tested in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.

#### *Bosnia-Herzegovina and Peace Enforcement.*

From 1991 to 1995, NATO could not achieve consensus over how to confront ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Allied diplomacy had mostly contained the civil fighting, but NATO procedures blocked intervention. In 1995, NATO finally agreed to airstrikes against Serb forces that were attacking the UN-proclaimed civilian safe havens. This use of airpower, combined with a Croat-Muslim ground offensive, led to a balance of power on the ground and paved the way for American diplomatic initiatives to facilitate a peace agreement. NATO then intervened as a peace enforcer with 60,000 troops, half of which were American. NATO had planned for peace implementation since 1993, a process that included engaging staff officers from Central and Eastern Europe partner countries in command post exercises. This allowed 10,000 troops from non-NATO countries to participate under NATO command—including 2,000 from Russia, with a Russian general posted in the NATO operational planning cell at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Belgium.

The Bosnia mission was successful for several reasons. First, American leadership helped forge a consensus within NATO and included other regional powers acting with a UN mandate. Second, substantial numbers of NATO troops were available for rapid deployment to enforce peace. Third, NATO forces were supported by other international institutions, including the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, European Union, and

World Bank, whose participation allowed the military to focus on primary missions.

*Kosovo and Warfighting.* In 1998–1999, the United States and NATO used military threats to dissuade Serb forces in Yugoslavia from continuing ethnic cleansing inside Kosovo (then part of Serbia, with a 90 percent majority ethnic Albanian population). NATO agreed through the fall of 1998 to action orders for airstrikes, but these were not implemented. When diplomacy failed to achieve objectives, NATO agreed in March 1999 to launch coalition operations against Yugoslavia. This campaign had six key characteristics. First, it emphasized airpower with no ground element available to combat Serb forces or help with air targeting. Second, senior decisionmakers assumed airpower would produce diplomatic concessions, and thus approved only 3 days of initial bombing. Instead, when bombing commenced, the Serbian army forced most of the Albanian population into fragile neighboring countries. Third, a lack of consensus among the allies limited target selection



UN (John Isaac)

UN Security Council votes on resolution condemning aggressive acts by Iraq against Kuwait, September 1990

and how low planes could fly, thus increasing civilian casualties. Fourth, advanced American military technology could not be easily integrated into coalition air operations. For example, to ensure sole control over its assets and prevent operational leaks, the United States did not inform allies in advance about sorties that involved the use of F-117s, B-2s, or cruise missiles. Fifth, NATO's decisionmaking procedures, which some critics called "war by committee," had a negative impact on joint force activation, staff composition, facilities, command and control, logistics, and execution. This lack of decisiveness led to what amounted to "incremental war," while



concerns over collateral damage created havens for the enemy. Key decisions were eventually taken outside of NATO by the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Germany, who began to signal preparations for a ground invasion by the United States and the United Kingdom. Finally, the European Union and, most significantly, Russia put diplomatic and economic pressure on Serb leaders to cease attacks on the ethnic Albanian population. Three months after the war began, Serbia capitulated. The Kosovo issue was not “settled,” however, until 2008, when the province declared its independence from Serbia; nevertheless, over 15,000 NATO troops remained as peacekeepers, and serious problems regarding the persecution of Serb minorities in Kosovo persist.

*Afghanistan and Counterinsurgency.* In 2005, NATO assumed command of coalition operations in Afghanistan. In stable areas, European allies contributed to reconstruction and peace support operations, while American-led combat and counterterrorist forces operated as a limited coalition of the willing. These two separate mandates violated a core component of counterinsurgency doctrine: unity of command. The overall operation was further weakened by insufficient NATO force generation; the national caveats placed on many troop deployments, which hindered force generation; and limited command flexibility and situational awareness. Even in peaceful areas, the different levels at which NATO members contributed to the Provincial Reconstruction Teams led to their uneven development and effectiveness. The lack of unity of command even meant that other international organizations and nongovernmental organizations found it difficult to conduct sustained efforts. Major elements that were fundamental to success were outside NATO’s area of responsibility, including rebuilding the police force (for which in 2003 the United States initially only budgeted \$5 million and Germany sent 50 trainers). Antidrug operations in Afghanistan and political-military trends in Pakistan were also outside NATO’s mandate.

By 2007, Taliban forces and al Qaeda were staging sustained attacks against Allied forces in several parts of the country, wearing down public support in Europe and Canada for continued operations. Training the Afghan army represented the best exit strategy, yet by fall 2008, the Afghan army remained poorly trained, rife with desertion, and lacking much of the heavy equipment needed to conduct operations. NATO needed to increase its Mentoring and Liaison Teams from 25 to at least 100 to stay on pace with a goal of 70,000 trained troops—even before a

new target of doubling the Afghan National Army and other security forces was put forth as part of a renewed focus on building Afghan capacity. Training is complicated by Afghan soldiers’ and policemen’s lack of fluency in English and illiteracy in their own languages. But even trained Afghan troops are difficult to sustain in the field, either because of unclear missions or tribal and ethnic loyalties.<sup>3</sup>

The cases of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Afghanistan illustrate important areas where NATO has been both essential to and a challenge for coalition military operations. The Bosnia-Herzegovina model of broad-based cooperation on peace operations worked best, while Kosovo and Afghanistan exposed significant political and operational limitations to direct military intervention by NATO. These situations are unique but also instructive of elements for success and dilemmas to avoid when considering the further transformation of NATO for coalition operations.

### *Issues and Challenges for the United States*

The Obama administration has an opportunity to reengage American multilateral leadership during this year marking NATO’s 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. At the same time that NATO Allies have been reluctant to apply lessons learned from past coalition military engagements as doctrine, the United States is sometimes charged with viewing NATO as a toolbox from which it chooses Allies selectively. Both of these tendencies reduce incentives for states to invest in the institutional foundations that make NATO effective, as well as undermining the principle of shared responsibility. Aligning missions with capabilities will be an essential step toward revitalizing transatlantic security cooperation.

The United States faces several strategic choices. First, Washington must decide whether it wants to cultivate a strong EU military capacity. The United States traditionally has viewed the EU defense and security capabilities as desirable as long as they do not duplicate those of NATO. These institutional architectures can be complementary and are increasingly viewed as such. The European Union provides unique economic and civilian resources, along with multilateral training and exercising for police forces. Meanwhile, the United States dominates force projection capabilities, including air- and sealift, and communications and intelligence infrastructure. How these institutional alignments will complement each other depends on another major strategic challenge, which is to achieve a common threat assessment as the basis for doctrine and planning. Although NATO



now supports missile defense systems in Europe, and its members strongly agree about the need to counter weapons of mass destruction proliferation and terrorism, they still cannot settle on the best response.

Reconciling relations with Russia remains a significant challenge for the transatlantic alliance. New geostrategic stresses, especially involving energy and pipelines, are high priorities for the United States and Europe, but developing joint operational doctrine and capabilities remains difficult. NATO has been delegated the tasks of supporting peacekeeping in North Africa, dealing with piracy on the high seas, training Iraqi forces, and bringing peace to Afghanistan. Yet the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Black Sea remain unstable areas in closer proximity to Europe. It is not clear how steps toward gradual NATO enlargement aimed at consolidating stability in Ukraine and Georgia can be taken without creating further tensions with Russia. Meanwhile, constructive engagement with Russia remains a priority, but has become far more difficult to implement in light of Moscow's decision to intervene militarily outside of its borders. The American bilateral Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program might serve as a broader multilateral framework for armaments safety and proliferation controls in Eurasia, while arms control and disarmament are given renewed attention. In all these matters, a coherent and sustainable Russia policy is required.

NATO members are willing to undertake coalition missions, but they often have to do so without established doctrinal concepts or sufficient resources. Some initiatives have included command structure reform and the development of the NATO Response Force. The European Union is developing a similar force that could complement NATO missions. NATO also developed emergency response programs for catastrophic terrorism and natural disaster relief. Nonetheless, NATO members are divided about whether the main role of coalition engagement should be peace support or combat operations. In reality, complex security environments such as Afghanistan will likely involve both. Thus, the Obama administration might consider building a consensus for the development of NATO doctrine for coalition operations, including counterinsurgency.

Reaching agreement on operational doctrine within NATO at the multilateral level could prove difficult. Some NATO Allies might prefer the flexibility of ad hoc approaches. Some steps, however, could support a range of coalition operations. NATO could, for instance, develop a substantial facility to train, game,

and exercise coalition and indigenous forces for joint military and civilian operations; such a program could incorporate multinational police forces and nongovernmental organizations, engage the private sector, and develop technology and engineering capacities. Along with this, Brussels also needs to establish an ongoing, NATO-wide net assessment and lessons learned facility, and to expand its information-gathering and analytic capacity by, for example, providing integrated databases for geospatial mapping, shared intelligence and analysis, demographic research, anthropological and sociological cultural awareness, and public opinion survey data. NATO's transformation could include a multinational center to offer large-scale language training and cultural studies for Allied forces and to provide English language training for friendly indigenous forces in conflict zones. With these combined assets, NATO would be well positioned to build an integrated strategic communications capacity. Finally, NATO could develop an integrated capacity linked to coalition deployments for "training the trainers," to carry out sustained local army and police training in stability operations.

#### *Enhancing the Foundations of American Power*

Getting more out of NATO Allies and partners will require a renewed spirit of American and European security cooperation. Collective defense remains the core of NATO's purpose, and current missions must be given adequate resources for their successful completion. NATO members, however, would be well served to use the Alliance's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year to bring forward new initiatives and the necessary funding to support a coalition operations doctrine that emphasizes joint military-civilian planning, capabilities, and exercising for peace support, conventional military operations, and counterinsurgency. If NATO fails to adapt, the United States might reassess how it coordinates coalition operations or have to reemphasize crisis containment by exercising power from over the horizon, rather than with deployed forces inside ongoing conflict zones. The United States gains from working with its allies and partners, and the administration will have an immediate opportunity to renew the transatlantic relationship in NATO as a core component of global security.

#### **East Asia and the Pacific: Transforming Alliances**

For over half a century, the network of U.S. bilateral security alliances with Australia, Japan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea (ROK), and Thailand

has served as the foundation of the region's stability and economic prosperity.

During the Cold War, the alliance structure stood as a vital link in the U.S. global containment strategy, but the Soviet Union's demise did not put an end to interstate tensions and rivalries in East Asia. In the decade that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union, the region experienced a series of challenges to regional stability and security—the 1993 standoff over North Korea's nuclear facilities, the 1996 Taiwan Straits missile crisis, the 1997–1998 Asian financial

September 11, 2001, have reshaped the international security environment and accelerated the global transformation of the U.S. military and the U.S. alliance structure.

The 2001 and 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Reports focused on uncertainty as the defining feature of the international security environment, which was found to be “increasingly complex and unpredictable.” Major war, asymmetric warfare, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, acts of international terrorism, and terrorists with access to weapons of mass destruction composed a broad and multifaceted set of security contingencies.

Both reports viewed East Asia as a region “susceptible to large-scale military competition.” While not specifically mentioning China, the 2001 QDR focused on the requirements for dissuading and deterring a “military competitor with a formidable resource base” in the region. China, with a large and booming economy and an increasingly sophisticated diplomacy combined with notable military restraint, was altering the strategic landscape of the region.

Beyond the military dimension, China's reemergence as the leading power in the region poses a more fundamental and complex strategic challenge for East Asia, the United States, and U.S. allies. In this regard, a sound and strong alliance structure, together with a broad and deep engagement strategy aimed at encouraging Beijing to act as a “responsible stakeholder” in support of international order, plays an important role in managing any risk attendant on China's rise.

The 9/11 attacks ushered in the global transformation of the U.S. military. The 2001 QDR called for the development of joint forces that “must be lighter, more lethal and maneuverable . . . more readily deployable.” The 2002 National Security Strategy, referring to operations in Afghanistan, made clear that the United States must be prepared for more and similar deployments and accordingly must develop “transformed maneuver and expeditionary forces.” The Transformation Planning Guidance, issued in April 2003, made clear that the United States could not afford to have “large forces tied down for lengthy periods,” and that transformed forces would “take action from a forward position and rapidly reinforce from other areas.”

The post-9/11 requirements also ushered in the transformation of the Asian alliances. In addition to existing alliance commitments to the defense of Japan and the Republic of Korea, and a similar, but nontreaty, commitment to the security of Taiwan, U.S. forces now would also be tasked with operations relating to global counterterrorism. At the same time,



U.S. Navy (William Weinert)

Navy guard patrols corridor in Camp Delta section of Joint Detention Group facility, Guantanamo Bay

shock, and North Korea's Taepo Dong missile launch over Japan in 1998—that affected the security interests of the United States, its allies, and its friends.

Today, Cold War legacy issues in East Asia, China-Taiwan relations, and a nuclear-capable North Korea on a still-divided Korean Peninsula continue to pose challenges to longstanding U.S. security interests and commitments. Meanwhile, the terrorist attacks of

transformation required the allies to do more in their own defense and in support of international order.

Although the process of alliance transformation has focused on the two key Northeast Asian countries, the Republic of Korea and Japan, where the U.S. military presence was concentrated during the Cold War, the United States has also undertaken capacity-building with Thailand and the Philippines to enhance their abilities to deal with internal threats posed by Islamic militants and separatist movements. In 2003, the government of then-Prime Minister John Howard invoked Article V of the Australia–New Zealand–United States security pact (known as ANZUS) to deploy Australian forces to Afghanistan and Iraq in support of the United States.

### *Transforming the U.S.–ROK Alliance*

*The East Asia Strategy Initiative.* Alliances, as instruments of national policy, are dynamic elements in a constant process of evolution: adjusting roles, missions, and capabilities to adapt to an ever-changing international environment. At times, changes in the international environment are transforming events, requiring a restructuring of alliance relationships.

The East Asia Strategy Initiative (EASI) of 1990 and 1991 was aimed at gradually reducing the U.S. force presence in the Asia-Pacific region and restructuring alliance relationships at the end of the Cold War. On the Korean Peninsula, EASI aimed to manage a three-stage reduction in U.S. forces over a 10-year period, starting with a Phase I reduction of 7,000 personnel. The overall objective was to move U.S. forces from a leading to a supporting role in the defense of the ROK; in this process, the United States would be prepared to consider necessary changes in command relationships. EASI also supported the relocation of U.S. military forces out of downtown Seoul.

EASI, however, did not survive the first North Korean nuclear crisis in the early 1990s. In November 1991, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney postponed the implementation of Phase II.

*Transforming the Alliance Post-9/11.* The 9/11 attacks led U.S. leaders to conclude that the heavy American forces stationed along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea would have to be transformed to meet new challenges in the global security environment. In addition to the Cold War mission of deterring North Korea, U.S. forces were now required to be able to deploy from the peninsula for missions elsewhere.

Meanwhile, with the 2002 election of South Korean President Roh Mo-hyun, whose political agenda

aimed to address inequalities in the alliance relationship, and in light of an increasingly capable ROK military, the process of transformation furthered the longstanding U.S. objective of moving from a leading to a supporting role in the defense of the ROK, and shifting the alliance toward a more equal partnership.

The two objectives were realized through a bilateral negotiating structure, the Future of the Alliance (FOTA) initiative, which was followed by the Security Policy Initiative (SPI).

Collectively, the two initiatives resulted in:

- The relocation of U.S. forces from forward positions at the DMZ to two hubs south of the Han River, Osan-Pyeongtaek and Taegu-Pusan. Redeploying south of Seoul rather than being tied down at the DMZ complicates Pyongyang's planning and enhances U.S. counterstrike options in the event of a North Korean attack. It also facilitates the deployment of U.S. forces from the peninsula to deal with contingencies elsewhere, including those related to international terrorism.

- The relocation of U.S. forces to garrisons south of Seoul will permit the return of the Yongsan Base, located in the middle of downtown Seoul, and some 50 other facilities to the ROK. The Yongsan relocation in particular will accomplish a longstanding U.S. objective, going back to EASI, of eliminating the political tensions inherent in a large U.S. troop presence in the heart of the capital.

The two initiatives also accomplished the enduring goal of moving the United States from a leading to a supporting role in the defense of the ROK. Primary responsibility for the defense of South Korea now rests with the ROK army, supported principally by U.S. air and naval assets. In line with the rebalancing of defense responsibilities, Washington and Seoul agreed in February 2007 to transfer wartime operational control to the ROK no later than April 12, 2012. In the process, the U.S.–ROK Combined Forces Command will be disestablished and replaced by a new bilateral command structure.

The effectiveness of the new security framework will be enhanced by projected ROK increases in defense spending under the Defense Reform 2020 plan and by U.S. provision of interim bridging capabilities in areas such as intelligence and command and control.

Reaching agreement on these changes required overcoming a number of sensitive issues. Many South Korean officers considered the initial U.S. target date for the transfer of operational control to be

premature. This was accommodated by extending the date to no later than April 12, 2012. Likewise, many South Koreans were concerned that the U.S. concept of “strategic flexibility,” involving the deployment of U.S. forces from the peninsula to deal with contingencies linked to international terrorism, would weaken deterrence against North Korea. There were also apprehensions that the deployment of U.S. forces from the peninsula to the Taiwan Strait in a China-Taiwan contingency might involve the ROK in a U.S.-China conflict. These concerns were dealt with through an exchange of diplomatic notes between Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon in January 2006, whereby the two governments expressed their understanding of each other’s requirements and respect for their positions.

In two summit meetings, President George W. Bush and the ROK’s current president, Lee Myung-bak, agreed to develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Strategic Alliance to extend cooperation from the peninsula to the region and beyond.

#### *Transforming the U.S.-Japan Alliance*

Article VI of the United States–Japan Security Treaty reads, “For the purpose of contributing to the security of Japan and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East, the United States of America is granted the use by its land, air, and naval forces of facilities and areas in Japan.” The early 1990s nuclear standoff on the Korean Peninsula revealed the U.S.-Japan alliance to be woefully unprepared to deal with a potential contingency there. U.S. access to ports, airfields, and hospitals ran into legal barriers at the national, prefectural, and local levels, calling into question the degree to which Japan could fully support U.S. military operations in the event of a regional war.

To address the issues, the United States and Japan entered into negotiations that resulted in the Tokyo Declaration of April 1996, which updated the alliance for the post–Cold War world. The Tokyo Declaration and the subsequent implementing legislation, signed in 1997–1998, committed Japan to provide the United States with rear-area support “in contingencies in areas surrounding Japan.” The Ministry of Foreign Affairs defined “areas surrounding Japan” as being functional, as opposed to geographic, in nature and application. The ambiguity and flexibility of the ministry’s definition later facilitated the deployment of Japan’s Maritime Self-Defense Force to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf region in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom* (2003) in Afghanistan.

In October 2000, the Institute for National Strategic Studies published *The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership*, the findings of a study group on the U.S.-Japan relationship chaired by Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye. The report called for an across-the-board strengthening of both the relationship and the bilateral alliance. Under President George W. Bush and Japan’s Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, the report would serve as a blueprint for the Defense Policy Review Initiative, a process intended to guide the continued development of the alliance.

Since 2002, the Defense Policy Review Initiative has informed the transformation of the U.S.-Japan alliance to meet the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Since 9/11, the alliance has advanced based on convergent strategic assessments of the international security environment and a strong mutual conviction that the alliance enhances the security of both countries and the Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, it fosters global security and stability. These assessments are reflected in several key national security documents of the alliance partners. On the U.S. side, these are the 2001 and 2006 QDR reports and the 2002 and 2006 National Security Strategies. The corresponding Japanese documents include the 2002 Defense White Paper, the October 2004 report of the Council on Security and Defense Capabilities, and the December 2004 New Defense Guidelines.

The joint statements issued by the bilateral U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee, a forum for meetings between the U.S. Department of State and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are also important blueprint documents in the process of alliance transformation. The February 2005 joint statement conceptualized the alliance as global in scope, and as a force in support of international stability and security; it also identified common strategic objectives both in East Asia and globally. Subsequently, the committee issued additional joint statements, including Alliance Transformation and Realignment for the Future (October 2005), Roadmap for Realignment (May 2006), and Alliance Transformation: Advancing United States-Japan Security and Defense Cooperation (May 2007).

Relocation and collocation, concentration, and missile defense cooperation characterize transformation in the U.S.-Japan alliance. The following are a few recent examples:

■ The U.S. Army I Corps relocated from Washington State on the Pacific Coast to Camp Zama, Japan,



where it is collocated with the Ground Self-Defense Force Readiness Command.

■ The U.S. Navy carrier air wing stationed at Atsugi Air Base in the Tokyo metropolitan area was transferred to the Marine Corps Air Station at Iwakuni, and the KC-130 tanker squadron will be based at Iwakuni but deploy to the Kanoya Self-Defense Force base in Kyushu and Guam for training and operations.

■ On Okinawa, transformation involves the relocation of the Futenma U.S. Marine Corps Air Station to the shoreline areas of Camp Schwab and Henoko Bay; the relocation of the Marine Corps III Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters and 8,000 Marine personnel and dependents to Guam; and the concentration of the remaining Marine presence, resulting in a reduced footprint on Okinawa. Japan has agreed to provide \$6.9 billion of the total cost of \$10.27 billion involved in the Guam relocation.

Progress in the Futenma-Guam relocation has been halting, however, owing to issues in Tokyo-Okinawa relations, internal Okinawa politics, and debates over the location and shape of the runways at Camp Schwab. Failure to effect the Futenma relocation, which has a target date of 2014 for completion, is likely to undermine the entire Guam realignment initiative.

Missile defense cooperation has involved the deployment of the U.S. X-Band radar at the Air Self-Defense Force Shariki Air Base, the sharing of X-Band data with Japan, and setting up of the Bilateral Joint Operations Coordination and Control Center at Yokota Air Base. The United States has also deployed a Patriot PAC-3 battalion to the Kadena Air Base and continued to add Standard Missile (SM-3) capabilities to forward-deployed naval forces, while Japan has accelerated the modification of its Aegis ships to make them SM-3-capable. The United States and Japan are also cooperating in the development of the next generation SM-3 interceptor. In September 2008, the Air Self-Defense Force reported the successful testing of its PAC-3 interceptor in White Sands, New Mexico.

### *The U.S.-Australia Alliance*

The United States-Australia alliance has served to enhance stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Australia has played a major role in supporting stability in East Timor, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands, and in combating international terrorism in the Asia-Pacific region. A substantial convergence in the

two nations' strategic perspectives and security policies in recent years has extended alliance cooperation beyond the region.

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, Australia invoked Article V of the ANZUS treaty, defining the attacks on the United States as an attack on Australia. Under Prime Minister John Howard, Australia deployed forces to both Afghanistan and Iraq. Howard's successor, Kevin Rudd, subsequently withdrew Australia's combat forces from Iraq, while continuing military support in Afghanistan.

Cooperation also extends to combating the spread of weapons of mass destruction and Australia's participation in exercises related to the 2003 U.S. Proliferation Security Initiative. The alliance partners are also working to enhance bilateral cooperation in intelligence matters, as well as in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

### *U.S.-Philippine Alliance*

Counterterrorism has been at the top of the U.S.-Philippine security cooperation agenda. The United States provides security assistance and training to the Philippine armed forces for their campaign against Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim separatist organization on Basilan Island, and for improvements to maritime border security. The Philippines was among the first countries to send troops to support the United States in Operation *Iraqi Freedom*, and was designated a major non-NATO ally in 2003. Despite the early withdrawal of the Philippine contingent, counterterrorism cooperation remains strong.

The United States is also supporting the Philippine Defense Reform program, which is aimed at transforming the Philippine defense establishment and improving the leadership and training of the Philippine armed forces. In accordance with the bilateral Mutual Defense Treaty, the annual Balikatan exercise combined U.S.-Philippine exercises in order to improve crisis action planning and the counterterrorism capabilities of the Philippine armed forces, and to enhance interoperability with U.S. forces.

### *U.S.-Thailand Alliance*

This alliance relationship emphasizes capacity-building in the Thai military to develop doctrine, education, and training. U.S. defense and security assistance enhances the ability of the Thai military to meet transnational challenges as well as to deal with internal instability caused by Muslim separatist groups in the southern provinces.

The United States conducts over 40 training exercises annually with Thailand. The centerpiece of these is the multinational Cobra Gold exercise, which aims to strengthen regional cooperation in disaster relief as well as global peacekeeping operations. Also, Thailand has participated in Operations *Enduring Freedom* and *Iraqi Freedom*.

### *Looking Ahead*

The bilateral alliance system is irreplaceable for dealing with the hard security issues confronting the East Asia region, from the Korean Peninsula to the Taiwan Strait. This will remain true for the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, trilateral security dialogues, now taking root among the United States, Japan, and South Korea, and among the United States, Australia, and Japan, are expanding the scope for alliance-based cooperation. A quadripartite strategic dialogue encompassing the United States, Japan, Australia, and India has been under consideration and may yet materialize.

At the same time, the alliances should be seen as the building blocks for multilateral coordination with nonallies to deal with a myriad of nontraditional security issues confronting the region, ranging from disaster relief to climate change, from nonproliferation to containing the spread of infectious diseases. The habits of cooperation and coordination developed over the years within the alliances can provide a firm foundation for initiatives aimed at dealing with issues of common concern on an ad hoc basis.

### **Strengthening Middle East Partnerships**

U.S. strategic partnerships in the Middle East have been under enormous strain over the last two decades, strains even more severe than those long inherent in the fundamental differences between the goals and perspectives of the United States and those of regional states. These strains at the government-to-government level reflect those existing in U.S. relations with all levels of Arab society.

Perceptions that the U.S.-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan war are aspects of a broader American war against Islam, that the Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib prisons reflect the hypocrisy of American rhetoric, and that the United States is now supporting Shia dominance over Sunnis, combine with longer standing complaints that the United States applies a double standard to the Israeli-Arab conflict and is only involved in the Middle East to obtain its resources. Grievances against U.S. policy are not always internally consistent—America is criticized both for

supporting authoritarian regimes and for pushing democratization too hard—but the grievances are no less deeply felt for being contradictory.

These contradictions are typical of the complexities of the Middle East. Unlike parts of the world where the United States has a long history of involvement in regional security, there is no framework of alliances to lend structure and predictability to strategic relations in the Middle East. Instead, the United States has a web of bilateral partnerships that reflect the great diversity in the economic and political environment in which each partner exists. To deal effectively with this complexity, the United States needs to learn to approach the Middle East with greater nuance and sophistication than it has in the past.

### *The Importance of U.S. Middle East Partnerships*

Strong cooperative partnerships with the countries of the Middle East are central to almost all the U.S. national objectives that have been set forth by successive administrations, from defeating terrorism and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to promoting economic and overall human development, defusing conflicts, and expanding the chances for greater economic and political freedom. Following are some key areas in which U.S.-Middle Eastern cooperation is particularly important.

*Energy.* Over 65 percent of the world's petroleum reserves and a large percentage of its natural gas are in the Middle East. As is widely recognized, until a replacement for hydrocarbon fuels is found, these resources will remain vital to economic growth throughout the entire, increasingly interdependent world. What is less well understood is the Middle East's own heavy reliance on these resources to generate income, not only in the oil- and gas-producing states themselves, but also in those countries that depend on remittances from expatriate workers. This raises serious questions about how the region will be able to cope with an ultimately inevitable post-oil world. It is important that the transition to the post-oil world does not increase the instability and tensions in the region.

*Lines of Communication.* Transport networks and nodes of critical importance to the global economy crisscross the Middle East, from the Strait of Gibraltar in the west to the Strait of Hormuz in the east. These waterways and the pipelines and port facilities that serve them are nearly as important to global

energy markets as the region's hydrocarbon resources themselves. Moreover, the waterways also play a key role in the trade of other goods between Europe and Asia and are crucial to the ability of the United States to move troops and military equipment from one theater to another in a crisis. The same is true of the air routes linking Asia and Europe and, in military terms, the overflight agreements that permit military use of those routes. Road networks in some of these countries are also essential to both commercial and military movements.

*U.S.-Muslim Relations and Countering Terrorism.* Although the people of the Middle East are a minority of the world's Muslims, the region is a fulcrum for U.S. relations with that wider Muslim community. Because of globalization, what happens in the region, whether in Abu Ghraib or Gaza, reverberates throughout predominantly Muslim communities everywhere. The effect of the Iraq War on violent extremism is certainly profound, even if difficult to delineate. What seems clear is that terrorism is a threat that can only be countered by cooperation with the states in which extremist organizations operate, a partial list of which would include Iraq, Algeria, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt.

*Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.* Apart from North Korea, the countries of most pressing current concern with respect to the

proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction lie within the Middle East or on its immediate periphery. India's and Pakistan's de facto entry into the nuclear club in 1998 inevitably affected the calculations of their neighbors to the west. Many Arab states have struck deals with France, the United States, and others on nuclear energy development. Others have shown interest in developing their own nuclear programs. Aside from the obvious safety and environmental concerns that may arise from such programs, there are proliferation concerns. Speculation is rife about what other Arab states will do if Iran acquires nuclear weapons. Preventing Iran from crossing that line promises to be difficult enough; forestalling the ensuing ripple effect will only be possible through strong strategic relationships with the other countries of the region.

### *Strengthening Partnerships: The Way Ahead*

*The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and U.S.-Israel Relations.* However much some may dispute it—and perhaps fewer do after the fighting in Gaza in early 2009—the one thing on which Arab leaders and their strongest critics on the right and left all agree is that U.S. favoritism toward Israel is the main obstacle to better relations. If the United States truly wants to strengthen its partnerships in the Middle East and to alleviate the negative state of its interactions with



UN Security Council issues presidential statement on launch of long-range rocket by North Korea

the Islamic world at large, it needs to work energetically and visibly toward comprehensive, durable, wise, and fair solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian and related conflicts. Even the perception of *positive intent* to solve a problem can go a long way in the Middle East, but mere lip service can be counterproductive. Arab audiences are well able to distinguish empty pledges from serious intentions. Promising to address the conflict without putting serious muscle behind the promise will only make the U.S. reputation worse, not better. Those Arabs who have been arguing for moderation and negotiation on this issue are losing ground in the “Arab street” to those who are arguing for more aggressive measures. As one Arab leader said recently, “We need to show our people some progress on this. The moderates are on the ropes.” The Obama administration’s swift appointment of former Senator George Mitchell as a special envoy for the Middle East was a helpful signal of Washington’s intent to find a diplomatic solution to longstanding tensions.

Israel obviously enjoys a special status as a U.S. partner, one to whose security successive administrations have pledged themselves. Despite these close ties, U.S. relations with Israel are sometimes strained. More importantly, they complicate U.S. relations with other regional actors. Israelis increasingly recognize that the threats their country faces are changing in ways that require fundamentally rethinking many strategic premises. If the United States can help shape this rethinking with the new Netanyahu government, it may be possible to enhance Israel’s security while at the same time promoting broader U.S. interests, including improving its relations with the other countries in the region.

*Iraq and Afghanistan.* U.S. partnerships with the Arab world are also under stress because of the long-running wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Muslims, whether Arab or non-Arab, react angrily to these conflicts not because they support terrorism but out of concern with the conduct of the wars. While most Middle Eastern governments are not democracies by any means, their ability to provide the kind of cooperation that is crucial to U.S. success in countering terrorism is nevertheless bounded by public opinion, which is in turn shaped by U.S. actions in the region.

It is no secret that there is, in many Middle Eastern countries, a widening divide between rulers and ruled, in some cases leading to deadly violence. Regimes are acutely aware of this sense of alienation and understand that antiterrorism cooperation with the United States, while helpful in countering

near-term threats, can aggravate anti-regime and anti-Western trends in the long run. If the United States could focus its efforts more on what Arabs would call the “roots of terrorism,” it could go a long way toward alleviating popular concerns and thus permitting closer cooperation. If the United States is once again seen as a country that produces jobs and freedom rather than conflict and oppression, it could start to turn the tide of disfavor that faces it in much of the Muslim world.

Winding down U.S. military involvement in Iraq will alleviate tensions somewhat, depending on the level of political stability left behind. In the meantime, the United States needs to ensure that its actions do not unnecessarily fuel the sense that America is “anti-Islam.” This is a matter of deeds, not words, although the newly inaugurated President’s Arab-media interview on January 26, 2009, put down a marker about Washington’s desire to improve relations throughout the Arabic-speaking world. The President’s speech in Cairo in June 2009 provided another compelling statement, but the United States also needs to change realities on the ground. The symbolic importance of the decision to shut down the Guantanamo prison cannot be overstated.

The United States can also do things at home to mitigate its anti-Islamic image, including trying harder to manage anti-Muslim sentiments in the United States better. What Americans say to each other reverberates in the Middle East more than many realize.

*Finding Areas for Nonsecurity Cooperation.* Many countries in the Middle East are facing water shortages, high unemployment, stagnating economies, and increasing socioeconomic stress. Working with regional states as equal partners to address these problems could go a long way toward putting U.S. relations on a stronger footing. For example, desalination technology could form the centerpiece of a major U.S. effort to promote sustainable development in the region. At the same time, it is also necessary to enhance personal ties by means of development cooperation, even if it means incurring some risk. A recent initiative to establish a Peace Corps program in rural Egypt was stopped before receiving full consideration, ostensibly due to security concerns. Such concerns, on the face of it, seem exaggerated, but in any case, such programs are exactly what are needed in places such as the Egyptian countryside. Fixing an old woman’s eyes and helping clean up water supplies will go further toward improving relations with the Arab people than all the strategic communications Washington could ever fund.



Cooperation with regional states is also the best way to develop much-needed expertise on the Middle East within the United States. Programs that send American students, scholars, and scientists abroad should be bolstered. Arabic, Farsi, Turkish, and other language programs should be given greater funding and focus. Centers of excellence should be developed with an eye toward long-term relations with the region.

*Working with Other Allies.* Recent history clearly demonstrates that the United States cannot solve the problems of the Middle East on its own. It needs to share information and resources not only with partners within the region but with those outside as well. Given their history of involvement in the Middle East, many European governments have considerable long-term knowledge and expertise on the region (although in some cases, the history also entails unwelcome baggage). The United States is accustomed to asking for allied contributions when it comes to military operations in the Middle East; it needs to think more broadly than that. Many members of the European Union as well as the EU itself are involved in development, education, and other projects in the region. The United States and the EU may have different perceptions on some issues, but they need each other to promote their mutual fundamental interests in the Middle East.

In a different way, the U.S. Asian allies, particularly Japan and South Korea, are also playing an increasingly important role in the Middle East, especially economically. While U.S. relations with other major players, such as China, Russia, and India, are sometimes strained, focusing on shared interests and objectives like the importance of Middle Eastern oil and gas might help illuminate previously overlooked opportunities for cooperation. The United States should not throw caution to the wind, but does need to recognize that its potential competitors are gaining influence. If it can adjust its expectations, policies, and actions to this reality, cooperation in such areas as development of energy and other resources, sea lane security, and alleviation of the conditions fostering extremism could lead to that most elusive of Middle Eastern outcomes, a win-win situation.

### *Seeing Past the Similarities*

The Middle East is a complex place. Arab cultures and societies are not monolithic. Even the one thing that is said to unite all Arabs—the Arabic language—is actually quite different across and within the countries of the region, with the version spoken in

one country often almost unintelligible to natives of another. Middle Easterners' perceptions of the United States and the rest of the world, as well as of their own region and what is important in that region, vary even more widely than the language.

While many of the region's countries face similar sets of challenges, each of them also has its own unique problems. To improve its partnerships, the United States must work not only on the cross-cutting issues, but on the country-specific ones as well. Indeed, the region is so diverse that Americans should probably stop seeking a unified theory to explain the entire Middle East, and instead start fully incorporating its kaleidoscopic complexity into strategic planning. Instead of aiming for a grand strategic vision that would provide a single, simple set of solutions, the United States should start rebuilding strained relations on a bilateral and subregional level. It should build flexibility into its regional policies and be ready to adjust and adapt to evolving realities, rather than relying on tried and true formulas that may have outlived their usefulness.

The one overarching exception, documented time and again, is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If a more hopeful diplomatic trajectory were to be seen, then it might be possible to work with religious and other leaders to bridge the gaps between Muslim communities around the world and the United States. The key will be to demonstrate a sense of the progress that cooperation with America can yield economically, politically, and socially.

## **Economic Development and Conflict Management: Priorities for the Future**

Many believe that the United States should pay more attention to the problems of global poverty and fragile states, and increase its reliance on "soft power." The George W. Bush administration moved in this direction by creating the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the Millennium Challenge Account, and by increasing aid to Africa. The administration warned that "weak states, like Afghanistan, can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states." The Iraq and Afghanistan wars have led to billions of dollars being spent on stabilization and reconstruction in those countries. While these programs set some directions for the future, however, the U.S. Government has not defined clear priorities to guide foreign assistance and conflict management efforts in the medium to long term. Officials in the new administration should be asking several questions as they

consider the directions they want foreign policy to take in the next several months and years:

- Are we doing enough to promote economic growth?
- What is the best way to support growth?
- What can economic assistance contribute to the struggle against extremism?
- What capabilities do we need to prevent or manage conflicts?
- Who should pay for them?

#### Current Views

*Afghanistan and Pakistan.* There is widespread agreement that the security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated and will require expanded troop commitments from the United States and NATO soon if it is to be brought under control. Many also believe that the Afghan government will need large and sustained economic assistance if it is to build its legitimacy, find alternatives to the poppy economy, and undercut support for the Taliban. The growing problem of sanctuary for the Taliban and al Qaeda in Pakistan's tribal areas has also convinced U.S. national security officials that Pakistan, too, will require major economic assistance and diplomatic engagement to help the fragile civilian government gain control over its territory and the many rival factions that threaten its stability.



U.S. Air Force (Delia A. Castillo)

F-16 takes off from Aviano air base during NATO Operation Allied Force

*Countering Extremism.* To reduce support for extremism in Islamic countries, the Bush administration relied mainly on diplomacy (belated attention to the Middle East peace process, pressure on authoritarian governments to democratize, and pressure on governments to support U.S. security objectives

in the region). As the previous section makes clear, however, public opinion in most Arab countries nevertheless remains overwhelmingly critical of U.S. policy. One option that has not been extensively explored is to use aid directly to help citizens. The U.S.–Middle East Partnership Initiative tried to do some of this, with uneven results. The new administration needs to consider a much more ambitious effort that targets one of the big underlying problems in the Middle East: the youth bulge.

*Bottom Billion.* There is growing support in Western countries for stronger efforts to relieve poverty and improve living conditions in the developing world, demonstrated by international support for the UN's Millennium Development Goals and the popularity of antipoverty movements led by pop singer Bono and others. In his book, *The Bottom Billion*, Paul Collier has called attention to the special problems faced by the billion or so people who live in countries in Africa, Central America, and Central Asia who have been left behind by global growth. National security officials have also become more concerned about economically stagnant and unstable countries, whose borders often contain "ungoverned spaces" where terrorists can operate or maintain bases. All these problems will be made worse by rapid population growth in poor countries, which the UN Population Division predicts will add 2.5 billion people by 2050. (The populations of Afghanistan, Liberia, Niger, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo will likely triple in this period.) The Group of Seven countries have agreed to increase aid for Africa and other poor regions. While some of the increased American aid has gone to support economic growth (especially through Millennium Challenge), the largest portion has concentrated on HIV/AIDS, health, and education. While those are all important areas, the United States and other leading donors are not doing enough to support growth. Without economic growth, poverty cannot be reduced, social programs cannot be sustained, and stability and security are jeopardized.

*Fragile States and Conflict.* Concern is growing about the problems of fragile states and civil conflict in the developing world. Paul Collier has shown that risk of conflict is associated with poverty and economic stagnation, and that conflict is extremely destructive to development. There is broad agreement that fragile states pose a major foreign policy challenge, but little consensus on what to do about them. This is a long-term problem. The United States and the international community need to agree on general principles that can guide their efforts in this area.

### *New Initiatives*

The new era we are entering can be viewed as the second stage of the struggle against extremism. The first stage began on 9/11 and has been dominated by the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. These conflicts can be compared to the Korean War, whose nature and outcome shaped the early years of the Cold War. As in that earlier time, the world faces a global threat, this time in the form of violent nonstate extremism. The ability to use military force remains critically important to countering terrorism, but there is a growing consensus that military means alone will not be sufficient. It was only 8 years after the signing of the 1953 Korean armistice that the Kennedy administration, for reasons having to do with Cold War geopolitical competition in the Third World, embarked on a substantial expansion of American investment in international economic development. President John Kennedy essentially created the modern field of development assistance, and established a new agency to manage it—the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). To deal with current threats, we need a new vision no less bold than Kennedy's, developed in closer partnership with other nations and international institutions.

Following are some specific suggestions for future U.S. policy initiatives in the four areas described above.

*Afghanistan and Pakistan.* Afghanistan will require large amounts of aid for at least several decades to help it raise low income levels, develop alternatives to the poppy economy, strengthen the capacity of the government to deliver services, and build the government's legitimacy. The government in Kabul needs to introduce political reforms, reduce the power of the warlords, and improve security and stability. None of this will be cheap—or quick. It will require sustained assistance from donors, including the United States, Europe, and others.

A daunting new set of challenges has arisen in Pakistan, due in part to that country's failure to control its border with Afghanistan. That failure, however, is linked to the broader problems of a fragile political order, severe economic strains (short-term in the macroeconomy and long-term in endemic poverty), and local political support for the Taliban, especially in the tribal areas. To address these problems, the government in Islamabad will have to not only make hard political choices, but also find a way to sell them to the people. Neither seems likely to occur without concerted diplomatic and economic support from outside the country. The U.S. adminis-

tration should consider a large economic package that focuses on short-term macroeconomic stabilization and long-term improvements in the welfare of poor people and the tribal areas. The latter should emphasize education and health, but also include programs to improve business and employment opportunities (infrastructure, business regulations, credit programs, and training). The United States will have to assume the largest share of the costs of such a package, but should also seek support from Europe and the Persian Gulf states, which have both the ability to contribute and a clear interest in Pakistan's stability. The United States should also seek to involve China and Iran in regional diplomacy to stabilize Pakistan.

*Islamic Youth.* One of the biggest problems in the Middle East is the so-called youth bulge, a demographic group that includes both the large number of young people who cannot find good jobs today, and the growth in their numbers projected for the next 20 years. The persistent poverty and lack of education that characterize the youth bulge contribute to popular support for extremism and threaten to destabilize governments. To reduce support for extremism and address the Arab public perception that the United States "doesn't care" about Arab countries, the United States should work with European and other nations to help unemployed young people in non-oil-rich countries in the Middle East get the education they need and find productive employment. Even rich Gulf states have youth employment problems, but they have the resources to deal with them, and should pay for any Western help they receive. But in countries such as Jordan, Egypt, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and areas such as the West Bank, the United States and Europe should take the lead, even if the Gulf states are willing to contribute financing.

The program should emphasize education and training, with a focus on practical business skills. It should aim to help both those who have formal academic credentials but lack the skills and values (for example, team orientation) that businesses seek and those who lack even basic academic training. It should include practical skill-building for unemployed university graduates, vocational training for less educated youth, business assistance for startups, support for existing or new local business schools, and Western-standard bachelor's and master's degree programs for the best and brightest (ideally through study at Western institutions, but if necessary done locally by Western educators). Although international programs always run the risk of local opposition,

American programs should be run, to the extent possible, by USAID missions, working with Western and local nongovernmental organizations and companies, not through host government ministries. Past experience has shown that there is strong local interest in such training and education and that young people will not be overly concerned that the training might have an American label, which it should have: “from the people of the United States of America.”

*The Bottom Billion.* The United States should work with other donor countries, the World Bank, and the UN to put in place major new initiatives to help “bottom billion” countries advance and join the global economy. These initiatives should stress three themes. First, donor countries should increase their support for economic growth. Over the last 40 years, there has been a trend toward giving more aid for the social sectors and less for agricultural development, infrastructure, and other programs to support growth. This trend has been due in part to the success of such aid in improving health and education outcomes, and its relative lack of success in spurring growth in Africa and other regions. If Washington wants to reduce poverty and make social services sustainable, however, policymakers have to find ways to help poor countries grow faster, which means putting a greater focus on economic growth programs.

Second, to make aid for growth support more effective, we should take lessons from the successful development experiences of Asian countries, including China. Two of the most important lessons are that growth pushes have to be led from within by leaders who are dedicated to economic advancement and export promotion; and that the most successful growth strategies did not follow the Washington Consensus model of imposing comprehensive economic reforms at the outset and then letting business develop naturally. Rather, they involved incremental reforms over time that brought tangible gains in business development and exports along the way—what the Chinese call “crossing the river by feeling for stones.” Many of those governments intervened actively to promote exports.

These principles suggest that aid for growth support should emphasize the following:

- **Selectivity.** It should concentrate on those countries doing the most to help themselves.

- **Business Development.** Donors should not impose a rigid ideological model, but look at who is doing the best job of improving business condi-

tions and give them aid to support the development of local businesses, agriculture, and nontraditional exports.

- **Regional Models.** The goal should be to help leading-edge countries advance so they can be models for their regions.

Millennium Challenge embodies many of these principles, but does not pay enough attention to helping countries develop their own growth and export strategies. It focuses on those countries with the best development conditions today, but ignores many states where the bottom billion are found. In none of these bottom billion countries can the conditions for growth truly be called good—some are just further along than others. All need to make continuous changes over decades to advance (as China did). The political commitment has to come from local leaders, but they need technical and business advice.

Third, the advanced countries should consider new and possibly more intrusive methods to encourage the responsible management of mineral wealth. As Collier makes clear, when high mineral wealth is combined with very low levels of economic development, the risks of corruption, “Dutch Disease” (when a sudden influx of foreign currency, usually resulting from the discovery of an exportable resource, destabilizes a country’s currency and balance of trade), and long-term economic stagnation are overwhelming. The incentives for predation are too powerful to be overcome locally. The only chance to break these vicious cycles is for the international community to press for greater transparency in oil payments, auctions for oil contracts, transparency in the uses of mineral proceeds, and prudent management of mineral wealth for the long term. The Group of Eight’s (G-8’s) July 2008 endorsement of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative is a promising first step, but actually getting the countries concerned to implement the initiative will be a challenging task that requires closely coordinated international pressure and incentives.

*Conflict and Fragile States.* Helping fragile states stabilize and develop is one of the great challenges of our time, one that requires a multinational response, as is explained in more detail in the next section. Unfortunately, because advanced countries often find little national interest or any imperative to take on the high costs and uncertainties of assisting individual fragile states, they tend to look to the UN or regional bodies to lead these efforts. That strategy will not work, however, unless the rich countries are



willing to provide more resources to the UN and other organizations. The rich countries should view fragile states as a global “public goods” problem that requires shared funding.

While fragile states vary greatly in the types of help they need (one size does not fit all), there is one broad initiative that could help with the problems of weak government institutions and weak private sectors: institute a long-term education program for people who commit to work in their government ministries for agreed periods of time. This should include overseas and local degree training (with outside academic help) in economics, management, public administration, and technical fields. The United States funded thousands of scholarships for this type of education in East and Southeast Asia in the 1960s and 1970s, which helped recipient countries strengthen their governments and advance economically.

States that have fallen into civil conflict occupy a special category. They often suffer from deep-rooted divisions and internal weaknesses that are very hard to resolve at the level of the antagonists. Outside interventions are often ineffective because they assume that the task is peacekeeping, when the real problem is that there is no peace to be kept. When a leading power intervenes—as Britain did in Sierra Leone in 2000—it can sometimes suppress violence fairly easily. In many cases, however, no leading power wants to take that responsibility, which leaves the task to the UN or regional actors. In these cases, it is again incumbent on rich countries to give the UN, African Union, and other organizations the needed support to do the job. They should consider the following actions:

- **Sovereignty.** The UN and regional bodies should develop new procedures and criteria for intervening in situations where conflict or government abuses are creating humanitarian crises or threatening regional stability. State sovereignty should not be unconditional.

- **Peace Enforcement.** The advanced countries should help the UN and regional bodies strengthen their conflict mediation and peace enforcement capabilities. The UN needs standby forces that can intervene proactively, with much better equipment, training, and pay than peacekeeping forces have today.

- **Expeditionary Assistance Capacities.** The international institutions and major powers need to develop new civilian expeditionary capacities that

combine the ability to deliver social services and create employment quickly with the capacity to support development over the longer term.

### *Meeting the Challenge, Paying the Bill*

Finding the funds to pay for these initiatives will be difficult, especially as Western budgets come under strains due to economic slowdowns and the need for government interventions to manage the credit crisis. The United States cannot pay for everything by itself, but must do its share. It will have to work cooperatively with Europe and Japan, the international institutions, and, it is to be hoped (over the long term), with China, India, and other emerging market countries to find common ways forward. We need a new vision of national security in the post-9/11 world—one that recognizes that stability is linked to economic opportunity.

### **Stabilizing Fragile States**

As explained above, fragile states pose a wide range of problems for the United States and its allies and coalition partners. They produce instability that extends far beyond their own borders and can threaten the security of countries around the world. And, as discussed above, the United States and its allies must make strategic adjustments, including adjustments to their assistance programs, if they are to become more effective at reversing state failure. The best way to address these problems is to help fragile states rebuild their governance capacity, but such efforts require plentiful resources and long-term political commitments. International cooperation is a vital part of most of these efforts, but capacity shortfalls remain and problems of multinational coordination tend to emerge. The U.S. administration faces a number of constraints on its ability to conduct state-building operations, and it must select priorities for improvement to meet the full range of security challenges that the United States and its allies are likely to face in the future.

### *Why Is International Cooperation Necessary?*

Weak and failed states suffer from a wide range of problems that can all be traced to what Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart call the “sovereignty gap,” which is the wide difference between formal sovereignty and the actual ability to govern. These governments have the legal right to govern their own affairs, but they lack the administrative capacity to do so effectively. The sovereignty gap leads to numerous problems whose effects extend far beyond their own

borders, including criminality, terror, arms proliferation, and refugee flows, to name a few.

Closing the sovereignty gap, particularly in states emerging from conflict, is difficult. It involves rebuilding state capacity or, in some cases, building state capacity for the first time, across a wide range of sectors. Reestablishing the security sector is arguably the most important first task, since few other efforts can progress until order has been established and effective justice and correctional systems are in place. Other high-priority areas include restoring the government's administrative capacity; providing such essential services as public utilities, health care, and education; stabilizing the economy; and developing a regulatory framework that encourages local and international commerce.

These are all enormous endeavors. None of them can be accomplished quickly, so they require long-term commitments of money, people, and political will. The United States simply cannot do this on its own in most cases, even if it wanted to, because the scope of the efforts involved in recreating the basic governing structures of a state is simply too large for any single country to take on by itself. Nationbuilding requires coordinated international cooperation for success. Efforts to stabilize fragile states must leverage the capabilities and resources of the international community, to maximize the number of assets that are brought to bear, and to help sustain political will over the long time horizons involved.

#### *Key Issues for the Obama Administration*

The new administration will face a number of challenges throughout its term in office that may limit its ability to work with partner countries to stabilize fragile states. These challenges are likely to persist in some form during the next 4 to 8 years even if the administration tries to address them, especially because many of them involve structural capacity problems that do not lend themselves to quick fixes.

*Civilian Capacity Is Vital but Lacking.* Most of the security challenges that emanate from fragile states cannot be addressed primarily through military means. Though military force will remain an important component of any national security strategy, these challenges cannot be addressed without extensive civilian efforts. Reducing terrorism and insurgencies, for example, can require intelligence and law enforcement efforts as much as, if not more than, the use of military force. And the reestablishment of effective governance capacity in failed or

fragile states requires primarily civilian involvement in the areas of law and order, justice and prison systems, public health, and education, to name just a few critical areas.

Unfortunately, the international community lacks anywhere near the civilian capacity required for sustained and successful state-building efforts. In most countries, civilian expertise in this wide range of areas is dispersed across government departments and agencies, and bureaucratic politics often impede the interagency coordination that would be necessary to integrate these efforts into coordinated state-building strategies. Many countries, including the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Germany, have sought to improve capacity in this area by reforming bureaucratic structures. Although these efforts have led to marginal improvements, they have remained limited by ongoing turf wars and poor organizational placement. As a result, even the bureaucracies of the most highly developed countries have had a difficult time fulfilling mandates.

Moreover, such civilian capacity as exists can seldom be readily deployed to zones of conflict and instability. Building state capacity cannot be done from afar; experts need to be present on the ground for a long period of time to provide advice and assistance. Yet civilians cannot be ordered to deploy in the same way that military forces can, and few countries have invested in civilian capacity for long-term international aid work. The United States, Canada, and many European countries are all experimenting with developing rosters of deployable civilian personnel, but these efforts still involve relatively limited numbers of personnel who are unlikely to be able to meet the demands for their services in future operations. The enduring nature of these problems will constrain the ability of the United States and its partners to address the needs of weak and failed states, and suggests that limited civilian capacity for state-building operations will remain a key challenge well into the Obama administration, and perhaps beyond.

*Everyone Wants to Coordinate, but No One Wants to Be Coordinated.* Even when civilian capacity does exist, there are major obstacles to the integration of those capabilities into a coordinated state-building strategy. It is difficult enough to coordinate all of the relevant actors from a single country, but the problem gets exponentially harder in multinational operations. Participating countries usually have their own policies and priorities in such operations, and they often prefer to maintain national control of their programs rather than subordinate them to

others. At best, this failure to coordinate leads to wasted resources and duplication; at worst, it leads to contradictory approaches that undermine the very objectives of the operations.

Afghanistan provides a case in point. NATO commands all multinational military forces through the International Security Assistance Force, but no comparable structure exists on the civilian side. Dozens, if not hundreds, of workers on the ground are providing humanitarian relief, conducting development activities, and assisting governments at the district, provincial, and national levels. Virtually all of these actors agree that their activities need to be better coordinated to prioritize programs and use their limited resources more effectively, but formal efforts to coordinate international approaches have not been successful. The coordination efforts that do exist occur on an ad hoc basis in the field, and do not address the fundamental strategic questions—even though most of the actors on the ground agree that a more coordinated approach is crucial for the overall success of their efforts in Afghanistan.

*Iraq Will Frame the Terms of the Debate.* For better or worse, debates about whether or how to stabilize fragile states in the coming years will almost inevitably

involve some sort of comparison to Iraq. Iraq has been the most ambitious, the most expensive, and the most controversial state-building project in recent years, and so it will shape public perceptions around the world about the feasibility and desirability of such efforts. Although it seems unlikely that future state-building efforts will approach the scale of Iraq, people—both in the United States and among its partners and allies—will tend nevertheless to generalize from that experience and oppose future attempts at state-building, even if they occur under very different circumstances.

### *Building Capacity for the Long Term*

These obstacles will not be easy to overcome, and may well limit the enthusiasm in the United States and abroad for engaging in new state-building efforts. Nevertheless, fragile states pose so many different security threats to the international community that improving worldwide capacity to address them should be a high priority for the new administration.

The U.S. Government should continue recent initiatives to improve civilian capacity. The Civilian Response Corps is an important step in the right direction, and Congress has recently demonstrated a newfound willingness to fund this initiative. It



U.S. Navy (John Gay)

General David McKiernan, commander, ISAF, congratulates residents of De Rawod district in Afghanistan for completion of Chutu Bridge

must continue to develop so that the government can deploy qualified civilians to future state-building operations. The administration must also ensure that the U.S. Armed Forces, and the Army in particular, do not lose all of the lessons about training foreign security forces that they paid such a high price to learn in Iraq. Since this will be a vital mission in many future state-building missions, particularly in postconflict situations, the military must institutionalize this training capacity so that it can be quickly mobilized when future demands emerge.

The administration should also encourage partners and allies to improve their own capacities for state-building operations, especially in areas where they have a comparative advantage. Police training is one such area; many European countries have national police forces that more closely resemble the police forces being rebuilt than does the decentralized policing system in the United States. The administration should also encourage multilateral organizations, including the European Union and the African Union, to develop their own capacities for these missions, so that they can pool the contributions of smaller nations and use them more effectively.

Finally, the administration should engage neighboring states early and often. Neighbors always have direct security interests at stake when they border a weak or failed state, and they will act to further those interests. If they believe that international state-building efforts will help, they can be a positive force for success. If they believe that their interests are threatened, however, they can easily play the role of a spoiler and undermine the efforts of the international community. The challenge for the administration and its partners, then, will be to engage neighbors with adept diplomacy, so that they become constructive supporters of any international state-building efforts.

### Rethinking Security Assistance

Security assistance, as a category of foreign aid, has meant many things to many people over the years. To some recipient countries, it has represented a lifeline to help lift them from circumstances of vulnerability, and a bridge that links their military officers with the special organizational culture, prestige, and high standards of the U.S. Armed Forces through military education, training, exercises, and force modernization programs via arms transfer relationships.

Not all observers have viewed U.S. assistance to foreign countries with unabashed enthusiasm. The late Senator Jesse Helms famously termed U.S.

foreign assistance the equivalent of throwing money “down a rat hole.” U.S. programs to train and equip foreign military forces have periodically drawn criticism when the recipient country’s track record for human rights and democratic practices has been found wanting. While many legislators on either side of the political aisle have held more positive views about the purposes and the results of U.S. security assistance, Senator Helms was not alone in his concern that American tax dollars have not always translated into maximum gains for the U.S. national interest when spent assisting foreign countries.

What “measures of effectiveness” for the U.S. security assistance process would satisfy the highest expectations of policy practitioners and their legislative overseers? Reduced to their essence, they are few:

- The intended uses of assistance funds must be likely to benefit the U.S. national interest—indeed, more likely to do so than any alternative use of the funds, including not spending them at all.
- The process of determining funding allocations should capture and reflect the judgments of the most expert and best-informed participants regarding the urgency of need and anticipated effects of these expenditures.
- The resulting worldwide program of assistance should reflect the sensible expectation that, notwithstanding the wisdom embodied in these budget plans, fast-developing circumstances bearing consequences for the U.S. national interest will merit unanticipated resource allocations.

The goal, in sum, is to maximize the prospect that the expenditure of U.S. security assistance funds will translate, on a day-to-day basis and over time, into effective U.S. influence on foreign individuals, societies, governments, events, and trends. Those who believe most strongly in the value of security assistance should be the most anxious that these performance parameters be met, and demonstrably so, the better to assure a broad and reliable congressional constituency for such assistance.

### *The Current System: Falling Short of Expectations*

By these measures, the existing security assistance process must be judged less than satisfactory. Merely to recite the above metrics is to highlight the gap between the status quo and what could and should be. The deficiencies of the system, however, are not a reflection of the quality of individual inputs from



hard-working officials so much as an indictment of a process overloaded by inputs that fails to preserve and capture the best among them. Indeed, for many senior U.S. military, diplomatic, and policymaking practitioners with recent experience in this arena, several conclusions seem unassailable.

First, the civilian and military managers of U.S. foreign relations operating on the frontlines around the world are perennially frustrated by significant revisions that occur well after they have developed and rendered their budget recommendations to Washington. It is true that the President, advised by the Office of Management and Budget, has a leadership role in managing the level of overall Federal expenditures; more often than not, however, explicit budgetary restraint on behalf of the President is exercised at the back end of the process rather than being clearly advertised at the beginning as a planning parameter. For its part, Congress, constitutionally empowered in matters of Federal expenditure, introduces its own significant alterations by earmarking some allocations and changing others without being obliged to explain its actions. While Members of Congress are fully capable of improving upon the best efforts of the executive branch, the absence of transparency can give rise to unfortunate perceptions about the influence exercised by recipient governments on Capitol Hill directly or through lobbyists.

Second, the country-specific security assistance allocations that emerge from final congressional deliberations and are sent each year to the President's desk for signature bear scant resemblance to the collective recommendations made months earlier at the front end of the budget-building process by the most senior empowered U.S. officials at American Embassies or geographic combatant commands around the world. On its face, the disparity in priorities between senior decisionmakers in Washington and their internationally deployed representatives signals some disunity of perspective and effort between the two groups. What many veteran policymakers find symptomatic of a dysfunctional budget process is the absence of dynamic movement year-on-year in traditional security assistance budget accounts. There has been modest movement in most countries' Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Military Education and Training allocations, even in the face of strategically momentous world events accompanied by urgent demands from senior professionals in the field for more latitude and scope to deploy these tools of American influence. It is hard to justify the enormous bureaucratic effort expended in develop-

ing country-specific and regional security assistance allocation recommendations when the most urgent of these recommendations—for significant changes in support of priority security goals—are so clearly unlikely to survive all the way to the final product that reaches the President for signature.

Third, security assistance funding has proven time and again inflexible, tied by law to specified countries and programs, and hence unavailable for fast-breaking crises where such a tool would clearly be the policy option of choice. Senior policy officials in Republican and Democratic administrations alike have experienced the same predicament wherein the President seeks to exert immediate political influence on an important situation but finds that the preferred tool—security assistance—cannot be reallocated in the necessary amounts due to legislative earmarks. Very often, Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) funds, which are by design more flexible than FMF, are diverted to the crisis of the moment and thus removed from whatever purposes had been painstakingly planned in coordination with foreign governments, the UN Secretariat, regional multilateral organizations such as the African Union, and others over the preceding 12 to 24 months. Such was the case in 2005 when PKO funds promised and dedicated to a 5-year, G-8-approved Global Peace Operations Initiative to train competent foreign military units on several continents for peacekeeping duty were suddenly reallocated in response to the breaking crisis in Darfur. There are costs to the national interest when the United States develops and codifies formal budget allocations backed by diplomacy, and then abandons a long-declared priority as the price of responding to an unanticipated higher priority.

There are long-term costs to perpetuating a system where the budget development process for security assistance funding is, at best, poorly attuned to the strategic perspectives of the country's leading civil and military operators overseas, not optimized to the realities of policy engagements around the world as they emerge, and therefore not configured to be as potent a tool of real-time political influence as leading U.S. policymakers inevitably want and need. In business terms, this would be the equivalent of losing touch with one's customer; many would agree that U.S. foreign policy needs to pay closer attention to the "market" of international trends, opinions, beliefs, and ideology if it is to retain the mantle of leadership in this century.

A recipient country whose assistance funds have been earmarked by Congress will ignore the voice of the American Ambassador with impunity, comforted

by the certainty that the “check” of U.S. assistance is already “in the mail,” since the by-name country appropriation is written into law. This represents a potentially wasted expenditure, a gift without gratitude, as the funds may not translate into a lever of policy influence for the U.S. Government on a day-to-day basis. American taxpayers are entitled to a system that affords the highest potential political return on their assistance investment. Congress has never been compelled to justify its preservation of earmarks other than the commitments connected to established U.S. strategic equities such as Israel’s peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan.

The paucity of discretionary funds, other than a small emergency account in the hands of every U.S. Ambassador around the world, is another opportunity lost. Washington has an understandable desire to minimize malfeasance by limiting discretionary funds in the hands of government employees abroad; however, this desire becomes unreasonable when junior military officers in Iraq have as much or more cash resources at their discretion to dispense as an engagement tool than highly experienced, Senate-confirmed senior diplomats representing the President of the United States to entire sovereign countries. These latter officials must be trusted and empowered to expend modest discretionary funds on a routine basis to capitalize on politically, culturally, and economically significant opportunities to win goodwill and long-term influence for the United States among foreign populations.

The objective, it bears repeating, is a political outcome—influence—without which foreign countries are more likely to act in ways adverse to our national interest. When the American officials that a foreign government or population sees in the field are perceived only as implementers of Washington budget decisions rather than empowered decisionmakers in their own right, this tool of national influence is not being used to maximum effect.

By far the clearest symptom of a security assistance process in distress has been the frequent scramble for funds by the Department of State, on behalf of the President, in response to exigent new circumstances facing the United States. The fact is that urgent scrambles to shift funds from existing budget accounts have occurred repeatedly in response to critical needs since 9/11, and most of the time, ad hoc alternative funding arrangements were necessitated by the absence of reprogrammable State Department funds. When U.S. diplomats and military commanders needed to secure the active

cooperation of countries close to areas of current or prospective hostilities involving American forces, the list of unanticipated and unbudgeted needs was long, from runway improvements on foreign airbases to accommodate U.S. aircraft, to defraying the expenses incurred by host-country military forces facilitating a U.S. combat mission in the vicinity of terrorist strongholds. Many friendly forces needed hot weather gear, weapons and ammunition, and even specialized training as a condition of joining the military coalitions conducting missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The chronic inability of existing security assistance authorities and funds under the control of the Secretary of State to service these urgent U.S. national security interests led to the establishment of precedents for the Pentagon to fill the void with its budget resources. Quickly enough, these precedents became workable patterns of funding, and what had begun as ad hoc became the most efficacious budget option, such that the overall trend produced a shift of security assistance program responsibilities away from the Department of State to the Department of Defense (DOD).

This shift in program stewardship was not by design; congressional overseers of State Department appropriations repeatedly warned State officials against the mounting trend even while producing no relief to the conditions that caused it. Time and again in this decade, the Secretary of State’s authorities and responsibilities have not been matched by available resources to address unanticipated, top-priority strategic issues of the day. Time and again, the Secretary of Defense has stepped in to address the need by arranging with his oversight committees the reprogramming of funds from the defense budget to accomplish what had traditionally been State Department functions.

Seven years after 9/11, a host of new DOD security assistance authorities has arisen, some of them under the control of military commanders in the field, some others managed by officials within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The Secretary of State retains a voice in approving security assistance country allocations for activities that are now essentially DOD programs. Foreign policy authority, predictably, has migrated along with resources, leaving the State Department and its oversight committees comparatively much diminished in their respective roles, and agonizing even more over how to use those authorities and apportion the discretionary resources that remain under their purview.

Many would say, with reason, that the new Pentagon security assistance franchise meets the needs of U.S. foreign policy in a timely, accountable, and effective way. It is also the case that the more ready availability of DOD funding elevates the Pentagon's policy voice with governments around the world seeking cooperation and support—a consequence not necessarily foreseen or intended when these new DOD authorities were created out of wartime necessity. The larger question raised is whether the United States, having placed the policy responsibility for arms transfers and security assistance under the Secretary of State for four decades in stark contrast to many other governments where the military or its parent defense ministry operates unchallenged in such matters of state, should now wish to emulate the model that it has been urging others to change for so many years.

In a further irony, as State's primacy in security assistance management has eroded, the department has simultaneously built up its internal financial management bureaucracy and process, which includes the establishment of the Bureau of Resource Management. There are undoubtedly merits in having one or more seasoned business executives overseeing the organization's budget, as indeed there is merit in any system that seeks to align expenditures with declared national policy goals. The paucity of discretionary resources under State Department management, however, now leads to more time-consuming and hence inefficient reallocation processes when events conspire, as they frequently do, to change the priorities of the day. There are more bureaucratic players contesting decisions over fewer assistance funds.

There is a further disadvantage to having a professional "budget management" cadre in the State Department. Foreign policy officials with advanced skills in many areas of diplomacy are not the primary stewards over the budget resources of the programs for which they are ultimately responsible. Without the clear responsibility to manage assistance resources, some of these officials will try to pull from the system the maximum amount for their areas of operation at every opportunity, rather than weighing tradeoffs and conserving resources with the confidence that saved monies will be available for more important needs later in the budget year. It is worth asking whether this represents the optimal business practice for an enterprise whose unified focus at all times should be on achieving benefits to the national interest far from the Washington Beltway.

Nor are these problems limited to the executive branch. On Capitol Hill, the culture of deference

between Members and particularly committees regarding their respective jurisdictions leads to a set of bureaucratic "seams" much worse than those found in the executive branch. The State Department's authorizing and appropriating committees, who are well versed on arms control and nonproliferation policies as well as human rights concerns, are mindful not to tread on the "turf" of the Armed Services and Defense Appropriations Committees, who alone deliberate on the operational goals and challenges managed by the Secretary of Defense and the combatant commanders. Whereas the top executive branch officials convene regularly to assess intelligence, diplomatic, and military options, from which flow arms transfer and military deployment decisions, each congressional committee handles a subset of the national policy "toolkit," and no more. An administration's focus on achieving counterterrorist and warfighting objectives through the judicious use of tools such as security assistance is therefore informed, and its policy judgments animated, by a far wider azimuth of political-military perspectives than that available to its various congressional overseers.

The U.S. Government's management challenge on security assistance, as with many tools of engagement and influence, is that there are a lot of "cooks in the kitchen." Some of this is by design. One would expect to find independent positions requiring negotiation and compromise between the executive as policy implementer and Congress as the Federal funding authority. Moreover, there is an appropriate tension between the practitioners seeking to use assistance to advance important policy objectives on the one hand, and the budget managers seeking to limit Federal expenditures in service of effectiveness and efficiency objectives on the other hand.

Beyond these structural checks and balances, however, there are distortions that detract from the achievement of optimal outcomes. Authority over resources can be the cause of unhealthy bureaucratic friction between and within departments and agencies. The scarcity of discretionary funds only exacerbates the competition for influence between policy offices and financial management offices. Too often, efforts to maintain secrecy about budget decisions work against the goal of an open, collaborative process that seeks consensus among all stakeholders.

After so many internal iterations and such an expenditure of effort to build an assistance budget in the executive branch, the fact that Congress may take a different view of global strategic priorities and the favor in which certain governments and

leaders should be held reflects constitutional design, and hence should be seen as a strength of the U.S. system. The fact remains, however, that executive branch negotiators will, more often than not, accept these congressional preferences without debate, even at considerable expense to the President's policy priorities; the legislative liaison offices at the State and Defense Departments rarely advise arguing against Congress's wishes and risking programmatic retribution from those authorities with the "power of the purse" over all of their operations. This argues for a more robust and continuous dialogue between the executive and Congress from the outset.

All of the distortions described here in the nearly 2-year cycle from initial plans to eventual disbursement of assistance funds, and the corresponding failure of the process to capitalize on the quality time and effort expended early on by frontline practitioners in the field, may be a cost that the U.S. Government can no longer afford. These assistance accounts, after all, concern U.S. relations with other governments and their military and security sectors. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is increasingly apparent that the international security environment features multiple actors with growing influence, both good and bad.

A Washington budget process capable of exerting effective influence on the security challenges of this century will do well to begin with a top-level political consensus on the goals to be pursued and the national interests at stake in our success or failure to achieve them. Only on such a foundation can a more efficient, flexible, transparent, and collaborative planning and allocation process be forged, one that, by better defining the national interest, places it further above political or personal consideration.

### Living with Coalitions

Just as cooperation between companies in the business world can take many forms, from full-blown joint ventures to short-term cooperative advertising campaigns, so can cooperation between countries. The modes of cooperation that two firms or two governments might choose from time to time depend in part on habit, but also in part on a clear-eyed calculation of what each hopes to achieve from the cooperation, and what it is willing to sacrifice to achieve it.

Companies and countries alike can get into ruts, falling back on forms of behavior that are familiar and comfortable. In a stable, established environment, being proficient at doing the same thing over and over again can serve a company or a country

well. But, in business, the companies that are most successful in rapidly changing sectors are generally those open to breaking old habits and embracing less familiar, more innovative approaches. Again, the same is true of countries.

### *Coalitions vs. Alliances*

The United States has been just as susceptible as any other country to becoming entrenched in habitual approaches to international cooperation. For 150 years, the United States adhered so faithfully to George Washington's declaration that "it is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances" that the Nation not only steered clear of permanent alliances but also of any alliances at all, including the temporary emergency alliances that Washington said would be acceptable. Even the dispatch to Europe of the million-strong American Expeditionary Force in World War I was carried out not as an "ally" but as an "associated power."

This sustained refusal to enter into alliances, however, did not mean that the U.S. Armed Forces never worked in concert with foreigners. On the contrary, they frequently operated during this period as part of what we would today call "coalitions of the willing"—with Britain's Royal Navy to suppress piracy in the Caribbean and the slave trade off the coast of West Africa, and with a shifting variety of European powers to protect Western lives and interests during riots and revolutions in places from South America to the Middle East to—most notably—China.

That the United States ultimately abandoned its historic antialliance stance, first for the short-term, emergency purpose of winning World War II and then for the longer term purpose of containing Soviet expansionism, did not mean that President Washington's cautions had been wrong, but rather that circumstances had changed. There were (and still are) sound reasons to steer clear of permanent alliances. They do, as Washington warned, limit freedom of action. They can make it more difficult to sustain good relations with those outside the alliance, even in nonmilitary spheres. They can put one's own peace and prosperity at the mercy of the "ambition, rivalry, interest, humor or caprice" of others, and may, if an ally behaves recklessly, even ensnare a country in a conflict against its own wishes. They are, in a word, "entangling."

These drawbacks were and are just as applicable to the North Atlantic Treaty, ANZUS, and the Rio Pact as to any other permanent alliance. American statesmen entered into these alliances anyway because they recognized the global circumstances that once



made Washington's advice so enduringly applicable had been radically transformed. In the late 1940s, the global situation was dire enough that the advantages of alliances were seen (although not unanimously) to outweigh the disadvantages. In the face of a clear, massively threatening, and commonly recognized threat, nations recognized mutual "entanglement" as a source of strength. In a bipolar world, formal alliance structures provided dependability and predictability and sent the adversary a signal of resolve. A shared understanding that the threat was an enduring one made the institutions of a permanent alliance desirable for creating habits of cooperation, for harmonizing and even standardizing many aspects of terminology, command, control, communications, logistics, and legal status. The problem is that, as in the 1940s, global circumstances have again been transformed.

### *Why Coalitions?*

Three generations of American diplomats, soldiers, and policymakers have now lived their entire professional lives in an international security system of which the collective defense alliances created in the 1940s have been the dominant organizing principle. U.S. comfort with alliances as the normal means of international security cooperation has been reinforced by the remarkable success these alliances have enjoyed and by their apparent adaptability to the challenges presented by the post-Cold War stra-

tegic environment, the kind of nonpolar world order contemplated in the opening chapter of this volume.

Institutions such as NATO may be sufficiently malleable to survive the transition from the bipolar Cold War order for which they were created to a new world in which the most pressing challenges may arise from shifting arrays of nonstate movements and other unfamiliar and evolving dangers, a world in which there is no single, enduring threat toward which to direct long-term attention and long-term investment. But it does not follow that NATO-like institutions will necessarily be the most effective means to meet such challenges. Nor is it clear that the political contortions necessary for NATO in particular to undertake operations outside the geographic area prescribed by its charter will necessarily redound to the long-term health of the organization, particularly if the erosion of the consensus rule turns NATO into merely a pre-assembled collection of nations from which coalitions can be easily be configured.

If most analysts' expectations are correct, and the security environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century turns out dramatically more fluid and rapidly changing than the one for which the great alliances of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were created, it is only logical that the United States and "like-minded" countries—a category likely to shift kaleidoscopically from one issue to another—would look for more flexible instruments of cooperation to meet the strategic surprises of the



U.S. Army (Jacob H. Smith)

Coalition forces return to base near Tarmiyah, Iraq, following an air assault mission

new age. It was in the context of just such a strategic surprise, Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, that the term *coalition* entered the modern American national security lexicon. The *Desert Storm* coalition was so labeled precisely to convey a sense of temporariness and flexibility. Many countries whose contribution to the common effort was enormously valuable for political reasons never would have signed up if the coalition had even been portrayed as an alliance, let alone if it had taken that international legal form. Some countries saw the commonality of interests with the United States as transient, or they feared that alliance with America would ipso facto mean alliance with certain other American "allies," such as Israel. In other cases, they shied away from too open-ended a defense commitment to other members of the coalition.

Similar reservations are likely to apply in the way countries regard the challenges of the future. We already see them in connection with what the United States has viewed since 9/11 as a "war" on terrorism. Many traditional U.S. allies simply do not see the struggle as a war, especially those in Europe for whom the threat is largely domestic, and thus a matter for internal security agencies, not military forces. Conversely, many traditional U.S. partners in the Muslim world do see the struggle very much as a war—albeit one being fought in many cases against their own citizens—but calculate that overt alliance relationships with the United States to prosecute the war would do the adversary more good than harm.

#### *Working Effectively in Coalitions*

For the United States to make the most effective use of coalitions in meeting the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will take more than a simple lexicon shift; it will require American officials to relearn an old political calculus. Unconstrained by the interlocking moral and legal commitments of which alliances are made, and often lacking the shared goals and values from which such commitments derive, coalition partners are likely to be more transparently driven by calculations of self-interest than many Americans have been accustomed to in dealing with allies. Other countries will be with us on some matters and not on others. This implies a style of coalition management that:

- segregates issues that can be segregated. In alliances, framing a multitude of particular issues as manifestations of a single systemic challenge can be unifying. In coalitions, it tends to drive away

partners willing to cooperate on one front (for example, suppressing al Qaeda) but not on another (such as regime change in Iraq).

- embraces pragmatism. If the United States had insisted on NATO-style unity of command in Operation *Desert Storm*, it would never have been able to assemble the broad-based coalition necessary to counter Saddam Hussein's claims that he was standing up for the Arab world against the West.

- does not hold a grudge. In an alliance, it is reasonable to fault a member that fails to carry its fair share of the burden, because alliances are governed by a "one for all, all for one" ethic. This does not apply in coalitions; partners owe the coalition no more than what they sign up for in the case at hand. Those that choose not to take part in a particular endeavor may make a different calculation the next time they are needed. The door should always be left open.

Beyond this change of mindset, the United States can also take a number of concrete steps to improve its ability to manage coalitions effectively.

*Laying the Political Foundation.* A perennial problem faced by democracies when a need for collective military action arises is how to persuade a skeptical public that such action is in their own country's interest and not only that of the partner states—that their leaders are not acting like the "poodles" of a foreign master, as the British colorfully describe the matter. Established alliances, in which all the governments share an interest in building popular support, and in which the justification for cooperation can be reinforced continuously over a period of years, are more easily able to build a reservoir of popular support on which to draw in the face of setbacks. By contrast, when a coalition has to be assembled on short notice, governments often face an uphill struggle to generate consensus, and may find public support evanescent if the mission is more costly than expected.

The U.S. Government must therefore be directly involved in generating elite and mass consensus in other countries in anticipation of possible contingencies. It cannot depend on partners to carry out this task, for some will become fully vested in the success of any given mission only after the fact. Besides public diplomacy, this will require broad-based, labor-intensive, time-consuming consultations with a wide range of potential partner states on emerging dangers that might ultimately never require collective action. They must begin well in advance of any specific request for commitments—when action

is impending, it is too late to build the conceptual consensus that must underlie a political decision to move forward.

*Attracting Meaningful Contributions.* It may be familiarity with the all-for-one, one-for-all ethic of formal alliances that is responsible for the mentality that seems to place greater stock in the number of “flags in the sand” than in what partners can realistically bring to the operation. In the long run, this approach undermines the ability of the United States to assemble future coalitions. “Donor fatigue” sets in as the same countries are tapped time and again to provide contributions that turn out to be underutilized. Eventually, donors will stop stepping forward in response to calls for troops, all the sooner if the dispatch of troops is seen to have had a deleterious effect on the donors’ ability to meet its own needs at home. U.S. decisionmakers should target requests for coalition contributions in any given situation to a tailored selection of countries that have specific military, civil, or cultural capabilities relevant to each given situation.

*Clearing Procedural Underbrush.* Every time a coalition is put together, it is necessary to solve anew the same set of issues related to command structures, terminology, rules of engagement, and doctrine. In an alliance such as NATO, issues similar to these are addressed in advance through well-defined institutional arrangements. In coalitions, dealing with them is inevitably a more haphazard process that depends on political decisions to be made by contributing governments at the time. Having gone through the process repeatedly, however, it should be possible to clear away some of the procedural underbrush in advance, or at least to identify those matters that will require addressal.

To that end, U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) should be tasked to develop a formal, combined lessons-learned process with past coalition partners to identify the most common and troublesome issues. The command should also design a set of combined, civil-military staff planning exercises to build contacts, develop familiarity, and identify potential roadblocks to cooperation with a wide range of prospective coalition partners. Having USJFCOM rather than the geographic combatant commands lead this process is essential precisely because coalitions, unlike traditional alliances, will invariably draw participation without regard to regional boundaries. Scenarios need not have real-world relevance; if they are too realistic, prospective partners will often be reluctant to participate. The purpose is to

provide a substitute means of building habits of cooperation at the working level that has traditionally been possible only within permanent alliances.

*Sensitivity to the Limits of Coalitions.* One key advantage that regional security organizations such as NATO and OAS have over ad hoc coalitions is that their place in the international order is enshrined in the UN Charter, and that they thus enjoy a degree of legitimacy in the eyes of many that an ad hoc coalition can never possess. This legitimacy is not everything—the opponents of the bombing of Serbia in 1999 did not find it any more acceptable for having been carried out under NATO auspices than if it had been done by an unaffiliated “coalition of the willing.” Nevertheless, it is politically and legally easier for many countries to participate in military operations if they are endorsed by the UN or a recognized regional organization, whether the EU, African Union, Arab League, or Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The United States should be prepared to work through any of these bodies as circumstances warrant. Moreover, U.S. policymakers must be acutely attuned to the perception in many quarters that, by operating through coalitions rather than alliances, America has somehow abandoned its commitment to collective security in favor of assertive unilateralism. As should be clear from the above, nothing could be further from the truth; correctly seen, coalitions are merely another manifestation of America’s fundamentally collective approach to security.

### *Can We Learn to Love Coalitions?*

As suggested above, U.S. officials are apt to find the investment of time and effort required for the management of shifting coalitions tiresome. Sometimes it may even seem pointless. Certainly an era of international security cooperation through short-term coalitions will leave few tangible, enduring achievements comparable to NATO and the Organization of American States, institutions whose continued relevance should not be undervalued even if they are not as well suited to present-day challenges as they were to those for which they were created. The same could be said of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and yet great things were accomplished through exactly the kind of coalitions that are likely to dominate the landscape of international security in the coming decades.

Some might think it desirable if we could somehow get coalitions to behave more like alliances. But even if that were possible, whatever it might yield in increased predictability could only come at a cost in flexibility and responsiveness to fluid, evolving

challenges. We must simply accept that adaptive instruments require close, attentive management. American leaders may never learn to love coalitions, but they must learn to live with them. **gsa**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> John G. Ruggie, *Multilateralism Matters* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 333.

<sup>2</sup> *International Herald Tribune*, February 21, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> For details on the Afghan army and police situation as it stood in 2008, see Anthony Cordesman, "The Ongoing Lessons of the Afghan and Iraq Wars," Center for Strategic and International Studies, April 2008.

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