

**Opening Statement by James A. Schear
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Stabilization and Reconstruction: The Challenges of Coordination

Introduction

Chairmen and Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer some perspective on the challenges of coordination in the context of stabilization and reconstruction (S&R) operations. As Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Partnership Strategy and Stability Operations, I could not think of a more timely and critical topic – as underscored by Operation Unified Response, our whole-of-government relief mission to Haiti following the devastating earthquake on January 12th.

Indeed, the events of the past couple of months are a stark reminder that stabilization and reconstruction are pervasive themes in many types of crisis contingencies, whether in the area of disaster relief, as it is in Haiti, or in irregular conflicts, such as in Afghanistan. It is apparent to me – as I take note of my fellow witnesses – that our combined and emerging “civilian-military” culture has come to embrace coordination, cooperation, and integration in a way that it never has before. There is a palpable sense of commitment to collaboration at all levels. That said, it is also clear that more needs to be done, particularly in the area of resourcing, building, and integrating civilian capacity.

Please allow me to address your four topics in the order you presented them:

I. Coordinating stabilization and reconstruction responsibilities

As you well know, coordination of stabilization and reconstruction responsibilities is a constant preoccupation of senior policymakers. We in DoD have been very supportive of institutionalizing structures and processes to strengthen coordination. We recognize that every contingency requires an integrated effort over multiple lines of operation. Our priority is to act quickly but also smartly. From a U.S. Government standpoint, this coordination is fundamentally about strengthening the partnership between the Department of Defense and U.S. civilian agencies.

I am very pleased that AMB Herbst described the role and mission of his particular office in detail.

From my perspective, coordination of responsibilities needs to address three critical areas of activity to ensure an effective response. First, we need to address *crisis management*, conducted mainly by senior policymakers, the aim of which is to mitigate, contain or defuse explosive situations. Second, we need to address *contingency planning*, orchestrated mainly by functional specialists who span all the sectors (e.g. security, relief, rule of law, etc.) that are deemed critical to a given response. This area of activity aims to manage the consequences of a rapidly unfolding situation by developing response options. Third, we need to address the *mobilization and effective targeting of resources*. For this area, it would include not just funding and authorities, but our human capital – for example, our capability to deploy savvy personnel and teams of civilian and military personnel that can work together.

We're also conscious of the reality that coordination in each of these areas plays out at three levels: at the tactical level through on the ground coordination of projects between military units and other U.S. Government agencies; at the operational level through synchronization of responsibilities between DoD and the Embassy country team; and at the strategic level where DoD operates in a support role to overall stabilization and reconstruction goals as determined by the Administration and guided through the Department of State.

To reinforce coordination, we have supported the development of common operating structures, familiarization with each agency's culture, and opportunities to improve "habits of cooperation." We have targeted areas where we can improve opportunities to know how each agency works, plans, and executes. For example, our Department and civilian agencies regularly exchange personnel. The crisis in Haiti highlights how this exchange becomes valuable: I have a liaison officer in my office from USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance who has helped enormously with the response. Likewise, DoD has liaison officers in USAID who are proving to be great value added for our relief efforts.

We also offer opportunities to train and exercise collaboratively. For example, we are bringing civilians and military personnel together for pre-deployment Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) training involving civilians in unit mission readiness exercises. Reports from the field are positive. Moreover, our manuals, instructions and doctrinal publications now draw extensively on non-DoD source material, such as the Army's COIN manual update, FM 3-24, which included non-DoD source material from academia and the Army's stability operations field manual, developed with input from interagency counterparts. The Joint Staff is also drawing on interagency inputs for stability operations and inter-organizational doctrine.

We reinforce all these efforts through enhanced information sharing. We are working to develop technology and implement procedures that better integrate with and enable communication between all U.S. Government departments and agencies involved in stabilization and reconstruction operations. Furthermore, DoD has made significant strides in ensuring that planning and operations are not overly classified (thus preventing access by other USG agencies). For instance, we have been forward leaning in including civilian agency participation in our planning processes.

II. Planning and cooperation across U.S. Government agencies and with partners

There continues to be interagency involvement in the development of individual agency strategic guidance and planning documents. For example, we have greatly expanded State and USAID participation in the rewriting of DoD Planning Guidance, namely the Guidance for the Employment of the Force (GEF).

The Department of State participated in our Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) working groups. In turn, State asked us to provide a liaison person to assist them as they conduct their Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development (QDDR) review.

Other integrated planning efforts have included strengthened interagency involvement in the development of State's Mission Strategic Plans, the COCOM Theater Campaign Plans, and USAID Regional Development Plans. I am confident that this cooperative trend within government will continue.

I would like to especially highlight our collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). As we're witnessing in our response to the disaster in Haiti, non-governmental organizations play an essential role in delivering humanitarian relief and reconstruction assistance.

Separately, we continue to work with Interaction and the United States Institute of Peace to implement guidelines for managing the relationships between NGOs and U.S. military in hostile or potentially hostile environments. Issued in July 2007, the "Guidelines for Relations between U.S. Armed Forces and Non-Governmental Humanitarian Organizations in Hostile or Potentially Hostile Environments" help shape how the different communities operate in the same space. We have incorporated the guidelines in Service doctrine and are currently finalizing language that would incorporate the guidelines in Joint Doctrine. Moreover, we are supporting ways to establish NGO liaisons at each combatant command and to facilitate ongoing dialogue between military and NGO stakeholders in Afghanistan. My office continues to work with NGOs to assess the guidelines in theater and as they're used in practice.

Furthermore, we expect the QDR will help foster a closer and more effective partnership between the U.S. Government and NGOs in the future, one that makes full use of the unique skills NGOs bring to conflict environments. As part of our QDR, we have formally consulted NGOs and think tanks.

Finally, I would like to highlight another key area where we foster collaboration – through the establishment of the Center for Complex Operations (CCO). The CCO was formally attached to the National Defense University in February 2009. It's a multi-disciplinary center with detailees from the Department of State, Department of Defense, and USAID. The CCO's mission is to enhance the U.S. Government's ability to prepare for complex operations and catalyze debate, discussion, and coordination among various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. In addition to its role in training and education, the CCO plays a critical role in developing an interagency lessons learned process. The current effort, involving offices across the U.S. Government and the United States Institute of Peace, focuses on drawing

lessons from Iraq and Afghanistan PRTs. This multi-agency organization was created, in part, to integrate the range of 'complex operations' lessons-learned centers and think tanks with USG interagency elements. The CCO brings various communities and multiple agencies together to build a shared culture.

III. Synchronization of CERP with similar USAID and Department of State projects

The Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP) is critical to supporting commanders in the field in executing counterinsurgency operations in support of the President's strategy. The requirements on CERP in Iraq are different than the requirements in Afghanistan, based on the unique conditions in each country, the nature of the conflict, other available foreign assistance, local government resources, and our own changing force presence.

The scope of CERP has evolved since 2003 as our military operations have advanced. What started as a post-combat necessity has evolved into a crucial non-kinetic tool for our counter-insurgency strategy. While CERP is not designed for long-term reconstruction projects, its overall impact has been immediate and of significant tactical, operational and strategic benefit.

In Iraq, the strong emphasis on close strong civil-military coordination, reinforced by U.S. Forces-Iraq (USF-I) orders and guidance from both the CENTCOM and OSD levels, has ensured that the use of CERP is synchronized with interagency actors. (U.S. Forces-Iraq formally replaced Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) on January 1, 2010). CERP guidance, from both the OSD and CENTCOM levels, requires close coordination on project selection and approval. The Office of Provincial Affairs (OPA)-Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) Unified Common Plan signed in April 2009 outlines, on an operational level, civil-military coordination on governance and assistance activities. USF-I's guidance for financial tools further underscores this integration and coordination in its guidance to military commanders on the expenditure of CERP funds and management of CERP-funded activities.

In the field, USF-I works with the Office of Provincial Affairs and interagency partners to develop CERP guidance and priorities. Building on official guidance, in the spring of last year General Odierno issued guidance requiring maneuver units to coordinate with Provincial Reconstruction Teams on the nomination, development, and execution of all but a very few, security-specific projects. As you know, as civil-military teams led by State Department personnel and including USAID and other civilian agencies, Iraq PRTs serve as the focal point for coordinating assistance projects at the provincial level.

In Afghanistan, the U.S. Government Civil-Military Campaign Plan for Afghanistan provides the overarching framework for reconstruction in Afghanistan within which CERP projects are vetted and coordinated.

As part of the plan, the Department of Defense and the Department of State established an Executive Working Group with 14 sub-working groups. One of these sub-groups is the Infrastructure Working Group (IWG). The IWG meetings are co-chaired by USAID and U.S.

Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A) (through the Joint Project Integration Office JPIO). The IWG, as a priority, is working to establish a number of infrastructure strategies in areas such as roads, water, and energy, which provide overarching guidance for CERP projects as well.

USAID now participates as a voting member on the CERP review board at the command level. Their participation prevents duplication of effort and also helps identify any problems with sustainment of projects nominated for CERP. The increase of U.S. Government civilians in the field significantly improves the integration and coordination of reconstruction projects across civilian and military funding streams.

IV. Consideration of sustainability by the host government when assessing projects

The principle of sustainability requires that projects which are conceived, nominated and executed will bring lasting benefit to the local population, enhance the legitimacy of the host nation government, and endure after the project, facility or service is handed off to local authorities.

Our execution of CERP is a case in point. CERP provides immediate, “on the ground” ability to initiate and execute projects. As noted earlier, CERP was never intended for long-term stabilization and reconstruction activities. This requires consideration of the transition from CERP-initiated projects to other U.S. Government and/or host nation funding streams to ensure long-term resourcing of projects. As I highlighted above, direct USAID participation in CERP project selection is just one component. More broadly, this requires our commitment to ensure projects are designed, resourced, executed, and transitioned appropriately.

Consideration of project sustainability is mandated in theater guidance at all levels from the conception stage at the tactical level through the nomination and execution process at the operational and strategic level.

And, related to my comments on cooperation with partners, sustainability is a primary consideration when coordinating project conception, nomination and execution with other government agencies.

More generally, sustainability can be enhanced by the following considerations:

- Seeking the advice, opinion and feedback of local authorities to ensure that they can adequately staff and maintain projects under consideration.
- Analyzing the supporting infrastructure, systems, and human capital required to ensure that projects (like those employing CERP funding) can successfully function as intended.
- Purchasing equipment and services that are readily available locally and equipment that can be repaired in the country, province or region.

It is critical to involve local and government decision-makers who can legitimately represent the needs and aspirations of local communities in our approach to project conception and implementation. This approach builds capacity for decision-making, financial viability, planning, and management; improves the legitimacy of the government by demonstrating the beneficial effects of its presence; spurs civic responsibility and strengthens social structures; and decreases the risk of creating dependency.

Concluding Observations

In sum, we have made substantial progress in improving our coordination with partners in stabilization and reconstruction operations. At the end of the day, we need to integrate multiple lines of effort to ensure a rapid and smart response in our crisis management, contingency planning and resource mobilization activities. Scalability and adaptability are also critical ingredients. We need response options that we can appropriately tailor to the needs of specific situations. It would be unfortunate if Iraq and Afghanistan were to become the only models for future S&R needs. The disaster in Haiti underscores our need to adapt quickly – and effectively – to immediate needs.

Thank you again for this opportunity to speak. I welcome your questions.