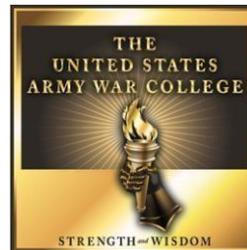


## Rebalancing the United States Counterterrorism Strategy

by

Colonel Joseph G. Lock  
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United States Army War College  
Class of 2015

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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## **Abstract**

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After nearly fourteen years of continuous combat and a global campaign to defeat al-Qa'ida (AQ), the United States Military is more capable, agile, and lethal than ever before. However, this exceptional capability is insufficient to reverse the expanding threat presented by AQ and other similarly inspired Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) that exploit fragile governments and thrive in ungoverned spaces. In order to reverse this trend, the U.S. needs to rebalance the current counterterrorism strategy, with much greater emphasis and resources applied toward building partner capacity (BPC) to reduce ungoverned space and eliminate emerging threats before they can take root. Increasing partner nation capacity building efforts requires persistent presence, a more streamlined funding authority, and better Special Operations Forces / Conventional Forces integration to maximize available manpower.



## **Rebalancing the United States Counterterrorism Strategy**

I believe we must shift our counterterrorism strategy -- drawing on the successes and shortcomings of our experience in Iraq and Afghanistan -- to more effectively partner with countries where terrorist networks seek a foothold.

–President Barack Obama<sup>1</sup>

After nearly fourteen years of continuous combat and a global campaign to defeat al-Qa'ida (AQ) following the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 (9-11) attacks against the United States, an examination of the U.S. counterterrorism strategy reveals some positive results and numerous areas for improvement.<sup>2</sup> Although the current U.S. strategy has resulted in the death or capture of the majority of AQ leadership responsible for the 9-11 attacks, the continued spread of Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs), some affiliated with AQ, and others inspired by a similar extremist ideology, has created an entirely new threat and cadre of leadership equally determined to attack the U.S. and its interests.

While maintaining pressure on AQ/VEO leadership with unilateral direct action strikes is an essential part of any counterterrorism (CT) strategy, in order to reverse the current trend of VEO expansion, the U.S. needs to pursue a more balanced approach to this problem and apply a much greater share of resources toward eliminating its underlying causes. Specifically, the U.S. needs to commit more effort and resources toward building partner nation capacity and capability to counter terrorist threats and reduce ungoverned space. Coupled with an increase in partner nation capacity building efforts, the U.S. needs to amend existing funding and deployment authorities to provide a more agile solution to the continually evolving threat. By rebalancing the current approach with greater emphasis, increased resources, and more flexible authorities

toward developing partner nation capacity and capability, there is an increased chance that the U.S. can reverse this trend of VEO expansion and realize sustainable success.

### Evaluating the Current U.S. Counterterrorism (CT) Strategy

The current U.S. CT strategy is found in the June 2011 *National Strategy for Counterterrorism*. This strategy expands on the 2010 *National Security Strategy* and reinforces the “safety and security of the American People” as the President’s greatest responsibility.<sup>3</sup> The *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* “sets out (the) approach to one of the top national security priorities: disrupting, dismantling, and eventually defeating al-Qa’ida and its affiliates and adherents.”<sup>4</sup> The strategy lists numerous “overarching goals:”<sup>5</sup>

- Protect the American People, Homeland, and American Interests
- Disrupt, Degrade, Dismantle, and Defeat AQ and its affiliates and adherents
- Prevent terrorist development, acquisition, and use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)
- Eliminate Safehavens
- Build Enduring Counterterrorism Partnerships and Capabilities
- Degrade links between AQ and its Affiliates and Adherents
- Counter AQ ideology and the specific drivers of violence AQ exploits
- Deprive terrorists of their enabling means

Analyzing these overarching goals, it is evident that the U.S. has realized success in many areas of the strategy. Overall, the American people have been protected and the few attacks in the homeland have been “lone-wolf” events, not AQ-directed. The U.S. has captured or killed the majority of those responsible for planning

and executing the 9-11 attacks. The U.S. has developed an extensive network of counterterrorism partners across the globe and continues to strengthen the interagency / intergovernmental cooperation necessary to keep pace with the threat. AQ and its affiliates have been disrupted and prevented from acquiring WMD, and the links between AQ and its affiliates have been severely degraded.

Despite these significant gains, new VEOs continue to emerge, inspired by the same extremist ideology that led to the rise of AQ. These groups exploit ungoverned or under-governed space and distort local grievances to fuel recruitment. The ability of these groups to leverage social media and compete in the information domain currently outpaces the moderate counter-argument. Although the strategy does not specifically address the rapid rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), formed from the remnants of AQ in Iraq, it is broadly written to include VEOs that may not claim allegiance to AQ but share similar extremist ideology and methodology.

The current CT strategy describes a multipronged approach for combating VEOs and eliminating the threat posed by extremist groups. The strategy recommends a balanced mix of several lines of effort including building partner capacity, enabling foreign partners through intelligence sharing, conducting direct action CT strikes against AQ leadership, strengthening our intergovernmental / multinational CT institutions, and directly confronting AQ's messaging by amplifying a positive counter argument, both globally and locally.<sup>6</sup> Although this strategy describes a balanced approach to combating AQ, the reality in its application has been a much heavier emphasis on direct action CT strikes. This emphasis not only absorbs a disproportionate amount of money and manpower, but also consumes a disproportionate amount of U.S. senior leader

attention and bandwidth.<sup>7</sup> The effect is less policy-maker / senior leader decision-maker time is invested toward developing and approving plans to build partner capacity / capability, strengthen and legitimize partner governments, and counter extremist messaging.

There are several reasons why the CT Strategy has become out of balance. The first reason is that, until very recently, there has been insufficient capacity within the U.S. military to invest in building partner capacity outside of Iraq and Afghanistan. Put in another way, the U.S. lacked the manpower and resources initially to execute the strategy as written.

Additionally, even as the U.S. military commitment in Iraq decreased significantly, there was reluctance within the National Security Staff (NSS) to pursue security cooperation activities that involved any significant commitment of military forces. This reluctance stemmed from a general policy of limiting “boots on the ground” solutions to security threats in order to prevent the U.S. Government from getting drawn into another protracted conflict.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, the perceived precision, low threat to U.S. personnel, and short duration commitment of employing stand-off direct action CT strikes, made this method the most attractive. By focusing the U.S. CT strategy on the elimination of key enemy leaders, the metrics for success are more direct. It is more difficult to measure progress with partner capacity building than it is to show progress through the systematic removal of terrorist leaders. Partner nation capacity building is a slow process where the metrics for success are often subjective and difficult to quantify. Contrast this with the relatively

quick and decisive results of stand-off CT strikes, it's easy to understand why this method became favored.

### Rebalancing the CT Strategy

Rebalancing the current CT Strategy requires a renewed commitment toward building partner nation capacity to defeat VEOs and reduce the requirement for U.S. unilateral action. For the first time in the last thirteen years, as the U.S. significantly reduces its requirements in Iraq and Afghanistan, there are forces available to invest in a broad capacity building effort. There is also significant expertise currently resident in the military to conduct capacity building activities. Although effective capacity building requires a long-term commitment, the end result is a sustainable security infrastructure that can reduce ungoverned space, provide legitimacy to fragile governments, and prevent extremist groups from exploiting vulnerable populations.

Despite the lengthy time horizons for capacity building, there are a number of recent examples where a small but persistent advisory effort has produced decisive security results. Security cooperation efforts in Jordan, Lebanon, and Columbia have produced sustainable and effective security forces in fragile states with significant internal threats. Despite receiving massive refugee flows from the civil war in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon have managed to remain relatively stable, even with extremist groups attempting to foment violence.<sup>9</sup>

This in contrast to the collapse of security forces in Yemen and Mali, where the U.S advisory effort was undermanned, insufficiently broad, and not persistent.<sup>10</sup> A modest but persistent effort in either of these two countries would likely have produced a much better outcome. The failure of security forces in Iraq is an example of a sufficiently resourced effort that unraveled after the complete removal of U.S. advisors.

Although Iraqi Security Forces had achieved a high level of capacity and capability, in the absence of embedded advisors, sectarian influences re-emerged and security forces collapsed. By shifting the U.S. counterterrorism focus away from unilateral CT strikes and toward capacity building, the U.S. can strengthen the legitimacy of our foreign partners, reduce ungoverned space where extremist groups flourish, and eliminate many of the underlying conditions which enable VEOs to spread.

### Understanding the Current Environment

The current global security environment is more volatile, complex, and ambiguous than ever before. The near instantaneous mass communication enabled by social media and the twenty-four hour news cycle has created an environment where the global population is increasingly more interconnected. Local grievances can quickly become disproportionately elevated or even worse, hijacked by extremist groups to radicalize vulnerable populations.<sup>11</sup> The speed with which the security environment can change was highlighted during the Arab Spring uprisings where long simmering grievances simultaneously reached a flash point in numerous Middle Eastern countries. The energy behind these uprisings was mobilized and sustained through social media connectivity and demonstrated just how quickly the present day security situation can deteriorate throughout a region.

Added to this communications revolution are an increased number of violent extremist organizations loosely affiliated by ideology, dispersed globally, and operating in under-governed spaces.<sup>12</sup> The success of the U.S. in destroying AQ senior leadership and organizational structure has resulted in a less centralized terrorist network and the emergence of groups, cells and individuals who share AQ's extremist ideology but operate independently. The interconnectivity of the global environment

enables these groups to spread extremist ideology faster than ever before to a larger audience than ever before. The ability of these groups to quickly gain international attention inflates the perception of the true threat and empowers them to negatively influence the security environment in ways not possible before.

Concurrently, the proliferation of increasingly more lethal weaponry and the ability of extremist groups to share knowledge of how to employ this weaponry, creates a much more dangerous environment than in the past.<sup>13</sup> Mass casualty producing weapons such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and improvised rocket-assisted mortars (IRAMs) are just two examples of highly lethal weapons developed by extremist groups and perfected with significant effects on the battlegrounds of Afghanistan and Iraq. The proliferation of this knowledge makes a small number of sufficiently motivated people capable of causing much greater damage than previously possible.

#### Strengthening Global Partnership

Recognizing that the threat in today's environment is more dispersed, more rapidly evolving, and more lethal than ever before, the challenge to the United States in countering this threat is more complex than ever. Predicting where the next security collapse will occur is not a luxury the U.S. can expect as it allocates limited resources to counter these dynamic threats. A possible way the U.S. can realistically remain ahead of these threats is by leveraging the combined capability of international partners and by building a mutually supporting network of counterterrorism allies. While many U.S. allies possess the will, some do not possess the capability or capacity to counter these threats without help.

The first step in expanding capacity building efforts is realizing that effective capacity building is best achieved through persistent presence and a long-term

commitment. Short duration, episodic engagements with partner nation security forces do little more than foster good will between the U.S. and its allies. In order to truly build capacity, the advisory effort must be persistent, predictable (from the partners' perspective), and sustained over a multi-year period. Episodic engagements, which are frequently the output of many theater security cooperation plans, do little toward building sustainable capacity. These events are typically short in duration (one to three months), do not include an effort to equip, and rarely involve the same units / people when repeat events are scheduled. While this strategy increases the number of foreign partners who have some positive interaction with U.S. military personnel, it does little to build sustainable capability and, equally as important, does not enable the establishment of long-term relationships essential for building effective partnerships. The ability to establish an environment of mutual trust comes only through a sustained partnership and a demonstrated commitment to nurturing relationships, understanding cultures, and appreciating the prevailing values. Once trust is established, partner units become more transparent, more willing to collaborate, and are more willing to build multi-year strategies designed to produce sustainable improvements in capability and capacity.

The greatest challenge to establishing long term, persistent engagement activities with numerous global partners is the availability of properly trained U.S. advisors to execute this task. The mission of building partner capacity has traditionally fallen under the purview of the Special Forces community, particularly in the development of partner nation counterterrorism forces. Counterterrorism, foreign internal defense (FID), and security force assistance (SFA) are all core missions of the Special Forces military occupational specialty.<sup>14</sup> Special Forces soldiers are specifically

assessed, selected and trained to conduct these missions. Unfortunately, there simply aren't a sufficient number of Special Forces soldiers available to meet all the demands created by the current environment, even with the reduced Special Forces commitment in Afghanistan and Iraq.

A solution to solving this manpower shortfall comes from realigning a portion of the conventional Army toward this mission and the deepening of Special Operations Force (SOF) / Conventional Force interdependence. The Regionally Aligned Force (RAF) is a concept envisioned by the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA), General Raymond Odierno, and highlighted in his February 2013 vision statement. The CSA identifies the current volatility, complexity, and rapidly evolving nature of the current global environment and provides a vision to produce a more flexible, agile, and globally engaged Army.<sup>15</sup>

Reflecting on lessons learned in Afghanistan and Iraq, General Odierno recognized that success in both of these conflicts was realized only after developing a deep understanding of the prevailing cultures, values, and environment. General Odierno also emphasized the fundamentally human nature of conflict and the essential role of landpower to succeed in future conflicts.<sup>16</sup>

Predicting where the next major conflict will arise is a difficult prospect. In order to reduce the startup costs associated with responding to future threats, the CSA has directed the alignment of specified Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) toward specific Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs). By dedicating a portion of the Army's ground combat capability toward a regional focus, the U.S. military can build cultural

expertise, foster working relationships with foreign partners, and remain globally engaged well ahead of the next conflict.

Aligning BCTs with GCCs also provides a predictable manpower pool that can be committed toward Theater Security Cooperation Plan (TSCP) activities and capacity building efforts. The predictability that comes with this BCT alignment enables the GCC to plan exercises and exchanges further in advance and signals a higher level of commitment to host nation governments. Additionally, this fosters an expeditionary mindset within the BCT, enables conventional Army units to gain valuable interagency / intergovernmental experience, and develops a much deeper understanding of the operational environment.

However, simply allocating a portion of the conventional Army toward capacity building efforts will not create the level of expertise, nor will it provide the persistent presence necessary to create true advances in partner nation capacity. The RAF concept, as currently envisioned, provides a reliable manpower pool for the GCCs to plan and execute traditional, short duration theater security cooperation program (TSCP) engagements. While this increases U.S. regional presence, signals U.S. commitment, and keeps a portion of the Army regionally attuned, it does not address the real goal of building sustainable partner capacity. In order to truly optimize this effort, the realigning of conventional force manpower must be coupled with a concerted effort toward SOF / CF interdependence. By coupling these two forces, many of the challenges preventing the efficient employment of both forces can be resolved.

To best enable SOF / CF interdependence, the Army should reevaluate its current BCT allocation and attempt to build habitual partnerships between select BCTs

and Special Forces Groups (SFGs). Ideally these BCTs would come from installations where SFGs are based, creating greater opportunities for combined training. Collocating these forces greatly increases the ability to conduct interoperability training and enables both communities to leverage each other's inherent strengths and capabilities. This arrangement would enable RAF BCTs to leverage the communications, intelligence, language, and foreign weapons expertise embedded within each SFG. Likewise, Special Forces Groups would benefit from the BCT's expertise in mechanized maneuver, fires (artillery and attack helicopter), employment of rotary wing assets, air defense, logistics, engineering, and infantry tactics.

Building long-term habitual relationships between SFGs and RAF BCTs would facilitate the creation of "hybrid" SOF/CF advisory teams capable of capacity building and advisory efforts at a much higher level and more responsive to the specific needs of the GCC. Combining these two forces also resolves many of the challenges confronting the RAF implementation. Specifically, BCTs are not organically manned or equipped to operate in a geographically dispersed, austere environment. BCT's do not have sufficient secure communications to command and control in a disaggregated configuration and are not manned to operate outside traditional Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) windows.<sup>17</sup> Contrast this with Special Forces Detachments that are outfitted with multiple, redundant, long-range secure communications and highly trained Special Forces Medical Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs), and are specifically manned and equipped to operate dispersed in austere environments.

Likewise, Special Forces Detachments are frequently required to train partner nation staffs above the battalion (BN) level and to create logistics and other systems to

enable foreign security forces. The expert logisticians and staff officers that are organic to a BCT are a much better choice to execute these training functions. Additionally, the BCT can help to fill the manpower shortage that currently limits SF unilateral capacity building efforts. Combining infantry squads and platoons with a small number of language proficient SF Soldiers would greatly increase the training throughput and depth of any persistent advisory effort.

By coupling CF/SF elements and creating hybrid “capacity building teams,” many of the manpower and expertise challenges to expanded capacity building efforts can be resolved. Drawing from both pools of manpower enables the GCC to design tailored training teams uniquely qualified to conduct capacity building training across a broad spectrum of skills and levels of command. Creating long-term habitual relationships between designated RAF Divisions and Special Forces Groups can mitigate many of the challenges currently facing the RAF employment and optimize the available manpower toward partner nation capacity building.

#### Authorities and Programs for Building Partner Capacity (BPC)

The United States employs a complex array of funding authorities and programs to facilitate Security Cooperation and BPC efforts. These programs fall under two main funding authorities: United States Code (USC) Title 22 “Foreign Relations and Intercourse” and Title 10 “Armed Forces.”<sup>18</sup> Traditionally, the Department of State (DoS) is the lead agency within the U.S. government for conducting foreign policy, including BPC. However, the Department of Defense executes many of these programs under the direction and approval of DoS.

Since the start of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the global war against AQ and its affiliates, the U.S. government has granted increasingly greater roles and

authorities for DoD to execute partner nation capacity building. Previously limited to joint exercises and military-to-military exchanges, the authorized expenditure of Title 10 has evolved to include dozens of capacity building programs including some that directly train and equip foreign forces.

DoD's primary implementing agency for administering BPC programs is the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), a three-star directorate within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense – Policy (USD-P). The DSCA directs, administers, and provides DoD-wide guidance to the DoD components and DoD representatives to U.S. missions abroad for the execution of DoD security assistance and security cooperation programs.<sup>19</sup> The DSCA works closely with the combatant commands and the DoS to implement foreign military sales (FMS), under Title 22 authority, and maintains a close liaison with Congress to report DoD security cooperation (SC), BPC, and equipping activities abroad.<sup>20</sup> In 2012 alone, the DSCA facilitated nearly seventy billion dollars of FMS to dozens of partner countries.<sup>21</sup>

Additionally, the DSCA directly manages nearly \$700M of SC programs and activities, which can be broadly binned into three categories: 1) Defense Institution Building (DIB), 2) International Education, and 3) Combating Terrorism Training and Equipping.<sup>22</sup> Most of these programs enable security cooperation and collaboration across a broad spectrum of security concerns as well as providing educational opportunities for U.S. allies.

Within the DIB category, there are a number of significant programs that contribute to the U.S. global capacity building effort. The most notable are the DoD Regional Centers for Security Studies, a network of five institutions each focused on a

region of the globe and dedicated to the advancement of security cooperation globally. These Regional Centers serve as permanent venues for hosting seminars, conferences, and training. They also serve as locations to facilitate collaboration on security issues impacting the different GCC AORs, providing a network of security cooperation leaders seeking to build sustainable partner institution capacity across the globe.<sup>23</sup> Authorized under Title 10 authorities, the funding for this program is provided annually through DoD Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funds with \$73.8M appropriated in the 2013 Defense Appropriations Bill.<sup>24</sup>

Also included in the DIB category of capacity building is the Defense Institutional Reform Initiative (DIRI). This program provides subject matter experts to work with partner nations at the defense establishment / institutional level and build more effective and professional organizations. This program provides capacity building at a ministry-level, an essential component to creating sustainable partner capacity.

The international education category includes a number of equally important capacity building programs and tools. Among these is the International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program, a Title 22 program executed by DoD. This program provides professional military training for foreign soldiers and officers across a broad spectrum of skills including counterterrorism. The goals of this program are to build relationships with foreign partners, improve professionalism, promote interoperability, and develop English language capability.<sup>25</sup> The IMET program is appropriated annually and has averaged over \$100M for the last three years, providing training to over 5000 individual foreign soldiers from over 140 countries each year.<sup>26</sup>

Although this program is not ideal for building nascent capability, the broad reach of this program and the network of relationships it fosters, make it worthy of specific mention.

Within the third category, Combating Terrorism Training and Equipping, there are four particularly important programs: 1) Section 1207, *Global Security Contingency Fund* (GSCF), 2) Section 1208, *Support of Special Operations to Combat Terrorism*, 3) Counterterrorism Partnership Fund (CPF), and, 4) Section 1206, *Global Train and Equip Authority*.

Section 1207, GSCF, is unique program administered jointly by DoD and DoS which provides training and equipment to a country's national military forces or security forces that conduct border and maritime security, counterterrorism operations, internal defense, or stability operations.<sup>27</sup> This program is a relatively new initiative within the SC field and is particularly unique in its joint administration between DoD and DoS.

Programs executed under this authority are funded by split contributions from DoD and DoS, with 80% of the funding coming from DoD and 20% coming from DoS.<sup>28</sup> From 2012-2015, the *National Defense Authorization Act* (NDAA) authorized \$200M annually for this program, permitting the expenditure of funds for a very broad category of capacity building and providing money for equipment, training, and construction.<sup>29</sup>

While this program represents an ideal model for conducting nascent capacity building activities, according to a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, the joint approval process generally leads to lengthy implementation timelines with most activities beginning over two years after identifying the need.<sup>30</sup>

Section 1208, *Support of Special Operations to Combat Terrorism*, is specific funding authority, granted to United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM),

and intended to enable foreign forces “engaged or facilitating ongoing operations by U.S. Special Operations Forces.”<sup>31</sup> The authority is exceptionally broad in that it allows the expenditure of funds to enable foreign forces, including irregular forces, groups, and individuals who may or may not be part of a formal security organization. This program is authorized and appropriated annually with funds not to exceed \$75M per year.<sup>32</sup> Although the approval processes for this funding authority are relatively quick, the intent of the program is not for capacity building efforts. While capacity building may result from this program, the primary purpose is to enable ongoing U.S. operations.

The CPF is a new Title 10 program authorized in the 2015 NDAA and 2015 Appropriations Act. This program provides \$1.3B to “provide support and assistance to foreign security forces, groups, or individuals to conduct, support, or facilitate counterterrorism and crisis response activities.”<sup>33</sup> The guidance for this program currently focuses activities in the USCENTCOM and USAFRICOM areas of responsibility, but excludes Iraq due to a number of other programs specifically designated for that country. On the surface, this program has the potential to resolve many of the current shortfalls that inhibit other SC programs. The size of the appropriation and the broad context of the intent are certainly unique when compared to other programs. However, it is too early to evaluate the program effectiveness, as it has yet to be implemented.

Perhaps the most significant capacity building authority currently implemented is Section 1206, *Global Train and Equip Authority*. Established as a temporary authority in the 2006 NDAA, this authority has been amended and extended every year (now through FY2017). As the first Title 10 direct train and equip authority, Section 1206

deviated from the historical paradigm of DoS control for foreign capacity building efforts. Section 1206 provides DoD with the authority to train and equip foreign military *and* security forces for counterterrorism operations and foreign military forces for stability operations.<sup>34</sup> Although DoD controls this authority, concurrence from DoS is required before it can be implemented. Since its inception in 2006, over \$2.2B has been applied toward capacity building efforts in over 40 countries.<sup>35</sup> However, there is an annual cap of \$350M applied towards this authority.

Section 1206 was originally envisioned as a rapid train and equip authority designed to keep pace with rapidly evolving terrorism threats by quickly applying resources to foreign security partners and preventing terrorist organizations from gaining a foothold.<sup>36</sup> Traditional DoS train and equip authorities and processes were regarded as too slow and bureaucratic to be effective. In DoD's FY 2009 *Budget Request Summary Justification*, Section 1206 funding was defined as a "Global Train and Equip authority allowing a response to emergent threats or opportunities in six months or less."<sup>37</sup> Despite, its original intent, Section 1206 authorities have become similarly burdened by long approval processes. A recent Congressional Research Service report on the effectiveness of 1206 authority noted that approval processes typically take 18 months compared to DoS planned train and equip processes that take three years or more to implement. While 1206 Authority is certainly a more expeditious route than Title 22 programs, it is simply not fast enough to keep pace with the threat.

Outwardly, U.S. SC / BPC efforts appear well resourced and tailored to respond to a broad array of security requirements. However, it is important to note that the majority of the FMS programs currently being executed are concentrated among a few

countries, with over half of 2013 dollars coming from Saudi Arabia alone.<sup>38</sup> Most of the U.S. FMS effort is invested toward well-established allies that have competent security and defense infrastructures capable of absorbing and employing U.S. technology. Perhaps the greatest benefit realized from the current SC / BPC efforts is the increased interoperability with the U.S. military being developed across the globe. While these efforts are an essential component to increasing the capability of our partners and strengthening the relationships with our allies, there is a segment of the security environment that remains underserved by this process.<sup>39</sup>

Fragile states and under-governed regions such as Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan, Iraq, Mali, Nigeria, North Africa, Central Africa, and parts of Central America require a much more focused and persistent training and partnership effort to achieve sustainable security.<sup>40</sup> The current BPC process is heavily invested with providing U.S. equipment, technology, and associated training to improve the capability of U.S. allies and success is often measured in the dollar amount of equipment supplied. Foreign partners that lack the institutional ability to receive and maintain equipment require a much more basic approach that is more manpower intensive and more dependent on persistent engagement than on military equipment.<sup>41</sup> The current process of providing training and equipment to foreign partners is also tied to lengthy approval processes and subject to annual authorization cycles. The process is faster for partners where we already have existing programs established, however it does not respond well to a rapidly deteriorating security environment in a region or country where we do not have an existing program.<sup>42</sup>

## Options for Improving Authorities and Funding

In order to best enable BPC/SC activities across the full spectrum of security environments, the following options should be considered:

- 1) Establish a faster BPC funding mechanism to respond to rapidly evolving threats. Similar to the rapid acquisition process that circumvents much of the acquisition bureaucracy, a rapid funding mechanism for BPC should seek to secure funding in a 60-90 day timeframe rather than the most accelerated process that currently requires over 18 months. While the new Section 1207 authority has potential, due to the dual-funding requirement of DoD/DoS, it is unlikely this authority will be rapid. DoD should conduct an extensive review of Section 1206 authority and create a process that aligns with the authority's original purpose: rapid response to emergent threats. Accelerated approval timelines could be realized by creating a list of "pre-approved" equipment and training specifically focused on improving partner nation CT capability.
- 2) Approve a new deployment Execute Order (EXORD) that authorizes the deployment of conventional military forces for the expressed purpose of conducting BPC activities. Special Operations Forces already benefit from the deployment flexibility granted in a different EXORD. Forces deployed under this EXORD would still require concurrence from DoS (at the Country Team level). However, by leveraging CONUS-based forces *allocated* to the GCC, the formal Request for Forces (RFF) to the Joint Staff and subsequent SECDEF Orders Book (SDOB) process could be circumvented, greatly accelerating the deployment process.

3) Codify Section 1206 as a permanent Title 10 authority. The 2015 NDAA currently has language that addresses this proposal. Section 1206 funding authority was established in the 2006 NDAA and renewed every year since. Making this a permanent law will reduce the uncertainty and delays associated with annual NDAA approvals.<sup>43</sup>

By creating a more streamlined and responsive BPC funding approval process, the United States can remain more agile and adaptive in response to a continually evolving VEO threat.

### Conclusion

After nearly fourteen years of continuous combat and a global campaign to defeat AQ, the United States Military is more capable, agile, and lethal than ever before. The U.S. developed the ability to identify, acquire, and capture or kill terrorist threats with a level of precision and discrimination unmatched by any military in the world. However, this exceptional capability is insufficient to reverse the expanding threat presented by VEOs who exploit fragile governments and thrive in ungoverned spaces. The only way the U.S. and its allies can hope to reverse this trend is through an expanded and more effective effort to build partner capacity. Improving the current approach requires a commitment for persistent engagement (not episodic), more streamlined funding and deployment authorities, and a concerted effort to maximize available manpower through better SOF / CF integration. Building partner capacity is identified as a cornerstone of our National Security Strategy and an essential component to mitigating the precipitous reduction in U.S. landpower. Accepting that the U.S. will need to shape and influence an expanding number of places with a smaller military, leveraging foreign partners is more critical than ever before. If the U.S. can

develop more flexible, agile, and responsive authorities while maximizing the available manpower, there is a much greater chance to reverse the expanding threat posed by VEOs and realize more sustainable progress in combating terrorism.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> President Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President at the United States Military Academy Commencement Ceremony,” public speech, West Point, NY, May 28, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> The term AQ includes AQ affiliates, adherents, and other terrorist groups inspired by AQ’s extremist ideology. Barack H. Obama, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (Washington D.C: The White House, June 2011), 3

<sup>3</sup> Obama, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism*, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 11-17.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph G. Lock, Author’s Personal Observations Working on the Joint Staff, 2009-2012.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Report on Terrorism 2013* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of State, April 2014), 32.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Country Report on Terrorism 2012* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of State, May 2013), 8.

<sup>11</sup> General Raymond T. Odierno, “CSA’s Strategic Intent: Delivering Strategic Landpower in an Uncertain World,” February 5, 2013, 2, linked from *The United States Army Homepage*, <http://www.army.mil/article/95729> (accessed January 15, 2015).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>13</sup> Kim Cragin et al, *Sharing the Dragon’s Teeth, Terrorist Groups and the Exchange of New Technologies* (Santa Monica, CA.: Rand Corporation, MG-485, 2007), 3-7.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Special Operations*, Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-05 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, August 31, 2012), 2-1, [http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR\\_pubs/dr\\_a/pdf/adrp3\\_05.pdf](http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR_pubs/dr_a/pdf/adrp3_05.pdf) (accessed March 20, 2015).

<sup>15</sup> General Raymond T. Odierno, “CSA’s Strategic Intent,” February 5, 2013, 7, <http://www.army.mil/article/95729> (accessed March 20, 2015).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. 2-3.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas H. Roe, "Center for Army Lessons Learned Interim Report on Regionally Aligned Forces in U.S. Army Africa," memorandum for Distribution, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, March 19, 2014, 5.

<sup>18</sup> Ashley S. Boyle, "Fact Sheet: U.S. Title 10, Title 22, and Title 50," August 9, 2012, 1-4, <http://www.americansecurityproject.org/fact-sheet-u-s-c-title-10-title-22-and-title-50/> (accessed March 20, 2015).

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Defense Security Cooperation Agency*, DoD Directive 5105.65 (Washington D.C: The Pentagon, October 26, 2012), 1.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 3-5.

<sup>21</sup> COL Ralph Boeckman, "Briefing: Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Regional Deputy Director of Operations," <http://www.ndia.org/Divisions/Divisions/International/Documents/DSCA%20-%20COL%20Boeckmann%20-%20NDIA%20Int'l%20Div%20Brief%20-%2010%20July%202013%20v%204.pdf> (accessed February 20, 2015)

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Defense Security Cooperation Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Estimates* (Washington, DC: The Pentagon, February 2011), 1.

<sup>23</sup> Defense Security Cooperation Agency, "DoD Regional Centers," <http://www.dsca.mil/programs/dod-regional-centers> (accessed March 20, 2015).

<sup>24</sup> Defense Security Cooperation Agency, "Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Estimates," [http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2015/budget\\_justification/pdfs/01\\_Operation\\_and\\_Maintenance/O\\_M\\_VOL\\_1\\_PART\\_1/DSCA\\_PB15.pdf](http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2015/budget_justification/pdfs/01_Operation_and_Maintenance/O_M_VOL_1_PART_1/DSCA_PB15.pdf) (accessed March 20, 2015).

<sup>25</sup> Defense Security Cooperation Agency, "International Military Education Program," <http://www.dsca.mil/programs/international-military-education-training-imet> (accessed March 29, 2015).

<sup>26</sup> Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management, "Security Cooperation Programs through Fiscal Year 2015," 30, [http://www.disam.dsca.mil/documents/pubs/security\\_cooperation\\_programs\\_20150108.pdf](http://www.disam.dsca.mil/documents/pubs/security_cooperation_programs_20150108.pdf) (accessed March 20, 2015).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>37</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Request Summary Justification* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of Defense, February 4, 2008), 103.

<sup>38</sup> Boeckman, DSCA Briefing.

<sup>39</sup> Joseph Lock, *Building Partner Capacity: Streamlining Funding Authorities*, Course Paper, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, February 19, 2015), 3.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Serafino, *Section 1206 CRS Report*, 24.

