

What Is “Building Partner Capacity?” Issues for Congress

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Summary

Since 2001, successive U.S. administrations have increasingly prioritized efforts to build foreign security forces—particularly in weak and failing states—arguing that doing so advances U.S. national security objectives. In turn, the Department of Defense (DOD) has invested billions of dollars in “Building Partner Capacity,” a term that refers to a broad set of missions, programs, activities, and authorities intended to improve the ability of other nations to achieve those security-oriented goals they share with the United States. As a consequence, these efforts and programs have been a growing focus of Congressional attention. Many partner capacity building programs and activities have their roots in the post-World War II period, if not well before, yet today they are implemented more widely, and often with greater resourcing, than efforts prior to September 11, 2001. Indeed, building partner capacity was a central feature of the 2003-2010 Iraq campaign, and is a core component of the ongoing current campaigns both in Afghanistan to counter Al Qaeda and the Taliban, and in Iraq/Syria to counter the Islamic State.

Recent events, particularly the battle between the Afghan government and the Taliban over Konduz, the inability of DOD-led efforts to produce more than a “handful” of anti-Assad, anti-Islamic State (IS) forces in Syria, and the collapse of U.S.-trained forces in Iraq in the face of the Islamic State, have called into question—including in Congress—whether these BPC programs can ever achieve their desired effects. CRS surveyed the publicly available literature on the subject, and found the debate on the strategic effectiveness of BPC and related programs nascent, at best. While a variety of studies explore programmatic effectiveness, very few explore what the United States sought to achieve when engaging in a BPC effort, and whether or not doing so led to desirable outcomes.

The increasing emphasis that the U.S. government is placing on BPC as a means to achieve strategic goals, combined with the paucity of the literature on this subject, prompted CRS to explore the historical track record of BPC efforts to help determine whether they produced outcomes consistent with U.S. strategic objectives. Twenty case studies since World War II were explored; each was grouped according to one of seven strategic goals that U.S. sought to accomplish. These goals included

- victory in war/war termination,
- managing regional security challenges,
- indirectly supporting a party to a conflict,
- conflict mitigation,
- enhancing coalition participation,
- building institutional and interpersonal linkages, and
- alliance building.

Given that U.S. leaders often argue that a BPC effort could help accomplish more than one of the above goals, determining what constitutes the “primary” strategic objective for a given BPC effort required analytic judgment. CRS organized the cases according to public statements at the time, with particular attention paid to how leaders described the purpose of the BPC effort. Effectiveness was judged based on two criteria: whether the strategic goal was achieved, and whether the effort produced unintended consequences that were obviously and meaningfully damaging to U.S. national interests. Within the case studies explored, BPC was least effective as a tool for allowing the United States to extract itself from conflict (victory in war/war termination). However, it was most effective as a tool for building interpersonal and institutional linkages, and for alliance building.

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Introduction: Why Is Building Partner Capacity of Interest to Congress?

A number of reasons underlie a growing Congressional interest in the complex national security policy area that has come to be labeled "Building Partnership Capacity," or "BPC." First, since 2006 BPC has increased in prominence within U.S. strategy, arguably becoming a central pillar of U.S. national security and foreign policy in recent years. Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, successive U.S. and Department of Defense leaders concluded that the traditional set of security assistance and security cooperation tools did not meet the needs of the changed strategic landscape. The term "Building Partnership Capacity" was coined in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review. Since then, BPC has become a catchall phrase for a wide array of programs,¹ all underpinned by the assumption that strengthening foreign security institutions in weak and fragile states will have tangible positive benefits for U.S. national security. Activities in which DOD engages toward those ends include (but are not limited to): training, mentoring, advising, equipping, exercising, educating and planning with foreign security forces, primarily in fragile and weak states. BPC is also used to describe a core element of recent U.S. military campaigns—namely, training and equipping foreign security forces—in Iraq (2003-2011), Afghanistan (2001-present) and Iraq/Syria (2014-present).

Despite the increasing emphasis on, and centrality of, BPC in national security strategy and military operations, the assumption that building foreign security forces will have tangible U.S. national security benefits remains a relatively untested proposition. This leads to the second reason for growing Congressional interest: neither the policy nor academic communities have explored in great detail whether or not Building Partner Capacity works to achieve U.S. strategic objectives. Recent events, particularly the battle between the Afghan government and the Taliban over Kunduz, as well as the collapse of U.S.-trained and equipped forces in Iraq and Syria in the face of the Islamic State, have called into question whether these BPC programs can achieve their desired effects.² Do BPC programs and activities actually advance U.S. national security interests? If so, when? If not, why not?

This leads to the third reason for increased Congressional interest in BPC and related programs: fiscal oversight. The relative intellectual and programmatic ambiguity of these efforts make it difficult to understand what, specifically, the DOD is doing to build partner capacity in fragile states. Answering the question, "what is BPC?" is surprisingly difficult, as definitions of BPC vary across the U.S. government. This uncertainty, in turn, makes it difficult to understand what, specifically, DOD is spending on BPC and related programs. While Congress has authorized over \$100 billion toward higher profile BPC missions in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria since 2001, DOD continues to execute BPC missions in countries around the globe. In some instances, components of DOD have begun augmenting its force structure in order to better conduct current and future BPC missions. As DOD budgets generally reflect inputs rather than outputs or outcomes, these BPC expenditures are difficult to identify and account for; this, in turn, creates challenges in determining whether it constitutes a cost-effective policy option.

¹ Dafna H. Rand and Stephen Tankel, *Security Cooperation & Assistance: Rethinking the Return on Investment*, Center for a New American Security, Washington, DC, August 5, 2015, p. 2, http://www.cnas.org/sites/default/files/publications-pdf/CNAS%20Report_Security%20Cooperation_FINAL.pdf.

² See, for example, Rosa Brooks, "The Hard Lessons of Kunduz and Syria," *Foreign Policy*, October 2, 2015, and Lawrence Korb, "Why the U.S. Military Can't Succeed in Training Foreign Armies," *Reuters*, October 5, 2015.

In short, despite the centrality of BPC in U.S. national security strategy and military operations, it remains unclear whether building the capacity of foreign security forces is an effective way to accomplish U.S. strategic objectives. It also remains unclear exactly how much DOD allocates toward BPC and related programs. These issues both individually and collectively present considerable oversight challenges for Congress, especially as it weighs the relative strengths and weaknesses of training and equipping programs in Iraq and Syria today as well as the need for future programs.

The complexity of BPC and related programs makes analyzing these programs' effectiveness a challenging endeavor. This report is therefore intended to accomplish two interrelated purposes. It first seeks to build a common understanding of what, exactly, constitutes BPC by illuminating the various ways in which different USG components define it. In so doing, it charts the evolution of BPC in national strategy documents since the term was first coined in 2006. With that intellectual baseline established, it then explores whether BPC has proven an effective means by which the United States has accomplished its strategic objectives to which such programs have directed since World War II. It concludes with questions and issues for Congress to consider. It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive study of all U.S.-led BPC efforts, which is beyond the scope of this research.

This report differs from many other CRS products, as it is intended to assist Congress with its oversight responsibilities by helping it think critically about BPC and related programs. Accordingly, it raises more questions than it answers. Among the most important: are BPC shortcomings due to execution issues? Or are they due to BPC being an inappropriate way to accomplish U.S. strategic objectives? While RAND and CRS scholarship illuminates some criteria for judging whether a BPC effort is likely to be effective (found on page four), ultimately, there are no clear-cut answers at present; further analysis is needed.

Potential Key Issues for Congress

CRS research offers the following potential key takeaways for Congress:

- "Building Partner Capacity" (BPC) is difficult to define. Since the term's introduction in 2006, it has been used to describe DOD programs, a strategic rationale for building the security forces of weak and failing states, and broader DOD cooperative activities with a variety of actors, including the State Department, U.S. state and local governments, security institutions in foreign countries, private companies, and nongovernmental organizations. This report focuses on BPC's use as a *strategic rationale for building security forces of weak or failing states*.
- Determining exactly how much DOD currently spends on BPC-related activities across its enterprise is difficult. This oversight challenge appears to have increased in recent years due to DOD's increased emphasis on, and prioritization of, cooperation on security matters with other countries. Cooperative security activities, including those that build capacity in weak and failing states, are diffuse across the DOD enterprise, and therefore difficult to trace to a particular budget activity or line item.
- The conceptual and programmatic complexity of BPC activities has compounded the analytic challenge of determining whether BPC programs are effective. Therefore, this report takes a "back to basics" analytic approach to understanding BPC effectiveness by identifying what kinds of strategic goals the United States

sought to accomplish since World War II when deciding to build a partner's capacity. These goals included

- victory in war or war termination;
- managing regional security challenges;
- indirectly supporting a party to a conflict;
- conflict mitigation;
- building institutional and interpersonal linkages;
- enhancing coalition participation; and
- alliance building.

This report examines between two and four case studies for each strategic-level rationale, for a total of 20 cases.³ The overall results are depicted in **Figure 1** below:

Figure 1. BPC Effectiveness by Strategic Rationale in Cases Explored



Source: Congressional Research Service.

Figure 1 suggests that in the case studies CRS researched, BPC efforts have been the *least effective*—relative to the strategic goal the United States sought to achieve—when used as a war exit strategy. BPC efforts have been *most effective* when used to build interpersonal and institutional linkages with other states and to build alliances. With respect to alliance building, several nations have, in a sense, “graduated” from being considered relatively weak and fragile states (particularly after the cessation of major wars) to strong U.S. allies; South Korea, Poland, and Japan are such examples.

Explaining Effectiveness?

The case studies CRS explored provide vignettes to illuminate questions associated with evaluating BPC activities rather than in-depth explorations. Perhaps the most critical of those questions is: why does, or does not, BPC work? Considerable debate exists in the policy and scholarly communities about why BPC efforts have a mixed track record. Two primary schools of

³ To determine whether a BPC effort was “effective,” CRS asked two questions. First, did the BPC effort contribute to achieving the stated U.S. goals? Second, did the BPC effort materially and obviously undermine U.S. interests in the long term? While it would be an analytic stretch to presume that failures or successes were a direct result of BPC efforts rather than other external or internal factors, one can make judgments based on the overall trends as to whether BPC meaningfully contributed (or did not contribute) toward accomplishing stated U.S. strategic objectives.

thought bear on this question: (1) those who blame BPC failures on execution issues, and (2) those who argue that, from a strategic perspective, BPC can never work.

Although CRS research for this report was focused on *whether* BPC worked rather than *why*, our findings suggest that according to the case studies selected, neither explanation may be fully accurate. For BPC to be effective a host of factors need to be taken into account and many of these factors are beyond the United States' ability to control. As a starting point, Congress may wish to consider the criteria below (see **Table 1**) when judging whether BPC is likely to be an appropriate tool toward accomplishing strategic objectives.

Table 1. Criteria for Judging Likely BPC Effectiveness

Factors Within U.S. Control	What does the United States want to achieve? Is there a demonstrable record of U.S. strategic-level success in accomplishing those objectives?
	Are U.S. objectives clear and consistent across U.S. government (USG) agencies (e.g., State, USAID, DOD)?
	Are U.S. programs across USG agencies organized, designed, managed and executed in a coherent and consistent manner?
	Are U.S. programs designed in a manner that will actually benefit the partner in the short, medium and long term?
	Are U.S. programs executed consistently over time (measured in years rather than months)?
	Is the United States prepared to conduct the BPC effort over longer durations (measured in years rather than months)?
	Are U.S. programs designed and implemented in a manner that is coherent with international community efforts?
Factors Outside U.S. Control	Are U.S. and partner interests aligned in the short, medium, and long term? If not, can the United States mitigate risks associated with diverging interests? If so, how?
	Does the partner have legitimate institutions of governance and effective political structures?
	Has the partner invested its own funds or other resources to build its security capacity? In other words, has it demonstrated it has "skin in the game?"
	Does the partner have sufficient systems and processes in place to translate U.S. assistance into durable capabilities?
	Do key actors in the international community support U.S. strategy? Are their efforts reinforcing those of the United States?

Source: The RAND Corporation and CRS.

CRS research points to the following additional observations:

- A common denominator in most of the successful cases is that the recipient of assistance was a legitimate, relatively effective institution of governance. Many of the least effective BPC efforts were conducted either during conflicts and wars (situations in which governance is contested by opposing parties) or in countries where legitimate governance was relatively nascent. Further, corruption and graft in a partner can significantly inhibit BPC effectiveness. Little evidence exists to suggest that BPC will be effective without a willing and capable partner on the ground.
- An alignment of interests between the United States and recipients of security assistance in the short, medium, and long term appears to be important for overall

BPC success. This implies, of course, that recipients of BPC assistance are politically legitimate enough to formulate and articulate their interests, and execute their strategies accordingly.

- BPC programs may lead to unintended consequences that create new, often equally significant strategic challenges. For example, U.S. partnership activities in Central and Eastern Europe after the end of the Cold War have been used by Moscow as a political pretext for interventions along its periphery.
- Partnership comes with long-term U.S. responsibilities that are not immediately obvious. Although the United States may build partner capacity to help partners help themselves, those partners are likely making a different, longer-term calculation. On the ground, accepting U.S. assistance is essentially making a *de facto* political and strategic choice that in some instances is tantamount to strategic alignment with the United States. This alignment can lead states to make assumptions about U.S. support in the event of a crisis that might not be in line with broader U.S. interests.

What Is “Building Partner Capacity”?

The breadth and scope of the different activities and programs that fall under DOD’s catchall term “Building Partner Capacity” (BPC) has made analyzing these programs—and their overall efficacy—difficult. This difficulty arises in part because the term “building partner capacity,” based on recent DOD usage, has been used to capture DOD’s wide variety of engagements with an extensive range of non-DOD actors. As a recent report from the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) notes, “the term building partner capacity (BPC) has become a catchall for a wide array of programs, only some of which actually pertain to enhancing the capabilities and capacity of a partner’s military and civilian institutions.”⁴ Indeed, as a RAND study noted, BPC is more a “term of art” than a specific program or capability. Moreover, like many other terms of art, BPC means different things to different people.⁵ Regardless of how the term BPC is used, it is primarily associated with a fundamental assumption: that enhancing the security capabilities of partners in less capable, weak, and/or failing states will ultimately advance U.S. national security interests.

DOD Activities That Build Partner Capacity

Illustratively, in no particular order, BPC includes the following activities:

- Establishing senior-level personal relationships between the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff or Combatant Commanders and the Chiefs of Defense of other states.
- Holding bilateral military exercises like the annual African Lion exercise conducted by the United States Marine Corps and the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces.

⁴ Rand & Tankel, p. 4.

⁵ Christopher Paul, Colin Clarke, Beth Grill, Stephanie Young, Jennifer Moroney, Joe Hogler, Christine Leah, *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity, and Under What Circumstances?* (Arlington, VA: The RAND Corporation, 2013) p. 8.

- Conducting multilateral exercises such as NATO's annual Combined Endeavor communications interoperability exercises involving NATO Allies and Partnership for Peace countries.
- Engaging in multilateral military planning and discussion of capabilities development, for example as practiced by NATO allies and "Partnership for Peace" countries.
- Including foreign military officers as students at U.S. military schools, as well as the participation of U.S. military officers as students at foreign military schools such as the National Defense University of Pakistan.
- Training and equipping of foreign military and security forces.
- Fostering specific capabilities in a country or given region of the world, such as the maritime capability-focused Africa Partnership station.
- Preparing foreign security forces to participate in multilateral military operations, such as training Burundian battalions to support their deployment to Somalia as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia.
- Embedding advisors into foreign military and security ministries, such as in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan (plans exist to send advisors to Yemen, Indonesia, Botswana, and Ukraine).

BPC in National Strategy⁶

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks (9/11 attacks) and the subsequent global war on terror provided the impetus for expanding DOD's security cooperation and assistance tools under the rubric of BPC.⁷ The term "Building Partner Capacity" first came into use in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), which argued,

Long-duration, complex operations involving the U.S. military, other government agencies and international partners will be waged simultaneously in multiple countries around the world.... Maintaining a long-term, low-visibility presence in many areas of the world where U.S. forces do not traditionally operate will be required. Building and leveraging partner capacity will also be an absolutely essential part of this approach, and the employment of surrogates will be a necessary method for achieving many goals.⁸

According to the 2006 QDR, BPC was, in essence, a maximalist interpretation and employment of a concept normally executed by Special Operations Forces when working with partner forces on the ground—"by, with and through."⁹ Over time, BPC became a preferred, if not primary,

⁶ In 2013, the Obama Administration announced a U.S. Security Sector Assistance policy, designed to coordinate USG activities to build the capacity of those institutions within partner nations that promote security and the rule of law. BPC, to include security cooperation and security assistance activities, constitutes the DOD contribution to interagency security sector assistance. <http://fas.org/irp/offdocs/ppd/ssa.pdf>.

⁷ DOD initially used "BPC" to describe efforts the Department would undertake to strengthen its relationships with a wide variety of actors, to include state and local governments; other agencies and departments within the U.S. executive branch; nongovernmental organizations; private businesses; and the security institutions of foreign countries. See Department of Defense, *Building Partnership Capacity: QDR Execution Roadmap* (May 2006), p. 4.

⁸ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review 2006 Report*, February 6, 2006, p. 23

⁹ After the QDR's publication, DOD issued an Execution Roadmap for Building Partner Capacity. In it, it argued that, "The nation's strategic objectives are unattainable without a unified approach among capable partners at home and with key friends and allies abroad.... The Department of Defense requires a long-term, focused approach to build the capacity and capability of its mission-critical partnerships." The roadmap defined BPC as "targeted efforts to improve (continued...)"

means by which the United States could secure its interests—as well as a national security objective in its own right. As the argument goes, much like Afghanistan before 9/11, the collapse of fragile states into conflict zones could ultimately create areas in which terrorist groups could plan and execute attacks against the United States and its allies. As then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates argued,

Building the governance and security capacity of other countries was a critical element of our strategy in the Cold War. But it is even more urgent in a global security environment where, unlike the Cold War, the most likely and lethal threats – an American city poisoned or reduced to rubble – will likely emanate from fractured or failing states, rather than aggressor states.¹⁰

Gates went on to note that, “in these situations, the effectiveness and credibility of the United States will only be as good as the effectiveness, credibility, and sustainability of our local partners... [BPC] is in many ways the ideological and security challenge of our time.”

Over time, BPC became primarily associated with DOD’s activities to enhance the capabilities of, and cooperation with, international partners characterized by weakness, instability, or fragility. In the QDR reports between 2006 and the current 2014 version, DOD seemed to emphasize BPC as a concept distinct from traditional security assistance and security cooperation, with the latter more geared toward building linkages with U.S. allies. Together, the QDR reports could be interpreted to make the following distinctions regarding BPC:

- BPC should help the United States maintain a long-term, low-visibility presence in parts of the world where U.S. forces do not traditionally operate (2006 QDR);
- BPC should focus on counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations (2006 QDR);
- BPC should deal with threats that emanate from state weakness rather than state strength (2010 QDR);
- BPC authorities apply in situations without a neat divide between defense, diplomacy, and development (2010 QDR);
- Security Force Assistance (SFA) operations are an increasingly critical element of BPC (2010 QDR); and
- BPC includes improving partners’ peacekeeping and counterterrorism capabilities and applies especially in fragile states (2014 QDR).

The 2010 QDR draws out the idea that the U.S. government widened its aperture when discussing when, whether, and how to build partner capacity. Rather than using “traditional” security cooperation programs exclusively to help its allies, the United States would help weaker states, thereby preventing conflicts stemming from non-state actors from becoming serious or even beginning in the first place. This approach could be seen as using BPC as a state-building tool for partner countries. In the context of U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, though, perhaps the key phrase is using BPC to “reduce risk to U.S. forces and extend security to areas we cannot

(...continued)

the collective capabilities and performance of the Department of Defense and its partners,” and took a very wide approach to defining what, specifically constituted DoD partners. These included other departments and agencies of the U.S. Government, state and local governments, allies, coalition members, host nations, and other nations, multinational organizations, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector.

¹⁰ Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Remarks as Delivered to the Nixon Center, February 24, 2010, <http://archive.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1425>.

reach alone.” Using this approach, this broadly conceptualized notion of BPC may be seen as a means of achieving U.S. strategic objectives at a lower cost without necessarily using U.S. military forces to achieve the same ends.

Perhaps in response to events in Central and Eastern Europe and elsewhere, recent DOD strategy documents appear to be re-expanding BPC’s aperture. The 2015 National Military Strategy appears to link building partner capacity efforts both to counterterrorism (generally conducted in fragile states) and alliance/coalition building (a task normally applied to more durable states and U.S. allies):

As we look to the future, the U.S. military and its allies and partners will continue to protect and promote shared interests. We will preserve our alliances, expand partnerships, maintain a global stabilizing presence, and conduct training, exercises, security cooperation activities, and military to military engagement. Such activities increase the capabilities and capacity of partners, thereby enhancing our collective ability to deter aggression and defeat extremists.¹¹

Altogether, BPC appears to have moved from a post-9/11 counterterrorism strategy applied to fragile states to a key means through which the United States seeks to accomplish “traditional” and “non-traditional” national security objectives. Recently, some scholars have argued that this emphasis on BPC constitutes a grand strategy in its own right—one of “sponsorship”—that counsels strategic patience and working with partners to achieve mutual objectives. As their logic goes, “proponents of sponsorship strategies recognized that they are likely to achieve acceptable results at a lower cost and with greater long-term legitimacy to the policy being implemented.”¹²

How DOD Executes BPC Strategies

Programmatically speaking, within the DOD context, BPC is most frequently associated with security cooperation and security assistance programs administered by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA).¹³ According to DOD Directive 5105.65, DSCA:

Under the authority, direction and control of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)) 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 over which DSCA has responsibility.¹⁴

According to DSCA, security cooperation refers to those activities undertaken by the Department of Defense to encourage and enable international partners to work with the United States to achieve strategic objectives. It includes all DOD interactions with foreign defense and security establishments, including all DOD-administered security assistance programs that (1) build defense and security relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests, including all international armaments cooperation activities and security assistance activities; (2) develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations; and (3)

¹¹ Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2015: The United States Military’s Contribution to National Security*, June 2015, p. 9, http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/2015_National_Military_Strategy.pdf.

¹² Peter Dombrowsky and Simon Reich, “The Strategy of Sponsorship,” *Survival* (57:5, October-November 2015) p. 123.

¹³ Other related programs are managed by the State Department, as directed in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

¹⁴ Department of Defense, *Defense Security Cooperation Agency Directive 5105.65*, October 26, 2012, p. 1.

provide U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access to host nations.¹⁵ Security cooperation is a core aspect of DOD's key planning processes, to include the Guidance for the Employment of the Force and Guidance for the Development of the Force.¹⁶

Security assistance, by contrast, is defined as a group of programs authorized by Title 22 of the *U.S. Code*, as amended, or other related statutes by which the United States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services by grant, loan, credit, cash sales, or lease, in furtherance of national policies and objectives.¹⁷

Security assistance is a subset of security cooperation,¹⁸ and BPC, in its current formulation, appears to be associated with those security cooperation and assistance activities designed to enable weakened or fragile states to manage their own security challenges. Although all DOD aspects of security assistance programs are administered by DSCA, the agency is not responsible for the department's broader strategy and non-programmatic elements of security cooperation or building partner capacity.¹⁹

As with all federal agencies, DSCA allocates its resources according only to the authorities Congress has provided. The authorities associated with security cooperation and security assistance are often described as a "patchwork" of authorities and programs, only some of which are exclusively within DOD's purview. Others are either (1) managed by the State Department, (2) managed by the State Department and executed by DOD (such as Foreign Military Sales programs), or (3) jointly managed by the State Department and DOD, requiring both departments' concurrence to authorize specific activities. **Table 2** depicts some of the key programs and authorities in the security assistance toolkit, including from where each program derives its legal authority.

Table 2. Key Security Assistance Programs

	Program	Legal Authority
Major Security Assistance and Cooperation Programs Before 9/11 ("Traditional Assistance")	Foreign Military Financing (FMF)	Title 22
	Foreign Military Sales (FMS)	Title 22
	International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INCLE)	Title 22
	Peacekeeping Operations (PKO)	Title 22
	Excess Defense Articles	Title 22
	International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance (ICITAP)	DOJ program funded and authorized by interagency agreements with State, USAID and DOD

¹⁵ Department of Defense, *DOD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to Security Cooperation Directive 5132.03*, October 24, 2008, p. 11

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁸ Defense Security Cooperation Agency, *Security Assistance Management Manual*, Chapter 15. <http://www.samm.dsca.mil/chapter/chapter-15>.

¹⁹ Within DSCA, a BPC directorate is tasked with managing and integrating a variety of security assistance and cooperation programs in a manner that advances partner nation capacity and capabilities through the provision of training and equipment, and includes a series of Title 10 humanitarian-based programs that provide DOD with the ability to accomplish national security objectives through military-civilian engagement.

	Program	Legal Authority
	Cooperative Threat Reduction	Title 10
	Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR)	Title 22
	International Military Education and Training (IMET)	Title 22
	Counter-Drug Assistance (Two authorities: Section 1004, Section 1033)	Title 10
	Joint Combined Exchange Trainings (JCET)	Title 10
	Combatant Commanders Initiative Fund (CCIF)	Title 10
	Training and Education Programs	Title 10 and 22, depending upon program
	Warsaw (now Wales) Initiative Fund	Title 10
Major Global Security Assistance and Cooperation Programs after 9/11	Train & Equip (Section 1206) Reauthorized as Building Capacity of Foreign Security Forces (Section 2282)	Title 10
	Global Lift & Sustain	Title 10
	Support to Foreign Forces (Section 1208)	Title 10
	Logistics Support to Foreign Forces (Section 1210)	Title 10
	Counterterrorism Partnership Fund (CTPF)	Title 10
	Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP)	Title 10
	Exercise-related programs (e.g., developing country combined exercise program [DCCEP]), Exercise-Related construction [ERC])	Title 10
	Ministry of Defense Advisors (MODA) Program	Title 10
	Coalition Support Funds (CSF), including Coalition Readiness Support Program (CRSP)—technically reimbursement, not assistance	Title 10
	Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF)	Pooled State/DOD Fund
	Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI)	Title 22
	Complex Crises Fund (CCF)	Title 22

	Program	Legal Authority
Major Country & Region-Specific Security Assistance and Cooperation Programs after 9/11	Afghan Security Forces Fund (ASFF)	Title 10
	Iraq Train and Equip Fund (ITEF)	Title 10
	Authority to Provide Assistance to the Vetted Syrian Opposition (Section 1209)	Title 10
	European Reassurance Initiative	Title 10
	Asia Pacific Regional Initiative	Title 10

Source: Dafna H. Rand and Stephen Tankel, "Security Cooperation & Assistance: Rethinking the Return on Investment," Center for a New American Security, August 2015, p. 5.

Examining **Table 2**, one could make two observations. First, after the 9/11 attacks, the number of security assistance programs proliferated. Of the 31 programs listed above 17 were created after 9/11, suggesting that the United States government believed that its traditional, pre-9/11 security assistance portfolio was necessary but insufficient to meet the challenges of an increasingly interdependent and complex world. Second, the majority of these programs established after 9/11 were additional authorities given to the Department of Defense, suggesting that DOD plays a greater role in security cooperation today than the one it historically played.

The latter observation is borne out by the current manifestations of BPC across the DOD's activities. Although the programs and authorities listed above are the focus of most analysis and discussion with respect to BPC, they do not capture the full extent of DOD's activities and expenditures in this area. This is because DOD has integrated BPC—in its various guises and manifestations (security cooperation, assistance, foreign internal defense, security force assistance, and so on)—across a wide range of its operations and activities (see "DOD Activities That Build Partner Capacity"). In order to do so, different DOD components utilize a variety of funding sources. For example, according to a 2013 RAND study, rather than using DSCA-earmarked funds for specific activities with partners,

Most [BPC] programs are funded by other, less narrow [funding] sources, such as operations and maintenance funds. Examples include exercises overseen by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and military-to-military contacts, which are often (but not always) funded by Traditional COCOM Activity Authority. In each of these cases, DoD uses a specific authority to use its operations and maintenance funds for a given security cooperation activity. In some cases, these funds are then reimbursed, but more often than not, the security cooperation activity comes at the expense of another defense priority.²⁰

DSCA, with its relatively narrow mandate, oversees only a smaller subset of DOD's overall BPC activities. This has financial oversight implications, as it is difficult to determine what, specifically, DOD spends on non-DSCA BPC programs.

BPC is also beginning to manifest in force structure. One example is the U.S. Army's initiative to build "Regionally Aligned" forces (i.e., augment its force structure to ensure that divisions and brigades both plan and prepare for operations to support a designated geographic combatant commander). To prepare U.S. forces to support a Combatant Commander's area of responsibility, units are required to train and exercise with counterparts in the region and help build a partner's

²⁰ Christopher Paul, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill, Stephanie Young, Jennifer D.P. Morony, Joe Hogler, Christine Leah, "What Works Best when Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?" (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation) 2013, p. 13.

capacity in the process.²¹ The Regionally Aligned Force concept is to be paid for by using a variety of different "pots" of money, to include Title 22 funds, Combatant Commander Funds, joint exercise funds, and special authorities such as the Global Security Contingency Fund.²² Looking forward, the Department of the Army is planning for a 25% increase in its security cooperation budget, which, according to Army planners, will have to be offset from elsewhere within the Army budget.²³ The U.S. Army is also contemplating building new "Train, Advise and Assist" units within its force structure, ostensibly to better prepare itself to accomplish BPC tasks.²⁴

DOD and Congressional Interpretations of BPC

Comparing DOD and legislative perspectives on partnership strategy, important conceptual distinctions seem to exist between how the two approach BPC. In DOD, especially in the QDRs, BPC appears to be a strategic concept allowing the Department and the military services to rationalize and make sense of a wide range of potential missions and tactics, including fixing the security institutions of failed states, creating like-minded security partners, facilitating interagency cooperation, and, recently, shoring up deficiencies in allies' defense capabilities for deterrence and defense purposes. DOD's 2006 BPC execution roadmap, for example, places the "Strengthen Interagency Planning and Operations" task above the "Enhance the Capabilities of, and Cooperation with, International Partners" task, stating that

the QDR recognized that the Department of Defense cannot meet many of today's complex challenges alone. Success requires unified statecraft: the ability of the US government to bring to bear all elements of national power at home and to work in close cooperation with allies and partners abroad.²⁵

In contrast, Congress, in legislation, has presented BPC as a narrower concept. The FY2006 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), P.L. 109-163, §1206, gave the President limited authority to direct DOD to "conduct or support a program to build the capacity of a foreign country's national military forces in order for that country to (1) conduct counterterrorist operations; or (2) participate in or support military and stability operations in which the United States Armed Forces are a participant."²⁶

²¹ "Pacific Pathways" is how the U.S. Army is preparing its soldiers to operate in the Pacific theater.

²² Kimberly Field, James Learmont and Jason Charland, "Regionally Aligned Forces: Business Not as Usual," *Parameters* (vol. 43, no. 3) Autumn 2013, pp. 55-63.

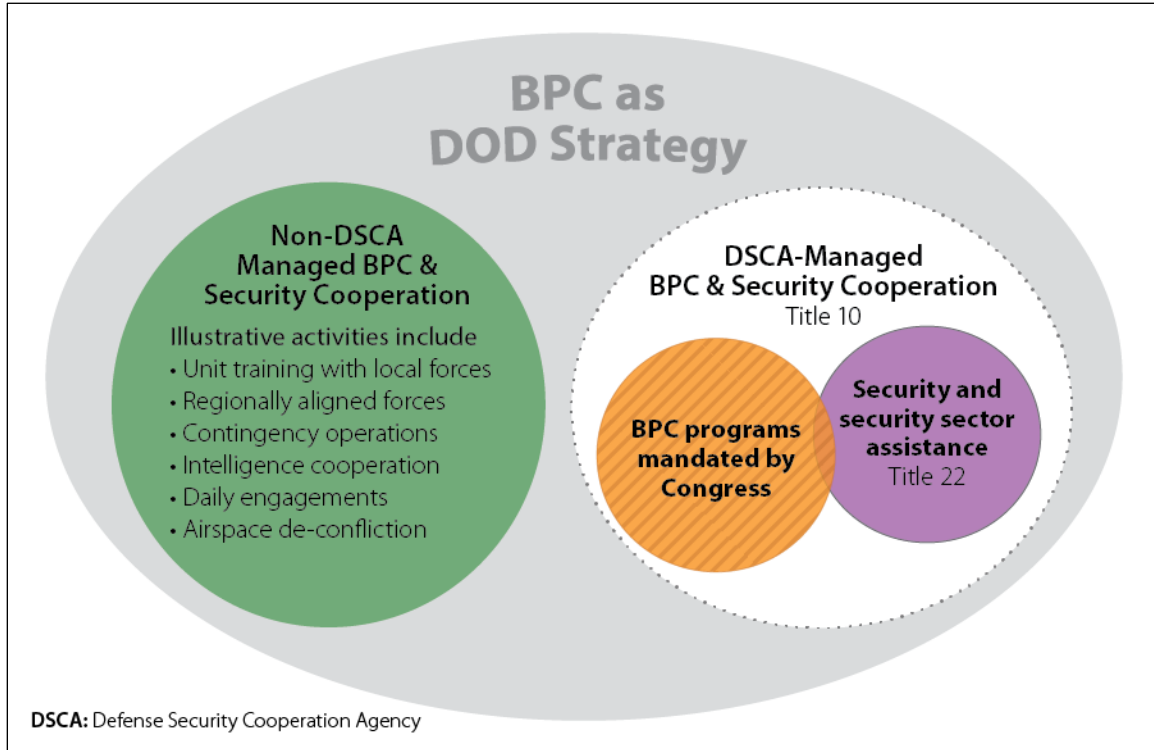
²³ Field et al., p. 62. http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/Parameters/issues/Autumn_2013/5_Field.pdf.

²⁴ Sydney J. Freeberg, "Army Mulls Train, Advise & Assist Brigades: Gen. Milley," *Breaking Defense*, December 14, 2015, <http://breakingdefense.com/2015/12/army-mulls-train-advise-brigades-gen-milley/>.

²⁵ Department of Defense, *Building Partnership Capacity: QDR Execution Roadmap*, May 22, 2006, p. 5.

²⁶ See CRS Report RS22855, *Security Assistance Reform: "Section 1206" Background and Issues for Congress*, by (name redacted) .

Figure 2. Differing Congressional and DOD Definitions of Building Partner Capacity



Source: Congressional Research Service

Notes: This figure depicts the different definitions of BPC, as used by different components of the U.S. government. DOD tends to use BPC to describe both strategies and programs, some—but not all—of which are managed by DSCA. Congress, by contrast, in legislation tends to focus on DSCA-managed programs (in the white circle) when considering BPC activities.

Figure 2 illustrates the difference of definitions between Congress and DOD when it comes to BPC. Congress tends to view BPC as a narrow set of programs (global train and equip and so on, as outlined in **Table 2**), managed by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency. This definition is depicted by the orange circle in the middle. The white circle depicts DOD's overall security cooperation activities that are led by DSCA - which include DSCA's security, security sector, and BPC activities; the white circle depicts how Congress tends to view DOD's role in security cooperation and assistance.

However, as the Regionally Aligned Forces example demonstrates, in DOD's view security cooperation, and by extension BPC, is *much* broader than those programs DSCA manages. The green circle depicts the wide array of programs, activities, and even force structure decisions designed to support the overarching rationale of building partner capacity. Essentially, DOD has infused BPC across its activities and operations, not just in DSCA-managed programs and activities. DOD does not presently capture the level of granularity necessary to identify the full scope of expenditure on BPC programs, particularly those represented in the green circle. Thus, identifying how much money DOD actually spends on BPC activities is nearly impossible at present.

The final component of the diagram is the grey shaded circle in the background. This represents the use of building partner capacity as a strategic rationale in its own right, and is used as a justification for many of the activities captured in the other circles of the diagram. As the diagram suggests, the term BPC is used to represent a variety of different programs activities, as well as

the intellectual rationale for undertaking those activities. These varying definitions—alternately using “BPC” to describe ends, ways and means—add to the ambiguity surrounding BPC and therefore compounding the oversight challenge associated with these programs.

Views are mixed regarding the efficacy of the “patchwork” system of security cooperation authorities. Some analysts argue that the ad-hoc manner in which these programs were formulated and executed created overlaps in some areas and gaps in others, leading program managers to find multiple sources of funding for a single activity.²⁷ Others, by contrast, maintain that these overlaps create flexibility, allowing program managers to organize activities that are more tailored to their individual requirements.²⁸ Regardless, successive administrations have sought to bring greater coherence to security cooperation and BPC efforts. Most recently, in 2013, the Obama Administration tried to make these programs and activities more coherent through Presidential Policy Directive 23 (PPD 23), which instructs national security agencies to improve, streamline, and better organize all U.S. security assistance and cooperation efforts.²⁹

What Does “Building Partnership Capacity” or “Train and Equip” Mean on the Ground?

Given that BPC is a term of art, a number of programs, capabilities, and activities fit under its umbrella. On the ground, this heterogeneity manifests itself in several different ways. The U.S. Army, in its Field Manual 3-22: Army Support to Security Cooperation, outlines the main tasks that U.S. ground forces would use to conduct what it terms “security force assistance.” This is an operationalization of both DOD BPC efforts and congressionally authorized “1206 Train and Equip” programs. It also applies to more traditional forms of security cooperation, especially “Foreign Internal Defense” missions performed by Special Operations Forces. The mission to equip is often tailored to different situations in specific countries.

Individual Training. In this task, U.S. forces train foreign security forces on “military occupational skills appropriate to their organization and equipment.” That is, U.S. trainers provide individual members of partner nation security forces with basic instruction in how to shoot their weapons, move in a tactical environment, and communicate with members of their unit. This training may also involve instructing officers and leaders in principles of military leadership, as well as tactical mission planning and execution.

Collective Training. In this task, U.S. forces train foreign security forces on “collective tasks at the battalion level and below.” That is, units (from a squad of approximately 10 individuals to a battalion of up to approximately 500 individuals) that perform the same type of missions (infantry, reconnaissance, logistics) learn to fight and conduct operations as a unit, increasing in complexity from squad patrolling to battalion-sized maneuvers.

Staff Training. In this task, U.S. forces train the staffs of foreign security forces in their functions, encompassing “staff training from company level troop leading procedures through military decision-making at the task force level.” That is, staff officers and noncommissioned officers learn how to plan tactical operations and obtain decisions and guidance from commanding officers and noncommissioned officers in leadership positions. Such training could range from planning and synchronizing fires and movements in a platoon defense to coordinating company maneuver and artillery fire in a battalion-sized attack.

Institutional Training. In this task, U.S. forces train the staff of a foreign nation’s “force generation structure and ministerial or departmental staff.” It may focus on force generation, budgeting, and oversight.³⁰

While largely limited to Army and Marine Corps units (along with Special Operations Forces), the method of conducting basic military training and weapons training, moving along in complexity to unit training, is applicable to all military and security force “train and equip” programs.

²⁷ Rand & Tinkel, p. 3.

²⁸ Jennifer D.P. Moroney, David E. Thaler and Joe Hogler, *Review of Security Cooperation Mechanisms Combatant Commands Utilize to Build Partner Capacity*, Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 2013.

²⁹ The White House, Fact Sheet: U.S. Security Sector Assistance Policy, April 5, 2013, September 15, 2015, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/04/05/fact-sheet-us-security-sector-assistance-policy>.

³⁰ Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-22, Army Support to Security Cooperation*, p. 4-6, http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR_pubs/dr_a/pdf/fm3_22.pdf. See also CRS Report R41817, *Building the Capacity of Partner States Through Security Force Assistance*, by (name redacted).

Is Building Partner Capacity Effective?

Despite the increasing importance and priority placed upon BPC by senior figures in the U.S. government, the assumptions that BPC is actually effective—and that the unintended consequences of BPC efforts are manageable—appear to have remained relatively untested. To the extent that BPC has been evaluated by government and nongovernment analysts, studies have tended to focus either on whether programs have been successfully executed (was equipment package X delivered to country Y), or on the difficulties of executing BPC programs due to the hodgepodge architecture of the security cooperation/security assistance enterprise. Arguments for or against the application of BPC strategies and programs tend to be anecdotal (it worked/did not work in country A; therefore, it could work/could not work in country B). Almost none of them systematically explore whether BPC programs achieved their intended strategic-level effects.³¹

Understanding whether, and when, BPC programs actually deliver intended strategic effects (as listed above) is an inherently tricky analytic endeavor. This is due to a variety of reasons. In the first instance, as a 2013 RAND study argued, data limitations, lack of assessments, and the long time horizons for partnership efforts make assessments of effectiveness difficult. In some instances, these dynamics are exacerbated by the fact that those institutions tasked with monitoring a given BPC program's effectiveness are often those charged with executing the program. Furthermore, RAND observes that in some instances, program managers lack sufficient longevity—or institutional memory—to understand the efficacy (or lack thereof) of programs. The study also observes that the relationship between improving the effectiveness of security forces and reducing the necessity for U.S. combat forces to intervene is, "is not a straightforward endeavor."¹⁴⁶

Another analytic challenge pertains to what, exactly, constitutes a BPC effort. While Congress and the State Department tend to think of BPC as a relatively narrow foreign assistance tool, the DOD is *de facto* conceptualizing BPC as a strategy to address a broad range of challenges. Indeed, DOD is including engagement with foreign forces across the full spectrum of its activities—doctrine, organization, training, materiel, logistics, personnel & facilities ("DOTMLPF")—which go beyond the more tightly scoped foreign assistance programs and authorities.

A further complication to understanding BPC effectiveness is determining what, precisely, the strategic objectives are for a given program. Determining effectiveness requires understanding what the BPC effort was intended to do in the first place. BPC programs are, almost by definition, longer-term activities spanning multiple years, if not decades. During these times, events on the ground, as well as changes of leadership in Washington, often lead to strategic-level shifts of emphasis or priorities. While at the strategic level these are often shifts of degrees, on the ground this can have real resource implications—and therefore real impact on the overall effectiveness of the mission.

Complicating matters further, rationales are often conflated with each other when justifying a particular BPC program or mission. For example, in Iraq, the argument for building Iraqi security

³¹ A noteworthy exception: Mara E. Karlin, "Training and Equipping is Not Transforming: An Assessment of U.S. Programs to Build Partner Militaries," Johns Hopkins University Doctoral Dissertation, Baltimore, MD, September 2012. Surveying U.S. efforts in Greece following World War II, South Vietnam throughout the 1950s and Lebanon in the 1930s and mid-2000s, Karlin maintains that if the United States "gets deeply involved in the partner state's sensitive military affairs, and if unhelpful actors play a diminishing role, then the partner state is more likely to establish internal defense" (p.2). Still, the United States seeks to build partner capacity to fulfill a variety of different requirements including, but not limited to, internal defense, which this study seeks to explore.

institutions was about alliance building (creating a stable Iraq that is friendly to the United States) as well as war termination (allowing U.S. and coalition forces to withdraw). Which goal mattered more? What were the resource implications of prioritizing one over the other? Without a solid strategic-level understanding of why these BPC programs were initiated, it becomes extremely difficult—if not impossible—to truly judge whether they were effective.

Still, all this does not necessarily argue that an analysis of BPC's effectiveness—relative to strategic-level aims for a given program—should not (or cannot) be undertaken. Given how many billions of dollars have been spent on these programs, a study of BPC's overall efficacy is necessary, even if it only serves as a starting point for other, more in-depth analytic work in this area.

CRS therefore sought to understand whether, at a strategic (versus programmatic) level, BPC has been an effective way to achieve strategic goals? If so, when? CRS reviewed the historical record and developed a list of objectives that the United States sought to accomplish through building partner capacity activities.³² This list included

- victory in war or war termination,
- managing regional security challenges,
- indirectly supporting a party to a conflict,
- conflict mitigation,
- building institutional and interpersonal linkages,
- enhancing coalition participation, and
- alliance building.

CRS then selected 20 case studies since World War II, organized by strategic rationale, to determine whether a given BPC effort had its intended strategic effect (an explanation of the methodology can be found in the text box below).³³ While it would be an analytic stretch to presume that failures or successes were a direct result of BPC efforts rather than other external or internal factors, one can make judgments based on the overall trends whether BPC meaningfully contributed (or did not contribute) to the accomplishment of stated U.S. strategic objectives.

Methodology: Determining BPC Effectiveness

This report uses stated rationales for building partner capacity activities as its analytic starting point. This is for two reasons. The first is definitional. As described earlier in this report, the Department of Defense is increasingly using "BPC" as a term describing (as well as justification for) a broad range of military-to-military activities across the spectrum of its planning and operations ("DOTMLPF"). By contrast, Congress—as well as the State Department—understands BPC in narrower, programmatic terms that pertain to specific authorities in support of broader foreign assistance objectives. Because of these definitional differences, using traditionally defined security cooperation authorities and programs as a starting point for analysis excludes the broader range of activities in which DOD is engaging. This broader range of activities, which spans across authorities, budget categories, and time, is not neatly captured by programmatic or budgetary assessments; a more fundamental conceptual starting point is needed. The

³² Although "Building Partner Capacity" is a relatively new umbrella term, the "toolkit" comprises a number of programs and activities that the United States has conducted with relative frequency over its history.

³³ Between two and four cases were explored per strategic-level rationale. Given that each individual case could fill multiple volumes, each case is a cursory "wave tops" survey. In other words, neither the case selection, nor the cases themselves, are intended to be exhaustive; rather, they are designed to help identify broader trends in the historical record. See the **Appendix** for an explanation of the research methodology. Note that NATO's Partnership for Peace/Warsaw Initiative Fund is explored in two case studies because the participation in these programs was so wide that the strategic-level objectives varied significantly.

second reason this report uses rationales as the starting point for analysis is that determining "did it work?" requires understanding what "it"—in this case, a given BPC effort—was supposed to accomplish in the first place.

BPC efforts exploring how effective these programs were, relative to the primary strategic aim they were intended to accomplish. Cases were therefore selected based on the major goals that the BPC effort intended to accomplish. All were selected from the post-World War II period and beyond, due to the fact that relatively reliable data do not exist prior to this time frame. Additional criteria for case selection included (1) significant U.S. participation in, or leadership of, the BPC effort, and (2) sufficient literature and primary source material discussing the effort, by which to develop a reasonably clear sense of how the effort progressed. To develop more generalizable analytic conclusions, between two and three cases were selected for each stated rationale (war termination, conflict prevention, and so on). Given that this is not an exhaustive history of BPC efforts, this report by necessity omits some BPC cases that scholars and practitioners might consider key. Those cases should be considered in future research.

Determining the "primary" strategic aim is, of course, a somewhat subjective exercise, as rationales for engaging in a particular program are often conflated with each other. In those instances, the CRS team collaboratively determined which primary strategic rationale a given BPC effort was intended to advance based on the available historical record. Changes to those rationales over time, if any, are explored in case studies, as is the outcome of the BPC effort. "Effectiveness" was judged according to two criteria: (1) that the BPC effort accomplished its strategic objectives in the long term, and (2) that effects of the given BPC effort did not materially and obviously undermine U.S. national security interests in the long term.

Case studies themselves are not intended to be detailed chronologies of a diplomatic relationship, military campaign, or program. Rather, their purpose is to situate BPC efforts within their respective strategic contexts, to understand how that context may have changed over time, and to understand whether or not BPC programs enabled the United States to achieve its objectives. The case studies therefore, by necessity, omit details in diplomatic—or military—relationships that may be important, but less salient for the purposes of this report. Furthermore, case studies are not intended to be audits of a given BPC program. While many BPC programs undoubtedly meet their programmatic-level criteria for success, this report is more interested in whether BPC programs helped the United States achieve its intended strategic-level objectives – a heretofore relatively unexplored question in the academic and policy literatures.

The following sections of this report delve into the case studies used to support the analysis in **Figure 1**. The sections are organized according to BPC rationale. After outlining the logic behind a given rationale (war termination, proxy warfare, etc.), each section explores whether those strategic objectives were met and concludes with an overall assessment of the efficacy of BPC toward accomplishing that rationale.

Rationale: BPC as an Exit Strategy from Wars

In many instances, the United States has built or expanded partner militaries with the goal of curtailing its involvement in wars. Particularly in those instances in which U.S. forces were engaged in a conflict, but with limited interests, the United States has dedicated significant resources to training and equipping host nation forces. As the logic goes, enabling a host nation and transitioning security responsibility from the United States to the partner creates conditions whereby American forces are able to withdraw. Put differently, at times the United States has sought to create an environment in which the level of conflict, even if it continued, could be handled by local forces, thereby creating a path to extricate U.S. forces. Further, as many senior officials argued during the counterinsurgency campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, local forces and governments must ultimately be responsible for maintaining security after military coalition members depart. Thus, constructing durable security institutions has been a key component of post-9/11 military campaign strategies. In the post-World War II period, large-scale capacity building missions designed to enable U.S. withdrawal from a particular theater of operations occurred in three countries: Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Case Study: Vietnam (1954-1973)

After World War II, the Pacific theater of operations became progressively challenging. Communists took over China and aligned with the Soviet Union, the situation in Korea was escalating, an insurgency was brewing in the Philippines, and anti-colonial movements were emerging in French Indochina. Fearing a communist takeover of the entire region, the United States began a modest military support effort in 1950, called the Military Assistance Advisory Group-Indochina (eventually renamed the MAAG-Vietnam). The MAAG was initially composed of some 128 personnel and had the narrow mission focus of sending military equipment to French and Vietnamese forces. After France withdrew from the theater of operations in 1954, the United States took on the responsibility of training and equipping the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). Eventually, the MAAG became so significant in size and scope that it was the only U.S. military advisory effort commanded by a three-star general. Further, of the more than \$2 billion in aid distributed to South Vietnam up to 1960, 80% of that aid was directed to military capacity building efforts.³⁴

The efforts initially appeared successful; South Vietnam was relatively politically stable until around 1957. Eventually, however, the Viet Cong returned to the guerilla tactics it had employed against the French.³⁵ The ARVN, with its conventional focus and insufficient manpower, was unsuited to waging a counterinsurgency campaign. By 1960, the United States began reconsidering the nature of its support to the Vietnamese government, in favor of a strategy that reflected its somewhat rudimentary understanding of counterinsurgency principles. In 1961, a "limited partnership" strategy was implemented, which expanded the scope of the MAAG to include advising ARVN counterparts down to the battalion level and in each provincial capital. Furthermore, beginning in 1962, the United States and the ARVN engaged in a "Strategic Hamlet" program intended to pacify the local population by providing security as well as improving Vietnamese lives economically, politically, socially, and culturally. Unfortunately, according to the Pentagon Papers, the Strategic Hamlet program failed in its objectives:

The Strategic Hamlet Program soon became the unifying vehicle to express the pacification process. The theory was that of physical security first, then government programs to develop popular allegiance. The fact was over-expansion, counter-productive coercion in some areas, widespread mismanagement, and dishonesty.³⁶

Ultimately, the American expectation at the time was that the government of Vietnam would reform itself to eradicate local concerns about injustice that were breathing life into the insurgency in the first place. The latter did not take place.

Challenges of Executing BPC Programs During the Vietnam War

The Pentagon Papers—the name of a secret study of U.S. involvement in Vietnam from 1945-1967 commissioned by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara—identifies several execution issues associated with U.S. BPC efforts:

U.S. "mirror imaging." The United States focused on training a conventionally oriented ARVN force capable of repelling an overt invasion by North Vietnam, despite the fact that intelligence assessments suggested that an overwhelming conventional attack from the north was unlikely.³⁷

³⁴ National Archives, *Report of the Office of the Secretary of Defense Vietnam Task Force (The Pentagon Papers)*, Part IV, B-3, p. ii.

³⁵ <http://www.history.army.mil/books/Vietnam/comm-control/ch01.htm>.

³⁶ National Archives, *Report of the Office of the Secretary of Defense Vietnam Task Force (The Pentagon Papers)*, Part IV, B-3, p. v.

³⁷ Ibid, part IV, A-4, p. 1.1

Insufficient attention to "means" in strategy development. The decision to undertake and enhance the training mission was largely political, without due consideration of resource and capability limitations.

Insufficient mission focus. The ARVN was in "extremely poor condition in 1954; its prospects were worse." ARVN was tasked with internal and external security responsibilities that it was not capable of addressing due to resource and manpower limitations.

Questionable host nation "ownership" of the mission. According to the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time, "Unless the Vietnamese themselves show an inclination to make individual and collective sacrifices required to resist Communism, which they have not done to date, no amount of external pressure and assistance can long delay complete communist victory in South Vietnam."³⁸

Lack of Alignment between U.S. and Vietnamese Interests. Other parts of the Pentagon Papers question the degree to which there was sufficient alignment of interests between the United States and Vietnamese governments. While "Diem [the Vietnamese leader] needed the U.S. and the U.S. needed a reformed Diem," the papers note "It is a matter of record that he did not reform his government.... What remains in issue is whether he could have done so. If he could not, the U.S. plan to end the insurgency was foredoomed from its inception, for it depended on Vietnamese initiatives to solve a Vietnamese problem."³⁹

Source: National Archives, *Report of the Office of the Secretary of Defense Vietnam Task Force (The Pentagon Papers)*, Part IV, A-4, pp. 1.1-5.1, <https://www.archives.gov/research/pentagon-papers/>.

After the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, U.S. attention on its BPC efforts were diverted; instead, the United States deployed additional forces of its own to escalate its campaign against the North Vietnamese. Eventually, a division of labor between the United States and its Vietnamese counterparts emerged, whereby the former took responsibility for offensive operations against North Vietnamese forces, and the latter focused on internal pacification.⁴⁰ Exacerbating matters, the conventional buildup occurred without the commensurate fundamental reforms to the South Vietnamese government that had been, at least in theory, agreed. The United States found itself waging a counterinsurgency campaign on behalf of a partner that was increasingly at odds with its own population.

Despite calls within the military to escalate the campaign even further,⁴¹ after the Tet Offensive—in which communist Vietnamese forces demonstrated their ability to mount surprise military operations in South Vietnam—and the election of President Nixon, the political tide turned against the war. Seeking to extricate the United States from the conflict, in 1969 U.S. strategy shifted to one of "Vietnamization," that is, the progressive transfer of security responsibility from American to South Vietnam forces as a vehicle to allow U.S. military forces to withdraw by 1973.⁴² The training mission was therefore reprioritized to build the AVRN capability to a level sufficient to allow it to shoulder more of the military burden. In tandem, U.S. forces began withdrawing from Vietnam, backfilled by their ARVN counterparts. According to President Nixon in his November 3, 1969, speech:

Under the new orders, the primary mission of our troops is to enable the South Vietnamese forces to assume the full responsibility for the security of South Vietnam.... We have adopted a plan which we have worked out in cooperation with the South

³⁸ Memorandum for SecDef from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Indochina," 17 November 1954, as cited in *The Pentagon Papers*, Part IV, A-4, p. 3.1

³⁹ *The Pentagon Papers*, Part IV, B-3, p. iii.

⁴⁰ *Pentagon Papers*, Part IV, B-3, p. vii.

⁴¹ According to Melvin Laird, General Westmoreland proposed raising the number of U.S. forces in Vietnam from 500,000 to 700,000.

⁴² Laird also describes "Vietnamization" as "de-Americanization."

Vietnamese for the complete withdrawal of all U.S. combat ground forces, and their replacement by South Vietnamese forces on an orderly scheduled timetable.⁴³

However, two years after the withdrawal of American troops, Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, fell to North Vietnam in 1975. According to former Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird:

Vietnamization represented a formula for withdrawing our forces with honor from Vietnam while supplying the South Vietnamese themselves with indigenous combat capabilities, provided they had the will and resolve to fight for their freedom. Time, however, was not on our side. The years of neglect of South Vietnam's own combat effectiveness, and the limited time available for our withdrawal, made the tasks of Vietnamization formidable. In the end we bought some time for both Saigon and Washington to adjust to the painful realities of our not so much having fought the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time, as having fought this war wrongly in the first place.⁴⁴

In part due to the systemic problems in South Vietnam, as well as the rapid timetable of transitioning to a force unprepared to take on security responsibility, the strategy of "Vietnamization" failed to create a government capable of repelling the North Vietnamese after U.S. forces withdrew.

Case Study: Afghanistan (2001-2015)

In response to the September 11, 2001, attacks, the United States launched an offensive in Afghanistan designed to eradicate the Al Qaeda terrorist group and depose the Taliban-run government, which hosted Al Qaeda on its soil. Subsequent to the initial military campaign, the international community met in Bonn under the auspices of the United Nations to establish an interim government for Afghanistan. The resulting Bonn Agreement outlined how the international community would support the newly created Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, to include providing security for the capital city, Kabul.⁴⁵

According to RAND, the international community's interest in immediately establishing an Afghan-led security presence was no accident:

Coalition commanders ... did not want a Bosnia-like long-term occupation of Afghanistan. Soon after the invasion, the blanket term "security sector reform" began to be bandied about in Kabul as the tool for extracting coalition forces.

The initial U.S. plan for the Afghan Security Force was to co-opt existing ethnically and geographically based militias by providing uniforms and equipment while integrating them into legitimate government institutions. Under power-sharing arrangements, faction leaders became Generals and militia leaders became officers in the Afghan National Army (ANA), which initially numbered 50,000 troops. Yet this approach quickly proved difficult to implement, as "local

⁴³ President Richard M. Nixon, November 3, 1969 speech. http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/forkids/speechesforkids/silentmajority/silentmajority_transcript.pdf.

⁴⁴ Melvin Laird, "Nixon-Ford Defense Policy," *International Security*, Vol 10, No. 2 (Fall, 1985) p. 11.

⁴⁵ United Nations, *Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Reestablishment of Permanent Government Institutions*, Bonn, 2001.

politics often trumped national interests during operations.”⁴⁶ The decision was subsequently taken in 2003 to build an ANA from scratch, with a target end-strength of 70,000.⁴⁷

In 2003, NATO assumed responsibility for commanding the International Security Assistance Force. By 2006, it became clear that the Taliban—once thought to be on the retreat—had instead regrouped, orchestrating a series of “spring offensives” each year designed to challenge the reach and legitimacy of the Afghan government in Kabul. By 2008, the Afghan National Army end-strength was increased to 122,000. While problems existed with respect to attrition and overstretch, generally speaking the ANA was considered by Afghans to be a legitimate, respected Afghan institution. Still, forces opposed to the Kabul government grew in strength, necessitating the continued presence of U.S. and coalition forces. The Afghan National Police, by contrast, had considerably more difficulty becoming an effective security provider. At the time, DOD and Government Accountability Office (GAO) officials determined that the police had significant shortcomings; in 2008, no ANP units were capable of performing their security responsibilities.⁴⁸

Several months after the inauguration of President Obama, the White House conducted a strategic-level review of the mission in Afghanistan. Ultimately, the United States departed slightly from the Bonn strategy by recalibrating its strategic objectives for Afghanistan and Pakistan to focus on the “core” goal to “disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future.”⁴⁹ In his address to the nation, President Obama noted:

At the same time, we will shift the emphasis of our mission to training and increasing the size of Afghan security forces, so that they can eventually take the lead in securing their own country. *That’s how we will prepare Afghans to take responsibility for their security, and how we will ultimately be able to bring our troops home* (CRS emphasis added).⁵⁰

In 2010, at the Lisbon Summit, NATO Allies, ISAF partners, and the Afghan government agreed to a plan to transition security responsibility to Afghan security forces and ensure they were in the lead by 2014:

The process of transition to full Afghan security responsibility and leadership in some provinces and districts is on track to begin in early 2011, following a joint Afghan and NATO/ISAF assessment and decision. Transition will be conditions-based, not calendar-driven, and will not equate to withdrawal of ISAF-troops. *Looking to the end of 2014, Afghan forces will be assuming full responsibility for security across the whole of Afghanistan* (CRS emphasis added).⁵¹

According to the plan, on December 31, 2014, the ISAF mission ended; on January 1, 2015, the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission (RSM) began. This mission change signaled NATO’s transition from a combat role to that of training, advising, and assisting Afghan forces. Simultaneously, Operation Enduring Freedom-Afghanistan (which to that point had been largely focused on conducting counterterrorism operations) was redesignated Operation Freedom’s

⁴⁶ Obaid Younossi, Peter Dahl Thruelsen, Jonathan Vaccaro, Jerry M. Sollinger and Brian Grady, *The Long March: Building an Afghan National Army*, The RAND Corporation: 2009, p. 14

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 15.

⁴⁸ Robert M. Perito, “Afghanistan’s Police: The Weak Link in Security Sector Reform,” *USIP Special Report*, United States Institute of Peace: August 2009, p. 6.

⁴⁹ The White House, “Remarks by the President on a New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan,” March 27, 2009.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Lisbon Summit Declaration*, November 2010. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68828.htm#afghanistan.

Sentinel (OFS), with two tasks: contributing to NATO's Resolute Support Mission and continuing U.S. counterterrorism efforts against al Qaeda.

Presently, the overall U.S. troop presence in Afghanistan is approximately 9,800;⁵² some 6,834 of those troops are assigned to Resolute Support (the total multinational force's troop strength is 13,223), while the remainder are assigned to Operation Freedom's Sentinel.⁵³ According to public estimates, approximately 500 of those are conducting day-to-day training with Afghan forces outside of Kabul.⁵⁴ The end-strength goal for the Afghan National Police is now 157,000. As of April 2015, 154,263 of those positions had been filled.⁵⁵ The goal for the Afghan National Army is 195,000, and the Air Force goal is 7,800. As of April 2015, 169,984 of the ANA positions and 6,533 of the Air Force positions had been filled. As of June 30, 2015, the United States appropriated more than \$686 billion to combat operations in Afghanistan and \$65 billion to programs supporting the training and equipping of Afghan Security Forces since 2001.⁵⁶

On August 26, 2015, Musa Qala, a key district in Helmand Province and a focal point for ISAF and Afghan security efforts, fell to the Taliban.⁵⁷ In October 2015, the northern Afghan city of Konduz was temporarily seized by the Taliban. These incidents occurred against a broader backdrop of increasing instability. As the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) noted in his July 30, 2015, report, "conflict-related violence increased in Afghanistan as the ANDSF sought to contain insurgent activity whose intensification resulted in record-high levels of civilian casualties, according to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan." Further, "incidents per-day average was higher in this [reporting] period than in the same periods in 2014 and 2013."⁵⁸ SIGAR also reports that, "DoD and RS officials acknowledge that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has spread into Afghanistan, although they added that the group was 'nascent and relatively small.'"⁵⁹ The DOD itself notes that significant challenges to ANP effectiveness remain:

The ANP continues to perform traditional policing as well as counterinsurgency operations in the face of significant casualties. Challenges remain in force protection, command and control, training, maintenance, medical, force management and personnel attrition, and corruption.⁶⁰

Although increased instability was, to some extent, expected to occur in the wake of the withdrawal of most U.S. and coalition forces, events in Konduz arguably necessitated a reconsideration of President Obama's strategy to withdraw all but 1,000 troops by the end of 2016. On October 15, 2015, President Obama announced that he would retain 9,800 troops in Afghanistan until late 2016 and then 5,500 troops thereafter. A presence of 5,500 troops is

⁵² U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, June 2015, p. 11.

⁵³ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Resolute Support Placemat," June 2015, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_02/20150227_1502-RSM-Placemat.pdf.

⁵⁴ General John Campbell, Testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee, October 8, 2015.

⁵⁵ U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, June 2015, p. 86.

⁵⁶ Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report*, July 30, 2015, p. 93.

⁵⁷ Mohammad Stanekzai, "U.S. Soldiers Killed in Afghanistan, Taliban Grab District," *Reuters*, August 26, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/26/us-afghanistan-attack-idUSKCN0QV13E20150826>.

⁵⁸ Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report*, July 30, 2015, p. 94.

⁵⁹ Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report*, July 30, 2015, p. 96.

⁶⁰ U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, June 2015, p. 5.

anticipated to cost approximately \$15 billion per year, approximately \$5 billion more than the smaller Kabul-based force was projected to cost.⁶¹

While it is difficult to assess whether efforts to train and equip the Afghan Security Forces have been successful, it is worth recalling the history of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Three years after the Soviet campaign concluded, the Moscow-sponsored government in Kabul abruptly fell in 1992.

Case Study: Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003-2010)

Shortly after the campaign in Afghanistan commenced, the United States turned its focus to Iraq. At the time, U.S. Administration officials assumed that the entire campaign would take between two and four years—a time frame predicated on the assumption that the regime of Saddam Hussein could be “decapitated,” leaving the rest of the government capable of assuming authority after an appropriate transition period. During the transition, an interim U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), in consultation with anti-Hussein Iraqis (both expatriate and local),⁶² would set the conditions to create a stable, democratic, and free Iraq.⁶³ These assumptions were further amplified in military campaign planning at the time; U.S. Central Command believed that coalition forces would be able to draw upon existing Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and structures to help provide security before responsibility was transitioned to a new Iraqi government.

By late 2003, training and equipping of the new Iraqi Security Forces was being implemented as part of a strategy to transition security and governance responsibility to the Iraqis. As President Bush noted at the time:

Our strategy in Iraq has three objectives: Destroying the terrorists; enlisting the support of other nations for a free Iraq; and *helping Iraqis assume responsibility for their own defense and their own future....* We are helping to train civil defense forces to keep order and an Iraqi police service to enforce the law, a facilities protection service, Iraqi border guards to help secure the borders and a new Iraqi army. In all these roles, there are now some 60,000 Iraqi citizens under arms, defending the security of their own country. And we are accelerating the training of more.⁶⁴ (CRS emphasis added.)

Efforts to execute this training program were somewhat fragmented in 2003 and 2004. While the Coalition Provisional Authority was responsible for reconstituting the Iraqi Security Forces, its ability to do so was stymied, at least in part, by a combination of a lack of resources and ambitious training objectives. In August 2003, the CPA directed the creation of the New Iraqi Army, with the goal of training and fielding 27 Iraqi battalions in two years—a goal subsequently revised to one year, likely in accordance with emerging plans to transition governing responsibility to the Iraqis in 2004. Meanwhile, efforts to create an Iraqi police force were called into question by the CPA’s limited resources. Military commanders at the time began establishing their own police training programs for their respective areas of responsibility, because CPA’s “throughput” of police personnel was not sufficient to meet immediate requirements.

⁶¹ Greg Jaffe and Missy Ryan, “Obama expected to announce new plan to keep 5,500 troops in Afghanistan,” *The Washington Post*, October 15, 2015.

⁶² OSD Policy, “Iraqi Interim Authority Implementation Concept—Summary,” March 30, 2003; OSD Policy, “Iraqi Interim Authority Action Plan,” March 30, 2003.

⁶³ Donald Rumsfeld, “Principles for Iraq – Policy Guidelines,” *The Rumsfeld Papers*, May 13, 2003.

⁶⁴ President George W. Bush, *Address to the Nation*, September 7, 2003, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/white_house-july-dec03-bush_iraq_speech/.

On May 11, 2004, President Bush issued National Security Presidential Directive 36, which streamlined the training of Iraqi security forces by giving responsibility for the effort to United States Central Command. Despite this improvement in the coherence of the ISF training effort—and despite the transition of governing authority from the CPA to Iraqi control in June 2004—violence across the country continued escalating. Recognizing the deteriorating situation, in November 2005 the White House issued a “National Strategy for Victory in Iraq,” which stated:

A “Security Track,” carrying out a campaign to defeat the terrorists and neutralize the insurgency, developing Iraqi security forces, and helping the Iraqi government:

Clear areas of enemy control by remaining on the offensive, killing and capturing enemy fighters and denying them safe-haven;

Hold areas freed from enemy influence by ensuring that they remain under the control of the Iraqi government with an adequate Iraqi security force presence; and

Build Iraqi Security Forces and the capacity of local institutions to deliver services, advance the rule of law, and nurture civil society (CRS emphasis added).

While the need to build Iraqi security institutions was never in doubt—it was always a key component of the United States’ exit strategy⁶⁵—differences of opinion existed as to the priority the effort ought to have relative to other missions, such as counterterrorism and stability operations. As violence continued to escalate, voices inside and outside the Administration began arguing that the United States needed to prioritize the ISF capacity building effort more meaningfully.

In early 2007, Congress mandated the creation of the Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq (P.L. 110-28, §1314 (e) (2)), which published its findings during September of that year. It concluded that:

The Iraqi Armed Forces – Army, Special Forces, Navy and Air Force – are increasingly effective and are capable of assuming greater responsibility for the internal security of Iraq; and the Iraqi police are improving, but not at a rate sufficient to meet their essential security responsibilities. The Iraqi Security Forces will continue to rely on the Coalition to provide key enablers such as combat support (aviation support, intelligence, and communications), combat service support, (logistics, supply chain management, and maintenance), and training. The Commission assesses that in the next 12 to 18 months there will be continued improvement in their readiness and capability, but not the ability to operate independently. Evidence indicates that the ISF will not be able to progress enough in the near term to secure Iraqi borders against convention military and external threats.”⁶⁶

By 2009, violence across Iraq had decreased significantly, and the ISF demonstrated some capability and capacity to take the lead for Iraq’s security.⁶⁷ In the judgment of the Obama Administration, therefore, the United States could begin its withdrawal from Iraq, redeploying all its combat brigades by August 31, 2010. The United States completed its withdrawal from Iraq in December of 2011, at the conclusion of its Status of Forces Agreement authorizing U.S. troops on Iraqi soil. According to DOD and Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction reporting, over the course of their involvement in Iraq, U.S. and coalition forces trained and equipped

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Center for Strategic & International Studies, Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq, September 6, 2007, p. 12, <http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/isf.pdf>.

⁶⁷ Starting in 2005, Congress required DOD to submit “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq” reports on a quarterly basis (P.L. 109-13). Reports included assessments of the capability and capacity of Iraqi security forces.

roughly 950,000 Iraqi Security Forces.⁶⁸ The United States spent upwards of \$815 billion on its combat operations, of which approximately \$25 billion was allocated to the Iraqi Security Forces Fund.⁶⁹

Although Iraq remained unstable after the withdrawal of U.S. forces, many leaders believed that the levels of violence were manageable. Yet rather than decrease—or plateau—in the years after the U.S. departure, violent incidents increased. Aggravating matters, remnants of Al Qaeda in Iraq (a formidable adversary prior to the surge) reemerged after the U.S. departure. Furthermore, Syria descended into unrest, which then turned into a brutal civil war. These and other factors, including the exacerbation of sectarian divisions by the Maliki government, combined to create a uniquely challenging security environment. In early 2014, the Iraqi Security Forces proved unable to repel the Islamic State. As the *New York Times* noted in June 2014:

The stunning collapse of Iraq's army in a string of cities across the north reflects poor leadership, declining troop morale, broken equipment and a sharp decline in training since the last American advisers left the country in 2011, American military and intelligence officials said Thursday. Four of Iraq's 14 army divisions virtually abandoned their posts, stripped off their uniforms and fled when confronted in cities such as Mosul and Tikrit by militant groups, principally fighters aligned with the radical Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, the officials said.⁷⁰

In August 2014, the United States began Operation Inherent Resolve, a coalition effort to build the capacity of Iraqi and Syrian forces while degrading its military effectiveness. The effort is currently ongoing; however, assessments regarding the campaign's progress are mixed. Given that another BPC effort was initiated in 2014, the 2003-2011 training and capacity building effort in Iraq does not appear to have produced security institutions capable of managing local security challenges.

Analysis

Despite significant investments of money, time, and personnel, U.S. efforts to build partners' capacity as a means to enable withdrawal from wars in which it was directly engaged did not prove successful in two—possibly three—out of three cases. In all three examples, the host nation forces that were to assume responsibility for waging a military campaign, in order to allow a U.S. departure from the theater, initially demonstrated some proficiency. Yet in both Vietnam and Iraq, those forces proved unable to secure their respective countries in the long term; in Afghanistan, the Obama Administration has chosen to retain almost 10,000 U.S. troops due to concerns about the ANDSF's ability to fend off Taliban incursions. Execution challenges throughout significant portions of these campaigns were manifest in all three cases. Yet a number of scholars and practitioners have questioned whether strategic issues—namely, whether host nation and U.S. goals can ever be sufficiently aligned to enable a durable security transition⁷¹—were the root cause of these BPC challenges. These questions deserve greater analytic scrutiny.

⁶⁸ Figure compiled by CRS using Department of Defense, United States Central Command, and U.S. State Department sources.

⁶⁹ CRS Report RL33110, *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11*, by (name redacted)

⁷⁰ Eric Schmitt and Michael R. Gordon, "The Iraqi Army Was Crumbling Long Before its Collapse, U.S. Officials Say," *The New York Times*, June 12, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/13/world/middleeast/american-intelligence-officials-said-iraqi-military-had-been-in-decline.html>.

⁷¹ Rosa Brooks, "The Hard Lessons of Kunduz and Syria," *Foreign Policy*, October 2, 2015

Rationale: BPC for Managing Regional Security Challenges

The logic for this strategic rationale is that building the security capability of states might prevent, or roll back, the ability of terrorist groups and other hostile forces to launch attacks against U.S. interests or those of its allies. Doing so might also prevent the outbreak of hostilities among warring factions that might otherwise lead to a humanitarian catastrophe and/or U.S. military intervention, as well as empower nations to participate in regional military operations that might benefit U.S. national security interests. As President Bush argued in 2004, the world “must create permanent capabilities to respond to future crises,” in particular, “a more effective means to stabilize regions in turmoil, and to halt religious violence and ethnic cleansing.”⁷² The 2015 National Security Strategy builds on this logic, arguing that mitigating state fragility and preventing, containing, and resolving armed conflict are all in the national security interests of the United States.⁷³ Thus, military-to-military engagements in this context are envisioned to be part of risk-mitigation strategies; a mechanism through which the local, “friendly” governments can be empowered to manage internal or regional security challenges with minimal U.S. involvement, if any.

BPC in this context has therefore evolved into a set of programs and authorities designed to better allocate the security burden among concerned countries, particularly in regions in which the United States has less direct interests. These BPC programs to manage regional security challenges tend to be more preventive in nature; they are designed and implemented as a bulwark against instability rather than with a specific crisis or conflict in mind. As such, these programs are designed to strengthen partners’ ability to manage their own security responsibilities, whatever they may be.⁷⁴

Case Study: U.S. Support to the African Union and the African Union Mission in Somalia (2005-Present)⁷⁵

The African Union (AU), a regional grouping of all countries in Africa except Morocco, was established in 2002 as the successor to the now-defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU). Despite funding and capacity shortfalls, the AU routinely becomes involved in internal and inter-state armed conflicts and political crises. Support to the African Union, and African peacekeeping capabilities more generally, has been a key component of both the Bush and Obama Administrations’ Africa policies. At the U.S.-Africa Leaders’ Summit in 2014, President Obama announced the African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership (APRRP) to strengthen the crisis response capabilities of African forces. Since 2009, the United States has committed to provide over \$1 billion to develop African peacekeeping capacity and strengthen African

⁷² U.S. Department of State, *Address to the United Nations General Assembly by President George W. Bush*, September 21, 2004.

⁷³ The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, February 2015.

⁷⁴ Recently, Peter Dombrowski and Simon Reich have described these kinds of activities as a “Strategy of Sponsorship.” See, Peter Dombrowski & Simon Reich, “The Strategy of Sponsorship,” *Survival* (vol 57, no. 5) October-November 2015, pp. 121-148. However, while Dombrowski and Reich describe a concept of employment for U.S. and partner forces, this paper is more concerned with whether those partner forces are effective.

⁷⁵ Much of the material contained within this section is derived from work by CRS analysts Nicholas Cook and (name redacted).

institutions. Further, the United States has trained and equipped more than a quarter-million African troops and police for service in UN and AU peacekeeping operations, many of which have ultimately been trained through the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI).⁷⁶

Global Peace Operations Initiative

According to the U.S. State Department website, the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) is a U.S. government-funded security assistance program "intended to enhance international capacity to effectively conduct both United Nations and Regional peace support operations by: building partner country capabilities to train and sustain peacekeeping proficiencies; increasing the number of capable military troops and formed police units available for deployment to stability operations contingencies; and facilitating the preparation, logistical support, and deployment of military units and FPU's to peace support operations."⁷⁷ GPOI was launched at the 2004 G8 Sea Island Summit as the U.S. contribution to the broader G8 Action Plan for Expanding Global Capability for Peace Support Operations. GPOI is funded through the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) account, which is managed by the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, although the U.S. military plays a role in implementing GPOI programs, particularly outside of Africa. During the first five-year phase of GPOI's existence (2005-2010), the program focused on directly training peacekeepers; it met its goal to train upwards of 75,000 troops. While GPOI's scope is global, the bulk of these troops have come from African countries. GPOI has since expanded its programs from the direct training of peacekeepers in many countries to helping partner countries efforts to build their own sustainable, indigenous peacekeeping training capacity. GPOI has also sought to expand its efforts to Asia, Europe, and Latin America. In addition, GPOI is the primary foreign sponsor of the Italian-run Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units, which uses Italian Carabinieri to teach constabulary policing skills to participants. According to the State Department, GPOI has facilitated the deployment of more than 197,000 peacekeepers from 38 countries to 29 peace operations around the world.⁷⁸

Source: CRS Report RL32773, *The Global Peace Operations Initiative: Background and Issues for Congress*, by (name redacted) .

Although much of the U.S. assistance to African countries is bilateral, the United States has allocated significant resources toward building the capacity of the African Union to manage multilateral peacekeeping operations. To this end, since 2005, the United States has stationed a peace and security advisor at the AU headquarters, provided assistance to the AU's Peace Support Operations division, given training on defense resource management and control, and supported training exercises to enhance partners' interoperability. In 2014, the United States committed to delivering \$70 million worth of equipment to African peacekeepers, including for AU forces in Somalia and the Central African Republic.

With respect to East Africa, instability and conflict have plagued Somalia for over 30 years. After Somali dictator Mohamed Said Barre was ousted in 1991, power struggles among clans and warlords overtook the country. In an attempt to ameliorate the situation, the United States, under the auspices of the United Nations, deployed troops to Somalia in 1992. However, after forces allied with warlord Mohamed Farah Aideed shot down a U.S. Black Hawk helicopter and killed several U.S. Army Rangers, the United States withdrew from Somalia six months later.

Despite attempts to form a federal government in early 2000s, Somalia remained unstable. A Transitional Federal Government, backed by the international community, was established, but it was rejected by many of the warlords and militias in Somalia. In 2006, the Union of Islamic Courts—with its militant wing, al-Shabaab (with linkages to al Qaeda)⁷⁹—established control in

⁷⁶ The White House, *Fact Sheet; U.S. Support for Peacekeeping in Africa*, August 6, 2014.

⁷⁷ U.S. Department of State, *Global Peace Operations Initiative Overview*, November 10, 2015, <http://www.state.gov/t/pm/ppa/gpoi/>.

⁷⁸ U.S. Department of State, *Global Peace Operations Initiative Factsheet*, November 10, 2015. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/06/243940.htm>.

⁷⁹ The U.S. National Strategy for Counterterrorism highlights East Africa as a region of concern because of al Shabaab (continued...)

Mogadishu. By mid-2006, al-Shabaab had taken much of central Somalia, prompting Ethiopian military intervention with U.S. support in December 2006.

In January of 2007, the African Union launched the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which quickly found itself embroiled in a brutal civil war. AMISOM supported the Transitional Federal Government on one side and al-Shabaab and the UIC waged an insurgency campaign on the other. Al-Shabaab and the UIC gained momentum among many Somalis, fed by historic anti-Ethiopian sentiment among Somalis and a lack of TFG capacity to secure its territory. As one scholar notes:

The ongoing conflict produced an escalating spiral of violence, not least because Ethiopian, TFG, and later AMISOM forces were often heavy handed in responding to these attacks. The resulting collateral damage among the civilian population produced a huge wave of displacement (in 2007, 400,000 of Mogadishu's population of approximately 1.3 million fled the city) and generated intense levels of anti-Ethiopian and also anti-American feeling.⁸⁰

Through 2009-2010, AMISOM and al-Shabaab fought bloody battles on the streets of Mogadishu, with neither side achieving a decisive advantage. During that time, Al Shabaab conducted its first terrorist attacks outside Somalia, with simultaneous bombings in the capital of one of AMISOM's main troop contributors, Uganda, in 2010.

By 2015, al-Shabaab appeared to be in retreat—although still potent. U.S. strikes were responsible for the deaths of several key figures responsible for coordinating terrorist operations outside Somalia, and a number of other notable figures have defected.⁸¹ As of September 2015, the strength of AMISOM uniformed personnel stood at 22,126, comprising both troops and police. Along with the current Force Headquarters staff of 81, the military component has 5,432 troops from Burundi, 1,000 from Djibouti, 3,664 from Kenya, 850 from Sierra Leone, 4,395 from Ethiopia, and 6,223 from Uganda.⁸²

With respect to AMISOM specifically, in 2014 the White House publically reiterated its commitment to "build capacity to counter al-Shabaab in Somalia and provide space for political progress. This includes predeployment training, provision of military equipment, and advisors on the ground." Based on State Department and DOD notifications, CRS estimates that the United States has allocated more than \$800 million in bilateral logistics, equipment, and training for AMISOM troop contributors since 2007, and almost \$300 million for Somali Forces. The United States has also provided more than \$500 million to the UN Support Offices for AMISOM.⁸³ The United States also maintained a small contingent of military personnel, including Special Operations Forces. These forces were augmented by a small team of military advisors in 2013, known as the Mogadishu Coordination Cell.

Given that Somalia is now diplomatically recognized by the United States, and that al-Shabaab's territory has been decreased and its capabilities have reportedly been degraded, the White House

(...continued)

and its connections with al Qaeda. See http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups/al_shabaab.html.

⁸⁰ Paul D. Williams, *AMISOM's Five Challenges*, November 10, 2015, <http://csis.org/story/amisom%E2%80%99s-five-challenges>.

⁸¹ Congressional Research Service.

⁸² The African Union Mission in Somalia Website, "Frequently Asked Questions," October 15, 2015, <http://amisom-au.org/frequently-asked-questions/>.

⁸³ Statement of (name redacted) Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, Hearing: U.S. Security Assistance in Africa, June 4, 2015.

views U.S. efforts to build the capacity of the African Union, and AMISOM, as a success. Others argue for caution, pointing out that AMISOM's track record is more fraught than a cursory glance might suggest. First, after over 30 years of war, challenges to rebuilding the Somali state remain substantial. Islamist militants continue to control territory in some rural areas, making it difficult for Somali and AMISOM forces to secure main supply routes. Second, although al-Shabaab is degraded, it remains potent. It has continued striking targets in Kenya, and in late February 2015, it released a video on social media—in English—calling for jihadists to attack Western targets. Some analysts are concerned that al-Shabaab may sever its links with al Qaeda in favor of the Islamic State.⁸⁴ Third, U.S. support for earlier Ethiopian interventions in Somalia arguably exacerbated local tensions, thereby fueling the conflict, and some analysts warn that civilian casualties during AMISOM operations could again alienate the local population.

AMISOM itself experienced significant challenges during the course of the campaign. Coordination among troop-contributing countries varies by sector, and some of AMISOM's military operations, by some accounts, are not directed by the central headquarters. Despite U.S. financial and training support, personnel shortfalls have plagued the operation, and participating countries are reimbursed for some but not all contingent-owned equipment.⁸⁵ Some AMISOM troop contributors, notably Ethiopia and Kenya, reportedly conduct operations outside the auspices of AMISOM for which they are not reimbursed. Other observers note that despite U.S. assistance thus far, the African Union's capabilities fall well short of expectations:

[The AU] has glaring shortcomings when it comes to analyzing and predicting violent conflict, formulating military doctrine, planning peace operations, mobilizing and deploying troops, providing logistical support, ensuring effective command and control, and distilling lessons learned and best practices from ongoing and completed operations. Professional standards vary widely across troop contributors, interoperability remains uneven, and many member states are reluctant to participate in AU missions.

Case Study: U.S. Assistance to Mali (2002-2015)⁸⁶

The Malian government has received U.S. support for its counterterrorism efforts since 2002, in response to perceived terrorist threats from radical Islamists (e.g., the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, which eventually renamed itself al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb [AQIM] in 2007). These terrorist activities led the United States to launch the Pan-Sahel Initiative (PSI)—a counterterrorism, military, and border training program for the Malian army, among others, in the Sahel. The PSI eventually became the Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP), which integrated counterterrorism and train and equip support with development assistance and public diplomacy efforts.

A separatist rebellion launched in late 2011 by members of the minority ethnic Tuareg community aggravated intra-military and political tensions in the country, leading to a military coup by junior officers in March 2012. The coup was led by Captain Amadou Sanogo, who had previously been a recipient of U.S. professional military education and training.⁸⁷ Sanogo argued that deposing the democratically elected government was necessary due to its inability to handle the Tuareg

⁸⁴ In October, 2015, a faction of al-Shabaab pledged its allegiance to ISIS. See Robyn Kriel and Briana Duggan, "Al Shabaab Faction Pledges Allegiance to ISIS," CNN.com, October 23, 2015, <http://www.cnn.com/2015/10/22/africa/al-shabaab-faction-isis/>.

⁸⁵ Williams, "Fighting for Peace," p. 225.

⁸⁶ Much of the material contained within this case study has been derived from reports by CRS analyst (name redacted).

⁸⁷ Martin Vogl, "Mali Coup leaders partially reopen airport," *The Associated Press*, March 26, 2012.

situation in northern Mali. Islamist extremist groups including Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), who initially reportedly fought alongside the separatists, took advantage of the ensuing chaos to expand their presence and eventually ousted the separatists to assert control over major towns in northern Mali. Malian forces, in turn, largely disintegrated and proved unable to reverse the territorial gains of these Islamic extremist groups.⁸⁸ In January of 2013, France launched military operations in northern Mali to dislodge AQIM in coordination with other regional forces.

U.S. security assistance for Mali was suspended between 2012 and 2013 due to the military coup, although the Obama Administration has slowly restarted some programs, focusing largely on security sector reform (rather than focusing on specialized training and equipping of Malian forces for counterterrorism purposes).⁸⁹

On June 20, 2015, after nearly a year of peace talks mediated by Algeria, a coalition of northern separatist rebel groups agreed to a peace accord with the government and a rival set of loyalist northern factions. However, the underlying causes of Mali's crisis have not been resolved, and security conditions have deteriorated since 2014. Islamic extremist groups launched attacks in targets across Mali in 2015;⁹⁰ on November 20, 2015, gunmen attacked the Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako, killing 22 people including one American. Al Murabitoun, a Sahel-based terrorist group affiliated with Al Qaeda, and Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) jointly claimed responsibility for the assault, possibly in coordination with other Mali-based groups.⁹¹ Despite post-9/11 efforts by the United States and France to train and equip Malian forces to counter terrorism, some have questioned whether these were sufficient in the wake of these attacks. As one Malian Member of Parliament noted, "we are not up for the fight against terrorism - we are not prepared enough."⁹²

Case Study: U.S. Support to the Former Warsaw Pact (1994-Present)

At the end of the Cold War, the United States and its European allies sought to rebuild ties with Central and Eastern European countries formerly associated with the Warsaw Pact. In January of 1994, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) established the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program to encourage closer collaboration between non-NATO states and NATO, and to help partners become full NATO allies when appropriate. Later that year, President Clinton announced the Warsaw Initiative, a program to provide U.S. bilateral assistance to PfP partners through supporting their participation in exercises, conferences, seminars, and other non-exercise events, as well as a program of Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to purchase equipment, training, and services to improve a partner's interoperability with NATO. The two programs, while programmatically distinct, are intertwined due to their overlapping participants and strategic goals.

Over time, NATO's PfP program expanded somewhat in scope, adding strategic-level dialogue with key non-NATO members (such as Sweden and Austria) on defense matters to its defense

⁸⁸ Simon J. Powelson, *Enduring Engagement Yes, Episodic Engagement No: Lessons for SOF from Mali*, Naval Postgraduate School Thesis, December 2013.

⁸⁹ The White House, *Fact Sheet: Security Governance Initiative*, August 6, 2014, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/08/06/fact-sheet-security-governance-initiative>.

⁹⁰ (name redacted), "Mali: Transition from Conflict," *CRS In Focus* (IF 101166), July 23, 2015.

⁹¹ CRS Insight IN10401, The November 2015 Terrorist Siege in Mali, by (name redacted), (name redacted), and (name redacted).

⁹² Thomas Fessy, "Mali Not Geared Up To Combat Terrorist Threat," *BBC News*, November 27, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-34920659>.

institution-building mission. There are now 22 countries in the PfP program; some 35 countries have participated in NATO's PfP overall, 12 of which became NATO members.⁹³

The Warsaw Initiative, by contrast, contracted in scope, as its members grew in defense capability and capacity, thereby "graduating" from the program. Presently, the Warsaw Initiative comprises 16 developing countries in the Euro-Atlantic region, including the Ukraine and Georgia. It has the following core goals:

- Enhancing partner capacity and advance democratic reform of defense establishments and military forces.
- Focusing on identified defense institution-building efforts in partner countries.
- Increasing U.S./NATO-Partner interoperability to enhance partner contributions to coalition operations.
- Supporting further partner integration with NATO.
- Continuing to support aspirant accession to NATO of select countries.

The Partnership for Peace and Warsaw Initiative resulted in the accession of 12 former Warsaw Pact nations into NATO, accomplishing, in theory, the program's overall strategic rationale of sharing the security burden in the Euro-Atlantic region. This burden-sharing, in turn, enabled U.S. forces to withdraw from the European theater and focus on other challenges, including a "pivot" to Asia. However, experts on both sides of the Atlantic argue that European allies and partners have not yet "backfilled" departing U.S. forces with the defense capabilities needed to meet emerging security challenges.⁹⁴ Allied defense spending declined, and most NATO states consistently failed to meet an agreed defense spending target of 2% of gross domestic product. This reduction in defense spending, compounded by the expense of expeditionary operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other places, has led to a reduction of NATO's actual military capabilities. Experts now debate whether Europe has the collective capabilities to manage myriad security challenges along its southern and eastern peripheries.⁹⁵

Case Study: U.S. Security Assistance to Pakistan: 2002-Present⁹⁶

After more than a decade under broad U.S. sanctions for its nuclear proliferation activities, and later for a military coup, Pakistan became a key ally in U.S.-led efforts to combat Islamist militancy and extremism following the September 11, 2001, attacks. As the logic went, Pakistan was a base for numerous U.S.-designated terrorist groups. By building the capability of Pakistani security forces, the government of Pakistan would be able to address the threat posed by these terrorist groups without the direct involvement of the United States. The United States, in turn, would be better able to focus its efforts on operations in Afghanistan. As President Bush stated during a press conference with President Musharraf of Pakistan in December 2004:

The President and I are absolutely committed to fighting off the terrorists who would destroy life in Pakistan, or the United States, or anywhere else.⁹⁷

⁹³ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Signatures of Partnership for Peace Framework Document*, January 10, 2012, August 5, 2015, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_82584.htm.

⁹⁴ See, for example, Naftali Bendavid, "Just Five of 28 NATO Members Meet Defense Spending Goal, Report Says" *The Wall Street Journal*, June 22, 2015. For further information on NATO matters, see CRS Report R43698, NATO's Wales Summit: Outcomes and Key Challenges, by (name redacted), September 8, 2014.

⁹⁵ (name redacted), "Four Questions for NATO's Leaders," *Defense One*, September 2, 2014.

⁹⁶ CRS Report R44034, Pakistan-U.S. Relations: Issues for the 114th Congress, by (name redacted).

In 2006, the United States and Pakistan affirmed their bilateral strategic partnership and articulated a number of steps that both countries would take together to strengthen their relationship and advance core goals.⁹⁸ With respect to peace and security, the countries announced they would take the following actions:

- Build a robust defense relationship that advances shared security goals, promotes regional stability, and contributes to international security;
- Continue robust U.S. security assistance to meet Pakistan's legitimate defense needs and bolster its capabilities in the war on terror;
- Deepen bilateral collaboration in the fields of defense training, joint exercises, defense procurement, technology transfers, and international peacekeeping;
- Decide to increase the frequency of defense policy discussions to strengthen collaboration in the identified sectors;
- Work together to ensure the maintenance of peace, security, and stability in the South Asia region and beyond; and
- Cooperate closely in international institutions, including bodies of the United Nations, on matters of mutual concern.⁹⁹

In 2009, President Obama announced a recalibration of U.S. strategy toward Pakistan:

[W]e must focus our military assistance on the tools, training and support that Pakistan needs to root out the terrorists. And after years of mixed results, we will not, and cannot, provide a blank check.¹⁰⁰

U.S. goals for Pakistan took several years to formally develop and articulate, and they evolved over time. Yet as early as 2002, Pakistan became a leading recipient of U.S. foreign assistance and other aid, with Congress appropriating more than \$18 billion in such assistance for FY2002-FY2015, including \$7.6 billion in security-related aid.

In FY2002, Congress began appropriating billions of dollars to reimburse Pakistan and other nations for their operational and logistical support of U.S.-led counterterrorism operations through Coalition Support Funds.¹⁰¹ These "coalition support funds" (CSF) have accounted for roughly half of overt U.S. financial transfers to Pakistan since 2001, or about \$13 billion to date. The amount equals a significant portion—as much as one-fifth—of Pakistan's total military expenditures during this period.¹⁰² According to the Department of Defense, CSF payments have been used to support scores of Pakistani army operations and to help keep more than 100,000 Pakistani troops in the field in northwest Pakistan. Such payments also compensate Islamabad for coalition use of Pakistani airfields and seaports.

(...continued)

⁹⁷ The White House, "President Bush and President Musharraf Discuss International Relations, Commerce," December 4, 2004, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/12/20041204-2.html>.

⁹⁸ The White House, "Joint Statement on United States-Pakistan Strategic Partnership," March 4, 2006, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/03/20060304-1.html>.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ The White House, "Remarks by the President on a New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan," March 27, 2009, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-a-new-strategy-afghanistan-and-pakistan>.

¹⁰¹ Coalition Support Funds are not technically considered Foreign Assistance.

¹⁰² Tom Countryman, "Pakistan: U.S. Security Assistance Programs Help Address Shared Challenges," *Dipnote*, June 7, 2010, September 15, 2015, <http://blogs.state.gov/stories/2010/06/07/pakistan-us-security-assistance-programs-help-address-shared-challenges#sthash.NI198Zdn.dpuf>.

The U.S. government has engaged in further efforts to build the capability and capacity of Pakistani Security Forces. In 2009, Congress authorized the creation of the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capabilities Fund (PCCF), a State Department-administered fund, as well as the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Fund, administered by the DOD. These funds were ultimately intended to support the government of Pakistan in building and maintaining the capability of its security forces to conduct counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations, and to clear and hold terrain in contested areas throughout the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and elsewhere along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan. These programs were zeroed out of the Assistance budget to Pakistan in FY2013. According to the Defense Security Cooperation Agency:

The Department intends to continue to reimburse the Government of Pakistan in FY 2015 for military operations it undertakes on its border with Afghanistan, which supports U.S. operations. Pakistan has served as an ally in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) since 2001 and will continue to play a key role in follow on operations. Pakistan's security forces regularly engage violent extremists who threaten the security of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan incurs expenses to engage in counterinsurgency operations, man observation posts along the Afghanistan border, and conduct maritime interdiction operations and combat air patrols.¹⁰³

While the post-2001 U.S. assistance program has seen notable accomplishments—notably in the area of humanitarian relief—according to many analysts, U.S. assistance to Pakistan since 2001 has not achieved its central goal as articulated in 2006. Mullah Omar, the spiritual leader of the Afghan Taliban movement lived in Quetta (a town in Pakistan) until his death; many military leaders attributed the organization, command, and control of the Taliban to the “Quetta Shura,” a group of Taliban leaders living with Omar in Pakistan. Efforts to encourage the Pakistani government to take on terrorist groups also languished, as the Pakistani government consistently prioritized its preparations for a conventional conflict with India. Yet it was the May 2011 revelation that Al Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden had apparently enjoyed years-long and undisturbed refuge inside Pakistan—near Pakistan's military academy—that caused many to question the wisdom of the continued provision of aid.

After the post-Osama bin Laden raid nadir in U.S.-Pakistan relations, the two countries resumed a strategic-level dialogue in January 2015. The assistance the United States provides to Pakistan has evolved into a mechanism to advance bilateral cooperation on other national security priorities, to include securing “lines of communication” to multinational operations in Afghanistan and nuclear security.¹⁰⁴ Yet on balance, despite the priority placed on building Pakistan as a stable ally capable of tackling terrorist groups on its own soil, and despite considerable U.S. expenditure on building Pakistan's security capabilities in order to do so, the central goals of this BPC effort arguably have not been met.

Analysis

Based on the four case studies selected, applying BPC to manage regional security challenges appears problematic. In the most successful case—U.S. support to the former Warsaw Pact—many argue that NATO allies failed to invest in the defense capabilities needed to effectively manage security challenges on the European periphery after the United States withdrew

¹⁰³ Defense Security Cooperation Agency, FY 2016 Budget Estimate, p. 95.

¹⁰⁴ “House Foreign Affairs Committee Holds Hearing on President Obama's Fiscal 2014 Budget Proposal for the State Department and Foreign Affairs,” *CQ Transcripts*, April 17, 2013. .

significant components of its European-based force structure after the end of the Cold War. In the other cases—support to the African Union and AMISOM, Pakistan, and Mali - U.S. investments to build local security forces have not necessarily translated into partners' increased capability—or willingness—to manage regional security challenges in a manner that advances U.S. national security interests.

Rationale: BPC to Indirectly Strengthen a Party to an Internal Conflict

Over the course of its history, the United States has, with relative frequency, supported its allies and partners as they wage their own internal conflicts. These are contingencies wherein the United States has some sort of larger, geopolitical stake in the outcome of an ongoing conflict, but cannot—or politically will not—become a direct party to the conflict. During the Cold War, this indirect support was often an extension of great power competition. In the absence of the Soviet Union, however, the United States continued supporting local actors to advance other national objectives, such as stemming the flow of narcotics into the United States. In these instances, military support and aid are channeled to one belligerent over another, in the hopes that doing so will enable the U.S.-favored party to ultimately win and create an advantageous post-war situation for the United States. This assistance can be as simple as providing weapons and money, or as complex as providing combat advisors.

Case Study: The United States and the Philippines (1947-1953)¹⁰⁵

The Japanese invasion of the Philippines during World War II threw Philippine society into turmoil and fomented the formation of the Hukbalahap (or, Huk) Rebellion.¹⁰⁶ The Huks initially targeted Japanese forces and their Philippine clients; upon conclusion of World War II, the Huks turned their focus toward the Philippine ruling class, which had excluded them from post-war political life as well as U.S. economic assistance. Fueled by these grievances, the Huks—already somewhat communist in leaning during World War II—took an even stronger communist disposition. The Huks began an insurgency to overthrow what they viewed as a corrupt post-war Philippine government.

The post-war, post-colonial Philippine government siphoned off aid and supplies from the United States, preventing much needed assistance from reaching the general population. Further, the government's constabulary forces conducted a brutal anti-Huk campaign, preying upon the local population by "seizing foodstuffs without paying for them, becom[ing] drunk and disorderly, extract[ing] information by inhumane methods, abus[ing] women, shoot[ing] up country towns and generally mistreat[ing] the populace."¹⁰⁷ As the rebellion grew in strength, the United States became increasingly concerned. Not only was the Philippines a former U.S. territory (until 1946), the situation was becoming ominously similar to Chiang Kai-shek's China—with endemic corruption and alienation of moderates within the country—just before the Communist takeover. Geopolitically, the United States wanted to address the situation, but given that the Truman

¹⁰⁵ For more information, see Walter Ladwig, *The Trouble With Allies: U.S. Indirect Intervention in the Philippines, Vietnam and El Salvador*, Oxford University Press, (Forthcoming in 2016), pp. 108-157.

¹⁰⁶ The Philippines became a U.S. commonwealth in 1935, which gave it greater self-autonomy.

¹⁰⁷ Ladwig, p. 117.

Administration was using the Philippines as an example to the Europeans of successful decolonization, direct intervention was not politically feasible.

After Philippine President Quirino—seen by the United States as an incompetent leader—requested military aid for his anti-Huk campaign, the United States began a policy of conditioning its support, tying aid and advice to initiatives that would erode the Quirino government's ability to prey upon ordinary Filipinos. For example, the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG) argued for the incorporation of the Philippine constabulary into the Philippine Armed Forces in order to curtail the Constabulary's predatory behavior. After initially resisting, the Quirino government acquiesced and, under American pressure, replaced the Chief of Defense with Ramon Magsaysay, who subsequently reformed the Philippine security forces to make them more accountable to the local population. Altogether, the United States spent approximately \$243 million on assistance to the Philippine security forces between 1947 and 1952.¹⁰⁸

Reforms in the security sector were echoed by reforms in the political sphere. The reforms Magsaysay instituted essentially devitalized the Huk rebellion. Magsaysay himself died in an airplane crash in 1957 before his reforms could fully take root. In 1960, Ferdinand Marcos became president; in Marcos's second term, he instituted a series of crackdowns that turned the presidency into a dictatorship, although U.S.-Philippine relations remained relatively close due to longstanding ties between the two countries, as well as the positioning of U.S. bases in the Philippine archipelago.

Case Study: U.S. Intervention in the Soviet-Afghan War (1980-1988)

Responding to escalating chaos that challenged the Soviet-installed Afghan government, in December 1979, the Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan. The Soviets deployed thousands of troops to Afghanistan and took charge of fighting what had by that time become a full-scale war against Soviet occupation.¹⁰⁹ This was the first time the Soviet Union attempted to extend its authority outside Central and Eastern Europe; the United States therefore sought to contain, if not check, Soviet expansionism.

According to press reports at the time, a low-level aid program involving the United States, China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan began in early 1980. In these early years, the U.S.-organized program was limited to one that would provide deniability to Pakistan. This meant obtaining Soviet-made weapons, or copies thereof, from the international black market and funneling them into Pakistan, who would then pass on the weaponry to anti-Communist Islamic forces in Afghanistan. The program was limited to approximately \$80 million.

In 1984, largely as a result of congressional intervention, the U.S. program to assist anti-communist forces in Afghanistan increased significantly. Subsequently, the Afghans were provided with U.S. and European equipment, including Swiss anti-aircraft guns and "Stinger" anti-aircraft missiles. Funding levels grew to approximately \$600 million per year, with a total of \$2 billion from 1980 through 1988. The anti-communist insurgency grew, both in strength and momentum.

¹⁰⁸ U.S. Department of State, "Philippines," Foreign Assistance Green Book.

¹⁰⁹ U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian, *Milestones: 1977-1980 The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S. Response, 1978-1980*, September 1, 2015, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1977-1980/soviet-invasion-afghanistan>.

During this time, the Soviet Union also continued to increase military pressure and pour money into Afghanistan. Yet these efforts failed to quell the growing U.S.-backed insurgency, and by 1986, Premier Gorbachev began referring to Afghanistan as a "bleeding wound." On April 14, 1988, a United Nations-brokered accord between Afghanistan and Pakistan was signed, with the United States and the Soviet Union as guarantors to the agreement. The U.S.-backed Afghan insurgents were not invited to the negotiations, which may have contributed to the conflict's endurance post-settlement. Although the United States and the USSR agreed as part of the agreement to cease their military activities—indirect or otherwise—in Afghanistan, Congress maintained that assistance should be extended if the Soviet Union continued interfering in Afghanistan. Moscow executed its withdrawal by February 15, 1989. U.S. assistance to Afghanistan dwindled after the cessation of hostilities, and within several years the region once again descended into chaos. The subsequent civil war, which led to the rise of the Taliban in the 1990s, eventually created a space wherein al-Qaeda could train and direct the 9/11 attacks against the United States.

Case Study: U.S. Assistance to Colombia (2000-2015)¹¹⁰

Colombia, a key U.S. ally in Latin America, has been caught in a protracted and complex internal armed conflict for upwards of half a century. Both right and left wing armed groups that opposed the Colombian government (two of the most prominent being the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC] and the National Liberation Army [ELN]) funded themselves through narcotics trafficking. Through their activities, Colombia dominated the global cocaine trade by the late 1990s, and heroin produced from Colombian-grown poppies became the dominant source of the drug in the eastern United States. Observers in Congress and in the Clinton Administration began to fear that Colombia would become a failed state.

In particular, Members of Congress grew alarmed over the increasing financial reliance of illegal actors in Colombia on the highly lucrative drug trade and feared that poorly equipped Colombian security forces were losing ground to these illegal actors. Some officials in the Clinton Administration thought that Colombia could become a failed state or a "narco-state." Colombia did not possess the resources to salvage its deteriorating security, compromised public safety, and struggling economy, which in the late 1990s had plunged into recession.

Plan Colombia was announced by Colombian President Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002) at the U.S. General Assembly on September 21, 1999. It was originally a six-year strategy to end Colombia's then-40-year-long internal conflict, eliminate drug trafficking, and promote democracy and development. The original plan had a goal to reduce the cultivation, processing, and distribution of narcotics by 50% over the plan's six-year time frame. It would do so by eradicating narcotics, implementing alternative development programs, strengthening, equipping, and professionalizing the Colombian Armed Forces and Colombian National Police, strengthening the judiciary, and fighting corruption. As initially conceived, the plan would cost \$7.5 billion, of which the Colombians would pay \$4 billion. Colombia sought international donations, including from the United States, for the balance.

At the outset, Congress appropriated \$1.27 billion over two years to the program. The U.S. contribution included training and equipping two new counternarcotics army battalions and providing Black Hawk and Huey helicopters for their transport. U.S. support also included assistance for: (1) drug trafficking interdiction; (2) Colombian National Police eradication

¹¹⁰ Much of the information contained in this section is derived from work written by CRS analyst June Beittel.

capabilities; (3) economic development; (4) "boosting government capacity," such as funding for human rights monitors and improving the justice system and the rule of law; and (5) other economic assistance and support for the peace process. Congress also prohibited U.S. personnel from directly participating in combat missions, which served to underscore and reinforce Colombian "ownership," according to some observers.

Key U.S. Lessons Learned from Plan Colombia

According to participants in the formulation and execution of Plan Colombia and follow-on assistance programs, both purpose and process were essential. The countries were united in purpose due to a general agreement between the U.S. and Colombian governments regarding what each intended to do, and the U.S. government organized itself to achieve its goals through a successful process.

Purpose. Both the United States and Colombian governments had a strong interest in ensuring that Colombia did not become a failed state. It was initially unclear, however, what Colombia was prepared to do to prevent its own collapse. Before developing a joint U.S.-Colombian plan, U.S. officials sought to understand the activities that the Colombian government was doing, or sought to do. U.S. assistance was then designed to improve and strengthen those Colombian-initiated efforts. This helped ensure that there was Colombian ownership of the plan, as well as sufficient alignment of interests between the United States and Colombia to enable a productive partnership. As Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering, Undersecretary of State at the time, poignantly noted, "We knew from experience that without a willing and competent local ally, all bets were off."

Process. Architects of Plan Colombia worked to ensure that different U.S. government agencies (both civilian and military) involved in Plan Colombia synchronized their efforts better than they had previously. While support to Colombia was established as an interagency, Assistant Secretary-level Executive Committee project (initially chaired by Undersecretary Pickering), it was housed within the Department of State rather than at the National Security Council. This helped "institutionalize" U.S. assistance to Colombia over multiple Administrations. To help ensure that the U.S. agencies involved would support increased U.S. assistance to Colombia, the Clinton Administration sought supplemental funding rather than have agencies reprogram funds they had already planned to allocate toward other foreign policy objectives.

Source: Thomas R. Pickering, "Anatomy of Plan Colombia," *The National Interest*, November/December 2009, pp. 71-79.

After the September 11, 2001, attacks, there was a growing recognition that the counternarcotics and counterterrorism problems in Colombia were tightly linked. Congress therefore agreed to grant the U.S. executive branch greater flexibility to build a unified campaign to combat both terrorist organizations and drug trafficking. Between FY2000 and FY2015, Congress appropriated nearly \$10 billion in assistance from State Department and DOD accounts to carry out Plan Colombia and its follow-on strategies.

By many accounts, the partnership between the United States and Colombia succeeded. As early as 2009, then-U.S. Ambassador to Colombia William Brownfield described U.S. assistance efforts as "the most successful nation-building exercise that the United States has associated itself with perhaps in the last 25-30 years."¹¹¹ Colombian Armed Forces are now working with other nations in the Central and South America to tackle their own counternarcotics and narco-trafficking challenges.¹¹² On September 23, 2015, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, in a highly symbolic gesture, shook hands with the leader of the FARC, Ricardo Londoño (alias Timochenko) and announced a timetable to complete peace talks, a framework for a transitional justice system for assisting victims, and a date for disarmament of the FARC. Some believe that this disarmament could lead to the disarmament of the ELN as well. Still, work remains ahead. The FARC and the Colombian government have not yet signed the final peace accord. Further,

¹¹¹ "Colombia to Aid U.S. in Taliban Fight," *CBS Evening News*, July 27, 2009.

¹¹² CRS Report R43813, Colombia: Background and U.S. Relations, by (name redacted).

Colombia remains a dominant producer of cocaine; 90% of the cocaine seized in the United States originates from Colombia.

Analysis

Based on the cases selected, it appears that BPC can be used effectively to support partners as they wage their own internal conflicts. In all three cases, U.S. military and security sector assistance helped U.S. partners win a given conflict. Further, in the cases of the Philippines and Colombia, this assistance helped promote longer-term stability and strengthened their respective bilateral relations with the United States. In the example of Afghanistan, however, when the BPC effort concluded, the U.S.-supported Afghans were unable to translate U.S. assistance into longer-term political security gains. Ultimately, Afghanistan descended into violent conflict and instability, which Al Qaeda eventually exploited. Thus, although BPC seems to validate the aim of indirectly supporting a party to a conflict, the Afghanistan case suggests that if such BPC efforts are not carefully managed in the short, medium and long term—both politically and militarily—they can have longer-term effects that may prove counterproductive to U.S. interests.

Rationale: BPC for Conflict Mitigation¹¹³

BPC has been used to help prevent the outbreak of further hostilities among warring countries or factions. As the logic goes, strengthening a relatively weak party to a conflict can help create—or reestablish—a balance of power among different factions, especially upon cessation of hostilities. This, in turn, makes it more difficult for the parties in question to return to violent conflict.

Case Study: BPC to Mitigate Conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995-2002)¹¹⁴

After the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords were signed, the United States aimed to mitigate conflict through establishing a Federation Army from the Bosniak (Muslim) dominated Army of Bosnia and the Croatian Defense Council, which distrusted each other even after significant Bosnian Serb military attacks. In December 1995, James Pardew was appointed as U.S. Special Representative for Military Stabilization in the Balkans, and he took charge of a joint DOD-State Department task force, based in the State Department, to coordinate a train and equip effort for the Federation Army.

In this case, BPC efforts had the rationale of strengthening the military capacity of the Bosnian Federation to help promote legitimate state governance, which, in turn, would prevent other actors from destabilizing the country's security. The Bosnia Train and Equip Program sought to establish a balance of power between Federation forces and the Bosnian Serb forces, which the Clinton Administration believed would help prevent a resumption of fighting when the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia was withdrawn. The program was carried out by a private firm, Military Professional Resources Inc. (MPRI), with many retired U.S. military officers on its staff. The direct U.S. contribution was about \$100 million in used, refurbished U.S. military equipment.

¹¹³ In the initial research design for this rationale, conflict prevention was included. However, identifying whether, or when BPC contributed to the prevention of conflict (rather than preventing the re-emergence of a pre-existing armed conflict) proved problematic. It is difficult to prove a negative.

¹¹⁴ This section is based on archived CRS Report 96-735F, *Bosnia: U.S.-Led Train-and-Equip Program*, by (name redacted) (available from the author).

The distribution of equipment, as well as the training component of the program, was carried out by MPRI under contract to the Bosnian Federation, not the U.S. government.

Approximately 200 retired U.S. military personnel ran the program. This was due to the desire to downplay direct U.S. military involvement, in part due to concerns that direct U.S. military participation in the program would undermine the neutrality of U.S. peacekeepers in Bosnia in the eyes of the Bosnian Serbs, and might even present a threat to U.S. soldiers. The program also included a training component, which focused on leader development; the leaders, in turn, were to train their soldiers. Training involved establishing leadership seminars, professional development schools, and a combat training center where senior commanders and staffs were to train.

In 2002, the State Department announced the end of the Bosnia Train and Equip Program. Then-Department Spokesman Richard Boucher said in a briefing to reporters:

The U.S.-led international program to train and equip the armed forces of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina successfully has completed its work. Through the generosity of the donors,¹¹⁵ the Train and Equip Program over the last seven years has provided world-class training, equipment, and facilities to the Federation designed to make its forces compatible with NATO standards. In present year (2002) dollars, the total combined value of U.S. and international goods and services provided under the program amount to approximately half a billion dollars. By redressing military imbalances, the program has achieved its goal of enhancing stability in Bosnia and the region. Other donor countries included: Brunei, Egypt, Germany, Jordan, Malaysia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the U.A.E.

The security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina today has greatly improved since the end of the Bosnian war in 1995. The voluntary reductions of the Federation and Republika Srpska armed forces are evidence of that. There is general agreement in Bosnia on the need to reform and restructure the armed forces in order to meet conditions to enter NATO's Partnership for Peace. There is growing understanding that the armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina must be able to defend the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state as a whole and represent it in collective defense missions.¹¹⁶

Case Study: BPC to Prevent the Re-emergence of Conflict between Egypt and Israel¹¹⁷

Egypt and Israel in the context of the late 1970s and afterwards provide a more complicated case than Bosnia. At first blush, U.S. efforts to build up military capabilities in both Egypt and Israel in the decades following the 1978 Camp David Accords and the subsequent 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt would be a textbook example of using what came to be termed BPC to achieve the strategic aim of preventing the re-emergence of conflict between the two nations. However, the complexities of conflict in the region, as well as significant changes in perceived threats to the United States in the Middle East since 1978 make conclusions regarding strategic effects of U.S. military aid murky. The conceptual distinction between BPC as an overarching strategic concept in DOD and the limited view of BPC as specific security cooperation authorities

¹¹⁵ The United States coordinated and led the Bosnia Train and Equip Program. Donor nations included Brunei, Egypt, Germany, Jordan, Malaysia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the U.A.E.

¹¹⁶ U.S. Department of State, Daily Briefing, October 30, 2002, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2002/14799.htm>.

¹¹⁷ This section is based upon CRS Report RL33003, *Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations*, by (name redacted), and CRS Report RL33222, *U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel*, by (name redacted).

in the State Department may also add to potential confusion given the relative size of State Department-administered security assistance and security cooperation programs to both Egypt and Israel. This case study uses BPC in the sense stated in the 2014 QDR: "Building security globally not only assures allies and partners and builds partnership capacity, but also helps protect the homeland by deterring conflict and increasing stability in regions like the Middle East and North Africa."¹¹⁸

For decades, the United States has used military aid and security cooperation to secure peaceful relations between Israel and Egypt. Since the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty, the United States has provided Egypt and Israel with large amounts of military assistance and has inaugurated a number of joint programs and exercises designed to increase U.S. bilateral institutional closeness with both countries. In the case of Egypt, U.S. policymakers have routinely justified aid as an investment in regional stability, built primarily on long-running military cooperation and on sustaining the treaty—principles that are supposed to be mutually reinforcing. For Israel, U.S. military aid has helped transform the Israeli armed forces into one of the most technologically sophisticated militaries in the world. U.S. military aid has been designed to maintain Israel's "qualitative military edge" (QME) over neighboring militaries. The rationale for QME is that Israel must rely on better equipment and training to compensate for being much smaller geographically and in terms of population than its potential adversaries.¹¹⁹

For Egypt, the United States has provided Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants of approximately \$1.3 billion per year and International Military Education and Training grants of between \$1 and 2 million per year since the mid-1980s. However, the military-to-military relationship has, in the past two decades, received less U.S. emphasis than one might expect to achieve the strategic aim of conflict prevention. The last significant U.S.-Egyptian joint military operation was in 1991, when Egypt contributed 20,000 troops to Operation Desert Storm.¹²⁰ As the United States continually engages in military operations against terrorist groups across the broader Middle East, the U.S. military, in particular, seeks partners that can provide "irregular" warfare capabilities including intelligence, training, and counterinsurgency support. Yet analysts consider the Egyptian armed forces to be more oriented to fight interstate than asymmetric warfare.

For Israel, the United States has provided FMF grants of between \$1.8 billion and \$3.1 billion per year since the mid-1980s. The United States and Israel also have jointly developed missile defense programs, for which the United States has allowed Israel to use FMF funds to purchase weapons systems. While the 1979 Memoranda of Agreement (out of the Camp David Accords) between Israel and the United States says "the United States will endeavor to take into account and will endeavor to be responsive to military and economic assistance requirements of Israel,"¹²¹ U.S. military aid to Israel has more closely followed the model of military sales and financing to developed countries (for example, NATO Allies) than the BPC concept, found in the 2006 QDR, of "maintaining a long-term, low-visibility presence in many areas of the world where U.S. forces do not traditionally operate." It is also unclear as to the extent to which U.S. military aid to Israel, given Israel's own defense spending and capabilities development (as well as a significantly

¹¹⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, *2014 Quadrennial Defense Review*, p. 13.

¹¹⁹ CRS Report RL33222, U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel, by (name redacted), p. 1.

¹²⁰ In Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, Egypt contributed a field hospital at Bagram.

¹²¹ Memorandum of Agreement between the Governments of the United States of American and the State of Israel, March 26, 1979, <http://muqtafi.birzeit.edu/InterDocs/images/284.pdf>.

changed political environment in the Middle East), would play a role in preventing conflict between Israel and Egypt since 1979.

Unrest and political turmoil throughout the Arab world since 2011 have significantly affected the Israel-Egypt security dynamic, particularly given multiple leadership changes in Egypt. Deep Israeli concern about managing the demilitarized areas of the Sinai Peninsula—a key geographical buffer for preventing the threat of conflict to reemerge—was largely relieved when Egypt's military ousted an Islamist-led government in July 2013. Since then, the regime led by President Abdel Fattah al Sisi has taken robust measures in close coordination with Israel to counter militants in the Sinai and to reduce the smuggling of goods and weapons into the Gaza Strip (controlled by the Palestinian Sunni Islamist group, Hamas, a U.S.-designated terrorist organization). However, the Egyptian government's overall control of the Sinai appears to face serious challenges, as part of a region-wide trend in which a number of central governments (including Libya, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon) struggle with heightened extremist activity in peripheral geographical areas. Reported collaboration in some cases between militants across the Sinai-Gaza border exacerbates these challenges.

These new realities have fueled U.S. policy discussions regarding possible adjustments for Egypt, Israel, and the Sinai-based Multinational Force of Observers (which, according to its website, as of April 2015 had a U.S. contingent of 692 personnel out of a total of 1667—by far the largest of any of the 12 contributing nations). One adjustment appears to be a U.S. restructuring of Egypt's military assistance to focus more squarely on counterterrorism, especially in the Sinai, with perhaps less emphasis on bigger weapons platforms traditionally used to maintain deterrence and security vis-à-vis other regional states. Other issues that may affect future BPC efforts and outcomes with Egypt and Israel include Egypt's ongoing domestic political and economic problems and its deepening dependence on Gulf Arab states, continued Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and larger regional developments involving civil conflict and the involvement of various international actors (including Russia and Iran).

Based on changes in the military-to-military relationships in Egypt and the ambiguity regarding whether the concept of BPC applies to Israel, analytical inferences regarding the effectiveness of U.S. military aid in achieving conflict prevention in this case are unclear.

Analysis

The examples of Bosnia and Egypt/Israel suggest that BPC to mitigate and prevent the reemergence of conflict may largely depend on factors outside U.S. control—in particular, other parties involved in those potential conflicts need to play a constructive (or at least, not destabilizing) role. Bosnia, arguably a successful BPC case, depended on the Bosnian Serbs remaining out of further conflict for the joint training of Federation forces to work.

In Egypt and Israel, many years of conflict mitigation were thrown into flux by significant changes in the strategic situation in the region starting with the 1979 Iranian Revolution and continuing through the Palestinian Intifada in Gaza to the Arab Spring and the election of the Muslim Brotherhood to power in Egypt and its subsequent replacement. While the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) has used U.S. military aid to function in what may be perceived as a deterrent role against both state and non-state threats, the strategic rationale behind U.S. military aid to Egypt appears to have changed in the years since the Camp David Accords. U.S. policy statements since the late 1970s have emphasized regional and domestic security in Egypt. In fact, the State

Department's background note on Egypt from 2012 stated "U.S. military cooperation has helped Egypt modernize its armed forces and strengthen regional security and stability."¹²²

After 1978 and Anwar Sadat's subsequent death, the U.S.-Egypt relationship through the Mubarak presidency may have slowly altered the U.S. strategic rationale of conflict prevention expressed in the post-Camp David Accords and may have evolved, perhaps even to the point of anti-Mubarak factions transforming the stated U.S. objective of regional security and Egyptian military modernization into a perceived *de facto* aim of keeping certain elements in power. These dynamics, in combination with factors inherent in Egyptian domestic politics, could have possibly contributed to the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood's influence in the first post-Mubarak elections. As such, the Egypt-Israel case likely diminishes in value in terms of understanding whether the United States successfully achieved its aims in conflict prevention following Camp David.

Rationale: BPC for Military Coalition Participation

Since World War II, the majority of U.S. military campaigns have been fought with coalition partners. Indeed, as was more recently demonstrated in Iraq and to some extent Afghanistan, the ability to draw upon a broader array of capable militaries to perform coalition operations may alleviate the burden levied upon U.S. forces. Furthermore, a broad and diverse array of coalition partners can help build international political legitimacy for military campaigns that do not have UN Security council mandates.¹²³ Yet many of the nations that signal interest in participating are unable to do so without significant external investments in the forms of training, equipping, logistics and sustainment. By compensating for shortfalls in partners' capabilities, the United States can simultaneously improve its partners' immediate operational effectiveness as well as their overall military capability. Building the military capability of partners, thereby enabling them to participate in coalition operations, can therefore enhance the United States' ability to achieve its strategic and military objectives.

Case Study: Vietnam and the "Many Flags" Initiative

Believing that a broad, international coalition to repel communist forces in Vietnam would help legitimize the effort—as well as galvanize international anti-communist support—the Lyndon Johnson Administration in 1964 initiated the "many flags" initiative.¹²⁴ At the outset, the United States concentrated on non-combat support, such as medical assistance, engineering, and police support. However, as the combat mission grew, so too did U.S. requests for combat-related support for South Vietnam. By 1969, more than 69,000 non-U.S. troops were in Vietnam, provided by the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Australia, and Thailand (by comparison, there were approximately half a million U.S. and 850,000 South Vietnamese troops).¹²⁵ The Philippines contributed a "civic action group" that focused on medical support and other enablers. Approximately 5,000 coalition troops died in Vietnam, the majority of them Korean.

Despite the Johnson's Administration's argument that repelling the North Vietnamese was critical to countering communist aggression, in terms of the numbers of flags in the coalition, participation was relatively scant compared with the Korean War. The Johnson Administration,

¹²² U.S. Department of State, "Egypt (03/19/12)," <http://www.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/egypt/196332.htm>.

¹²³ Many experts believe this is increasingly likely post-Libya, post-Crimea.

¹²⁴ President Lyndon Johnson, *The President's Press Conference*, 23 April, 1964, August 12, 2015, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26182>.

¹²⁵ Jonathan Coleman, "The Foreign Policy of the Johnson Administration," pp. 50-51.

therefore, considered using financial and military incentives to increase allied participation in the coalition. Financial rewards for the United Kingdom, Thailand, Korea, and Pakistan were all taken into consideration. Seoul requested "about \$600-\$700 million worth of cumshaw [gratuities or bribes]" to send one of its divisions to Vietnam.¹²⁶ Furthermore, the Johnson Administration apparently believed that the actual wages Filipino soldiers received from the United States while deployed to Vietnam constituted the real rationale for their participation.¹²⁷

Case Study: Coalition Participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom

In 2003, amid significant international controversy, the United States assembled an ad hoc coalition to oust Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. Four nations (the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Poland) composed the initial assault force; after cessation of major combat, the coalition swelled to 39 nations, including the United States.¹²⁸ Each nation contributed capabilities that were in line with their own comparative advantage; Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, and Moldova focused on explosive ordinance disposal, whereas El Salvador and the Republic of Korea focused on civilian-military cooperation.

In addition to the contributions coalition forces made to the operational and tactical environment in Iraq, their presence had obvious strategic implications that reached far beyond the theater of operations. Multinational operations strengthened and maintained long-standing alliances and reflected a general aura of international cooperation among U.S. allies. Georgia's decision to send troops to Iraq, for example, created strong ties with the United States and other Western allies, as did the significant contributions of other eastern European and former Communist Bloc nations. Finally, multinational operations helped improve interoperability between U.S. and coalition forces.¹²⁹

Yet this expansion of the coalition was by no means an easy logistical endeavor. Expeditionary military capabilities are expensive, and many nations simply do not, and will not, have the defense budgets to sustain operations outside their immediate regions. The Department of Defense therefore sought, and gained, approval in the FY2002 supplemental for funding to enable nations to participate in Operation Iraqi Freedom that otherwise could not.¹³⁰ By April 2007, the United States spent approximately \$1.5 billion to transport, sustain, and provide other services for military troops from 20 countries. Much of this assistance was allocated toward sustainment services such as food, supplies, and base operations services such as communications and equipment.¹³¹

As Operation Iraqi Freedom endured, and violence began to crescendo within Iraq, coalition partners began departing the theater. In early 2007, President Bush authorized a "surge" of forces

¹²⁶ Jonathan Colman and JJ Widen, "The coalition of the Semi-Willing: American Diplomacy and the Recruitment of Allies in Vietnam, 1964-1968," Working Papers in Military and International History (Manchester: Center for Contemporary History & Politics, European Studies Research Institute, 2008): p 5.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Stephen A. Carney, *Allied Participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom*, Center for Military History, United States Army, 2011, p. 3, September 20, 2015, http://www.history.army.mil/html/books/059/59-3-1/CMH_59-3-1.pdf.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ See (name redacted), CRS Report RL31829, Supplemental Appropriations FY2003: Iraq Conflict, Afghanistan, Global War on Terrorism, and Homeland Security, by (name redacted) and (name redacted), p. 20.

¹³¹ Statement of Joseph A. Christoff, *Stabilizing and Rebuilding Iraq: Coalition Support and International Donor Commitments*, Government Accountability Office, May 9, 2007, August 25, 2015, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/120/116563.pdf>.

to create a degree of stability while Iraqi forces gradually took on greater responsibility for security tasks. By the end of 2007, 15 nations had withdrawn their troops from Iraq.

Case Study: Coalition Participation in Operation Enduring Freedom/International Security Assistance Force

After initiating operations in Iraq in 2003, the United States soon found that continuing the same level of post-9/11 operations in Afghanistan would prove difficult. The United States therefore decided to maintain (although shrink) its counterterrorism and training mission, Operation Enduring Freedom. Concurrently, NATO agreed to assume responsibility for the International Security Assistance Force and expand its area of operations across all of Afghanistan. Securing coalition participation for the mission in Afghanistan was seen as essential while the United States focused on quelling an increasingly dangerous insurgency in Iraq. To enable allied and partner contributions of combat forces to Afghanistan, the United States helped deploy and sustain a number of countries' troops, and in some instances assisted with pre-deployment training. The United States also contributed medical enablers and helicopters to help allies in southern Afghanistan perform resupply operations. Eventually, the coalition grew to 52 nations at its peak.

Although the United States invested in their participation to increase the size of ISAF's combat presence, most coalition partners were not willing to assume the same degree of operational risk as the United States. Many nations placed "caveats" or restrictions on the use of their forces, thereby limiting the ability of theater commanders to employ troops as they saw fit.

Analysis

On balance, BPC to generate participation in U.S.-led military coalitions appears relatively effective. However, coalition participation does not necessarily equate to equal apportionment of military risk. Further, different nations participating in Afghanistan had different political priorities and strategic approaches, making it difficult to synchronize civilian and military activities across the Afghan theater. Therefore, while political goals (e.g., expanding international participation in a mission to increase its legitimacy) may be satisfied, doing so may come at the cost of operational effectiveness.¹³²

Rationale: BPC to Build Institutional and Interpersonal Linkages

The Department of Defense (DOD) routinely engages in various activities designed to strengthen partners while promoting U.S. military personnel's understanding of, and connections to, other countries. Many of these programs have been ongoing throughout the Cold War into the present day. Others were initiated after the 9/11 attacks to promote individual and institutional collaboration on counterterrorism issues specifically.

¹³² (name redacted), "Lessons in Coalition Warfare: Past, Present and Implications for the Future," *International Politics Reviews*, November 28, 2013, November 10, 2015, <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/ipr/journal/v1/n2/full/ipr20138a.html>. See also Nora Bensahel, *The Coalition Paradox: The Politics of Military Cooperation*, (Stanford: Stanford University), 2009.

In large part due to the military's experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, many DOD and Administration officials have further stressed the need to build linkages and partnerships for two primary reasons.

First, recent operations underscored an enduring requirement for soldiers to operate in cultural contexts unfamiliar to most U.S. military personnel and understand the local "human terrain" of the environments in which they operated. As the theory goes, building relationships with partners around the globe helps better prepare military forces to understand local and regional dynamics in the event of a crisis that might necessitate U.S. involvement. As former Chief of the Army Staff Raymond Odierno noted:

Before the most recent set of conflicts, it was generally believed that cultural awareness was only required in select Army units, such as Special Forces or Civil Affairs. Recent history has made clear that we need expanded levels of cultural and regional awareness in *all* Army units.¹³³

Second, the experiences of Iraq and Afghanistan underscored the complexities of prosecuting coalition warfare at strategic, operational, and sometimes tactical levels. Strengthening institutional and interpersonal linkages between U.S. military personnel and their counterparts in other nations can therefore bolster interoperability between the United States and its partners. Programs traditionally associated with this rationale include DOD's regional centers, multinational exercises, and the International Military Education and Training Program (IMET), among others. More recently, the U.S. Army has initiated a plan to align its force structure with different regions around the globe ("regionally aligned forces") to help accomplish these purposes.

Case Study: The Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (1995-Present)

As the Cold War ended and the "Asian tiger" economies of Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, and Hong Kong emerged, it quickly became clear that Asian security dynamics were also shifting. Administration and congressional leaders therefore argued that DOD needed an institution that could support United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) by providing innovative regional solutions to theater security challenges.¹³⁴ The Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) was therefore established in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1994, with an initial budget of \$3 million annually.¹³⁵ APCSS was designed along the lines of the DOD Marshall Regional Center in Europe that had been established several years prior as part of the U.S. response to the end of the Cold War. The APCSS is now one of five DOD regional centers.¹³⁶

¹³³ General Ray Odierno, Regionally Aligned Forces: A New Model for Building Partnerships, Army Live: The Official Blog of the United States Army, March 22, 2012, October 13, 2015, <http://armylive.dodlive.mil/index.php/2012/03/aligned-forces/>.

¹³⁴ Larry Hanauer, Stuart E. Johnson, Christopher Springer, Chaoling Feng, Michael J. McNerney, Stephanie Pezard and Shira Efron, *Evaluating the Impact of the Department of Defense Regional Centers for Security Studies*, (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 2014) p. 11.

¹³⁵ Figure is in 1994 dollars.

¹³⁶ Other Regional Centers include George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies (GCMC)—Garmisch, Germany, established in 1993; the William J. Perry Center for [Western] Hemispheric Defense Studies (WJPC)—Washington, DC, established in 1997; the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS)—Washington, DC, established in 1999; and Near East-South Asia Center for Strategic Studies (NESA)—Washington, DC, established in 2000.

According to the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), the purpose of the Regional Centers is to, "utilize unique academic forums to build strong, sustainable international networks of security leaders."¹³⁷ According to the RAND Corporation, regional centers—which include the APCSS—are a critical tool for the DOD to engage with nations and advance U.S. national objectives by

- exposing partner nation leaders to U.S. values and rule-of-law, governance, and policies;
- shaping partners' strategic thinking;
- nurturing relationships that facilitate U.S. access to the highest levels of partner nations' governments;
- building communities of interest among partner nation officials from across regions to encourage regional interaction and problem-solving;
- providing neutral venues for addressing regional conflicts; and
- offering one of the few security-related engagement tools for smaller countries that have limited military-to-military engagement with the United States.

Further, according to RAND, regional centers build partner capacity by

- imparting fundamental national security analysis skills to partner nations by addressing the strategic analytic skills needed to develop their own national capacities and interact more productively with the United States;
- helping build partner nation institutions, thereby improving the effectiveness of Combatant Command-led BPC initiatives, which tend to focus on operational training;
- developing future partner nation leaders, both civilian and military, by providing skills and information as well as exposure to democratic values; and
- promoting whole-of-government solutions to security issues by fostering multinational interagency partnerships that can, in turn, facilitate regional responses to transnational security challenges.

In addition to holding conferences and workshops on targeted issues, the centers hold between four and eight "executive development" courses each year (which require residency at regional centers), each course ranging from 1 to 10 weeks in duration. Governments from each regional center's area of responsibility are generally invited to send participants to each course. U.S. officials with regional responsibilities are also invited to participate. Congress appropriated \$55,223,000 toward the regional centers in FY2015; the Defense Security Cooperation Agency requested \$57,841,000 in FY2016.

As of May 12, 2015, the APCSS had trained some 8,500 persons—from over 100 countries—during its 190 workshops. The alumni network from its resident courses is approximately 9,500 strong, 266 of which have attained senior level positions within their respective governments.¹³⁸ In its FY2016 budget proposal, the APCSS highlighted its "Fellows Program," wherein resident course participants develop new initiatives to be implemented in their respective home countries:

¹³⁷ DSCA, "DOD Regional Centers," November 20, 2015, <http://www.dsca.mil/programs/dod-regional-centers>.

¹³⁸ Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies, *Fact Sheet: May 2014*, September 3, 2015, http://apcss.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/APCSSFactSheet_May14_2015.pdf.

For example, an earthquake preparedness and recovery awareness project initiated by a participant from Nepal recently received funding approval from the United Nations Development Program to renovate and retrofit 100 school buildings so that they are earthquake resistant.... Another project by a U.S. participant, focused on building senior leader consensus for greater gender inclusion in support of the Women, Peace and Security initiative, has generated such strong support for WPS objectives within U.S. Pacific Command that they will soon be added to the PACOM theater engagement plans.¹³⁹

Although the APCSS has created a forum for informal collaboration and exchange in a region with a dynamic security environment, determining these regional centers overall effectiveness has proven challenging. As the RAND study notes: "Though virtually all U.S. officials who interact with the centers assert that they are key to advancing DoD goals and objectives, neither the centers nor their stakeholders have been able to measure the extent to which they do so."¹⁴⁰ This may be due to the fact that developing appropriate metrics to understand relatively intangible outcomes is difficult.

Case Study: International Military Education and Training¹⁴¹

The International Military Education and Training (IMET) program was formally established in 1976 as part of a restructuring of the U.S. Foreign Military Sales program. IMET had its antecedents in legislation passed in 1949 that created the grant Military Assistance Program (MAP). IMET is intended to be a low-cost policy program to provide training in U.S. Department of Defense schools to predominantly military students from allied and friendly nations on a grant basis.

IMET participants are exposed to the U.S. professional military establishment and the American way of life, including democratic values, respect for internationally recognized human rights, and the belief in the rule of law. Students are also exposed to U.S. military procedures and the manner in which the military functions under civilian control. Through the IMET program, the United States seeks to influence students who may rise to positions of prominence in foreign governments, expose foreign students to a professional military in a democratic society, and professionalize foreign armed forces. It also seeks to strengthen regional relationships while enhancing the self-defense capabilities of U.S. friends and allies. Many nations participate in IMET, in part, to enhance their ability to effectively use the defense articles and services they obtain from the United States.

The foreign students participating in IMET must speak English and train to U.S. standards alongside their American counterparts. While the Secretary of State determines which countries will participate in IMET in a given year, the Department of Defense is responsible for executing the program. According to the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, IMET currently has the following strategic-level goals:

- train future leaders;
- create a better [individual] understanding of the United States;

¹³⁹ Department of Defense Office of the Comptroller, Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Estimates: Defense Security Cooperation Agency, February 2015, p. DSCA-439.

¹⁴⁰ Hanauer et al., p. iii.

¹⁴¹ Much of the material contained within this section, and in particular footnote 142, is derived from reports written by former CRS specialist Richard Grimmett.

- establish a rapport between U.S. military and the country's military to build future alliances; and
- enhance interoperability and capabilities for Joint Operations.

Over its history, IMET funds have been used, in some instances, to train individuals who have committed—or who went on to commit—human rights abuses.¹⁴² Congress has played an active role in increasing vetting requirements for prospective recipients of U.S. foreign assistance, both individuals and units, to help prevent aid being delivered to known human rights abusers (see text box below).

"Leahy Law" Human Rights Provisions

Congressional interest in the laws and processes involved in conditioning U.S. assistance to foreign security forces on human rights grounds has grown in recent years, especially as U.S. Administrations have increased emphasis on expanding U.S. partnerships and building partnership capacity with foreign military and other security forces. Congress has played an especially prominent role in initiating, amending, supporting with resources, and overseeing implementation of long-standing laws on human rights provisions affecting U.S. security assistance.

First sponsored in the late 1990s by Senator Patrick Leahy, the "Leahy laws" (sometimes referred to as the "Leahy amendments") are currently manifest in two places. One is Section 620M of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), as amended, which prohibits the furnishing of assistance authorized by the FAA and the Arms Export Control Act to any foreign security force unit where there is credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. The other provision, inserted annually in DOD appropriations legislation, for years prohibited the use of DOD funds to support any training program (as defined by DOD) involving members of a unit of foreign security or police force if the unit had committed a gross violation of human rights. For FY2014, the prohibition was expanded to also include "equipment, or other assistance."

Implementation of Leahy vetting involves a complex process in the State Department and U.S. embassies overseas that determines which foreign security individuals and units are eligible to receive U.S. assistance or training. Beginning in 2010, the State Department has used a computerized system called the International Vetting and Security Tracking (INVEST) system, which has facilitated a major increase in the number of individuals and units vetted (some 160,000 in FY2012). Congress supports Leahy vetting operations through a directed allocation of funds in State Department appropriations.

Source: CRS Report R43361, *"Leahy Law" Human Rights Provisions and Security Assistance: Issue Overview*, coordinated by (name redacted).

¹⁴²The School of the Americas, an institution established in 1946 to provide military training to personnel from South and Central America, became the focus of intense scrutiny as it was discovered that some of its alumni from Colombia, El Salvador, Peru, Guatemala, and Honduras committed egregious human rights violations up until the late 1980s. IMET funds were used in part to support their training. For example, with respect to El Salvador, 48 of 69 Salvadorian military members cited in the U.S. Truth Commission's report on El Salvador for involvement in human rights violations (including 19 of 27 military members implicated in the 1989 murder of six Jesuit Priests) were SoA alumni. Concerns over the School intensified when DoD made excerpts from its Spanish-language training manuals publicly available; contained therein were instructions on forms of coercion against insurgents including execution, torture, and blackmail. The School of the Americas subsequently earned the nickname "school for dictators," because of the high number of former Latin American dictators who attended the school.

Increased Congressional scrutiny over the SoA in the 1990s led to the introduction of stricter vetting criteria for participants, including ensuring that no human rights violators would participate. The SoA also expanded upon its training for human rights abuse prevention, established a board of advisors of human rights advocates, and, as part of E-IMET, began including courses for civilian officials on the creation and maintenance of effective military judicial systems and military codes of conduct. In 2001, the School was renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. The WHISC has an annual budget of approximately \$11.5 million in FY 2015 (of which approximately \$2.8 million was derived from IMET and other State-Department led security assistance programs). See Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, "Frequently Asked Questions," November 10, 2015, <http://www.benning.army.mil/tenant/whinsec/faq.html#>.

On balance, IMET is generally viewed favorably by Administration officials and participants. Increased scrutiny and vetting of IMET participants—and educational programs supported by IMET—have largely helped prevent further instances (like that of the School of the Americas, see footnote 141) from reoccurring. IMET is a vehicle through which U.S. military personnel routinely engage and build relationships with their counterparts in foreign countries. As a RAND report detailing the application of IMET in Thailand and the Philippines notes:

IMET training is, as the U.S. Ambassador to Thailand pointed out, a means of exposing foreign military students to the United States, thereby providing the United States with improved military-to-military relations and avenues of influence. It is only secondarily an assistance program. Through the IMET program, thousands of U.S.-trained military students have risen to positions of prominence in their own countries. In many case they have then afforded the United States foreign policy opportunities it may otherwise not have had.¹⁴³

Analysis

On balance, the programs surveyed that enable the Department of Defense to build institutional and interpersonal linkages suggest that BPC is effective to support this rationale. Indeed, not only have informal linkages between U.S. and partner nation personnel been formed, some participants in these kinds of BPC programs have gone on to take key positions within the national security architectures of their home countries. This, in turn, may have given the United States more avenues of interaction with other governments than it might otherwise have had, although it is important to note that these BPC they do not exist in isolation—other variables may also contribute to the development bilateral relationships. In evaluating the effectiveness of these programs, it is important to note that while they appear to achieve the goal of promoting institutional and interpersonal connectivity, those connections can, but do not necessarily, lead to closer bilateral relations. Nor does creating further mechanisms for interaction translate to a greater degree of strategic alignment between the United States and participating nations. Indeed, assessing these programs according to those criteria may be inappropriate, as it goes beyond the scope of their institutional purpose and mandate.

Rationale: BPC for Alliance Building

One key rationale for U.S. military engagement with foreign counterparts pertains to shaping their security institutions for the purposes of creating stable, likeminded partners and allies. Thus, the United States engages with the security institutions of other governments to increase the number of partners with comparable political and military objectives that it may call upon to help manage various security challenges. This military engagement may, at least in theory, “spillover” and enable cooperation on a variety of other, non-military issues.¹⁴⁴

Case Study: BPC in Greece to Support NATO (1947-1952)

In the early Cold War period, the United States undertook a number of programs intended to improve military and governance capabilities in what would become NATO and, in a more ad hoc fashion, in Asia leading into and through the Vietnam War. The threat from the USSR and the

¹⁴³ Jennifer Morrison Taw, “Thailand and the Philippines” *Case Studies in U.S. IMET and its Role in Internal Defense and Development*, (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 1993), p.xiv.

¹⁴⁴ Glenn Snyder, “Alliance Politics,” Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.

concept of collective defense was explicitly stated as a rationale for the Marshall Plan, mutual defense treaties, and attempts both within NATO and with potential allies to improve specifically military capabilities. BPC was, in these instances, used to enable states to become stable allies in the emerging Cold War security order.

One case to consider is the U.S. role in Greece in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

In the Second World War's aftermath, U.S. officials became increasingly concerned about the Greek government's ability to prevail against communist forces in the Greek civil war. Outgoing Secretary of State Dean Acheson told the new Secretary of State, George Marshall, that "unless urgent and immediate support is given to Greece, it seems probable that the Greek Government will be overthrown" and succeeded by a left-leaning regime, eventually resulting in the "loss of the whole Near and Middle East."¹⁴⁵ President Truman announced Greece and Turkey as the initial recipients of what became known as the "Truman Doctrine" in a speech before a Joint Session of Congress on March 12, 1947:

The very existence of the Greek state is today threatened by the terrorist activities of several thousand armed men, led by Communists, who defy the government's authority at a number of points, particularly along the northern boundaries. A Commission appointed by the United Nations Security Council is at present investigating disturbed conditions in northern Greece and alleged border violations along the frontier between Greece on the one hand and Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia on the other. Meanwhile, the Greek Government is unable to cope with the situation. The Greek army is small and poorly equipped. It needs supplies and equipment if it is to restore the authority of the government throughout Greek territory. Greece must have assistance if it is to become a self-supporting and self-respecting democracy.

The United States must supply that assistance. We have already extended to Greece certain types of relief and economic aid but these are inadequate.¹⁴⁶

On May 22, 1947, Congress passed "An Act to Provide For Assistance to Greece and Turkey" (P.L. 80-75), which authorized the President to provide aid:

—by detailing a limited number of member of the military services of the United States to assist those countries, in an advisory capacity only ...

—by providing for (A) the transfer to, and procurement for my manufacture or otherwise and the transfer to, those countries of any articles, services, and information, and (B) the instruction and training of personnel of those countries.¹⁴⁷

The State Department subsequently established the American Mission for Aid to Greece (AMAG), which was to oversee the entirety of the U.S. effort authorized under P.L. 80-75. The War Department created the United States Army Group-Greece, subordinate to AMAG, which oversaw a total of more than \$171 million (approximately \$1.87 billion in 2015 dollars) of military aid transferred to Greece from March to December 1947. This aid included hospitals, trucks, rifles, and 75 combat and cargo aircraft. The Army's mission subsequently expanded to helping the Greek General Staff organize 20 battalions of 500 men each into a new National Defense Corps, which were widely unsuccessful at a tactical level because the Greek National Army (GNA) established these new militia units in areas bereft of supporting national troops.

¹⁴⁵ Lawrence S. Wittner, "American Policy toward Greece," in John O. Iatrides, ed., *Greece in the 1940s: A Nation in Crisis* (Hanover, NH, and London: University Press of New England, 1981), p. 234.

¹⁴⁶ President Harry S. Truman, Speech before a Joint Session of Congress, March 12, 1947. Transcript available at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp.

¹⁴⁷ P.L. 75, 80th Congress.

Eventually, U.S. military forces would be training extensive sections of the Greek National Armed Forces and even lead Greek troops into battle against leftist insurgents.¹⁴⁸

In December 1947, the Joint Chiefs of Staff created the Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group-Greece, which would eventually lead the U.S. advisory effort. The number of U.S. advisors grew from less than 50 to more than 200 by the early part of 1948. The group had five tasks: (1) monitoring the military operations, (2) formulating plans for the employment and coordination of the Armed Forces of Greece, (3) advising the U.S. Joint Chiefs and the Chief of the AMAG on how to use the Greek Military, (4) providing operational advice, and (5) ensuring that "operational returns are commensurate with the aid furnished."¹⁴⁹ Not only would the U.S. advisors provide training and advice, but they would also take active leadership of Greek National Army units in battle.

The U.S. Army's Combined Arms Center published a historical analysis of the effort that made a favorable assessment of the role of U.S. advisors in Greece:

The U.S. mission in Greece contributed to the decisive nationalist victory over the communists through its material and operational assistance. Through its operational assistance, JUSMAPG dramatically improved the nationalists' combat efficiency. Despite these successes, there were two negative long-term outcomes for the GNA from the Greek Civil War. First, the Greek Expeditionary Force for the Korean War demonstrated that the GNA had not institutionalized the improvements in combat leadership. Second, the GNA became increasingly active politically and executed a coup d'état in 1967. Nevertheless, JUSMAPG's efforts improved Greek combat leadership sufficiently to achieve victory by August 1949. This improvement, the communist commitment to conventional operations, and the U.S. material support resulted in the massive attrition of communist forces that led to the final decisive battle.¹⁵⁰

At the same time, the United States was negotiating with other European Allies the foundations of NATO, agreed in the Washington Treaty of 1949. Almost all countries that signed the Washington Treaty had, by 1949, concluded economic and security assistance agreements with the United States. Underlying all was the emerging concept of collective defense, codified in Article 5 of the treaty:

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.¹⁵¹

Greece, along with Turkey, acceded to NATO and became a party to the Washington Treaty on February 18, 1952. In accepting the instruments of accession, U.S. Acting Secretary of State James E. Webb said, "The devotion which these two countries have manifested to the principle of collective security is well known to us all. I am confident that through their accession to the Treaty a significant contribution will be made to the greater effectiveness of the collective defense

¹⁴⁸ Major William D. Harris, Jr., *Instilling Aggressiveness: U.S. Advisors and Greek Combat Leadership in the Greek Civil War 1947-1949* (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2013).

¹⁴⁹ Harris, p. 49.

¹⁵⁰ Harris, p. 101.

¹⁵¹ The North Atlantic Treaty, April 4, 1949, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/stock_publications/20120822_nato_treaty_en_light_2009.pdf.

system which has been created under the Treaty.”¹⁵² In this case, developing stable, pro-Western security institutions in Greece arguably created a stable, likeminded partner and ally to strengthen NATO against the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.

Case Study: BPC in Korea to Support the United Nations (1948-1950)

A second case of building partner militaries under a rationale of alliance building involved the newly created Republic of Korea (South Korea) in 1948-1950. The Korean Peninsula had been divided since 1945, in what was intended to be a temporary administrative arrangement, when Soviet troops accepted the surrender of Japanese troops north of the 38th parallel while U.S. troops received the surrender south of the line. The Truman Administration sought to use the newly formed United Nations to negotiate a unified Korea, but the Soviet Union blocked UN-observed elections in the north and supported Kim Il Sung as the leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). In the south, the United States supported Syngman Rhee as the elected leader of the Republic of Korea.

In implementing a UN-agreed withdrawal of U.S. and Soviet military forces from the peninsula in 1948, the United States signed an agreement with the Republic of Korea specifying that “the Commanding General, United States Army Forces in Korea, agrees that, pursuant to directives from his government and within his capabilities, he will continue to organize, train and equip the Security Forces of the Republic of Korea now in being, provided that his obligation shall cease upon the completion of withdrawal from Korea of forces under his command.”¹⁵³ This agreement allowed General Hodge, commander of U.S. forces in Korea, to establish what would become in 1949 the Korea Military Advisory Group (KMAC).

The KMAC, originally with 482 military advisors, helped train the newly organized Republic of Korea Army (ROKA) in the use of light weapons in artillery. Over time, KMAC advisors were dispersed among the ROKA division and involved establishing the ROK military schools system. After the North Korean invasion of June 25, 1950, the KMAC grew to a wartime strength of 1,308 men and provided advisors to the ROKA down to battalion level.¹⁵⁴ The U.S. Army's history of KMAC offers a positive assessment of achieving its objectives:

In the year before the invasion KMAC made a beginning. It improved and strengthened the ROK Army's organization and disposition and established an integrated training program that brought most units up through company-level exercises. By setting up military schools, KMAC started to raise the quality and competence of ROKA leadership. And some progress had been made in the KMAC effort to tie in the ROKA logistical support with the country's economy. The individual KMAC effort during the prewar period on the whole was excellent despite the obstacles besetting the advisors. They labored long and hard with the materials at hand to lay a firm foundation, and it was to their credit that the ROK Army was even 50 percent combat effective when the war broke out.... During the last two years of the war the ROK Army steadily improved and assumed an increasingly important role in the defense of its country. Despite several lapses, the over-all performance of the ROK Army was encouraging and showed the

¹⁵² Department of State, Press Release No. 124, February 18, 1952.

¹⁵³ U.S. Department of State, *Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States of America 1776-1949, Volume 9* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 478.

¹⁵⁴ Spencer Tucker, ed, *Encyclopedia of the Korean War: A Political, Social and Military History, Vol. 1* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2000), pp. 350-352.

efforts KMAG had made to increase its efficiency and competence. Time, hard work, patience, and determination all contributed toward the fashioning of a better ROK Army, and KMAG could understandably be proud of its part in this development.¹⁵⁵

The success of the ROKA was, to the Truman Administration, a key test of the ability of the United Nations to influence international security. It was able to internationalize the military effort in support of the ROK under a UN aegis by going to the UN Security Council in June 1950, a time when the Soviet Union was boycotting the council over the issue of Chinese representation. With the Soviets absent, the Security Council passed a resolution condemning the DPRK attack and demanding a withdrawal from the south. The UN also sent forces from 15 nations to the peninsula to stop the communist advance.¹⁵⁶ In this rationale, the strength of ROK forces and the ROK government was critical in maintaining a military coalition on the ground and supporting the role of the UN in its first major test in responding to a world crisis. Creating a stable, likeminded South Korea through working to help ROKA units defend against DPRK attack could be seen as also strengthening the initial U.S. vision for the United Nations as an alliance to prevent and mitigate state conflicts.

Case Study: BPC to Build Alliances in the Former Warsaw Pact (1992-2010)

U.S. and NATO initiatives to build the capacity of former Warsaw Pact nations to effectively share the post-Cold War security burden were detailed earlier in this report (see "Case Study: U.S. Support to the Former Warsaw Pact (1994-Present)" section above). However, given the scope and breadth of these programs, which supported a wide variety of nations, it is important to note that another key rationale for Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Warsaw Initiative was to build some of these former Warsaw Pact countries into stable NATO allies. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, it was by no means assured that the former Warsaw Pact countries would become partners or allies—rather than adversaries—in the post-Cold War European security order. The PfP and Warsaw Initiative, executed in tandem, resulted in the accession of 12 former Warsaw Pact nations into NATO.

While PfP and the Warsaw Initiative achieved their strategic-level aims, it is worth noting that in the aggregate, these Euro-Atlantic partnership programs have also created new strategic challenges for the United States and NATO. Russia has argued that the Warsaw Initiative and PfP were fundamentally destabilizing to the European security order, as they targeted nations within Moscow's "natural" sphere of influence.¹⁵⁷ Further, states such as Georgia and Ukraine hope that their PfP participation will enable them to become full NATO members, thereby gaining access to the alliance's territorial and collective defense provisions, which the United States ultimately underwrites. It remains to be seen whether these Ukrainian and Georgian goals are realistic in light of Russian aggression. It does appear, however, that these partners may have hoped—if not planned for—greater U.S. and NATO assistance during their respective conflicts with Russia (and/or Russian proxies). Thus, while the initial strategic-level aims of these alliance building

¹⁵⁵ Major Robert K. Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and in War* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 1988), pp. 187-188.

¹⁵⁶ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, "The Korean War, 1950-1953," <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/korean-war-2>.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with President Vladimir Putin, *Il Corriere della Serra*, September 23, 2015, http://www.corriere.it/english/15_giugno_07/vladimir-putin-interview-to-the-italian-newspaper-corriere-sera-44c5a66c-0d12-11e5-8612-1eda5b996824.shtml?refresh_ce-cp.

programs appear to have been accomplished, they have produced other longer-term strategic challenges with which the United States must grapple.

Analysis

The cases of Greece, South Korea, and the former Warsaw Pact suggest that BPC can support the rationale of alliance building. The case studies also suggest that geopolitics play an important role in the success of these BPC activities. In the Greek and South Korean cases, the Soviet Union assisted those armed groups that the United States opposed. This assistance may have provided, given the overlay of the Cold War, incentives for both the United States and the recipient countries to develop unified approaches to accomplishing military and political goals, thereby strengthening both the nascent NATO and U.N. organizations. The case of building former Warsaw Pact nations into stable NATO allies suggests that BPC to support alliance building may be done outside the context of an overwhelming threat. The international community also played a significant role in this transition, much as it did in the cases of South Korea and Greece. Finally, common to all these cases is that the partners in question were politically recognized, legitimate actors, making it somewhat easier to translate BPC assistance into durable institutions.

Study Results

Successive U.S. administrations have argued that building partner capacity—using security cooperation, security assistance and other tools and authorities at its disposal—is a key, if not preferred strategy for spreading stability in fragile states. As Secretary of Defense Robert Gates once stated, “the most likely and lethal threats – an American city poisoned or reduced to rubble – will likely emanate from fractured or failing states.” He further noted that building the capability and capacity of partners to manage their own security is “in many ways the ideological and security challenge of our time.”¹⁵⁸

This is a main reason why the United States has consistently prioritized the allocation of resources toward building the security capability and capacity of weak and failing states. BPC has, in fact, become a strategic cornerstone of the U.S. approach to dealing with a wide variety of conflicts and security challenges—from Latin America to the Middle East to Asia. As the logic goes, if the United States enables these countries—or other local actors—to manage their own security, the threats to the United States that might emanate from their territories—such as terrorists, narco-traffickers, or radical jihadists—might be eliminated, thus reducing the risk that the United States might have to intervene directly. Ultimately, the application of BPC strategies assumes that strengthening these local actors will help advance the United States’ ability to advance its own objectives, and that these partnership strategies will help establish more U.S. partners in managing global security.

While the theory appears uncontroversial, its fundamental assumption—that engaging in BPC is a viable manner through which the United States can achieve its objectives—has remained a relatively untested proposition. As such, Congress today operates from a limited foundation when trying to evaluate the efficacy and efficiency of current BPC efforts. In order to begin addressing this analytic gap, CRS therefore developed a list of strategic rationales the United States has articulated when beginning BPC programs, and then analyzed whether programs were effective

¹⁵⁸ Robert M. Gates, “Nixon Center (Security Assistance),” speech delivered at the Nixon Center, Washington, DC, February 24, 2010, <http://archive.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1425>.

relative to those aims. The results of this CRS study, depicted in **Figure 1**, are elaborated below, by rationale.

Effectiveness of BPC by Strategic Rationale

- **War termination.** In the cases explored, the BPC efforts that appeared to be the least effective were those associated with victory in war/war termination or, in other words, those efforts wherein the United States based its exit strategy from a conflict on growing capable, durable local forces. Cases CRS examined included Vietnam, Iraq from 2003-2010, and Afghanistan from 2001-2015. All of these efforts were resource intensive both in terms of blood and treasure expended by the United States. In two of three of these, security capability that the United States constructed in the partner nation did not prove durable in the long term. The third, Afghanistan, is an effort still ongoing, and therefore difficult to judge.
- **Managing regional security challenges.** These are cases wherein the United States built the capacity of other states in order to empower them to manage internal or regional security challenges with minimal U.S. involvement. The track record of these efforts is mixed, and has at times led to unintended consequences that create long-term strategic challenges. For example, U.S. security assistance to Pakistan in order to advance counter-terrorism objectives has not produced local security or many improvements in the bilateral relationship. Real debates exist as to whether U.S. support to AMISOM inflamed rather than mitigated the conflict in Somalia. In the arguably most successful case—U.S. support to the former members of the Warsaw Pact—many maintain that NATO allies failed to invest in the defense capabilities needed to effectively manage security challenges on the European periphery
- **Indirectly supporting a party to a conflict.** Three instances were examined in which the United States trained and equipped proxies in order to assist a conflict to a party—sometimes governments, sometimes opposition forces—with minimal U.S. involvement in order to build a post-war advantageous situation to the United States. In all surveyed instances—U.S. assistance to Colombia from 2000-present, U.S. assistance to the Philippines in 1947-53, and U.S. assistance to the Afghans from 1980-1988—the United States succeeded in the short term. With the exception of Colombia, however, these programs failed to produce capable partners or allies in the long term.
- **Conflict mitigation.** These are efforts wherein the United States engages in a BPC effort to strengthen local security forces post-conflict in order to help ensure a peace accord is durable. The train and equip effort to create a balance of power between Bosnian Federation forces and Bosnian Serbs was arguably successful, but depended upon the abstention of Serbian forces from conflict. In Egypt and Israel, many years of conflict mitigation were thrown into flux by significant changes in the strategic situation in the region starting with the 1979 Iranian Revolution and continuing through the Palestinian Intifada in Gaza to the Arab Spring and the election of the Muslim Brotherhood to power in Egypt. While the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) has used U.S. military aid to function in what may be perceived as a deterrent role against both state and non-state threats, the strategic rationale behind

U.S. military aid to Egypt appears to have changed in the years since the Camp David Accords. After 1978 and Anwar Sadat's subsequent death, the U.S.-Egypt relationship through the Mubarak presidency may have slowly altered the U.S. strategic rationale of conflict prevention expressed in the post-Camp David Accords and may have evolved, perhaps even to the point of anti-Mubarak factions transforming the U.S. stated objective of regional security and Egyptian military modernization into a perceived aim of keeping certain Egyptian political elements in power. Such an aim, in combination with factors inherent in Egyptian domestic politics, could have possibly contributed to the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood's influence in the first post-Mubarak elections.

- **Enhance military coalition participation.** Using training, equipment and sustainment programs to secure the participation of allies and partners in military coalitions has been used several times over the course of the post-World War II period. While these efforts have resulted in greater international participation in U.S.-led coalitions, they also create significant operational burdens on U.S. military forces. In the cases of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom/ISAF in Afghanistan, building, maintaining, coordinating and synchronizing the contributions of coalition partners became a major focus of operational effort in its own right. Still, BPC does appear to be an effective mechanism to expand military coalition participation.
- **Building interpersonal and institutional linkages.** The United States engages in significant efforts to help ensure U.S. forces' familiarity with other nation's militaries and cultures. These are also programs designed to help individuals in other nations security establishments become familiar with the United States, the rule of law, democratic values and so on. Cases surveyed in this area include the DOD's regional centers program, and the International Military Education and Training program. In this area, the results are generally perceived as positive, and require very little investment relative to the other BPC efforts listed in this survey.
- **Alliance building.** There have been several BPC efforts the United States has engaged in post-World War II in order to transition a country into becoming a stable ally. The cases surveyed—Greece, South Korea, and the former Warsaw Pact—suggest that BPC can be successfully employed toward alliance building. However, in the South Korean and Greek cases, the Soviet Union was actively supporting the opposing side for its own alliance building purposes. That overwhelming threat helped incentivize partner nations to become allies of the United States. Further, building South Korea and Greece were seen to be concurrently building the nascent United Nations and NATO, creating significant multilateral stakes in the success of those efforts. With respect to the post-Cold War world, the desire to expand and strengthen the NATO-led European security architecture led to a number of states being invited to join NATO.

Explaining BPC Success and Failures

Given the complexity of BPC programs, as well as the complexity of formulating and advancing U.S. objectives when designing BPC programs, this report is intended to be a starting point for

further analysis. Still, the 20 case studies explored above suggest that at a strategic level, BPC has a mixed track record when it comes to accomplishing stated U.S. objectives. Further, the analysis suggests that the effectiveness of U.S. BPC efforts may be related to the overall strategic objective the United States seeks to accomplish. Yet it would be a mistake to suggest that BPC programs were the sole reason that the United States did or did not accomplish its objectives; to link a particular BPC effort to the success or failure of an overall foreign policy objective is not the point of this study. Rather, the question is whether BPC is more or less likely to be an effective means of achieving U.S. national goals, an important consideration for Congress as it evaluates BPC programs. In the cases explored wherein BPC proved less effective, it does not appear that BPC programs and efforts contributed to the accomplishment of stated U.S. strategic objectives.

There is considerable debate in the policy and scholarly communities about why BPC efforts have a mixed track record. The debate falls into two primary schools of thought: those who blame BPC failures on execution issues, and those who argue that, from a strategic perspective, BPC will never work. These results of this study suggest that neither explanation is fully accurate. Applied toward some rationales, BPC appears to be an effective means to accomplish stated objectives. Applied toward other objectives, BPC programs have not meaningfully delivered intended strategic effects. Complicating the analysis, execution challenges often plagued those cases wherein BPC proved less effective, making it difficult to fully assess whether failures were due to BPC programs being an inappropriate means to accomplish stated objectives, or whether BPC programs and activities would have succeeded were it not for these execution challenges.

This CRS study sought to understand whether BPC worked rather than why, specifically, it did or did not. Even so, in case study research several themes and issues recurred. In this context, it is worth noting several findings of a RAND study focusing on effective execution of BPC programs.¹⁵⁹ One key finding of that report suggests that in order for BPC to be effective, U.S. efforts must be consistent—both within DOD, within the interagency, and ideally with other members of the international community. Further, BPC efforts must be implemented consistently over longer time frames (years or decades rather than months) to demonstrate significant results. BPC cannot be a quick fix solution. Perhaps most importantly, BPC success depends on a number of factors largely outside of U.S. control. These include whether or not a partner's interests align with U.S. interests in the short, medium and long term; whether a local partner is a legitimate institution of governance; whether a partner nation can "absorb" the assistance provided and translate it into durable institutions; and whether a partner is a passive or active recipient of U.S. assistance—demonstrated by investing its own resources into the BPC effort.

The point about legitimate governance is an important one, and may help explain some of the significant variation between the outcomes of BPC efforts, although further research is warranted on this point. One apparent commonality between most of the successful cases—across the spectrum of rationales—is that supported partners demonstrated political cohesion and capability sufficient to exercising legitimate governance in their respective territories. The instances in which BPC efforts were least successful relative to overall strategic aims tended to occur in fragile, weak, or war-torn states that lacked the capacity for legitimate governance. U.S. proxy support to the Philippines and Colombia appears to be an exception to this. Despite the fact that their respective countries were by most accounts weak and failing as the United States began its support, leaders in both countries instituted significant reforms and bolstered their own ability to govern. This, in turn, eroded political support for opposition forces. Still, the specific role that

¹⁵⁹ Paul et al., 2013.

legitimate governance plays in facilitating BPC effectiveness remains unclear. Does having a legitimate partner help translate into greater strategic alignment with the United States? Or does the lack of a legitimate partner exponentially exacerbate execution issues, making it inherently more difficult to achieve strategic objectives? These are questions that deserve greater analytic scrutiny.

At a strategic level, this survey of BPC cases suggests that building partner capacity programs do not necessarily translate into meaningful strategic-level partnerships for the United States. In those instances where such partnerships were forged into alliances, or alliance-like relationships, there appears to have been significant alignment between U.S. and partner interests at the strategic level—as was seen in all three alliance-building cases. The United States was able to take advantage of these alignments and deepen its connections with partners. Further, the international political context may have a significant bearing on whether a BPC effort is likely to prove effective for alliance building.

Finally, the case studies suggest that BPC efforts may produce unintended consequences that create different, albeit formidable, strategic challenges for the United States. These consequences may be in part due to the fact that the concept of a “partner” remains somewhat undefined, as does the United States’ long-term obligations to partners. While the United States may intend for BPC to enable a “hands-off,” indirect approach toward accomplishing its objectives, partners may have a wholly different perspective, and one that likely takes a longer view on the implications of U.S. partnership and assistance. Receiving BPC assistance from the United States makes a de facto political statement, both internally to domestic political stakeholders and internationally to other countries with which a given partner might align. Military strategists often concede that when conducting battle, the enemy gets a vote. When building partner capacity, the partner gets a vote; what the partner does, once its capacity has been built, may have longer-term implications for the United States. All of which suggests that as the United States engages in BPC programs, it also assumes long-term responsibility.

Potential Questions and Issues for Congress

The priority being placed by successive U.S. administrations on building partner capacity, combined with the apparent intellectual and programmatic ambiguity of BPC programs as currently formulated and executed, altogether suggest that significant work might be done to clarify BPC’s purpose, roles, and efficacy relative to strategic objectives and execution. As a starting point, Congress may ask the following questions as it scrutinizes current and future BPC programs and activities (broadly defined):

- Better understanding the strategic context in which BPC programs are being applied is important to understanding whether BPC is likely to prove an effective means toward stated ends. Under what conditions is BPC, broadly defined, likely to achieve success? How can Congress, in its oversight function, assess likely success for BPC?
- BPC and security cooperation activities are manifesting across a broad range of DOD’s programs and operations. Should Congress likewise take a broader view of BPC and Security Cooperation in the policy provisions of the NDAA? How can the United States build a more holistic view of BPC and Security Cooperation that captures the broad range of DOD activities in these areas? Related, what is DOD actually spending on BPC activities, broadly defined? Can Congress obtain reliable information on these programs and their strategic effects?

- Is DOD's current strategic-level approach to BPC consistent with the current National Security Strategy (NSS) and National Military Strategy (NMS)? Are the assumptions regarding security cooperation and partnerships in both the NSS and NMS appropriate, given BPC's mixed track record? Are the resources for BPC and related efforts sufficient to accomplish stated objectives? What are the force structure implications if DOD continues to reorient itself to perform BPC tasks?
- It appears that some BPC programs have been formulated and executed without an appropriate appreciation for the longer term risks and unintended consequences they can create. Does BPC produce a meaningful return on investment? Are the risks and unintended consequences produced as a result of BPC efforts worth the investment? How can DOD and the U.S. government better account for those risks, and manage them over time? Related, does BPC create de facto security obligations to partners? What happens if and when the United States fails to live up to the expectations of partner states?
- How is DOD defining its strategic (rather than programmatic) end states for BPC? Should Congress influence these strategies through legislation or oversight? How can DOD tell whether it is achieving its objectives? Should strategic, versus programmatic, measures of effectiveness be developed? If so, would those be better developed by the executive branch, or an external organization that does not have USG bureaucratic interests in the discussion?
- Given the paucity of literature on the subject, significantly more work could be done to explore and explain BPC successes and failures. Is BPC's mixed track record due to poor execution of programs? Or are BPC efforts being applied toward strategic ends that are inappropriate? Are DOD security cooperation programs and authorities delivering the right kinds of assistance?
- Building partner capacity can result in better trained and equipped partners with interests that do not necessarily align with those of the United States. What criteria does the United States use in selecting partners? Are partners on the ground legitimate and capable of building and sustaining durable security institutions? How can the United States better account for, and manage, divergence of interests, if at all?
- The international security environment is becoming increasingly complex. If fiscal resources continue to shrink for DOD programs and operations, how should DOD prioritize BPC relative to other missions?

Conclusion

The increasing priority that successive U.S. administrations have placed on Building Partner Capacity programs and activities prompted CRS to try to understand the efficacy of these programs. Accordingly, this study sought to understand what, exactly, constitutes DOD's Building Partner Capacity programs, and whether they proved an effective means toward advancing U.S. strategic objectives. The results varied depending upon the strategic rationale in question. Ultimately, the study raised more questions than answers and should therefore be used as a starting point for further debate and analysis on the subject. There are no clear-cut answers at present. Considerably more intellectual spade work could be undertaken to clarify the conceptual underpinnings of BPC efforts, and whether, and when, BPC is an appropriate tool for advancing U.S. strategic goals.

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