

An Expanded Mandate for Peace Building

The State Department Role in Peace Diplomacy, Reconstruction, and Stabilization

A Report of the CSIS Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project

AUTHOR
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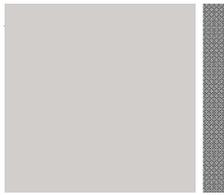
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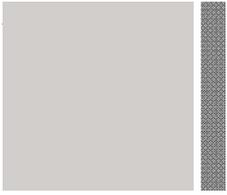
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CONTENTS

Foreword	v
The Role of Diplomacy in Peace Building	2
The Secretary of State: Locus of Authority in Peace-Building Diplomacy	3
Multi-Bureau Engagements in Stabilization and Reconstruction	5
Geographic Bureaus: Linchpins of Peace-Building Diplomacy	10
Functional Bureaus: Interagency Coordination and Operations	14
Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS)	18
Strengthening State Department Effectiveness in Peace Building, Reconstruction, and Stabilization	38
About the Author	43



FOREWORD

The past few years have seen a number of new initiatives within the U.S. government that address the growing challenges of building peace. The CSIS Post-Conflict Reconstruction (PCR) Project and other partner organizations have played an active role in developing these initiatives and have published a number of reports and books that analyze different aspects of the reform process. Yet, despite the expanding resource base, none of these publications has addressed the changes underway within the U.S. government. We were therefore delighted when Ambassador Dane Smith, an old friend and former colleague with significant experience in the numerous conflicts in West Africa in the 1990s, approached us for support in preparing a book on the topic.

The resulting volume, *U.S. Peacefare: Organizing American Peace-Building Operations*, will be published later this year. The book is an invaluable survey of the range of U.S. agencies involved in peace building, including the National Security Council, the Department of Defense, and the independent U.S. Institute of Peace, in addition to the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). *U.S. Peacefare* gets into the weeds of the budgeting, authorization, and appropriation process related to peace building, but it also makes informed judgments about the effectiveness of each agency and the interagency coordination under the George W. Bush administration. It concludes by offering a comprehensive set of recommendations for structural reform.

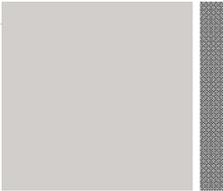
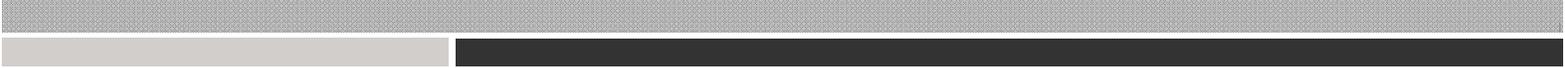
Because of the currency of the debate on the architecture and operations of America's involvement in fragile states, conflict stabilization missions, and peace building—notably in Afghanistan and Iraq—we are eager to share two sections from Dane's forthcoming book as PCR reports.

The first, *An Expanded Mandate for Peace Building: The State Department Role in Peace Diplomacy, Reconstruction, and Stabilization*, offers a highly detailed account of the inner workings at State and explores the evolution of the peace-building machinery and capacity. The second, *Foreign Assistance for Peace: The U.S. Agency for International Development*, is an equally in-depth look at the development of civilian operational responses within USAID.

There is growing realization that a damaging imbalance exists in American statecraft. Over the previous two decades the balance between the U.S. civilian agencies and the military has been tilting ever more toward the latter. At the same time, we are nearing a point where important decisions will have to be made on the future direction of U.S. foreign policy. A central part of arriving at these decisions will be the discussion on the proper role of the State Department and USAID in peace building.

The PCR Project is dedicated to raising the level of international public debate on a range of conflict-related concerns, from early warning and conflict prevention to rebuilding shattered societies. Our commitment is to advance peaceful, democratic change, with an emphasis on locally led reform. As you will see in these two chapters, Dane Smith's book will make a valuable contribution.

*Frederick Barton
Karin von Hippel
Codirectors, PCR Project
April 2009*



AN EXPANDED MANDATE FOR PEACE BUILDING: THE
STATE DEPARTMENT ROLE IN PEACE DIPLOMACY,
RECONSTRUCTION, AND STABILIZATION

Dane F. Smith Jr.

“The civilian foreign affairs agencies should be better organized for overseas crisis response, and the secretary of state should play a lead role in this effort. . . .The agencies must be capable and flexible enough to provide a robust partner to the military when necessary or to lead a crisis response effort when appropriate.”¹—Senator Richard Lugar

President George W. Bush liked to describe his presidential model as that of a CEO who delegated and then decided. Based on that model, he planned to rely on the Cabinet departments to take the lead on foreign policy and national security. In the arena of diplomatic conflict management the State Department was to be in charge. Where military operations were planned, Defense was to be responsible. Under the shock of 9/11 Bush worked with the principals of the National Security Council (NSC)—vice president, secretaries of state and defense, national security adviser, and CIA director—to come up with a response targeting Afghanistan. On Iraq, however, he turned solely to Defense for planning and execution. The stabilization and reconstruction debacle that followed initial military success prompted far-reaching changes, formally speaking, in the administration’s approach to conflict. The secretary of state received the mandate to lead coordination of interagency reconstruction efforts through the mechanism of a coordinator for reconstruction and stabilization. In the Department of Defense (DOD), “stability operations,” to be carried out collaboratively with the civilian agencies, was elevated in importance to the level of combat operations.

This first section of a two-part report examines the evolution of peace building in the State Department. It begins with a sketch of the role of diplomacy in peace building. It reviews the leadership role of the secretary of state. It proceeds to an examination of multi-bureau involvement in the reconstruction and stabilization efforts in Afghanistan and Iran. It assesses the central role of individual geographic bureaus in particular conflicts and the special peace-building tasks of several functional bureaus. The bulk of the section is devoted to a description and evaluation of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. It concludes that

¹ From his remarks introducing on February 25, 2004, the *Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act of 2004*, <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/F?r108:1:./temp/~r1086eugMz:e42188>.

traditional peace-building diplomacy, led by the geographic bureaus, has been uneasily and incompletely yoked with the work of the Coordinator's Office and advances suggestions for reform.

The second section of the report, published separately, looks at the peace-building function at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

With the exception of Iraq, the report is concerned with management of political conflicts within states and not with inter-state conflicts.²

The Role of Diplomacy in Peace Building

The State Department is the nerve center of diplomacy in the U.S. government. Diplomatic action does take place in the White House, particularly on the part of the president and some senior National Security Council staff members. It also takes place exceptionally at the policy levels of the Pentagon and USAID, as well as of other agencies. But State is in charge of the diplomatic function.

Diplomacy today involves three basic elements:

- Communicating with foreign governments and international organizations
- Planning and implementing foreign policy
- Foreign operations

Communication is the traditional task of diplomacy: talking and listening to foreign officials, reporting back home the interaction and the local context, and negotiating with other governments. American diplomats don't normally make high-level policy, but they do advise on policy, carry out policy and engage in policy planning. In recent decades, American diplomats have also increasingly been involved in operations (i.e. running systems, programs and projects).³

Diplomatic communication is a key ingredient in official peace building. At the outset, it is normally the only ingredient. Diplomacy begins as soon as the U.S. government takes cognizance of a foreign conflict. The United States conveys to the government where the conflict is taking place its concern about the impact of the violence. It may seek additional information about that government's approach and usually urges a peaceful solution. Diplomatic communication is normally undertaken by the U.S. embassy under instructions from the secretary of state or senior State Department officials to whom the secretary has delegated that responsibility.

² It treats U.S. action in Afghanistan strategically as intervention in the ongoing civil war between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. See below.

³ See Harry W. Kopp and Charles A. Gillespie's very useful discussion of "what diplomats do" in *Career Diplomacy: Life and Work in the U.S. Foreign Service* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 58-63.

As peace building gains momentum in a particular case, diplomacy has three basic functions:

1. To create—and maintain—a consensus on the approach to peace building in any given case. Does the government of the country in which the conflict is taking place accept the concept of outside counsel and support or does it insist on treating the conflict as a matter solely of domestic jurisdiction? Are other governments in the region concerned about the violence? What do they propose to do? Is there interest in action in the UN General Assembly or the Security Council? Which government or governments should take the lead? How should the approach be adjusted to changes on the ground? Consensus is usually forged through diplomatic conversations between Washington and the capitals concerned.
2. To plan the vehicle for peace building. It was diplomatic planning which put together NATO's role in Bosnia and Kosovo. It was diplomatic planning which fashioned a "coalition of the willing" to intervene in Iraq, when the idea of a second Security Council resolution was dropped in March 2003. Diplomatic planning set in motion sponsorship of negotiations between the government of Sudan and the Southern People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).
3. To create and coordinate a program of post-conflict (sometimes mid-conflict) stabilization and reconstruction. Multiple projects may be created, ranging from reintegration of former combatants into their communities to repair of local infrastructure and preparations for elections. The process normally requires careful diplomatic coordination with host country officials, international organizations and other governments involved.

The Secretary of State: Locus of Authority in Peace-Building Diplomacy

The secretary of state is the chief diplomat of the United States, but has multiple additional roles: senior foreign policy adviser to the president, CEO of the State Department, and chief defender of administration foreign policy before the Congress. As chief diplomat the secretary is constantly in communication with heads of government and foreign ministers of states with which the United States has relations, often dealing with questions of peace and conflict.

The secretary's active involvement in peace-building activities is intermittent and highly selective. Involvement often reflects the interests of the president. After 9/11 Bush assigned to Secretary of State Colin Powell the diplomatic tasks required for an effective response to al Qaeda's attack. For Powell that meant immediately exerting diplomatic pressures on Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf to side with the United States against al Qaeda and the Taliban. With respect to Iraq, Powell may have been a "reluctant warrior" but he won the initial debate over whether to seek a UN Security Council resolution, and it was he who presented the case, at a dramatic Security

Council session, that Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction and failure to disclose them made military intervention essential to protect the American people.⁴

White House interest in the Sudan also accounted for the periodic active engagement of Secretaries Powell and Condoleezza Rice. The president's intense desire to find a solution to the Darfur crisis in western Sudan was a factor in Powell's unprecedented statement to the Congress that genocide was taking place after he visited Darfur in 2004.⁵ Condoleezza Rice's visit to Sudan in 2005 reflected the president's interest, more than personal commitment to finding a solution.⁶

High-level peace-building actions can reflect the special concerns of the secretary. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright pushed Kosovo to the top of the U.S. diplomatic agenda in 1997. Secretary Rice seized the Israel-Palestine issue upon shifting from the NSC to the State Department. In the wake of the Iraq imbroglio, she wanted to help put the Middle East "back together in a different configuration...that lays a foundation [for peace]."⁷ Rice became the chief negotiator in the Lebanon crisis, traveling to Beirut and then Israel. She was the central figure in arranging the Annapolis Conference of November 2007. It brought together Prime Ministers Abbas and Olmert to launch formal, but ultimately unsuccessful talks aimed at a peace treaty.⁸

Often the secretary is able to hand off high-profile peace-building tasks to other "seventh floor principals."⁹ In 2005 Condoleezza Rice turned over the Sudan portfolio to Deputy Secretary Robert Zoellick, who became, in effect, special envoy for Darfur and played an active role in the signature of the ill-starred 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement.¹⁰ Even though the Bush administration

⁴ Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 148-153, 221-227, 309-312.

⁵ Testimony Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, September 9, 2004.

⁶ Marcus Mabry suggests that Rice was basically going through the motions of humanitarian interest, but "the Administration sought no greater involvement in the humanitarian crisis." *Twice as Good: Condoleezza Rice and Her Path to Power* (New York: Modern Times, 2007), 266. The quotation disregards President Bush's clear personal interest in the crisis and his frustration about the inability of his administration to find a solution.

⁷ Rice told her biographers that when Bush asked her to become secretary of state, she asked whether he would support creation of a Palestinian state and received an affirmative reply. Marcus Mabry, *Twice as Good*, 240; Glenn Kessler, *The Confidante: Condoleezza Rice and the Creation of the Bush Legacy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007), 23-24.

⁸ Numerous observers have commented that the Annapolis Conference would not have occurred without Rice's efforts. Helene Cooper, "Rice's Way: Restraint in Quest of Peace," *New York Times*, November 29, 2007.

⁹ The offices of the secretary and other senior-most State officials, along with the State Department Operations Center, are located on the seventh floor of the State Department.

¹⁰ The DPA was never implemented basically because only one of the Darfur rebel groups signed it. Zoellick reportedly did not feel he was a success in the role. Richard S. Williamson, special Sudan envoy in 2008, has described the DPA as "an embarrassment to the United States." Interview with Williamson, November 20, 2008. One biographer suggests that in 2007 Rice effectively turned the Iraq issue over to Deputy Secretary John Negroponte, former ambassador to that country. Elisabeth Bumiller, *Condoleezza Rice: An American*

renounced the use of special presidential envoys in its initial presidential directive, the secretary of state frequently appointed special envoys. The activities of special envoys for Middle East security (James Jones) and Gaza disengagement (James Wolfensohn), Kosovo (Frank Wisner), Somalia (John Yates), and Northern Ireland (Richard Haass, Mitchell Reiss, and Paula Dobrianksy) have been more associated with the secretary of state than with the White House.¹¹

In December 2005 the secretary of state formally acquired a specific peace-building mandate. National Security Presidential Directive 44 designated the secretary as the leader and coordinator for all U.S. government agencies in reconstruction and stabilization. It gave her responsibility to develop programs and strategies and to coordinate them among the agencies and with the international community. The directive then diluted that leadership authority by stating that “the secretary of state shall coordinate such efforts with the secretary of defense to ensure harmonization with any planned or ongoing U.S. military operations.” Other agencies were required to coordinate with State, but State and Defense “will integrate stabilization and reconstruction contingency plans with military contingency plans when relevant and appropriate.” The NSPD thus gave the secretary of state substantial authority with respect to other civilian agencies, but left her to battle with the defense secretary over control of key policy elements. The document indicated that she would implement her new authority through the coordinator for reconstruction and stabilization, a function analyzed in detail below.¹²

Multi-Bureau Engagements in Stabilization and Reconstruction

Decisions by the president to commit the armed forces to regime change and/or intervention in a civil conflict generate State Department involvement at many levels. Afghanistan and Iraq provide important illustrations.

Afghanistan

The Bush administration’s strategic response to 9/11—to intervene in the still flickering civil war in Afghanistan on the side of the Northern Alliance and dissident Pashtun leaders—immediately spawned a range of diplomatic tasks for the State Department. Among the first was securing international support through the United Nations, the function of the Bureau of International

Life (New York: Random House, 2007), 304. That point was disputed by the Iraq Coordinator’s Office (interview with Barbara Stephenson, February 1, 2008).

¹¹An important exception was the decision to use special envoys for Sudan for all but the period when Zoellick had the portfolio. The president made the decision to make the appointments, and envoys John Danforth, Andrew Natsios, and Richard Williamson all assert that they reported to the president, not the secretary. Interviews with each on November 13, 2008, April 28, 2008, and November 20, 2008 respectively.

¹²The White House, National Security Presidential Directive 44, “Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization,” December 5, 2005.

Organization Affairs. On September 12, at Washington's behest, the Security Council passed a resolution condemning the terrorist attacks, affirming the U.S. right of self-defense and calling on all states to bring the perpetrators to justice. A second Security Council resolution at the end of the month termed the attacks a threat to international peace. A third expressed "support [for] the efforts of the Afghan people to replace the Taliban regime," in effect endorsing U.S. armed intervention.¹³

A second task was concluding arrangements with neighboring countries to facilitate U.S. military logistics in the theater. Teams led by senior U.S. diplomats negotiated memoranda of understanding to set up support facilities—including temporary basing, accords to permit refueling of aircraft, and overflight agreements with the different Central Asian republics and Russia.¹⁴

A third task was centralizing the management of the diplomacy of intervention, stabilization and reconstruction within the State Department. In October 2001, Secretary Powell appointed veteran diplomat James Dobbins, as "envoy to the Afghan opposition." He and UN special representative Lakhdar Brahimi convened the Northern Alliance and other opposition elements in Bonn to create an interim authority led by Hamid Karzai. The Security Council authorized an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to reestablish a government and help reconstruct the economy.¹⁵ Dobbins enjoyed considerable autonomy in his diplomatic role, but laments he was unable to influence the Defense Department on post-conflict reconstruction. The result was that ISAF was restricted to Kabul and could not play a wider peace-keeping role. In the face of Defense Department resistance to a broad-gauged reconstruction program, Dobbins and U.S. military commanders eventually came up with the idea of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). PRTs were groups of up to 80 persons, basically made up of military personnel with a small army civil affairs section and a handful of State and USAID officials. According to Dobbins, the military-dominated PRTs were "an admission of failure to achieve post-conflict security" and a "second-best approach" to stabilization and reconstruction.¹⁶

The position of a special adviser for Afghanistan with international responsibilities lapsed with the departure of Dobbins in early 2002. Instead, a coordinator for Afghanistan, sited in the Bureau of Southern and Central Asian Affairs (SCA), was appointed to work the interagency process for the State Department. Five senior officials served in that position 2002-2008, the last two with the rank of deputy assistant secretary of state.¹⁷ The coordinators for Afghanistan have not viewed

¹³ Resolution 1368 of 9/12/01, Resolution 1373 of 9/28/01 and Resolution 1378 of 11/14/01. With U.S. support, Secretary General Kofi Annan appointed Lakhdar Brahimi as his special representative for Afghanistan.

¹⁴ Interview with A. Elizabeth Jones, former EUR assistant secretary, November 9, 2007.

¹⁵ Res. 1386 of December 20, 2002.

¹⁶ Interview with Dobbins, December 1, 2006.

¹⁷ David T. Johnson, 2002-2003; William B. Taylor Jr., 2003-2004; Maureen Quinn, 2004-2006; John A. Gastright, 2006-2007; and Patrick Moon, 2008. The coordinators did not have the title of special envoy.

themselves as managers or arbiters of the policy process, but instead as the day-to-day coordinators and integrators of the various elements of policy and resources among the agencies, with particular attention to the priorities of the State Department and the ambassador in Kabul.

Critics in the State Department have charged that Afghanistan did not receive serious and sustained direction from the secretary of state during the Bush administration and charge that there was no unified civilian command structure on Afghanistan. Some decisions were taken by the secretary of state, others by the national security adviser. The absence of sustained leadership complicated the task of the coordinators, who were constrained by being placed in a State Department geographic bureau. From that location they have had limited leverage to muscle their agenda through other State Department bureaus or other agencies such as USAID.

Iraq

From 2002 to 2008 the State Department struggled for influence on Iraq. National Security Presidential Directive 24 of January 20, 2003 gave responsibility for post-conflict Iraq not to the State Department but to Defense. Powell did not contest the decision, noting that it followed the model of postwar Germany and Japan. He reasoned that only Defense would have the people and funds to carry it out. However, he did envisage an important role for the State Department—and particularly the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) with its expertise on the Arab world. He sent to the Pentagon the State Department’s Future of Iraq study, along with the names of some 75 State Department Middle East experts who could help with stabilization and reconstruction.¹⁸ The Future of Iraq study, launched a few weeks after 9/11, assembled for nine months more than 200 Iraqi exiles to strategize on a range of reconstruction topics ranging from humanitarian assistance and economic revival to democracy and governance.¹⁹ The voluminous report provided myriad useful details and identified key potential problems of stabilization. However, it was not crafted into the kind of operational plan favored by military planners and was largely ignored by the Defense Department.

The Pentagon’s treatment of the roster of experts proposed by State for the reconstruction team also created friction. Rumsfeld personally rejected two heading the list: Thomas Warrick, who had led the Future of Iraq project, and Meghan O’Sullivan, a highly regarded member of State’s Policy Planning Staff. Vice President Cheney’s staff uncovered statements and writings attributed to Warrick critical of the administration’s approach to Iraq. O’Sullivan’s writings at the Brookings Institution before 9/11 had opposed military intervention against Saddam Hussein. Rumsfeld’s

Ronald E. Neumann, ambassador to Afghanistan, 2005-2007, told the author that when approached for the ambassador position, he responded that he would not serve, if a special envoy was named. Interview December 18, 2007.

¹⁸ Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 282-283.

¹⁹ See George Packer, *The Assassins Gate: America in Iraq* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 66; National Security Archive, “New State Department Releases on the ‘Future of Iraq’ Project,” September 1, 2006, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB198/index.htm>.

office also rejected seven more State representatives Powell had asked to be assigned to the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Affairs (ORHA), the DOD unit assigned responsibility for post-conflict reconstruction. The rebuff led to a bitter dispute between the two cabinet secretaries. Ultimately, O’Sullivan (but not Warrick) was permitted to join the ORHA team, along with five of the other seven on Powell’s list.²⁰ In the end, senior positions in ORHA were fairly evenly divided among State (humanitarian affairs), USAID (reconstruction), and Defense (civil affairs and governance).²¹ Other State Department officers were assigned as senior advisers to the Iraqi Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Minerals and Industry, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, or as coordinators of specific sectors of the country.²² ORHA soon disappeared and was replaced by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA).²³

The U.S. administrator of Iraq and CPA chief from May 2003 to June 2004, Ambassador L. Paul (Jerry) Bremer, had spent a career in the Foreign Service, including an assignment as ambassador to the Netherlands, but he did not get the job through the recommendation of the State Department.²⁴ The CPA was created and funded as a division of the Department of Defense. Bremer’s first hires were two retired ambassadors, including Hume Horan, the leading Foreign Service Arabist of his generation. Senior CPA staff were largely State, USAID, and Treasury Department.²⁵ Nevertheless, numerous Bush administration loyalists were recruited for the CPA out of an office in the Pentagon, some almost completely lacking international experience.

²⁰ Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 283-284.

²¹ Respectively George Ward, Lew Lucke, and Michael Mobbs, former law partner of Under Secretary of Defense Douglas Feith.

²² David Dunford, Robin Raphel, Timothy M. Carney, and John W. Limbert respectively. Barbara Bodine was administrator of central Iraq, including Baghdad. Raphel later replaced Mobbs as head of civil administration and governance. See Packer, *The Assassins’ Gate*, 120-135.

²³ There was no announcement of the establishment of the CPA or of the elimination of ORHA—or of the resignation of ORHA chief, Gen. Jay Garner. L. Elaine Halchin, *The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA): Origin, Characteristics, and Institutional Authorities* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, April 29, 2004).

²⁴ Bremer was named by President Bush as special envoy to Iraq on May 6 and designated by DOD as administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority on May 13. On his retirement from the Foreign Service, he became managing director of Kissinger Associates and developed ties with the conservative Heritage Foundation. He was CEO of Marsh Crisis Consulting, a risk and insurance services subsidiary of Marsh & McLennan Companies, when he was contacted by Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz and Vice Presidential Chief of Staff I. Lewis (“Scooter”) Libby about the job.

²⁵ Departing ORHA director Garner, according to Bob Woodward, thought that “though Rumsfeld had been eager to ensure that the Defense Department controlled the postwar effort, almost everyone in a position of power within Bremer’s new CPA came from the State Department.” Bob Woodward, *State of Denial* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), 208. Bremer writes, “The CPA almost certainly had more junior, mid-grade and senior Foreign Service officers and retired ambassadors working in Iraq than

Perhaps the most controversial was former New York police commissioner Bernard Kerik, who took charge of police training for a few months before departing abruptly.²⁶

In November 2003, the administration decided to end the CPA early. The CPA and the Iraqi Governing Council signed an agreement designating June 2004 as the date for the official transfer of authority. Secretary Powell asked Ambassador Francis Ricciardone Jr. to become the State Department Iraq transition coordinator, working in tandem with a Defense Department coordinator. A multisector transition team was created under the two coordinators.²⁷ When Ambassador Bremer left Baghdad in June, the State Department assumed the lead role in representing and managing U.S. interests in Iraq, working through its embassy, reopened under the leadership of Ambassador John Negroponte. The embassy, unlike the modest unit closed down by Washington in 1990 after Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, was relocated in the highly fortified Green Zone and became the largest American diplomatic post in the world.

In March 2005, Secretary Rice, newly arrived at State, appointed Richard Jones, former ambassador to Kuwait and briefly a deputy to Bremer, as senior adviser to the secretary and coordinator for Iraq (S/I). Jones's mandate was "to develop, coordinate and lead implementation of policy on Iraq," chairing an interagency steering group. The appointment was aimed at ratcheting up the State Department's capacity to influence policy and its implementation. Two other coordinators followed Jones—James Jeffrey, who then moved to the second position at the NSC, and David Satterfield. The coordinator has had a small office, ranging from three to five persons, formally part of the Office of the Secretary of State. The work of the office and the division of labor with the Office of Iraqi Affairs in the Bureau of Near Eastern (NEA/I) has been ad hoc. As of early 2008, for example, the coordinator focused on the internal politics of Iraq. His deputy concentrated on the civilian budget for Iraq and the work of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams. A third officer worked on other politico-military issues. NEA/I was divided into three "pillars"—political, politico-military, and economic. The coordinator had the closest relationship with the ambassador in Baghdad.²⁸ NEA/I was closest to the political section at the embassy in

anywhere else but the State Department itself." L. Paul Bremer, *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), 187.

²⁶ Another was the replacement of a senior USAID official, Frederick M. Burkle Jr., a physician and professor at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health with an international reputation on disaster response, serving as senior adviser to the Ministry of Health, by James Haveman, a community health leader from Michigan who had directed a Christian adoption agency. Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Ties to GOP Trumped Know-How among Staff Sent to Rebuild Iraq: Early U.S. Missteps in the Green Zone," *Washington Post*, September 17, 2006.

²⁷ Marc Grossman, under secretary of state for political affairs, "The Imminent Transfer of Sovereignty in Iraq," Testimony to the House International Relations Committee, May 13, 2004, <http://www.state.gov/p/us/rm/32467.htm>.

²⁸ Deputy Coordinator Barbara Stephenson had primary contact with the Iraqi minister of provincial affairs.

Baghdad. The S/I relationship with NEA/I has been carefully managed under a kind of “board of directors,” comprising the coordinator, the NEA deputy assistant secretary charged with Iraq, and the NEA/I director.

In 2007, the coordinator’s office was heavily engaged in moving forward the civilian “surge,” accompanying the dispatch of five additional military brigades to Iraq. The president’s speech presenting “a new way forward” in Iraq called for doubling the PRTs so that they might really influence stabilization and reconstruction at the local level. Secretary Rice insisted on State leadership of the effort. S/I chaired the PRT working group, made up of representatives from the Defense and Commerce Departments and the Office of Provincial Affairs at the embassy in Baghdad. The Working Group in turn ran separate subgroups on recruiting, training, funding and logistics. State took pride in recruiting 300 officers for new PRTs during that year.²⁹

Geographic Bureaus: Linchpins of Peace-Building Diplomacy

In the normal course of events, the secretary’s involvement in peace building arises from decisions generated from lower levels of the State Department. The secretary’s engagement and ratification of such decisions stem less from her role as chief diplomat than from being State Department CEO, presiding over its numerous geographic and functional bureaus.

Headed by assistant secretaries of state, the geographic bureaus—Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Eurasia, Near East, South and Central Asia, Western Hemisphere—are the engines of most U.S. peace-building diplomacy. This traditional role is based essentially on their geographical expertise.³⁰ Information on and current experience with a particular country is centralized within these bureaus, organized into offices that group a number of countries as “desks.”³¹ If civil conflict breaks out overseas, the U.S. embassy reports developments to relevant agencies in Washington, nearby U.S. embassies, and the concerned military combatant command. However, it is a small group of State Department officers, likely including the desk officer, the country director, a deputy assistant secretary of state, and perhaps the assistant secretary, who decide how the State Department and the embassy should react. These officials normally take into account the recommendations of the U.S. ambassador, who is on site and therefore hopefully well placed to understand the developing crisis.

The following cases illustrate two different modes through which the geographic bureaus respond to internal conflict overseas.

²⁹ Interview with Barbara Stephenson, February 1, 2008.

³⁰ See John H. Esterline and Robert B. Black, *Inside Foreign Policy: The Department of State’s Political System and Its Subsystems* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Mayfield, 1975), 47. Their comments about the role of the geographic bureaus are generally still applicable today.

³¹ The exceptions are the Offices of Russian Affairs and Chinese Affairs, which involve only one country.

Bureau of African Affairs (AF): Democratic Republic of the Congo

In 1997, insurgent leader Laurent Kabila came to power with the support of the Tutsi-led Rwandan government, after the fall of long-time president Mobutu Sese-Seko. The Tutsis had taken power in Rwanda when they broke the back of the 1994 genocide campaign. They wanted to keep under control the Interahamwe Hutu militia which had fled Rwanda into the Congo. After a year Kabila ordered his backers to leave. That precipitated a regional donnybrook when Rwanda and Uganda attacked Kabila, and Zimbabwe and Angola defended him. In 2001, Kabila was assassinated and replaced by his son Joseph. The change in leadership led to several years of negotiations under African auspices and a spate of signed agreements, but war continued, along with blatant exploitation of the Congo's mineral wealth by its neighbors. An important destabilizing element was poisonous relations among Kinshasa, Kigali, and Kampala. The United Nations deployed a peacekeeping force (UN Mission in the Congo [MONUC]) beginning in 1999, but it was not very effective. An estimated 4 million died in the Eastern Congo alone between 1998 and 2003, the vast majority from combat-related malnutrition and disease.

The Bush administration did not play an active diplomatic role. Washington quietly supported South African diplomatic leadership to bring the Congolese factions to a peaceful settlement and confined itself to dispatching humanitarian aid.³²

In late 2003, a new deputy assistant secretary of state in the African Bureau, Donald Yamamoto, visited the region and received requests from Kabila, Rwandan president Paul Kagame, and Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni for U.S. assistance in ending the Congo crisis. Yamamoto recommended that the U.S. host a meeting of the three. The idea initially had little support from skeptical Foreign Service Officers, but found favor at the Africa Directorate of the National Security Council, which had been advocating a more active U.S. policy. Defense was neutral because no U.S. military resources were at stake. Eventually, AF supported the idea, and Secretary of State Powell approved support for convening what came to be known as the Tripartite Joint Commission, linking the three governments. It met for the first time in May 2004 at the ministerial level. The tension and animosity that marked the initial meetings gradually dissipated.³³ In 2005, Burundi joined the group, retitled as the Tripartite Plus Joint Commission. In addition to diplomatic support, the United States funded the creation of and training for an "analysis fusion cell" bringing together intelligence officers from the four countries to exchange

³² The Lusaka Agreement was concluded in August 1999. After a series of failed meetings in 2001 at different sites, under the mediation of former Botswana president Ketumile Masire, the South Africans sponsored a series of negotiations in 2002-2003 promoting the "Congolese National Dialogue" in Sun City, South Africa. These discussions resulted in the Agreement on the Transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which created a transitional constitution, recognized Joseph Kabila as transitional president, and brought the other factions into the government. It did not essentially change the problem of the Interahamwe and Rwandan intervention in Eastern Congo to control that group.

³³ Interview with Donald Y. Yamamoto, October 2, 2006.

information on “negative forces”—the various militia groups roiling the eastern Congo.³⁴ The commission process reduced considerably, but did not entirely eliminate the threat of a new Rwandan intervention in the eastern Congo.

UN operations strengthened, including MONUC, as the international community gained confidence from the tripartite process.³⁵ Subsiding cross-border tensions and massive UN electoral assistance set the stage for the generally successful elections held in July 2006. After the elections the commission continued its work.³⁶ In December 2007, Museveni, Kagame, Burundian president Nkurunziza, and the Congolese minister of state for the interior, representing Kabila, met with Secretary of State Rice in Ethiopia. The meeting reinforced the commission’s commitment to implement existing agreements. Just as importantly, it confirmed high-level U.S. engagement with the Congo peace process, an engagement forged by the geographic bureau in alliance with its NSC counterpart.

Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs (EUR): Nagorno-Karabakh

The collapse of the Soviet Union left the successor states with a group of territorial conflicts: Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Nagorno-Karabakh.³⁷ Nagorno-Karabakh is a former Soviet oblast (province) of Armenian speakers that voted in 1988 to secede from Azerbaijan and join Armenia. The resulting war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which lasted until 1994, was the bloodiest conflict emerging from the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) attempted to deal with these disputes, sometimes called “frozen conflicts,” because of their intractability. For the United States, Nagorno-Karabakh took priority because of a strong domestic Armenian lobby and the interest of U.S. oil companies in gaining access to Azerbaijani oil and, more generally, to the vast oil reserves of the Caspian

³⁴ Christine A. Terada, “U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Discusses Meeting of Joint Commission,” ReliefWeb.int, November 8, 2005.

³⁵ The appointment of William L. Swing, a former U.S. ambassador to the Congo, as the special representative of UN secretary general Kofi Annan led to strengthened UN and MONUC performance, aided at critical points by special French forces. On Swing’s role, see Philip Roessler and John Prendergast, “Democratic Republic of the Congo,” in *Twenty-First-Century Peace Operations*, ed. William J. Durch (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2006), 287.

³⁶ In 2005, the United States actually proposed deactivating the commission but was dissuaded by the parties and interested European states. Under the auspices of the commission, Rwanda and Congo signed an agreement in November 2007 to end threats to peace and stability in both countries and the region. Kigali agreed to submit a list of those accused of orchestrating the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and believed to be in the Congo; Kinshasa promised to prepare a detailed plan to disarm the Rwandan Hutu rebels in the eastern Congo. Apparent progress toward that goal was finally made in early 2009, when President Kabila invited Rwandan troops to enter the Congo and join Congolese troops in combating the Hutu rebels.

³⁷ Transnistria, a strip of land populated by Russian speakers but falling within Moldova, declared its independence in 1990 with the objective of joining Russia. Abkhazia and South Ossetia are separatist regions of Georgia; the latter became the theater of the brief Russia-Georgia war of 2008.

Basin. The United States became cochair, along with France and Russia, of the OSCE's Minsk Group, set up in 1992 to deal with the crisis.

In 1997, the Clinton administration organized itself to play a more active role. It announced a policy to promote political and economic reform and reduce regional conflicts, while reinforcing energy security and exploiting U.S. commercial opportunities. It appointed both a negotiator for Nagorno-Karabakh and newly independent states regional problems and a separate senior adviser for Caspian energy diplomacy. Both had ambassadorial rank, reported respectively to EUR and the Bureau of Economic, Energy and Business Affairs (EB), but worked in tandem.³⁸

The Bush administration inherited a set of negotiations under the auspices of the Minsk Group that brought the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to Key West, Florida, in early April 2001. Secretary Powell chaired the meeting, and President Bush met with the two leaders. Although American officials characterized the talks as making progress, there was little actual movement. Later in 2001, the Bush administration appointed its own negotiator for Nagorno-Karabakh and Eurasian conflicts (Rudolf Perina) and senior adviser for Caspian Basin energy diplomacy (Steven R. Mann). In 2004, both positions were combined in Steven Mann, and EUR became responsible for both issues. The major responsibility of the Negotiator has been to cochair meetings of the Minsk Group. Mann and the other OSCE negotiators nearly succeeded in bringing the parties to agreement in a 2006 meeting. Peace-building efforts for Nagorno-Karabakh, as well as those for Georgia and Transnistria, have remained an exclusively State Department concern and, with the exception of limited EB involvement, a monopoly of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.³⁹

Although State's geographic bureaus are naturally equipped to take the lead in peace-building diplomacy, they do not always do so effectively. Leaders and their staff may overlook key factors in a conflict. They may misjudge the capacity of the local government or rebellious movements. They may exercise bad judgment in proposing a U.S. response, sometimes ignoring cogent dissenting views. The diplomacy of peace building is a necessarily imperfect art, but artistry can be improved by training. Officers in geographic bureaus working on conflict rarely receive training in conflict assessment or management, unless they have a personal interest. Likewise, senior officers selected as ambassadors, or deputy chiefs of mission, or special envoys working on conflicts do not normally go through any kind of formal training on conflict management. They are usually picked for their expertise on the country or region and possibly for previous success in negotiation. The situation reflects the propensity of the Department of State for "on-the-job" training for its political officers. Secretary of State Powell has been quoted to the effect that

³⁸ Fiona Hill, "Une stratégie incertaine: la politique des Etats-Unis dans le Caucase et en Asie centrale depuis 1991," *Politique étrangère* 66, no. 1 (February 2001).

³⁹ Responsibility for Caspian Energy diplomacy was subsequently split off from Steven Mann and divided among up to six different officials at the end of the Bush 43 administration. Mann remained Eurasian Energy coordinator.

Foreign Service Officers are better educated than military officers at the beginning of their careers, but military officers are better educated at retirement. The Diplomatic Readiness Initiative to expand the Foreign Service by more than 1,000 did increase training by 25 percent between 2000 and 2004 but did not focus particularly on political training and even less on conflict.⁴⁰ It was not until the creation of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization in 2004 that a set of courses was developed at the Foreign Service Institute on conflict assessment and management. Even then, those enrolled were largely representatives of that office and the Active and Standby Response Components that emerged from it.⁴¹

Functional Bureaus: Interagency Coordination and Operations

In addition to the geographic bureaus, the State Department has functional bureaus that carry out specialized tasks in peace building. We look briefly at three.⁴²

Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO): UN Liaison

The Bureau of International Organization Affairs has basic responsibility for the diplomacy of the United States with the United Nations and its specialized agencies. IO's position relative to the UN organizations in New York, Geneva, Vienna, and elsewhere is analogous to a geographic bureau's relationship with the capitals in its region. IO gets drawn into peace-building diplomacy in the articulation of U.S. positions on a given international conflict in the General Assembly and the Security Council. If the United States decides to take a lead role in shaping the international

⁴⁰ Kopp and Gillespie, *Career Diplomacy*, 32-33. As Kopp and Gillespie point out, a key reason for the State Department's failure to match the military in training for its personnel is that the numbers of FSOs relative to jobs is too small to create a sufficient "float" to enable its personnel to take regular time for training.

⁴¹ As of the beginning of 2009, the FSI Web site mentioned training in "foreign affairs tradecraft" to include area and cultural studies, consular affairs, information technology, resource management, security, economics, public diplomacy, political reporting, and leadership but without mention of conflict. Only when the reader pursues the question into the course catalog do courses for "Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation" emerge.

⁴² Considerations of space preclude treatment of the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), which enjoys a generally harmonious relationship with other bureaus involved in peace building. PRM manages refugee protection programs funded by the United States. Most of this funding is allocated to support persons fleeing states afflicted by civil conflict. An approximate value of annual refugee funding devoted to support for peace building and stabilization is \$700 million, coming from the Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA), for ongoing refugee crises, and U.S. Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund (ERMA) for unforeseen crises. PRM does not operate refugee camps or provide aid directly to refugees, but works through the UN High Commission for Refugees, other international organizations, and nongovernment organizations. Voluntary refugee repatriation is a major part of post-conflict reconstruction programs.

response to the conflict, it will seek the agreement of other member states and the UN Secretariat for a proposed course of action. Measures short of the dispatch of peace-keeping forces usually involve consultations with the UN Department of Political Affairs, and often the secretary general, to work out agreement on a general course of action. The United States might promote, for example, the appointment of a special representative of the secretary general or a visit to the country by the under secretary for political affairs or even the secretary general himself.

When the issue becomes of sufficient moment for consideration of a UN peace-keeping mission, consultations intensify with the leading countries of the affected region and the major UN funders. Within the UN Secretariat, the locus shifts to the Department of Peacekeeping. In this situation the IO bureau becomes a gate keeper for U.S. peacekeeping funds. IO is primarily responsible for justifying and defending the peacekeeping portion of the U.S. international affairs account. Since the United States provides 27 percent of funding for authorized UN peacekeeping operations, it is up to IO to raise questions about whether a new peacekeeping mission would be cost effective for U.S. interests. Washington lobbied other governments for a UN force in Liberia and Sudan, but initially opposed the dispatch of a force to Cote d'Ivoire, a high priority for France. When American personnel are involved as peacekeeping forces or observers—modest numbers in recent years, IO works closely with the Political-Military Affairs Bureau and with the Department of Defense to work out the numbers and logistics.⁴³ IO also monitors whether peacekeeping operations meet the terms set out in Security Council resolutions. It gets involved in debates over whether such missions should be extended when their mandates (normally six months or one year) run out.⁴⁴

Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM): Defense Department Liaison

The Bureau of Political-Military Affairs carries out the routine diplomatic tasks that arise out of its coordination role with the Department of Defense.⁴⁵ PM also gets involved in peace building and stabilization, when U.S. armed forces are involved, including securing agreements with other

⁴³ As of October 2008, the United States was providing 298, of which all but 22 were police. United Nations, “Contributors to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, Monthly Summary of Contributions (Police, Military Observers, and Troops),” October 31, 2008, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2008/oct08_1.pdf. In early 1995, by contrast, the United States had several thousand troops deployed in Somalia and Haiti. U.S. Department of State, “U.S. Participation in the United Nations, 1995,” <http://www.state.gov/www/issues/unpart/1995/part1.html#997555>.

⁴⁴ Interview with former assistant secretary Kim Holmes, November 28, 2006.

⁴⁵ These tasks include (a) negotiating and overseeing implementation of military agreements between the United States and other governments; (b) control and monitoring of arms transfers and trades and the proliferation of conventional weapon systems; (c) aggregating and providing general oversight for the security assistance budget (International Military Education and Training [IMET] and Foreign Military Financing [FMF]); (d) coordinating with military commands on overflight and landing requests, clearances for military visits, and overseas noncombatant evacuation operations (NEOs) of U.S. officials and American citizens, when their lives are threatened by political disorder abroad.

governments to join U.S.-led military coalitions. PM took on a peace-building role during the Clinton administration, when it became the locus of State Department planning for complex emergencies.⁴⁶ The bureau created an Office of Contingency Planning and Peacekeeping. When a complex emergency arose or seemed likely, the National Security Council's Global Affairs Directorate would task the different agencies for responses, including a political-military plan, drafted in the first instance in the new PM office. During Clinton's second term more than 20 such plans were written.⁴⁷ Some of the plans provided useful benchmarks for gauging progress in particular cases.

When the Bush administration came into office, Secretary Powell picked Lincoln Bloomfield, a former deputy assistant secretary of defense and close friend of Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage, as PM assistant secretary. Powell and Armitage wanted in the post a trusted individual who "knew the Pentagon and how it worked." After 9/11, Bloomfield set up a separate PM operations center, staffed by a Pol-Mil Action Team (PMAT) to secure a running flow of data from the combatant commands for the retired general who was secretary of state. Bloomfield also became part of the team, heavily staffed by the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, which negotiated agreements with the Central Asian republics. He headed the group that secured Uzbekistan's accord for contingency pilot rescue operations in that country. In the runup to the Iraq war, Bloomfield was charged with leading the diplomacy required to pull together the "coalition of the willing" which eventually became the Multi-National Force-Iraq. His PM team sent messages to U.S. embassies in the capitals of potential coalition governments to determine interest, set up military liaison with CENTCOM for those responding positively, maintained a definitive tally of coalition member contributions, and kept their Washington ambassadors informed of developments through weekly meetings at the State Department.⁴⁸

Under the Bush administration, PM did not play the same planning role as during the second Clinton term.⁴⁹ The planning function was entrusted to the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. (See below.)

⁴⁶ The template for action became Presidential Decision Directive 56, "Managing Complex Contingency Operations, issued May 1997, though never systematically applied. The PDD, still a classified document, called for an interagency Executive Committee to develop a political-military implementation plan to coordinate U.S. government actions.

⁴⁷ Interview with Leonard R. Hawley, former NSC official, deputy assistant secretary of state, and deputy assistant secretary of defense, September 7, 2007. In a partial refutation of the conventional wisdom that plans simply gather dust on a shelf, Hawley discovered they had been downloaded into a database used by the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization.

⁴⁸ Interview with Lincoln Bloomfield, November 8, 2007.

⁴⁹ The Office of Contingency Planning and Peacekeeping was renamed the Office of Policy, Plans and Analysis, but did not continue its role of planning for complex emergencies.

Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL): Policing

State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs—known informally as “drugs and thugs”—has responsibility for organizing and managing the police function within stabilization and reconstruction. Unlike the other two functional bureaus described above, INL has taken on operational responsibilities. Over the past two decades INL has developed a reputation for aggressiveness within State and the interagency process in its pursuit of anti-narcotics and law enforcement programs, positions often bolstered by strong advocacy from members of key congressional subcommittees.

Since 1994, when Washington recruited 50 police officers for the International Police Monitor mission in Haiti, international civilian police operations—or CivPol—have become an integral part of the American approach to peace building. Where the local police function has broken down, international officers occasionally patrol or investigate. More often they are responsible for restructuring, monitoring, and/or advising local police who are making the transition to democratic policing. Usually, they are directly involved in training.

There has been considerable bureaucratic conflict and confusion over the division of labor among federal agencies. The Department of Justice provides the basic interface between the federal government and police at the state and local level. Since 1986 it has maintained the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) to respond to requests for overseas police training. However, State has leadership in the allocation of military and security assistance and has assumed authority over policy implementation on the civilian police aspect of most post-conflict reconstruction programs. There has been deep-seated rivalry between State and Justice on police issues over the past decade. Since 2001, in the special environments of Afghanistan and Iraq, the Defense Department has played a major role in shaping the policing aspect of stabilization.⁵⁰

In 2000, after lengthy interagency debate, the Clinton administration issued Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 71 (“Strengthening Criminal Justice Systems in Support of Peace Operations and Other Complex Contingencies”) designating the State Department as the lead agency. The Bush administration formally endorsed continued State Department leadership on transitional justice. The relationship between INL and ICITAP has remained tense.

Since the mid-1990s the United States has deployed civilian police to Haiti, the Balkans, East Timor, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. In Haiti, INL has funded 50 U.S. police officers and 3 U.S. corrections officers for the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

⁵⁰ During much of the past 30 years, USAID has been prohibited from doing police projects. In 1974, following human rights abuses by foreign police forces, which included graduates from the USAID Office of Public Security police training program, Congress banned U.S. assistance to foreign police. David H. Bailey, “U.S. Aid for Foreign Justice and Police,” *Orbis* 30, no. 3 (2006): 469-479.

During the transition to the elected government of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the United States contributed up to 75 uniformed police officers to the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Following the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan, INL provided a contingent of 15 police, judicial, and corrections officers to the UN Mission to assist the government of Southern Sudan to develop a criminal justice capacity.⁵¹

In 2004 and 2005, differing INL and U.S. Central Command approaches to stabilization law enforcement became a significant issue. In Iraq, the State Department believed it had the lead and funds to develop a civilian training program involving civilian American mentors with new police trainees emerging from the facility in Jordan. The military wanted to create special police units, rather than a single nonsectarian police force. It also wanted the mentors to be military police. Defense prevailed.⁵² Advocates of the State Department position argue that, as a result, the Iraq police have remained a corrupt and sectarian force, unlike the Iraqi army which has gradually improved its reputation for professionalism. In Afghanistan, both INL and ISAF run police training operations. Nevertheless, dissatisfaction with police performance—hampered by “corruption, insufficient training and equipment, and absenteeism”—remains pervasive.⁵³

Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS)

In 2004, the Bush administration decided to supplement the traditional approach to peace-building diplomacy and complex emergencies. In the wake of the reconstruction debacle in Iraq, the NSC Principals Committee approved creation of a stabilization and reconstruction office for the U.S. government. There was a debate over its location. Some wanted it attached to the NSC. Others urged that its operational role made it fit logically within USAID. In the end it was decided to place the office in the State Department as the key implementing instrument for the secretary of state’s new mandate to lead the interagency process for post-conflict reconstruction. That mandate was formalized the following year under National Security Presidential Directive 44. So

⁵¹ U.S. Department of State, “Civilian Police and Rule of Law Programs,” fact sheet, January 2, 2008. INL manages the contracts for recruitment, training and support of CivPol personnel. Until 2004, contracting was exclusively with DynCorp, a northern Virginia corporation. The process began to open up in 2002, when INL signed contracts with DynCorp and two other firms to develop rosters of qualified police officers to be drawn on for CivPol operations. Since 2004 the three companies compete for CivPol contracts, but DynCorp, despite criticism by auditors and inspectors, continues to be responsible for the bulk of CivPol recruitment and training.

⁵² INL assistant secretary Robert C. (Bobby) Charles argued vociferously that the DOD approach violated a basic principle of policing in stabilization operations: “military to military and cop to cop.” Interview December 9, 2007.

⁵³ Anthony H. Cordesman, “Losing The Afghan-Pakistan War? The Rising Threat,” CSIS, Washington, D.C., updated October 21, 2008, http://www.csis.org/index.php?option=com_csis_pubs&task=view&id=4885.

the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) was attached to the secretary of state. Colin Powell appointed Ambassador Carlos Pascual as the first coordinator.⁵⁴

The creation of S/CRS marked a major change in the peace-building function of the State Department. Rather than concerning itself almost exclusively with the foreign policy and diplomacy of peace building and specialized operational functions such as police training, the department vested in the coordinator responsibility for strategic planning for reconstruction and stabilization (R&S) and for mobilizing and coordinating the civilian operations to carry it out. In short, the expectation was that S/CRS would play both a planning and an operational role in coordinating the inter-agency response to foreign crises.

Launch and Evolution

Pascual's chief ally in getting started was Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage, who ensured his access to Secretary Powell and helped with the budget. The Defense Department was supportive of the new office. S/CRS staffers found themselves inundated with requests from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the geographic combatant commands to participate in military exercises involving stabilization and reconstruction. The NSC staff weighed in to help the new office move forward. Because he initially lacked analytic horsepower in his office, Pascual forged an alliance with the U.S. Institute of Peace, the government's independent think tank on conflict transformation, which helped S/CRS reach conclusions about the lessons from Iraq and to think about indicators for determining progress in R&S. Nevertheless, as expected, S/CRS encountered serious growing pains during its first two years.

The new staff initially focused on conflict prevention, formulating a framework for R&S, and developing a capacity to plan for it, drawing in both the civilian agencies and the military. Initially, prevention focused on an "early warning" process involving the intelligence community and State Department geographic bureaus. Pascual arranged for the National Intelligence Council to put out a list of countries at risk of instability to be reviewed by him and the regional assistant secretaries. However, the watch list soon became so large that it covered half the countries with which the United States had diplomatic relations; it lacked focus and priority. Moreover, there was a squabble about whether the list should be unclassified, a position advocated by conflict

⁵⁴ Congress endorsed S/CRS in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 (Division B, Title IV, Sec. 408, H.R. 4818 (P.L. 108-447), signed into law by President Bush December 8, 2004. The law directed that the coordinator report directly to the secretary of state and outlined the office's functions:

- Catalog the nonmilitary capabilities of U.S. agencies to deal with conflict in countries or regions that are in, or are in transition from, conflict crises;
- Monitor instability worldwide to anticipate the need for U.S. and international assistance;
- Assess the crises and determine the appropriate nonmilitary U.S. response;
- Plan the response;
- Coordinate interagency contingency planning and action;
- Coordinate training of civilian personnel for stabilization and reconstruction.

managers in USAID seeking to develop assistance programs, and opposed by ambassadors—and some USAID directors—worried that the inclusion of their countries on a watch list would anger presidents and prime ministers.⁵⁵ Despite this squabble, conflict prevention work eventually led to a simulation of election scenarios in the Congo and exercises at the U.S. embassies in Nepal and the Central African Republic.⁵⁶

S/CRS made little progress in securing interagency agreement on a formal framework and process to trigger a major R&S program. Developing a planning mechanism brought sometimes contentious relations with USAID, as well as other bureaus within State. USAID administrator Andrew Natsios was unhappy about the creation of S/CRS because he had devoted considerable attention to building a conflict management capacity in USAID, centered on the new Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation in the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs (DCHA).⁵⁷ The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance in the same bureau feared its DARTs (Disaster Assistance Response Teams) would be commandeered by S/CRS. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) did not wish S/CRS to intrude into its operational control of police training. The Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM) tried to reassert its earlier ownership of complex contingency planning and claimed a new responsibility for State-Department related aspects of counterinsurgency, a specific type of conflict response.

The geographic bureaus in particular were unenthusiastic about ceding a place at the table to a brand new coordinator, whose staff lacked expertise about their particular conflict problems. Moreover, without an operational budget, S/CRS could not offer the bureaus the incentive of additional funds. In early 2005, Secretary Rice instructed Pascual to get involved in Sudan, where the outbreak of violence in Darfur threatened to undermine the Bush administration's triumph in securing the peace agreement between North and South. A planning group was set up for Sudan, cochaired by S/CRS, but AF attempted to keep the coordinator away from the policy issues by an endless series of meetings. Nonetheless, according to Pascual, the group produced the first comprehensive interagency strategy to deal with the conflict and contributed to a major increase in funding for post-conflict reconstruction.⁵⁸

S/CRS did make headway on conflict assessment methodology. It established a relationship with the Joint Forces Command (JFC), which in the wake of the Iraq conflict aggressively expanded its

⁵⁵ Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, a U.S. ally, was incensed to learn that Ethiopia was on the list. Interview with Constance B. Newman, ex-USAID assistant administrator for Africa and ex-assistant secretary of state for African affairs, July 17, 2007.

⁵⁶ Another early success, but outside the scope of this study, was S/CRS involvement in a large project looking at contingencies relating to political instability and migration patterns in post-Castro Cuba.

⁵⁷ The evolution of USAID's treatment of conflict and development is analyzed in the second monograph in this series, Dane F. Smith, *Foreign Assistance for Peace: The U.S. Agency for International Development* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 2009).

⁵⁸ The planning group, convoked by the NSC, was called a Conflict Reconstruction and Stabilization Group (CRSG), the body formalized in the 2007 approval of the Interagency Management System (see below).

concept of “jointness” to encompass not only the different military services and commands, but also cooperation with civilian agencies. In 2005, S/CRS and JFC issued a draft “Planning Framework for Stabilization, Reconstruction and Conflict Transformation.”⁵⁹ That document found its way into the curricula of a number of military training schools.⁶⁰ A complementary document, the “Essential Tasks Matrix,” also issued in 2005, became available to U.S. embassies and to the regional combatant commands as a guide to action.⁶¹ In 2006, a third piece of the documentary toolkit emerged: “Metrics for Interagency Planning for Conflict Transformation,” providing guidance on standards of measuring accomplishment of an essential task.⁶²

Pascual gave particular attention to the development of a capacity to “move rapidly to help countries in the aftermath of conflicts.”⁶³ In addition to the Washington-based staff of 80 he envisaged, Pascual wanted a swiftly deployable vanguard of 100 who could do crisis diplomacy or at least augment U.S. embassy staffs in an emergency. This “active response corps” would in turn be supplemented by active duty officers from State and other agencies, who could go out to do specialized tasks in law enforcement or economic reconstruction on temporary duty assignments. He also wanted to create a roster of specialists from the private sector with skills mostly unavailable in the federal government. To finance this expeditionary activity, the coordinator proposed a “conflict-response fund” of \$100 million. The fund was promoted as a means to “jump start” key R&S programs requiring immediate resources, while alternative funding was identified to sustain them.

S/CRS quickly encountered budget realities. At the end of 2004, the NSC staff arranged meetings aimed at providing additional funding for S/CRS. The Deputies Committee recommended as much as \$350 million, to include the Conflict Response Fund, but the NSC principals failed to agree. OMB chopped the request to \$100 million for the Fund and no more than \$25 million for S/CRS. Although the Coordinator’s Office continued to enjoy the support of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations was

⁵⁹ “Draft Planning Framework for Stabilization, Reconstruction and Conflict Transformation.” The document was revised in 2007, incorporating feedback and lessons learned from planning exercises on Sudan, Chad, Haiti, Kosovo, Zimbabwe, and Nepal.

⁶⁰ Interview with Barbara J. Stephenson, ex-S/CRS director of planning, October 3, 2006.

⁶¹ The “Post Conflict Reconstruction Essential Tasks Matrix” is a detailed, 50-plus-page checklist of “to do” items. It divides the tasks into five basic functions: security, governance and participation, humanitarian assistance and social well-being (including health and education), economic stabilization and infrastructure (including legal and regulatory reform), justice and reconciliation. Both the Planning Framework and the Essential Tasks Matrix were based on the *Post-Conflict Reconstruction Task Framework* developed jointly by CSIS and the Association of the U.S. Army, found at Appendix 1 of Robert C. Orr, ed., *Winning the Peace: an American Strategy for Post-Conflict Reconstruction* (Washington: CSIS, 2004), 306-327.

⁶² For example, for the objective “sustainable security established,” a metric might be “episodes of political violence with more than four deaths.” Metrics are to be reassessed on a continuing basis.

⁶³ Stephen D. Krasner and Carlos Pascual, “Addressing State Failure,” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2005): 161.

unimpressed with the arguments for an active and supplementary expeditionary capacity. The \$100 million request for the conflict-response fund was “zeroed out” by the appropriators in the FY2006 budget. Fears were expressed that approval of new staff would become a pretext for intervention in additional parts of the world. Opinion on the right fretted that the military would be dragged into peacemaking and policing and on the left that aid was being militarized. The conflict response money was dismissed as a slush fund.⁶⁴

The Condoleezza Rice era at the State Department initially proved problematic for the new office. The departure of Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage meant the loss of an important S/CRS champion in the budgetary wars and inter-bureau conflict. No other seventh floor principal picked up the portfolio. The NSC was preoccupied with securing interagency agreement on the directive regulating interagency R&S management—NSPD 44, issued at the end of 2005. With Condoleezza Rice now at the helm, the NSC expected the department to exercise the authority vested in it. The office made some headway. It continued to amass staff and to refine its own planning process. A partial and temporary solution to the budget impasse was developed: Sec. 1207 transfer authority, in collaboration with the Defense Department. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld requested and Congress approved authority to transfer up to \$100 million in Defense funds in FY2006 “to assist the State Department [with] immediate reconstruction, security, or stabilization assistance to a foreign country.”⁶⁵ In a speech at Georgetown University in January 2006, on her trademark vision of “transformational diplomacy,” Rice included a paragraph on S/CRS. She said, “We have an expansive vision for this new office, and let there be no doubt, we are committed to realizing it.”⁶⁶

The resignation of Carlos Pascual at the end of 2005 led to turbulence and uncertainty. His position remained open for five months. The long transition, according to S/CRS staffers, provoked an effort by a group of senior State Department officials, led by the director of policy planning and the assistant secretary for politico-military affairs, to put the office out of business. The effort was joined, at least to some degree, by Randall Tobias, whom Rice had named to the new post of director of foreign assistance. The new position combined the role of administrator of USAID with a new deputy secretary of state position.⁶⁷ In particular, Tobias, as czar of the foreign operations budget, wanted to make sure that any budget for stabilization and reconstruction came

⁶⁴ Stephenson interview.

⁶⁵ S. 1042, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006*. See also “Defense Department Seeks More Aid Capability,” *Washington Post*, October 29, 2005.

⁶⁶ U.S. Department of State, “Transformational Diplomacy,” January 18, 2006, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/59306.htm>.

⁶⁷ The new position made him formally third in rank in the State Department behind Deputy Secretary Robert Zoellick.

under his jurisdiction.⁶⁸ The effort to eliminate S/CRS failed, but some believe that it was only the explicitness of Rice's pledge at Georgetown that kept it alive.

John E. Herbst became coordinator in May 2006. His basic guidance from Secretary Rice was to get more S/CRS staff working on actual conflicts, i.e. that his office should become more operational. That guidance posed a dilemma. Should S/CRS focus its efforts on individual crises—a micro approach? If so, it confronted the opposition of the geographic bureaus to its involvement in their major crises. That could leave S/CRS doing “boutique crises,” as permitted by the geographic bureaus or dictated by the seventh floor. Herbst decided that it was essential that S/CRS remain involved on the macro planning side—shaping the overall government decision-making and planning process for dealing with R&S crises of varying magnitudes. At the same time, the office needed to build capacity to engage operationally in conflict, both emerging and full-blown. Accordingly, Herbst defined two essential tasks for his office: to ensure a “whole-of-government” approach to reconstruction and stabilization and to build a civilian surge capacity to meet specific U.S. government needs in that area.⁶⁹

Herbst faced two serious challenges early in his tenure. The first was the Lebanon crisis, which erupted in July 2006, only two months after his arrival. Would the State Department turn to S/CRS to help coordinate the civilian agency response? Herbst's effort to insert himself into the process was blocked not only by the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, but also by Tobias, the new budget czar. Rice, at the center of crisis diplomacy, did not look to S/CRS. The result was not pretty from the point of view of mobilizing resources to deal with the crisis. Coordination among the agencies was haphazard. Afterward, Tobias told others that S/CRS should have had a lead role on resources for Lebanon.

The second challenge was securing an expanded budget. How could Herbst shepherd his budget request through F, the major new budget shop of Randall Tobias? F, launched only in March 2006, was trying to master and integrate the international affairs budget process, while at the same time drafting a proposed FY2008 budget for presentation to the Office of Management and Budget by late 2006. Herbst had little success. No money was placed in the budget for the Civilian Reserve Corps and only \$25 million for the Conflict Response Fund. Recognizing that an ally on the budgeting side was essential to the fiscal viability of his office—and encouraged by Tobias's reappraisal of S/CRS after Lebanon—Herbst made a deal to become a deputy to the budget czar. Under that arrangement Herbst reported in practice to Tobias, but retained a formal reporting

⁶⁸ Tobias did not have charge of the entire 150 function, but of the foreign operations portion of that function involving State and USAID. That did not include the State Department diplomatic and consular affairs account.

⁶⁹ Statement to a roundtable of experts, July 18, 2007. Dane F. Smith, “Roundtable on Proposed Civilian Reserve Corps,” a PCR Project Special Briefing, CSIS, Washington, D.C., November 2007, 1.

link with the secretary of state.⁷⁰ Without this alliance Herbst believes his later efforts to increase staff and budget would have been fruitless.

Interagency Management System

In 2007, S/CRS moved forward on the process and operational side, as well as in its visibility. Key operational procedures for a “whole-of-government” Interagency Management System (IMS) were agreed upon by the NSC Deputies Committee in March. At the direction of the president, secretary of state, secretary of defense, or the NSC, a Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group (CRSG), operating at the assistant secretary level, may be established to deal with an actual or a potential crisis. The CRSG would be cochaired by the relevant State regional assistant secretary, the S/CRS coordinator and the NSC senior director for the region. S/CRS would be the CRSG secretariat. An Integrated Planning Cell (IPC) would deploy to the headquarters of the regional combatant command concerned to work toward cohesive civilian-military planning. An interagency Advance Civilian Team (ACT), coordinated by S/CRS, would be dispatched to the country in crisis to implement whatever strategic plan the CRSG agreed upon. For example, if an ACT were sent to deal with instability in Kyrgyzstan, an IPC would be dispatched to the Tampa, Florida, headquarters of the Central Command (CENTCOM). The ACT, supported by Field ACTs to extend stabilization and reconstruction activities beyond the capital, would operate under the authority of the U.S. chief of mission. If there is no functioning embassy, the ACT serves as the embassy.⁷¹

No CRSG has been called into being and no Advance Civilian Team dispatched, since approval of the IMS.⁷² In August 2008, however, on the outbreak of the Georgia-Russia conflict, the State Department set up an interagency task force. It was disbanded after two weeks in favor of a S/CRS-run staff on the model of a CRSG secretariat. During the two months of its operation, the S/CRS planning chief led a team to Tbilisi, but it was not formally constituted as an ACT.⁷³ Several military exercises using the IMS system and drawing on other agencies have taken place.

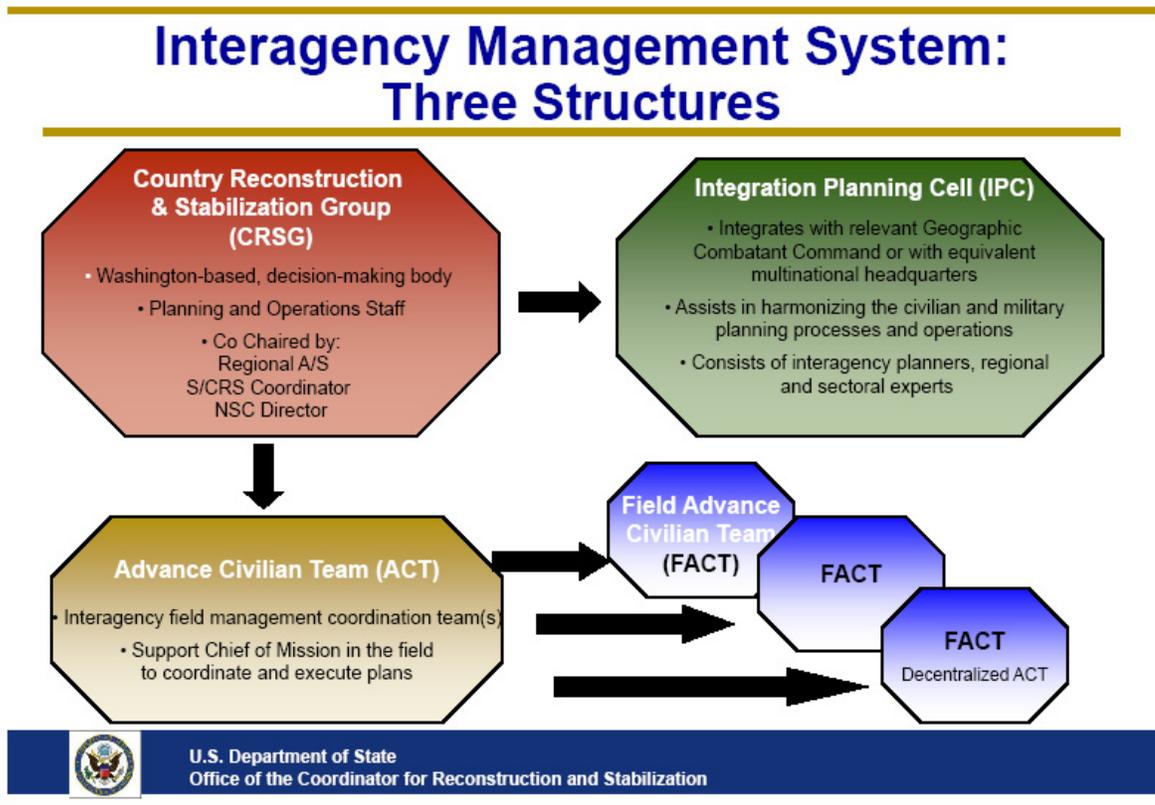
⁷⁰ The direct formal relationship with the secretary is indicated by the office prefix S before S/CRS. The State Department organizational chart also links S/CRS to the secretary rather than to F. Both the *Consolidated Appropriations Act 2004* and the *National Defense Authorization Act of 2008* direct that the coordinator report directly to the secretary.

⁷¹ Smith, “Roundtable,” 1.

⁷² An “experimental” CRSG took place in January 2008 to test the new mechanism. The subject and results are classified. Interview with Jonathan Benton, director, S/CRS Office of Civilian Readiness and Response, December 7, 2007. Before approval of the IMS, a CRSG was established for implementation in southern Sudan of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and S/CRS cochaired meetings on Haiti and Cuba transition in the mode of a CRSG. As a follow-up to planning on post-Castro Cuba, an IPC has been dispatched to the Southern Command.

⁷³ Interview with Jonathan Benton, December 5, 2008.

Figure 1. Reconstruction and Stabilization Interagency Management System (IMS)



Source: courtesy S/CRS.

Questions have been raised about the type of crisis the IMS would be applied to. In testimony to before the Congress, Herbst stated that the IMS provides “coordinated, interagency policy and program management for highly complex crises and operations.” The features of such crises are that they

- Are national or security priorities,
- Involve widespread instability,
- May require military operations, and
- Engage multiple U.S. agencies in the policy and programmatic response.

He added that the IMS is not designed to deal with political and humanitarian crises normally handled by means of existing organizations and systems.⁷⁴ Still, the issue of the circumstances triggering the IMS remains subject to debate. The effort to define the circumstances precisely seems doomed to failure, since policy makers normally wish to exercise discretion in ambiguous situations.

Advances on the Budget

S/CRS also gained traction in the budget process, despite the abrupt resignation of Randall Tobias. Somewhat unexpectedly, President Bush in his 2007 State of the Union message called for congressional enactment of a Civilian Reserve Corps. Although the proposal had nothing behind it in the FY2008 budget, it placed a White House imprimatur on building it into the next budget. A year later, in February 2008, the president's budget message for FY2009 gave prominence to a "Civilian Response Capability, [requesting] \$249 million to enhance the capability of civilian government agencies to respond to crises and to create a rapidly deployable civilian reserve corps." The budget proposal gave substance to the civilian reserve proposal originally developed by Carlos Pascual.

Organization

By the end of 2008, S/CRS staff had risen to 105, making it the equivalent of a small State Department bureau. After experimenting with different tables of organization, the office divided its staff into two major components, each headed by a deputy coordinator. Both divisions are heavily engaged in R&S operations.

The principal deputy coordinator for conflict transformation supervises two substantive offices: Planning and Strategic Communications.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ John E. Herbst, "Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations: Learning from the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Experience," Statement before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, October 30, 2007. Herbst was presumably seeking to clarify a criticism by the GAO that there was not a clear definition of R&S operations which distinguished them from other types or military or civilian activities such as counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, or development assistance, thereby creating confusion about when the framework would be applied. Government Accountability Office (GAO), *Stabilization and Reconstruction: Actions Needed to Improve Governmentwide Planning and Capabilities for Future Operations*, GAO-08-228 (Washington, D.C.: GAO, October 30, 2007), 8. It seems clear the IMS could be used to deal with a counterterrorism or counterinsurgency situation, if the other criteria applied and R&S activities were warranted. The IMS could generate a strategic plan that would include various kinds of short-term assistance, but development assistance would be handled under existing USAID procedures.

⁷⁵ The principal deputy also supervises a Resource Management Office that handles personnel, finance and budget, technology, and general services.

Planning

The Planning Office views itself as responsible for building the interagency capacity to do reconstruction, stabilization and conflict transformation.⁷⁶ Although the Interagency Management System provides the macro-framework for dealing with major crises, the framework can be adapted in principle to a range of reconstruction/stabilization situations: U.S. government civilian interventions with little or no military support, combined civil-military operations, and U.S. contributions to UN or multilateral operations. Triggers for planning would usually be the request of a geographic assistant secretary of state to S/CRS for planning for a particular country or region. In that case, the planning process would proceed under the auspices of the regional Policy Coordinating Committee of the National Security Council. A request for planning might come from another office in the State Department. Alternatively, the request might be made by a Defense Department geographic combatant command through the secretary of defense. In that case, planning would normally proceed under the auspices of the combatant command itself. If, as envisaged by the IMS, a Crisis Reconstruction & Stabilization Group is created, its activation, formally generated by the secretary of state, might originate with the coordinator.

Full-blown planning within the CRSG framework would operate in three sequences. S/CRS would pull together an interagency strategic planning team consisting of conflict transformation specialists and regional and country experts. The team would assess the situation and develop a policy guidance memo articulating an overarching policy goal – something on the order of “locally led emergent peace initiative”—stated in terms relevant to the specific country situation. It would then develop “major mission elements” (MMEs), narrowly tailored objectives necessary for the achievement of the overall goal with attention to phasing. Normally, several options would be examined under individual planning templates. This policy formulation document, including supporting narrative, diagrams of the different elements of the plan, and unresolved policy or resources issues for decision, would be sent to the NSC Principals Committee or Deputies Committee for action.

The second sequence is strategy development, to be completed by an “MME planning team,” which further develops the MMEs to include measures of success and resource requirements.⁷⁷ The MME planning team would include key players from the different agencies involved and might even be multilateral (i.e., “coordinated” with host country officials or allied governments). The Office of Management and Budget would likely be involved at that stage to secure the necessary funding. The MME team attaches essential tasks to each MME and assigns agency leadership for each. Other donor contributions, if any, would be plugged in at this point. The essential tasks would cover a broad range of the “tools” operable in international relations:

⁷⁶Much of the section on planning reflects an interview with Oscar de Soto, S/CRS director of planning, December 10, 2007.

⁷⁷ Although the first and second sequence would normally be separate, the strategic planning team may develop the MME strategies as well.

- Diplomacy, including persuasion, inducements and coercion,
- Public diplomacy,
- Intelligence,
- Military capability and deterrence,
- Economic relations,
- Assistance programs,
- Law enforcement, including security reform and collaboration on terrorism and apprehension of persons for criminal acts, and
- Consular policy, especially visa policy targeting obstructionist individuals.

This strategic planning package would be submitted for approval to the CRSG—or alternatively to the interagency Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) concerned.

The third sequence moves the process on to individual agencies for implementation of programs normally falling to them. An example might be USAID’s implementation of disaster relief or emergency food aid. The S/CRS role in this tertiary sequence is not supervisory, but rather coordinating and monitoring, in particular identifying gaps in implementation planning so that individual agency responsibility may be determined to fill the holes. S/CRS would work with the MME team to help the agency for which implementation performance is problematic.⁷⁸ The U.S. chief of mission in the country concerned would also have an opportunity to approve or seek to adjust the implementation plans.⁷⁹

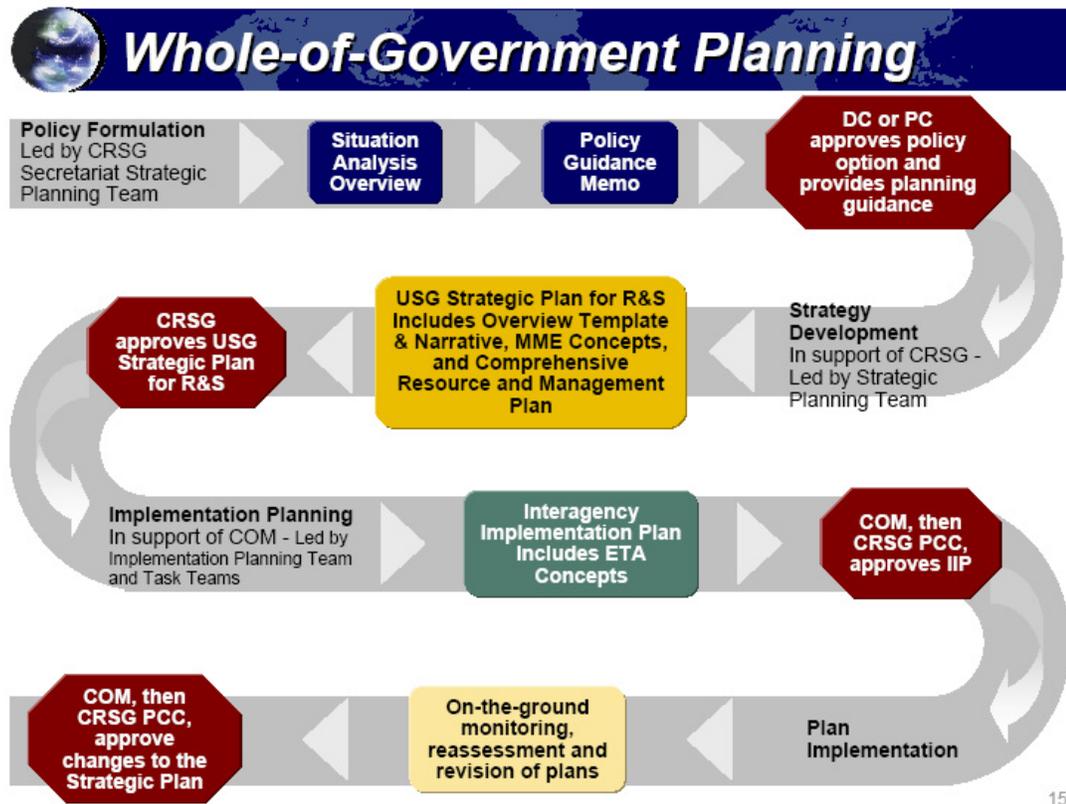
In line with John Herbst’s emphasis on becoming operational, the Planning Office shifted its focus from the overall planning framework to coordinating the development of country and region-specific plans. The revised focus was an effort to get away from the highly abstract quality of the planning framework to draft specific plans using approaches and measurements based on concrete experience. In carrying out specific planning, the Planning Office works with other State Department bureaus, with USAID offices, and with the military, particularly the geographic combatant commands. The Joint Forces Command continues to be a major facilitator and collaborator, providing experts, space and some financing for planning exercises. S/CRS considers its most important planning to have been applied to Sudan, Haiti, and Kosovo, for which both strategic and MME planning exercises have been completed. In 2007 S/CRS supported the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs in a medium-term strategic planning exercise for a four-year period following Kosovo’s anticipated declaration of independence. In 2008, following that

⁷⁸ The triggers and planning sequences are described in detail in *U.S. Government Draft Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization and Conflict Transformation*, 12-34. See Note 56.

⁷⁹ The views of the chief of mission, channeled through the geographic bureau and assistant secretary, would presumably be taken into account throughout the policy and strategic planning process.

declaration, the office launched a “whole-of-government” contingency and transition planning process for the first 90 days. It also deployed staff to meet gaps at the new U.S. embassy in Pristina and to assist the European Union’s International Civilian Office in Kosovo.⁸⁰

Figure 2. Interagency Management System Planning Process



Source: courtesy S/CRS.

⁸⁰ Since Cuba does not have violent internal conflict, it is not dealt with in this study, even though S/CRS has become involved in post-Castro planning. Cuban planning under S/CRS auspices emerged from earlier work by the Commission for a Free Cuba (CAFC). At the end of 2006, S/CRS, at the request of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, became the secretariat for an integrated planning approach to post-Castro Cuba.

Becoming more operational has not extended to assuming a significant role in Afghanistan and Iraq. When S/CRS was established in 2004, Colin Powell warned it to stay away from both countries, fearing it would be swamped and founder. Instead it was charged with learning the right lessons for the next big crisis. The warning was not repeated by Secretary Rice. It is important to ask why S/CRS, more than four years after its founding, has not been trying to demonstrate its value in the two countries where the Bush administration, after a poor start, made its heaviest practical investment in reconstruction and stabilization. As noted above, the State Department role in reconstruction has been heavily focused on the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), for which the civilian staff come mostly from State and USAID. In 2007, the director of foreign assistance, with the concurrence of the Bureau of Southern and Central Asian Affairs, asked S/CRS to look at the PRT planning process in Afghanistan. The Planning Office sent a team to Kabul, which interviewed all U.S.-led PRTs. It found that there was no formal planning process and worked with the embassy and ISAF to develop one. S/CRS wrote plans for the teams operating in the Eastern Regional Command, about half the total in country.

That useful, if quite limited, role in Afghanistan has not been replicated in Iraq. Some S/CRS staff claimed that the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) has been too preoccupied with Iraq to ask for help.⁸¹ That view is disputed by a former deputy Iraq coordinator. After it was decided to double PRTs in Iraq as part of the 2007 civilian surge, she and a policy level official in NEA, with seventh floor encouragement, tried unsuccessfully to persuade S/CRS to join the planning process.⁸² S/CRS activity has been basically limited to 30 end-of-tour interviews of Iraq PRT members. S/CRS has been involved in the developing of training courses at the Foreign Service Institute for persons serving on PRTs in Iraq. In sum, the Offices of the Coordinators for Afghanistan and Iraq (along with NEA's Office of Iraqi Affairs) are providing civilian leadership for the civilian reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan. S/CRS has thus far played a minor part.⁸³

Generally the U.S. military has been critical of the capacity of civilian government agencies, especially the State Department, to perform detailed operational planning—as opposed to policy planning. S/CRS leadership believes that it has now achieved a “decent” operational planning capacity. DOD observers concede that significant progress has been made, but note that the degree of detail normally included in a military plan is still lacking. The Office of Stability Operations in the Pentagon has provided military planners to S/CRS to expand operational planning capacity.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Benton interview, December 7, 2007.

⁸² Stephenson interview.

⁸³ When the civilian surge was launched in 2007 to accompany the military surge in Iraq, senior military were disappointed to discover that the much discussed civilian reserve did not yet exist, four years after the creation of S/CRS, and that the military would initially have to put reservists into those positions.

⁸⁴ Interview with L. Celeste Ward, deputy assistant secretary of defense for stability operations capabilities, December 1, 2008.

The Office of Planning also covers sectoral expertise and best practices, handled by a separate division until late 2008. Good planning must take into account experience in various aspects of R&S and lessons learned. S/CRS has attempted with limited success to assemble a range of expertise in the sectors relevant to conflict management—security, law and order, infrastructure, economic reform, and governance, but is strongest in transitional security. For the other sectors, the office has one or two experts for each, most on contract. Because there is a shortage of available experts in the U.S. government, S/CRS lacks “a deep bench,” to cite the office director.⁸⁵ To synthesize lessons learned, S/CRS sets up a working group for specific best practices, drawing in the relevant State regional and functional bureaus. For example, S/CRS (not INL) headed the working group on “stability policing,” at the request of the NSC Deputies Committee.

In an assessment requested by the U.S. Congress, the Government Accountability Office noted that the State Department had taken steps toward better interagency coordination of R&S activities, but criticized it for inconsistency in the planning process. It claimed that there was ambiguity between NSPD 44 and the IMS framework on one side and the Foreign Affairs Manual, which governs State Department operations, on the other. While the latter gives to the geographical assistant secretary the authority to direct, coordinate and supervise U.S. activities in countries in the region, the GAO said S/CRS was claiming under NSPD 44 the authority to lead, plan and coordinate R&S, thus undermining the assistant secretary’s authority.⁸⁶ In rejoinder, it can be argued that the geographic assistant secretary’s cochairmanship of the CRSG permits him/her to exercise these authorities and to provide general policy guidance on the country or region concerned, while the coordinator, as second cochair, is enabled to provide leadership for the more specialized R&S planning function.⁸⁷ S/CRS also points out that in the clearance process for the IMS, all the geographic bureaus indicated their approval of the division of labor. In practice, of course, policy leadership may vie with planning leadership to shape the R&S strategy used. Whether the process gets mired down in a turf battle or makes decisions efficiently will depend on the flexibility of both cochairs and their commitment to finding practical solutions to differences that may emerge. It is up to the secretary of state to sort out persisting differences of view at the assistant secretary level.

⁸⁵ De Soto interview.

⁸⁶ GAO, *Stabilization and Reconstruction: Actions Are Needed to Develop a Planning and Coordination Framework and Establish the Civilian Reserve Corps* (Washington, D.C., GAO, November 2007), 13.

⁸⁷ In its response to the GAO report, the State Department stated that “S/CRS works to complement the existing roles of the regional bureaus at State, USAID and other agencies working in R&S. S/CRS may, depending on the circumstance, assist with conflict assessment and planning processes for reconstruction and stabilization in conjunction with its interagency partners...” GAO, *Stabilization and Reconstruction*, Annex 3, 5.

Communication and Outreach

The Office of Strategic Communications, which reports to the principal deputy coordinator, is responsible for publicizing the work of S/CRS—including outreach to the academic and NGO sectors. It also is charged with building partnerships with other countries interested in the peace-building function and the numerous international organizations engaged in such work. Most of its attention is focused on public affairs and diplomatic strategy. The major partners of S/CRS are its counterparts in Britain and Canada, set up at roughly the same time. Britain’s Stabilisation Unit (previously called the Post-Conflict Response Unit) is a joint venture of the Department for International Development (DFID), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Defense Department. Canada’s Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START) is a permanent interagency group located within the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. There is frequent S/CRS interaction with the staff of these two structures.⁸⁸ However, the one non-American member of the S/CRS staff in late 2007 was an adviser on diplomatic strategy from the European Union. S/CRS also stays in touch with the UN’s Peace-Building Commission. S/CRS has ties with NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which has had heavy responsibilities for the Balkans, and the African Union, deeply enmeshed in the Darfur crisis.

Strategic Communications also bears responsibility for developing a legislative strategy. That function was slow to come together. Until 2008, there was no one in S/CRS formally designated for congressional liaison, although several staffers spent much of their time working with the Congress. The lack of consistent attention to congressional liaison during the first few years handicapped the office in making the case to Congress for the resources it needed.

Reporting to the second deputy coordinator are the Office of Civilian Readiness and Response and the Office of Conflict Prevention.

Expeditionary Capacity

Civilian Readiness and Response is the operational heart of S/CRS. It is responsible for developing and deploying U.S. resources in support of R&S. In particular, the office was charged with developing “civilian-military operational models” for an immediate surge response, to be followed by the insertion of more traditional support mechanisms to address longer-term needs.⁸⁹ S/CRS is supposed to coordinate the efforts of the relevant government agencies to mobilize their capabilities and to fill in the gaps which may arise.

The civilian expeditionary surge capacity is premised on a three-tiered structure. By 2006 S/CRS had created an Active Component of the Civilian Response Corps (CRC-A) consisting of civilian

⁸⁸ For analysis of both, see Stewart Patrick and Kaysie Brown, *Greater than the Sum of its Parts: Assessing “Whole of Government” Approaches to Fragile States* (New York: International Peace Academy, 2007), 27-30, 67-73.

⁸⁹ Interview with Marcia Wong, ex-S/CRS deputy coordinator, January 10, 2007.

generalists and specialists drawn from U.S. government civilian agencies.⁹⁰ It still numbered only 10 persons in 2008 but was projected to rise rapidly to 110 in 2009 and 250 by 2010, depending on congressional funding. If one or more CRSGs are activated and Advance Civilian Teams are dispatched, the demand for CRC-A services will increase rapidly. Thus far, all CRC-A members have been State Department employees, but USAID officers are expected to join the component, as it expands. The primary responsibility of Active Component members is to deploy quickly for up to six months to countries with stabilization crises, usually to augment embassy staff. Approximately 75 percent of them are to be available to deploy within 48 hours of being called up. They retain employment in their home agencies and have other assignments when not in the field. They are supposed to train up to eight weeks a year, including participation in joint civilian-military exercises.

Even in the absence of IMS activation, the CRC-A has dispatched representatives to Lebanon, Kosovo, Haiti, Afghanistan, Liberia, Chad, Sudan and Iraq. Their assignment to Sudan's troubled Darfur province, an early test of S/CRS expeditionary capacity, was designed to support Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick in the negotiation of the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). Creating an embassy field presence for the first time in the remote far west of the Sudan, CRC-A personnel established a peace secretariat for the DPA and served as observers for the African Union Cease-Fire Commission. Zoellick, in fact, gave credit to an Active Component staffer for the signature of the accord by SLA military leader Minni Minawi, the only rebel signatory.⁹¹ Since the DPA almost immediately broke down, the ongoing responsibility of Active Component officers has been primarily political reporting, based on extensive liaison with the parties to the conflict, the African Union forces (AMIS) and the United Nations.⁹² The presence of a total of nine CRC-A members in Darfur until mid-2008 improved U.S. embassy—and general U.S. government—understanding of the dynamics and evolution of the conflict.

The Active Response Component is augmented by a Standby Response Component (CRC-S) of people bringing relevant skills from the State Department and other government agencies.⁹³ These are volunteers and “reservists” who hold day jobs in different government agencies. In 2008, S/CRS also had 150 Foreign Service retirees on its roster. CRC-S members should be available on 30 days notice. In a crisis they would deploy at a rate of up to 25 percent within 30 to 60 days of a call up. Duration of deployment would be 90 to 180 days. As of the end of 2008, there were about 500 CRC-S enrolled, including retirees. The hope is to expand the component to 2000 by 2010, including representatives of other agencies and federal retirees. CRC-S members take basic training at the Foreign Service Institute and are expected to hone their skills in follow-up courses. S/CRS seeks to draw people with experience in overseas assistance, security, democratization and

⁹⁰ Until 2008, CRC-A was called the “active response corps.”

⁹¹ Interview with John E. Herbst, January 30, 2007.

⁹² Interview with Ann Bodine, Active Response Corps director, and Eythan Sontag, ARC, November 1, 2007.

⁹³ Previously called Standby Response Corps.

business development. Reservists must be at a GS-09 or FS-4 level (early mid-career). Only a handful of SRC had been deployed by the end of 2008 (in Darfur, Chad, Iraq, and Afghanistan), but additional numbers have been trained.⁹⁴ They may be mobilized by a CSRG or, less formally, within the State Department by agreement between the geographic bureau concerned and the S/CRS Coordinator. Standby Component members, when deployed, may form part of an Advance Civilian Team (ACT) or Field Action Civilian Team (FACT) assembled under the authority of the ambassador.⁹⁵

The third tier is the Reserve Component (CRC-R), highlighted in President Bush's 2007 State of the Union Message and his 2008 Budget Message (for FY2009). Bush said the CRC-R "would ease the burden on the Armed Forces by allowing us to hire civilians with critical skills to serve on missions abroad when America needs them." The Reserve would consist of experts from state and local government, as well as the NGO community and the private sector, who have skills lacking in sufficient numbers in the U.S. government. Such specialists would include police trainers, persons able to set up court systems, correctional officers, city managers, lawyers, engineers, and agricultural specialists. Members would make a four-year commitment, and agree to deploy for up to one year. Reservists would receive several weeks of orientation, followed by annual updating and mission specific training prior to deployment.

Creation of the Reserve—unlike the CRC-A and CRC-S—requires congressional authorization. Its activation, limited to major U.S. stabilization engagements, would require a presidential determination and would emerge from a CSRG-developed implementation plan. CRC-R members would become U.S. government employees, when mobilized for training and deployment. Approximately 25 percent of the Reserve would be available to deploy at any one time.

In mid-2008 the Congress made a supplemental appropriation of \$55 million to enable S/CRS to expand the Active and Standby components of the civilian response capacity to 100 and 500 respectively, but left funding for the Civilian Reserve Component to the new administration and the 111th Congress.⁹⁶

Both Civilian Readiness and Response and Conflict Prevention have an important role in ensuring that S/CRS personnel and those selected for civilian expeditionary work receive adequate training. The Foreign Service Institute (FSI), located at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center in Arlington, Virginia, is the primary training site. There is a week-long introductory course, mandatory for CRC-A and CRC-S members, covering the IMS system and the use of conflict assessment tools, particularly the S/CRS Essential Tasks Matrix. Students who have had

⁹⁴ The S/CRS Web site as of December 2007 seemed to imply SRC deployments to Lebanon, Haiti, Kosovo, Iraq, Nepal, and Afghanistan, but those additional deployments did not occur.

⁹⁵ Benton interview, December 2007.

⁹⁶ The appropriation included \$30 million for S/CRS and \$25 million for USAID for the same purpose. H.R. 2642 (PL 110-252), *Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008*.

the five-day course are supposed to get further training annually, but that rule has not been strictly enforced. Active and Standby Components also take a course on failed states. There is a course in advanced planning.⁹⁷ S/CRS staff developed the core materials and often lecture. The Office has collaborated with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, USAID, the military and the U.S. Institute of Peace to put together about a dozen FSI courses. S/CRS staff are asked periodically to speak at military training schools, including the Center for Army Lessons Learned at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute at the Army War College.

Prevention

Under the first coordinator, the Office of Conflict Prevention gave considerable priority to early warning—periodic review by S/CRS and the geographic bureaus of a watch list of countries potentially afflicted with conflict. However, this early exercise came to be viewed as somewhat duplicative of existing government-wide intelligence efforts and lacking in operational usefulness. Under John Herbst, it has been deemphasized in favor of a more operational approach, centering on assessment.

At the invitation of a State geographic bureau, S/CRS will assemble an interagency team to do an in-country assessment of an incipient conflict and draw up recommendations for preventive actions. The receptivity of the geographic bureaus to such S/CRS involvement in the prevention field has also been limited. Traditionally, the bureaus have tended to resist efforts of outside offices to insert themselves into crisis situations, including potential ones. S/CRS explored different approaches to improve the attractiveness and relevance of its prevention services. Rather than developing an assessment from scratch, Conflict Prevention drew on existing strategic planning such as the Mission Strategic Plan, done by all embassies, or the Operations Plan for each country, developed for the Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance. S/CRS has found it useful to collaborate with State geographic bureaus on “scenario-based planning.” A good example was cohosting with State’s Africa Bureau a policy exercise to strengthen planning for the 2006 election in the Congo. It drew in both the U.S. interagency R&S community and participants from the European Union and the United Nations.⁹⁸ It helped expatriate agencies and personnel work through the planning implications for coping with 25 million voters over an area half as large as the United States.

Conflict Prevention has also used roundtables to assess the nature of a situation which could explode into or revert to civil war. The Zimbabwe roundtable brought together the U.S. ambassador, previous ambassadors and other experts to consider how the U.S. government and international community might proceed in the event of complete state collapse or transition to a

⁹⁷ Interview with Christopher Hoh, associate dean, Foreign Service Institute, December 4, 2008.

⁹⁸ Testimony by Carlos Pascual, “Stabilization and Reconstruction: Building Peace in a Hostile Environment,” hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, 109th Congress, June 16, 2005.

post–Robert Mugabe situation. S/CRS viewed the exercise as scenario-based planning, which could lead to a broader interagency strategic planning process. A similar roundtable was done for Kosovo to examine the implications of the impasse in negotiations between Kosovar Albanians and Serbia and of the expected Kosovar declaration of independence, which took place in 2008.

This variegated and somewhat ad hoc approach to assessment became more formalized in the last year of the Bush administration. In mid-2008, the NSC approved the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF) put together by an interagency working group co-chaired by S/CRS and USAID’s Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM). It is a planning tool used to assist interagency members reach consensus on a particular country’s conflict dynamics and potential entry points for U.S. conflict management efforts. The ICAF draws heavily on the Conflict Assessment Framework developed by USAID.⁹⁹ It feeds into the situation analysis and policy formulation aspects of the planning process in the Planning Framework for Stabilization, Reconstruction and Conflict Transformation, described above.¹⁰⁰ The new tool has been applied to Tajikistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in an earlier iteration to Sri Lanka.

The Office of Conflict Prevention manages funds transferred by the Defense Department—Sec. 1207 grants—to support R&S activities. Although the Department of Defense had authority to transfer up to \$100 million in FY2006, S/CRS received only \$15 million for a project in Lebanon to train and equip police and remove unexploded ordnance. The bottleneck developed partly from the insistence of the Defense Department on approving each individual project and partly from the transformed State/USAID budget process under F, which also interposed its clearance requirement on each request. In FY2007, however, funds eventually totaling \$100 million began to flow faster with new leadership at the Defense Department and more streamlined F procedures. An initial \$20 million grant for Haiti, focused on security, rule of law, and development projects to stabilize Cité Soleil, Port-au-Prince’s most unruly neighborhood, came early in the fiscal year. A cluster of projects were approved before year-end, including two regional projects, for the Trans-Sahel Counter Terrorism Initiative and Southeast Asia, as shown in the table below.

In 2008, an additional \$100 million was slated to go to nine different countries, but half the money was channeled to Georgia, after its confrontation with Russia, to meet the needs of displaced persons and rebuild the police force. Most of the remainder went to Afghanistan, Lebanon, the Congo, Tajikistan, and Sri Lanka.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ See the second monograph in this series on USAID.

¹⁰⁰ See Note 58 and Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, “Principles of the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework,” 8, www.S/CRS.state.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.display&shortcut=CJ22.

¹⁰¹ Nina M. Serafino, *Department of Defense “Section 1207” Security and Stabilization Assistance: A Fact Sheet*, RS22871 (Washington, D.C. Congressional Research Service, November 25, 2008). A \$5 million project for Colombia was held up at least temporarily because of a hold imposed by House State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Subcommittee chair Nita Lowey.

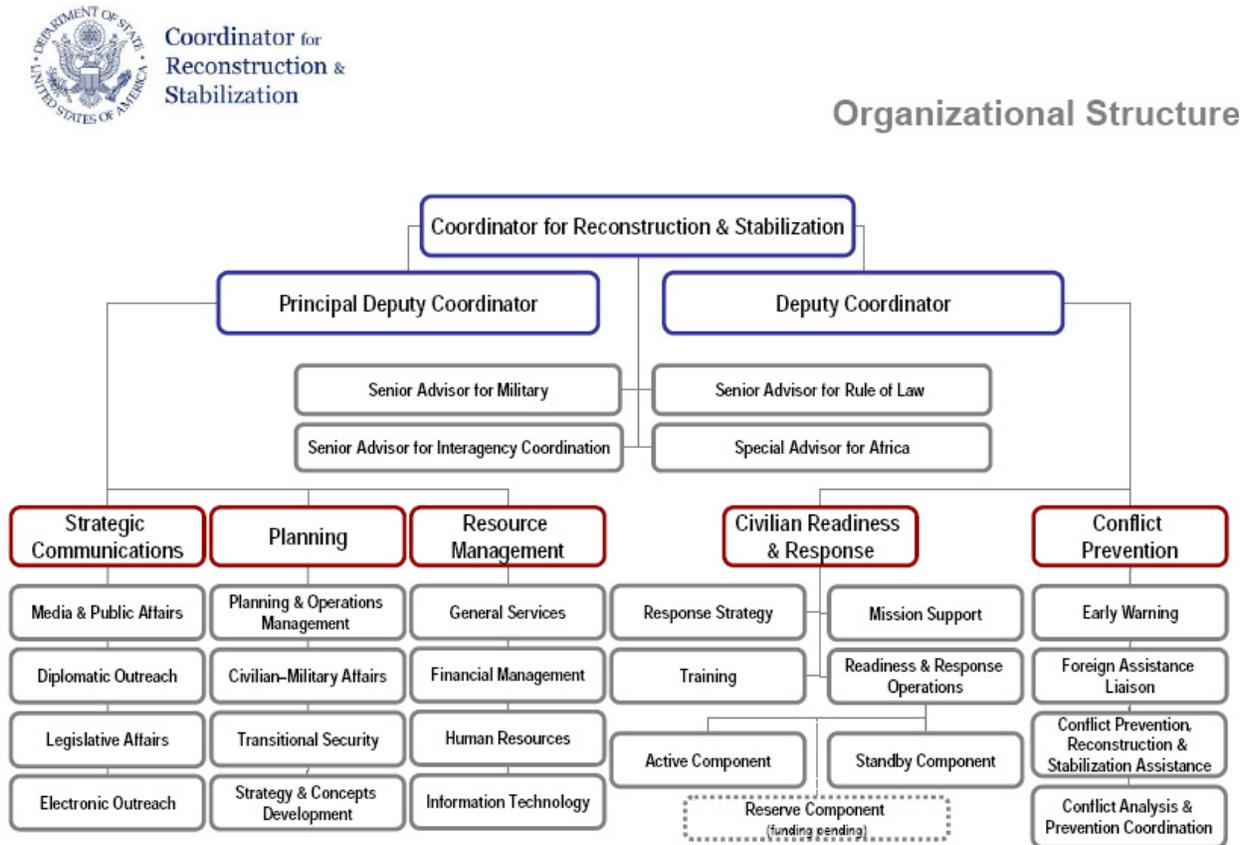
Figure 3. FY2007 Sec. 1207 Projects

Country/Region	Amount (\$ million)	Purpose
Haiti	20.0	Cité Soleil
Somalia	25.0	Stabilize Kenya border region
Niger, Mali, Mauritania	18.8	Security and civilian development presence
Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia	12.0	Infrastructure, maritime security, local law enforcement capacity
Yemen	10.0	Youth services and employment
Nepal	10.0	District-level governance
Colombia	4.0	Areas liberated from insurgents
Total	99.8	

The prescribed role of Conflict Prevention is “to coordinate interagency processes to identify states at risk..., lead interagency planning to prevent or mitigate conflict, develop detailed contingency plans [for integrated R&S], and coordinate preventative strategies with other governments, international organizations and NGOs.”¹⁰² Measured against its mission, the office has not yet established itself as the U.S. government’s lead entity in preventing conflict. It manages one of the most important R&S programs—Section 1207 grants—but those grants are not strictly limited to preventive action, as demonstrated by their use in conflict-ridden countries like Haiti, Nepal, and Georgia after Russian intervention. Conflict Prevention has a formal but not an actual lead in early warning, on which the National Intelligence Council plays the major role on classified assessment and USAID’s Office of Conflict Management and Mitigations (CMM) on unclassified lists. Its major conflict prevention assessment tool, the ICAF, approved in 2008, is built on frameworks developed not in S/CRS, but in USAID’s CMM Office. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Office of Conflict Prevention is something of a hodge-podge, an assembly of divisions designed to pick up residual responsibilities not clearly related to crisis planning (Office of Planning) and expeditionary capacity (Civilian Readiness and Response).

¹⁰² As advertised on the S/CRS Web site, <http://www.S/CRS.state.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.display&shortcut=CKTH>.

Figure 4. S/CRS Organizational Chart (February 2009)



Source: courtesy S/CRS.

Strengthening State Department Effectiveness in Peace Building, Reconstruction, and Stabilization

The post-Cold War record of the Department of State in peace-building diplomacy and the experience of the Bush administration with S/CRS suggest four general recommendations for consideration by the new administration:

1. The Obama administration should confirm through presidential executive order that the secretary of state will continue to carry the responsibility for leading and coordinating post-conflict reconstruction activities.

The principal locus of peace building in the U.S. government is the State Department. Diplomacy is at the heart of conflict prevention, of conflict resolution and of most post-conflict reconstruction. Most conflicts in the post–Cold War period are rooted in specific regional contexts, involving governments, disaffected elements within a state, and neighboring countries affected by the violence. Within the U.S. government, embassies and the State Department geographic bureaus they report to—aided by the intelligence community—are the storehouses of expertise not only about the political and security situation in the afflicted state but on past and present modes of U.S. operation there. They are therefore in the best position to make a judgment about the seriousness of a potential conflict and the desirability of U.S. action. When conflict has broken out, they are on the front lines of formulating the U.S. response—noninvolvement, consultation with other states and international organization, providing good offices or supporting the good offices of other states. Even when a peace agreement has been concluded, those State Department elements are intimately involved in the diplomacy of developing the mechanism of stabilization and reconstruction, as well as the diplomacy of sustaining and modifying its format.

The fact that the State Department is the institution out of which most U.S. peace building emerges has a bearing on, but is not decisive for the debate about where to place operational leadership for reconstruction and stabilization. The major alternatives are the National Security Council and the Defense Department. The case for the NSC is that peace building calls for a serious commitment by a number of U.S. government agencies; that one cabinet secretary is not in a position to dictate to another agency how to allocate its personnel and budget; and that only the NSC is in a position to secure true interagency coordination for peace building. The argument usually cited for the Defense Department is that only the Pentagon has the operational planning capacity, the budget and personnel numbers to do post-conflict reconstruction effectively. The Bush administration, after the initial failure of DOD-led reconstruction and stabilization in Afghanistan and Iraq, vested in the secretary of state leadership and coordination responsibilities for R&S activities (NSPD 44). The decision recognized that reconstruction and stabilization are more closely tied to foreign policy leadership and diplomacy than to military operations. NSPD 44 also reflected a consensus view that the NSC, as part of the White House staff, should not be “operational.” It should instead be the driver of the bureaucratic process and ensure interagency coordination, drawing on presidential authority.

The wisdom of that placement also rests on a judgment about the capacity of the State Department to operate programs. A number of critics argue that the State Department lacks an “operational” bureaucratic culture.¹⁰³ Foreign Service Officers may be good at representation, reporting and policy planning, but are said to be unequipped by orientation and training to manage complex programs. That, it is argued, is the province of the military, with its focus on

¹⁰³ Interview with Andrew S. Natsios, former administrator of USAID and former special envoy for Sudan, April 28, 2008.

operational planning and logistics, and USAID officers with their long experience in planning and managing projects. This study has pointed out that such a portrait of the State Department is outdated. Over the past three decades the State Department has become increasingly operational in fields related to post-conflict reconstruction, including human rights and democracy programs, refugee programs, and civilian police programs. A judgment about the suitability of the present S/CRS to play this operational role is presented below.

2. The State Department should require that political officers complete a training module on conflict during mid-career. Promotion precepts for entry into the Senior Foreign Service should include the completion of that module and at least one assignment in a conflict zone. The Bureau of Personnel should take positively into account experience in one or more countries troubled by political violence in negotiating with the regional bureaus assignments as deputy chief of mission and country director.¹⁰⁴

The frequent involvement of the geographic bureaus in attempting to manage political conflict abroad warrants much greater attention to training in conflict assessment and transformation for political officers. Officers in the political cone should be required to complete a training program on conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict resolution. Promotion precepts should ensure that political officers do not cross the threshold to the Senior Foreign Service without conflict zone assignments. Such assignments should also be taken into account in assigning officers to senior positions, overseas and in Washington.

3. The secretary of state should confirm that staffing and operational support for her reconstruction and stabilization leadership will be exercised through an office like that of the present coordinator for reconstruction and stabilization. However, State should undertake, in coordination with the NSC, Defense, and USAID, a thorough evaluation of the contribution and potential of that office, including its interface with State's geographic bureaus and other agencies, its staffing needs, and its budget requirements. The objective would be to create a fully integrated State-USAID operation, with some staffing from the military and additional civilian agencies as well. There should be recognition that the ability of the office to play a major role in future crises will depend on the extent of support it receives from the secretary, if and when the leadership of the geographic bureaus seeks to limit it to a marginal role. The evaluation should also consider how the office might be calibrated to a more thoroughgoing multilateral approach to conflict management, in particular the desirable division of labor between S/CRS and analogous units in the UN secretariat and allied governments.

S/CRS, conceived as the formal staffing and operational arm of the secretary of state in her new R&S policy responsibility, was the most significant institutional initiative of the George W. Bush administration in peace building. Regrettably, S/CRS has not yet demonstrated its capacity to run

¹⁰⁴ It should also be taken into account in selection of ambassadors to conflict zones. However, since the selection of an ambassador involves at the outset a choice between a political and a career appointee, that position is not included in the recommendation.

R&S operations for the civilian side of the government. Its failure to phase into a cutting edge role in Afghanistan and Iraq, the administration's most important such efforts, leaves it with problems of credibility which need to be addressed by the Obama administration. S/CRS was ignored during the 2006 war in Lebanon and kept on the sidelines in the 2007 Somalia crisis. The powerful geographic bureaus have been unwilling to cede to S/CRS a major role in dealing with high priority conflicts, although most now agree that it can play a useful role in augmenting embassy resources through deployment of Active Response personnel. However, the issue of the balance between geographic bureaus and S/CRS is likely to be rejoined if Congress approves creation of a significant surge capacity, including the standby component and civilian reserves. A geographic bureau may be reluctant to agree to a significant number of personnel in the field with institutional loyalties to S/CRS, rather than to the bureau.

Without the secretary of state's active leadership and commitment to the coordinator's designated role, S/CRS will be elbowed aside, when crises arise in which the White House, the secretary of defense and the secretary of state are deeply invested. It may be desirable to formalize the division of labor S/CRS considers to be a present reality: primacy in foreign policy guidance with the geographic bureaus and primacy in program design and implementation with S/CRS. Working out the complementarity is essential. Depriving the bureaus of their primary diplomatic role would produce bureaucratic foot dragging. Short-circuiting the sources of regional expertise and experience would lead to critical mistakes in practice. On the program side, the effective work of a handful of Active Response personnel in Darfur, Kosovo, Nepal, and Lebanon; R&S projects in a dozen countries; and planning exercises involving Zimbabwe and Kosovo represent building blocks of S/CRS expertise and experience for a wider post-conflict role. Since policy guidance and program implementation overlap in practice, a practical *modus operandi* would need to be worked out in each case.

One straightforward way to strengthen the operational capacity and credibility of S/CRS would be to make it a truly integrated State/USAID entity. Since 2006, the coordinator has reported not only to the secretary of state, but also to the director of foreign assistance. The first coordinator, Carlos Pascual, came out of USAID, and the most recent second deputy coordinator, Larry Sampler, is a USAID officer. Disappointingly, no other USAID personnel appeared on the staff list at the end of 2008. In the future, filling up to a third of S/CRS positions with USAID officers, drawing to the extent possible on those with experience managing assistance projects in conflict areas, would inject operational depth into the Coordinator's Office. It would also convey a message that the leadership of the State Department is committed to strengthening its operational capability. If S/CRS becomes an integrated State/USAID operation, the administration should examine the juxtaposition of S/CRS with two USAID offices: Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) and Transition Initiatives (OTI). The former has seized the interagency lead in

conflict prevention. The latter possesses the U.S. government’s most effective expeditionary force for conflict management.¹⁰⁵

The second major constraint has been the absence of appropriated funds for CRS until very late in the administration. Its only real source of program funds has been a transfer from the Defense Department (Sec. 1207). Not only can CRS not count on continued congressional acquiescence in Sec. 1207 transfers, but such funding on a permanent basis would be inappropriate. CRS should be directly accountable to Congress for its major R&S projects. Congress decided in a 2008 supplemental bill to “forward fund” \$55 million to launch the civilian stabilization initiative, against the \$249 million request for FY2009. The *FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act*, enacted in March 2009, added an additional \$75 million for a coordinated civilian response capacity at State and USAID, indicating that the new Congress was positively disposed toward—if not completely sold on—the reconstruction and stabilization enterprise.

4. In evaluating the future shape and mandate of S/CRS, the administration should reexamine—in at least informal consultation with Congress—the dimensions of the need for a civilian “surge” capacity, including the balance between additional full-time positions for State and USAID and a reserve cadre to meet rapidly developing additional human resource and skill requirements.

Prospects for adequate long-term funding for CRS will rest to a considerable extent on whether to move forward with a civilian coordinated response program. The Bush administration’s request for a three-tiered surge capacity involving 250 in the Active Component, 2000 in the Standby Component and 2000 Civilian Reserves by 2010 should be scrutinized carefully, in consultation with the Congress. While supported by the authorizing committees, the backing of the appropriators remains in doubt. An evaluation of the proposed program should include a judgment about the nature and frequency of future conflicts engaging U.S. interests. It should look into the tradeoffs between providing personnel for a surge capacity and increasing full-time employees for the State Department and USAID. There is sympathy in Congress for a general increase in personnel for both agencies. The evaluation should also look into the possibilities of closer collaboration between the United States, United Nations, and key allies building up post-conflict response capabilities, like Canada, the United Kingdom, and other European states, and examine what should be the desirable division of labor among these partners.

¹⁰⁵ The role of USAID in peace building, with special emphasis on CMM and OTI, is examined in the second monograph in this series.

About the Author

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