



## Chapter 5

# Stability, Security, Reconstruction, and Rule of Law Capabilities

### The Principal Instruments of Liberal Democracies for Competing in the New Security Environment

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To effectively deal with armed conflict “amongst the people,” the United States must develop new concepts of operations for what should be called SSRR operations. The capability to conduct such operations effectively is a crucial—and inadequately developed—requirement for competing at the substate level in weak and failed states, either as part of major operations or in stand-alone stability and preventive operations.

At present the U.S. has very few full-time, civilian and military trained professionals whose career is devoted to these tasks. The U.S. often operates in an ad hoc manner in reaction to crises and military operations, with little recognition of the need to prepare the people, equipment, and logistics to meet its needs in contested parts of the world.

The U.S. needs to focus on achieving four end-states through political shaping operations, constabulary-type security operations, and state building. The first is security for the host nation population at the local level, pro-

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duced through a combination of foreign and indigenous forces. The second is political stability, which is a function of creating legitimacy for the new political order and an effective process for inclusion and collective decision making for the society. The third is reconstruction, both of state institutions and a framework and system for wealth generation. The fourth is the rule of law, creating institutions to provide impartial enforcement of the law and conflict resolution of private disputes, strengthening systems to ensure integrity of personnel within state institutions, and propagating a positive ethos and culture of lawfulness, in collaboration with multiple local indigenous sectors. In pursuing these end-states, it is vital to recognize that adversarial political players—both indigenous and regional—will be competing to disrupt these efforts and to achieve alternative end-states.

## **New Needed Capabilities**

The United States needs to develop six discrete capabilities:

1. Senior-Level Military Assistance and Advisory Groups (MAAG), at headquarters in the U.S. and in Embassy operations, are configured to serve as not just the military commands but also serve as the political brain of the SSRR operation. Most important, the MAAG will have strategic planning and political action cells to develop and lead the implementation of a tailored political-military strategy for achieving stability and progress in the host country, based on detailed political mapping and interaction with local leaders and social groups.
2. U.S. Foreign Liaison and Assistance Groups (FLAG) will be brigade-sized military combat units optimized for classic population-centric security operations based on securing areas of strength and then expanding security outward in incremental steps (i.e., an “ink spot” security campaign). This will require that several of U.S. Army and Marine combat brigades and regiments are re-equipped and re-trained for this kind of irregular warfare.
3. Security Training and Equipping Groups (STEG) will be a near-brigade-sized unit that will be a standing part of the U.S. force structure designed to rapidly train and equip indigenous police, intelligence, and military institutions. It will have major dedicated stockpiles of equipment—arms, ammunition, mobility assets, communications, etc.—to outfit host-country security and police forces without procurement delays.
4. Advisory Corps will be U.S. military officers qualified to serve as embedded advisors or mentors of host-country forces, playing the key role of

facilitating the partnering of U.S. and local forces and moving local partners up the learning curve as quickly as possible.

5. Civilian Operations, Reconstruction, and Development Support (CORDS) Groups will be a brigade-sized unit (or smaller depending on the context) that will be a standing part of the U.S. force structure and designed to create parallel advisory offices to the host-country civil administration structure at the national, provincial, and local levels. These units, which exist within Army Civil Affairs brigades, will facilitate the improvement of governance and delivery of services through indigenous institutions.
6. Rule of Law Support (ROLS) will entail a new deployable capability within the U.S. Army Reserve Legal Command and its civilian agency counterparts. They will strengthen Host Nation institutions supportive of the rule of law, both by providing integrity training and security sector reform for law enforcement and security agencies, and by working with multiple civil sectors within the country to create a culture supportive of the rule of law.

## Configuring Capabilities for Varying Scenarios

The configuration of deployed SSRR capabilities should vary based on the nature of the intervention.

- For *high intensity* (Phase IV) operations, all the SSRR capabilities—MAAG, FLAGs, STEGs, CORDS Groups, Advisory Corps, and ROLS—will be needed.
- For a *limited presence mission*, such as in Pakistan or Colombia, the configuration of deployments will vary. All will require a MAAG, which designs the strategy, carries out political engagement, and commands all deployed U.S. forces. If host-country security forces require enhancements, STEGs and elements of the Advisory Corps would be deployed. If unit-partnering is required, FLAGs would be used. For governance, particularly at the local level, CORDS Groups and ROLS would be employed.
- For a small *advisory mission*, the most appropriate deployment would be MAAG commanding a small Advisory Corps, supported by limited components of the CORDS Groups and ROLS.

## Resources and Costs

The most significant resource required is dedicated U.S. force and civilian structure to this purpose. The United States should convert several of

the Army's combat brigades and Marine regiments into SSRR-optimized capabilities. This will still allow for an adequate capability to deal with the legacy threat of major conventional combat while providing the necessary forces for the far-more-likely-to-occur SSRR operations. Most of the converted brigades and/or regiments should become FLAGS, while a few others should be converted into STEGs, CORDS Groups and Rule of Law Support capabilities. The Advisory Corps is not a separate organization, but it may require building a larger U.S. officer corps. The STEGs will require POMCUS-like stockpiles (storage of light infantry equipment and logistics) to equip host-country forces.

Rule of Law Support will require professional experts on legal and security sector reform as well as those schooled in working with key civil society sectors—the media, education, and centers of moral authority.

## **STABILITY, SECURITY, RECONSTRUCTION, AND RULE OF LAW CAPABILITIES**

The new international security environment is characterized by two fundamental trends: 1) the reemergence of major powers on the Eurasian landmass (China, Russia, India, Iran, etc.) with sufficient capabilities to act as near-peer or peer competitors to the United States in their would-be spheres of influence, and 2) the emergence of vast regions composed of weak or failed states that enable the emergence of powerful nonstate actors and that constitute the political terrain for substate competition among major and medium powers. As a result of these trends, two dominant forms of political-military competition have emerged. At one level, factions within weak or failed states are engaged in competitions for political power among themselves. In essence, this is a violent competition over “state formation,” in which armed political groups seek to impose factional control over territory as the foundation of creating state structures. At the next level, external powers are providing assistance (e.g., money, arms, technical assistance, etc.) to substate factions that serve as proxies in competitions with geopolitical rivals. This new interstate competition focuses on the ability to help friendly local actors to organize state or quasi-state institutions (i.e., instruments of coercion, civil administration, and taxing and revenue generation) that have a sufficient combination of legitimacy and coercive power to sustain themselves.

In weak or failed states, the definition of the problem is that state institutions have neither a monopoly of force nor administrative bodies capable of executing other basic functions of the state, such as defining property rights, adjudicating private disputes, enforcing criminal laws, or providing public

goods. Typically, a broad range of “bad actors” exploit state weakness or failure, including organized crime networks, terrorists, private militias, insurgents, and other armed groups. Though these bad actors present challenges that vary in kind and degree, they have in common the fact that they all destabilize society, threaten the security of the people, impair the ability of citizens to generate wealth, and work against any sense that the society is governed by the rule of law.

Stability, Security, Reconstruction, and Rule of Law (SSRR) capabilities and operations represent a key instrument of the United States and other liberal democratic powers to compete at the substate level in weak or failed states. They can be used as part of Phase IV operations following a conventional military intervention (as in Afghanistan or Iraq) or they can represent the intervention itself in the event that no conventional opposition exists (as in Somalia in the early 1990s). In the most basic sense, such operations are designed to strengthen a host government or local allies, particularly by making the relationship between the host government and the people stronger than the relationship between the people and criminal organizations, militias, insurgents, or other armed groups. SSRR operations involve deployment of capabilities to execute four functions in partnership with a host government or local allies:

- **Stability**, which revolves around creating functional politics in a society, requires assistance to local political actors to create a political process that establishes the legitimacy of the political order and that enables a society to execute collective decision making.
- **Security**, in weak and failed states, is about establishing control. It is produced through (1) the deployment of outside military units to displace or neutralize the armed units of adversaries and to create a permissive environment for nonmilitary instruments of power and/or (2) the training, equipping, and mentoring of indigenous military, police, and intelligence organizations.
- **Reconstruction** entails those capabilities that create indigenous institutions to provide for civil administration, basic services, economic development, and state revenue generation.
- **Rule of law** capabilities involve helping a host government to establish a system for impartial law enforcement (i.e., police, courts, prisons) and to create a culture of lawfulness within state institutions as well as the broader society.

Currently, no liberal democratic power, including the United States, can perform SSRR operations in a coherent or effective manner. While the conventional wisdom in U.S. policy circles is that the United States needs to

develop “whole of government” capabilities for counterinsurgency and stabilization operations, the suite of capabilities necessary for effective SSRR operations does not exist in a coherent form. Those elements that do exist are typically underdeveloped and divided among various stovepiped bureaucracies that are unable or unwilling to integrate their actions either in Washington or in the field.

This chapter sets forth a framework for developing robust SSRR capabilities for deployment in weak or failed states by (1) characterizing the fundamental task for SSRR operations; (2) describing the dimensions of substate competitions that SSRR capabilities must address; (3) defining the specific operational components that form the basis of effective SSRR capabilities; (4) outlining the needed command structure, both within the U.S. government and within a broader multinational coalition setting; (5) describing the types of commanders and managers that need to be developed to lead SSRR operations; and (6) discussing broadly the resource and budget issues involved in fielding effective SSRR capabilities.

### ***1. Fundamental Task for SSRR Operations***

The objective of SSRR operations—which entail deployment of external military forces and other capabilities into weak or failed states—is to establish a legitimate and effective government in an unstable or misgoverned country. Creating stability in such settings is enormously difficult. It requires one to overcome the inherent challenges of establishing a functional political order and to counter the competitive efforts of rival internal and external forces who seek to undermine such an order.

The kind of internal instability that prompts military interventions by the United States or other liberal democracies is typically the result of profound dysfunctions in a country's politics. The types of dysfunctions might include the existence of narrowly based or exclusivist political orders that stimulate ethnic or sectarian conflict (Rwanda), a lack of social or political cohesion that leads to fragmentation (former Yugoslavia), abusive or oppressive government that triggers social or military resistance (Haiti), or the rise of a rogue regime whose actions prompt external intervention to thwart a wider threat (Afghanistan). In essence, leaders of an SSRR operation need to ask how the particular dysfunctions of the country can be overcome.

The first step toward success in an SSRR operation is to develop a tailored political concept or plan for how a particular country can be made to function effectively, given its history, its level of development, and its social, demographic, and political composition. In thinking through such a concept, one should ask what the sources are of political legitimacy in the society,