
Building Partner Capacity

By

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I came from an office in the office of the Secretary of Defense. For the partner nations, that is our ministry of defense in the Pentagon. The office that I am in was created in 1989 by our parliament because our parliament recognized that the normal military services would not care about the special operations community and each time we have a war we would build a large special operations community and each time the war was over we would cut it, cut it, cut it back until it was almost gone. And congress recognized this parliament recognized this, and they passed a law that had three main pieces to it.

The first piece was the creation of the United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM), which eventually ended up at Tampa, Florida. Somebody told me last night, there was even some noise about bringing it here which would have been fine too so, Special Operations Command.

The second thing congress did, in order to give special operations some independence, was they gave it its own money; and we call this money in the Pentagon Major Force Program-Eleven (MFP-11), so that the special operations community could buy the things that it needed in order to have equipment and training that was necessary, recognizing that it is different from other military forces.

The third thing that the law did is it created our office and the office of the Secretary of Defense. Since then until now, we have added a very senior Assistant Secretary whose responsibility it is to work closely with SOCOM, to protect SOCOM and the special operations community from the winds of change that often blow after the wars end. I have worked in this office on-and-off for twenty years; I have seen it change tremendously. Most of the time, I have spent in the same office that I am in now.

We are the office for Special Operations and Combating Terrorism, and inside that office we have three or four subordinate components. We have a counter-terrorism shop that works in the interagency to gain approvals for counter-terrorist operations around the world to be conducted for the most part by special operations commands' members; so we spend a lot of time with the intelligence community, with the Department of State, with the office of the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Staff, and the President's advisors getting approvals to do various missions around the globe. We have another part of the office that is dedicated just to special operations and irregular warfare and irregular warfare is a growing business in Washington, as you can well imagine. We have a third part of the office, a group of which met here yesterday, I believe, or was funded by our office, we have an office for the Counterterrorism Fellowship Program. This is \$35 million a year to assist partners with developing counter-terrorism education and training capabilities, and there was a curriculum group here yesterday that was working on new curriculum for NAVSCIATTS that I believe that was funded by that group. And finally, we have a technology support office that spends several hundred-million dollars a year looking at technologies to try to improve special operations capabilities, combating terrorism capabilities, which includes the offense, defense and the consequence management. And

so, from our office, we have a pretty good view of the issues that operate at the macro-level, the large interagency and international level.

Now we also manage Joint Specialized Exercise Training Teams (JSETTs), which many of you have participated on or which have come to your countries to work with your Special Operations Forces (SOF); and we have the 1206 Program, which is \$350 million a year for grant assistance that buys equipment and training for partners. So you can see that they heavily engage in the partnership capacity building process.

Now partnership capacity building means helping friends help themselves, and so that is a very important trust of what we do. Now the concept of building partnership capacity or helping friends help themselves is based on the following idea. All of us, all of the nations represented here, have sovereign land territory and sovereign waters that they are responsible for. If the world could make the size of the footprints of governments match the size of the footprint of sovereignty, then there would be no more empty space. We know that bad, malign, non-state, active networks live in the empty spaces, you understand empty spaces, space where there are no governments, we have lots of empty spaces around the world. Some of you live very close to the empty spaces, most recently, the empty space in Somalia, and our Kenya colleague lives right next door and has to live with the challenges that come out of the empty space in Somalia. In Afghanistan and Pakistan, we clearly have a Fatvah and other regions that are empty space. So the idea would be that if we can increase partner capabilities for governments to the extent that everybody could control their land, sea, and air territories; then it would be a government's choice to support a non-state actor network, a criminal enterprise, in their country; and then we could use state-crafts to push on that nation to stop supporting whichever movement it might be. Some would be narcotics-trafficking organizations; some could be children-trafficking organizations or people-trafficking organizations, terrorist organizations, and the like—many honoring systems in all of these clandestine, illegal, non-state actor tribes. So that is the basic concept that underpins the idea of building partnership tasking.

If we build a net of governments, meaning a network of interagency, international military, and law enforcement capabilities, and we put this net in the sea, that net will catch all fish. So it will catch terrorists; it will catch traffickers; it will catch people trafficking in oil; it will catch drug-runners; it will catch people-traffickers. And so the idea would be that we build partnership capacity across government agencies to build a net.

The net, right now, everybody is focused on terrorism, and rightfully so. But terrorism is just one of the fish that the net would catch. And so building the net is very important, and that is what we are doing here. We are providing capabilities for you all to govern your littoral coastlines, your inland waterways, in a way that you can enable legitimate commerce and legitimate movement on the waters and stop illegal movement on the waters and under the waters.

We have seen this semi-submersible problem coming out of Colombia and out of the west coast and out of the Pacific. There have been other activities where semi-submersibles have been used, so we are trying to build this net of governments that we can use to catch all fish.

Coastal and maritime capabilities are crucially important in this effort. Maybe you have been watching the media; and you are depressed about the problems between India and Pakistan with the Pakistani, I do not want to say sponsored, but the Pakistani used-to-be-supported terrorist group that did the attacks at Mumbai and how did they do the attacks in Mumbai, how did they get to Mumbai? Anybody know? Small boats. The reason they used small boats is because India's land of governance

is pretty good. They have border controls; they have a line of control; and their land border is robust. But the terrorist group knew that their sea wall was not so robust, and so they came down the coast like any group of traffickers and went at it our way and conducted their attack.

We have plenty of indications that they will probably do the same kind of attack again. The seacoast provides you with an open area where, particularly at night, it is very difficult to control entry. That has always been the case; it will always be the case. But you all are the eyes, the ears, and the tools that can help close that vulnerability. A key to doing this is not only the tactical capabilities that you have learned here in this school's teachings, but most importantly we have to figure out maritime domain awareness. This means the ability to watch an entire domain, an entire space at sea, preferably internationally and follow threats or unknown vessels as they move across this space. So one of the things that my office is trying to do is, in certain regions, develop a regional approach to maritime domain awareness because the challenge for us all is to be able to choose between the legitimate traffic and the illegitimate traffic. Just as the Colombian quote said every time we stop a legitimate trafficker, we lose some credibility every time we stop [an] illegitimate trafficker, we gain some credibility. But differentiating is difficult and particularly in zones where there is an international water in between three or four territorial waters you can see that this problem gets complex. So we have been looking at that quite a bit in our office.

Why does the United States prefer to do this with partners instead of doing it ourselves? The United States probably has the military capability to do a lot of this by ourselves. But we do not want to, and there are good reasons why we do not want to. But first I will tell you why we want the partners to do it. We want the partners to do it because you have an absolutely perfect[ly] legal basis for your actions. You are a sovereign state; you have laws; you have an international set of waters; and you have not only the right—you have the responsibility to police those waters. And so when you police them, you do that job inside international law and inside local law. And that is much better than a United States unilateral action because it is very difficult to determine our legal authorities to do that. Second, you bring to the problem all of the regional and cultural understanding; and understanding the regional and cultural dynamics is critically important to this kind of work. You know these things from your history and your culture and your education and the region. We usually do not, and often we get it wrong. And then we have to move backward and try to fix things. So from a regional and cultural standpoint—much better you [than] us. Thirdly, an action by you against an illegal, non-state, active trafficking organization is completely accepted by your own population. You are doing a job that they expected you to do, and that improves the legitimacy of the government and improves the credibility of your capabilities. And, when you do it, you are strengthening the legitimacy and the sovereignty of your host nation government. So these are the factors why we would like to see the partners do these operations.

The reasons the United States should not do them are as follows: if we do it, we are actually undermining the legitimacy and the sovereignty of your nation. Even if you invite us to do it, we are still undermining it. It decreases the sense of sovereignty and legitimacy inside your own population. It moves the responsibility from you to us. That should not happen. It is your responsibility to govern your territory, and this school and our enterprise seeks to give you the capabilities to do that. But, if we do the intervention, we have relieved you of that responsibility and relieved you of the responsibility that goes with it. The United States would be immediately blamed for an invasion or for being a regional, a global hegemony, a country that does not care about the rule of law and the rest of it. And most importantly, if we do it instead of you doing it, the terrorist, the insurgents, the drug-runners can say, "See the government is not capable; they have to rely on the Americans." They

are corrupt; they are not good; and it actually improves their propaganda against your government and against us. So it is very important that we develop the capabilities that we are doing here, and I wanted to give you this kind of over-arching political framework so that you could see why the United States is so interested in doing it this way.

It is true that we are a generous nation, but it is also true that we have recognized that having you do this work on your own behalf with systems from us is ten times better than us doing the work directly. And so you are seeing a big change in the thinking in the Pentagon [and] in the thinking in Washington along these lines.

There may be time where we will want to do an operation together. There may be times where we will provide what we call the enablers so perhaps some of the intelligence, perhaps some of the long-range transportation, perhaps some of the long-range communications; but when it comes to the actual combat action, the preferable choice is always that the partner nations should do it. And so there are places in the world where we are working on a variety of operations and concepts like this; but in most cases, in all cases, we are looking for the partners to be at the very front of the operation.

This school is a particularly interesting piece of the partnership capacity building family because this school is seeking to train the trainer; and I call this partnership capacity building with a bounce, meaning that if we train one person and that person goes back and works on a special boat, we have one person trained. But if we train the schoolhouse, if we work with the schoolhouse from Colombia or Kenya, then that schoolhouse goes home and trains hundreds of other people in these same capabilities and this is a model that we need to use more frequently because it expands the training method tremendously at a very reasonable cost.

There is a saying in assistance language:

If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day; if you teach a man to fish . . . you feed him for life.

This school is teaching people to fish and teaching schools to teach fishing is a very important factor.

This also expands the impact of the partnership capacity effort because now you have the most important criteria for the training apparatus. The partner nation's school owns their school. So they have ownership; and they have political buy-in that makes this not a United States enterprise, but a Colombian enterprise, a Filipino enterprise, a Kenyan enterprise, an Indonesian enterprise, and the like. Ownership of the school and what is being taught is extremely important. Secondly, it gives you pride and pride in being able to build your own military and law enforcement capabilities [is] extremely important.

- It is important on a national basis
- It is important on a regional basis
- It is important for your interaction with your parliament to get money and support
- It is important everywhere
- It also gives the enterprise duration

If the United States gives a country some boats and some training in 2006 and we do not go back and there is no ownership, by 2008 or 2009, the training has gone—the boat is in disrepair, and in

[many] ways we may have wasted our money. But if you own the school and you are invested, you will figure out a way to work with this—the sustaining, the training, and the boats. Finally, in the end you can become self-sufficient which is, of course, the goal. And if you are self-sufficient, the United States only has to work with you once in awhile. And our goal, our hope is that you will become a regional teacher because you understand the regional aspects of what’s going on far better than we do. Understanding the trafficking and the waters between the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia—those three countries understand the legal traffickers and the illegal traffickers in that huge piece of water way better than the United States will ever understand it. So that is another one of our goals.

And with that I would just like to close. I applaud all of the partners for their efforts here. I do hope that we will have another symposium like this next year, either here or in a partner nation. I would encourage you when you leave to keep in contact with the fellow students that you have here, both locally and on a regional basis. Last night I talked with the leadership here for a little bit about figuring out how to do an internet-based network community of interest so that all of us could communicate from time to time in the future, so that, as a new curriculum is developed, we could put it on the web site, you could teach it. My goal is to take this process and build a community of interest focused on riverine and littoral maritime government’s capabilities and expand that outward, and I very much appreciate the fact that you have come here. We look forward to continuing to interface with you; and we hope that as we build this enterprise we will expand that footprint of government out so that we can do a much better job of [keeping] intricate and non-state active traffickers out, of all kinds, that operate in these waters. With that, it [has] been a great pleasure to be here with you today and last night; and I think we need to celebrate the 10th anniversary.