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# **The Jordan Model: Coming Soon to a United States Embassy Near You**

**By  
Russell Crumrine  
Assistant Professor  
United States Army Command and General Staff College**

The promulgation of Department of Defense Directive (DoDD) 5105.75, dated December 21, 2007, will result in major changes in the leadership of Security Cooperation Offices and Defense Attaché Offices in U.S. diplomatic missions (embassies); coordination of security cooperation programs and activities with geographic combatant commands (GCCs); and, potentially, relations with host country militaries and officials. The directive establishes the position of Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché (SDO/DATT). The SDO/DATT will essentially be triple “hatted,” fulfilling the traditional responsibilities of the U.S. Defense Attaché (DATT), Chief of the Security Cooperation Organization (CSCO),<sup>1</sup> and the additional duties traditionally associated with the designation of U.S. Defense Representative (USDR). The Department of Defense (DOD) policy is to insure unified DOD representation in U.S. embassies in the accomplishment of national security objectives.<sup>2</sup> The SDO/DATT will be the “principal DOD official in a U.S. embassy, as designated by the Secretary of Defense. The SDO/DATT is the Chief of Mission’s (COM) principal military advisor on defense and national security issues, the senior diplomatically-accredited DOD military officer assigned to a diplomatic mission, and the single point of contact for all DOD matters involving the embassy or DoD elements assigned to or working from the embassy.”<sup>3</sup>

The implementation of the SDO/DATT concept is complex and involves numerous DOD secretaries and agencies, the Joint Staff, GCCs, the military services, and the Department of State (DOS) tackling a myriad of issues and a multiyear implementation timeline. Addressing the full scope and scale of the SDO/DATT concept and its implementation is outside the scope of this article. This article will highlight some of the background related to the creation of the SDO/DATT position and the duties and responsibilities of the SDO/DATT and offer some thoughts and comments on the SDO/DATT position from four perspectives—the diplomatic mission (COM/ambassador), GCC, host country, and the security cooperation and defense attaché offices. Recognizing that the scale and scope of security cooperation programs vary from country to country, as do the in-country U.S. military organizations/offices and personnel to manage and coordinate them, this article focuses on having separate security cooperation and defense attaché offices as part of a U.S. diplomatic mission.

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1. The term Security Cooperation Organization (SCO) is used to refer to military assistance advisory groups, offices of defense cooperation, offices of military cooperation, et al. located within a foreign country, regardless of organizational title or name, carrying out the coordination and management of security cooperation programs and activities. This definition is in keeping with DoD Directive 5132.03, *DoD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to Security Cooperation*, dated October 24, 2008. SCO replaces the previously common term Security Assistance Organization (SAO) used generically to refer to these organizations and offices.

2. U.S. Department of Defense, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, and Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence, Department of Defense Directive 5105.75, *Department of Defense Operations at U.S. Embassies* (Washington, D.C., December 2007), 2.

3. U.S. Department of Defense, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Department of Defense Directive 5132.03, *DoD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to Security Cooperation* (Washington, D.C., October 2008), 11..

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Prior to the creation of the SDO/DATT position and implementation of this new change, Defense Attaché Offices (DAO) and Security Cooperation Offices (SCO) in U.S. embassies were generally separate military entities with separate leadership. Each office functioned under the responsibility of the U.S. ambassador/COM. Each office fulfilled different missions and responsibilities; was governed by different laws, legal authorities, policies, and directives; and had separate military and civilian personnel staffing. The Defense Attaché headed the DAO, while a designated senior officer, normally referred to here as the Chief, lead the SCO. Additionally, until DOD issued DoDD 5105.75, one of these officers was appointed as the U.S. Defense Representative (USDR). In accordance with the now rescinded DoDD 5105.47 and DOD Instruction (DoDI) 5105.57, the USDR represented the Secretary of Defense and GCC for coordinating administrative and security matters for noncombatant command DOD personnel in country.<sup>4</sup> In exercising directive authority over DOD noncombatant command personnel in emergencies, the USDR did not preempt the ambassador's/COM's authority over DOD noncombatant command personnel or the GCC's command authority over DOD personnel.<sup>5</sup> The USDR's responsibilities included coordinating diplomatic mission support for DOD elements on temporary duty in or deployed to the host country and providing information on in-country activities for DOD noncombatant command personnel/units.<sup>6</sup> Bottom line—the USDR was responsible for coordinating and overseeing the force protection requirements of DoD personnel and elements inside the host country which did not fall under the force protection responsibility of the ambassador/COM.

The concept of having a single officer serve as the DATT, CSCO, and USDR is not new. This triple “hatting” concept is often referred to within the security cooperation community as the “Jordan Model.” In the U.S. Embassy in Jordan, the Defense Attaché also serves as Chief Military Assistance Program (MAP) Jordan and USDR. The SDO/DATT is essentially the Jordan Model. It must be noted that in the embassy in Jordan the DAO and SCO (MAP) are separate offices; the SDO/DATT concept does not call for consolidating the offices, only the top leadership position.<sup>7</sup>

Proposals for consolidation of SCO and DAO leadership were periodically raised during the 1990s and early 2000s. These proposals were not widely or universally supported and often encountered resistance from GCCs, the military services, and DOD agencies for a variety of reasons and concerns. The primary impetus for implementing the SDO/DATT concept appears to have come primarily from ambassadors and the office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence. Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld finally approved implementation of the concept and promulgation of the requisite DOD policy directives and instructions.<sup>8</sup>

With the consolidation of the DATT and CSCO into one billet and individual (the SDO/DATT), the selection and training requirements for individuals to fill SDO/DATT billets will change in accordance with DoDD 5105.75. The military services nominate officers for each SDO/DATT billet. The services' nominations are reviewed by the:

- Director, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)

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4. U.S. Department of Defense, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Department of Defense Directive 5105.47, *U.S. Defense Representative (USDR) in Foreign Countries* (Washington, D.C., January 1992), 2.

5. U.S. Department of Defense, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Department of Defense Instruction 5105.57, *Procedures for the U.S. Defense Representative (USDR) in Foreign Countries* (Washington, D.C., December 1995), 4.

6. *Ibid.*, 5.

7. DoDD 5105.75, 3.

8. Bill Ellis, DSCA, e-mail message to author, June 29, 2009.

- Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA)
- Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS)
- Appropriate Geographic Combatant Command

DIA and Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), with Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and GCC concurrence, forward nominations for approval to the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy (USDP) and Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence (USDI). Once approved by USDP and USDI, each SDO/DATT receives a Letter of Appointment issued by the Secretary of Defense and a Letter of Introduction to the COM. (Representative generic Letter of Appointment and Letter of Introduction based upon actual appointment and introductory letters are on the next page.) Besides the Secretary of Defense's letter, the CJCS provides the appropriate host country military counterpart with information introducing the SDO/DATT as DOD's senior diplomatic representative to the host country.<sup>9</sup> In light of the fact that in many countries the host country military establishment has been



**Figure 1**  
**Secretary of Defense Generic Letter of Appointment of Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché**

Colonel John Q. Public, USAF  
U.S. Defense Attaché Office Bandaria  
Washington, D.C. 20521-7777

Date

Dear Colonel Public:

You are hereby appointed SDO/DATT in the Republic of Bandaria. As SDO/DATT, you are the principal Department of Defense official at the American Embassy in Bandaria and my representative to the Ambassador and the government of Bandaria. You will represent the geographic combatant command, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) to the U.S. embassy country team and the host nation. Congratulations on your selection to serve in this key position.

I charge you with the overall direction and management of the Defense Attaché Office and the Office of Military Cooperation (OMC) and the coordination of U.S. defense issues and activities in Bandaria in accordance with DoD Directive 5105.75 and DoD Instruction 5105.81. I expect you to provide strong and ethical leadership and to set the standard for personal excellence.

You will receive guidance and instructions from DIA on your duties as the Defense Attaché and from the geographic combatant command and DSCA on your duties as Chief, OMC. The Office of the Secretary of Defense will provide additional policy guidance as required. You will communicate regularly with your geographic combatant command, DIA, and DSCA to address the multi-faceted equities of each.

As you prepare for your mission, remember you are representing an important and integral part of the U.S. foreign policy process. I wish you great personal and professional success as you embark on this challenging assignment.

Sincerely,  
//SIGNED//  
Secretary of Defense



**Figure 2**  
**Secretary of Defense Generic Letter of Introduction of Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché to U.S. Ambassador**

Honorable Jane Smith  
American Embassy Bandaria  
Washington, D.C. 20521-7777

Dear Madam Ambassador:

This letter introduces Colonel John Q. Public, United States Air Force, whom I appointed as the Senior Defense Official (SDO) and Defense Attaché (DATT) to your embassy. As the SDO/DATT, Colonel Public is my representative to you and, subject to your authority as Chief of Mission, the diplomatic representative of the Defense Department to the government of Bandaria. I urge you to take full advantage of Colonel Public's expertise and resources as your principal military advisor.

Colonel Public is an exceptionally experienced and qualified officer, in whom I place my full trust and confidence. He commanded United States Air Force organizations in combat and in peace with success and served with distinction as a member of the Air Staff. I commend Colonel Public to you as an officer who will serve the interests of both the Department of Defense and the Department of State.

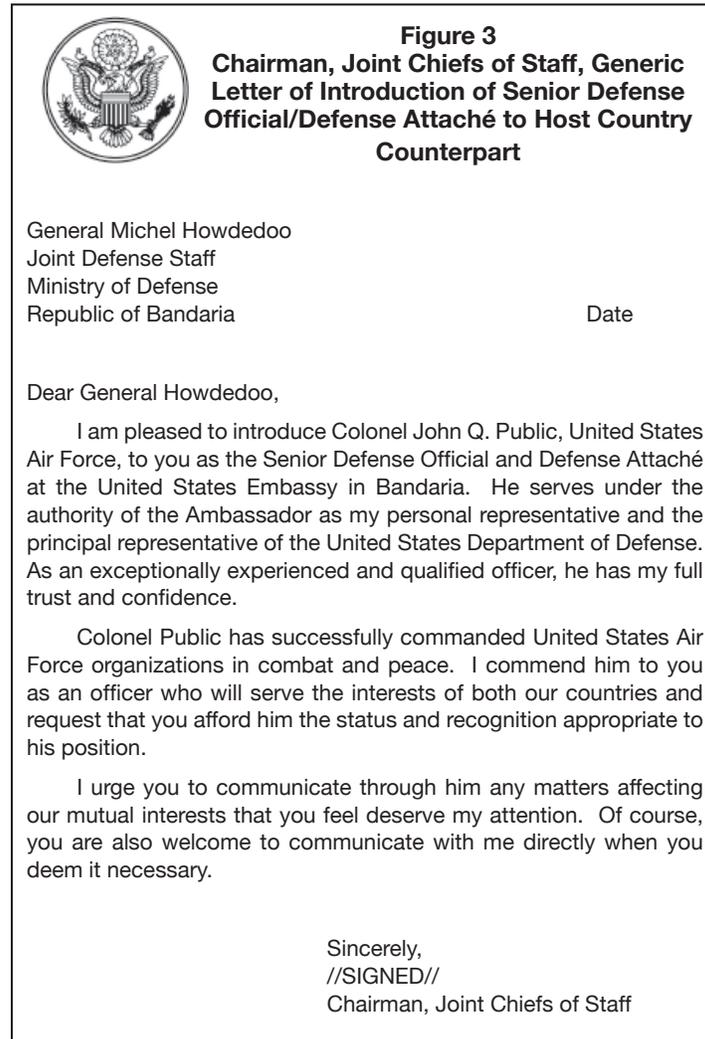
I urge you to communicate through him any matters affecting our mutual interests that you feel deserve my attention. Of course, you are welcome to communicate with me directly for those matters you feel are appropriate.

Sincerely,  
//SIGNED//  
Secretary of Defense

9. DoDD 5105.75, 7.

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dealing with both a DATT and CSCO, these appointment and introduction efforts will likely be key to acquainting host country civilian and military leaders to this new representational and responsibility paradigm.



Whereas in the past the DATT and CSCO had separate and distinct responsibilities, an officer serving as the SDO/DATT will be responsible for performing all of these responsibilities. In accordance with DoDD 5105.75 and DoDI 5132.13, the SDO/DATT will:

- Serve as Defense Attaché and Chief of Security Cooperation
- Be the primary point of contact for planning, coordinating, supporting, and executing DOD issues and activities with the host country including the geographic GCC's Theater Security Cooperation Program
- Be the principal liaison between U.S. diplomatic mission (embassy) and host country defense/military establishment and participate in development and coordination of national security and operational policy
- Serve as the principal in-country DOD diplomatic representative of the Secretary of Defense and DOD components
- Serve as single DOD point of contact and advisor to the U.S. ambassador/COM

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- Coordinate on behalf of the Secretary of Defense and geographic GCC administrative and security related matters for all DOD personnel in country not under the GCC
  - Exercise Coordinating Authority over DOD personnel and elements under COM authority<sup>10</sup>
  - Recommend proposed changes to SCO joint manning to COM and geographic GCC
  - Execute other assigned duties and responsibilities specified in applicable DOD, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and GCC classified policy directives and instructions

Just as DATT and CSCO billets and responsibilities were separate and distinct, each of the officers also received different training. Officers selected to serve as a SDO/DATT will now be required to complete training applicable to serving as an attaché as well as managing security cooperation activities and programs. A direct result of this required training is that the services must nominate officers for SDO/DATT billets much earlier to facilitate completion of all required training which will require more time. Completion of the required training could conceivably take up to 1-2 years which may include language training.

DoDD 5105.75 provides general guidance on the minimum training officers selected to serve as SDO/DATTs are to receive. Specific training will be programmed based upon country of assignment but may include the following:

- Joint Military Attaché School course for attaché training (About 13 weeks)
- DISAM course for security cooperation overview (About 1-3 weeks depending on specific course—SDO/DATTs may attend the Security Cooperation Management Overseas course or the Security Cooperation Management Executive Course for General Officer/Flag Level)
- Force protection (Up to two weeks)
- Language and cultural training/refresher training (About 1-18 months depending on language and previous language training)
- Consultations with DOD agencies, Office of Secretary of Defense staff elements, Joint Staff, DOS, and other appropriate U.S. Government agencies (About 1-5 weeks depending on country and complexities and scope of U.S. interests, objectives, and programs and activities)
- Consultations with appropriate geographical GCC (About one week)

Based upon my experiences performing security cooperation duties in the Military Assistance Program (MAP) in Jordan, at a GCC, and at DISAM, I offer some thoughts and comments concerning the SDO/DATT concept. These comments are not all inclusive, nor do they address many of the other relevant issues and challenges for consolidating DAO and SCO leadership. I believe it is worthwhile to consider the SDO/DATT from four perspectives:

- The diplomatic mission (ambassador/COM)
- GCC
- Host country

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10. Which DoD personnel and elements fall under the Chief of Mission's authority and the specific guidelines of this authority are generally outlined in the *Foreign Service Act of 1980* as amended, the *Foreign Assistance Act of 1961* as amended, the *Diplomatic Security Act of 1986*, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of State and the Department of Defense on Security of DoD Elements and Personnel in Foreign Areas.

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- The Security Cooperation Office/Defense Attaché Office

For the diplomatic mission and especially the ambassador/COM, the SDO/DATT provides what many ambassadors desire—a single individual responsible for advising and informing on all DOD activities and programs in the country. A coordinated, consensual DOD position on U.S. national security interests and objectives with respect to the host country should result. Consolidated leadership of the two offices, the DAO and SCO, should also benefit the COM by resulting in unity of effort between the two DOD offices. Friction and “turf battles” between the two offices, often between the DATT and CSCO, had unfortunately occurred from time to time. Having a single senior DOD leader mitigates this friction.

While there are advantages to having an SDO/DATT, there are also some potential cautions or concerns for COM to consider. First is the recognition that the SDO/DATT will be responsible for some distinctly different and separate responsibilities as an attaché and a security cooperation officer. COMs need to recognize that depending on the scope and complexity of the military relationship and programs and activities with the host country, the SDO/DATT may be challenged to balance competing priorities and issues. The learning curve for new SDO/DATTs, even those with a previous tour as either an attaché or security cooperation officer, may be steeper than if the officer only had to fulfill one “hat’s” responsibilities instead of three as the SDO/DATT.

GCCs also gain a single military point of contact in the diplomatic missions located within the GCC’s area of responsibility. With the GCC as the Senior Rater/Concurrent Reporting Senior/Reviewing Officer for SDO/DATTs, the SDO/DATTs will be very responsive to GCC requirements and priorities, including security cooperation plans, programs and activities, contingency and operational planning, and GCC intelligence requirements.<sup>11</sup> Previously the GCC Commander, or more likely a designated staff section Director (e.g., J4, J5), was in the rating chain of CSCOs but not DATTs except for the DATT/Chief MAP in Jordan. Synchronization and coordination of the GCC’s and DOD’s military security cooperation programs, activities, other programs, and objectives with the other agencies at a diplomatic mission in the Mission Strategic Plan should also be enhanced under the unified SDO/DATT leadership structure.

The designation of the additional duty of United States Defense Representative (USDR) also led at times to friction between the DATT and CSCO in an embassy. Anecdotally this was often the result of “personality clashes” between the incumbents. The SDO/DATT concept eliminates these conflicts. It enhances the coordination and oversight of force protection and security requirements for all DOD personnel in the country, both under the COM responsibility and especially under GCC responsibility. For the GCCs and DOD as well, there will no longer be a requirement to evaluate and recommend appointment of either the DATT or the CSCO as the USDR. The SDO/DATT fulfills the formerly distinct USDR responsibilities.

Security cooperation personnel assigned to a diplomatic mission play key roles in planning, coordinating, and facilitating the execution of security cooperation programs and activities in support of the GCC’s Theater Security Cooperation Plan and DOD. In doing so, access to and interfacing with host country civilian and military leaders and interlocutors is critical. This is especially true for the SDO/DATT as the senior U.S. military representative in the country. The SDO/DATT’s access to and relationship with host country representatives may be a potential issue from the GCC’s perspective and also the perspective of the host country; this will most likely be in countries where the U.S.

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11. The Defense Intelligence Agency Director serves as the rater for Senior Defense Officials/Defense Attachés.

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maintained separate attaché and security cooperation offices. The intelligence related connotations of the duties and responsibilities of the DATT are the concern.

A somewhat commonly accepted perception is that U.S. security cooperation personnel often had more access and fewer administrative and travel restrictions imposed on them by the host country than did U.S. military attachés. Anecdotally this results from the perception that attachés focus on overt intelligence gathering since they work for the DIA. Whether or not this is accurate or not, how host country representatives view the SDO/DATT is important. SDO/DATTs will need to insure that host country representatives do not perceive them with an intelligence collection stereotype. The first SDO/DATTs appointed must endeavor to help their host nation counterparts and interlocutors understand the full range of the SDO/DATT's responsibilities; how the SDO/DATT concept may benefit their country; and foster strong, mutually beneficial, respectful relationships. The CJCS's letter of introduction supports these efforts. SDO/DATTs should also appreciate that the perception and relationships they develop and how they fulfill their now combined responsibilities are critical to the environment and foundation they create for their successors. The success of DATTs/MAP Chiefs in Jordan and receptivity of Jordanian civilian and military leaders during the past thirty plus years exemplify the potential of the SDO/DATT concept.

Having a single officer in charge of both the DAO and SCO also has some implications for the internal management and functioning of the two separate offices. Unity of command of the DAO and SCO ought to facilitate unity of effort between the two offices and foster appreciation by each of the roles, responsibilities, objectives, and priorities of the other. Reflecting on service in MAP Jordan, I offer the following five initial observations.

Central to the effective and efficient operation of each of these two separate offices is the SDO/DATT's balancing of the different competing missions, programs, activities, and priorities. In larger diplomatic missions with robust SCOs and programs, such as Office of Military Cooperation Cairo or Office of Defense Cooperation Turkey, this balancing act will likely be more challenging and more important. The SDO/DATT must balance workload between two offices and endeavor to not become too focused on either intelligence matters or security cooperation matters, especially through personal bias or preference. Shifting priorities will obviously require the SDO/DATT to become decisively engaged for short periods of time in either the DAO or SCO. The SCO preparing for an annual or biennial security cooperation meeting, such as a Joint Military Commission, is an example of when the SDO/DATT's workload balance will shift more toward the SCO at the expense of the DAO.

This need to balance workload, shifting priorities, and the broad scope of responsibilities and programs highlights the importance of having a deputy or principal in both the SCO and DAO to manage the overall functioning and operations of each office. The deputy/principal would be analogous to the Executive Officer (XO) and Operations Officer (S3) in a unit such as a battalion. In support of the Commander, each oversees and manages specific aspects of the battalion's mission and operations which fall under their purview. In the case of the SCO and DAO, this will include the specific programs, activities, and responsibilities of their respective office, as well as coordinating and communicating with other members of the diplomatic mission Country Team, host country government and military establishment, GCC staff, appropriate U.S. Government departments, and DOD agencies and representing the SDO/DATT as required.

Representing the SDO/DATT is another important point for the SDO/DATT's consideration. Specifically, in the absence of the SDO/DATT, who represents the two offices with the COM and on the Country Team? There is not an obvious one size fits all solution. A number of factors will likely

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inform the SDO/DATT's decision. These factors may include the COM's preference, the experience of the individuals, specific issues that the Country Team may be discussing at the time, as well as other factors identified by the SDO/DATT. The SDO/DATT must insure that this situation does not become a point of contention or friction between the two offices or individuals within the SCO and DAO.

As noted previously, shifting priorities will at times require the SDO/DATT to be decisively engaged or more focused on matters being worked within one of the two offices. SCO and DAO personnel should anticipate that action on issues and matters requiring the SDO/DATT's review or approval may therefore be slowed when the SDO/DATT is engaged with higher priorities in the other office. Unforeseen issues and actions will occur; proactive planning around scheduled major events and activities such as attaché conferences, security cooperation conferences, distinguished visitor visits, and host country events can facilitate the SDO/DATT's review and approval of matters in a timely fashion.

Finally, access to the SDO/DATT may be a challenge. The SDO/DATT's workload and schedule are one issue. Access or ease of access may be complicated by location and proximity of the SCO and DAO offices. Even when the SCO and DAO offices are located within the embassy, they are, as a general rule, physically separated with distinct requisite security safeguards such as cipher locks, cameras, and access control rosters. Access becomes even more challenging in those countries where the SCO is located separately from the embassy, such as on a host country military installation. When the DATT and CSCO were separate positions, this geographic separation did not create significant problems since the CSCO worked from the SCO. The combined concept complicates access to the SDO/DATT and creates more inconvenience for SCO personnel since the SDO/DATT's office will likely be located within the embassy chancery. This is not an insurmountable problem, but the SDO/DATT and SCO personnel will need to mitigate these challenges. Whether both offices are located within the embassy or in separate facilities, "going to see the boss" will require an appreciation of these local security arrangements and conditions and development of local procedures to facilitate access to the SDO/DATT within required security procedures and protocols.

In offering some thoughts and insights about the SDO/DATT concept, there are some other important relevant points from the perspectives of DSCA, DIA, GCCs, and diplomatic missions that are not addressed in this article. These points include budgeting, housing, official vehicle, representational funding, other required support items and costs, joint manning documentation, travel costs, and temporary duty costs for training to list a few. Successful resolution of these and other administrative and logistical issues for each SDO/DATT billet is critical to the successful implementation of the SDO/DATT concept worldwide. They may pose the most frustrating and difficult problems for DSCA, DIA, the GCCs, and diplomatic missions to resolve during the next couple of years.

The SDO/DATT concept modeled after the structure of the multi-hatted DATT and MAP Chief in Jordan has both opportunities and challenges for the effective leadership and functioning of Defense Attaché Offices and Security Cooperation Organizations. This article has briefly highlighted some background of the concept and foundational policy aspects for this paradigm shift and the duties and responsibilities of the SDO/DATT. Some thoughts and insights considering the concept from the perspective of the COM, GCC, host country, and internally to the DAO and SCO were also provided. The concept has worked successfully in Jordan during the past thirty years, a credit to those officers who served as the Defense Attaché and Chief of the Military Assistance Program, the diplomats

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who served as the COM, and the cooperative professional relationship engendered by the Jordanian civilian and military leaders. The challenge for designated SDO/DATTs and COM, supported by DOD leaders and agencies, DOS, and GCCs, is to work with civilian and military leaders in host countries to lay the foundation for the long term success of SDO/DATTs in every country where separate DAOs and SCOs currently exist.

### **Author's Note**

Thank you to Mr. Bill Ellis of DSCA for providing some of the background information on the development and approval of the SDO/DATT concept and ongoing implementation efforts.

### **About the Author**

Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Russell Crumrine is an Assistant Professor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in the Department of Joint, Interagency, and Multinational Operations. He holds a Bachelor's Degree from Bowling Green State University and a Master's from the University of Louisville. He served on active duty in the U.S. Army as a Field Artillery Officer and as a Middle East Foreign Area Officer. As an FAO, his security cooperation assignments include serving as the Joint Actions Officer for U.S. Central Command in the Military Assistance Program, American Embassy in Jordan; International Programs Manager for Middle East and North Africa, Turkey, and Greece, Directorate of Logistics and Security Assistance (J4), U.S. European Command, Stuttgart, Germany; and as Director of Academic Support and Middle East Seminar Director, DISAM, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. He was also designated a Joint Specialty Officer.