

# Long Range Planning: Maximizing the Benefits of Security Assistance

By

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The need for good, solid planning has never been more vital than now if we and our security assistance partners are to realize the maximum benefit from the program.

When I first decided to do an article on "Planning," I naively envisioned being able to generate a checklist of some sort to pass on to SAOs which would assist them and their counterparts in formulating sound, viable, long range security assistance plans which maximize the effective use of available funds and resources. Obviously, I had forgotten everything I had learned during my tour in an SAO and, for that matter, what is taught at DISAM.

Each and every country security assistance plan is by necessity unique. Security assistance planning is a dynamic, case-by-case process which defies standardization. To begin with, we are dealing with a large number of countries which have a variety of needs, resources, and planning capabilities. Our security assistance partners "run the full spectrum from treaty allies to non-aligned countries, from wealthy to economically dependent, and from militarily and technologically sophisticated to those in need of basic military advice. This diversity would challenge any single framework." [1]

Much of our ability to conduct long-range planning depends on the level of access enjoyed by the SAO. But even when the dialogue is excellent and candid, there are uncertainties on both sides which tend to hinder the best laid plans. On the U.S. side, there are the problems of financing, equipment releasability, cost, and the political situation. Washington guidance may be absent or unclear. On the Host Country side there may be cash-flow problems, a lack of a cohesive national strategy, a desire to avoid a world-image of being a U.S. lackey, and differing goals among officials of the the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Finance. Moreover, countries which are engaged in actual conflicts or are at a very fundamental stage of unit organization must keep their best people out with units rather than in headquarters turning out paper.

Does this mean that we should just give up and not even attempt long-range or forward planning? Of course not. There is a lot we can do to improve the situation. But first, let us review some basics. To begin with, what is meant by national security planning? Generally speaking, we are talking about a process whereby a country identifies its tactical and strategic requirements and then develops a systematic program to procure the necessary equipment, services, and training to meet those requirements in a timely but affordable fashion. Such procurements can be made indigenously, offshore or in combination thereof. When we talk about U.S. security assistance

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planning with a country, we are referring to our part in assisting the country attain its national goals. When we become involved through joint planning and financial assistance, U.S. goals and desires must also become a consideration. General U.S. goals can be briefly summarized as follows:

- Safeguard the U.S., its allies and its friends from aggression and coercion.
- Limit or balance Soviet gains, and if possible, roll back their advances.
- Isolate regional troublemakers and exporters of violence.
- Foster close relations to achieve and maintain stability.
- Develop and preserve democratic institutions and practices.

As we enter into a security assistance relationship to attain these goals, other benefits accrue to the United States.

- In many countries, the military-to-military security assistance discussions are the most concrete relationship between the U.S. and that country because it results in tangible programs. Security assistance planning is a door opener to future, improved bilateral relations (if the security assistance relationship is a positive one and the programs successful). And to the extent to which planning can build a consensus between a country's objectives and those of the U.S., the closer the basic relationship will become and the more intense the dialogue will be on broader policy issues.

- Planning security assistance programs together can result in an improvement in the inter-operability of forces because countries like standard U.S. equipment and want to stay standard. This includes not only the interoperability of U.S. forces with a given country but interoperability among all the friendly forces within a region.

Obviously, a certain amount of planning is always basic to significant cases. If there weren't any, a DD Form 1513 would never be written. The question to ask is whether the planning one is involved in is *reactive* or *forward*. The following are three common examples of situations which result in the need for reactive planning.

- U.S. (and often indigenous) funds are available, but no one knows quite how to employ them.
- U.S. equipment is already on hand, but long term support has not been planned and/or required training has not been programmed.
- Procurements may have been made quickly (perhaps in response to a crisis) or in large quantities without adequate thought toward funding, and payment requirements subsequently become overwhelming.

In many instances, the need for reactive planning as outlined above can be decreased, if not eliminated, through the use of forward planning which may be defined as a candid dialogue between the appropriate representatives of the U.S. Government and the Host Government. Such a dialogue should produce the following: a mutually agreed to threat is defined; affordable, cost effective countermeasures to the threat, which can be integrated into the existing or anticipated force structure, are identified; and a systematic program is set up within the constraints of a realistic budget to acquire the countering capability in a timely fashion. When procurement from U.S. sources is desired, the following must also be considered: releasability, availability, and anticipated lead times; requirements for immediate and long term maintainability and supportability during both peace and conflict; and the need for requisite training plans which match not only initial acquisition schedules but also reflect expected requirements for the lifetime of the equipment.

The extent to which the U.S. Government is able to take part in this planning process differs with every country and is dependent on many of the factors discussed earlier such as bilateral relations and accessibility as well as, quite often, our ability to compromise on such issues as the differing environment and infrastructure in which U.S. equipment must function. One fact of which we must never lose sight is that the country is responsible for its own security. For any plan to ultimately work, it must be the country's plan in which it decides its own priorities and requirements. Any attempt on our part to force priorities is irritating at the least and potentially fatal to bilateral relationships in the extreme. "Impatience on our part for positive changes should be tempered by the realization that a given people and culture cannot change overnight, however desirable such change may be. This is cultural imposition and arrogance. It is also unrealistic." [2]

Now that we have defined forward planning, and have identified its importance, let us next examine the elements which enter into country planning.

What is planned? The answer depends on the extent of country sophistication, the infrastructure in place, and the extent of country experience with security assistance processes. To illustrate, military assistance to El Salvador necessarily began with basic infantry equipment and training. Then, the U.S. provided transport vehicles, medical equipment and training, and larger-caliber arms. From there, we expanded to communications in an integrated command, control, and communications system, and to a logistics and maintenance infrastructure. All capabilities had to be carefully developed through a step-by-step process.

At the other end of the spectrum are countries with highly developed military establishments. In Egypt and Pakistan, for example our emphasis is on total packages for particular cases. Equipment, spares, training, and maintenance capability are introduced for each system modernized. Intermediate countries are those where previously purchased U.S. equipment is in place and in use. The first requirement is to ensure adequate support of that equipment before undertaking selected purchases for modernization. This kind of planning is characteristic in countries such as Morocco and Tunisia. [3]

Who does the planning on the U.S. side? SAOs will find that, for newly-instituted programs or upon some other decisive change in relations, people from Washington and the Unified Command will be doing all the work and grabbing all the glory. But the SAO is *never* excluded; he gets to make all the arrangements and gets to do the follow-up. The SAO also gets to do the planning with the country in the case of old, established relationships or where the program is mostly sustainment and logistic systems, etc., must be planned and executed.

Let us now explore how we could go about improving forward planning. May I suggest that one of the first steps to be taken by the SAO is to evaluate how (and whether) the host country plans. Then, the SAO must consider its ability to influence or "plug into" that process at a meaningful node. The following is a list of questions, the answers to which may help SAO personnel assess their knowledge of a host country's planning capabilities and whether the SAO has a fighting chance of influencing the process.

- Is there one central agency with which integrated plans can be discussed or is the SAO limited to talking only to individual services?
- Does one service dominate all others?
- What authority does the military have to commit credit loans or MAP grants to particular FMS cases?

- Where is the real seat of host country authority (not just what is reflected in "wiring diagrams") when it comes to planning and budgeting? Is the SAO "wired" into that seat of authority?
- Does the host country have an adequate budget to go beyond salaries and operations?
- What is the major source of host government funds and how stable is that source? For example, is tourism the major source of revenues? If so, is the level of tourism being affected adversely by new emergent events such as terrorism? Are revenues dependent on the export of one or two products? If so, what do future revenues look like?
- Are internal political decisions generally made with or without funding considerations--that is, is there going to be trouble down the road when bills become due?
- Does the SAO know how a country is going to pay for an acquisition? Is it by credit, MAP, national funds, or some combination thereof?
- Is the SAO aware of what the host country is procuring from other off-shore sources and how these procurements are integrated into any plan?
- Will the infrastructure support the desired acquisitions?
- What is their track record in making what they buy work for them?
- What is the acquisition policy for major systems? Is it driven as much by politics as by military need?
- Does the SAO only receive a "wish list" with no apparent rationale? If so, can any meaningful information be gleaned from the wish list alone?
- Are plans laid out adequately enough so that prioritization can readily be accomplished by the country?
- Was their plan drawn up to meet real needs or is it only to keep up with their neighbors?
- Is the Total Package Approach promoted by the SAO? Does the host country understand it?
- Does the SAO understand the laws of the country? For example, can the military legally perform multi-year acquisitions?
- How does the host country government view its relationship with the U.S.? How does it want that relationship viewed by other nations in the region, in the world?
- Is there a good dialogue within the Country Team? Is Country Team support evident and articulated to the host country?
- Is our relationship with the country such that we don't really need or care about long, involved integrated plans? Are we there only to maintain a presence, a dialogue?
- What does the country consider more important, the acquisition of new equipment or sustainability?

After answering the above questions, the SAO may well find that it is impossible to have much more of an influence than at present, and that any attempt to push the point would only exasperate the situation. Or, the SAO may find that the country has been doing more planning than previously realized but that the SAO personnel have not been talking to the right people, or for political or cultural reasons, they are just not being informed. Or, the SAO may actually verify that its approach is on the right track and all that must be done is to find a way to convince the host country counterparts to do a better job in long-range planning.

Each country team must determine the best way to approach its counterparts on this topic. But one thing is true in all situations, planning must be done within the existing framework of the host country. As mentioned earlier, for any plan to be accepted and to work, it must be the country's.

Perhaps the greatest reason for joint military planning is the need to make defense procurement decisions based both on funding limitations and on local conditions and local constraints, which may be misinterpreted or ignored in a plan developed solely in the U.S. We may want a country to change its strategy and tactics, but we will not succeed without beginning with a thorough exploration of the current strategy and thinking of that country. This can not be accomplished in a few meetings, but must be developed over years. The strategic dialogue must be pursued week by week at the SAO and country team level, although regular Joint Military Commission meetings (or their equivalent) have a galvanizing effect on planning and coordination on both sides.[4]

For many countries, planning with the U.S. means the development of a multi-year plan. This may be the first such plan the country has produced. Great initial problems and a myriad of misunderstandings are inevitable. Typically, the initial input to a five-year plan consists of a massive wish list. The SAO must be extremely cautious when that first plan is received. It should not be made fun of or scoffed at, as one SAO did several years ago. The results could be disastrous for any future planning. At the same time, weaknesses need to be discussed with counterparts. But most importantly, insure that unrealistic funding support from the U.S. Government is not reflected, implied, or hoped for in such plans. Complete candidness is the watch word.

Such plans allow countries to develop an appreciation for lead times and limits of financing. In short, they may force a country to develop a planning apparatus.

Some Third World countries have approached this high level of sophistication. Some are still at the primitive level where the wish list mentality predominates. Most, of course, inhabit the middle range of sophistication . . . . In some cases a five-year plan may not be possible, especially early in the bilateral military relationship and where the U.S. cannot project budget requests for that country beyond the present year. But, even a short range plan that is carefully programmed can represent a rational "present - able" approach.[5]

Several lessons have emerged from our worldwide efforts in planning security assistance programs, to which recipient countries are increasingly receptive.

- It is important for countries to recognize the full implications of lead times. Given limited U.S. production bases and special order requirements for FMS and MAP-funded acquisitions, it is necessary for countries to buy adequate stocks of spares, munitions, and other consumables. The Special Defense Acquisition Fund (SDAF) is now operating at a sufficient volume to alleviate some lead time problems.

- Where countries are dependent on U.S. funding--the levels and times of which are uncertain--they must design plans and procurement requests so as to make full use of funds in a timely manner in order to confine lead times to production times. Because of these uncertainties, countries should also plan for funding at several levels, with variable programs at each level.[6]

The first step in implementing our concept of planning is to convince the country that what we call "the Total Package Approach" is the best way to work towards meeting their own defense goals. The Total Package means placing equal priority on the supporting infrastructure and the actual equipment to be procured.

Good planning means paying attention to all the details that count, not just weapons and schedules, and dollars. Equally essential links of the chain are strategy, intelligence, war reserves, spares and ammunition, weapon training, maintenance equipment, and training, peacetime and wartime logistics, communications, and command and control. In other words, every important military skill has to be planned for, and become part of planning.[7]

Obviously, knowledge and professionalism are more important now than ever before if we are to prevent the budgeting crisis in which we find ourselves from degrading our security assistance efforts in many countries to the point where bilateral relations are damaged. The development of long-range plans by the SAOs, their counterparts, and the Washington community, conducted in an atmosphere of cooperation, mutual respect, and candor, would not only help to temper the effect of austerity, but could actually improve bilateral rapport and lead to increased cooperation and improvements in our global and regional defense posture.

## ENDNOTES

1. Rudd, Glenn A., "Security Assistance, A Time for A Change--Improved Planning," A paper presented by the Deputy Director, DSAA, at the Pacific Command Security Assistance Conference on 19 November, 1985.
2. Semmel, Andrew J., "The Realities of Third World Assistance Programs," *The DISAM Journal*, Spring 1985, p. 79.
3. "Planning with Countries," *1987 Congressional Presentation Document (CPD)*, Vol. 1, p. 19.
4. Ryan, Michael W.S., "Security Assistance: Planning for Low Intensity Conflict," *The DISAM Journal*, Summer 1985, pp. 77-78.
5. *Ibid.*
6. CPD, *op. cit.*
7. Rudd, *op. cit.*

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