
Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction and Terrorism Through Security Cooperation

By

Stephen G. Rademaker

Acting Assistant Secretary of State, International Security and Nonproliferation

[The following excerpts are extracted from the remarks to the Security Cooperation Strategy Conference, April 6-7, 2006, National Defense University, Washington, D.C., April 6, 2006.]

Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the hands of terrorists would pose a grave security threat to the United States and our allies. We assess that it will be very difficult to deter terrorists from using WMD if they can lay their hands on such weapons.

Therefore, if terrorists acquire weapons of mass destruction, we have to assume they will employ them, with potentially catastrophic effects. To help counter with this growing threat, President Bush released the *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction* in December 2002. This strategy rests on three pillars:

- Counterproliferation to Combat WMD Use;
- Strengthened Nonproliferation to Combat WMD Proliferation; and
- Consequence Management to Respond to WMD Use.

The national strategy recognizes that prevention will not always succeed, and therefore it places great emphasis on protection and counterproliferation, to deter, detect, defend against, and defeat WMD in the hands of our enemies. The strategy also focuses on consequence management, to reduce as much as possible the potentially horrific consequences of WMD attacks at home or abroad

Serving to integrate the three pillars of this strategy are four enabling functions that must be pursued on a priority basis: first, intelligence collection and analysis on WMD, delivery systems, and related technologies; second, research and development to improve our ability to respond to evolving threats; third, bilateral and multilateral cooperation; and fourth, targeted strategies against hostile states and terrorists.

This strategy applies to all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, radiological, chemical, and biological. We recognize, however, that biological weapons in the possession of terrorists would pose a uniquely grave threat to the safety and security of the United States and our allies. Bioterror attacks, unlike other forms of WMD attack, could mimic naturally occurring disease, potentially delaying recognition of an attack and creating uncertainty about whether an attack even occurred. In response to these challenges, President Bush outlined the elements of the U.S. biodefense program in a separate document entitled *Biodefense for the 21st Century*, issued in April 2004. That program has four essential pillars:

- Threat awareness,
- Prevention and protection;
- Surveillance and detection; and
- Response and Recovery.

Good strategies, however, must be effectively implemented by all government agencies in order to achieve the desired results. In this regard, it is important to underscore the unity of effort and purpose that exists between the Department of State and Department of Defense on the important mission of combating WMD terrorism. Last month, President Bush released the new *National Security*

Strategy of the United States. This document made clear our determination to use all elements of national power to counter the threat posed by terrorists armed with WMD. The preferred approach is to convince our adversaries that they cannot achieve their goals with WMD, and thus deter and dissuade them from attempting to use or even acquire these weapons in the first place. With respect to terrorists, however, a comprehensive strategy also requires proactive counterproliferation efforts to defend against and defeat WMD before it is unleashed. Both the diplomatic and military instruments of national power must be brought to bear to successfully prevent, protect against, and respond to the threat or use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists. The *Quadrennial Defense Review* and the Secretary of State's new Transformational Diplomacy initiative both aim to build dynamic foreign partnerships and strengthen the capacity of our foreign partners.

Effective programs and policies are essential to these efforts. Let me briefly outline for you a few of our recent successes, and then explain why we believe partner capacity building is a critical tool in combating WMD terrorism.

The Bush administration has stressed the importance of security cooperation to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. U.S. assistance under Nunn-Lugar and related programs to eliminate weapons and prevent their proliferation has been funded at record levels. Moreover, with the formation in 2002 of the G-8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the United States has persuaded our foreign partners to join us in financing these activities. The G-8 Global Partnership is a prime example of the use of effective multilateralism to combat WMD proliferation. Other efforts to address proliferation threats worldwide include the Global Threat Reduction Initiative to reduce fissile and radioactive material worldwide, and the Second Line of Defense and Megaports programs to install radiation detection capability at major seaports, airports, and border crossings.

The United States spearheaded efforts to persuade the United Nations Security Council to become more active in combating WMD proliferation. A major milestone was the adoption of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1540 in April 2004. In adopting Resolution 1540, the Security Council for only the second time since its creation invoked its Chapter VII authorities to require nations to take steps in response to a general, rather than a specific, threat to international peace and security. In particular, Resolution 1540 requires all states to criminalize WMD proliferation, institute effective export controls, and enhance security for nuclear material.

Another important multilateral effort of the Bush Administration to combat weapons of mass destruction is the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). PSI highlights the close interaction among nonproliferation, counterproliferation, and intelligence. PSI countries have put their diplomatic, military, law enforcement and intelligence assets to work in a multinational, yet flexible, fashion. We and our PSI partners are applying laws already on the books in innovative ways and cooperating as never before to interdict shipments, to disrupt proliferation networks, and to hold accountable the front companies that support them. PSI has now expanded to more than 70 countries, and continues to grow. PSI is not a treaty-based organization, but rather is an active security cooperation partnership to deter, disrupt and prevent WMD proliferation.

The United States is also working with foreign partners to build national and international capacities for combating WMD terrorism. Building and strengthening the capacity of international partners to combat WMD terrorism is a new framework for security cooperation. We are developing plans for building a layered defense in depth to prevent, protect against, and respond to the threat or use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists. For example, we are developing model bilateral information sharing agreements in the areas of nuclear detection, bio-surveillance, and consequence management. These agreements, to be implemented on a voluntary basis, are designed to provide reach back support in the event of a WMD terrorism attack and save valuable hours in government-to-government coordination time that could potentially save thousands of lives. We are also working

on such partner capacity building initiatives as development of a web-based WMD terrorist experts network, and creating a nuclear terrorism campaign within the State Department's Rewards for Justice Campaign that would offer financial rewards to those who turn in terrorists planning acts of nuclear terrorism. Increased information sharing among partner nations will assist partner nations in identification of key domestic, or international, gaps or vulnerabilities that could be detected and then exploited by WMD terrorists. Once these gaps or vulnerabilities are identified, partner nations can work to strengthen the layered defense in depth by taking remedial action. The threat of nuclear terrorism is one of the most dangerous international security challenges we face today. Terrorist acts involving nuclear materials, radioactive substances, or nuclear facilities could bring catastrophic harm to the United States and other members of the international community. In recognition of the seriousness of this threat, we are always looking for new ways to work with other willing partner nations to combat this growing threat around the globe.

Multilateral cooperation among partner nations in order to build a layered defense in depth is the hallmark of our approach. We believe that this innovative and dynamic approach to security cooperation in combating WMD terrorism will prove to be broader, deeper, more flexible, and more effective than the traditional tools of nonproliferation diplomacy alone.