

Stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense shall be prepared to conduct with proficiency equivalent to combat operations.

—DODI 3000.05, “Stability Operations,”
September 16, 2009

Above: Marine waits between flight operations aboard USS *Bataan* in support of Operation *Unified Response*, Haiti

Executive Summary

Department of Defense (DOD) components have been explicitly directed to address and integrate stability operations—related concepts and capabilities across a panorama of doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities, and applicable exercises, strategies, and plans. In this issue, *Joint Force Quarterly* examines current interagency cooperation and strategies under way in the broad and extremely complex category of stability operations.

As delineated in the instruction quoted above, stability operations establish civil security and civil control, restore or provide essential services, repair critical infrastructure, and provide humanitarian assistance. The Armed

Forces of the United States presently support foreign governments, their security forces, and international governmental organizations in disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating former belligerents into civil society, rehabilitating former belligerents and units into legitimate security forces, strengthening governance and the rule of law, and fostering economic stability and development. As one of our Forum authors notes, the conduct of stability operations is the next frontier in jointness, as it is especially dependent on effective partnering at all levels of seniority in mitigating contemporary national security risks. Adroitly integrated civilian and military efforts are essential to mission success.

The Forum kicks off with an essay by noted nationbuilding and Middle East

security expert Dr. Seth Jones, whose recent book, *In the Graveyard of Empires*, is a study confined specifically to aspects of insurgency in Afghanistan. In this related essay, he asserts that U.S. stability and security strategy has been informed more by past experiences rebuilding nations with strong central governmental institutions than the opposite and unique condition in Afghanistan. He makes the case that a successful U.S. counterinsurgency strategy depends on improved cooperation with tribal and other community forces in Afghanistan, while maintaining a direct link to the Afghan government. He begins his argument by emphasizing the importance of protecting the population, a task that necessitates the development of the Afghan National Army and National Police, as well as counters to pervasive corruption with attendant improved governance. The great challenge to overcome is institutionalizing the central government's exclusive reliance on local security forces to establish order in rural areas. The author evaluates the history

control of warlords whose fighters were not loyal to the local communities. He opines that when local forces are small, defensive, and geared toward protecting villages, they are less likely to be hijacked by regional warlords. Dr. Jones concludes by outlining a community defense initiative that needs careful monitoring and shaping by the Afghan government and international community.

Our second installment is from the U.S. Southern Command representative at the U.S. Agency for International Development, Lieutenant Commander C. Spencer Abbot. Commander Abbot observes that Federal agencies have made great strides in strategy, tactics, techniques, and procedures associated with contemporary stability operations, but DOD lags in an area that is glaringly deficient: the development of DOD personnel in interagency partnership and complementary nontraditional stability tradecraft. Just as the Goldwater-Nichols Act was crafted to remedy Service lethargy in preparing military leaders conversant in joint operations, Service action is required now

poses an expansion of the definition of *joint*, specifically a revised interpretation of the 2007 Title 10 legislation redefining joint matters to include all liaison and exchange assignments that occur outside an officer's core competency. Perhaps the most intriguing proposal in this article is an expansion of the U.S. Navy's Career Intermission Pilot Program, which currently allows a small number of personnel to depart Active duty for up to 3 years and return with an adjustment to their date of rank, later reintegrating in a more junior year group after obtaining external education or training unavailable in current joint professional military education. Commander Abbot concludes that continued failure "to prepare to collaborate effectively with other states and confront mutual threats may prove not a paradox, but instead a self-fulfilling prophecy."

The final Forum article is a case study addressing security assistance in the South Caucasus and the complexities involved therein. Dr. Michael Mihalka of the U.S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies and Lieutenant Colonel Mark Wilcox, USA (Ret.), of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College identify three compelling explanations for the failure of democracy in the region before exposing the irony that progress in economic liberalization has actually led to decreased political stability. Reviewing the recent histories of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, their analysis suggests, counter-intuitively, that moving a state along the path from authoritarianism to liberal democracy *increases* the likelihood of external violence unless security concerns are mitigated. The authors hypothesize the extent to which security assistance has contributed to instability in the region and explore the unintended consequences of U.S. aid to Georgia and Armenia. They emphasize that the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization should not calculate the value of security assistance to the treaty organization in isolation, but must instead carefully consider the consequences of such aid for the stability of the wider region. They further predict that civil-military relations in the Caucasus are likely to remain poor, making future security assistance highly problematic. Dr. Mihalka and Colonel Wilcox conclude that the risks involved in future security assistance demand nothing less than a formal risk assessment analogous to an environmental impact statement. **JFQ**

—D.H. Gurney



Marines provide security for food supply truck during relief mission in Léogane, Haiti

U.S. Marine Corps (Alan Addleson)

of local bottom-up (versus Federal top-down) security, a somewhat bifurcated system that improves legitimacy among tribal elements. This effort is what Dr. Jones refers to as a *community defense strategy*, tailored to ultimately orchestrate citizen support against insurgents. Jones points out that the last three decades of warfare in Afghanistan were littered with failed efforts to establish forces under the

to develop the complex operations skills critical to success in today's security environment. The author recommends various changes to officer education programs, personnel assignment policies, and security cooperation programs in order to advance DOD success in stability operations, which rely heavily upon familiarity with and integration of the core competencies of external partners. Commander Abbot pro-