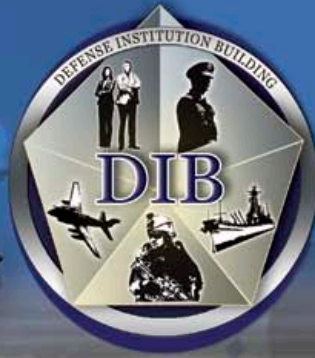


DEFENSE INSTITUTION BUILDING



DEFENSE INSTITUTION BUILDING CONFERENCE

20 - 21 JUNE 2011

CRYSTAL CITY MARRIOTT - ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

DEFENSE INSTITUTION BUILDING CONFERENCE

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ABOUT THIS EVENT

On June 20-21, 2011, the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Partnership Strategy and Stability Operations (PSO) sponsored the Defense Institution Building (DIB) Conference, the first major USG conference devoted solely to this subject. Held in Arlington, Virginia, the Conference brought together more than 180 mid-to senior-level government officials and practitioners representing the stakeholder groups involved in Defense Institution Building.

As defined in Conference materials, DIB encompasses the U.S. and Allied programs, structures, and processes used to develop effective, efficient, and accountable partner defense establishments, to include Ministries of Defense, Joint/General Staffs and Commands, and the supporting institutions of the Armed Forces.

Responding to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates' call to focus on building partner-nation defense institution capacity and capabilities, the two-day Conference was an opportunity for policy-makers, security cooperation professionals, DIB-related providers and practitioners, policy analysts, and representatives of the Combatant Commands and Services to examine DIB challenges, identify strategies and approaches, and discuss how the Department is developing its approach to building defense institutions.

The Conference also served as a launching event for a series of smaller, focused workshops that will refine approaches and establish best practices for use in the field. The overall Conference program solicited participant views and suggestions for future development in the conceptual, programming, and implementation arenas.



Conference sponsorship by DASD Jim Schear, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Partnership Strategy & Stability Operations. Conference design and coordination by Center for Civil-Military Relations staff, Naval Postgraduate School. Writing and editing by Hal Hansen. Cover design by Jesse Darling and Marlon Alojegan. Report layout and graphics by Braden Coolidge. Photography by Olivia Boinet. Copyright © 2011 Center for Civil-Military Relations. All rights reserved. The opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed or implied herein are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Naval Postgraduate School, the US Navy, US Defense Department, or any other agency or organization.



The inaugural DIB Conference consisted of panels like this one on 'DIB Key Concepts and Challenges,' along with functional area breakout sessions, reporting and a keynote address.

Introduction Challenges and Opportunities

In the past decade, the US government has invested substantial resources to develop the tactical and operational capabilities of partner nations, but has not consistently invested in developing the institutional capacities of its partners. In the May/June, 2010 issue of Foreign Affairs, this disparity was noted by then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. "The United States has made great strides in building up the operational capacity of its partners by training and equipping troops and mentoring them in the field," wrote Gates. "But there has not been enough attention paid to building the institutional capacity (such as defense ministries) or the human capital (including leadership skills and attitudes) needed to sustain security over the long term."

In the Conference's keynote speech, Gates' call for increased attention to building partner defense institutional capacity was echoed by Dr. Kathleen Hicks, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Forces in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Dr. Hicks noted the importance of expanding DIB efforts, and urged Conference participants to confront the challenges that must be resolved if the following objectives are to be achieved:

- **Building capable defense institutions;**
- **Strengthening partner nations' human capital in these defense institutions; and**
- **To enable the first two goals, improving the Defense Department's internal ability to do this kind of work and do it well.**

"In the coming two days of this groundbreaking Conference," said Dr. Hicks, "you will examine each of these challenges. I thank you in advance for sharing your knowledge, experience, and work as we look to strengthen our DIB focus and capacity."

An increased capacity to engage in DIB could yield substantial benefits for the United States and its partners, such as a direct enhancement of security and stability, sustainment of U.S. security cooperation investments, building bilateral relationships—particularly between ministries—and strengthening civil-military relations and rule of law.

Referencing the most recent Quadrennial Defense Review, Dr. Hicks noted in her opening remarks that “our interconnected world means that the security of the United States is directly affected by the strength and durability of our allies and partners. And in turn, allied strength is a function of institutional strength. Coalitions cannot operate effectively across the globe on a foundation of ineffective institutions.” More broadly, increased security within a partner country can be a key pre-requisite of overall growth and stability, which reinforces the strength of our partners.

Another potential benefit to increasing DIB efforts was noted by Dr. James Schear, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Partnership Strategy and Stability Operations. In his remarks at the beginning of the Conference, Dr. Schear observed, “With those countries where we have spent enormous amounts on equipping and training, we are looking for a way to sustain our investment.”

The importance of sustaining US investments was also noted by Kevin O’Keefe, the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Plans, Programs and Operations in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. “DIB efforts are important and we support them,” said O’Keefe. “First, we’d like to sustain the investment we’re making in partner nations. Second, we want to help our partners reach the next level of capabilities. And overall, we want to build strong relationships that will allow us to work together and address common problems.” As O’Keefe noted, one of the most substantial of DIB’s potential benefits is the opportunity to change the US government’s relationship with many countries from “donor-partner” to that of “partner-partner.”

Conference participants also noted the importance of strengthening civil-military relations and building defense institutions that will play an appropriate role in the partner country and respect the rule of law.

Given these potential benefits of DIB, participants agreed that the U.S. government’s renewed attention to this topic is timely. Although there are many challenges to successful DIB engagements, the cost of these efforts is typically quite low compared to other security assistance efforts while the potential return on investment is very high. “The investment we make in institution building,” noted Dr. Hicks, “pays off enormously to the United States in lives and treasure and I would underscore ‘lives.’”

Dr. Harold Trinkunas, Associate Professor of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, speaks during a breakout session on ‘Civil-Military Relations and Interagency Coordination.’



Section 1: Defining DIB

As defined in Conference materials, the term ‘DIB’ refers to the programs, structures, and processes used to develop effective, efficient, and accountable partner defense establishments, including defense ministries, joint and general staffs and commands, and the supporting institutions of the armed forces.

Building on this definition, Conference participants offered additional thoughts on the core principles and key aspects of DIB. “At its most basic level,” noted Dr. Hicks, “DIB is about establishing responsible defense governance. But DIB is not a single program or collection of programs; it is a process that brings an iterative, long term approach, emphasizing tailored engagements and focused support of partner-led efforts.”

“Our efforts emphasize long term capacity and capability building projects, defense planning exchanges, in-country advisors, and education of key personnel,” said Dr. Hicks. “Current DIB efforts in a diverse range of countries on virtually every continent range from helping a partner nation stand up basic ministerial functions to creating more complex processes, such as defense resource management planning and budgeting.”

In defining the boundaries of DIB, one initial clarification can be made about the relationship between DIB and Security Sector Reform (SSR). While DIB is specifically focused on building defense institutions, SSR includes all aspects of a nation’s security sector—a domain that encompasses defense but which also typically entails the justice, intelligence, and internal security systems. Although DIB efforts can be undertaken alone or as a component part of a broader SSR effort, many Conference participants commented on the interdependence of the issues

involved in DIB and SSR, as well as the interdependence of both DIB and SSR with the broader social and political context of the partner country.

While essential to DIB efforts, the importance of this broader context can also create challenges in establishing the boundaries of DIB efforts. Precisely because defense institutions are so tightly intertwined with other social and political institutions, DIB practitioners are often presented with situations in which the necessary changes to be made inside of defense institutions can only be fully realized if there are certain corresponding changes outside of those institutions.

As one example of this challenge, many Conference participants noted the relationship in many partner countries between the ministry of defense and the ministry of finance. Because changes in defense institutions often entail accompanying changes in the appropriation of funds, and because, in many countries, the ministry of finance exerts primary influence over most funding decisions, it can be difficult to build defense institutions without also building trust and cooperation with the ministry of finance.

This situation, and others like it, call attention not only to the broader context of DIB efforts, but also to the need for greater discussion about DIB’s core components, boundaries, and linkages. Further discussion and ultimately clarification would enable practitioners and policy makers to work with clear guidelines and within an understood framework to develop effective responses to the complex and interconnected challenges that come with helping partners build defense institutions.





From R-L: Center for Civil-Military Relations Director Rich Hoffman discusses Defense Institution Building and partnership support with David Cate, Director of Coalition Affairs and Partnership Programs in OSD (Policy), and Dr. James Schear, DASD for Partnership Strategy and Stability Operations.

Section 2: General Principles of DIB Efforts

While the term DIB is a somewhat recent creation, the comments of many participants at the Conference suggest that there is already much agreement about some of the general principles that guide successful DIB efforts. Two of these principles relate to the selection of partner nations for DIB efforts and the importance of tailoring those efforts to the unique context of each partner nation.

SELECTION OF PARTNER NATIONS

Whether a well-established democracy or a newly independent state, history and experience show that defense institutions are constantly evolving. Generally, efforts to build defense institution capacity occur most commonly among newly independent nations, developing countries, and those in transition or emerging from conflict. But there are also potential benefits to pursuing DIB with relatively stable governments that continue to refine and improve their defense institutions. Just as the US government continues to evolve its own Department of Defense, many partner nations that are relatively stable and sophisticated could still benefit from support to build defense institutions.

In selecting nations for participation in DIB efforts, DIB practitioners and policy makers must evaluate not just the strategic interests of the US government, but also the interests of the partner nation. While a DIB program's function is to advance the US national interest, efforts to build partner defense institutions must also account for the interests of the partner nation if they

are to be credible among the partner nation's ministry of defense, government, and, in some cases, broader public. Without this credibility, DIB efforts are unlikely to be successful.

Historically, DIB efforts have often worked best when there is a both a willingness and capacity to change within the partner nation. The partner country must have its own internal incentives for wanting to proceed with DIB efforts. "Obviously, those countries with a reason to change are more likely to succeed," said Gary Morgan, Senior Analyst, Office of the Secretary of Defense Cost Assessment & Program Evaluation.

As noted by many participants, one example of the importance of internal motivation is the incentive to reform defense institutions triggered by the prospect of admission and / or closer ties to NATO and the West. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the desire to join NATO created a strong demand for DIB efforts in many Eastern European countries, and it was in this context that many elements of DIB were first pioneered and developed.

Assessing the level of motivation for DIB within a partner country requires a careful consideration of the social and political context in which DIB efforts will occur. This is complicated by the fact that nations are not unified actors and it is not uncommon for some elements within a partner country to be strongly motivated to pursue defense institution reform efforts, while other elements are strongly opposed.

“Indeed, there is no single formula for building effective defense institutions across all countries and cultures. Certainly there is no ideal organizational structure with a universally applicable blueprint that fits all defense institutions in all situations. Rather, the values of responsible governance should infuse all DIB efforts, while the actual contours of individual DIB projects should reflect the unique requirements of each country.”

– Deputy Under Secretary Hicks

TAILORING DIB EFFORTS TO THE PARTNER COUNTRY

Each partner country is unique, as are each country's defense institutions, and DIB efforts should accommodate this uniqueness. For this reason, DIB practitioners must avoid “mirror imaging,” which is to say: imposing their own perceived notions and preferences or their government's policies and procedures upon the defense institutions of partner countries. DIB practitioners must always bear in mind that the defense institutions of the United States are substantially different from those found in partner nations and that DIB projects are guided by the principle of tailoring each project to the unique circumstances of the partner nation.

Tailoring DIB efforts to each country's unique requirements increases the likelihood that partner countries will take full ownership of the DIB process. Without this sense of ownership, it may be difficult to persuade leaders in the partner country to fully commit themselves to the risks and sacrifices that DIB often requires. Certainly, if DIB practitioners are perceived as expert facilitators of a process that allows the partner country to achieve its own unique goals, DIB efforts are more likely to succeed. But if the practitioners are perceived to be merely imposing their own views and procedures upon the partner country, this will greatly reduce the partner country's political will to proceed with DIB efforts and is contrary to the whole point of an appropriate DIB process.

One important aspect of tailoring DIB efforts is the ability to place an individual partner country within its regional context. Although each partner country is unique, states in the same region will often face similar circumstances and potentially share similar objectives. This regional context should inform DIB efforts, and at times may allow for several nations to work together to address these common challenges. An example of this regional context can be found in the similar circumstances faced by Eastern European nations after the breakup of the Warsaw Pact and collapse of the Soviet Union. These nations sought closer ties to NATO following the collapse of communism. Because these countries had recently emerged from Soviet domination, and were seeking closer ties to NATO and the West, there was a similar background and a shared motivation that created a distinct set of regional commonalities.

Tailoring DIB efforts to each partner's individual and regional contexts is a critical aspect to building successful defense institutions. As such, a thorough understanding of the partner country is an integral element of any DIB project. In almost all cases, it is important to conduct a front-end assessment of the partner nation. Throughout the Conference, many participants shared their experiences and perspectives about the approach, methodology, and value of these assessments, and indicated that they may come in many forms: an official initial assessment, a soft assessment conducted during another initial event (such as a workshop or seminar), or through a combination of both and extensive preliminary work.

One DIB practitioner, LTC Greg Joachim, a Military Advisor with the Bureau of African Affairs in the Department of State, suggested the following list of factors as key elements in an initial assessment of partner capacity: Political will, budget, and resources; threats; previous and current defense structures; military structure and command; legal considerations; language, culture, ethnicity, and identity; absorptive capacity; and levels of corruption.

Participants also noted the value, in some cases, of a joint assessment process that includes the partner nation as a way of insuring that the DIB efforts stemming from that process reflect not just the interests of the US government, but also the interests of the partner nation. Participants also noted that DIB efforts often have political ramifications and that locals in the partner country are often in the best position to assess which efforts are most politically feasible.

One potential challenge in conducting a front-end assessment is an initial lack of transparency and limited access to necessary information. Assessments of a partner country's institutional capacity often require a degree of transparency and access, and in some cases it may be necessary to pursue an initial stage of trust building that includes exchanges and other activities that develop the relational trust that can lead to greater transparency and access.

Although the scope and form of front-end assessments may vary greatly, the guiding principle of these assessments, and of DIB efforts more broadly, is the need to incorporate a thorough understanding of the partner nation's unique circumstances and requirements into each DIB project.

Dr. Sue Dueitt, an expert in human resource management and retired Army Major General, poses a question within the DIB Conference general session.



“For example the knotty problem of corruption in and around national defense institutions requires measures that aim to shift not only discrete methods but also institutional cultures. To address a specific corruption challenge, US DIB professionals should consider US goals for the partner country, as well as the partner's own goals, unique history, and culture. Then, DIB efforts should tailor its project there with lessons learned from comparable DIB experiences.”

– Deputy Under Secretary Hicks

Section 3: Building Institutional Capacities in Partner Countries

In accordance with the Conference's focus on developing thinking and understanding of approaches to building defense institutions, participants had the opportunity to discuss the broader, cross-cutting issues that inform the context in which institutional capacities can best develop, as well as specific challenges related to different functional aspects of defense institutions, including: policy and strategy; planning, budgeting and resource management; force development and management; human resources; and logistics and infrastructure.

COMMON CHALLENGES IN BUILDING DEFENSE INSTITUTIONS

A critical component to building effective defense institutions is developing an institutional culture that is prepared to implement changes and see them through over the long-term. The structure and function of defense institutions is not determined just by laws, regulations and organizational charts, but also by unwritten institutional rules or unique cultural norms. Understanding the specific aspects of a partner country and its institutions will help practitioners gain lasting traction on important issues like fighting corruption, developing meritocracy, and developing a positive framework for civil-military relations. Although efforts related to

the development and change of institutional culture are often slow to take root and can be difficult to measure, their effects on behavior can be equal to the effects produced by legal and organizational changes. By encouraging and supporting partner nation efforts to foster an institutional culture that accompanies, reinforces, and complements the difficult legal and organizational changes undertaken in these efforts, practitioners are helping to secure the long-term impacts of DIB efforts.

“Institutional culture change will take time and likely will involve a multi-pronged approach of directly addressing some obstacles, slowly working together with the US country team and other stakeholders to help develop different mindsets, and incrementally institutionalizing accountability measures,” said Dr. Hicks, who cited the issue of corruption as an especially clear example of the importance of developing an institutional culture that reinforces and accompanies legal and organizational changes. Dr. Hicks also noted the need to encourage an institutional culture that celebrates “professional excellence and responsible governance,” two attributes that often take time and patience to develop and which can be challenging to measure, but which are crucial to the success of DIB efforts.

“There needs to be a solid assessment of the threat environment, and that can’t be done by the US imposing its own thoughts about what threats that country faces. It needs to be done in conjunction with the partner country and with full understanding of their perspective. It’s about what they want to accomplish. It’s not just about us. We need to understand what missions and tasks they want their security forces to be able to undertake, and what capabilities, capacities and operational concepts they have the ability to do.”

– Jennifer Taylor, Fellow in the New Defense Approaches Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies

Closely related and generally integral to institutional culture is civil-military relations. In many partner nations, particularly those emerging from conflict or in societal transition, the development of effective defense institutions is hindered by undeveloped or unbalanced relations between the military and its civilian counterparts.

“In particular,” noted Dr. Hicks, “our efforts to develop defense ministries must embody the civil-military balance, transparency, accountability, and adherence to the rule of law that is at the heart of any effective, efficient, and accountable government. A civilian-led defense ministry, with experts in military strategy and policy exercising legitimate authority over professional military forces, represents the gold standard in national security institutions.”

Developing and enhancing the effectiveness of defense institutions, while also preserving or creating healthy and appropriate civil-military relations, can be a challenge to DIB practitioners. While DIB efforts are designed to strengthen defense institutions, practitioners must be cognizant of the risk in over-developing a partner nation’s defense institutions in a way that would create an ineffective or harmful imbalance between civilian organizations and military / defense organizations. Overall, DIB practitioners—guided by policymakers and planners—should strive to help the partner develop defense institutions that are in-harmony with other elements of the partner nation’s government. A partner nation’s defense institutions must be able to effectively respond to national security threats, but also must be accountable to the public and respect the rule of law, human rights, and practice good governance and general accountability. While in

some cases this balance will be especially difficult to uphold—particularly in countries lacking democratic political institutions—DIB efforts should always serve the principles of accountability and responsible governance to the greatest extent possible.

One of the DIB practitioner’s most important tools is the way in which the practitioner acts, and in which other American officials and sponsored actors conduct themselves. By acting in certain ways, and presenting a civilian “face” and model for action to partner nation personnel, practitioners and other surrogates are showing just how the system works. This includes the actions demonstrated by US troops stationed in the partner nation, as well as the relationships and behaviors demonstrated by a DIB team supporting the partner. For many partner nations, working with DIB practitioners is an excellent opportunity to observe how civilian and uniformed personnel can work together in a civilian-led system.

The value of this kind of modeling can exceed the value of formal outreach efforts designed to instill appropriate attitudes towards civil military relations. DIB practitioners should be especially conscious of the implicit values demonstrated in the behavior they are modeling. In some cases, for example, a uniformed representative may not be the most effective representative to explain the value of a civilian-led defense ministry. “If we’re trying to say that civilians should be running the defense ministry, but they’re only talking to military personnel, we’re not sending the right message,” noted David Cate, Director for Coalition Affairs and Partnership Programs in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.



Steven Senkovich (L) of the US Joint Forces Command Coordinating Review Authority, discusses DIB with Steven Rader, Defense Policy Analysis Program Manager for Science Applications International Corporation.

A major challenge to the development of appropriate civil-military relations in many partner countries is the lack of a well-developed civilian cadre. For a variety of reasons, many partner nations do not have a group of educated and experienced civilians to provide staffing and leadership within defense institutions. This is a challenge that must be examined and addressed when undertaking DIB efforts with a partner nation. Without an established core of civilian professionals, DIB efforts will not achieve what Dr. Hicks described as the “gold standard” of “a civilian-led defense ministry, with experts in military strategy and policy exercising legitimate authority over professional military forces.”

KEY FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF DEFENSE INSTITUTIONS

Development of institutional culture and the establishment of a cadre of defense planners (civilian or otherwise) are critical cross-cutting aspects to the many different functions of an effective defense institution, particularly the Ministry of Defense. These specific functions, particularly at the Ministry of Defense level, are important for not just establishing an accountable institution, but for the development of an effective institution. More often than not, it is a specific functional area or areas that will be the partner nation’s reason for seeking support or the US reason for offering it.

Therefore, while remaining attuned to the previously discussed cross-cutting aspects of defense institutions, practitioners play a key role in supporting partner nations as they develop institutional capacity in key functional areas. For each of these specific areas, participants noted that the general goal which DIB practitioners are working towards is a self-sustaining, organic process rather than a specific product or outcome of that process. These organic rules and processes created by DIB efforts should be sufficiently well rooted in the partner nation that they will continue to operate even after the departure of DIB practitioners and will withstand turnover in the personnel chosen by the partner nation to manage and implement them.

POLICY AND STRATEGY

One of the key functional areas of most ministerial-level capacity development efforts is enabling partner nations to develop the organic capacity to conduct analysis, do research, and design and implement policy and strategy. Because policy and strategy are critical for coordinating and enabling other capacities, the development of a process for policy and strategy is a keystone

“If you’re trying to apply the US solution to the problem, you’re probably wrong. You cannot export the way we do business in Washington. There aren’t many countries in the world that are buying aircraft carriers and so they don’t need a system that is that labor intensive and time consuming. You have to tailor what you’re providing to them to the needs of the partner.”

– Gary Morgan, Senior Analyst, OSD Cost Assessment & Program Evaluation

capacity and must be sequenced and prioritized appropriately. In keeping with the general principles of DIB efforts, the emphasis must be on building the partner nation’s capacity to create and execute its own process for policy and strategy, a process that reflects a national political consensus on security goals, challenges, and opportunities, and which enables a nation to determine how its defense sector can best serve the needs of its citizens.

A successful policy and strategy process typically entails: a formal and regular analysis of the security environment; a clear articulation and definition of international security policies and objectives; participation in, or cooperation with, international organizations; contributions to international peacekeeping and peacemaking; systematic and formal prioritization of national interests and objectives; and the establishment of an effective policy directorate within the MOD, supported by its military counterpart to oversee the operations of the entire defense organization.

The Conference noted several challenges facing this functional area. As DIB practitioners work to build a process for policy and strategy, one challenge they often encounter is the lack of effective parliamentary oversight bodies willing and able to engage in constructive dialogue about policy and strategy. Another commonly encountered challenge is the lack of defense planning structures and institutional experience, particularly in mid- to long-term planning, and the attendant problem of a lack of personnel with the capacity to design and implement policy and strategy processes.

Also, because an effective policy and strategy process requires oversight and accountability, DIB practitioners must also confront the challenge of developing an institutional culture that embraces

the principle of responsible governance. As discussed earlier, legal and organizational changes will thrive and endure when a culture of accountability accompanies and reinforces those changes. This relationship between informal culture and formal rules applies to the development of processes for policy and strategy, as well as to the development of other key areas of functional capacity.

PLANNING, BUDGETING, AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Just as important as policy and strategy is the development of organic planning, budgeting, and resource management processes and systems. Without these processes and systems, partner nations will be unable to implement any policy and strategy outcomes or effectively further develop their institutional capacity.

When functioning properly, the interrelated roles of defense planning, budgeting, and resource management should identify and prioritize resource requirements; allocate resources to requirements with highest priorities; link resources to goals and objectives; tie resource decisions to performance achieved; and provide a continuous flow of information to decision-makers.

In attempting to enhance capacity for resource management, DIB practitioners often confront a host of challenges: the lack of a “cost-awareness culture,” connected to a lack of accurate cost data; the lack of a defense planning calendar with clear decision-points and plans that support them; a legacy of centralization and/or non-existent planning; resource management driven by the budget rather than plans; ineffective execution processes; a lack of transparency among departments and agencies on financial assumptions and projections; and a tendency to see plans as being unchangeable once they have been approved, even when their most basic assumptions have been invalidated.

As noted previously, one of the complexities of developing institutional capacity for planning and budgeting is the need to coordinate DIB efforts with the partner nation’s ministry of finance. As one participant noted, “There’s no way you can adequately look at the resource management program without looking at ministry of finance.” This need to maintain focus on a partner nation’s defense institutions while also coordinating with other institutions and decision makers within a partner nation is indicative of the complexity of DIB efforts and the need to consider the broader context in which efforts occur.

FORCE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Force development and management—the term decided upon by the Conference’s breakout panel focusing on this functional area—represents the whole of processes, organizations, and personnel that foster and sustain the armed forces today while planning for the defense force of tomorrow. Force development is a capacity that enables the defense institutions of partner nations

to develop appropriate responses to some of the most challenging questions they face. “What are you going to invest in, in terms of capabilities?” said Paul Scharre of the Office of Force Development in the Strategy, Plans, and Forces office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. “What do you want your armed forces to be able to do, under what kind of conditions, under what time-frames?” Overall, force development helps partner countries make better decisions about how to balance capability, cost, and time.

Although DIB practitioners can’t simply export the details of DoD procedures for force development, Scharre noted that there are some exportable concepts related to force development that could enhance a partner nation’s ability to defend itself, and improve the outcome of security cooperation investments that the US government has already made in the partner. In a general sense, DIB practitioners must constantly be distinguishing between specific and non-exportable policies and procedures, and the general principles and concepts such as responsible governance, accountability and professionalism that underlie and

Colonel Karen Chipchase, Chief of the International Resource Integration Branch within Army HQ Operations and Plans.



“Force development and management ... is a process that sits at the nexus of strategy and resources. It provides a connective tissue between your strategy and your resources.”

– Paul Scharre of the Office of Force Development in the Strategy, Plans, and Forces office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

motivate those specific policies and procedures.

As DIB practitioners seek to expand a partner nation’s force development capacity, some of the more common challenges they confront are: a haphazard or uncoordinated force management system and sometimes forces themselves—sometimes an unintended result from multiple countries providing uncoordinated assistance; a force system that is unconnected to policy and strategic priorities; force structure personnel who resist or reject initiative from lower levels of leadership or who view subordinates strictly as executors of orders; and an absent or underdeveloped capabilities assessment, in terms of either objective data or a culture of consultation and accountability.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Without human resources capacity—primarily in the form of a cadre of professional ministerial staff—partner nations will be unable to develop key functions like strategy, planning, budgeting, and force development, and, if developed, are unlikely to achieve appropriate implementation or institutional sustainment. For these processes to be fully effective, they must be designed, managed, and implemented by well-trained and professional personnel. For this reason, most DIB efforts are likely to include some kind of human capital development aspect, and are likely to require a team of human resources experts.

“One ongoing DIB challenge lies in finding or creating the right kinds of experts—and retaining them,” noted Dr. Hicks. “How can we build or reform defense institutions that develop and attract effective defense professionals?”

In some partner nations, the shortage of effective defense professionals is caused in part by the lack of an effective national

defense education system or system that ensures that national defense institutions are staffed by defense civilians with the requisite skills, a fact that underscores, once again, the need for DIB practitioners to keep an eye on the larger picture and broader social context even while they maintain a primary focus on defense institutions. In some partner nations, there may be an effective national education system but there may not be a trained cadre of civilians capable of staffing the Ministry of Defense. In other partner nations, there may be an effective educational system and an adequate supply of effective military professionals, but there is an absence of an effective defense human capital system to allow the personnel involved to contribute their full potential.

As DIB programs continue to evolve, one of the primary challenges likely to be faced is the development of a process by which partner nations are able to remedy their most serious deficits in human resources capacity, a process that should include a strategic assessment to accurately determine the human resources requirements of a partner country’s defense institutions. This requires a dual focus on the civilian defense cadre needed to staff the Ministry of Defense as well as the system for managing military personnel.

Although discussion of processes related to human resources are sometimes mired in issues like payroll and retirement systems, it should be a goal of DIB practitioners to move beyond those issues into the more complex and strategic aspects of human resources, such as recruiting and retaining the highest quality personnel while also training and educating them to achieve their highest level of potential. As noted by Dr. Bernie Rostker, a Senior Fellow at the RAND Corporation, DIB practitioners need “a strategic way of thinking about human resources and be able to integrate human resources into other strategic processes.”



From L-R: Greetings all-around: Dr. Peter Holm, Country Director within the Office of the DASD for South and Southeast Asia, Greg Hermsmeyer, Security Sector Specialist at Deloitte Consulting, and Nadia Gerspacher, Program Officer with United States Institute of Peace.

As noted by many participants, the US government already offers a variety of professional military education programs to the military personnel of partner nations, and such programs have the potential to be more closely coordinated with DIB efforts. Because DIB remains an evolving process, many opportunities for coordination and collaboration are yet to be fully realized.

In addition to more effectively coordinating defense programs for foreign students in the US, DIB practitioners can also work with partner nations to build the capacity of their own professional defense and military education programs to help build and expand the cadre of professionally trained defense civilians and military personnel. As part of a larger human resources strategy, an effective program of defense education should make strategic decisions about both curriculum and instruction, and should enable both civilian and uniformed personnel to execute their missions at the appropriate level of strategy, operations, and tactics in peacetime, conflict, and war.

As with other aspects of DIB, efforts related to human resources should be tailored to suit the needs of the partner country. “I think our job should be not to provide a single solution to our partner countries,” said Dr. Rostker, “but to help them consider what feasible options they have as they move forward and develop their own answers.”

LOGISTICS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Logistics and infrastructure is a term used to describe the process for coordinating the people, organizations, processes, and infrastructure needed to deliver equipment and support operations in synchronization with national plans and policies. This includes the development, acquisition, and distribution of material, as well as the transport of personnel, the acquisition, construction, or maintenance of facilities, the acquisition or furnishing of services, as well as medical and health service support, and disaster relief. Helping partner nations develop defense ministry and general staff

logistics and infrastructure processes is critical for sustaining US security cooperation investments over the long-term, for ensuring that partner nations are able to operate with us in the field, and is a critical supporting functional area to the policy and strategy and planning and budgeting functions.

As DIB practitioners seek to build greater capacity in the area of logistics and infrastructure, the more common challenges they will face include: lack of alignment between logistical doctrine, process and procedures and the needs of defense strategy, force structure, and newly envisioned missions; centralization of logistical systems and / or systems based on the “push” model, with logistics support determined at the operational level or higher on a basis other than objective data determined from actual operational requirements; the fragmentation of responsibilities among different people and different offices in MOD and

defense staffs; and the lack of transparency and accountability in acquisition and acquisition systems that respond to validated military requirements rather than the personal desires of senior officials.

One consideration relevant to the area of logistics and infrastructure is that many of the partner nations that would derive the greatest benefit from DIB efforts are also countries that have the most limited capacity and capability to manage their own logistics processes and infrastructure management. Precisely because of this lack of capacity, it’s important for DIB practitioners to work towards the enhancement of this capability at the ministerial level while also being very clear with partner countries that developing institutional capabilities related to logistics and infrastructure does not include any form of physical hardware or tangible assistance with infrastructure being provided.

Colonel Andrew Dennis (L), Stability Operations and Security Cooperation Division Chief within Army HQ, shares information with Captain David Foster, Strategist with US Army Training and Doctrine Command.



Section 4: Measuring Effectiveness

Conference participants agreed that a system for evaluating the effectiveness of DIB efforts would not only help improve and refine those efforts but would also demonstrate DIB’s benefits to policy makers and appropriators. As Alan Gorowitz, Director, Partnership Policy and Strategy for the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Partnership Strategy and Stability Operations) asked: “To what extent are we able to articulate a general framework for what success looks like and articulate what it looks like when we see it? What are the requirements, and what does success look like, and how will we know when we get there?”

Despite this agreement, participants noted that efforts to assess DIB efforts to date have been hampered by multiple challenges. One challenge in formulating a protocol for DIB assessments is that DIB efforts often take years, and even decades, to show full results. “Quite frankly,” noted Dr. Schear, “the challenge we face is that this is a slow-growth program that doesn’t provide immediate payoffs. But a longer-range plan, over time, can deliver substantial results.”

“There was a lot of discussion on the assessments piece and that’s a tough nut to crack,” noted Bruce Balbin, Deputy Director, Security Cooperation Programs Division, European Command Strategy Directorate. “I frequently get asked, ‘How successful was that event?’ It may have achieved some small part of it, but you don’t know right away. Ten years or 25 years may be how long it takes to assess what you do.”

Another challenge in the development of a protocol for DIB assessment is that DIB's focus is the establishment of processes rather than specific products of those processes. Measuring the effectiveness of a process is a complex undertaking, especially when the processes being assessed have often been uniquely tailored to the partner nation and are therefore highly context-specific and non-uniform.

Despite these challenges, participants agreed on the fundamental contours of an assessment system: It should be based on an initial definition of the desired end-states of any given DIB effort. This description of the end-state should incorporate both the strategic interests of the United States as well as the goals that partner nations have set for themselves. Once goals are defined, a process must be determined for measuring progress towards those goals. In addition, measures of effectiveness should not be identified post hoc but should instead be incorporated into the planning process of any DIB effort. Finally, participants warned against the often overly complex measurement systems developed by operations research analysts who have limited understanding of the capacity building process. These create demands for data collection on quantitative measures that are often irrelevant but are embraced on the false assumption that they are more rigorous and objective than qualitative measures.

One participant with experience building ministerial capacity in Iraq noted the value of assessments that incorporate narrative and qualitative elements, rather than basing those assessments entirely on statistical and quantitative measures: "We found that metrics really broke out to two things," said Tim Hoffman, Director of the Security Cooperation Taskforce in OSD Policy. "One was really a hard measurable. And then there were the more intangible things that were subjective in nature. When you're really talking about how well a country is doing, that largely tends to dwell in the subjective realm. There are places where you can use objective metrics—they aren't inapplicable—but when you're talking about the larger strategic and political issues, you might want to use a subjective and narrative approach."

Jeffrey Stefani, Strategy and Plans Director at the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies, poses a question during a DIB plenary session.



Section 5: Developing Capacity for DIB Within the US Government

For DIB efforts to be successful, the capacity of the US government to engage in DIB efforts must continue to be evaluated, and a number of important capacity challenges must be addressed as part of subsequent discussions about DIB efforts.

As the structures and processes that make up Defense Institution Building continue to develop, one capacity challenge to be addressed is the question of how DIB is coordinated within the US government. As David Cate noted, currently DIB "programs are scattered" and this often produces an "ad hoc" approach. In addition to this scattering of programs, the current overall capacity to engage in DIB efforts is not equal to the scale of DIB needs. To meet current needs, there must be an enhancement of both coordination and overall capacity, including an appropriate development of the bureaucratic infrastructure this enhancement requires.

As this process continues to evolve, it will be important to establish clear lanes of activity, assign clear roles and responsibilities, and develop a framework of DIB coordination within the Department of Defense and throughout the US government. For DIB efforts to be most useful to the partner country and most cost-efficient for the US government, they need to be synchronized. Two especially important areas of synchronization will be the coordination of DIB efforts with country teams in the partner nation, and a clear understanding of the role of the combatant command.

On the subject of coordinating DIB efforts, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Kevin O'Keefe noted, "We think this is a very important step, and we want to engage very carefully with the defense community to make sure our efforts are

mutually reinforcing... How do we ensure that DIB is consistently incorporated into regional and country-level planning? ... My message to you today is that the State Department is here as a partner."

Greater partnering and coordination with combatant commanders is also an important element in the further development of DIB programs. Combatant Commanders have an important role to play in planning DIB projects and leveraging the relationships and knowledge gained in-country.

In a general sense, the greater development of DIB capacity will require the full development of the human resources necessary to perform successful DIB programs. DIB is a highly specialized and complex process that calls for knowledge and skills in a wide variety of areas. Certainly, as DIB efforts become more closely coordinated with a broader range of in-country personnel, there will be greater need for DIB-specific training and education on a wide variety of topics, including, for example, the best way for security cooperation personnel to engage a partner nation that may benefit from DIB efforts. In such situations, a number of critical questions will have to be answered, such as: what is the most effective way for security cooperation personnel to begin a dialogue about the potential benefits of DIB efforts? What are the best methods of demonstrating these benefits to the ministerial leadership in partner countries?

As DIB conversations develop, it may also be useful to develop a shared DIB lexicon throughout the US government. A common vocabulary would clarify future DIB discussions and facilitate the sharing of DIB information and best practices.

Closing: Executive Summary

In the past decade, the US government has invested substantial resources to develop the tactical and operational capabilities of partner nations, but has not consistently invested in developing the institutional capacities of its partners. Conference participants discussed the challenges that must be resolved if the following objectives are to be achieved:

- **Building capable defense institutions;**
- **Strengthening partner nations' human capital in these defense institutions; and**
- **To enable the first two goals, improving the Defense Department's internal ability to do this kind of work and do it well.**

The successful resolution of the challenges related to these objectives could yield substantial benefits for the United States and its partners, such as a direct enhancement of security and stability, sustainment of U.S. security cooperation investments, building bilateral relationships—particularly between ministries—and strengthening civil-military relations and rule of law.

Given these potential benefits of defense institution building (DIB), participants agreed that the U.S. government's renewed attention to this topic is timely. Although there are many challenges to successful DIB engagements, the cost of these efforts is typically quite low compared to other security assistance efforts while the potential return on investment is very high.

As defined in Conference materials, DIB encompasses the

programs, structures, and processes used to develop effective, efficient, and accountable partner defense establishments, to include Ministries of Defense, Joint/General Staffs and Commands, and the supporting institutions of the Armed Forces.

While the term DIB is a somewhat recent creation, the comments of many participants at the Conference suggest that there is already much agreement about some of the general principles that guide successful DIB efforts. Two of these principles relate to the selection of partner nations for DIB efforts and the importance of tailoring those efforts to the unique context of each partner nation.

In selecting nations for participation in DIB efforts, DIB practitioners and policy makers must evaluate not just the strategic interests of the US government, but also the interests of the partner nation. While a DIB program's function is to advance the US national interest, efforts to build partner defense institutions must also account for the interests of the partner nation if they are to be credible among the partner nation's ministry of defense, government, and, in some cases, broader public.

Each partner country is unique, as are each country's defense institutions, and DIB efforts should accommodate this uniqueness. For this reason, DIB practitioners must avoid "mirror imaging," which is to say: imposing their own perceived notions and preferences or their government's policies and procedures upon the defense institutions of partner countries. DIB practitioners must always bear in mind that the defense institutions of the

United States are substantially different from those found in partner nations and that DIB projects are guided by the principle of tailoring each project to the unique circumstances of the partner nation.

In accordance with the Conference's focus on developing thinking and understanding of approaches to building defense institutions, participants had the opportunity to discuss the broader, cross-cutting issues that inform the context in which institutional capacities can best develop, as well as specific challenges related to different functional aspects of defense institutions, including: policy and strategy; planning, budgeting and resource management; force development and management; human resources; and logistics and infrastructure. For each of these specific areas, participants noted that the general goal which DIB practitioners are working towards is a self-sustaining, organic process rather than a specific product or outcome of that process. These organic rules and processes created by DIB efforts should be sufficiently well rooted in the partner nation that they will continue to operate even after the departure of DIB practitioners and will withstand turnover in the personnel chosen by the partner nation to manage and implement them.

Conference participants agreed that a system for evaluating the effectiveness of DIB efforts would not only help improve and refine those efforts but would also demonstrate DIB's benefits to policy makers and appropriators. The evaluation system must respond effectively to some of the challenges associated with assessing DIB efforts, such as DIB's extended time frame, the

qualitative nature of many of DIB's most important outcomes, and the fact that DIB focuses on establishing processes rather than specific products of those processes. Despite these challenges, participants agreed on the fundamental contours of an assessment system: It should be based on an initial definition of the desired end-states of any given DIB effort; this description of the end-state should incorporate both the strategic interests of the United States as well as the goals that partner nations have set for themselves; once goals are defined, a process must be determined for measuring progress towards those goals.

For DIB efforts to be successful, the capacity of the US government to engage in DIB efforts must continue to be evaluated, and a number of important capacity challenges must be addressed as part of subsequent discussions about DIB efforts. Currently, DIB programs are scattered throughout the US government, and the scale of these efforts is likely not adequate to currently understood DIB needs. As DIB discussions evolve, it will be important to establish clear lanes of activity, assign clear roles and responsibilities, and develop a framework of DIB coordination within the Department of Defense and throughout the US government.

The Conference served as a launching event for a series of smaller, focused workshops that will refine approaches and establish best practices for use in the field. Workshops that will follow the DIB Conference include topics such as: Strategic Defense Reviews, Resource Management, Defense Ministry Cadre Development, and Regional Challenges to Conducting DIB.

