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COUNTER-TERRORISM CAPACITY BUILDING: THE CASE FOR A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

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AIM

1. This service paper aims to provide Director General International Security Policy (DGIS(Pol)), as the interface with Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and other interested departments within the Government of Canada (GoC) with recommendations for improving the efficiency of Canadian foreign counter-terrorism (CT) capacity building (CB) programs. Though several global CTCB operations are currently conducted under CANSOFCOM's approved Global Engagement Plan (GEP), these lack the capacity, in many instances, to achieve lasting results in terms of partner nation ability to realistically deal with internal security matters. To achieve the long term desired outcomes, a more collaborative approach to planning and execution is required. This approach must start with the definition of clear and quantifiable objectives by the GoC, include greater synchronization and harmonization across the Canadian interagency partners, and promote unity of effort between allies. Without these needed changes, localized short term effects will continue to not translate to the desired long term outcomes for which the programs were intended.

INTRODUCTION

2. Current efforts, executed and funded under GAC's Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program (CTCBP) since 2004,¹ in several at risk countries around the globe, have to date provided good political value in terms of creating a positive popular narrative at home, and good diplomatic value in terms of symbolic support for the international community. In addition, some localized and short term tactical effects have been created. Given current trends in the global

¹ Global Affairs Canada, "Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Assistance," last modified 2013-04-26, <http://www.international.gc.ca/crime/ctcb-rcat.aspx?lang=eng>

security environment, and recent statements by the Prime Minister,² increases in this modest contribution to Canadian and international security are likely. As such, it is expected that CANSOFCOM, under its GEP, will increasingly force generate (FG) and force employ (FE) teams and Task Forces (TFs), to work “with” and “through” Host Nation (HN) partners, in an effort to eliminate or contain regional threats.

3. CTCB assistance is defined by GAC as follows: “...the provision of training, funding, equipment, technical and legal assistance to other states to enable them to prevent and respond to terrorist activity in a manner consistent with international counter-terrorism and human rights norms...”³ As discussed above, though localized and short term increases in capacity have been achieved to date on many training missions, GAC’s stated objective of enabling local response has proven to be difficult to achieve due to the compounding effects of several factors that will be discussed in this document. In brief, creating long term capacity requires more than the short term tactical engagements and one time equipment donations that have characterized CTCB operations to date.⁴ In order to achieve the desired outcomes, a comprehensive, long term approach is required.

4. The discussion that follows is organized to first define the problem space by merging western military thought on trends in the global security environment in order to evaluate the relevance of continued CTCB missions. It will then re-introducing the Canadian and

² See statement made on 4 December 2015 by the Prime Minister on the speech from the throne: “Canadians want a safe and peaceful nation that provides them with opportunities. We will strengthen our relationships with our allies and continue to work with them in the fight against terrorism, provide assistance to the world’s most vulnerable, contribute to greater peace throughout the world, invest in our Armed Forces, and negotiate trade agreements that expand our economic opportunities”, Prime Minister of Canada, “Speech from the throne”, last accessed 7 February 2016, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2015/12/04/statement-prime-minister-canada-speech-throne>

³ Global Affairs Canada, “Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Assistance,” last modified 2013-04-26, <http://www.international.gc.ca/crime/ctcb-rcat.aspx?lang=eng>

⁴ As experienced by the author as the Task Force Commander for CANSOFCOM’s multiple training engagements in Jordan in 2013.

international CTCB stakeholder community, and provide a description of CANSOFCOM's role within, defining inefficiencies and making recommendations throughout. It is understood that many of these issues lie outside the purview of DGIS(Pol). The intent for this service paper is to offer discussion start point ahead of any future planning initiatives in an effort to elevate Canadian interagency discussion, bring a measure of congruence to the overarching plan, and lower the likelihood of patchwork solutions to increasingly complex regional and global problems.

DISCUSSION

5. It is commonly understood across western militaries that the contemporary operating environment (COE) will continue to be characterized by uncertainty, volatility, ambiguity, and complexity. In "Future Land Warfare Report 2014", The Australian Directorate of Future Warfare defines five simple meta-trends that serve to illustrate this. In general, the COE will be increasingly crowded, connected, lethal, collective, and constrained.⁵ The term "crowded" describes population growth and urbanization; "Connected" refers to the increasingly interlinked global economic, social and communications systems; "Lethal" refers to technological advances that will continue to increase the lethality of weapons and weapons systems; "Collective" is used to describe warfare as increasingly contribution based where coalitions are formed to respond to common threats; Finally the term "constrained" refers to the effect of changes to the economic, demographic, and social environment.

⁵ Blair Watson, *Future Land Warfare Report 2014: Preparing Australia's Next-Gen Army*, Vol. 40, 2014), 50-54.

6. Many of these trends are echoed and amplified by the Canadian Directorate of Land Concepts and Design in “Land Operations 2021 Adaptive Dispersed Operations” with the following synthesis of the Future Security Environment (FSE)⁶:

In general, the future security environment will continue to exhibit high volatility and uncertainty. Already, ongoing trends (e.g. globalization, rapid scientific and technological innovation, demographic change, shifting regional power balances, the growing prominence of non-state actors) are leading to considerable change in the nature of conflict and its conduct. The result is that traditional threats and challenges are increasingly being eclipsed by newer dangers. While the prospect of inter-state war will not disappear, future challenges will be more diverse—with asymmetric attacks launched by transnational terror groups, and the political instability, civil war and humanitarian crises characteristic of fragile countries making up the lion’s share of turmoil in the early 21st century.⁷

Based on these two perspectives, though the potential for a conventional war is currently low, the environment in many unstable pockets across the globe will continue to be characterized by the complexity of geopolitical uncertainty and regional power dynamics, including the growth in prominence of non-state actors. Next, the disintegration of the social order incited by urbanization and competition over resources will result in even greater volatility. Finally, despite their regional nature, global security is increasingly affected by internal conflicts through international terrorism, illicit economic activity, weapons proliferation, population migration, and the erosion of both social and political stability. It is clearly in the interest of the GoC and its allies to put effective mechanisms in place to mitigate these threats to international security.

7. Economic and political constraints in the operating environment will continue impact the will and ability of Western nations to undertake large scale and sustained operations. As evidence, the current slate of training missions undertaken by the CAF and other Western

⁶ The FSE document is not used here as the synthesis available in ‘Land Operations 2021’ is seen as more appropriate due to its brevity.

⁷ Andrew B. Godefroy and Canada. Dept. of National Defence, *Land Operations 2021: Adaptive Dispersed Operations : A Force Employment Concept for Canada's Army of Tomorrow* (Kingston, Ont: Directorate of Land Concepts and Doctrine,[2007]).

militaries is offered. Though not all CT in nature, it is clear that the GoC is increasingly hesitant to become engaged in operations of a decisive nature, opting instead for pre-conflict operations and the indirect approach. As such, small scale training missions are expected to increasingly constitute Canada's contribution to international security. Emily Spencer offers the following observations of the pre-conflict operational philosophy: "This philosophy reduces the potential need for costly military intervention by Western nations through minimizing the number of smoldering issues that might erupt into larger national or international conflagrations".⁸ Though this pre-conflict philosophy has clearly been adopted by Canadian policy makers, analysis of the outcomes of these missions has been noticeably absent.⁹ This problem is not limited to the Canadian interagency environment. Charles Williams offers the following description of recent U.S. interagency collaboration in security assistance:

...there is a lack of comprehensive means to collect data that would allow the regional coordinating body to measure the effects of their proposed solutions. This is a significant shortcoming because without feedback it is almost impossible to know whether or not the policies worked or to hold agency actors accountable for their implementation.¹⁰

Clearly, there is a need to apply a higher level of analytical rigor to the planning and implementation of CTCB if GAC's stated objectives are to be met. In addition, the use of an interagency coordination body is noted and will be revisited further on in this document.

8. Special Operations Forces (SOF), by virtue of their low profile, agile, and cost effective nature, offer an ideal engagement option for the indirect approach. This view is shared across Western governments as demonstrated by the proliferation of small SOF TFs deployed in a

⁸ Emily Spencer et al., *By, with, through: A SOF Global Engagement Strategy* (Kingston, Ont: Canadian Defence Academy Press,[2014]).

⁹ As experienced by the author as the Task Force Commander for CANSOFCOM's multiple training engagements in Jordan in 2013.

¹⁰ Charles Malcom Williams, "Revisiting Persistent Engagement and Interagency Collaboration," *Military Review* 93, no. 2 (2013)66.

network of persistent military assistance missions throughout the globe.¹¹ Through enabling the development of local solutions to regional issues, the global SOF network is deployed in an effort to provide an effective method of mitigating regional threats while minimizing costs. As offered by Bernd Horn: “The “left of bang” or phase zero approach of military assistance and engaging the target countries and partnered nations, particularly their SOF, is an economy of effort. It is a case of the proverbial ounce of prevention being better than a pound of cure”.¹²

9. As an added benefit, the relationships built within the global SOF network increase information sharing, interoperability, and even provide staging options ahead of crisis response, further increasing operational flexibility. As such, inclusion in the global SOF network engendered by CANSFOCOM’s GEP, offers the potential for disproportionate contribution on behalf of the CAF in achieving GoC policy objectives. CANSOFCOM’s slate of CTCB missions have provided the platform for building the SOF network, however due to their episodic and constrained nature, have fallen short in their ability to quantifiably build local capacity to deal with the security concerns they were intended for. The issue with the operational model, in its current form, is the lack of interagency involvement. This is not a criticism of CANSOF operational design, instead it is a reality of the strategic environment. To build legitimate capacity, a persistent interagency approach is required. This view is amplified by Christopher Lamb who offers the following observation:

SOF’s indirect approach is not equivalent to just providing military training. SOF work with foreign forces to achieve security objectives shared by foreign governments and ours in ways that are consistent with U.S. interests and values, something that requires intense interagency collaboration, particularly with the Department of State.¹³

¹¹ Keenan D Yoho, Tess deBlanc-Knowles and Randy Borum, "The Global SOF Network: Posturing Special Operations Forces to Ensure Global Security in the 21st Century," *Journal of Strategic Security* 7, no. 2 (2014)6.

¹² Spencer et al., *By, with, through: A SOF Global Engagement Strategy*44

¹³ Christopher Lamb, "Global SOF and Interagency Collaboration," *Journal of Strategic Security* 7, no. 2 (2014)8.

To bring the discussion back to the Canadian interagency context, GAC is the lead department for security assistance, and is thus responsible for defining objectives and implementing strategy to achieve them. The current CTCBP model of funding short term opportunistic programs and equipment donations without an overarching strategy to achieve its stated objective is problematic and will continue to fall short.¹⁴

10. Many Canadian and allied military and civilian organizations work towards the goal of helping at risk nations mitigate terrorist threats. Though an extended stakeholder group exists, for the purpose of this service paper, the Canadian CTCB interagency community consists of GAC as the lead agency, with Public Safety Canada (PSC), and the Department of National Defence (DND) at the strategic level. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the Canadian Security intelligence Service (CSIS), the CAF, and the Canadian Embassy define the operational level. The various Other Government Department (OGD) country representatives, in addition to the individuals and teams deployed forward to execute the CTCBP operations, constitute the tactical level. In terms of allied stakeholders, a similar slate of agencies, both military and civilian are included in this community. In order to bring congruence to this diverse group, an overarching and quantifiable set of objectives from the GoC is necessary.

11. Due to the sensitive nature of this activity, many organizations operate within compartmentalized programs that are at times redundant and even counterproductive as “stovepipes” isolate overlapping lines of effort. In the current resource constrained environment, there exists competition for limited resources between Canadian organizations, and for viable

¹⁴ As experienced by the Author on several CTCB operations, it is at times difficult to distinguish which agency has the lead for CTCB activity as GAC representatives offer the “means” in terms of funding, but neglect to provide any input with regard to the “ends” or “ways”.

Host Nation (HN) partners between allies looking to increase their presence in any given country. Clearly, unity of effort is lacking, as is a sense of shared responsibility. These issues could be served by the creation of a centralized planning framework for the Canadian Interagency community, and participation in allied planning to minimize overlap. In addition, through the global SOF network, CANSOF teams are uniquely situated to provide understanding of the allied interagency CTCB intent, activity, and plans in any country in order to inform estimates for future contribution. CANSOF capability should be leveraged to complete preparation of the environment prior to any planning initiative across the Canadian interagency community.

12. Specific to the U.S however, foreign CTCB is currently being conducted on a scale several orders of magnitude larger than the Canadian commitment for the utilitarian reason that the 9/11 attack has caused the USG to move toward preventing terrorism from reaching the American homeland. Currently, a substantial amount of foreign CT capacity building is being conducted by the U.S. military, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies.¹⁵ American policy makers expect that the full power of the U.S. interagency is harnessed to provide effects. The difference between Canadian and U.S. efforts is stark. Canadian policy makers limit their expectation to presence. If Canadian credibility in international security circles is to be safeguarded, this will have to change: Currently, CANSOF personnel deployed on CTCB operations are forced to negotiate for participation options with allies, already in location, from a position of weakness as it is never clear what the GoC is prepared to offer in terms of resources and authorities.¹⁶

¹⁵ Stephen Keane and Kenneth A Artz, "An Integrated Approach to Civilian-Military/Interagency Counterterrorism Capacity Building," *The Air Force Law Review* 71 (2014)5.

¹⁶ As experienced by the Author on several CTCB operations.

13. In order to make a valuable contribution to international security, Canadian CTCB planners should spend time defining gaps in capability or capacity of allied programs in order to determine where they can add value, rather than rapidly deploying forces to provide CTCB engagements that are limited to training and equipping.¹⁷ For a legitimate contribution, the full weight of the Canadian Interagency community is required as is a persistent engagement across the tactical and operational levels. Thus, in order to tangibly improve a partner nation's CT capacity, a persistent and whole of government approach is required. In the interest of outcomes, fewer engagements should be considered; this should ensure adequate resources and rigor are applied to achieving longer term improvements.

CONCLUSION

14. Creating long term capacity within a partner nation requires more than short term tactical opportunistic engagements and one time equipment donations that have characterized CTCB operations to date. In order to achieve GAC's stated objectives, a comprehensive, long term approach is required. The credibility of Canada's contribution to international security has suffered due to a short term, redundant, and unsophisticated approach to CTCB that has produced minimal long term effects: Since 2004, partner nations are only marginally better prepared, at the individual skill level, to handle internal security problems with serious global consequences. Only through legitimate outcome oriented contribution can this be rebuilt. The intent for this service paper was to offer DGIS(Pol) a series of discussion start points prior to any future CTCB planning initiatives in an effort to elevate the Canadian interagency discussion, bring a measure of congruence to the overarching plan, and lower the likelihood of patchwork

¹⁷ As experienced by the author as the Task Force Commander leading CANSOFCOM's multiple training engagements in Jordan in 2013.

solutions to increasingly complex regional and global problems. Ultimately, the collaborative approach will foster unity of effort within the Canadian interagency CTCB community, and lead to better outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

15. The following recommendations are offered in an effort to improve the quality of Canada's contribution, to international CTCB:

- Overarching and quantifiable GoC policy objectives must be clearly articulated by GAC as the lead department;
- A centralized planning framework must be established leading to the development of a Canadian Whole of Government CTCB plan with a legitimate oversight body;
- Increased importance must be applied to understanding of allied intent, operations, and plans. This must include more emphasis on liaison and negotiation of roles. Canada's contribution is too small to be developed in isolation;
- Prior to any planning for CTCB, ground truth must be comprehensively understood through environment preparation. CANSOF teams are suited for this task;
- Persistent and comprehensive presence on fewer missions is preferred over small scale episodic presence on many missions; and

- Data collection and analysis must be conducted to ensure CTCB efforts are achieving the desired outcomes. This in turn will promote accountability, and lead to more efficient programs through adjustment.

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