



International Cooperation in Combating Terrorism: An Updated U.S. Assessment

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International cooperation is a key strategy in combating terrorism. And yet, the NSA revelations and the controversy over the latest U.S. raids in Libya and Somalia, as well as escalated drone operations in Yemen, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, have raised questions regarding U.S. intelligence sharing, the rule of law, and partnership collaboration with other nations.

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The Potomac Institute for Policy Studies
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Behind the raids, rescues, and drone strikes of recent times has been a growing, international network of U.S. educated and trained military officers and security professionals. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the permanent program that has enabled and strengthened that international network.

In January 2002, Congress appropriated \$17.9M in the Defense Appropriations Bill to allow DoD to launch an initiative called the Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP). The new program was intended to provide funding for foreign military officers to attend U.S. military education institutions and selected regional centers for non-lethal training. This was really a paradigm shift in how we had viewed foreign military officers in our schools in the past. Typically, in the past, those officers had come from the major NATO allies, and they were the officers who were prominent in our programs for the previous 20 years.

In 2003, a decade ago, Congress made the CTFP a permanent program and included the Counterterrorism Fellowship Program in the 2004 National Defense Authorization Act. Since then, the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict has provided oversight of the program. It is worth citing the Senate appropriation language which approved \$20M for the “Regional Defense Counter-terrorism Fellowship Program, to fund the education and training of foreign military officers, ministry of defense civilians, and other foreign security officials, to include United States military officers and civilian officials whose participation directly contributes to the education and training of these foreign students.”

From its inception, CTFP was intended to include not just partner military officers but also other security professionals and practitioners, including police and civilians. This has distinguished this body of students from those international officers attending U.S. military schools under the auspices of the Department of State’s International Military Education and Training or IMET program.

The initial goals of the CTFP were:

- 1) To build and reinforce the counterterrorism capabilities and capacities of partner nations, and
- 2) To build and strengthen a global network of experts in combating terrorism and practitioners committed to fight with us against terrorists and terrorist organizations.

From the start, and at a time when many U.S. military planners were still talking about ending the war by killing just a few more of Al Qaeda’s senior leaders, the CTF Program was seen as a long-term investment in the future. So, at the time this legislation was passed, I was the lead writer for the National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism and in our discussion with the So-Comm. planners they said, “Why are we worried about long-term capabilities? We won’t need those, the war will be over if we killed just a few more al Qaeda leaders.” So, at least here were some visionaries who saw that we would require different capabilities and capacities than just our own US kinetic action.

Within the CTFP, the program at the Naval Post-Graduate School has focused on the operational level, while the National Defense University has focused on the level of strategy and policy. At NDU, the School of National Security Executive Education (SNSEE) executed the CTFP with a graduate-level program that within a few years also awarded a Master of Arts Degree in Strategic Security Studies to its graduates. At the time, SNSEE also evolved in the College of International Security Affairs—CISA. As part of their rigorous program of study over 11 months, CISA CT Fellows complete a thesis that typically is a CT plan for their country or a plan that addresses other security or regional challenges.

At this juncture, I should also note how international fellows are selected for the program. Our embassies, working with their host countries, identify potential professionals who have the experience and academic background, as well as the English language skills, to succeed in the program. The embassies then vet these candidates. Fellows are then slated for school in collaboration with our Regional Combatant Commands and based on the priorities from the Office of the Secretary of Defense-Policy.

So you might wonder, with an education program like this, how do we measure success or determine the value of the program?

For program feedback, we engage with our stakeholders, OSD SOLIC and the Regional Combatant Commands, for their assessment. In addition, we constantly survey our students and alumni.

For instance, a survey of a sample of alumni that we conducted last month showed:

79% believed that completion of the program at NDU advanced their career, while 47% assessed that their supervisors in their home countries recognized them as a more valuable counterterrorism asset as a result of the NDU/CISA experience.

53% thought that their supervisors “very much valued” the NDU experience.

73% reported that they have been able to use what they learned to teach others.

38% directly impacted their country’s CT legislation or policy, and all of those credited the program with making it possible.

82% believed that their participation has improved the ability of their country to combat insurgents and terrorists.

86% of those sampled maintain contacts with classmates and professors and assess that this has positively contributed to their ability to combat and respond to terrorism worldwide.

Let me take just a couple more minutes and highlight some of the contributions of recent CISA graduate(s):

1) They took on **positions of increasing importance** this year, which included high-profile appointments such as the Senegalese Army Chief of Staff, Colombian Navy Chief of Staff, Chief of Trinidad and Tobago Defense Force, Afghan Ambassador to India, Commander of Jordan's Special Forces, and Director General of Military Intelligence in Pakistan and other key positions.

2) They regularly return home to **write and teach their respective war colleges'** curriculum, largely based on their experience at CISA. These include:

- Nepal Command and Staff College
- Ethiopian General Command and Staff College
- Colombian Air War College
- **Nigerian Defense Academy and Intelligence College**
- Kenyan Military Academy
- Iraq CT Academy
- Philippines Command and Staff College
- **Indonesian Defense University's Asymmetric Warfare Division** (who are coming next week for a 10 day academic course).
- **Bangladesh Army/Special Forces** - the current LTC from Bangladesh is responsible for creating an 8-week CT course for officers upon his return

3) They have played a central role in re-**establishing security in Mali**. CISA's 7 Malian graduates are all in key national security positions.

- For example, BG Didier Dacko has been the Commander of the Northern Zone since before the AQIM offensive. He was recently featured in *The Atlantic* and described as "a combat-hardened commander respected by American and French officers." He wrote a 62 page thesis in 2010 on "How to Improve the Security Situation in Northern Mali."
- COL Sory Kone, who wrote two theses while at CISA, served as an advisor to both President Touré and the new Malian President Keita.
- A Nigerien graduate is now the Niger Contingent Commander in Mali, who took that position after attending the Nigerian NDC – where MG Idris, a 2006 graduate, serves as the Deputy Commandant and Director of Studies. He was also responsible for helping to design the Security Architecture of ECOWAS while in that role and the Strategic Communications Strategy for AFISMA (African Union Mission in Mali).
- Our recent academic exercise on Mali and extremism in Western Africa, drew 30 outside observers (including 10 general and flag officers) from State, USAID, AFRICOM, SOCOM, UN headquarters, the African Union, France, and Nigeria.

4) From Jordan, of whom there are 35, they play a **strategic role in holding the country together despite a spillover from instability in Syria**. HRH Aisha Bint al Hussein is the highest ranking woman in the Jordanian military and has revolutionized the role of women in JAF and played a key diplomatic role as the interface between the U.S. and JAF as the Defense Attaché in Washington.

- Furthermore, five Jordanian graduates have served as Task Force Commanders in Afghanistan and Iraq – two have received U.S. commendations (SOCOM medal and U.S. Bronze Star).

5) A Kenyan grad is currently commanding a **brigade of 5,000 Kenyan troops in Somalia** as part of AMISOM's role as the key fighting force in Somalia, now under U.N. auspices. A previous CISA graduate, Ayub Matiiri, also served as the key link between the Somali Transitional government and Kenya, and was able to solve an impasse. A Ugandan alumnus was the Intelligence Officer for the AU force in Somalia.

6) There are 26 alumni from Pakistan, a priority country in a program that recognizes the damage the Pressler Amendment did in the eyes of a generation of Pakistani officers. In Pakistan they are at the intersection of CT. One **Pakistani graduate was tasked to stand up a CT Cell within the Navy** and was the most junior officer to be head of the Pakistani "Marines". His classmate is now a key interface between ISI and the Army. Another recently published a book, built upon his CISA thesis, on Human Security in Pakistan. (There are 4 Pakistani officers, including 2 Brigadiers who commanded Brigades in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas in the current program.)

7) Several are NATO Special Operators who have been instrumental in the growing effectiveness of NATO SOF activities in Afghanistan. These include a Polish Navy Special Warfare ("Formoza") Commodore who **persuaded the Minister of Defence to send 10 percent of Polish Special Forces to Afghanistan in 2010 to improve** their ability to innovate and gain experience with land warfare tactics. He was also responsible for leading the growth of the Formoza Unit from 20 to 250 (in 2012).

"At first when I arrived at CISA, I thought the world was against me and that I would never be able to make it through the program due to my English and my Russian-style education, but now, I am the biggest advocate in Poland of the American way of thinking about strategy."

8) We have 6 Afghan alumni, the majority of whom are from Afghanistan's Office of the National Security Council. In fact the 2 Afghan civilians in the current program are from the ONSC. Our most prominent Afghan alumni is Ambassador Abdali, who after graduating became the Deputy National Security Advisor and is now Afghanistan's ambassador to India.

9) Several have played a key role in South American narco-trafficking. For example, VADM Wills, who recently took over as the Chief of the Colombian Navy, was responsible for seizing 4 tons of cocaine, valued at \$29.1 million, from FARC semi-submersibles in one month during his tenure as Colombian Navy Commander of Pacific Fleet. In Mexico, the **Army created its first dedicated CT unit** under a 2011 graduate and his classmate from Guatemala led the effort to **update Guatemala's Strategy for Narco-Trafficking**.

10) 1 served as the **Operational Head of the Thai Counterterrorism Operations Center**. During his tenure, North Korean efforts to engage in arms proliferation were thwarted by Thai interception of sensitive materials. Now he serves as the 3 star in charge of military relations with 4 border countries.

11) 2 wrote theses on **Brazilian security for the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympics**. These two graduates returned home to play a critical role in the planning efforts within the Police and the Air Force. Another Brazilian graduate was selected as the Brazilian liaison with INTERPOL at their international headquarters in France.

A final note on the CT network and the integration of Americans into this international group. In recent years, we have been able to incorporate U.S. professionals into the CTFP. In addition to U.S. military officers, grade O-5 to O-6, we have, or have recently had, students from NCTC, State, DIA, ONI, FBI, DHS, DoTrans, and DoEnergy. We have also worked to develop links between our CT fellows and our U.S. students who are Afghanistan-Pakistan “hands” and our Special Operators at Fort Bragg.

Dr. Harlan K. Ullman

Senior Advisor at the Atlantic Council and Chairman of the Killowen Group

Yonah, thank you. It is a privilege and a pleasure to be on the same platform as the 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps. General Gray has been a great role model and mentor, and not just to Marines. Thank you, Al.

General Gray: Coming from a Navy Officer, that's pretty good.

Ullman: A former Naval Person, who's served with the seventh Marines, by the way.

I want to expand the discussion a bit. We talk about October. There are other black days in October: October 1929; October 1987; October 2008; and, if Congress had not passed the debt ceiling, the DOW would have dropped 5,000 points in October 2013. I make that point because we have to look at a broader perspective.

Let me start this discussion in a very provocative way. This is a dollar gold coin with Jimmy Madison on the front. I will give this to anyone who can identify the first known Palestinian female suicide bomber. It was somebody called Wafa Idris. About a dozen years ago, she blew herself up in Gaza City. She was a very successful Palestinian lawyer. She didn't kill herself because of 72 virgins- she had been married. Her husband was killed, her parents were killed, her children were killed by the Israelis during the Intifada. She was desperate. Now, I'm not suggesting that's the root cause, but we have to look at some of these human issues to understand what we're dealing with.

Let me provide a little bit further context. I would argue right now that the so-called Westphalian system that's been around since 1648 is under fundamental attack, disruption, and possibly change. The cause is quite simple. If you take a look at the global diffusion of all forms of power, which can be called globalization, it's having several remarkable effects, of which we sometimes are ignorant. Most importantly is the empowerment of individuals and non-state actors at the expense of the state-centric system. Bradley or Chelsea Manning, depending on how you want to define him or her, Edward Snowden, al-Qaeda are examples of what empowerment has done. What this means is that states, even though the United States will remain foreseeably the strongest economic and military power in the world, are losing the influence and relevance that they once had.

Second, as we discovered in Iraq and Afghanistan, the best military in the world cannot beat an enemy that does not have an army, navy, or an air force. In fact, when you go to the toolkit for the other weapons that are necessary, they've either been stillborn or undernourished.

Thirdly, in many ways more interesting, 100 years ago next June 28, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his pregnant wife Sophie got plugged in Sarajevo. World War I erupted. Today I would argue, and it's the title of a new book I'm writing, we have an excess of archdukes and a surfeit of bullets. What's interesting is you don't need Gavrilo Princip firing his 9 millimeter Beretta at somebody. You could simply fire a shot in the air and have an effect, like the Tunisian fruit vendor who set himself on fire to interesting consequences.

I make those points because we're dealing in a tectonically different world with an international security system that is still very much wedded to post-World War II and the Cold War, and it's not changed sufficiently. And, indeed, I would argue that our own national security system as well as our government is badly broken, and I wish I had a cure for that. But those are the realities. Now, I would argue that the top four danger challenges that men as mankind, stability, prosperity, peace.

First, is failed and failing government, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, with Washington and Brussels in between. And if you didn't cry at the spectacle just the other day on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue, I mourn for where we are headed, and it's not just here. This is a worldwide problem.

Second, are economic disparity, despair, and dislocation. We deal in Egypt where approximately half the population lives on \$2 a day, and all they have for resources really are sand and Suez. How do you fix it? And it's not just Egypt; it's elsewhere.

Thirdly is radical ideology and religious extremism. Here we have a real problem, because I think our vocabulary is not up to the task, and neither is our syntax and grammar. We can't even really identify the nature of the threat. Are they Islamics, are they radicals, are they jihadis, and so forth.

Finally, is global warming, which, at the end of the day could be the wildcard, but I'm not going to discuss that.

So against this background, and I don't view myself as an optimist or a pessimist, but a realist, how do we react? What should we be doing? In one sense, we need global solutions. It would be nice to have a Nixonian-Kissinger view of the world. Here is an example: when you look at some of the root problems, they are geographically identifiable from Eastern Mediterranean to the Bay of Bengal, plus or minus. And we all know the issues: the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Saudi Wahhabism, Salafism, Iranian radicalism, but also Persian arrogance, India, Pakistan. You see what's happening in Syria. Now if, and this is a big "if", we were really a mature country we would be looking to try to come up with a global solution. Here's one that was proposed that got nowhere: to the surprise of most people, Mister Assad said, after he was being prodded, that he would forgo chemical weapons.

Three weeks ago a major Russian delegation came to Washington including the former Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. Their plea and a discussion I am told took place between John Kerry and Sergei Lavrov, the Russian Foreign Minister was based on...the notion of putting together a joint U.S.-Russian technical team to help implement this disarmament program. But underlying this team was the thought that, if we could successfully remove Assad's chemical weapons and then bring the Russians in to advance negotiations with Iran over its nuclear ambitions, that could lead to a comprehensive strategy. By the way, if negotiations with Syria and Iran worked out then perhaps this could lead to removing Hezbollah, from Syria because if negotiations worked, Iran might encourage Hezbollah to leave. There could be a solution, and it could lead to something with Iran. And if you were able to defang, and I'm not saying we could, Iran's

nuclear ambitions, what a terrific opportunity that could have been. Then, you could have moved on to the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian crisis and even India-Pakistan. In fact, when Nawaz Sharif was here, he noted that when he had met with Bill Clinton in 1999 before the Cargill disaster, he had said if you only spend 10% of your time, Mister President, on India-Pakistan-Kashmir instead of the Middle East, we could get a solution.

Unfortunately, what I just described is rather akin to Beethoven, who was deaf, saying, "I shall hear in Heaven." It's a nice fantasy. I wish we were capable of doing that. But I'm afraid that this government, Republican or Democrat, it makes no difference, that sort of thinking is going to happen until we can hear in heaven. So what, then, do we do?

First and most importantly, we have to start looking at these issues of radicalism not as a war, and I think the notion of a global war on terror was as fatuous as a war on drugs, a war on crime, or on everything else. It's far deeper than that. I would look at radicalism in terms of pathologies and disease. You can either deal, as we have, with symptoms, or we can deal with causes. And frankly, whether it was the Bush administration or the Obama administration, we're dealing with tactics, we're dealing with symptoms, and we're not dealing with causes. So we need to practice defensive medicine and you need to go as best as you can to the cause.

Second, we're too self-centered. Boston Marathon- was not an American calamity. Did you know in that same space of time that a handful of Americans were killed or wounded, over a thousand Pakistanis, Iraqis, Yemenis, and Afghans were slaughtered and murdered? We are too self absorbed and obsessed. It would be very useful, for example, if we were able to take a look at the Department of Homeland Security, which is a monstrosity and predictably so, and reform it, we would be ahead of the game. TSA, for example and I don't know about you, but I would assume at cost exchange ratio of about a trillion pairs of shoes have been taken off, to what end and what gain? I think that there are far better ways of achieving airline security. And indeed, regarding TSA, and this is a small point, that privatization and turning this over to the airlines with due risk and is a smarter way of doing business, which will save us a huge amount of money, but that's beside the point.

The one area where I find the greatest fault, and I find this inconceivable, is if you go back to World War II, we had some pretty good propaganda and the Brits were even better at it than we were. If you think about Churchill, his bodyguard of lies, and when he called Hitler that "little Nazzzi" or "little Corporal." Actually, during the Cold War, we weren't bad. We had Radio Free Europe, we had all sorts of ways of taking on the Soviets. I was never a great fan of advancing democracy, but frankly when you wave that fire in their faces it really made a point. Ronald Reagan's challenge to "take down that wall, Mister Gorbachev," has got to go down as one of the really great taunts.

So why are we not developing black, white, gray propaganda to use against radicals? We don't even have to do it ourselves. You go to Pakistan, there's nothing going on. The State Department has a very small program to get on the internet to try to woo young Muslims away from al-Qaeda. Now why in God's name have we not put together a major program to deal ideologically? And it's not like we don't know- in 2004, Bill Schneider who was Chairman of the Defense Science Board sent a report to Don Rumsfeld and asked to look at the global war on

terror. The report said, quote: “The United States cannot win the global War on Terror unless we win the global war of ideas, and we are losing the war of ideas.” That was 10 years ago. I cannot understand, and I’ve had this conversation with several Secretaries of State and Secretaries of Defense, I just cannot understand why we have not put together a major, major plan to deal with an ideological battle in which we get so-called moderate clerics to rally on our side and we destroy the bad guys.

One of the things the American political system does better than anything, is negative campaigning. The Bush team could accuse John McCain of having a black child out of wedlock in South Carolina when it was an adopted daughter. But it’s not just the Republicans and Democrats, it works on both sides. So why don’t we do that with Ayman al-Zawahiri? Why don’t we discredit these guys? My sadness is that we have ideas, we have good people, but we have a political system that currently is really broken. So I go back to the analogy of looking at this issue of ideological rivalry and conflict in terms of medicine and disease. I would argue right now, in the scale of things, it’s equivalent to a bad case of the flu. It’s uncomfortable, aggravating, we probably can treat it; however, as is the case with superbugs that are resistant to antibiotics, and you might not know this but more people die in the United States of superbugs than of AIDS, and how much money are we putting into superbugs? The answer is not a hell of a lot, because there’s no profitable motive, plus you can only use these things on a limited basis. But the issue is making sure right now that this ideological zealotry which is somewhat political, which is somewhat emotional, which is somewhat economic, does not turn into a superbug. That is what we have to do, and I’m not convinced that we have the ability to do it.

Academic Centers

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Established in 1994, the activities of IUCTS are guided by an International Research Council that offers recommendations for study on different aspects of terrorism, both conventional and unconventional. IUCTS is cooperating academically with universities and think tanks in over 40 countries, as well as with governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental bodies.

International Center for Terrorism Studies (ICTS)

Established in 1998 by the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, in Arlington, VA, ICTS administers IUCTS activities and sponsors an internship program in terrorism studies.

Inter-University Center for Legal Studies (IUCLS)

Established in 1999 and located at the International Law Institute in Washington, D.C., IUCLS conducts seminars and research on legal aspects of terrorism and administers training for law students.

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