

*Editor's note: At USIP's groundbreaking ceremony, President Bush spoke of the growing importance of civilian involvement in post-conflict stabilization work. This article describes the Institute's involvement in creating the Civilian Response Corps, a major part of such initiatives.*

## Providing a “Critically Missing Piece”: USIP and the Growth of the Civilian Response Corps

The launch of the State Department's Civilian Response Corps (CRC) marks a fundamental restructuring in American capacity to address strategic challenges that have emerged since the end of the Cold War. USIP has provided a “critically missing piece” in the effort, according to USIP Senior Program Officer Michael Dziedzic.

The concept of the corps is akin to the National Guard, in which specially trained civilians wait on standby to deploy in military roles. In the CRC, however, teams of specialized civilians will deploy to relieve the reconstruction burden on military units. The corps is part of the State Department's transformational diplomacy initiative, which aims to more closely integrate civilian and military components of national security policy.

CRC members will participate in the range of areas needed to help fragile states restore stability and the rule of law and achieve economic recovery and sustainable growth during post-conflict periods. They will include police, border security officers, prosecutors, judges, diplomats, development specialists, public health experts, engineers, economists, public administrators, agronomists and others.

Without such a cadre, lengthy delays in deploying civilians with vitally needed skills at the critical early phase of a post-conflict operation are common. By the time such experts have been assembled, security conditions have often worsened, as was the case in Afghanistan and Iraq. The CRC will address this challenge by providing a “surge capacity” of civilian experts to address critical stability challenges in a matter of days or weeks rather than months and years.

### Overview of the Civilian Response Corps

The CRC will consist of active, standby and reserve components. The active and standby components are composed of full-time



*Recent post-conflict activities have demonstrated the need for increased cooperation among the defense, diplomatic and development communities.*

federal personnel trained and equipped to deploy rapidly to countries in crisis or emerging from conflict.

Active members of the CRC will be prepared to deploy within 48 hours after call-up by the secretary of state. This component will consist of personnel from eight different federal agencies; the plurality will be from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the departments of State and Justice. Up to 75 percent of the active group will be available to deploy at any time. When not overseas, they will engage in training, planning and other reconstruction and stabilization (R&S) activities. “The active component is going to be the make-or-break element of this effort. I believe it will demonstrate its value very fast and very clearly,” says Ambassador John Herbst, the State Department's coordinator for reconstruction and stabilization (S/CRS), the bureau which oversees the CRC.

Members of the CRC's second group— the standby component, serve in the

federal government in jobs beyond R&S but have specialized skills needed for such operations. Members of the standby grouping will pursue additional training for a minimum of two weeks annually and be available to serve in crisis zones within 30 days after call up. No more than a quarter of standby personnel would deploy at any given point in time.

The third component—the reserves—will be comprised of civilians working in the private sector or state and local governments. They will provide skills needed for R&S work that are not readily or sufficiently available within the U.S. Government, such as police and other skills related to rule of law. Reservists will train for two weeks annually and be deployable for a one year within a two-year window of service.

While the CRC is administered by S/CRS, a number of government entities have partnered in the effort, including the State Department's bureaus of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement

and Diplomatic Security, USAID, and the departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Justice and Treasury.

S/CRS recently received \$75 million from Congress to establish the active and standby components. With this funding, the State Department anticipates that by fall 2009, the CRC will field 100 active and 500 standby members. Of the active component, USAID plans to recruit 37 by the end of 2009. If the effort receives full funding from Congress, the CRC will expand to 250 active members, 2,000 standby members and 2,000 reservists by 2010.

### USIP: Driving the Process

Over the past decade, USIP has used its convening power and ability to formulate policy approaches to drive the process of establishing and growing the CRC. The Department of Defense, the National Security Council (NSC), Congress and the White House each supported the effort as it gained momentum.

Says USIP Vice President Daniel Serwer, “It’s a national security readiness question. The CRC brings major value added to what the U.S. government can do in a postwar situation. USIP has been a supporter for a long time. We’ve played a really important role in working out all the kinks.”



Ambassador John Herbst directs the State Department’s Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, which oversees the Civilian Response Corps.



Specialists Beth Cole, Michael Dziejdzic, and Robert M. Perito (left to right) are among the USIP staff that have led the Civilian Response Corps effort.

“We had a lot of help reaching this point,” Herbst reflects. “USIP has been a critical, if not *the* critical partner in all of this. They have been a very much appreciated counselor and ally as we’ve done the work.”

Stewart Patrick, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations who served on the State Department’s policy planning staff from 2003 to 2005, concurs. “The final shape [of CRC] owes a lot to USIP,” says Patrick, who worked closely with USIP staff as the process unfolded.

USIP began to examine the dynamics of peacemaking operations after troubled American interventions in Panama, Haiti and Somalia in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Ambassador Robert Oakley was the Institute’s first senior fellow to work on the topic in 1995. He and Dziejdzic coedited *Policing the New World Disorder: Peace Operations and Public Security*, which became a seminal work in the field. The authors recommended applying the concept of troops on standby to civilian specialists to close the public security gap in post-conflict situations.

Senior Program Officer Bob Perito, then at the U.S. Department of Justice, joined USIP as a senior fellow in 2001 to explore the role of constabulary, police, judiciary and corrections units deployed in the aftermath of war and in civil conflict. His resulting book, *Where Is the Lone Ranger When you Need Him? America’s Search for a Post Conflict Stability Force*, raised questions about military preparedness for nonmilitary tasks and called for

the establishment of a U.S. stability force comprised of police, lawyers, judges and others involved in rule of law.

Over the next few years, others began to recognize the value of USIP’s work in the field, beginning with the Department of Defense. In the buildup to the Iraq War, Chairman of the Defense Policy Board Richard Perle invited Perito, USIP President Richard H. Solomon and then-Executive Vice President Harriet Hentges to deliver a presentation on the topic. Perle then briefed Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld on the issue. After this meeting, Perito briefed the Defense Policy Board at the Pentagon on the concept of civilian involvement in post-conflict affairs.

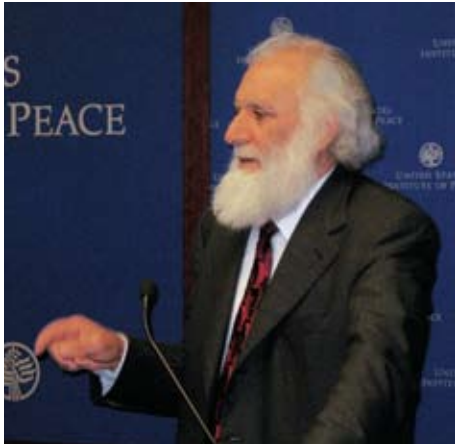
After the fall of Baghdad in April 2003, lawlessness prevailed in Iraq. That summer, NSC staff contacted Dziejdzic and asked the Institute to undertake a study focused on U.S. options to deploy rule of law specialists in post-conflict zones. Senior Program Officers Beth Cole, Dziejdzic and Perito identified and interviewed officials from rule of law entities such as the federal Bureau of Prisons, state judges and police, the U.S. Marshall’s service and the international affairs office at the Department of Homeland Security. The trio asked about the ability of these employees to contribute to a standby capability force for international deployment.

The USIP report on the topic provided the organizational design for a State Department office called the Office of Rule

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“USIP has been a critical if not *the* critical partner in all of this. They have ... the work.”

—Ambassador John Herbst



*His Excellency Dr. Abdul Jabbar Sabit, former Attorney General of Afghanistan, makes a point at June 2008 presentation at USIP.*

In recognition of the critical role Muslim leaders play in peacebuilding in Afghanistan, the Institute's Religion and Peacemaking program convened 70 Afghan religious scholars and leaders for workshops on conflict resolution and peacemaking. The program also supports teacher training workshops in cooperation with Afghanistan's ministries of religious affairs and education, and the national council of religious scholars.

USIP's grant and fellowships program has contributed as well. The Institute provided a grant to the Women Activities and Social Services Association (WASSA) based in Herat, as it conducts its dialogue and conflict resolution program through negotiation and mediation training. USIP has also established two fellowships for Afghan specialists.

Finally, USIP's Afghanistan Working Group serves as a hub for experts and U.S. government personnel working on Afghanistan, hosts meetings on current critical issues, disseminates information and creates an informal space for interagency and intergroup communication and collaboration. The Institute has also recently hosted key figures related to Afghanistan such as Abdul Jabbar Sabit, the country's attorney general; famed journalist Ahmed Rashid; and Professor Sibghatullah Al-Mojaddedi, chairman of the Afghan Upper House and former president of the country's Islamic interim government.

### **Civilian Response Corps**, *from page 7*

of Law Operations (ORLO) to house such efforts. The authors noted, however, that the other functions essential to stabilizing a state emerging from internal turmoil would also be required.

Clint Williamson, then director of Stability Operations at the NSC, worked to expand the concept beyond an office focused on rule of law issues to several other areas, including humanitarian assistance and governance. The Pentagon also took an increasing interest in the subject, as strategists wanted to limit the need for U.S. soldiers to be charged with responsibilities best performed by civilians.

Congress engaged in the growing effort to more closely integrate military and civilian functions in post-conflict environments. An advisory group focused on stability and reconstruction, convened by Senators Joseph Biden, Richard Lugar and others, began to meet. In addition to the Institute, other organizations participated in the meetings, including RAND, the Center for Strategic and International Studies and National Defense University.

Subsequently, Lugar and Biden proposed the Stability and Reconstruction Management Act, which called for the establishment of S/CRS and the CRC. The legislation proposed civilians for operations in areas such as rule of law, financial management and agriculture. USIP advised the group that formulated this legislation. The bill passed the Senate Foreign Relations committee, but did not go further.

However, the creation of the S/CRS office was a breakthrough for USIP's efforts. The department's policy planning office accepted USIP's recommendation to establish a coordinating bureau for civilians in post-conflict environments. "We were amazed. For something like that to happen in the USG at that speed, it's pretty unprecedented," reflects Cole. However, the office lacked a legislative mandate and was initially staffed with only eight state department officials. Ambassador Carlos Pascual was appointed as the first S/CRS coordinator.

USIP then worked with S/CRS staff to establish working groups on transitional governance; disarmament; demo-

bilization, and reintegration; elections; media; the role of women; economic development and management of natural resources. The strategic planning staff at S/CRS adopted "conflict transformation as their strategic planning paradigm. This concept was explored in the USIP publication, *Quest for Viable Peace* which was co-edited by Dziejdzic. Perito and Senior Rule of Law Advisor J. Alexander Thier worked to integrate civilian police and judges into discussions on the effort.

Although funds from Congress to support the CRC did not materialize, USIP persisted in its efforts to develop the theoretical framework for the corps. "USIP decided that this was too important. No matter what happened on the legislative front, this was an idea to put in front of the U.S. government because of demands out there," remarks Cole.

In a major boost, the White House became directly involved when President Bush authorized National Security Directive 44 which gave the secretary of state the authority to manage stabilization responses through S/CRS.

As the effort took shape, it became evident that all the skills for civilians to apply in conflict zones were not housed or easily available within the federal government. Herbst, who replaced Carlos Pascual as director of S/CRS, introduced the idea of three separate modules—active, standby and reserve—to better meet anticipated needs for civilian specialists in managing a transition from conflict.

In July 2008, the CRC was formally launched. USIP has continued to support the inauguration of the CRC by conducting workshops to develop a recruitment strategy for police and other positions related to the rule of law.

USIP anticipates that it will provide education and training for members of the CRC in coming years. Serwer projects that the Institute will provide "the training required to make a lawyer from Des Moines into an effective mentor of justice ministry officials in Kabul."

Herbst notes that, "The success we've achieved—and I don't want to overstate it because we've got a long way to go—is in large part due to help from our friends. USIP is very important there."