

Leveraging “3D” Security: From Rhetoric to Reality

By Lisa Schirch and Aaron Kishbaugh | November 15, 2006

Introduction

In a potential step forward, the Bush administration has begun using the term “3D Security” to define its overall approach to security. According to the rhetoric, diplomacy, development, and defense are to be equal “pillars” supporting a more integrated security policy capable of

Key Points

- A “3D” security framework creates possibilities such as increased funding for development and diplomacy, decreased reliance on the military, and decreased conflict between development, diplomacy, and defense personnel in crisis situations.
- A 3D security framework brings dangers such as increased politicization and militarization of development and diplomacy programs.

addressing wide-ranging threats such as terrorism, the spread of nuclear weapons, global warming, poverty, and health pandemics. While this new 3D or “whole of government” frame offers hope for expanding conceptions of security beyond the realm of military force, its implementation thus far raises several concerns.

By defining development and diplomacy as security strategies, the administration officially recognizes that building stable and sustainable peace involves

preventing conflict and addressing the root causes of insecurity. The concept of “human security,” focusing on a wide range of threats to individuals rather than nations, is spreading. When former President Bill Clinton called AIDS one of the greatest threats to U.S. security he elevated the priority of AIDS from a health issue requiring charity to a security issue even for those who do not have AIDS.

A 3D security frame offers the possibility of shifting U.S. foreign assistance to more meaningfully and effectively address global poverty. Historically, too much U.S. development assistance has been used to “win the hearts and minds” of people abroad to various U.S. purposes. USAID officials have lamented that the distribution of development assistance funds is often governed by political or military interests rather than by the goal of poverty reduction.

The coordination of 3D security offers the possibility of what military actors call “de-confliction,” that is, reducing some of the internal conflicts between development, diplomacy, and defense

personnel who on the ground often work at cross-purposes. Lack of basic communication and coordination between these sectors decreases the effectiveness of each sector and can increase such inefficiencies as duplication of efforts to bring relief supplies to the same communities.

In places like Bosnia, Somalia, and Colombia, for example, a lack of proper communication channels has sometimes prevented NGOs from doing development work or community-level diplomacy, or from knowing where landmines were placed, where roads would be closed to civilian traffic, and where civilians needed humanitarian aid. The lack of communication channels causes problems for both NGOs and military actors. Civilians also suffer from this lack of communication, as they too enter fields full of landmines, try to pass military convoys unaware of shoot-to-kill orders for anyone doing so, or they simply don’t receive aid because aid agencies are not aware of their needs. In the 2005 Tsunami, it appears that higher levels of communication and coordination between military and civilian actors may have hastened the pace of humanitarian relief efforts.

Recently the U.S. government has introduced a variety of new 3D security initiatives to maximize the contributions of development, diplomacy, and defense toward security. The National Security Presidential Directive 44 calls for increasing civilian capacity in reconstruction efforts such as S/CRS and the Department of Defense Directive 3000.05 calls for development of stability, security, transition, and reconstruction (SSTR) capacities within DOD. The State Department’s new Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) is tasked with leading, coordinating, and institutionalizing U.S. government civilian capacity to perform diplomatic and development tasks related to reconstruction and stabilization of fragile or failed states.

In January 2006, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced a shift toward Transformational Diplomacy: an initiative “To work with our many partners around the world to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people—and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system.” Transformational diplomacy attempts a more 3D integrated approach. It tightens the link between the State Department and USAID, as the latter boosts its focus on democracy as a central framework for planning its development programs. While these new initiatives offer opportunities to build on the strengths of 3D security noted earlier, they also illustrate some of the dangers of 3D security.



Problems with Current U.S. Policy

Budgeting

An effective 3D security approach requires well-resourced development, diplomacy, and defense sectors. In Congress, the support for 3D security has not yet translated into budgetary reality. Currently, the United States spends about the same amount (\$1 billion) in development assistance to fragile states in *a year* (excluding funds set aside for Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and HIV/AIDS) as it spends in Iraq in less than *a week*. In 2006, both houses of Congress refused to support the Bush administration's requested \$75 million for the Conflict Response Fund that would have enabled S/CRS to immediately deploy civilians with reconstruction and stabilization skills into crises such as Lebanon during the summer of 2006. A 3D security strategy will not work without a strong administrative base and standing civilian reserves. There is little hope for increasing development assistance given the current infrastructure. Foreign assistance is carried out by over 50 separate U.S. government units leading to a congressional appropriations process that is guided by these restrictive funding categories.

Equal Ds or Who is in Charge?

The disparity in resources and size make it challenging for the State Department, USAID, and the many NGOs to act as equal partners with the Department of Defense (DOD). Currently, DOD alone has the capacity to take on some ideally non-military tasks, such as: coordinating Tsunami relief efforts or restructuring government, running elections, and rebuilding infrastructure. Congress is widening the gap by giving DOD more funding for reconstruction and stability operations. The military itself acknowledges that its personnel often lack the preparation and training to handle these responsibilities. Continued funding of DOD's capacity for SSTR and continued rejection of S/CRS's appeal for programs such as the Conflict Response Fund risk leaving civilians from the State Department, USAID, and NGOs out of future funding and policymaking in post-conflict development assistance and diplomacy.

Instead of equalizing development, diplomacy, and defense, an unbalanced 3D security framework that only strengthens DOD capacities could increase the militarization and politicization of development and diplomacy. Many military and political leaders call for even greater coordination and integration of the 3Ds to increase the coherence and effectiveness of each approach in conflict zones. NGOs are increasingly referred to as "force multipliers" supporting the goals of military actors. However, higher levels of coordination, integration, or "harmonization" will likely always be problematic in war zones like Iraq where the military is an actor in the conflict rather than a neutral peacekeeper. Development organizations need to maintain their impartiality in such situations if they are to have the access they require to meet the humanitarian needs of all groups. For this reason a 3D approach should keep development and defense firmly apart from each other in combat operations.

Militarization of Aid

Local Iraqi development workers report that military "hearts and minds" development operations in Iraq are problematic in at least two ways. First, when military personnel simultaneously build schools and make frequent and aggressive searches of innocent civilians, local people report that distrust and confusion about U.S. motives increase.

Second, because of the involvement of U.S. forces in development and reconstruction work, local Iraqi development organizations report that they now receive frequent death threats and are targets for the insurgents because all development efforts in Iraq are perceived as linked to the U.S. occupation. As a result of military involvement in reconstruction, there are very few international or local NGOs able to work safely to meet the many humanitarian needs of Iraqis.

3D Conflicts of Interest

There are a variety of conflicts of interest between defense, development, and diplomacy sectors, particularly between government and nongovernmental organizations. Several years ago the director of USAID chastised the NGO community for downplaying USAID funding of their work, instead of promoting it to assist the government's public diplomacy efforts. This exposes a key concern of many NGOs: while they may need the USAID resources to meet the needs identified by local people, NGOs may find their lives endangered by insurgents seeking U.S. targets and their work hampered by groups who refuse to work with U.S.-funded development projects.

Furthermore, the USA PATRIOT Act currently prohibits NGOs from conducting unofficial diplomacy or development assistance with any groups on the U.S. list of suspected terrorists, even if they are only seeking access to unarmed people with humanitarian needs. There is no distinction between those rebel groups the United States is fighting, such as al-Qaida, and key groups in Nepal, Sri Lanka, or the Philippines who may end up on the United States' list of terrorists.

In addition, the new and tighter linkage between the State Department and USAID could allow the needs of the diplomatic mission or the larger security agenda to overshadow development assistance.

Key Problems

- There is a gap between current security funding priorities and the growing consensus that security challenges requires a 3D security approach.
 - Because of the disparity in capacities between the sectors, there is a danger of increasing militarization of development efforts.
 - Conflicts of interest limit the capacities of some development and diplomatic programs.
 - Integration of the 3D sectors could be perceived as consolidating the projection of U.S. power.
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Partnership or Projection of Power?

By identifying fragile and failed states as security threats, a 3D security framework could reinforce the idea that militaries and development organizations in the Northern Hemisphere have the right to interfere and dictate the development paths of countries in the South. In this development model, outside interests and plans take precedence and local civilian populations are marginalized as one of many “stakeholders,” as opposed to playing central roles in decision-making. U.S.-driven efforts at democratization and nation-building in places like Iraq encourage the perception that the United States wants to impose development or democracy

Toward a New Foreign Policy

Budgeting

A 3D security approach requires increasing investments in civilian capacity for development and diplomacy. Specifically, 3D security requires full funding for S/CRS and the Conflict Response Fund to address immediate crises. DOD recently lobbied skeptical congressional appropriators to shift some of its own funding to S/CRS. Increased funding for UN peacekeeping is also important, as crises in Lebanon, Sudan, and elsewhere arise. Development

Key Recommendations

- Increase investments in civilian capacity for development and diplomacy efforts.
- Build structural firewalls between the 3Ds to increase their ability to focus on their separate but related tasks.
- Build greater partnership with the international community through real policy changes.

ensure that budgeting reflects 3D security priorities and that each sector is held to the same rigorous level of evaluation for dollar input. A unified security budget that incorporates all three sectors may address some of these concerns.

Build Structural Firewalls between the 3Ds

A 3D approach requires coordination and communication, but also firewalls between government departments with different missions. For example, the State Department and the CIA successfully protested the Bush administration’s authorization to use plain-clothes secret commando groups to conduct covert operations against suspected terrorist targets in nearly a dozen countries without informing the U.S. ambassadors in those countries. After a great deal of internal struggle, the State Department reached an agreement with the Pentagon that ambassadors would be informed and have the opportunity to object to all U.S. military activity in their host countries.

plans onto local “host” nations rather than working as partners with people abroad to develop home-grown forms of democracy and locally-guided development.

While Transformational Diplomacy implies increased partnership with communities abroad, it also brings the danger of an increased sense of U.S. presence and control abroad. It risks confusion about whether American diplomats, development workers, and military personnel are all working to achieve a single purpose in projecting American power abroad, rather than the diverse missions they each hold that contribute to U.S. and global security.

Development and diplomacy should not be burdened with the primary overt goal of contributing to short-term security or military goals. Development aims to reduce poverty. Diplomacy aims to address conflicts and build constructive relationships. Development and diplomacy contribute to long-term security when they are properly resourced and freed to focus on these important tasks.

The State Department, USAID, DOD, and NGOs each need a wide measure of independence from each other so that they can best carry out their unique tasks. Development and diplomacy efforts are too large, too important, and too distinct to be subsumed into the mission of the Department of Defense. The success of these missions will be compromised if they are linked with or inhibited by military operations. A central coordinating mechanism for engagement across the 3Ds will help ensure that each has an equal voice in budgeting and policymaking. The United Kingdom’s shift toward 3D security relies on its own “Department for International Development” to be an equal partner with its diplomatic and defense sectors. Will defense, development, and diplomacy sectors allow a new under-resourced office like S/CRS to play this role, or is the creation of a Cabinet-level Department for International Development required? How should Congress define and impose limits to DOD, the State Department, or USAID’s missions?

Policies within the USA Patriot Act that inhibit the effective work of development and unofficial diplomacy should be changed. Development and diplomacy sectors will work best to build U.S. and global security when they are allowed to pursue diplomatic solutions to the armed rebel movements in these other countries without restrictions that prohibit them from communicating with key stakeholders in those conflicts.

Increased Partnership

In a spate of recent civil-military meetings, Defense and State Department officials are reaching out to NGOs to learn from their analytical frameworks, focusing more on fragile and failed states. While these meetings signal a move from 3D rhetoric to reality, the increase in coordination between U.S.-based defense, development, and diplomacy sectors could unintentionally increase the exclusion of other actors such as the EU, the UN, and most

importantly, local people in areas where the United States gets involved.

A 3D security approach is more likely to bring about sustainable security when local people are more clearly in decision-making positions. 3D security will require shifting global perceptions about an “America that imposes its will on others” to an “America that works in partnership with the global community” with real policy changes that seek to engage the world community as equal partners in a mutual effort to build global security. The United States can demonstrate its commitment to work in partnerships by accepting the results of free and fair elections regardless of outcome, including others in decision-making at every level, and keeping local peoples’ self-determined development paths at the center of all levels of engagement.

Conclusion

Embracing a 3D security approach is a positive step in the right direction for U.S. policy. Yet there are dangers that could come from how the United States implements 3D security. At its best, 3D security links to a broader analysis of current threats, a richer set of responses to security challenges, and a stronger role for local communities around the world to work in partnership with international actors in building global security. As the United States develops its architecture to support a 3D security framework, it is important to support not only *more* development and diplomacy, but also *better, more effective* policies and programs that can contribute to long-term U.S. and global security.

SOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

Global Interdependence Initiative
The Aspen Institute
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<http://www.aspeninstitute.org/>

Center for Global Development
1776 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Third Floor
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202.416-0700
<http://www.cgdev.org/>

Partnership for Effective Peacekeeping
Refugees International/Citizens for Global Solutions
1705 N Street NW
Washington, DC 20036
202.828-0110
www.effectivepeacekeeping.org

The 3D Security Initiative
Eastern Mennonite University
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<http://www.3Dsecurity.org>

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