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The Responsibility to Protect: Six Years After

Vincent A. Auger, PhD



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On 2–3 June 2011, Air University (AU) hosted two French attachés who visited French officers enrolled in AU schools and learned how professional military education at AU prepares foreign officers for success. *Left to right:* Rémy Mauduit, editor, *Air and Space Power Journal—Africa and Francophonie*; Col Anthony “Chris” Cain, USAF, retired, PhD, deputy director, Air Force Research Institute, Maxwell Air Force Base (AFB), Alabama; Maj Gen Gratien Maire, French defense attaché, French Embassy, Washington, DC; Brig Gen Scott Hanson, commander, Carl A. Spaatz Center for Officer Education, and commander, Air War College, Maxwell AFB; Col Vincent Cousin, air attaché, French Embassy, Washington, DC; Lt Col Hugues Pointfer, student, Air War College, Maxwell AFB; and Lt Col Olivier Kaladjian, student, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Maxwell AFB.



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A Few Aspects of Globalization

This issue of *Air and Space Power Journal—Africa and Francophonie* addresses security, alliances and coalitions, language study, and humanitarian welfare as complementary components in a globalized world. In “Security Assistance, Surrogate Armies, and the Pursuit of US Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa,” Maj Shawn Cochran, US Air Force, argues that the creation of US Africa Command (AFRICOM) does not imply either a militarization of Africa or a step toward a buildup of US troops on African soil. Rather, it symbolizes a new level of commitment to Africa. Specifically, “through its various security assistance programs, the United States now seeks to build both the capability and willingness of African states to employ military force throughout the region in a manner that supports US strategic interests and precludes the requirement for direct US military intervention.”

Beate Neuss then apprises us that the enormous complexity of the tasks and problems we face today demands cooperative action between the United States and Europe. As she points out in “Asymmetric Interdependence: Do America and Europe Need Each Other?,” Europe depends upon US support to pursue its interests and realize its goals. Indeed, no problem can be solved without the United States. Furthermore, trade and overall economic development intimately bind these two economic regions together. The strongest such regions in the world, the European Union and the United States account for 60 percent of global economic productivity. The totality of exchange, including the rapidly growing service sector, is estimated at \$3.7 billion, making the transatlantic area the cornerstone of the world’s economy. Such a degree of integration between sovereign states exists nowhere else.

In “Civilian Language Education in America: How the Air Force and Academia Can Thrive Together,” Col John Conway, US Air Force, retired, acquaints us with the evolution of foreign language teaching in the United States. The linguistic xenophobia of the 1920s, which deemed the study of foreign languages “un-American” and “unpatriotic,” set in motion damaging reverberations that continue to some extent today. Conway makes pertinent and timely recommendations to remedy this problem.

Finally, Dr. Vincent Auger discusses questions raised by a United Nations document that proclaimed a “responsibility to protect” nations from horrific crimes against humanity. His article, “The Responsibility to Protect: Six Years After,” explains some of the failings of this norm and examines several policy consequences of its ineffectiveness.

Rémy M. Mauduit, Editor

Air and Space Power Journal—Africa and Francophonie
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Security Assistance, Surrogate Armies, and the Pursuit of US Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa

MAJ SHAWN T. COCHRAN, USAF*

Creating US Africa Command (AFRICOM) reflects a growing recognition of US strategic interests in Africa and of a need to influence more effectively the security environment to protect and promote these interests.¹ AFRICOM also symbolizes, perhaps unintentionally, a new level of US commitment and identifies the United States as a significant stakeholder in Africa. Still, the United States has no desire for a more direct military role in the region. Contrary to the fears of many, the new command does not imply a militarization of US policy, nor does it represent an insidious step toward a buildup of US troops on African soil. Establishing an unofficial metric, a Department of Defense (DOD) official stated recently that the United States could consider AFRICOM a success “if it keeps American troops out of Africa for the next 50 years.”² For the United States, security assistance fills this gap between strategic commitment and aversion to military intervention. Accordingly, “a large part of AFRICOM’s mandate will be to build the indigenous capacity of African defense forces,” and “the command will concentrate much of its energies and resources on training and assistance to professionalize local militaries so that they can better ensure stability and security on the continent.”³ In the words of a senior US military officer assigned to AFRICOM, the United States seeks to enhance regional military forces because “we don’t want to see our guys going in and getting whacked. . . . We want Africans to go in.”⁴

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AFRICOM's focus on security assistance should lead one to consider whether such programs, as prescribed by current policy, are an effective hedge against more direct US military involvement. Such a question is particularly relevant to the near future of US military strategy in Africa, given the US government's avowed support of the African Standby Force (ASF), which is expected to be operational by 2010, as well as the recent extension of Section 1206 (nontraditional security assistance) funding authority to the DOD through fiscal year 2011. This article addresses the issue predominantly by exploring, within the context of Africa, the relationship between security assistance and surrogate force. It suggests that such a perspective, rooted in the broader concepts of agency theory, may add value beyond the more traditional logic of partner capacity building. It concludes that the efficacy of security assistance strategy derives largely from how it translates the donor-recipient relationship into a sponsor-surrogate relationship.

After expanding upon the linkage between security assistance and surrogate force, the article examines two case studies: the 2003 intervention of Nigeria and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Liberia, and the 2006–8 intervention of Ethiopia and the African Union (AU) in Somalia. These specific cases are germane for a number of reasons. First, they represent the two predominant strands of US security policy in Africa: peace support operations (Liberia) and counterterrorism (Somalia). In each case, the intervention was preceded by a period of significant and focused US security assistance to key actors. Finally, in each situation, the United States was under somewhat unique pressure to become involved militarily yet sought other alternatives, primarily in the form of surrogate force. The associated analysis attempts to identify the nature and causes of divergence between donor expectations and preferences on the one hand and recipient performance on the other. It then examines the viability of donor attempts to shape recipient behavior and thus achieve a desired security outcome.

Security Assistance and Surrogate Force

Until the mid-1970s, US policy makers used the terms *military assistance* and *military aid* generically for all transfers of military weapons, equipment, and training to recipient governments. In 1976 Congress

amended the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, introducing the label “security assistance” to include military assistance as well as other related programs. The “legislation shifted official terminology to usage of the term *security assistance* in preference to *military assistance* to include the political and economic aspects, as well as the military aspects, of arms transfers.”⁵ Today, the DOD defines security assistance as a group of programs, authorized by law, by which the United States “provides defense articles, military training, and other defense related services, by grant, loan, credit, or cash sales in furtherance of national policies and objectives.”⁶

There is no official DOD definition for surrogate force, the second key concept. For many, the term *proxy* may be more familiar. Within the military realm, the terms *proxy* and *surrogate* are largely interchangeable. The use here of the latter reflects a desire to establish a degree of distance from the related, yet viscerally more contentious, concept of proxy war. Given the African experience, any allusion to proxy war will likely elicit recollections of how external powers, both in the colonial and Cold War eras, competed by initiating, escalating, and exploiting local conflicts.⁷ Today, many who wish to denigrate a given foreign policy in Africa simply apply the label “proxy war” for dramatic effect.⁸

In his study of Soviet Third World strategy during the Cold War, Alvin Rubinstein suggests that

in foreign policy, the term “surrogate” (literally, one who fills the role of another) indicates a function in the relationship between two governments, in which government A, the surrogate, defers to the preferences of government B and acts on its behalf or in support of its policy in pursuance of shared though not necessarily identical goals and in circumstances that otherwise might require B to assume higher costs and/or higher risks.⁹

This definition provides a useful starting point but limits unnecessarily the concept to relationships between governments. Over the past several decades, the United States has demonstrated a proclivity for the use of both state and nonstate surrogates.¹⁰ Despite this widespread application, US defense publications provide only tangential reference to the subject. In its definition of unconventional warfare, Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, includes operations “conducted through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source.”¹¹ Although vague, this latter source adds an important

element to Rubinstein's characterization by emphasizing the idea of a mutually beneficial relationship. The surrogate acts on behalf of government B, but in addition, government B supports and enables the surrogate.

For the purposes of this article, a surrogate force is defined as an organization that serves the needs or interests of a secondary actor—the sponsor—by employing military power in place of the sponsor's own forces. Implicit within this definition is the requirement for the sponsor to fund, equip, train, or otherwise support the surrogate. The sponsor also must exercise at least some form of control or influence over the surrogate. This control, however, is never absolute. In many cases, it is tentative at best. As Rubinstein explains, "Whereas surrogates may connote subordination and dependence, in practice they cover a range of relationships."¹² From a definitional standpoint, there must be some congruence of interests between the surrogate and sponsor beyond financial considerations. This does not preclude differing or competing objectives, but the surrogate does not act solely for monetary gain or purely in response to coercion. Finally, one must recognize that the sponsor-surrogate relationship does not represent a formal agreement and thus differs distinctly from an alliance.

In his 1950s analysis of foreign aid, George Liska introduced a categorical distinction between creative and acquisitive assistance programs. Creative aid, even of a military variety, focuses on the socioeconomic development of a recipient without being tied to any specific strategic objective of the donor. It is "not primarily intended to acquire anything, at least not immediately; it is extended in the hope that it will favorably affect the economic and political development of the recipient country." On the other hand, a donor will utilize acquisitive aid to "win a comparatively specific advantage" or to "acquire" an asset.¹³ In further defining the nature of the latter, Liska postulates,

In the case of acquisitive aid the recipient's performance substitutes directly for action by the donor. The donor either does not expect to act at all or would have to act "more" or "differently" if he could not anticipate the performance of the recipient. . . . The case is clearest where military and economic aid are intended to help the recipient maintain an army for local self-defense, so that the United States does not have to participate with troops or need involve only a correspondingly smaller number of troops.¹⁴

This passage highlights the basic linkage between security assistance and surrogate force. A similar perspective is pervasive to, although not necessarily articulated within, justification for US security assistance funding.

Proponents of US security assistance cite a number of program benefits.¹⁵ Most justifications share the common theme of economy of force. Calling for a dramatic increase in security assistance funding during the Reagan years, Secretary of State Alexander Haig claimed, “As we strengthen these states, we strengthen ourselves. . . . We can do so more effectively and frequently at less cost.”¹⁶ In 1985 Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger testified to Congress that security assistance serves to “ease the financial and logistical burden of our global security interests.”¹⁷ More specifically, the achievement of economy through security assistance stems from a reduction in the requirement for more financially and politically costly US military intervention. Continuing his testimony, Weinberger explained, “If effective, our programs help reduce the likelihood that US forces will be called upon to intervene on behalf of friendly or allied countries sharing common security interests.”¹⁸ James Buckley, undersecretary of state for security assistance and technology during the same period, argued that the programs “bolster the military capabilities of our friends and allies, permitting them in some cases to undertake responsibilities which otherwise we ourselves might have to assume.”¹⁹ More recently, and reflecting more specifically on the benefits of US security assistance to Africa, Cong. Ike Skelton explained,

In the Global War on Terror, we need all of the help we can find. Where nations are willing to pony up resources, especially in terms of available troops, then we should do all we can to make sure that they are as well trained and well equipped as we can make them. Clearly no one is better suited to patrol the ungoverned spaces in Africa than the Africans. . . . Not only will they be more effective than we could ever be, but it will also relieve at least some of the demand to deploy our own troops.²⁰

Mirroring Liska’s logic, Weinberger, Buckley, and Skelton advocated security assistance as a means of enabling other actors to take the place of US forces. They were, essentially, espousing the linkage between security assistance and surrogate force.

Terminology often obscures this key relationship. US policy makers and defense personnel alike speak regularly in terms of “building partner capacity.” The dialogue surrounding the standup of AFRICOM certainly follows this trend. This is probably more palatable than the notion of developing surrogates, but the palatability comes with a downside. Bertil Dunér outlines the three dimensions of a surrogate relationship as compatibility of interests, material support, and power.²¹ Of the three, power, or influence,

exerted by the sponsor is most critical. For Dunér, whether or not a state has acted as a surrogate “can best be regarded as a question of whether it has been subjected to the exercise of power by some other state; whether it has been pressured to intervening.” A partner, on the other hand, receives material support yet is in no way pressured or influenced by the donor to intervene.²² By analyzing, strategizing, and implementing security assistance in terms of a partnership instead of a sponsor-surrogate relationship, one is perhaps more likely to marginalize the critical, albeit controversial, factor of donor influence and control.

Such marginalization may affect adversely the degree to which security assistance programs achieve US objectives. According to William Mott, “Throughout the Cold War, Americans persisted in the obsessive conviction that arms transfers . . . would provide pervasive U.S. political influence on recipient policy” and create automatically “decisive leverage on recipient behavior.” Washington policy makers assumed a degree of US control inherent in the provision of security assistance and “expected strategic and diplomatic loyalty and even military service from U.S. recipients.”²³ This assumption was, in many cases, flawed. Failing to address adequately the issue of donor influence, “Washington was never able to create the convergence of recipient aims to achieve U.S. aims.”²⁴ Instead of shaping recipient behavior and use of military force as hoped, security assistance became “at best a precedent and an argument for continued aid, and at worst a resource at the disposition of the recipient for domestic or external use regardless of the stated purpose for which given.”²⁵

The key point here is that capacity building, in many circumstances, may not be enough. The United States cannot assume that the mere granting of security assistance—what Dunér categorizes as material support—will shape automatically recipient behavior or that the resultant capacity will necessarily be utilized in a manner that best supports US interests. Dunér is correct in referring to any such assumption as “a very shallow notion.”²⁶ Addressing security assistance from a mind-set of surrogate force development as opposed to partner capacity building highlights the critical need, particularly in the absence of formal alliances, for donor influence associated with donor material support.

This approach to security assistance lends itself readily to the broader theoretical framework of agency theory. As cited above, “In the case of

acquisitive aid the recipient's performance substitutes directly for action by the donor. The donor either does not expect to act at all or would have to act 'more' or 'differently' if he could not anticipate the performance of the recipient." Agency theory, in turn, addresses the ubiquitous yet complex relationships in which one party, the agent, acts on behalf of another, the principal.²⁷ Thus, to the degree that security assistance falls within the acquisitive category, the core concepts of agency theory become more germane. The following analysis of US security assistance strategy in Africa relies substantially on these concepts. Within this analysis, the sponsor and surrogate assume the roles, respectively, of principal and agent.²⁸

There has been little shortage of instability and conflict in Africa over the past decade. In most cases, the United States has chosen to remain a concerned observer—just another member, albeit an influential one, of the amorphous international community. On rare occasion, certain facets of a conflict serve to drive the United States into a more active leadership role and pressure it to consider more seriously the application of military power. While relatively uncommon, it is in such situations that the concept of surrogate force is most relevant and the linkage to security assistance becomes most vital. The two cases presented below reside generally within this category. Each points to a degree of success in the utilization of surrogate force and to the value of US security assistance programs while at the same time illustrating readily the truism that agency is rarely, if ever, perfect.

Case I:

Intervention of Nigeria and ECOWAS in Liberia, 2003

The Liberian elections of 1997 brought rebel leader Charles Taylor to power and resulted in a short period of relative stability in the nation. Within a couple of years, however, a new bout of internal fighting emerged in response to the abuses of the Taylor regime. The resumed civil war in Liberia finally came under the international spotlight in early June 2003 as the insurgent group Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy, long confined to remote areas of the country, made a rapid advance upon Monrovia, and tens of thousands of refugees streamed into the capital city.²⁹

The Impetus for US Involvement

On 29 June, United Nations (UN) secretary-general Kofi Annan called for international peacekeepers to intervene in the conflict. In a letter to the Security Council, he expressed that “such a force should be led by a permanent member of the council.”³⁰ Arguing that the United States had a special relationship with Liberia, the secretary-general looked specifically to the Americans to fill a leadership role. France and Great Britain had recently deployed substantial peacekeeping forces to their former colonies of the Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone, respectively. Although Liberia was never a US colony, it was the closest thing to it in Africa, and many advocates of US intervention, including the governments of France and Great Britain, suggested that the United States should respond in a comparable manner.³¹

Similar arguments had surfaced in the early 1990s at the outset of the preceding Liberian conflict, yet the United States had declined to commit forces. In 2003, however, it faced additional considerations. One was the increased interest in subregional energy resources. At that time, analysts predicted that by 2020, the United States would import 25 percent of its crude oil from the Gulf of Guinea.³² Other growing concerns included the pervasive weapons and drug trafficking as well as the perceived presence of international terrorist organizations. As Secretary of State Colin Powell explained, “We do have an interest in making sure that West Africa doesn’t simply come apart.”³³

Despite the historical ties, international pressure, and at least some degree of national interest, feelings in the United States toward committing troops to Liberia remained mixed. A conservative Congress feared being drawn into a protracted African conflict and stretching the military too thin. The defense establishment was also reluctant “to get involved in a complex and violent dispute that does not involve compelling issues of national security for the United States, especially when American troops are already deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.”³⁴ At a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen Richard Myers, expressed strong reservations about involvement in Liberia, warning lawmakers of the potential for a long and costly operation.³⁵ Vice-chairman Gen Peter Pace echoed those sentiments, pointing directly to the precedent of the US debacle in Somalia.³⁶ This view, however, was not universal within the US government. The State Department, led by Powell, pressed for a

vigorous military response from the United States.³⁷ A small but vocal group of US lawmakers weighed in on the side of Powell. After a period of intense internal debate, the administration merely conceded in early July that it was “not ruling out” the deployment of American troops.³⁸

Potential Surrogates

While ostensibly weighing US military intervention, President Bush deployed a small team of military advisors to western Africa to assess the situation and determine the ability and willingness of subregional actors to respond.³⁹ At a press conference, Bush explained that the team was “assessing ECOWAS strength: how soon, how quick [*sic*], what kinds of troops, who they are.”⁴⁰ This focus on ECOWAS was not surprising. From a military perspective, it was by far the most developed and experienced subregional organization in Africa. Further, ECOWAS had intervened—absent a UN mandate—in Liberia previously to maintain subregional stability. There was obviously some interest amongst its members in preventing the violence from spreading as it had in the 1990s.

In turning to ECOWAS, the United States was, in effect, turning to Nigeria. Nigeria was the subregional power and, according to Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Pickering, “the only country in the region capable of projecting military force.”⁴¹ In testifying to Congress, Pickering also pointed out that an earlier ECOWAS military operation in Liberia had been Nigerian led, Nigerian dominated, and Nigerian financed. Without Nigeria, the force would have been “tiny and not functionally viable.”⁴² The tepid attempt by ECOWAS to intervene militarily without Nigerian participation in the Ivory Coast (2002) further reinforced the perception. In 2003 it is unlikely the other countries within ECOWAS were either capable of launching or willing to launch a robust peace support operation without Nigeria taking a dominant role.

This does not imply, however, that ECOWAS lacked relevance as an organization. Nigeria possessed the muscle, but ECOWAS provided the legitimacy. According to some analysts, Nigeria intervened in Sierra Leone (1997) “without consulting its partners or receiving prior authorization” and utilized the label “Nigerian-led ECOMOG peacekeeping force” out of necessity for good public relations.⁴³ Although perhaps overly skeptical, this assessment does highlight the sensitivities related to unilateral action in

the subregion. Nigeria was hesitant to act, or at least to appear as if acting, unilaterally. On a parallel note, the other members of ECOWAS were accepting of Nigerian leadership but protested what they perceived as Nigeria's "penchant for a unilateral diplomatic style."⁴⁴ Thus, while focusing primarily on Nigeria as a potential surrogate, it was important for the United States to discuss publicly any subregional intervention in terms of ECOWAS.

Security Assistance Relationships

In 2001 a Department of State official testified to Congress that "in the coming year, we are going to be exploring with ECOWAS ways in which we can deepen our cooperation and offer more assistance to them as they try to develop these multilateral capacities."⁴⁵ By 2003, however, the United States still lacked the statutory basis to provide security assistance funding directly to ECOWAS. Accordingly, all US security assistance relationships in the subregion were bilateral. Although the United States had such relationships with a number of ECOWAS countries, the bulk of security assistance from 2000 to 2003 flowed to Nigeria. The US security assistance relationship with Nigeria was thus the most relevant to the 2003 Liberian crisis.

In 1993, responding to Gen Sani Abacha's establishment of a military dictatorship, the United States cut all security assistance to Nigeria. It initially banned Nigeria from participating in the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) for the same reason. As Amb. Marshall McCallie, program director for ACRI, explained to Congress, "We can't provide military assistance to countries that are governed by military governments, particularly those that have displaced civilian governments. . . . I look forward to the day when Nigeria has returned to democratic civilian rule and we are able to work together with them in peacekeeping."⁴⁶

The 1999 Nigerian elections, ostensibly representing a return to such rule, provided "a monumental opportunity for the United States on the African continent." The US government viewed Nigeria not only as the key subregional power but also as the "possible linchpin for the entire continent."⁴⁷ This vision included a significant role for Nigeria in the maintenance of subregional and regional security. At a 1999 congressional hearing on the future of US policy toward Nigeria, Senator Bill Frist explained, "We want Nigeria to remain engaged in regional conflict resolution and peace-

keeping and perhaps expand these efforts further.”⁴⁸ Similarly, Undersecretary Pickering pointed to an “extremely important need” for Nigerian forces “to be available in the region to deal with conflict in the region.”⁴⁹

The first practical connection of US security assistance to this “extremely important need” came in the form of Operation Focus Relief (OFR). Through a year 2000 arrangement brokered by the United States, three West African nations pledged troops to the faltering UN Mission in Sierra Leone. Senegal and Ghana each promised one battalion, while Nigeria pledged five. US military advisors in the subregion, however, briefed US leadership that “the Nigerian army was broken and there would be no guarantee of victory in Sierra Leone by shoveling in ill-led, -trained, and -equipped troops.”⁵⁰ Accordingly, through OFR, the United States provided \$80 million over a five-month period to train and equip seven battalions from the three countries.⁵¹ Interestingly, only Nigeria deployed its OFR-trained units to Sierra Leone.⁵² Accompanying these units into Sierra Leone was a small team of US Soldiers tasked to monitor performance.⁵³

After the termination of OFR, the United States continued to provide substantial security assistance funding to Nigeria. In 2001 the Department of State Bureau of African Affairs pointed to Nigeria as “the largest single focus in terms of bilateral military programs and capacity building on our part” and “the largest single recipient of US security assistance.”⁵⁴ Overall, from 2001 to 2003, Nigeria received the most US security assistance by far of any nation in Africa.⁵⁵ Although never involved in ACRI, Nigeria became one of the charter African Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA) participants in 2002. This surge in US funding correlated closely to the above-mentioned perception of Nigeria as a potential leader in regional and subregional peace operations. The fiscal year (FY) 2000 *Congressional Presentation for Foreign Operations* listed the “continued participation of the Nigerian military in regional peacekeeping efforts” as the “key indicator of performance” of relevant security assistance programs.⁵⁶ Similarly, the FY 2003 *Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations (CBJ)* validated the increase in security assistance to Nigeria as a means to “improve Nigerian crisis response peacekeeping capabilities” and to “reinforce a positive role in regional peacekeeping.”⁵⁷ Thus, through the period of 2000 to 2003, there was a clear linkage between substantial US security

assistance to Nigeria and the US expectation that Nigeria would assume a dominant role in subregional peace support efforts.

From Recipient to Surrogate

With the situation in Liberia deteriorating, ECOWAS leaders met in early July and announced that they were tentatively willing to provide 3,000 troops to a peace support mission. As a caveat, however, they requested that the United States take the lead and contribute 2,000 of its own forces to the operation. Pres. Olusegun Obasanjo explained, "It isn't Nigeria that set Liberia on fire, is it? Of course it is not. It is not the West Africans that set Liberia on fire. You know who did, and those who set Liberia on fire should also join in putting the fire out."⁵⁸ Where the United States saw the past ECOWAS intervention in Liberia as a positive sign of future willingness, the organization's members, particularly Nigeria, saw it as a negative experience not to be repeated. They had been there before, and it had been protracted, expensive, and bloody. Driving the ECOWAS agenda, Nigerian leadership desired that the United States share the burden in 2003. This stemmed not only from a perception of US responsibility but also from a belief in US military effectiveness. The direct involvement of US combat troops would certainly guarantee rapid success.⁵⁹

For the United States, this was not an expected or acceptable reaction from subregional actors. After toying with the idea of direct military intervention, the administration determined that it was, at most, willing to serve in a supporting role. In mid-July, President Bush stated, "What I'm telling you is that we want to help ECOWAS. . . . I think everybody understands that any commitment we had would be limited in size and limited in tenure. . . . Our job would be to facilitate an ECOWAS presence."⁶⁰ Within US policy-making circles, there was significant frustration over Nigeria's hesitancy to respond, particularly given the extent of recent US security assistance.⁶¹ Accordingly, the United States launched a heavy diplomatic effort in the subregion aimed primarily at Nigeria. The US-appointed UN special representative in Liberia, Jacques Klein, averred at a press briefing that "ECOWAS needed to move quickly," and, in general, he "attempted to bully ECOWAS into deploying a 'vanguard' force of at least 1,000 troops immediately."⁶² US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Walter Kansteiner traveled to Africa to increase pressure on regional leaders.⁶³

Still, the Nigerian-dominated ECOWAS “seemed to be waiting for a signal from the United States that it was ready to help militarily, ‘so there was something of a stalemate, everyone waiting for everyone else.’”⁶⁴

The impasse began to dissolve toward the end of July. On 25 July, the United States announced it was deploying a naval amphibious group with 2,300 Marines from the Mediterranean to the coast of Liberia, with an arrival date of 2 August, and further pledged \$10 million to support an ECOWAS mission.⁶⁵ Three days later, ECOWAS leaders formally committed to deploying forces to Liberia by 3 August. Nigeria was the first to agree to provide troops to the ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL), after which Ghana, Senegal, Mali, and Togo followed.⁶⁶ Once again, Nigeria would provide the bulk of military equipment and personnel. It is important to note that the United States remained vague concerning the mission of the inbound Marines. For the most part, it was a symbolic move, intended, in the words of a senior administration official, “to speed action by the Economic Community of West African States.”⁶⁷

Ostensibly, this symbolic military support, combined with US funding and diplomatic pressure, provided the necessary push for the intervention. The vanguard of Nigerian forces began arriving in Liberia the first week of August, and ECOMIL soon reached its prescribed strength of 3,600.⁶⁸ Having been within helicopter range for a week, US ships moved within sight of the Liberian capital of Monrovia on 11 August. They dispatched 20 Marines ashore to serve as liaisons to ECOMIL, but the rest remained on board. According to a senior Pentagon official, this action served to “show support for West African peacekeepers without committing more American ground troops to the mission.”⁶⁹

The ECOMIL operation continued until 1 October 2003, at which point most of its forces were “blue-hatted” and subsumed within a follow-on UN mission (UNMIL). Over the two months of its existence, ECOMIL was generally effective in securing and stabilizing Monrovia, overseeing the negotiated departure of Charles Taylor, and facilitating the flow of humanitarian aid. The US military, for its part, provided substantial logistical, intelligence, and communications support. US forces also conducted a robust information campaign, to include the widely broadcast “ECOMIL and You” radio program.⁷⁰ In assessing the contribution of the US military, one pundit suggests, “The real threat of American force, symbolised by the ships

offshore, gave the West Africans important psychological support.”⁷¹ Eventually, the United States did land approximately 200 Marines in Monrovia to help secure the international airport and to provide a quick-reaction force in support of the African peacekeepers.⁷² This force, however, returned to the ships after 10 days. The only other visible signs of direct US military involvement were the periodic flights of US fighter aircraft and attack helicopters on “show of force” missions. The US amphibious group departed the area by 30 September, just prior to the dissolution of ECOMIL and transition to UNMIL.

Most US military and civilian leaders viewed the operation, “the first US military commitment to an African conflict since Somalia,” as a success.⁷³ The United States had achieved its short-term military objectives in Liberia with a minimal commitment of troops and without suffering a single casualty.⁷⁴ According to one US military participant, “The operation clearly demonstrated that a relatively small forward US military presence . . . could enable a locally provided regional force to achieve tremendous results.”⁷⁵ Although African troops carried out the mission, US policy makers were quick to take credit. In reference to US security assistance programs, Assistant Secretary Kansteiner testified to Congress, “Quite frankly, without this US assistance, those intervention forces never would have been deployed to Liberia and never would have been able to be the peacekeepers that they, in fact, are.”⁷⁶

An Agency Perspective

Although largely successful, the US-backed ECOMIL intervention still raises a number of issues in terms of principal-agent relations. Evident from the start was a dissonance between US and Nigerian expectations. Nigerian leadership felt fully justified in requesting a substantial US military contribution as a condition for its own commitment. US policy makers, conversely, grew frustrated at Nigerian intransigence, arguing that the subregional power was failing to live up to its obligation. Once in Liberia, Nigerian military units, as well as those from other ECOMIL participants, performed fairly well.⁷⁷ Getting to that point, however, proved a difficult and contentious process involving heavy US diplomatic pressure, pledges of additional funding, and a symbolic deployment of US forces. From an agency perspective, the US deployment is especially problematic. Aside from a small minority, US leadership did not desire to commit its military to the situation yet felt

compelled in response to international pressure and, more significantly, the insistence of subregional actors. There is some evidence here of what Mott conceptualizes as reverse leverage.⁷⁸ As one news report claimed, “The Nigerians know, however, that they have got the Americans over a barrel and will hold out for the best possible deal before going in.”⁷⁹

The surge in US security assistance to Nigeria from 2000 to 2003 was closely tied to the US government’s expectation of Nigeria as a lead contributor to subregional and regional peace support operations. From the US point of view, Nigeria’s hesitancy to respond to the Liberian crisis and attempt to pressure the United States into committing its own forces represented a degree of “shirking,” defined within agency theory as not doing all that was contracted or not doing the task in a desirable way. Shirking often occurs when agent interests deviate from those of the principal. In the case of the Liberian crisis of 2003, however, US and Nigerian interests aligned relatively well. The diplomatic wrangling between the United States and Nigeria was not about the need for an intervention or whether Nigeria would play at least some part. The devil was in the details—the timing, conditions, roles, levels of involvement, and, of particular concern, who would foot the bill. The gap between US expectation and Nigerian response derived primarily from risk implications and the existence of competing principals.

Beyond the factor of conflicting goals, shirking is also more likely in situations where there is significant outcome uncertainty and thus significant risk. It is therefore important to consider how the perceptions of risk vary within a principal-agent relationship. Nigeria’s past involvement in Liberia was not necessarily an indicator of future risk tolerance. The earlier experience was not a pleasant or an inexpensive one. The potential for a similar experience was enough to “trigger the risk implications of the theory” in a manner that the United States, perhaps, did not fully comprehend or appreciate.⁸⁰ Kathleen Eisenhardt discusses “the problem of risk sharing that arises when the principal and agent have different attitudes toward risk. The problem here is that the principal and the agent may prefer different actions because of the different risk preferences.”⁸¹ From the Nigerian perspective, it was completely reasonable to prefer a substantial US military commitment as a means of risk mitigation.

Closely related to risk was the issue of competing principles. Interestingly, Nigerian lack of enthusiasm for the mission stemmed in part from the inculcation of democratic practices. In a democracy, the state military ultimately serves as an agent of the people. Where Nigerian dictators had been able to employ the military whenever and however they saw fit, the democratically elected leadership, accountable to Nigerian public opinion, found it increasingly difficult to justify and garner public support for the expenditure of troops and national treasure in external conflicts.⁸²

This case highlights the key role of the dominant subregional actor. For the United States, it would have been meaningless to delegate to ECOWAS without Nigerian buy-in. The bilateral relationship remained far more critical than any relationship the United States had with the broader subregional organization. As a senior Nigerian military officer recently explained, "If you want to work with ECOWAS, you can't go straight to ECOWAS. . . . You need to come to us first."⁸³ As in previous operations, the ECOWAS framework was primarily useful in terms of legitimacy, necessary for both the internal and external audiences.

In the end, the United States achieved its strategic objectives in Liberia through the use of surrogate force. US security assistance played an important role in this success. The questions that linger pertain to the deployment of US troops, intended primarily to "speed up action" by ECOWAS. This deployment had to be weighed against the genuine fear held by most US policy makers and senior defense officials of being drawn into a Liberian civil war. Admittedly, the symbolic US force remained small and generally confined to the safety of its ships, but the United States was playing a dangerous game, both with its troops and with its credibility. It was able to maintain its indirect support role, but one must ask what US forces would have done if the situation in Liberia had continued to deteriorate or if ECOMIL had been overwhelmed. The United States was fortunate that it never had to make this decision. As Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Theresa Whelan expressed to Congress, "The good news is they weren't needed."⁸⁴ Although it is not especially useful to dwell on the hypothetical, the contention here is that the United States, while attempting to operate through surrogate force, found itself at risk of a level of military involvement neither intended nor wanted. It is such risk that the United States sought to avoid through its security assistance strategy. In order to mitigate

the perceived risk implications of its surrogate and thus gain the benefits of employing surrogate force, the United States had to adjust its own perception of acceptable risk.

Case 2:

Intervention of Ethiopia and the African Union in Somalia, 2006–8

Somalia remained a failed state a decade after the infamous US-led UN operation (1992–93), ungoverned and plagued by endemic warfare. In 2004, under the guidance of the subregional Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and the UN, a group of Somali delegates congressed in Kenya and formed the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). This attempt to finally end the pattern of conflict and chaos, however, quickly foundered. The new president was a divisive choice; “his close links to Ethiopia, his staunch anti-Islamist positions and his heavy-handed tactics against political opponents in his own clan earned him a reputation as a leader who tended to polarize rather than unite Somalis.”⁸⁵ From the start, this government possessed little power or legitimacy. According to Somalia expert Ken Menkhaus, “Placing Abdullahi Yusuf and a very pro-Ethiopian, anti-Islamist government in power, was a godsend for Mogadishu’s struggling Islamist movement. . . . The threat of a Yusuf-led government was the ideal foil for hardline Islamists to mobilize their base of support.”⁸⁶

By mid-2005, the TFG remained isolated in the provisional capital of Baidoa, while the newly organized Supreme Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) had emerged as “the strongest political and militia force in Mogadishu.”⁸⁷ In February 2006, with Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) backing, a group of nine clan militia leaders formed the Alliance for Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism to counter the Islamists.⁸⁸ After a four-month battle, the CIC emerged victorious, absorbing most of the alliance militias into its ranks. Having gained complete control in Mogadishu, it soon extended its rule over much of the country. CIC chairman Sheikh Sharif Ahmed vowed that his group would continue fighting until it controlled all of Somalia.⁸⁹

The Impetus for US Involvement

For the US government, the triumph and subsequent rise to national power of the CIC “was the exact opposite result it had intended in encouraging the formation of the Alliance” and “an important setback in the U.S. war on terrorism.”⁹⁰ It feared that the CIC would provide a safe haven and support for al-Qaeda terrorists along the lines of the Taliban in Afghanistan. DOD spokesperson Sean McCormack explained shortly after the Alliance defeat, “We do have real concerns about the presence of foreign terrorists in Somalia, and that informs an important aspect of our policy with regard to Somalia.”⁹¹ Similarly, Dr. Jendayi Elizabeth Frazer, assistant secretary of state for African Affairs, expressed displeasure that al-Qaeda was operating with “great comfort” in areas controlled by the CIC.⁹² The United States noted particularly that the sanctuary provided a small number of individuals linked to the 1998 bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, as well as those responsible for the 2002 attacks against an Israeli resort and Israeli aircraft in Mombasa.⁹³ The implications of any US response toward the situation, however, extended beyond Somalia and the presence of a few key al-Qaeda operatives. Frazer testified to Congress, “Somalia’s continued exploitation by terrorist elements threatens the stability of the entire Horn of Africa region. We will, therefore, continue to take measures to deny terrorists’ safe haven in Somalia.”⁹⁴ US policy makers were cognizant of the fact that “there are Islamic extremist elements in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Eritrea, all watching what is happening in Somalia and how the United States reacts.”⁹⁵ Of even broader concern was the increasing presence of foreign jihadists “who want to turn Somalia into the third front of holy war, after Iraq and Afghanistan.”⁹⁶

In 2003, within the context of the Liberian crisis, the United States seriously considered a substantial troop commitment to Africa. Given the nature of the Somalia conflict as well as previous experience in the country, the United States had no such debate in 2006. Still, the situation in Somalia was of utmost concern, demanding a US response. Within the context of the global war on terrorism (GWOT), the United States could ill afford the emergence of another extremist Islamic state serving as a base for foreign jihadists and having explicit ties to al-Qaeda. Having failed to gain effective surrogates internal to Somalia and seeing its diplomatic efforts stalled, the

United States looked to subregional and regional actors as potential suppliers of military force.

Potential Surrogates

After the CIA-backed operation backfired, the Department of State reasserted control of Somalia policy. Assistant Secretary Frazer made the conflict a top priority and began working to build support for a plan to bolster the TFG with troops from other African nations. By 2006 the AU had some experience in the security realm, having deployed troops under regional auspices to Burundi (2003), Sudan (2004), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (2005). With the TFG in jeopardy, the United States sponsored and drafted a UN Security Council resolution calling for an AU mission to Somalia. The request was not for a peacekeeping mission but a “protection and training” mission.⁹⁷ Resolution 1725, adopted unanimously by the council on 6 December 2006, specifically tasked an African force to maintain and monitor security in Baidoa, to protect members of the TFG and key state infrastructure, and to train TFG military forces and thus enable the Somali government to provide for its own security.⁹⁸

Following the framework prescribed within the 2002 *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*, the mandate for an 8,000-strong intervention force was directed to the sub-regional IGAD. A key limitation to the proposed IGAD Mission in Somalia (IGASOM), however, was the caveat that no states bordering Somalia could participate.⁹⁹ This political necessity served to exclude Djibouti, Kenya, and, most importantly, Ethiopia. Of the three remaining IGAD members, only Uganda was a viable option to provide troops.¹⁰⁰ Sudan had its own internal issues to deal with and was also sympathetic to the CIC.¹⁰¹ Eritrea was actively supporting the CIC and was more likely to play the role of spoiler. Uganda did step up and volunteered to participate. Its proposed contribution of approximately 2,000 troops, however, would not have been adequate given the complexities and dangers associated with the mission. The CIC indicated that it would view any IGASOM deployment as a hostile foreign invasion and vowed to attack any external force.¹⁰² With marginal backing and little chance of success, IGASOM failed to materialize.

Ethiopia, excluded from the AU mandate, was probably the only country in the entire region with the military capability and political will to

lead a robust operation into Somalia to counter the CIC. In 2006 Ethiopia wielded sub-Saharan Africa's largest and most seasoned standing army.¹⁰³ That summer, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi ostensibly asserted to US officials that Ethiopia could crush the CIC in one to two weeks.¹⁰⁴ Further, as a matter of precedent, Ethiopia had twice sent troops into Somalia to destroy terrorist training camps during the 1990s.¹⁰⁵ Most importantly, Ethiopia saw the rise of the CIC and potential elimination of the TFG as a serious threat to its own national interest. Zenawi's dislike of the CIC derived from a number of factors, to include the Islamists' call for jihad against Ethiopia, close links with Ethiopia's rival Eritrea, support of armed insurgencies within Ethiopia, and irredentist claims made on disputed territory.¹⁰⁶

Security Assistance Relationships

The United States began providing security assistance directly to the AU in 2005. This included primarily international military education and training (IMET) funding to prepare individuals to staff AU headquarters and to manage peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.¹⁰⁷ The bulk of US military capacity-building efforts in Africa, however, remained bilateral. According to a US military liaison with the AU, this was partly because "it is easy, it is what ambassadors are comfortable with . . . it is harder to do anything multilateral." The officer also pointed out that the structure of the nascent AU security mechanism precluded extensive multilateral efforts. He explained, "We can't go faster than the Africans themselves."¹⁰⁸ For a number of reasons, the United States continued to focus its security assistance bilaterally with a small number of key strategic partners in the region. Similar to Nigeria in the period of 2000 to 2003, Ethiopia emerged as a key strategic partner and as the lead African recipient of US security assistance through the period of 2003 to 2006. In general the United States came to view Ethiopia as "the linchpin to stability in the Horn of Africa and the Global War on Terrorism."¹⁰⁹

US security assistance to Ethiopia after the Cold War had remained both insignificant and sporadic until 2002. Of major impediment were the various sanctions related to Ethiopia's ongoing conflict with neighboring Eritrea. Even nonlethal ACRI training planned for Ethiopia in the second half of 1998 was cancelled because of cross-border hostilities.¹¹⁰ On 12

December 2000, Ethiopia and Eritrea signed a formal cease-fire agreement. The concomitant repeal of the UN Security Council arms embargo opened the door for increased US support. According to the FY 2002 *CBJ*, the United States was “especially interested in renewing our military-to-military ties to Ethiopia” following the conflict.¹¹¹ To facilitate this renewal, the United States allocated \$3.6 million in security assistance for 2002.¹¹² As rationale, the *CBJ* offered, “Within East Africa, Ethiopia has the potential to emerge as a major peacekeeping contributor.” Further, it stated that the United States “will encourage Ethiopia to participate in regional peacekeeping initiatives and in the African Crisis Response Initiative.”¹¹³

The following year, US security assistance to Ethiopia increased to \$4.9 million in foreign military financing (FMF) and IMET.¹¹⁴ Ethiopia also began participating in ACOTA in 2003 and thus received additional funds, equipment, and training through the peacekeeping operations account. While continuing to highlight the potential role of the Ethiopian military in regional peacekeeping, the FY 2003 *CBJ* reflects a significant shift in emphasis to counterterrorism. For the first time, the annual document listed Ethiopia as “an African front-line state in the war on terrorism” and, consequently, specified the FMF “to provide Ethiopia with equipment to advance its counterterrorism abilities.”¹¹⁵ Further, the United States specifically targeted Ethiopia in the \$100 million East Africa Counterterrorism Initiative.¹¹⁶ Interestingly, from the start, the United States viewed Ethiopia’s counterterrorism contribution from at least a subregional perspective. In particular, it looked to Ethiopia to conduct “efforts to apprehend terrorists in Ethiopia *and beyond*” (emphasis added).¹¹⁷ The FY 2003 *CBJ* explained further that Ethiopia had “in the past sent its troops into neighboring Somalia to destroy terrorist camps. Should a country in the region be found harboring or assisting terrorists, Ethiopia would become an important partner in the war on terrorism.”¹¹⁸

The year 2004 saw little change in US security assistance to Ethiopia. In 2005, however, the funding nearly doubled, making Ethiopia the top recipient of US security assistance in Africa.¹¹⁹ Where previous budget documents suggested merely that Ethiopia “has the potential to emerge” as a major peacekeeping contributor, the FY 2005 *CBJ* established that Ethiopia “is emerging” in such a role.¹²⁰ This recognition was, at least in part, a reflection of Ethiopia’s contribution to the AU’s first independent peacekeeping

operation (Burundi, 2003).¹²¹ Citing other progress, the document claimed, “Ethiopia has provided outstanding cooperation in the war on terrorism.”¹²² Although traditional security assistance to Ethiopia declined marginally in the 2006 budget, the United States more than made up for the drop with over \$21 million in emergency GWOT funding.¹²³ The FY 2006 *CBJ* provides an important, albeit nuanced, indication of how the United States perceived the role of security assistance to Ethiopia. Expanding upon the previous capacity-building emphasis, the 2006 document states, “The United States will use . . . military assistance funding to increase Ethiopia’s capacity *and willingness* to participate in future peacekeeping missions” (emphasis added).¹²⁴

By 2006 the robust security assistance relationship with Ethiopia centered on the US perception of Ethiopia as a key contributor to subregional counter-terrorism efforts. Again, US documents make reference to an expectation that Ethiopia would intervene, at least in some cases, against a neighboring country harboring or assisting terrorists. According to some analysts, by the summer of 2006, the United States began discussing with Ethiopia the possibility of such an intervention into Somalia.¹²⁵

From Recipient to Surrogate

While working to garner support for an AU mission to Somalia, the US government also attempted to engage with moderates within the CIC. By mid-December 2006, however, with the failure of IGASOM to materialize and CIC intransigence on the safe haven issue as a backdrop, the United States “ominously shifted tone on Somalia.”¹²⁶ At a press conference on 14 December, Assistant Secretary Frazer denigrated the CIC as “extremists to the core” and as being “controlled by al Qa‘ida.”¹²⁷ Many observers perceived these statements as a precursor to an Ethiopian invasion. On 24 December, after months of military buildup, Ethiopia did invade, launching a large-scale offensive into Somalia. The result was a rout. The Ethiopian attack “produced not only a decisive victory in initial battles in the open countryside but also an unexpected collapse of the UIC [Union of Islamic Courts] back in Mogadishu. . . . There, hardliners were confronted with widespread defections by clan militias, businesspeople, and moderate Islamists.”¹²⁸ Most of the remaining CIC (or UIC) leadership, as well a large number of

foreign fighters, fled south toward the Kenyan border. Preceded and protected by the Ethiopian army, the TFG soon filled the void in Mogadishu.

The degree of US encouragement and support for the Ethiopian intervention remains an area of significant debate and contention. Ethiopian leadership openly acknowledges US prompting, but the US government has remained more tight-lipped. Still, a number of credible government sources have alluded to a significant US role. Referring to the operation, a senior US military officer in the subregion at the time claims, "It was absolutely encouraged by the United States. . . . The US certainly applied soft power behind the scenes."¹²⁹ A high-level Department of State official working for Assistant Secretary Frazer contends unambiguously that "the US directly and indirectly supported the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia" and that this support was necessary because "the AU did not have the capacity."¹³⁰ A number of pundits point to the trip by Gen John Abizaid, US Central Command commander, to Ethiopia shortly before the invasion, ostensibly a routine visit, as a strong indicator of prior coordination or as representing "the final handshake."¹³¹ Former US ambassador to Ethiopia David Shinn contends, "At a minimum . . . the U.S. gave a green light to Ethiopia."¹³²

The question of US prompting or consent prior to the invasion, while interesting, may be somewhat irrelevant. As Menkhaus suggests, "Ethiopia's offensive would likely have occurred with or without US tacit approval."¹³³ Nonetheless, the United States at least endorsed the intervention after the fact and then cooperated militarily with Ethiopian forces in Somalia, many of which the United States had trained and equipped through its security assistance programs.¹³⁴ The apparently successful use of US special operations forces, intelligence assets, and limited precision air strikes, combined with a large-scale intervention by a subregional power, was quickly dubbed "the Somali Model." According to one report, "Military operations in Somalia by American commandos, and the use of the Ethiopian Army as a surrogate force to root out operatives for Al Qaeda in the country, are a blueprint that Pentagon strategists say they hope to use more frequently in counter-terrorism missions around the globe."¹³⁵

Ethiopia's decision to withdraw its forces less than a month after the invasion, however, served to "cast some doubt on the viability of such a model."¹³⁶ Shortly after entering Somalia and demolishing the organized

CIC, Ethiopian troops became the target of “a complex insurgency by a loose combination of Islamists, warlords, armed criminals, and clan-based militia.”¹³⁷ Prime Minister Zenawi had no desire to wage a protracted and costly counterinsurgency campaign. Within a matter of weeks, he announced that Ethiopia had achieved its objectives and that it intended to redeploy its troops. Ostensibly, Ethiopia had sought “not to install a viable government, but to prevent Somalia’s Islamists from trying to form one” and perhaps, as one polemicist suggests, “to win the favor of the U.S. for loyal service in the ‘war on terror.’”¹³⁸ Ethiopia’s “exit strategy” was the anticipated replacement by an AU force.¹³⁹ With the CIC no longer a substantial threat, such a force was, in theory, more viable than in early December 2006. Once again, though, it proved largely untenable in practice.

The TFG was dependent upon Ethiopian troops for regime survival. With Ethiopia threatening to depart, the United States and the AU, fearing a security vacuum, scrambled to assemble a regional force as replacement. Assistant Secretary Frazer cited the deployment of such a force as “a crucial component of our strategy in Somalia.”¹⁴⁰ On 19 January 2006, the AU Peace and Security Council bypassed the subregional organization and established the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). A month later, the UN Security Council passed the US-sponsored Resolution 1744, providing a mandate to AMISOM and thus overriding the precedent Resolution 1725 (December 2006). The new resolution authorized the deployment of AMISOM to provide support and protection for the TFG, facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance, and create conditions conducive to long-term stabilization, reconstruction, and development.¹⁴¹

The response from AU members was underwhelming. A few African countries pledged troops, but most remained ambivalent at best. Top AU diplomats pleaded with member countries. Likewise, Frazer conducted “full court press” diplomacy to garner regional support.¹⁴² In the end, these efforts were largely in vain. AMISOM deployed in March 2007 with a mere 1,700 Ugandan troops.¹⁴³ Only tiny Burundi later joined the mission. Interestingly, Uganda had received substantial US security assistance, although not to the level of Ethiopia, since 2004.¹⁴⁴ Further, military units from both Uganda and Burundi received substantial US training, equipment, and logistical support specifically for AMISOM. Still, the total contribution of Uganda and Burundi, as could be expected, was well below the

mandate requirement.¹⁴⁵ The force could do little more than safeguard key infrastructure such as the Mogadishu air and sea ports.¹⁴⁶

US influence over Ethiopia may have been largely irrelevant prior to the 2006 offensive, but this was not the case as the operation dragged on. Faced with a tepid AU response, the United States pressured Ethiopia to remain in country.¹⁴⁷ Succumbing to US overtures, Zenawi kept his troops in Somalia for over two years, far longer than he wished.¹⁴⁸ Nonetheless, by late 2008, Zenawi finally became “fed up” with the lack of regional and international support as well as with the heavy economic cost, heavy casualties, and incessant appeals at home for a troop withdrawal.¹⁴⁹ In February 2009, the remaining Ethiopian soldiers departed Somalia, leaving behind a feeble AMISOM of approximately 3,400 Ugandans and Burundians.

An Agency Perspective

It is true, as one analyst suggests, that the United States “reaped some short-term counter-terrorism benefits from its successful, if ephemeral, proxy incursion.”¹⁵⁰ The operation prevented the consolidation of an extreme Islamist government and provided the United States better opportunities to target international terrorists operating within Somalia. Many questions persist, however, as to the broader implications of the episode. Given the ineffective subregional and regional responses, the United States found it necessary to rely upon Ethiopia unilaterally as its primary surrogate. Although Ethiopia was the most willing and capable actor as well as the predominant recipient of US security assistance in the subregion, geopolitical dynamics made such reliance highly problematic. Not surprisingly, the Ethiopian intervention and subsequent occupation were particularly ill received and probably did more to inflame than to mitigate the violence endemic to Somalia.

In 2006 US and Ethiopian leadership perceived the CIC as a serious threat, and it is probable that the United States at least encouraged Ethiopia to intervene. There was probably little need for heavy diplomatic pressure; it was likely just a matter of giving the green light. In any case, the Ethiopians certainly did not appear to exhibit any shirking behavior in terms of the initial decision to invade, and the decision to depart in 2008 can hardly be considered shirking. The Ethiopians remained in Somalia far longer than they had desired and far longer than should have been expected. As David Shinn argued to Congress, “Ethiopia appears from the beginning to have

planned a brief campaign because of the high cost of the operation and the fact that a long Ethiopian presence in Somalia would further incite Somali nationalism against Ethiopia.”¹⁵¹

Ethiopia did not display shirking behavior in terms of “not doing all that was contracted.” Shirking, however, also encompasses “not doing the task in a desirable way.” This was Ethiopia’s primary shortcoming as a US surrogate. While Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa waged a hearts-and-minds campaign in the subregion, the Ethiopian army waged a brutal counterinsurgency campaign in the streets of Mogadishu where soft power held little sway. Not restrained by concerns of collateral damage and civilian casualties (unlike the United States in Iraq), the Ethiopians leveled entire city blocks. Further, the US surrogate accumulated a dubious human rights record. Amnesty International has presented credible evidence of extensive torture and deliberate killings of civilians by Ethiopian troops.¹⁵² Whether well founded or not, there was little question within the subregion of US complicity. Already poor, the image and potential credibility of America declined even further. Ken Menkhaus contends, “There’s a level of anti-Americanism in Somalia today like nothing I’ve seen over the last 20 years. . . . Somalis are furious with us for backing the Ethiopian intervention and occupation, provoking this huge humanitarian crisis.”¹⁵³

Beyond shirking, another concern within this episode was the likelihood of opportunistic behavior by Ethiopia. Ethiopia’s apparent enthusiasm for the initial invasion did not necessarily reflect a complete convergence of interests between the United States and its surrogate. For Ethiopia, Somalia was not just about Somalia. It was not even about the broader war on terrorism. Ethiopia and Eritrea, despite the 2000 cease-fire, continued to battle through Somali surrogates. The desire to gain the advantage in this proxy conflict was certainly at play in 2006. To the degree that it relied on US assistance and support in facilitating this separate agenda, Ethiopia exhibited opportunism, described within agency theory as taking advantage of the perquisites of the principal-agent relationship to achieve benefits unrelated to the relationship. Further, some analysts suggest that Ethiopia played the international terrorism card in the Horn of Africa to its own advantage. They argue that Ethiopia exaggerated the terrorist threat and linkages to al-Qaeda to gain additional US assistance against local competitors. According to one expert, “The new game in Somalia is to call your

enemy a terrorist in the hope that America will destroy him for you.”¹⁵⁴ In a sense, Ethiopia may have tried to oversell its own value as an agent to the United States.

Even though numerous critics place responsibility upon Ethiopia and its sponsor (the United States) for Somalia’s further descent into chaos, the broader African security community shares a portion of the blame. A significant consequence of the AU’s failing to fulfill its mandate in Somalia was the extended Ethiopian occupation. A key observation from this case is that the AU, as an institution, may be ambitious and well intentioned in exercising its regional security prerogative, but the enthusiasm does not extend necessarily to member states under no obligation to contribute troops or resources to any given mission. From an agency perspective, the failure of Ghana and Nigeria to respond is of particular interest. Both received substantial US security assistance funding in 2005 and 2006. Both, at the urging of the United States, pledged troops to AMISOM and in return were promised additional US training and equipment tailored specifically for the operation.¹⁵⁵ The United States also agreed to provide logistical support.¹⁵⁶ Still, despite significant US diplomatic pressure, neither country ever deployed its forces to Somalia, each offering a continuous litany of reasons for the delay. When asked to explain this lack of response despite previous pledges, a senior US military official in the region opined that Somalia “scared the . . . out of them” and that they had no direct interests related to the mission. In other words, “Why would Ghana care about Somalia?”¹⁵⁷

Despite short-term gains, the efficacy of US efforts to achieve strategic objectives in Somalia through surrogate force remains questionable at best. The suboptimal outcome derived not only from US delegation to Ethiopia but also from delegation to the AU. In the aftermath, Somalia remained a violent and ungoverned sanctuary for terrorists, Islamic extremists, criminals, and even pirates. The credibility, image, and subregional hearts-and-minds campaign of the United States suffered. US support for a unilateral Ethiopian intervention also raised concerns throughout the rest of Africa. Shortly after the invasion, the United States announced the creation of AFRICOM. This unfortunate timing led to widespread suspicion in Africa concerning the role of the new command.¹⁵⁸ Finally, US relations with Ethiopia were strained. To some degree, the Ethiopians felt that the United States failed to live up to its end of the contract. Ostensibly acting on behalf

of the United States, they expected an even greater level of US backing and grated at accusations of Ethiopian atrocities emanating from the US Congress. In the telling words of an Ethiopian government official, “We went in to do your bidding. You should have provided more support. You have flogged this horse long enough.”¹⁵⁹

Discussion and Conclusions

These two cases illustrate US attempts to translate donor-recipient relationships into effective sponsor-surrogate relationships as a means of shaping the African security environment and pursuing US objectives. While certainly limited in scope, these examples offer a few tentative conclusions as to the broader efficacy of such efforts.

Donor Expectations and Control Mechanisms

Aware of the sensitivities associated with “acting for,” US officials are quick to point out that recipient governments in Africa retain sovereign decision-making authority over the employment of their own military forces. Nonetheless, the United States retains specific expectations tied to its security assistance programs and attempts to impart these as tacit obligations upon recipient governments. The surge in US security assistance to Nigeria from 2000 to 2003 stemmed from the US government’s expectations of Nigeria as a lead contributor to subregional and regional peace support operations. From 2003 to 2006, the United States justified its substantial security assistance funding to Ethiopia in terms of Ethiopia’s potential leadership role in both peace support and counterterrorism. Many other donor-recipient relationships throughout this general time frame, although lesser in scope, were based on similar US aims. It is not surprising that in both 2003 and 2006, the United States turned to its recipients when assessing the need to apply military force. In each case, it found it necessary to employ control mechanisms, with varying degrees of success, in attempting to align recipient behavior with donor preferences.

Screening serves as an indirect or passive control mechanism, but it is a critical one nonetheless. Some agents are more likely to perform in a manner acceptable to the principal than others. The principal must determine desirable attributes and then be able to identify those attributes in

potential agents. The latter is not always straightforward, as agents tend to hide information that would preclude the transfer of benefits.¹⁶⁰ All states receiving US security assistance through programs such as ACRI and ACOTA must express a general interest and willingness to participate in external peace support operations.¹⁶¹ Some recipients, however, “gladly take the training” and never deploy.¹⁶² Some, as perhaps was the case with Ethiopia, may try to exaggerate or inflate their own value as agents, thus distorting the screening process.

From 2000 to 2006, US security assistance strategy, with its concomitant screening mechanisms, was reflective of a broader “anchor state” approach to Africa. The 2002 *National Security Strategy* established that “countries with major impact on their neighborhood such as South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, and Ethiopia are anchors for regional engagement and require focused attention.”¹⁶³ In focusing security assistance efforts on Nigeria (2000–2003) and Ethiopia (2003–6), the United States was seeking to establish principal-agent relationships with the dominant actors within the respective subregions. Nigeria and Ethiopia already possessed robust military capabilities—at least relative to the rest of Africa—and each had shown a past willingness to intervene militarily in neighboring countries, whether for peacekeeping or other purposes. These factors, ostensibly indicators that the United States would achieve “the most bang for its buck” or “the best return on its investment,” served as strategic screening criteria.¹⁶⁴

These case studies highlight the tension between strategic and what can be considered “statutory” screening criteria. US statutes, as codified primarily within the amended Foreign Assistance Act, prohibit security assistance for a number of reasons, including unaddressed human rights abuses or the presence of a government brought to power by military coup. These restrictions derive largely from US values and political sensitivities but are also important in that such recipients are ostensibly more likely to shirk in terms of “not doing the task in a desirable way.” The United States reinstituted security assistance to Nigeria after the 1999 Nigerian democratic elections and then cut it again in late 2003 (reinstituted in 2005) due to implications of human rights abuses by the Nigerian military. With the substantial increases in security assistance to Ethiopia starting in 2002, critics argued that the United States was not holding the Ethiopians to the same standard. Many US policy makers, however, viewed Ethiopian support as

critical to the GWOT and appeared willing to overlook certain indiscretions or legalistic restraints to achieve strategic ends. The resultant tension was evident in congressional debates. Although it may be necessary at times to favor strategic over statutory criteria, such a compromise is not without cost. Dissonance between donor rhetoric and practice, as well as the application of varying standards to different recipients, can skew recipient perceptions of donor expectations and preferences.

There was certainly strong justification for screening recipients in terms of the broader anchor-state strategy. Extant military capacity and geopolitical influence of a surrogate is potentially of great benefit to a sponsor. Nonetheless, relying mainly on subregional powers in Africa is not without its drawbacks. States such as Nigeria and Ethiopia are entwined intimately in subregional power politics. This is not to suggest a lack of involvement by lesser states, but dominant players are, anecdotally, more likely to have broader agendas and, consequently, additional motives that may be hidden from the sponsor. By aligning mainly with a subregional power, a sponsor may be drawn into subregional politics unwittingly, losing credibility as an unbiased external actor or “honest broker” in the resolution of African conflict.¹⁶⁵ Reliance on a few dominant states also increases the potential for reverse leverage within the donor-recipient relationship. There were hints of this in 2003 when the Nigerians knew they had “the Americans over a barrel.”

The application of incentives and diplomatic pressure was evident in both case studies. The United States clearly utilized diplomatic pressure to shape recipient behavior in the case of Nigeria in 2003. The same was true in the case of Ethiopia, even if not for the initial invasion, at least for the continued occupation of Somalia. In trying to garner regional support for AMISOM, the United States looked specifically to and applied pressure on key recipients such as Uganda, Ghana, and Nigeria. The case of Uganda provides an example of the United States successfully incentivizing recipient behavior through the provision of additional assistance linked to a specific mission. Similar incentives, however, proved inadequate with Nigeria and Ghana in the context of AMISOM. While these all represent attempts by the donor to control recipient behavior, it remains difficult to assess the precise degree, nature, and effects of any of these efforts. This is not surprising. As Dunér contends, “When it comes to a proxy relation . . . both parties usually try to conceal the true nature of their relationship. . . . Few

governments like to acknowledge that they have threatened or brought pressure to bear on another; even fewer like to admit that they have acted against their will.”¹⁶⁶

Agency Cost Calculus

A simplistic yet meaningful conclusion one can draw from the case studies is that the effectiveness of donor control mechanisms and, consequently, the viability of donor influence are highly dependent upon context. Three important contextual factors identified within agency theory and illustrated by the case studies include the level of congruence between donor and recipient interests, the relative perception of risk, and the existence of competing principal-agent relationships. It is the interplay between such contextual factors and efforts by the donor to control recipient behavior that dictates the agency costs associated with any given donor-recipient relationship.¹⁶⁷

In the case of AMISOM as a whole, those outside the subregion had little direct interest in Somalia. Given the lack of perceived state interests and significant risk implications associated with the “less-than-ideal security situation,” the paucity of regional enthusiasm should not have been surprising.¹⁶⁸ In many recipient states that declined to participate, internal domestic pressure competing with external US pressure proved to be significant. After Nigeria pledged troops to AMISOM, the internal domestic outcry against participation was intense, leading the government to reconsider. Malawi’s defense minister “reportedly promised troops only to have the president rescind the announcement.”¹⁶⁹ In such a context—with a lack of converging interests, significant risk implications, and competing (primarily internal) relationships—the amount of donor control required to effectively shape recipient behavior likely exceeds that actually provided by donor control mechanisms.

The United States had a strong donor-recipient relationship and alignment of interests with both Nigeria in 2003 and Ethiopia in 2006. The same was true with Uganda within the context of AMISOM. All three states responded as US surrogates. Nigeria appeared to possess a greater initial risk aversion, even going into a more benign environment. The United States was able to mitigate this primarily through a symbolic deployment of US forces. The key in this case was adjusting the level of shared risk within the relationship. As discussed above, the Nigerian government’s

perception of risk derived, in part, from democratic accountability. The governments of Ethiopia and Uganda, more questionable in terms of democratic practices, perhaps lacked similar concerns.¹⁷⁰ Although it is impossible to suggest any correlation here, this remains an interesting observation nonetheless. Nigeria was obviously less amenable to intervening in Somalia. The risk was probably greater and, as discussed above, the convergence of interests no longer existed.

From the case studies, it is apparent that the United States takes two broad approaches to developing surrogate forces in Africa. The first derives from the perceived strategic potential of a key actor. It consists of a longer-term security assistance relationship not tied directly to any specific intervention. This was the approach taken with Nigeria from 2001 to 2003, Ethiopia from 2003 to 2006, and Uganda in the years leading up to its participation in AMISOM. The second can be characterized as a “fire brigade” approach. This is more ad hoc and involves a short-term use of security assistance to generate support for a specific intervention and prepare willing participants just prior to deployment. This was the case with Nigeria in 2000 (Operation Focus Relief) and Burundi in 2007–8. When the need for intervention arises, the two approaches often become blurred. Uganda, already a significant recipient, was provided additional US training and equipment for participation in AMISOM.

Given the uncertainties tied to contextual factors in Africa and the limits of US control mechanisms, the latter approach may appear relatively attractive. Why invest long term without any guarantee of return? Why not just wait until the need arises and then tailor security assistance to provide only the willing actors with what is necessary for a specific intervention? This would ostensibly eliminate some of the uncertainty inherent in screening and mitigate agency loss from shirking behavior. The United States, in fact, has moved in this direction over the past few years. ACOTA, in particular, has been utilized repeatedly for such “just in time” security assistance.

Significant benefits remain associated with the longer-term strategic approach. There is necessarily a balance between the two, but US capacity-building efforts “in whole have been too schizophrenic . . . hindered by a failure to sustain efforts over time.”¹⁷¹ Liska speaks of consistency as a key to shaping recipient performance without having to resort to explicit sanctions. Eisenhardt proffers the value of the long-term relationship in terms of

gaining a deeper understanding of agent interests and motivations.¹⁷² Such understanding is vital. As Mott suggests, for security assistance to be effective, “a donor must fathom the recipient’s polity, economy, and culture and cause the recipient to adopt desired policies, military strategies, or other behaviors.”¹⁷³

When donor and recipient interests do not completely align and risk implications are significant, the longer-term relationship may be an important determinant of recipient behavior. Ethiopia and Uganda, the two most willing contributors in the second case study, each had its own national objectives related to Somalia. Nonetheless, the performance of each exceeded that dictated purely by immediate state interests. Each faced significant risks and suffered numerous casualties yet remained involved militarily far longer than desired or originally intended (Ethiopia wanted to depart after a few weeks; Uganda expected to leave within six months). The political leadership of both Ethiopia and Uganda, although perhaps not initially as sensitive as that of Nigeria, eventually felt the pressure of internal dissent. The Ugandan government, in particular, faced an increasingly angry public that complained about the siphoning of military resources from the country’s own internal struggle with the Lord’s Resistance Army.¹⁷⁴ Still, both states responded to US appeals, in part because they valued and sought to foster a broader security relationship with the United States. Critics of Ethiopian and Ugandan military actions in Somalia denigrate these states for intervening to gain favor with the United States. From the US perspective, having recipients that substantially value and are willing to accept significant risk to maintain a longer-term relationship is not necessarily a bad thing.

At the core of the agency cost calculus is ultimately the perceived value of employing surrogate force versus committing one’s own forces. The key benefit of developing and then operating through a surrogate is ostensibly the avoidance of sponsor military involvement. This obviation, however, is rarely complete, and the need to supplement the surrogate with the sponsor’s own military forces must be factored into the equation. Such a commitment may be necessary in terms of political, operational, psychological, or deterrent effect. For the sponsor, limited military participation may also be useful in terms of monitoring surrogate performance.

The United States found it necessary, or at least of sufficient utility, to supplement its surrogates militarily in both case studies. In Liberia, the

impetus and impact were largely political and psychological. US military liaisons attached to ECOMIL units also provided, among other benefits, a monitoring function. The most significant cost of the US military deployment was an increased risk of more extensive military involvement. In Somalia, the impetus can best be categorized as operational or in terms of enhancing military effectiveness of the surrogate. This was particularly true regarding the use of US military assets for intelligence sharing and limited air strikes. Associated costs stemmed from the damage to the US image and credibility within the region and beyond from being perceived as inextricably linked to the unilateral Ethiopian invasion. Overall, the role of the sponsor's own military forces will vary greatly, but in most situations where the sponsor's interests truly are at stake, there will be a role. The sponsor must be realistic in addressing this facet of employing surrogate force.

Final Thoughts and Recommendations: Revisiting the Linkage between Security Assistance and Surrogate Force

This article attempts to address the question, Is security assistance to Africa, as prescribed by current US policy, an effective hedge against more direct US military involvement in the region? It does so by considering the linkage between security assistance and surrogate force, a surrogate force being defined as an organization that serves the needs or interests of a secondary actor, the sponsor, by employing military power in place of the sponsor's own forces.

One should not take from this discussion that Africa's problems or threats to US strategic interests in Africa are best dealt with through military means. In most cases, military force, even if employed by a surrogate, is not the answer, but sometimes it is. Given the nature of the African security environment, it is sometimes impossible to pursue broader economic, political, and humanitarian aims without a concomitant threat or application of arms. In discussing US security assistance efforts in 2001, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs William Bellamy noted, "None of the Administration's priorities in Africa can be realized in the presence of deadly conflict. We must help to stop the wars in Africa."¹⁷⁵

Within Africa, creating surrogates involves the use of security assistance to develop state military forces that are both capable and willing to intervene in regional contingencies in which the United States perceives a

national stake yet is hesitant to commit its own troops. Security assistance provides the basis for and shapes the sponsor-surrogate relationship. To be of value to the United States, the surrogate not only must act when required but also must do “the task in a desirable way.” This may not always, but will often, require a degree of donor control over recipient behavior. Addressing security assistance from a mind-set of surrogate force development as opposed to partner capacity-building highlights the need for donor control associated with donor material support.

It is a serious mistake to assume that the capacity developed through US security assistance programs in Africa will necessarily be utilized in a manner that best supports US strategic goals. In other words, we cannot underestimate the need for donor control. Conversely, it is also wrong to overestimate the potential for US control over recipient behavior, despite the robust application of screening, monitoring, and contracting mechanisms. An important, albeit basic, conclusion derived from this analysis is that within the context of security assistance and surrogate force in Africa, agency is rarely if ever perfect. The recipient will always perform in a manner that is suboptimal, at least to some degree, from the perspective of the donor. Even in the best of situations, the donor and recipient will not have complete identity of interests or matching perceptions of acceptable risk. The donor-recipient relationship does not occur in a vacuum. It will always be subject to competing relationships. Understanding these dynamics, the strategist should be able to better contemplate and weigh agency costs associated with the implementation of US security assistance strategy in Africa. Referring to such costs, Susan Shapiro explains that “the trick, in structuring a principal-agent relationship, is to minimize them.”¹⁷⁶

The following tentative recommendations are derived from the above analysis:

1. Despite the growing rhetoric of pan-Africanism and preference within Africa to operate through a regional security organization, the United States should maintain the focus of its security assistance programs at the bilateral level. It should attempt to align its efforts with the development of the ASF and support, through “creative” assistance, the regional and subregional mechanisms but not at the expense of strong bilateral donor-recipient relationships.

2. The United States should reconsider its predominant focus on anchor states. In terms of screening, the United States seems overeager to seek out the most powerful and influential states in the region. These states, however, are not necessarily the best surrogates in terms of willingness or appropriateness. Reliance on a few dominant states increases the potential for reverse leverage within a donor-recipient relationship. Still, it is unrealistic to bypass the subregional powers. The aim, instead, should be to seek greater balance and not overlook the Burundis of the region.
3. The United States must remain wary of disregarding surrogate shortcomings (e.g., questionable democratic practices, poor human rights records, and complicity in ongoing conflicts) out of perceived strategic necessity. Looking the other way on such issues may garner short-term gains but could hurt US security assistance efforts in the long term by skewing recipient perceptions of donor expectations. Further, the United States must be concerned not only that the surrogate performs the desired task but also that it performs the task in a desirable way. A military with a reputation of human rights abuses or dubious civilian control at home is, anecdotally, more apt to tarnish the sponsor's reputation when "acting for" in an external conflict.
4. The United States should weigh carefully the trend toward the "fire brigade" model of developing surrogates through security assistance. This may be adequate and necessary in some situations, but the long-term donor-recipient relationship remains important. When donor and recipient interests do not completely align and when risk implications for the recipient are significant, the future value of such relationships is a key source of donor influence over recipient behavior.
5. The United States should assess more realistically and more creatively the potential utilization of its own military forces in the region. Announcing to the world, even if in hyperbole, that AFRICOM will be deemed a success if it "keeps American troops out of Africa for the next 50 years" is not particularly sound. Restraint in military affairs is commendable and desirable. Unreasoned restraint, however, is problematic, especially when national interests are at stake. Liberia in 2003 was nothing like Somalia in 1993, yet the specter of Somalia weighed

heavily, probably too heavily, in US decision making. This is not a call for the United States to become embroiled in African conflicts, but if the United States expects African surrogates to accept significant risks, it may need to reconsider its own aversion to military involvement in the region.

6. Finally, the United States should exorcise “African solutions to African problems” from its official lexicon. The Clinton administration formally adopted the phrase in the mid-1990s as the basis for ACRI and subsequent security assistance programs.¹⁷⁷ The phrase has persisted within and has shaped US security policy in Africa ever since. Government rhetoric linked to the recent standoff of AFRICOM reflects further promulgation. The concept, however, is no longer appropriate or particularly useful. Given the increasing perception of US strategic interests in Africa, many African problems are also now US problems. Moreover, the United States cannot assume that purely African solutions are adequate to protect and further US interests. Although just a phrase, the concomitant mind-set obviates sophisticated analysis connecting US security assistance to its strategic interests. It glosses over the role of US influence in shaping the behavior of the African states that receive and benefit from US security assistance. It wrongly assumes that capacity building is enough. In sum, it misses the critical linkage between security assistance and surrogate force.

Through its various security assistance programs, the United States now seeks to build both the capability and willingness of African states to employ military force throughout the region in a manner that supports US strategic interests and precludes the requirement for direct US military intervention. The United States, in effect, is seeking to develop surrogates. Hopefully, this article is of modest value to the strategists involved in the process. It certainly does not provide a clear road map for success or unambiguous policy recommendations. That was not the intent, nor would it have been entirely practical, given the nature of security assistance and the complexities of the African security environment. Recognizing the challenges of crafting a strategy for security assistance within any region, Hans Morgenthau contends that “When all the available facts have been ascertained, duly analyzed, and conclusions drawn from them, the final judgments and

decisions can be derived only from subtle and sophisticated hunches. The best the formulator and executor . . . can do is to maximize the chances that his hunches turn out to be right.”¹⁷⁸ If AFRICOM hopes to utilize security assistance as an effective hedge against more direct US military involvement and still pursue effectively US interests within the region, these hunches need to be pretty good.

Notes

1. The Congressional Research Service (CRS) cites “Africa’s role in the Global War on Terror and potential threats posed by uncontrolled spaces; the growing importance of Africa’s natural resources, particularly energy resources; and ongoing concern for Africa’s many humanitarian crises, armed conflicts, and more general challenges, such as the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS” as driving the creation of AFRICOM. See Lauren Ploch, *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa*, CRS RL34003 (Washington, DC: CRS, 22 August 2008), [ii], <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/110388.pdf>.

2. Comments by Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Defense Ryan Henry, 23 May 2007, quoted in *ibid.*, 7.

3. *Ibid.*, 27, 20.

4. Unattributed interview with US military advisor to the African Union, April 2009.

5. William H. Mott IV, *United States Military Assistance: An Empirical Perspective* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 4–5. For the purposes of this article, the terms *military assistance* and *security assistance* are treated interchangeably.

6. Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management, *The Management of Security Assistance* (Wright-Patterson AFB, OH: Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management, June 2001), 45.

7. Former assistant secretary of state for African affairs Herman Cohen defines proxy war as “internal conflict that has been orchestrated and supported almost entirely from the outside.” See Herman J. Cohen, “US-Africa Policy as Conflict Management,” *SAIS Review* 21, no. 1 (Winter–Spring 2001): 241, http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/sais_review/v021/21.1cohen.pdf.

8. For example, see Björn Hallberg, “The US Proxy War in East Africa,” *Silent Nation*, 28 December 2006, <http://silent-nation.com/2006/12/28/the-us-proxy-war-in-east-africa>.

9. Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Moscow’s Third-World Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 168.

10. Some commonly cited cases include reliance on the Hmong tribesmen in Laos, the South Vietnamese in Indochina, the Northern Alliance against the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Kosovo Liberation Army in Kosovo, the Contras in Nicaragua, and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in Angola.

11. Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 8 November 2010 (as amended through 31 December 2010), 383, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf.

12. Rubinstein, *Moscow’s Third-World Strategy*, 170.

13. George Liska, *The New Statecraft: Foreign Aid in American Foreign Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 96.

14. *Ibid.*, 112–13.

15. According to Duncan Clarke, Jason Ellis, and Daniel O’Connor, security assistance serves to promote regional stability, aid deterrence, help friendly countries defend themselves, advance US economic interests, maintain alliances, secure access to facilities and resources, gain political influence, and further understanding of American values and institutions. See Duncan L. Clarke, Jason D. Ellis, and Daniel B. O’Connor, *Send Guns and Money: Security Assistance and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997), 2.

16. House, *US Security Assistance and Arms Transfer Policies for the 1980s: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 97th Cong., 1st sess., 1981, 154.
17. House, *Foreign Economic and Military Assistance: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 99th Cong., 1st sess., 1985, 129.
18. *Ibid.*, 133.
19. House, *US Security Assistance and Arms Transfer Policies for the 1980s: Hearings before the Subcommittee on International Security and Scientific Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 97th Cong., 1st sess., 1981, 91.
20. House, *Building the Capacity of Foreign Military Forces: Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services*, 109th Cong., 2nd sess., 2006, 4.
21. Bertil Dunér, "Proxy Intervention in Civil Wars," *Journal of Peace Research* 18, no. 4 (1981): 353–61.
22. *Ibid.*, 357–58.
23. Mott, *United States Military Assistance*, 76–77, 24.
24. *Ibid.*, 10.
25. William H. Lewis, "Political Influence: The Diminished Capacity," in *Arms Transfers in the Modern World*, ed. Stephanie G. Neuman and Robert E. Harkavy (New York: Praeger, 1979), 196.
26. Dunér, "Proxy Intervention in Civil Wars," 358.
27. Susan P. Shapiro, "Agency Theory," *Annual Review of Sociology* 31, no. 1 (2005): 263–84.
28. To denote the actors within a security assistance relationship, I utilize the terms *donor* and *recipient*. The sponsor-surrogate relationship necessarily incorporates a donor-recipient relationship in that the sponsor provides some form of material support. The sponsor is distinguished from the donor, however, by the additional efforts to exert influence over the recipient in an effort to utilize the recipient's military forces for donor purposes.
29. Nicole Itano, *Liberating Liberia: Charles Taylor and the Rebels Who Unseated Him*, Institute for Security Studies (ISS) Paper no. 82 (Pretoria, South Africa: ISS, November 2003), http://kms1.isn.ethz.ch/service/engine/Files/ISN/112152/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/425ec317-1a1d-490a-8896-0989d81e94cd/en/PAPER82.PDF.
30. Somini Sengupta, "U.N. Leader Calls for Peacekeeping Force in Liberia, Possibly Led by U.S.," *New York Times*, 29 June 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/29/world/un-leader-calls-for-peacekeeping-force-in-liberia-possibly-led-by-us.html>.
31. House, *US Policy toward Liberia: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on International Relations*, 108th Cong., 1st sess., 2003, 45.
32. Senate, *The Gulf of Guinea and US Strategic Energy Policy: Hearing before the Subcommittee on International Economic Policy, Export, and Trade Promotion of the Committee on Foreign Relations*, 108th Cong., 2nd sess., 2004, 1.
33. Colin Powell, quoted in Kirk Semple, "Bush Orders U.S. Troops to Position Off Liberian Coast," *New York Times*, 25 July 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/25/international/africa/25WIRE-LIBERIA.html>.
34. Richard W. Stevenson, "Bush Team Says It's Weighing Intervention in Liberia's Torment," *New York Times*, 2 July 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/02/world/bush-team-says-it-s-weighing-intervention-in-liberia-s-torment.html>.
35. Reed Kramer, "Bush Makes Symbolic Shift on Liberia, but Dying Continues," 28 July 2003, reposted from allAfrica.com, http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Urgent_Action/apic-72903.html.
36. Christopher Marquis and Thom Shanker, "Pentagon Leaders Warn of Dangers for U.S. in Liberia," *New York Times*, 25 July 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/25/world/pentagon-leaders-warn-of-dangers-for-us-in-liberia.html>.
37. Richard W. Stevenson, "Bush Seems to Favor Sending a Modest Force to Liberia," *New York Times*, 15 July 2003, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html>.
38. Stevenson, "Bush Team Says."
39. Eric Schmitt, "Pentagon to Assess Military Needs in Liberia," *New York Times*, 5 July 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/05/international/africa/05MILL.html>.
40. Stevenson, "Bush Seems to Favor."
41. Senate, *The Nigerian Transition and the Future of US Policy: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., 1999, 25.

42. Ibid., 15.
43. Eric G. Berman and Katie E. Sams, *African Peacekeepers: Partners or Proxies*, Pearson Papers no. 3 (Clemensport, Nova Scotia: Canadian Peacekeeping Press, 1998), 19. ECOMOG, or the ECOWAS Monitoring Group, was the name applied to the ECOWAS military force in the 1990s.
44. Adekeye Adebajo, "Mad Dogs and Glory: Nigeria's Interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone," in *Gulliver's Troubles: Nigeria's Foreign Policy after the Cold War*, ed. Adekeye Adebajo and Abdul Raufu Mustapha (Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008), 198.
45. Testimony of William Bellamy, in House, *African Crisis Response Initiative, a Security Building Block: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on International Relations*, 107th Cong., 1st sess., 2001, 23.
46. Department of State (hereafter, DoS), "African Crisis Response Initiative," on-the-record briefing, Washington, DC, 28 July 1997.
47. Senate, *Nigerian Transition*, 1, 2.
48. Ibid., 7.
49. Ibid., 15.
50. Correspondence with Victor Nelson, former US defense attaché to Nigeria, March 2009.
51. Institute for National Strategic Studies, "Liberia—from Intervention to Stabilization," INSS Roundtable Series on Post-Conflict Stabilization and Crisis Management (summary of roundtable discussions, National Defense University, Washington, DC, 5 March 2004).
52. Correspondence with Michael Bittrick, former US military advisor to the DoS, Bureau of African Affairs, March 2009.
53. Senate, *Weak States in Africa: US Policy in Liberia: Hearings before the Subcommittee on African Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations*, 107th Cong., 2nd sess., 2002, 28.
54. Testimony of Bellamy, 25.
55. US Agency for International Development (USAID), "U.S. Economic and Military Assistance to the World," US Overseas Loans and Grants, http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov/text_description.html.
56. DoS, *Congressional Presentation for Foreign Operations, Fiscal Year 2000* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Resource Management, 1999).
57. DoS, *Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations, Fiscal Year 2003* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Resource Management, 2002).
58. Gavin Esler, "President of Nigeria" (interview with Olusegun Obasanjo), BBC News, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/3106961.stm>. This comment was primarily in reference to the United States and its Cold War policy in Liberia.
59. Correspondence with Victor Nelson.
60. Stevenson, "Bush Seems to Favor."
61. Reed Kramer, "U.S.-Africa Ties, Boosted by Money for Liberia, Face New Complications over Nigeria Sanctions," 18 November 2003, allAfrica.com, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200311180059.html>.
62. Chris Talbot, "Liberian War Restarts," 21 July 2003, World Socialist Web Site, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2003/jul2003/libe-j21.shtml>.
63. Maggie Farley and Carolyn Cole, "Liberia Peacekeeping Plan Falters," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 July 2003, <http://articles.latimes.com/2003/jul/30/world/fg-liberia30>.
64. Eric Schmitt, "President Orders Troop Deployment to Liberian Coast," *New York Times*, 26 July 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/26/world/president-orders-troop-deployment-to-liberian-coast.html>.
65. Ibid.
66. Maggie Farley, "West African States Approve Sending Peacekeepers to Liberia," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 August 2003, <http://articles.latimes.com/2003/aug/01/world/fg-liberia1>.
67. Schmitt, "President Orders Troop Deployment."
68. House, *US Policy toward Liberia*, 22.
69. Thom Shanker, "U.S. Aims to Back Nigerians, without Sending in More Marines," *New York Times*, 12 August 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/12/international/africa/12MILI.html>.

70. Blair A. Ross Jr., "The U.S. Joint Task Force Experience in Liberia," *Military Review*, May–June 2005, 66.
71. Itano, *Liberating Liberia*, 9.
72. Tim Weiner, "200 U.S. Marines Land in Liberia to Aid African Force," *New York Times*, 15 August 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/15/world/200-us-marines-land-in-liberia-to-aid-african-force.html>.
73. House, *US Policy toward Liberia*, 9.
74. As one analyst points out, several Marines contracted malaria, and some later died from the illness. Correspondence with Stephen Burgess, Air War College, March–April 2009.
75. Ross, "U.S. Joint Task Force," 67.
76. House, *US Policy toward Liberia*, 22.
77. See Ross, "U.S. Joint Task Force," 60–67.
78. See Mott, *United States Military Assistance*.
79. Jonathan Clayton, "Liberia Q&A: Why the United States Is Not Sending Troops," *Times Online*, 30 July 2003, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/tools_and_services/specials/article853580.ece.
80. Kathleen M. Eisenhardt, "Agency Theory: An Assessment and Review," *Academy of Management Review* 14, no. 1 (January 1989): 71.
81. *Ibid.*, 58.
82. Unattributed interview with Nigerian military officer, February 2009.
83. *Ibid.*
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Asymmetric Interdependence

Do America and Europe Need Each Other?

BEATE NEUSS*

The End of the “Unipolar Moment”

Americans and Europeans still look to one another before they look to anyone else. Our partnership benefits us all.”¹ Having been in office only a few days, Vice Pres. Joe Biden availed himself of the opportunity presented by his appearance at the Munich Security Conference in February of 2009 to spread his vision of transatlantic cooperation. The message behind the vice president’s charm offensive could hardly have been any clearer: “My dear Europeans,” he seemed to say, “of course we are still dependent on one another! Of course we still need each other! Cooperation is essential! And, yes, we still need Europe’s advice and support!”

America’s position with regard to the symmetry or asymmetry of the transatlantic relationship can be found, diplomatically formulated, between the lines of the vice president’s speech. In short, “We’re going to attempt to recapture the totality of America’s strength.” In other words, the United States retains its claim to the role of the world’s leading power—as first among equals. Consequently, the sort of dialogue between equals that Europeans so eagerly desire with the United States will not be based solely on interdependence—that is to say, on mutual dependence—and instead presupposes to a degree a symmetric distribution of power.

It has been a long time since Washington placed such strong emphasis on its partnership with Europe as a whole—not just with “new” Europe—and on the need for cooperation and support. In May of 1989, Pres. George H. W. Bush presented the idea of “partners in leadership” to the Federal Republic of Germany as the United States searched for practical support in

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transforming political structures in postrevolutionary Europe.² Europe's inability, acting either as individual states or through the European Union (EU), to deal effectively with the wars going on at its own front door, in the Balkans, and with other global challenges—together with the United States' largely unchallenged preeminence from 1991 on—masked the fact that Washington needed to act in close cooperation with its allies to fulfill its global role. The experience of trying to fund and conduct two wars with an increasingly reluctant and ever-shrinking “coalition of the willing” proved to be too costly in every respect. The legitimacy of American leadership was weakened when the United States was not able to count on political support from even the principal European powers for its controversial war in Iraq.

Immediately after taking office, the new US administration, which had received considerable advance praise in Europe from both official circles and the general public, put in a high-profile appearance at the Munich Security Conference in February 2009 in order to press the “reset button” in transatlantic relations. It was the first time in the 45-year history of the convocation that a US vice president had appeared at the event, and Biden used that opportunity to demonstrate a resolve “to set a new tone.”³ Prior to Barack Obama's election victory, government officials and analysts in Europe had speculated with some concern about the elevated expectations and demands that the new president likely would direct at Europe. But even now that the first of those demands has been publicly articulated, there is nevertheless a great sense of relief at being able to work with a more cooperative administration on pressing world problems—such as the global financial and economic crisis, climate issues, securing energy supplies, international terrorism, and continuing problems in the Middle East—none of which can be solved without the United States. Europe needs US support to pursue its interests and achieve its goals. Therefore, there is an increasing awareness on both sides that the enormous complexity of the tasks and problems we face demand cooperative action. This fundamental commonality of interest is useful in interdependent relationships, even when those relationships are not symmetrical in nature. The degree of agreement that exists on implementation determines the extent of the actual willingness to cooperate.

Symmetry: Economic Interdependence

"It's not logical to talk about a risk of recession in Germany," the EU commissioner for economics and finance, Joaquín Almunia, announced in January 2008. "The United States economy . . . has serious problems with fundamentals. We haven't."⁴ Yet, by late summer of 2008, the collapse of Lehman Brothers dramatically demonstrated that America's crisis was Europe's crisis too, as the viruses infecting the American financial system quickly spread to Europe. The progress of the financial crisis and the recession that followed revealed just how deeply interconnected the transatlantic economy is, and it was soon clear that the crisis would be overcome only through cooperative effort. Despite public calls for cooperation, there are clear indications that protectionist impulses are proving difficult to suppress on both sides of the Atlantic. It remains to be seen whether the old adage "When America catches a cold, Europe gets the flu" still applies. Generally speaking, Europe has in recent years become more competitive and increasingly oriented toward the broader world market. The EU, with its 480 million inhabitants, now possesses a larger domestic market than the United States, with its 303 million inhabitants; so it is possible that the EU may avoid becoming any more caught up in the swirl of recession than the United States. But it is also important to note that, in spite of its domestic market and existing legal structures, the EU's member states find it difficult to act in concert and instead tend to fall back on protectionist measures that work to the detriment of others in the EU.

Public discussion is currently focused on the negative side of interdependence, with the sale of Opel offering just one example of more general developments. It is important, therefore, not to forget that interdependence has an upside as well and that it is this which has provided for the high level of prosperity and global economic influence enjoyed on both sides of the Atlantic.

Interdependence and Global Influence

The EU and the United States are the strongest economic regions in the world. The EU is responsible for 38 percent of world trade, if one includes internal trade.⁵ But even when taking into account only the trade with outside third parties, the EU is still the world's largest economic power,

with 17.4 percent of world trade, followed by the United States at 11.9 percent—so that both together, accounting for nearly a third of world trade, can be considered the world's dominant economic powers.⁶ This is especially true with regard to their influence on the structure of the world economic order, given that the United States and the EU account for 60 percent of global economic productivity. This is what has placed them in a position (thus far at least) to dominate those institutions responsible for shaping global economic policy—which in turn has provided them the ability to pursue American and European interests and put into place American and European policies.

No two economic regions are as closely intertwined as these. In terms of trade volume, each is the other's largest trading partner. Germany alone sells as many goods to the United States as it does to China and India combined. The United States is by far the largest consumer of EU-produced goods, with 21.9 percent of the EU's products going to the United States. In terms of import goods, the United States is in second place, behind China, at 12.7 percent (as of 2007). European exports constitute 18.4 percent of total American imports, while the EU takes in 21.8 percent of America's exports. Trade in the service sector is similarly upbeat. Both sides are thus intimately bound together through trade and overall economic development.⁷

Trade between the two has grown steadily, producing consistent trade surpluses for Europe. The totality of exchange, including the rapidly growing service sector, is estimated at \$3.7 billion, making the transatlantic region the cornerstone of the world's economy.⁸ Moreover, this trade consists principally of high-value finished goods, which in turn means it is linked on both sides of the Atlantic to well-paying jobs.

Trade by both regions with other parts of the world, especially with Asia, is growing rapidly, while transatlantic trade prior to the current economic crisis grew at a modest average rate of only 3 percent. But the liberal market economies of the United States and the EU, each operating within its respective context of legal and political protections, have seen to it that trade has been replaced by investment. European and American direct investments are now the primary drivers behind the transatlantic economy. Well over half of all trade is made up of the exchange of goods traded within companies. Americans have been responsible for 57 percent of foreign investment in the EU since the beginning of the current decade. Nowhere else does the US

economy invest more than it does in particular European countries. In 2007 US investments in the EU were three times the amount invested in all of Asia! American firms operating in Europe produce three times as many goods as the United States exports to the EU, and the ratio is similar for Europe.⁹

The effect of this investment on the job market is impressive: 3.6 million Europeans work for American companies—including 367,000 Germans employed in manufacturing, out of a total of some 600,000 jobs in Germany as a whole.¹⁰ European companies and their subsidiaries employ even more Americans: roughly four million. This means that far more jobs are produced in the United States than are exported to so-called low-wage countries in Eastern Europe or Asia. In all, more than eight million people living in the transatlantic economic region are employed by companies from the opposite side of the Atlantic. If one includes those jobs created indirectly through direct investments, then the estimated number comes to a total of 12–14 million jobs, almost all of which are in professional areas at average or above-average levels of pay.¹¹

Tied together with direct investments is the substantial level of investment in research and development carried out by both sides. Here, too, there is no comparable activity going on between countries or regions anywhere else in the world.¹² This means that job creation and net production occur not only as a result of intensive trade but also more often locally, within each respective market. The prosperity of the United States and EU member countries depends decisively on the intensive integration existing between the two sides.

Clearly, this degree of integration between sovereign states exists nowhere else. In contrast to the early postwar years, interdependence is now much more symmetric, as the distribution of power and dependency between economies has come into greater balance. European influence in shaping the structures of the world economy is now plainly evident: the expansion of the G7 into the G8; the inclusion of emerging market economies at the G8 meeting in Heiligendamm in 2007; and the crisis meeting of G20 finance ministers in 2009—all can be traced to European initiatives. The current economic crisis has promoted the formation of a united front.¹³

During the conflict between several European countries and the United States over the Iraq war, when political relations were “poisoned” (according to Condoleezza Rice) and communication at senior levels was

seriously encumbered, discussion—especially in Germany—focused on what effect this political conflict would have on economic relations and whether German or French jobs might be endangered by it as a result. Yet, despite the worst deterioration in political relations since 1945, the transatlantic economy was not detrimentally affected. The ill feeling that did arise remained largely limited to the temporary renaming of french fries to “freedom fries.” More importantly, economic integration served as the “glue” that provided a stable basis for ongoing relations; economic lines of communication remained strong, even when political relations were disrupted. A reading of bare facts and figures offers only a hint of the flourishing nature of the transatlantic economy and of the intense communication and lively exchange of people and ideas it encompasses. It is this exchange that has been able to substitute, at least partially, for the loss of understanding and affinity each side held for the other before the flow of GIs once stationed in Germany ceased.

Differing rates of growth in the developing world and in other continents and the related shifts in economic power occurring in an already multipolar world demonstrate conclusively that neither side in the transatlantic economy can pursue its interests alone in shaping the world’s economic order.

Asymmetries in Power Structures

Since 1990 the EU has taken ever greater strides toward becoming an important global player. But even though Hillary Clinton placed Brussels high on her itinerary and declared during a visit there at the beginning of March 2009 that the EU is a “great power,” there still exists an asymmetry of political clout in the transatlantic region stemming from the structural differences in political coherence between a properly constituted great power, such as the United States, and the EU.¹⁴ While the EU speaks with one voice in international organizations and acts according to commonly held regulations and legal codes, in matters of foreign and security policy it still operates on an intergovernmental basis, which means that all essential decisions must be reached through unanimous consent among all 27 member states.

This asymmetry is conspicuous in political matters, especially in foreign and security policy. The EU’s international presence remains diffuse, owing to its institutional and legal structures. So long as the Lisbon Treaty is not

allowed to take effect, the EU must operate according to the rules set down in the Amsterdam Treaty, which call for the EU presidency to rotate every six months. This means that EU member states have to accustom themselves constantly to new leadership and that policy continuity cannot be ensured. Since the EU's contours as a union of states *sui generis* can be difficult to discern and the strength of the EU presidency is largely dependent upon the relative power of the member state currently holding that office, the foreign policy significance of the EU is often easily underestimated by other global actors. There is a great temptation to speak with individual member states directly and to seek to divide them from one another. A dramatic example of this occurred during the run-up to the Iraq war when the countries of the EU15—even the six founding members—were divided into two camps, each pursuing different policies with the United States and on Iraq.

In addition to the rotating EU presidency, there is also the anomalous position of “High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy.” Javier Solana has occupied this office, created in 1987 by the Treaty of Amsterdam, since 1999, which means he at least has been able to provide a recognized constant in Europe's common foreign and security policy (CFSP). He is part of the CFSP troika made up of the current EU president and the currently presiding head of the EU Commission. But the end result of this confusion of political and institutional responsibility is that Henry Kissinger's old wisecrack—“Who do I dial up when I want to talk to Europe?”—remains relevant today.

The Treaty of Lisbon could bring significant improvement in this regard by creating the office of “President of the European Council,” who would serve a two-and-a-half-year term and could be reelected once, while being prohibited from simultaneously holding office in any member state. The “High Representative” would also serve as both chair of the EU foreign affairs council and vice president of the commission, responsible for foreign policy. His job would be to provide for a coherent European foreign policy, and he would be supported in his responsibilities by a European foreign service.¹⁵ This structure promises greater continuity, unity, higher visibility, greater confidence, and, ultimately, improved efficiency in the EU in matters of global concern. It would also provide an answer to Kissinger's question about Europe's telephone number. The effect of such a reform should not be

underestimated: certainty and consistency allow Europe's partners to feel securer about the decisions they take and are therefore important prerequisites for achieving international goals. Putting the Treaty of Lisbon into force—a European “Yes, we can!” indispensable to European self-assertion—would constitute a step, albeit a small one, toward the elimination of transatlantic asymmetry. Even so, the complex intergovernmental coordination processes would remain.

The “first network-like governing system in history” obviously would operate according to a different logic than the American federal system in the way it shapes political will on significant questions relating to foreign policy.¹⁶ Reaching quick decisions in times of crisis would prove difficult. This is especially true in matters involving the threat or actual use of military force. The process of creating political consensus in the multitiered European system requires that approval be obtained at the national level (often in [coalition] governments and in parliament), as well as between member states and at the EU level. Consequently, for the foreseeable future, Europe will not be able to achieve the sort of efficient decision-making structures the United States possesses—nor will it wish to since it would not accept the reduction of national sovereignty that such a structure would entail. Nevertheless, some things can still be improved: Europe lacks a counterpart to the US National Security Council, for example, where interests are defined, priorities set, and strategies developed. This constitutes a serious shortcoming.

Europe's Growing Empowerment

Despite all the deficiencies the EU demonstrates in the areas of foreign and security policy, it nevertheless has managed to respond to all major crises—the wars in the Balkans, international terrorism, natural disasters, and the threats emanating from fragile states—with increasing foreign and security policy cooperation, a growing coherence, and burgeoning international presence. The war in Kosovo in 1999 in particular acted as a catalyst in consolidating a European military component. Consensus proved elusive on key points of some important questions—for example, on the EU's position with respect to America's Iraq policy in 2003. But the EU learned from its ensuing powerlessness, and in 2003 it was able to provide for greater clarity about its common interests, threats, and goals through the formulation of

the *European Security Strategy* (ESS).¹⁷ Five years on, it has undertaken a review of both progress made and continued shortcomings.¹⁸

The EU was able to reach a common position on the war in Georgia in 2008—albeit with some difficulty, given its members' differing views about how to react to Russian actions there. The EU's involvement in a conflict that would have traditionally been considered America's responsibility to resolve demonstrated real progress toward a European Security and Defense policy (ESDP). Clearly, the overextension of American power has forced the EU to expand its ability to act. France's return to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) military structures should prove a plus for the ESDP as well, since it helps to still concerns in the United States and among the European members of the alliance over the prospect of the dissolution of NATO brought about by development of an autonomous ESDP. Suspicions about French intentions blocked all progress on the ESDP prior to the British-French meeting at Saint-Malo, France, in 1994. With France's reintegration into NATO, however, the development of the ESDP should proceed more easily, especially now that Washington has recognized the need for independent European capacities and no longer pursues efforts aimed at blocking them.

The EU sees itself first and foremost as a nonmilitary power. This self-perception has contributed to a tendency to implement essential military reforms—both in the ESDP and in NATO—only reluctantly and with great delay, if at all. Both the *ESS* and the council report of 2008 on the implementation of that strategy, as well as the reaction to the war in Georgia, demonstrate that the EU prefers a strategy that seeks to include all relevant actors in an “effective multilateralism.”¹⁹ Such a strategy also endeavors to uphold the rule of international law through dialogue as well as economic and financial incentives.²⁰ Beyond a partiality for the policy of prevention, the transatlantic partners differ markedly from one another in other ways as well. In principle the EU does not use its military as a means for issuing threats, though it clearly does see the military as an instrument of last resort. The United States, however, takes for granted that the military is an instrument of global policy. The difference in political mentalities here is striking.²¹

Equally striking are the differences in the military capacities of the United States and Europe. Here lies the single most important root cause for the asymmetry of political power. Though Europe has two million troops

under arms—about 450,000 more than the United States (as of 2007, only 5 percent of these can be sent on missions abroad)—American military expenditures are twice those of Europe; moreover, Europe's expenditures are not disbursed in a focused manner. More than half of Europe's military expenditures go to personnel costs, while far too little goes into new military technology.²² The technology gap between Europe and the United States has only grown larger in recent years, making interoperability more difficult. Above and beyond this, there are the numerous caveats by which EU members who are also NATO allies limit their military involvements. In addition, Europe's armies are organized at the national level, with little effort toward specialization or division of labor. Despite increasing cooperation by defense manufacturers, there still exists, on the one hand, a duplication of weapons systems and, on the other, equipment which is unneeded or ill suited to dealing with today's new challenges, as well as glaring shortfalls in equipping humanitarian missions, peacekeeping operations, and combat operations in asymmetric engagements (not least in terms of logistics).

With embarrassing regularity, Europeans have failed to achieve the goals they set for themselves. In 1999, for example, a decision was made that envisioned sending 60,000 troops abroad, including far-flung locations, within a 60-day time frame for a period of a year. The implementation of this policy should have been completed by 2003, but currently there is only a stated intention to implement the plan "in the coming years."²³ On the other hand, two EU battle groups have now been placed in readiness. These highly flexible, 1,500-strong units can be deployed within 10 to 15 days for missions of up to six months in duration. For more sweeping missions, the EU can draw on NATO capabilities, as provided for through the Berlin Plus agreement.²⁴

Europeans do not shy away from important, albeit less dangerous, missions—80,000 soldiers are now serving in United Nations, NATO, and EU operations around the globe. The EU is participating in a broad array of assignments—more than 20 thus far—ranging from peacekeeping actions in Aceh following the tsunami there, to protecting refugees and engaging in institution building in Kosovo. The goal of acting as the EU can be seen in the way in which it has presented, even in those missions, that it is not leading as "EU" missions (e.g., the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon).²⁵ However, no obvious strategic vision directs these operations, some-

thing which the EU itself acknowledges, as in December of 2008 when it determined that “despite all that has been achieved, implementation of the ESS remains work in progress. For our full potential to be realized we need to be still *more capable, more coherent and more active*” (emphasis in original).²⁶

Europeans cannot measure themselves using the United States as their yardstick. The United States is a world power in a literal sense, with bases around the world that provide it with a global presence. Even so, the EU must make efforts to become a credible military partner with a willingness to make its own contribution to burden sharing if it wants to have a voice in decisions shaping strategy and global order. Its security policy relevance has grown over the course of the decade. The EU has provided for regional stability for its neighbors to the east and south through the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), and it is engaged in Africa, where the United States takes no active role. Both of these serve to relieve the United States of some of its traditional role as world power. The EU contributes to securing the world’s trade routes around the Horn of Africa through Naval Force Somalia (“Operation Atalanta”). This is in Europe’s own best interest, yet it involves assuming a role on the high seas that has up to now been the purview of the US Navy. Recently, the EU also has found itself in the novel position of effectively mediating a classic conflict between states involving a resurgent world power (Russia) and America’s partner (Georgia)—and it did so without assistance from the United States, which conspicuously kept its distance. But Europe is also right to recognize that “to build a secure Europe in a better world, we must do more to shape events. And we must do it now.”²⁷ This explicitly involves possessing the right instruments to deal with emerging global security policy challenges. In the areas of soft power and economics, Europe has much to offer—but this alone is not sufficient to create a relationship of symmetry or a partnership of equals.

Interdependence: Indispensable Partnership

Practically all recent studies conclude that we are on the threshold of a multipolar world order and of radical changes of unique and historic proportions.²⁸ These studies conclude that Europe’s political and economic relevance will shrink, owing to demographic changes and the shifting of the economic center of gravity to Asia. By 2025 only 10 percent of the world’s population will live in the North Atlantic region. *Global Trends 2025*, a report

of the US National Intelligence Council, considers Europe barely worth mentioning in its examination of the future development of the international order. The United States is also considered to be of declining importance yet will remain the only world power with leadership qualities. Even so, no one questions the fact that Washington must act multilaterally to regain legitimacy, bring an end to the two wars in which it is involved, master the current economic crisis, and deal with the other challenges ahead. The United States has learned that even its power is limited and that unipolarity, to the degree it ever really existed, lasted for only a brief moment in time.²⁹ It is now aware that the tremendous problems of global order cannot be resolved even by the mightiest country on Earth.

Under President Obama, the transatlantic allies are largely of one view about the tasks and threats that lie ahead in the twenty-first century. In the search for a correlation of interests—whether it be in combating terrorism, shaping the world’s financial systems, formulating climate policy, or dealing with matters of human rights, nonproliferation, or Middle East policy—it soon becomes evident that there exists a greater congruency of interests and goals with the United States than with any of the world’s other emerging or reemerging great powers. Emerging powers may profit from a stable international order, but they generally do not contribute to its stability. Since neither the United States nor the EU can successfully pursue global policies alone, where can they turn in the new multipolar constellation of powers but to each other? Each, therefore, is the other’s indispensable partner!

Europe’s interest lies in a democratic order coupled to a social-welfare, market-based economy, which it sees as the most secure foundation for providing “the greatest good to the greatest number” (Jeremy Bentham) because this best combines personal freedom with the greatest possible prosperity. EU member states have placed the effort against climate change at the top of their list of priorities. Furthermore, they see effective multilateralism as the foundation of a peaceful world order—a view to which President Obama also subscribes. For Europe, but also for the world as a whole, the United States remains the “indispensable nation” (Madeleine Albright), without which neither the battle against climate change nor the effort to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction can succeed. At bottom, both the United States and the EU are striving toward the goal of world governance, which they see as the prerequisite for effectively

securing global peace and prosperity. Precisely what form this should take remains to be discussed. But the more relevance Europe can secure for itself (including matters relating to security policy), the greater will be its influence in that discussion.

Europe's role has changed markedly over the course of the past decade—so much so that analysts view the EU as a hegemonic if not imperial power, able to successfully set European norms in both its own region and beyond. The European periphery has come under the economic and political domination of Europe—while Europe's borders have been continuously shifting outwards through the admission of new members and as a consequence of new political instruments like the ENP or the Black Sea Synergy program. Zaki Laïdi has referred to this as a “normative empire.”³⁰ The EU's influence has grown because it no longer seeks its fortunes through soft power alone.

Today, Europe may have more to offer the United States, but does Europe have what it takes to deal with the United States on an equal footing in discussions over matters of importance? First, the fact that both sides are dependent on each other does not mean that they are equally dependent on each other. The EU is in many ways more vulnerable than the United States. It has too few natural resources of its own, and those countries that supply it with needed resources are often under the control of unstable, authoritarian regimes. Second, mutual dependence does not mean that there are no differences of opinion over strategy or how to approach a problem. These differences exist and provide the grist for conflict. They arise out of differing historical experiences, but they are also due to asymmetries of power, to America's insistence on having a dominant role in world affairs, and to European shortcomings in security policy.

While Europe's influence clearly came to bear in managing the global economic crisis—requiring that Washington follow up on demands for new regulations and structural reforms—controversies over burden sharing in security policy still continue. With France's reintegration into the military structures of NATO, the underlying controversy over a European military component—either independent in nature or linked with NATO (together with British suspicions of European initiatives in this matter)—should now be settled. This will allow for the further development of the ESDP—provided Europe can summon up the political self-assertiveness necessary to secure its position in an increasingly complex international

system. For that, it will need the cooperation of the United States: "Europe must see to it that America remains committed to Europe."³¹ The United States is in need of a partner that is capable of taking action itself. This also entails the unpleasant demand of Europeans that they make a proper contribution to burden sharing and, above all, that the EU be capable of making decisions and taking action. Only then will it be possible to give real meaning to the conclusion drawn in the *ESS* of 2003: "The transatlantic relationship is irreplaceable. Acting together, the European Union and the United States can be a formidable force for good in the world."³²

Notes

1. Joseph R. Biden (speech, 45th Munich Security Conference, 7 February 2009), <http://www.securityconference.de/Joseph-R-Biden.234.0.html?&L=1>.

2. George H. W. Bush, "Remarks to the Citizens in Mainz, Federal Republic of Germany, 31 May 1989," <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=17085>.

3. Biden, speech.

4. Quoted in the *International Herald Tribune*, 22 January 2008.

5. Stephan Bierling, *Die Huckepack-Strategie: Europa muss die USA einspannen* [The Huckepack Strategy: Europe must constrain the USA] (Hamburg: Edition Koerber-Stiftung, 2007), 22.

6. Eurostat, "Warenhandel, nach den Weltweiten [*sic*] wichtigsten Händler [*sic*]" [Commodity trading after the global main vendor], <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=de&xcode=tet00018>.

7. Figures for 2007: Eurostat Comext, Statistical Regime 4/IMF (Dots), DG Trade 10 September 2008. Trade volume for the EU consisted of €442.567 million and for the United States €446.625 million. The EU's trade surplus (including service sector) was €80 billion.

8. Daniel S. Hamilton and Joseph P. Quinlan, *The Transatlantic Economy 2009: Annual Survey of Jobs, Trade, and Investment between the United States and Europe* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2009), v, <http://www.brookings.edu/Press/Books/2009/thetransatlanticeconomy2009.aspx>. US exports in the service sector doubled between 1997 and 2007 to \$180 billion, while the EU's exports to the United States rose from \$62 billion (1997) to \$154 billion (2007). *Ibid.*, ix.

9. See "Investment: Underpinning the Relationship" and "Trade: Increased Investment Stimulates Trade," in *The German-American Partnership: Benchmarking Success* (Berlin: US Diplomatic Mission to Germany, November 2008), 8–9 and 11–12, respectively, <http://www.buyusa.gov/germany/en/benchmarking2008.pdf>.

10. Hamilton and Quinlan, *Transatlantic Economy 2009*, 20–21. The US Embassy places the figure for the same period (2006) at a total of 800,000 jobs in Germany. See <http://germany.usembassy.gov/benchmarks/employment/>.

11. Hamilton and Quinlan, *Transatlantic Economy 2009*, 21.

12. Almost \$19 billion in Europe and around \$30 billion in the United States. *Ibid.*, x.

13. Despite differing viewpoints, the spring summit of 20 March 2009 led to an agreement to take a common position at the G20 meeting in April of that year.

14. "Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, bezeichnet die EU als grosse Macht" [... called the EU in Brussels a great power], *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 7/8 March 2009.

15. Treaty of Lisbon, Art. 26 and 27.

16. Jeremy Rifkin, "The American Dream, der europäische Traum und die dritte europäische Revolution" [The American dream, the European dream and the third European revolution], in *Die alte und die neue Welt*:

Transatlantische Gespräche [The old and the new world: Transatlantic discussions], ed. Bernd M. Scherer and Sven Arnold (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2008), 25.

17. European Council, "A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy" (Brussels: EU, 12 December 2003), <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>.

18. European Council, "Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy—Providing Security in a Changing World" (Brussels: EU, 11 December 2008), http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/esdp/104631.pdf.

19. Council of the European Union, "Brussels European Council, 11 and 12 December 2008, Presidency Conclusions" (Brussels: Council of the European Union, 12 December 2008), annex 2, "Declaration by the European Council on the Enhancement of the European Security and Defence Policy," 15, <http://www.eurunion.org/EurCounConclu-12-12-08.doc>.

20. Sven Biscop, Jolyon Howorth, and Bastian Giegerich, *Europe: A Time for Strategy*, Egmont Paper 27, Royal Institute for International Relations (Ghent: Academia Press, January 2009), <http://aei.pitt.edu/10883/01/eg27.pdf>.

21. Robert Kagan, *Macht und Ohnmacht: Amerika und Europa in der neuen Weltordnung* [Power and powerlessness: America and Europe in the new world order] (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 2003).

22. European Defense Agency (EDA), *An Initial Long-Term Vision for European Defense Capability and Capacity Needs* (Brussels: EDA, 3 October 2006), 29, <http://www.eda.europa.eu/genercitem.aspx?ares=organisation&id=146>.

23. Council of the European Union, "Brussels European Council," annex 2, "Declaration by the European Council," 16.

24. For example, during Operation EUFOR Althea.

25. Biscop, Howorth, and Giegerich, *Europe: A Time for Strategy*, 8.

26. European Council, "Report on the Implementation," 2.

27. *Ibid.*, 12.

28. See, for example, US National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World*, NIC 2008-003 (Washington, DC: GPO, November 2008), http://www.dni.gov/nic/PDF_2025/2025_Global_Trends_Final_Report.pdf; and EU Institute for Security Studies, *The New Global Puzzle: What World for the EU in 2025?* (Paris: EUISS, 2006), http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/NGP_01.pdf.

29. Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (Winter 1990/91): 23–33.

30. Zaki Laïdi, *The Normative Empire: The Unintended Consequences of European Power*, Garnet Policy Brief no. 6, February 2008, http://www.garnet-eu.org/fileadmin/documents/policy_briefs/Garnet_Policy_Brief_No_6.pdf. See also Jan Zielonka, "Europe as a Global Actor: Empire by Example?," *International Affairs* 84, no. 3 (May 2008): 471–84; and Hiski Haukkala, "The European Union as a Regional Normative Hegemon: The Case of European Neighborhood Policy," *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, no. 9 (November 2008): 1601–22.

31. Bierling, *Huckepack-Strategie*.

32. European Council, "Secure Europe in a Better World," 13.

Civilian Language Education in America

How the Air Force and Academia Can Thrive Together

COL JOHN CONWAY, USAF, RETIRED*

Higher education is primarily a long-term supplier of general and specialized talent for government and other sectors. It is an aquifer not a spigot. While it can respond quickly for “comet” needs of government, its strength is in maintaining “a constellation” of resources.

—Nancy L. Ruther
Yale University

The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) of 2006 first proposed that Department of Defense (DOD) language planners focus on preaccession language education instead of spending time and treasure to teach foreign languages to recruits and second-termers, a proposal echoed in the QDR of 2010.¹ Since “preaccession language education” almost always connotes formal college and university coursework, it appears that the last two QDRs seek to strengthen the linguistic skills of the officer corps. However, a lack of both direction for and understanding of what this nation’s language education system can provide continues to hamstring efforts to expand preaccession language training.

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We are still feeling the effects of changes in foreign language education in America that occurred in the World War I era. The decades prior to that war saw robust enrollment in foreign language courses, in both high schools and colleges, reflecting the country's strong immigrant heritage.² The study of German had acquired "prestige" status as America's public schools embraced Germany's model of instruction. Many people considered German the language of the educated person; consequently, it comprised about 24 percent of all language instruction in public high schools in 1915.³ Only the traditional study of Latin boasted a higher enrollment (37.3 percent). Moreover, one-third of all US universities required applicants to have studied German or French for two to four years, and fully 85 percent demanded that prospective students pass a foreign language competency test prior to matriculation.⁴

Upon America's entry into the war in 1917, German virtually disappeared from every high school curriculum in a wave of anti-German sentiment, attracting less than 2 percent of all language students.⁵ Enrollment in French and Spanish rose, but neither reached German's earlier numbers. Latin remained strong, but the decline in German offerings prompted some students simply not to take a foreign language at all.⁶ With German marginalized, French became the new prestige language, in time morphing into language instruction only for individuals seeking postsecondary education.⁷ This trend became codified in the college preparatory track as a requirement for higher education—to the virtual exclusion of the vocational track. Consequently, enrollment in foreign language, once nearly universal across the American educational spectrum, continued to diminish in the decades after World War I.⁸

But a more ominous trend emerged: by 1920, 22 states had prohibited the teaching of foreign languages, some of them outlawing any such instruction below eighth grade.⁹ Underpinning this linguistic xenophobia—fueled initially by anti-German feelings during World War I—was the idea that citizens could neither understand nor appreciate American ideals without learning them in English. Thus, the teaching of foreign languages became "un-American" or "unpatriotic."¹⁰ Learning another language exposed students to other cultures and thus divided their loyalties, as expressed by a Nebraska statute of that era: "To allow the children of foreigners, who had emigrated here, to be taught from early childhood the language of the country of their parents was to rear them with that language as their mother

tongue. It was to educate them so that they must always think in that language, and, as a consequence, naturally inculcate in them the ideas and sentiments foreign to the best interests of this country.”¹¹

It took no less than a Supreme Court ruling in 1923 to overturn such laws.¹² By then the damage was done, however. Foreign language education in the elementary grades virtually disappeared for the next four decades; initial language education was relegated to high schools; and the rise of isolationism in America kept the study of foreign languages on the ragged edge of patriotism.¹³

Thus, this country had truncated a basic tenet of language education theory—that mastery of a foreign language took a long time and should begin early. In 1940 a national report on what high schools should teach recommended the elimination of foreign language instruction, among other subjects, because the “overly academic” curriculum in high schools caused too many students to fail.¹⁴

Today that legacy continues. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 emphasizes the testing of students in reading and mathematics to the exclusion of many other subjects, including foreign languages.¹⁵ Panelists at a Senate subcommittee hearing on federal foreign language strategy in 2007 specifically criticized the act, noting that such standardized testing impeded the addition of foreign language instruction to curriculums. “Foreign languages are being left out due to No Child Left Behind,” one them bluntly declared.¹⁶ A recent survey by the Center for Applied Linguistics reported that this legislation has negatively affected approximately one-third of public elementary and secondary schools with language programs, adding that it has diverted resources from foreign language instruction to “accountable” courses in mathematics and reading.¹⁷

Language Study as a Sequence

Why should the Air Force care about foreign language courses taught in elementary schools and high schools? A study conducted in 2002 points to elementary-level foreign language education as the “sequence starting point” for studying a second language in nearly every country except the United States, which tries to produce competent students of foreign languages in the unrealistically short span of two to four years of high school or two to four semesters of college.¹⁸ The study’s author echoes what many

other linguistic scholars propose: acquiring any proficiency in a second language requires an extended sequence of study. In short, the sooner one begins language studies, the better.

Former White House chief of staff and director of the Central Intelligence Agency (and current secretary of defense) Leon Panetta has described our current system of instruction in foreign languages as “discontinuous,” with “considerable slippage” in language study between high school and college.¹⁹ In 2000—the most recent year for which data on language enrollment in secondary schools are available—approximately 5.9 million students took language classes in high school.²⁰ Two years later, only about 1.4 million students took them in college.²¹

One explanation—that many high school students don’t attend college—would account for some of this disparity. However, the enrollment in 2006 of only 1.57 million college students in language courses (of over 17 million college students nationwide) suggests some continuing apathy on the part of the students, colleges, or both.²² Most colleges do not require a foreign language for graduation; in fact, many doctoral programs require no language, much less demonstrated proficiency in two languages for graduation.²³ Of the four-year institutions that responded to the Modern Language Association’s (MLA) survey in 2006, 7.8 percent reported teaching no language courses at all.²⁴

Moreover, most of these college language students enroll at the introductory level (first and second year), less than 20 percent of them going any further.²⁵ Given the gulf in language study between high school and college and the paucity of language students advancing beyond the basic four semesters of college, it is painfully obvious that college language instruction offers no easy solution to the Air Force’s needs.

A Brief Quantitative Assessment of Language Education

How well does college-level language instruction prepare individuals to meet the military’s needs? Does a correlation exist between classroom hours and DOD test scores? On the one hand, some scholars claim that no formula can accurately determine the length of time necessary to attain various levels of language proficiency because of the unquantifiable nature of motivation and aptitude. On the other hand, various other language authorities have attempted to quantify the above-mentioned correlation.

The International Language Roundtable (ILR) defines a listening/reading level of 1/1 as “elementary proficiency.” In the listening category, level 1 denotes comprehension of utterances that meet basic needs for survival, courtesy, and travel. A score of 1 in reading indicates sufficient comprehension to read simple connected sentences.²⁶ The International Center for Language Studies calculates that 150 hours of classroom instruction can produce a score of 1/1 in the Romance and Germanic languages, considered the easiest to master.²⁷ At the other end of the scale, Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, and Korean—some of the most difficult languages for English speakers to learn—demand more than twice that figure (350), equivalent to nearly eight semesters of college instruction (assuming that four semesters of a college language course equate to about 180 hours of classroom instruction).²⁸ In most colleges and universities, eight semesters would certainly qualify a student for a minor concentration in a language. (See table 1 for the ILR’s breakdown of hours required for various levels of proficiency. Note that any level beyond 3 calls for immersion studies in that language’s native setting. In other words, classroom instruction will carry a student only so far.)

Table 1. Classroom hours required for proficiency levels by language difficulty

ILR Levels from S/L/R ^a 0 to:	S/L/R 1	S/L/R 2	S/L/R 3	S/L/R 4
Romance and Germanic Languages (French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Romanian, German, Afrikaans, Danish, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish)	150 hours	400 hours	650 hours	b
Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Korean	350 hours	1,100 hours	2,200 hours	b
All Others^c (e.g., East European, African, and Asian Languages)	250 hours	600 hours	1,100 hours	b

Adapted from International Center for Language Studies, “Classroom Hours to Achieve Proficiency Levels by Language Difficulty,” International Center for Language Studies, Washington, DC, <http://www.icls.com/FLD/ILRlevels.htm>.

Note: Reaching these goals assumes that the student will supplement every five hours of classroom study with a minimum of two to three hours of preparation.

This table, an adaptation of the expected levels of speaking proficiency for various lengths of training according to the US State Department’s Foreign Service Institute, is intended to meet the needs of private-sector students.

These equations vary slightly: the Foreign Service Institute estimates that students will need 575–600 hours of its classroom instruction in the Romance languages to reach level 3/3. See Mary Ellen O’Connell and Janet L. Norwood, eds., *International Education and Foreign Languages: Keys to Securing America’s Future* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2007), 45. For the most difficult languages (Chinese, Arabic, etc.), the Foreign Service Institute mandates that students spend the second year of their 88-week course in the target country.

^a S = speaking proficiency, L = listening proficiency, R = reading proficiency

^b Generally, classroom instruction cannot attain level 4 because such proficiency demands extensive use of language in a native setting.

^c Approximate classroom hours for Indonesian and Malay: S/R-1 = 200; S/R-2 = 500; S/R-3 = 900

Furthermore, because college instruction in languages usually occurs at a relatively leisurely pace and is not as intense and goal-directed as classes at the Defense Language Institute (DLI) or Foreign Service Institute, students would probably have to take more classroom hours to attain the same results on the Defense Language Proficiency Test.²⁹ According to an interview with the DLI's acting chancellor in 2005, the institute's French students "burn through a typical college French textbook in about six weeks."³⁰ Lastly, the number of hours devoted to reaching proficiency rises exponentially, not linearly—a fact that substantially affects those who wish to increase their language skills but have limited time for language study. Basic language acquisition requires considerable time, and upper-level study even more, creating a problem in any Air Force work setting not directly tied to language proficiency. For example, medical personnel who participate in the International Health Service's language program would have to take increasingly more time away from clinical work (and their continuing education requirements as medical professionals) to score higher on the Defense Language Proficiency Test. Such a time-management problem could force an Airman to choose between professional duties and the pursuit of improved language skills.

Producing Officers Proficient in Foreign Languages

As the QDRs of 2006 and 2010 point out, the military should emphasize preaccession language training to meet most of its needs instead of relying on postaccession language study.³¹ The intensive training nature of the first year of an officer's career, featuring Undergraduate Pilot Training, Undergraduate Navigator Training, or a host of other technical courses, seriously inhibits language training after commissioning.

One must also address a broader issue. With few exceptions, line officers in the US Air Force receive their commissions via three distinct routes: the US Air Force Academy (USAFA), Officer Training School (OTS), and Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC). Although each produces some language-capable members, each has its own language drawbacks.

Given the finite number of USAFA graduates each year, only a few will have majored or minored in foreign languages. Moreover, even though the academy has increased its language offerings, they cannot possibly

match the number found on civilian campuses across America (approximately 219 in 2006).³²

At this writing, OTS admits only technical majors—engineers, biologists, and the like—so language majors who wait until after graduation for commissioning cannot pursue this route.³³ Native-speaker candidates for OTS more often reflect a happy circumstance than targeted recruitment; hence, only a small number of Air Force officers with native language ability obtain their commissions through OTS.

Consequently, America's colleges and universities represent the greatest "aquifer" of foreign language studies in the country. Opportunities for language majors to receive AFROTC scholarships have soared recently—an impressive number of such students could merit these awards.³⁴ In addition, senior ROTC cadets are taking advantage of a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2009 that authorizes a bonus for completing coursework in a number of foreign languages, even if their studies do not lead to a degree.³⁵ The Air Force anticipates that the numbers of participants in the program will grow to nearly 1,000 in the 2010–11 academic year.³⁶

However, as noted above, the American educational system has its own problems providing what the Air Force needs: about half of the US colleges and universities that host AFROTC detachments offer only French, German, and Spanish (the "Big Three"), and 15 percent of those campuses have no language programs at all.³⁷ If the Air Force truly desires preaccession instruction in the rest of the languages of the world, it will either have to place AFROTC detachments at civilian institutions that offer them or push for curriculum changes at existing AFROTC locations.³⁸

Section 529 of Public Law 111-288 (which places into law the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010) takes this concept a step further, authorizing the secretary of defense "to establish language training centers at accredited universities, senior military colleges, or other similar institutions of higher education" to accelerate "foundational expertise in critical and strategic languages." It authorizes a sweeping language education program tied to the nation's colleges and available for all military and civilian members of the DOD. The law also pays particular attention to incorporating these programs into ROTC.³⁹ Although it is too early to determine the implementation of this law, it does highlight the important role that colleges and universities will play in language education.

However, despite any wholesale push for less commonly taught language (LCTL) classes for AFROTC cadets, the differences between academia's language goals and those of the military are striking. The concept of knowledge for knowledge's sake sets academia apart from the DLI or even the USAFA insofar as universities have no mandate to produce two dozen Dari linguists in six months. Rather, in academe, it is enough to explore Dari as a language. Colleges and universities have no imperative to create Urdu linguists at the 3/3 level, teaching any course in the Urdu language almost by happenstance and assuming that it *should* rather than *must* be offered.

Even if colleges offer niche language courses, they face the continuing issue of funding them. According to Dr. Gilbert Merx, vice-provost for international affairs at Duke University, the language edifice at America's colleges is "pretty impressive but nonetheless fragile." He believes that many of the LCTL courses might possibly "disappear" unless sustained by federal funds.⁴⁰

Moreover, the military now emphasizes speaking another language instead of just reading and listening to it.⁴¹ A strong speaking requirement, however, runs contrary to the traditional academic approach to language study, which emphasizes grammar and literature, particularly in the foundational courses. Admittedly, schools offer classes in conversation, but they occur later in the academic process and build on acquired grammar and vocabulary skills. One finds this approach across all of academia: a heavy literary focus in foreign language studies instead of a flexible, student-oriented set of courses.⁴² Some people view this situation as a clash between the "instrumentalist" approach used by "freestanding language schools" to meet their students' needs and the college/university foreign language department's "constitutive" approach, which focuses on the relationship between cultural and literary traditions, cognitive structures, and cultural knowledge.⁴³ An MLA white paper published in 2009 further emphasizes the constitutive approach: "language and literature need to remain at the center of what departments of English and languages other than English do. . . . The role of literature needs to be emphasized. . . . The study of language should be integral to the study of literature."⁴⁴ Even though this traditional approach remains in the best tradition of the liberal arts, one MLA committee does address the need to develop courses in translation and interpretation, citing a great "unmet demand."⁴⁵

Congress has recommended targeting ROTC language and culture grants toward the largest “feeder schools, particularly the five senior military colleges,” to develop programs in critical languages.⁴⁶ However, these five—the Citadel, Virginia Military Institute, North Georgia College and State University, Norwich University, and Texas A&M University—have varied lists of language offerings beyond the Big Three, courses in Arabic and Chinese being the most common. Virginia Military Institute and Texas A&M offer the most advanced classes, but all five adhere to the same literature-centric approach that characterizes language study at the post-secondary level.⁴⁷

A defining factor regarding the difference between the academic and directed approaches to language training involves the relatively leisurely pace of the former and the intensity of the latter. The DLI turns out Arabic linguists in a year or so, equivalent to a four-year college curriculum with summers off or maybe one overseas immersion. Many language experts believe that anything less than majoring in a language won’t produce an adequate linguist.⁴⁸

Finally, language majors have few incentives to become officers in the Air Force. The service offers no officer Air Force Specialty Codes for linguists, translators, or the like, and no real opportunities for them to serve. AFROTC currently does not require a foreign language for commissioning, and officers have few opportunities to use language skills immediately upon commissioning.⁴⁹

Language Enrollments

Language enrollments continue to rise in both two- and four-year colleges, up almost 13 percent between 2002 and 2006 (table 2). The raw numbers for 2006 (1.58 million students enrolled) represent real growth of 260 percent over enrollments in 1960 (608,749). However, the 2006 numbers represent only 8.9 percent of total college and university enrollments of 17.65 million. That ratio is roughly half of the 1960 ratio of 16.1 percent.⁵⁰

Table 2. Fall 2002 and 2006 language course enrollments in US institutions of higher education (languages in descending order of 2006 totals)

	2002	2006	% Change
Spanish	746,267	822,985	10.3
French	201,979	206,426	2.2
German	91,100	94,264	3.5
American Sign Language	60,781	78,829	29.7
Italian	63,899	78,368	22.6
Japanese	52,238	66,605	27.5
Chinese	34,153	51,582	51.0
Latin	29,841	32,191	7.9
Russian	23,921	24,845	3.9
Arabic	10,584	23,974	126.5
Greek, Ancient	20,376	22,849	12.1
Hebrew, Biblical	14,183	14,140	-0.3
Portuguese	8,385	10,267	22.4
Hebrew, Modern	8,619	9,612	11.5
Korean	5,211	7,145	37.1
Other languages	25,716	33,728	31.2
Total	1,397,253	1,577,810	12.9

Reprinted from Nelly Furman, David Goldberg, and Natalia Lusin, Enrollments in Languages other than English in United States Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 2006 (New York: Modern Language Association, 13 November 2007), 13, table 1a, http://www.mla.org/pdf/06enrollmentsurvey_final.pdf.

Spanish, the language most widely taught in college since 1970, boasted 822,985 students in 2006, eclipsing the total enrollment of all other languages combined (approximately 755,000), a trend that has persisted since 1995. French is a distant second (206,426), and German third (94,264). Surprisingly, the fourth most widely taught language in American colleges and universities, with 78,829 enrollments, is American Sign Language. These four make up over 76 percent of all college language enrollments for 2006. However, Spanish, German, and French are considered abundant in the Air Force, although one can make a case for needing French in Africa Command's area of responsibility. American Sign Language has no practical military use at all.⁵¹

Some explanations and caveats to the totals in this table are in order. These data reflect raw numbers and do not indicate whether students take more than one language course at a time, which would lower the aggregate totals. If one excludes two-year colleges from the data, introductory lan-

guage classes account for over 78 percent (approximately 915,000) of these enrollments, with advanced classes making up the remaining 22 percent (approximately 255,000), for a ratio of 7:2.⁵²

Moreover, these data do not identify the number of classes in conversation, presumably in the advanced-class category. Since 198,598 of enrollments in advanced classes are in Spanish, French, and German (198,598 of a total of 255,105 advanced enrollments—nearly 78 percent), it suggests that colleges and universities teach relatively few other languages above the introductory level.⁵³

Nevertheless, one sees an increasing trend toward students earning degrees in other languages. According to graduation data compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics, US colleges and universities awarded 17,866 bachelor's degrees in foreign languages and literatures in 2007–8, almost 72 percent of them in Spanish (9,278), French (2,432), and German (1,085).⁵⁴ This still leaves a substantial cohort of 5,071 students with bachelor's degrees in other languages (including 289 in Chinese and another 57 in Arabic), possibly representing a fertile source of recruitment.⁵⁵

The Rise of Less Commonly Taught Languages

Other than Biblical Hebrew, enrollments in the rest of the top 15 languages show sustained growth and, happily, the Air Force needs most of them. Among those languages, Arabic (Modern Standard) and Chinese (Mandarin) have seen the greatest increases in the number of students (126 percent and 51 percent, respectively) since 2002 and in the number of institutions offering classes.⁵⁶

Both of these languages fall into that linguistic grouping commonly referred to as LCTLs. Although the phrase “less commonly taught languages” seems self-explanatory, the concept itself requires some clarification. In reality, LCTLs include all languages other than the Big Three. Some, such as Igbo, are used by small population groups. Most of the others suffer from the paucity of courses available throughout academe—something particularly true of African languages such as Hausa and Yoruba, as well as tongues from the Pacific Rim such as Malay and Indonesian.⁵⁷

Instruction in these and many other LCTLs is available across the country but usually only at larger universities, some of which have formal centers for such languages. Classes are generally small and in some cases

taught not by permanent faculty members but by native speakers in the United States on Fulbright scholarships. Characteristically, universities may offer coursework in an LCTL one year but not the next; textbooks may not be readily available; and the quality of instruction may vary widely.⁵⁸ Though commonly thought difficult to learn, LCTLs run the gamut from no more problematic than French or Spanish (languages such as Portuguese and Swahili) to extremely difficult (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Arabic).⁵⁹ Not surprisingly, the Air Force and the other services have great interest in drawing many LCTLs from the aquifer of academia.

A “Social Demand Theory” of Language Education

Perhaps in America one really doesn’t perceive a lack of speakers of foreign languages so much as lack of a formal *demand* for them—a view described as a “social demand model.” Such a model involves a gap between the need (in this case, language experts in numerous, albeit less commonly taught, languages) and the actual product (language majors in Spanish, French, and German—all of them abundant in the Air Force, as mentioned previously).⁶⁰ To portray the social demand model accurately, its disciples point out the necessity of detailed information on the need. That is, if you don’t know exactly what you need, you can’t demand it. Therefore, in the absence of specific demand, you get what’s available.

Despite a DOD-wide review of the department’s language requirements, little has emerged that amounts to a clear call for offering specific languages in academia. The substantial rise in college enrollments in Arabic and Chinese, as noted above, is encouraging, but the interest in Arabic most likely stems from the events of 11 September 2001 and from military activity in Iraq. Increases in Chinese enrollment may proceed from the realization that China will become a near-peer competitor in the coming decades or, perhaps, from a second-generation Chinese-American population that seeks to better understand and appreciate its ethnic heritage. These reasons seem much more likely explanations than a clarion call from the DOD. On the other hand, the simultaneous, substantial rise in the number of students taking American Sign Language, and with nearly the same intensity, fits neither pattern. Unless and until a clear connection exists between the specific language needs of the DOD and the language aquifer that is America’s

colleges and universities, both will pursue divergent paths, crossing only by happenstance.

The Junior College Solution

Among the most ravenous consumers of raw talent in America, college football coaches project their needs—an outside linebacker here, a punter there—years in advance of the prospects’ playing days, cull the best qualified from the high school ranks, and then pursue them with a zeal that often runs afoul of good sense as well as National Collegiate Athletic Association rules. Not surprisingly, these master recruiters often find proven—emphasis on the word *proven*—talent within the ranks of junior colleges. Although these players lack four years of playing eligibility, they have two more years of experience than high school seniors, and coaches can carefully select them to fill a particular need. If college football coaches can recruit the best players from junior colleges, so can language managers of the Air Force and AFROTC recruit the best language students.

The nation’s two-year colleges have seen strong growth in language courses during the past decade, especially in Chinese, Arabic, and Japanese.⁶¹ Granted, two years of instruction does not yield proficiency, especially in the more difficult languages such as Arabic and Chinese, but it is a start. More importantly, such enrollment demonstrates the student’s interest and intent. Simple online research can identify colleges that teach languages of interest to the DOD, many of them located near communities of native speakers that feed into the school system. For example, it is no coincidence that most two-year colleges teaching Mandarin Chinese are on the US West Coast.

One must note, however, that, given the small number of students and the scarcity of instructors, specific course offerings at two-year colleges may wax and wane. Nevertheless, the available courses can offer a practical, affordable way to identify potential linguists with the right skills and aptitudes, thus reducing training time and costs. To illustrate, the Air Force could recruit junior college graduates with four semesters of a desired language into its senior ROTC programs at four-year universities to complete their degrees as language majors. Clearly, Air Force recruiters as well as AFROTC detachment “coaches” should pursue this avenue.

Final Observations

The DLI's Foreign Language Center routinely produces competent linguists in difficult languages, but one cannot expect it to provide all of the languages for all of the services all of the time. Civilian language education in America can serve as an additional source of talented linguists for the US Air Force and its sister services.

AFROTC is already making inroads into foreign language curricula insofar as it recruits and compensates majors in specific languages. However, because this is not a requirements-driven, proactive approach between AFROTC and university language departments, it lacks focus at the collegiate administrative level.

The DOD's process for determining its language requirements remains incomplete, and the part available lacks service-specific granularity. This vacuum has led the Air Force to believe it has few specific language requirements, but that belief may prove incorrect, causing the service to fall behind in language emphasis. This attitude also overlooks the joint nature of modern military operations as well as the deployment of over 10,000 Airmen in joint expeditionary training billets every year—essentially “boots on the ground” assignments with their Army and Marine counterparts. If we fight alongside these Soldiers and Marines, who value language training, then shouldn't we value it as well? And what of the growing demand to speak the language, not just read and understand it? How will we train and test this skill?

Finally, in light of the current emphasis on preaccession language training, what do we do with all of these officers who have newly acquired, very fragile language skills? Do we acknowledge their hard work with a bonus for proficiency in a foreign language? Do we have assignments that take advantage of their skills? On a much more practical level, do we acknowledge their linguistic capabilities and sustain them throughout a career?

Where Do We Go From Here? Recommendations

Although the following recommendations for improving language skills in the Air Force by using America's colleges and universities apply to our service, they have equal relevance to our sister services and to the DOD.

First, the Air Force should lift its embargo on nontechnical majors, allowing college graduates who majored in languages to attend OTS. Many college students and graduates choose a military career only after testing the civilian job market. According to a study commissioned by the MLA, government service does not appear as a “job category” in a national survey of college graduates whose first bachelor’s degree is in foreign languages. Although it may be buried in the 6.3 percent listed as “other occupations,” government service of any type—including the military—does not appear as a career of choice for the vast majority of language graduates.⁶² If the acceptance of nontechnical majors violates OTS policy, then the Air Force should regard the acquisition of fluency in a foreign language as a “technical” major.

Following this same theme, critical language skills must become a recruiting priority. Even in the face of this “newfound” desire for linguistic competency in officers, the strong need for enlisted language specialists continues unabated.⁶³ Although that aspect of the issue falls outside the scope of this article, recruiting for this cohort must also become a priority.

Following the Army’s successes in this area, the Air Force Recruiting Service should explore America’s many foreign-language-speaking communities to target specific languages.⁶⁴ An easy and accurate tool, the MLA language map pinpoints those areas of potential recruits.⁶⁵ However, recruiters should be advised that most of these “heritage speakers” will need additional training in order to become militarily effective.

The Air Force should take the lead in implementing new congressional legislation to establish language research centers at colleges and universities. In selecting suitable sites, it should look at colleges that host AFROTC detachments and those near Air Force bases. Additionally, the Air Force could build on the curricula at many colleges’ existing critical language centers to meet its language needs. For example, Texas A&M University—one of the five “military colleges” highlighted in a congressional study and in the 2010 QDR—not only has an outstanding corps of cadets but also a large, diverse faculty and student body. Its capacity for growth and diversity lends itself to such an undertaking.

We should also use the social demand theory for discussing curriculum development with college and university language departments, stressing the need for making available more introductory conversational courses to

the entire AFROTC corps of cadets as a method of encouraging language education throughout the corps. To add leverage, AFROTC detachments should team with the other ROTC programs on campus to present a consolidated statement of need for specific language classes.

At the high school level, we should encourage Air Force Junior ROTC (AFJROTC) cadets to enroll in available language programs, a move that would cost the Air Force nothing, help extend the sequence of language education down to the high school level, increase the “demand” for language courses in secondary education (not a bad thing), and help instill a sense of the “global” nature of the Air Force in AFJROTC cadets. Such high school programs could also promote competition for senior ROTC language scholarships across a wider base of students. Other incentives within AFJROTC could include language competitions among schools (similar to drill competitions) and the awarding of ribbons for students with exceptional grades in foreign languages.⁶⁶ Given the narrow range of languages available in most American high schools, enrollment in any language—even Latin—would be a plus.

To complete this sequence, the Air Force should encourage its language professionals who wish to teach to become AFJROTC instructors or—better still—return to school and become language teachers under the DOD’s “Troops to Teachers” program. To show the military utility of languages, we should encourage those who have “been there and done that” to become mentors and role models. Finally, but most importantly, we cannot allow the current DOD and Air Force emphasis on foreign language education to fade from view, as it has so many times before.

By definition, attaining language proficiency is a long sequence, best begun early and continued unabated throughout the educational system—a fact particularly true of the more difficult (to Western students) languages that the DOD desires. We must keep the language aquifer flowing.

Notes

1. *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 6 February 2006), 17, <http://www.comw.org/qdr/qdr2006.pdf>; and *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, February 2010), 54, <http://www.defense.gov/qdr/QDR%20as%20of%2029JAN10%201600.pdf>.

2. Paul Simon, *The Tongue-Tied American: Confronting the Foreign Language Crisis* (New York: Continuum Press, 1980), 3. Mr. Simon is a former US senator. See also Deborah M. Herman, “‘Our Patriotic Duty’:

Insights from Professional History, 1890–1920,” in *The Future of Foreign Language Education in the United States*, ed. Terry A. Osborn (Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey, 2002), 12, table 1.1, “Public High School Students Studying Foreign Language.” In 1900 “at least 600,000 elementary students [were receiving] some part of their education in German.” “Timeline: The Bilingual Education Controversy,” in *School: The Story of American Public Education*, 2001, Public Broadcasting System, http://www.pbs.org/kcet/publicschool/roots_in_history/bilingual_timeline2.html.

3. Jamie B. Draper and June H. Hicks, *Foreign Language Enrollments in Public Secondary Schools, Fall 2000*, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, US Department of Education Grant no. PO17A000017-01, May 2002, [5], table 1, <http://www.actfl.org/files/public/Enroll2000.pdf>. Although 73 percent of high school students studied a foreign language in 1915, that ratio would fall to 43.8 percent by 2000. In 1915 Spanish comprised only 2.7 percent of total enrollments in high school, a ratio that would rise to 30.2 percent by 2000. *Ibid.*, 1, 5.

4. Simon, *Tongue-Tied American*, 3.

5. Iowa had the dubious distinction of being the first state to ban the speaking of German in public: in churches, on trains, and even on the telephone. See Herman, “‘Our Patriotic Duty,’” 11.

6. *Ibid.*, 12.

7. *Ibid.*, 17.

8. Enrollments hit their all-time low in 1948 (21.7 percent) but have since enjoyed a slow but steady rise. Draper and Hicks, *Foreign Language Enrollments*, [5], table 1.

9. “This prohibition did not extend to the ‘Ancient or dead’ languages—Latin, Greek, Hebrew.” Elizabeth Mertz, *Language and Mind: A Whorfian Folk Theory in United States Language Law*, Sociolinguistics Working Paper no. 93 (Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, July 1982), <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~haroldfs/540/theory/mertz1.html>.

10. Herman, “‘Our Patriotic Duty,’” 12.

11. *An Act Related to the Teaching of Foreign Languages in the State of Nebraska*, 9 April 1919, quoted in Meyer v. State of Nebraska, 262 US 390 (1923), decided 4 June 1923, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes dissenting.

12. Even then, the court’s ruling was predicated on the 14th Amendment (i.e., “No state . . . shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without the due process of law”) rather than the 1st Amendment (freedom of speech, etc.). Ironically, a survey by the US Department of Education in 2000 showed *zero* Nebraska seventh and eighth graders enrolled in foreign language classes, against a national average of 14.69 percent. However, the same survey showed Nebraska leading the nation in the percentage of high schoolers enrolled in language studies (78.49). Draper and Hicks, *Foreign Language Enrollments*, [6], table 2.

13. Numerous studies in the 1920s concluded that bilingual education was harmful to children. Most of these studies targeted socioeconomically disadvantaged children, testing them in their weakest language—English. See Harold F. Schiffman, *Linguistic Culture and Language Policy* (London: Routledge, 1996), 315.

14. Dr. Ray Clifford, chancellor, Defense Language Institute—Foreign Language Center (remarks at the National Briefing on Language and National Security, National Press Club, Washington, DC, 16 January 2002), http://www.nflc.org/policy_and_strategy/language_and_national_security/nflc_briefing_january_2002/full_transcript.

15. James Campbell, “The Fixes ‘No Child’ Needs,” *Baltimore Sun*, 6 December 2006, http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2009-12-06/news/0912070036_1_minority-students-state-takeover-yearly-progress.

16. “Impediments to U.S. Push on Languages,” *Inside Higher Ed*, 26 January 2007, <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2007/01/26/languages>. The *Baltimore Sun* reported on a survey by the Center on Education Policy which revealed that “71 percent of the nation’s 15,000 school districts had reduced the hours of instructional time [in] . . . other subjects [including foreign languages] to make more time for math and reading.” Campbell, “Fixes ‘No Child’ Needs.”

17. Nancy C. Rhodes and Ingrid Pufahl, *Foreign Language Teaching in U.S. Schools: Results of a National Survey* (Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, November 2009), “Executive Summary,” 6, <http://www.cal.org/flsurvey>.

18. Herman, “‘Our Patriotic Duty,’” 18.

19. Leon E. Panetta, "Foreign Language Education: If 'Scandalous' in the 20th Century, What Will It Be in the 21st Century?," Stanford University Conference Paper, n.d., 5, <https://www.stanford.edu/dept/lc/language/about/conferencepapers/panettapaper.pdf>.

20. Draper and Hicks, *Foreign Language Enrollments*, [6], table 2.

21. Nelly Furman, David Goldberg, and Natalia Lusin, *Enrollments in Languages other than English in United States Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 2006* (New York: Modern Language Association, 13 November 2007), 13, tables 1a and 1b, http://www.mla.org/pdf/06enrollmentsurvey_final.pdf. These numbers represent all modern languages and include Latin and "Greek, Ancient."

22. Ibid.

23. MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, *Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World* (New York: Modern Language Association, May 2007), 5, http://www.mla.org/foreign_languages_an.

24. Furman, Goldberg, and Lusin, *Enrollments in Languages other than English*, 2. Moreover, 9.1 percent of the nation's two-year colleges offered no foreign language classes. Ibid.

25. Panetta, "Foreign Language Education," 5; and Furman, Goldberg, and Lusin, *Enrollments in Languages other than English*, 4.

26. "Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Proficiency Levels," <http://www.icls.com/FLD/ILR.pdf>.

27. International Center for Language Studies, "Classroom Hours to Achieve Proficiency Levels by Language Difficulty," International Center for Language Studies, Washington, DC, <http://www.icls.com/FLD/ILRlevels.htm>. Generally speaking, these ILR levels measure linguistic proficiency via the Defense Language Proficiency Test.

28. Margaret E. Malone et al., "Attaining Higher Levels of Proficiency: Challenges for Foreign Language Education in the United States" (Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, 2005), <http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/attain.html>.

29. According to an interview with the DLI's commander, "graduates of a six-month Spanish course at DLI will typically speak better than a graduating Spanish major at a four-year university." Tim Kilbride, "Language Emerges as Element of National Security," American Forces Press Service, 31 March 2009, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=53726>.

30. Katherine McIntire Peters, "At a Loss for Words," *Government Executive*, 15 June 2005, <http://www.govexec.com/features/0605-15/0605-15s3.htm>.

31. *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 2006, 79. "We will continue our emphasis on enhancing these skills in general purpose force officers during pre-accession training." *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 2010, 54.

32. Furman, Goldberg, and Lusin, *Enrollments in Languages other than English*, 5. In addition to the top 15 listed in the table, the MLA reported 204 less commonly taught languages offered at America's colleges and universities.

33. OTS can add or subtract from its acceptance demographic, based on the needs of the Air Force.

34. See "In-College Scholarships," US Air Force ROTC, <http://www.afrotc.com/scholarships/in-college/foreign-language-majors/>.

35. "Foreign Language Incentive Pay for Precommissioning Programs," 37 USC, chap. 5, sec. 316a.

36. "Air Force Officials Developing Cross-Culturally Competent Officer," Air Force News Service, 11 December 2009, <http://www.af.mil/news/story.aspx?id=123181940>.

37. Briefing, AFROTC, subject: In Contact—Incorporating Language Training and Cultural/Regional Education into Officer Force Development Plans, August 2005, slide: "Military-Affiliated Collegiate Foreign Language Programs." This is a DOD-wide problem as well as an Air Force problem. Undersecretary of Defense Michael Dominguez points out that 1,321 colleges host ROTC detachments (of all services) and that 1,148 of them have foreign language programs. However, he also states that the vast majority of them rarely teach more than Spanish, French, and German; less than 40 percent teach Chinese or Arabic; and less than 10 percent teach Farsi. Though admittedly an improvement over the percentages reported for AFROTC-affiliated schools in 2005, these are still low for the languages that the Air Force needs. Senate, *Statement of the Honorable Michael L.*

Dominguez, *Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness)*, before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, "Lost in Translation: A Review of the Federal Government's Efforts to Develop a Foreign Language Strategy," 110th Cong., 1st sess., 25 January 2007, 8, 9, http://hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=7ce18437-63be-44ea-8f56-87ebbbdc186d.

38. The University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition is an outstanding resource for determining where languages are taught and a good starting place to research the issue. Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA), University of Minnesota, <http://carla.umn.edu/>. For details of schools and language offerings, see also a listing of the 15 national foreign language resource centers. "Foreign Language Resource Centers," Michigan State University, <http://nflrc.msu.edu/index-1.php>.

39. *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010*, Public Law 111-288, 111th Cong., 1st sess. (7 October 2009), sec. 529, pars. (a), (b) (4), http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_reports&doid=f:hr288.111.pdf.

40. Dr. Gilbert Merckx, "National Briefing on Language and National Security" (remarks at the National Press Club, Washington, DC, 16 January 2002), http://www.nflc.org/policy_and_strategy/language_and_national_security/nflc_briefing_january_2002/full_transcript.

41. Briefing, Iris Bulls, deputy director, Defense Language Office, subject: Distance Learning: Preparing the 21st Century Total Force, 15 March 2007. This observation was based on early returns from the combatant commanders' language requirements survey.

42. Gaylord George Candler, "Linguistic Diglossia and Parochialism in American Public Administration: The Missing Half of Guerreiro Ramos's Redução Sociológica," *Administrative Theory and Praxis* 28, no. 4 (2006): 553.

43. MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, *Foreign Languages and Higher Education*, 2.

44. Modern Language Association, *Report to the Teagle Foundation on the Undergraduate Major in Language and Literature* (New York: Modern Language Association, February 2009), 3, 6, http://www.mla.org/pdf/2008_mla_whitepaper.pdf.

45. MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, *Foreign Languages and Higher Education*, 9.

46. House, *Building Language Skills and Cultural Competencies in the Military: DOD's Challenge in Today's Educational Environment, Report of the US House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations*, 110th Cong., 2d sess., November 2008, Committee Print 110-12, 36-37, <http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/Reports/LanguageCultureReportNov08.pdf>.

47. See "Department of European and Classical Languages and Cultures," Texas A&M University, <http://euro.tamu.edu/>; "Modern Languages and Cultures," Virginia Military Institute, <http://www.vmi.edu/show.aspx?tid=37083&cid=100>; "Undergraduate Programs," Norwich University, <http://www.norwich.edu/academics/undergrad.html>; "Majors and Minors," Citadel, <http://www.citadel.edu/main/academics/majorsminors.html>; and "Academic Majors," North Georgia College and State University, <http://www.ngcsu.edu/LandingPages/Default.aspx?id=4373>.

48. Stephanie van Reigersberg, "National Briefing on Language and National Security" (remarks at the National Press Club, Washington, DC, 16 January 2002), http://www.nflc.org/policy_and_strategy/language_and_national_security/nflc_briefing_january_2002/full_transcript. Even so, a 2008 MLA report observed that even "four-year language majors often graduate with disappointingly low levels of linguistic ability." MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, *Foreign Languages and Higher Education*, 7. Everette Jordan of the Department of Defense takes this argument even further, believing that even a language major needs an additional three to five years to gain the experience level needed to perform his job. Everette Jordan, "National Briefing on Language and National Security" (remarks at the National Press Club, Washington, DC, 16 January 2002), http://www.nflc.org/policy_and_strategy/language_and_national_security/nflc_briefing_january_2002/full_transcript.

49. Briefing, Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center, Randolph AFB, TX, spring 2005, subject: Intelligence Careers, slide: "Save Languages for a Second Tour."

50. Furman, Goldberg, and Lusin, *Enrollments in Languages other than English*, 18, table 4.

51. Classes in American Sign Language have had a meteoric rise, from less than 0.1 percent of total enrollments in 1990 to 5 percent in 2006. Furman, Goldberg, and Lusin, *Enrollments in Languages other than English*, 3. For the purposes of this study, we must discount this language because it probably does not have applications outside the United States. According to the Deaf Resource Library, no universal sign language exists. See Karen Nakamura, "About American Sign Language," Deaf Resource Library, <http://www.deaflibrary.org/asl.html>.

52. Furman, Goldberg, and Lusin, *Enrollments in Languages other than English*, 21, table 7b.

53. For Arabic the introductory to advanced ratio is 7:1; for Chinese, 7:2. These ratios are surprisingly strong, but Korean surpasses them at 3:1. Ibid.

54. "Table 308. Degrees in modern foreign languages and literatures conferred by degree-granting institutions, by level of degree and sex of student: selected years 1949–50 through 2007–08," *Digest of Education Statistics, 2009*, National Center for Education Statistics, http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d09/tables/dt09_308.asp?referrer=list; and "Table 309. Degrees in French, German, Italian, and Spanish conferred by degree-granting institutions, by level of degree: selected years, 1949–50 through 2007–08," *idem*. In the same year, colleges and universities also awarded 2,650 master's degrees (1,522 in the Big Three) and 773 doctorates (346 in the Big Three). See tables 308 and 309.

55. "Table 310. Degrees in Arabic, Chinese, Korean, and Russian conferred by degree-granting institutions, by level of degree: 1969–70 through 2007–08," *Digest of Education Statistics, 2009*, National Center for Education Statistics, http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d09/tables/dt09_310.asp?referrer=list.

56. Four hundred sixty-six institutions offered Arabic in 2006, up from 264 in 2002. Six hundred sixty-one offered instruction in Chinese in 2006, up from 543 in 2002. Furman, Goldberg, and Lusin, *Enrollments in Languages other than English*, 3.

57. Timothy Reagan, "Toward a Political Economy of the Less Commonly Taught Languages in American Public Schools," in *The Future of Foreign Language Education in the United States*, 125. Reagan has created a hierarchy of LCTLs based not on linguistic factors but on the likelihood that they will be taught in public school. They include the following:

Level 1: Commonly Taught Languages (French, German, Spanish)

Level 2: Most Commonly Taught LCTLs (Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian)

Level 3: Rarely Taught LCTLs (Portuguese, Italian, Norwegian, etc.)

Level 4: Never/Virtually Never Taught LCTLs (all African languages; most Asian and Oceanic languages)

Level 5: Nonlanguages (American Sign Language, Esperanto)

See *ibid.*, 130–32.

58. *Ibid.*, 131.

59. "Less Commonly Taught Languages," Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures, Texas Tech University, http://www.depts.ttu.edu/classic_modern/undrgrad/lctl/lctl.php.

60. Mary Ellen O'Connell and Janet L. Norwood, eds., *International Education and Foreign Languages: Keys to Securing America's Future* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2007), 37. The authors tend to focus on teaching vacancies to the exclusion of any real military application.

61. Furman, Goldberg, and Lusin, *Enrollments in Languages other than English*, 16, table 2b. In 1980 one-fifth of junior colleges offered no foreign language courses. Simon, *Tongue-Tied American*, 3.

62. Modern Language Association, *Report to the Teagle Foundation*, 32. The Air Force might profitably recruit at elementary and secondary schools, where many (about 25 percent) language majors are employed. The same survey identifies 2.2 percent of those graduating with a bachelor's degree in a foreign language as employed in "food preparation and services." *Ibid.* The State Department's Stephanie van Reigersberg may have pinpointed the reason that more language majors don't enter government service in any capacity, much less the armed services: money. "Language knowledge is not rewarded financially at all," she contends. "How do you convince people . . . who can go and work in [an] international banking environment to work for government if the government wants them to be GS-9s?" Van Reigersberg, "National Briefing on Language and National Security."

63. *Newfound* is a relative term. One can trace calls for linguistic skills in officers back almost 50 years. "Officer Foreign Language Study," a Headquarters USAF/AFDPD report of November 1962, cites a letter

of 24 August 1961 about officers' language training which announced the goal that "all Air Force officers be proficient in at least one foreign language" (p. 21).

64. Since 2003 the Army has actively recruited native speakers (primarily Arabic) through its 09L Interpreter/Translator Program. According to Gail McGinn, the DOD's senior language authority, it is a "particularly successful program." House, *Statement of Mrs. Gail H. McGinn, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Plans and the Department of Defense Senior Language Authority, before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations*, 110th Cong., 2d sess., 10 September 2008, <http://www.dod.gov/dodgc/olc/docs/testMcGinn080910.pdf>. According to its latest posture statement, the Army plans to expand this program beyond the Central Command area of responsibility into Pacific Command and Africa Command. "Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy (ACFLS)," *2010 Army Posture Statement*, [https://secureweb2.hqda.pentagon.mil/vdas_armyposturestatement/2010/information_papers/Army_Culture_and_Foreign_Language_Strategy_\(ACFLS\).asp](https://secureweb2.hqda.pentagon.mil/vdas_armyposturestatement/2010/information_papers/Army_Culture_and_Foreign_Language_Strategy_(ACFLS).asp).

65. "The Modern Language Association Language Map: A Map of Languages in the United States," Modern Language Association, http://www.mla.org/map_main.

66. The Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Agency's annual "Sensor Olympics" language competition would be an excellent resource for establishing such a program. For a review of the original program, "Comfy Olympics," by its innovator, see Maj Gen Doyle E. Larson, USAF, Retired, "ESC Commander Starts Comfy Olympics," *Spokesman Magazine*, December 2004, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0QUY/is_2004_Dec/ai_n15622859/?tag=content;col1. For a more current view of information about Sensor Olympics, see 1st Lt Karoline Scott, "Sensor Olympics XXIX Honors AF ISR Agency's Enlisted Airmen," Air Force ISR Agency Public Affairs, 10 November 2008, <http://www.afisr.af.mil/news/story>.

The Responsibility to Protect

Six Years After

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At the 2005 World Summit at United Nations (UN) headquarters in New York, the assembled leaders of most of the nations of the world gave their unanimous approval to an “outcome document” that, among its many provisions, contained three paragraphs affirming a “responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.”¹ The summary provided by the UN Department of Public Information declared that this signified “clear and unambiguous acceptance by all governments of the collective international responsibility to protect.”² UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan hailed this as a “most precious” accomplishment.³ A year after the World Summit, Gareth Evans (former Australian foreign minister and one of the most vocal proponents of a “responsibility to protect” [R2P]) remarked that “on any view, the evolution in just five years of the responsibility to protect concept . . . to what now has the pedigree to be described as a broadly accepted international norm (and one with the potential to evolve into a rule of customary international law) is an extremely encouraging story.”⁴ Even as Evans proclaimed the establishment of R2P as a new norm, he noted that in the case of Darfur, the norm had yet to produce much international action. In addition to Darfur, since the proclamation made at the conclusion of the 2005 World Summit, cases of violence or large-scale loss of life in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Myanmar, Zimbabwe, and Kenya have raised questions about what difference this new norm made in saving lives.

In retrospect, the rapid acceptance of R2P by the international community in 2005 may have been too good to be true. After all, the new norm

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was intended to place an important limit on one of the most enduring and widely accepted international norms: the sovereign rights of states—particularly the norm of noninterference/nonintervention in the internal affairs of those states. Yet, the assembled leaders of the world accepted it with little public debate. The fact that important details from the original R2P proposal were stripped from the document in last-minute backroom negotiations might indicate that the supposedly “clear and unambiguous” support for the new norm was actually less robust than its advocates claimed.⁵ The location of the R2P discussion in the World Summit document (buried on page 30 of the 38-page document in paragraphs 138–40 of its 178 paragraphs and wedged between boilerplate language on support for democracy and a discussion of children’s rights) might offer another hint that the member states may not have seen R2P as the central achievement of the summit in the same way that the norm’s supporters did.

This failure of R2P to live up to its promoters’ expectations is partially due to “buyer’s remorse” or suppressed reservations on the part of some of the states that did not object to the World Summit Declaration. However, the ineffectiveness of R2P to date also reflects the manner of the norm’s promotion and adoption, as well as its content. To examine this assertion, this article discusses the process by which R2P was adopted and the substance of the norm that resulted, followed by an analysis of the major difficulties that currently weaken the application of R2P in practice and the policy implications of that weakness.

The Responsibility to Protect: Emergence and Apparent Acceptance

In recent years, several accounts have discussed the story of how the concept of R2P emerged as an international norm.⁶ In reaction to the brutal atrocities and mass slaughter in Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia in the early 1990s, political scientists and legal theorists began to discuss “humanitarian intervention” as a necessity in the face of violence within states. At the UN, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali questioned whether existing rules concerning sovereignty were adequate to the challenges of the post-Cold War world. His subordinate Francis Deng discussed the concept of “sovereignty as responsibility,” adding that perspective to the growing discussion in the late 1990s.⁷

It fell to Annan, Boutros-Ghali's successor, to lead the push for a redefinition of the norms surrounding intervention. In June 1998, Annan questioned whether the "old orthodoxy" of sovereignty barred the international community from considering intervention in severe internal conflicts: "The Charter protects the sovereignty of peoples. It was never meant as a license for governments to trample on human rights and human dignity. Sovereignty implies responsibility, not just power."⁸

The following year brought crisis, war, and intervention in Kosovo and East Timor. These events and the confused, tentative reactions to them from all facets of the international community prompted Annan to return to the need for a new international norm. With the opening of the General Assembly due in mid-September 1999, Annan decided that such a high-profile forum would be his venue for a major address on the topic. According to a close adviser, he planned to use "the bully pulpit of the Secretary-General to change the climate within the Security Council."⁹

In his address, Annan openly raised fundamental questions concerning the existing norms based on sovereignty and nonintervention. He observed that "state sovereignty, in its most basic sense, is being redefined by the forces of globalization and international cooperation. . . . The State is now widely understood to be the servant of its people, not vice versa." Referring to the precedents of Rwanda, Kosovo, and East Timor, Annan stated that each had demonstrated either "the consequences of inaction in the face of mass murder" or "the consequences of action in the absence of complete unity on the part of the international community." In response to this situation, Annan proposed a "developing international norm in favor of intervention to protect civilians from wholesale slaughter."¹⁰ A year later, at the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000, Annan once more challenged the membership of the UN to take up the intervention issue.

The government of Canada responded to the secretary-general's challenge by forming an International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) to prepare recommendations that would address the dilemma of protecting civilians from slaughter in a system of sovereign states. Led by Gareth Evans and Mohamed Sahnoun, the ICISS produced a report a year later that attempted to change the dynamics of the debate by reframing the issue not as a right to intervene but as the "responsibility to protect" people at risk.¹¹ The ICISS outlined the legal and ethical basis for R2P,

locating the primary responsibility with each state. Responsibility devolves upon the international community only when a state cannot or will not protect its citizens. The commission identified three components of R2P: prevention, reaction, and rebuilding. It defined the responsibility to react—the most controversial component, which, in extreme cases, would involve the use of force without the consent of the target state—and limited it by “threshold criteria” and “precautionary principles.” These were intended both to prevent misuse of the R2P principle for self-interested intervention by states and to serve as a “trigger” to begin the process of reaction when the threshold was breached. While investing primary authority for invoking R2P with the Security Council, the ICISS left open the possibility that if the council were unwilling or unable to act, regional organizations or coalitions of willing states might provide protection to threatened populations.

By an accident of history, the ICISS report appeared shortly after the attacks of 11 September 2001, the consequences of which completely overshadowed the report and its conclusions. However, the resuscitation of the R2P norm came again from Annan, who in late 2003 formed a High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change. Evans was appointed to the panel, and the report that it delivered in December 2004 imported the ICISS language and recommendations concerning response to mass-atrocity violence.¹² Annan then used the recommendations of this panel to reaffirm the importance of adopting the new norm of R2P in his report *In Larger Freedom*, issued in March 2005 as a framework document for the World Summit to be held in September.¹³

This intricate duet between Annan and the “outside” panels established a strong entrepreneurial push for the adoption of R2P, and they were rewarded by the inclusion of three paragraphs endorsing the new norm in the Summit Outcome document. That acceptance did not come without significant modification of the ICISS proposals, however. The document included no threshold criteria, did not discuss precautionary principles, and omitted proposed reform of the Security Council to allow it to respond more effectively to humanitarian crises. Nevertheless, proponents of R2P celebrated the adoption of the outcome document as a turning point, one that filled a “crucial normative gap.” “Norm displacement has taken place from the entrenched norm of non-intervention to the new norm of the responsibility to protect.”¹⁴

Responsibility to Protect: Uncertain Consolidation

Despite the high hopes expressed immediately after the adoption of the R2P language in 2005, most observers have noted that relatively little has changed in terms of state practice. Conflicts in the Darfur region of Sudan and the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo continue to smolder with no new sense of urgency or purpose resulting from the R2P document. Few states express interest in plunging into the continuing hell that is Somalia. Internal repression in Zimbabwe, obstinacy by the government of Myanmar in the face of a humanitarian disaster resulting from Cyclone Nargis, and intense political violence in Kenya were all met with heartfelt denunciation but very little action. In explaining this business-as-usual response by the international community, many supporters of R2P decry the lack of political will on the part of the states that approved the World Summit declaration in 2005.

Although issues of contradictory state interest and flagging political will are undoubtedly part of the explanation for the meager results, the problems facing R2P as a new norm need further specification and clarification. More precisely, three types of problems demand examination: (1) likely creation of a false appearance of consensus around R2P at the 2005 World Summit, (2) the forms of norm resistance employed by states opposed to or skeptical of the new norm, and (3) the postadoption “battle over meaning,” which, ironically, has occurred primarily among supporters of the norm.

A False Consensus?

Many of the proponents of R2P start from the premise that the 2005 World Summit Outcome document represented a true consensus among the UN member states and that the task now involves getting those states to implement their beliefs. Donald Steinberg called on supporters of R2P to “advance and consolidate the World Summit consensus” by building capacity and further institutionalizing the norm.¹⁵ In a January 2009 report to the General Assembly on the implementation of R2P, Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon argued that “the task ahead is not to reinterpret or renegotiate the conclusions of the World Summit but to find ways of implementing its decisions in a fully faithful and consistent manner.”¹⁶

However, it is appropriate to ask whether the 2005 World Summit Outcome document and subsequent UN discussions are accurately portrayed as

an overwhelming and deep consensus on R2P. As stated earlier, the three brief paragraphs on R2P were hardly featured prominently in the document, which was also the equivalent of an “omnibus” piece of legislation. That is, it contained a great many provisions and commitments, ranging from the fight against terrorism (11 paragraphs), to the need for a Peacebuilding Commission (nine paragraphs), to support for human rights (13 paragraphs). Some leaders may have agreed to the document because they concurred with many of the provisions—but not necessarily with the R2P paragraphs. If they did examine the R2P language, they might also have noted that it was vague enough not to commit them to any specific course of action, thereby making agreement essentially cost-free. There seemed little reason to openly reject the R2P language (after all, who wasn’t against genocide, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing?), but approving the Summit Outcome document did not necessarily indicate a deep commitment either to the norm or its implementation—or even a clear understanding of what the norm implied. Indeed, one may construe the removal of specific commitments from the language of the document as an indication of failure to reach true consensus.

Since the 2005 summit, supporters of the norm mention the incorporation of R2P language into UN resolutions as additional evidence that a broad consensus exists in support of R2P. Several observers have pointed to the inclusion of a reference to R2P in Security Council Resolution 1674 (28 April 2006) on the protection of civilians in areas of armed combat. In September 2009, Secretary-General Ban congratulated the General Assembly for adopting “its first resolution on the responsibility to protect” by consensus.¹⁷

However, supporters of R2P are stretching to find evidence of a broad consensus in these documents. The General Assembly resolution that Secretary-General Ban praised in September 2009 had only two paragraphs—the first noting Ban’s report on R2P, as well as “the productive debate” on that document during a special plenary session in July, and the second stating that the General Assembly “decides to continue its consideration of the responsibility to protect.”¹⁸ The Security Council resolution was slightly more substantial, “reaffirming” the Summit Outcome language in one brief operative clause among 28. In neither case was any action predicated on the invocation of the R2P doctrine.

The norm entrepreneurs who engineered the emergence of R2P were quite skilled in changing the terms of debate concerning intervention and

in inserting the R2P language into an increasing number of UN documents. Notably, however, the governments of the major powers at the United Nations—especially the United States, China, and Russia—demonstrated little active interest in or sponsorship of the norm's emergence. The fact that some of these states had significant reservations about the norm became evident in the resistance they initiated.

Forms of Norm Resistance

Resistance to R2P has often been indirect, for the same reason that no leader publicly objected to the Summit Outcome document: no state wishes to be portrayed as unconcerned with mass-atrocity crimes. However, that has not prevented actions designed to weaken the original formulation of the norm and the terms of its application. One form of resistance entails objecting to the establishment of criteria that would trigger an R2P reaction. The United States, China, India, and Russia opposed such criteria, and the World Summit Outcome document made no mention of such standards.¹⁹ Similarly, the United States opposed any language requiring UN members to respond to atrocities. John Bolton, US ambassador to the UN, wrote that “we do not accept that either the United Nations as a whole, or the Security Council, or individual states, have an obligation to intervene under international law.”²⁰ Certainly, officials of the Bush administration (and Bolton in particular) had no enthusiasm for ceding American freedom of action to the UN, but the advent of the Obama administration does not appear to have changed this aspect of the US position. In an address to the International Peace Institute in Vienna in June 2009, Susan E. Rice, the new US permanent representative to the United Nations, spoke in very supportive terms of R2P. However, although she offered several suggestions for improving the international community's ability to implement the norm, Rice made no mention of setting threshold criteria, providing US forces to support UN action, or reforming the Security Council to promote surer and more consistent reaction.²¹

Another means of resisting or restraining the R2P concept has involved questioning the legitimacy of the new norm, especially when compared to long-standing norms—an argument stressed by the government of China. Despite the efforts by Annan and others to delegitimize a strict interpretation of the norm of state sovereignty, that norm still has great appeal

to many states, who can use it to restrict and qualify the competing norm of R2P. In the July 2009 plenary session of the General Assembly, a Chinese delegate argued that “the international community can provide assistance but the protection of its citizens ultimately depends on the government of the state. This is in keeping with the principle of state sovereignty. There must not be any wavering of the principles of respecting state sovereignty and non-interference of internal affairs.”²² Rather than R2P’s limiting the exercise and prerogatives of sovereignty, the Chinese official clearly portrayed the traditional norm of sovereignty as limiting the application of R2P.

A third method of resisting the new norm may concern an insistence on following existing procedures within the UN system even though those same procedures failed so disastrously in the cases of Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur. The prime issue here is the veto power held by the five permanent members of the Security Council (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and United States). The ICISS had broached the idea that the P-5 might adopt informal rules limiting the threat or use of the veto in cases of humanitarian emergencies.²³ Unsurprisingly, the permanent members rarely raise this issue in discussions of R2P. Many states also insist that the UN is the only forum with the legitimate authority to invoke and act on R2P, limiting the ability of regional organizations and “coalitions of the willing” to apply it without UN authorization.

The Battle over Meaning

Considerable controversy has emerged over exactly what R2P entails and when it should be applied. In a double irony here, most of this debate occurs among *supporters* of R2P, and the very speed of acceptance celebrated by those advocates worked against the much slower process of building consensus on the meaning and implications of R2P before adoption at the 2005 World Summit.

Proponents of R2P championed a norm to deal with a relatively rare situation—the large-scale murder of citizens by their own state. However, many supporters (especially those in nongovernmental organizations [NGO] and academe) now want to interpret the conditions for invoking R2P more liberally so that the international community can address other significant issues—but this development enjoys almost no support among states whom the norm sought to motivate. Some argue for development of

an “R2P variant” to respond to natural disasters.²⁴ The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, a research and advocacy organization established in 2007, has advocated that R2P be invoked to protect ethnic and religious minorities in Burma/Myanmar.²⁵ Others suggest authorizing intervention to overthrow Robert Mugabe’s regime in Zimbabwe, while another proposal wishes to use “the essential components of R2P” to challenge states that refuse to implement policies to cope with climate change.²⁶ In recent years, Gareth Evans may have spent almost as much time arguing against those who would expand the meaning and application of R2P as he has promoting the concept to skeptics.²⁷

Other aspects of meaning that have barely seen discussion include the implications and consequences of invoking R2P and undertaking intervention. An R2P intervention may likely involve regime change in the target state. How long can R2P be used to justify an extended occupation that may prove necessary to construct a safe and stable environment? What exit strategy will an R2P intervention use, and should there be explicit criteria similar to those the ICISS proposed to trigger an intervention? Will a moral-hazard issue arise if R2P is invoked too frequently, with groups in many societies tempted to do so to entice international intervention on their behalf? The failure to discuss the messy details of implementation, although very helpful in reducing controversy before adoption, poses a lingering threat to the acceptability of the norm.

Conclusion: What Future for the Responsibility to Protect?

After six years, the record of R2P as a new norm is mixed at best. The concept now has high public visibility, and the UN Secretariat is committed to developing and implementing the norm. A new Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund have been established at the UN, and member states have discussed enhancing the early warning/prevention capabilities of the organization. Some have pointed to the Kenyan mediation effort led by former secretary-general Annan as “an ideal R2P reaction” that did not require the deployment of military force, although US Ambassador Rice noted that the R2P “was explicitly not part of the debate in the Council” during discussion of the Kenyan crisis.²⁸

A simple critical mass of states may be capable of implementing the prevention, diplomatic reaction, and rebuilding aspects of the R2P norm, in

that international organizations, middle and small states, and even NGOs can provide many of the financial and institutional resources necessary to increase prevention capacity or conduct diplomatic mediation. To a lesser extent, those actors may be able to offer sufficient resources to assist with rebuilding. But regarding the central issue of reacting to mass-casualty violence, it is less clear that the R2P entrepreneurs can implement that pillar of the norm without cooperation of the major powers, for two reasons. The first is related to the issue of structural power—the material capacity to implement the R2P agenda. Without the active cooperation of the United States in particular, other states may find it very difficult or impossible to mount a rapid or effective response to ongoing atrocities. Second, to be considered legitimate, a response to ongoing atrocities would have to be sanctioned by the Security Council. With three (and possibly all five) of the permanent members of the Security Council skeptical about the desirability of the norm or the best means of applying it, R2P may become a hollow doctrine. The inability thus far of the R2P norm entrepreneurs to persuade one or more major powers to join them in playing an entrepreneurial role on this issue continues to stand as a substantial hurdle to the prospects of norm consolidation.

Given this situation, what might strengthen R2P as a viable norm in the international system? Any recommendations must be modest since the primary issue of building a more solid and meaningful consensus among states about the meaning and application of R2P will take time. However, two steps can move that process forward:

1. *Strengthening conflict-prevention and peace-building capabilities.* These are the least controversial aspects of R2P (in theory and practice), and solid foundations already exist within the UN and in other inter-governmental organizations on which to build expanded capabilities. Some governments that have not been enthusiastic about the use of military force in the context of R2P (such as the United States) have recognized the importance of prevention and rebuilding in their own policies and therefore might be persuaded to increase their assistance to multilateral efforts that complement those national policies. Civil society organizations such as the International Crisis Group and the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect can also make meaningful contributions in these areas. Additional resources (both finan-

cial and political) devoted to these capabilities not only would pay dividends directly but also might reduce the likelihood of using military intervention, the more controversial and costly option.

2. *Promoting continuing discussion among governments of the purpose of R2P.* Understandably, many governments in the Global South are concerned that R2P might be used as justification for intervention in their states by self-interested states of the Global North (or even by their neighbors in the South). Such suspicions will be difficult to overcome, but a continuing dialogue about the types of situations in which R2P would apply, mechanisms for making decisions about invoking R2P, and limitations on the use of the concept—exactly those topics stripped from the R2P idea before its adoption in the UN—may help to build confidence that under certain circumstances the international community can broadly agree to invoke R2P. Such a dialogue may also reassure states of the North that R2P will not be used to justify unending demands on their economic and military resources. This discussion must involve the relationship between the norm of sovereignty/noninterference and the concept of R2P, an issue glossed over in the UN process but remaining at the heart of much resistance to the new norm. Similarly, expansive interpretations of the types of problems that R2P can address must be dismissed as irrelevant to the norm in order to build confidence in, and consensus behind, a more specific and limited purpose. Within the UN, the secretary-general could sponsor such a dialogue (perhaps by establishing a new forum for that purpose), as could interested “middle powers” such as Canada, outside the UN framework.

Proponents of R2P were overly optimistic to believe that an international norm as entrenched as sovereignty would be limited so easily by the states that so often benefit from that norm. It takes time for a majority of states to accept any new norm—especially one that so directly challenges the status quo. Furthermore, given the diverse interests and values of the many states in the international system, R2P may never live up to the broadest hopes of its sponsors. However, with patient discussion, a willingness to understand the concerns of the various participants in that discussion, and the devotion of more resources to prevention and rebuilding, R2P

may help promote a more effective and unified international response to humanitarian catastrophes in the future.

Notes

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8. Kofi A. Annan, *The Question of Intervention* (New York: UN Department of Public Information, 1999), 6.
9. Several high-ranking members of the UN secretariat, interviews by the author, United Nations, summer 2002.
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12. High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility* (New York: United Nations, 2004).
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14. Thakur and Weiss, "R2P," 39, 42.
15. Donald Steinberg, "Responsibility to Protect: Coming of Age?," *Global Responsibility to Protect* 1, no. 4 (October 2009): 441.
16. Ban Ki-Moon, *Implementing the Responsibility to Protect*, A/63/677 (New York: UN General Assembly, 12 January 2009), 4, <http://globalr2p.org/pdf/SGR2PEng.pdf>.
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19. Wheeler and Egerton, "Responsibility to Protect," 122.
20. Cited in *ibid.*
21. Susan E. Rice (remarks on the UN Security Council and the Responsibility to Protect, International Peace Institute, Vienna, 15 June 2009), <http://usun.state.gov/briefing/statements/2009/125977.htm>.
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