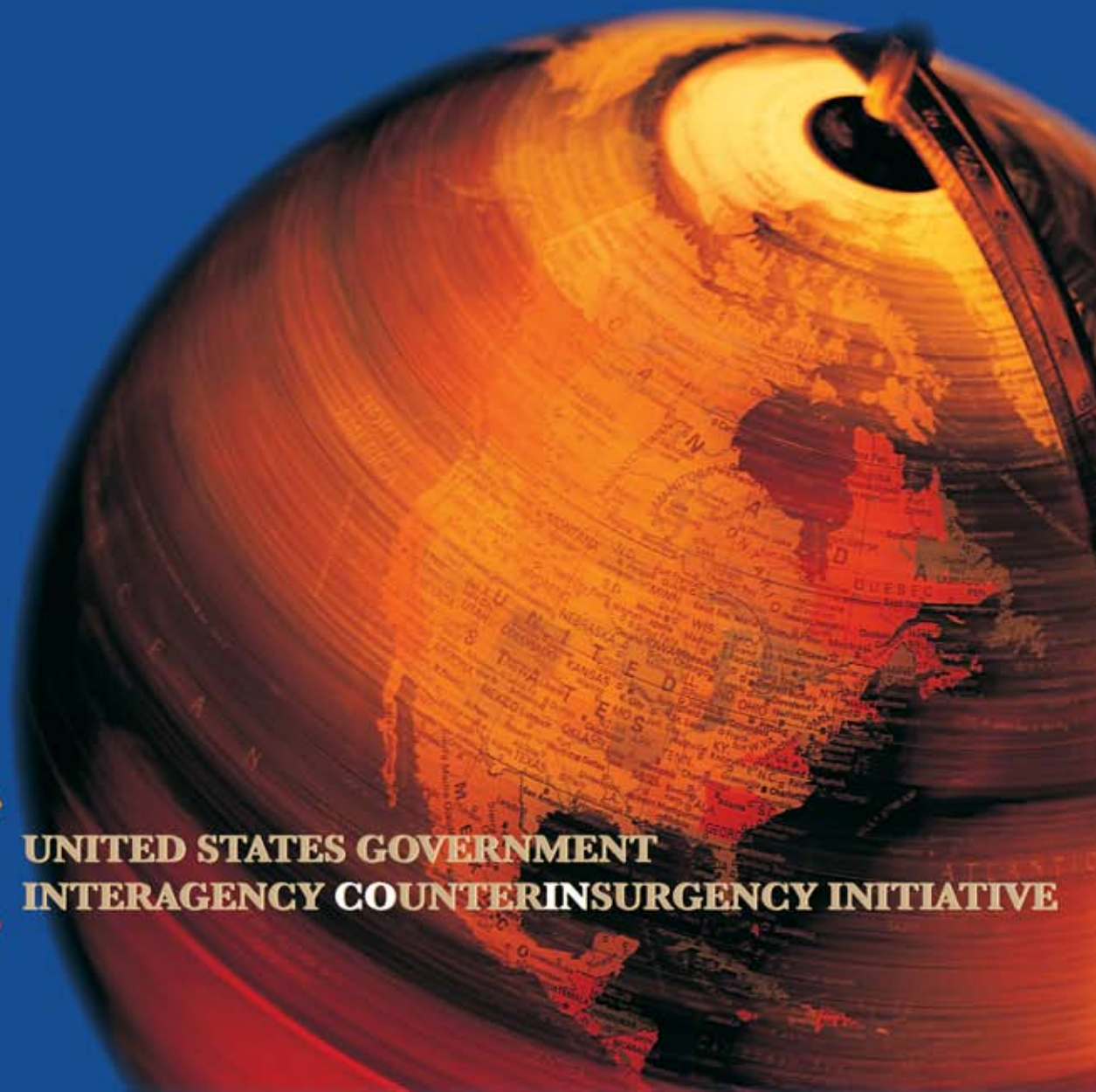
United States Department of State

COUNTERINSURGENCY
FOR U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY MAKERS

A Work in Progress

October 2007



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INTERAGENCY COUNTERINSURGENCY INITIATIVE

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Preface

"*Counterinsurgency for U.S. Government Policy Makers: A Work in Progress*" (the "Interim Guide") is one of several complementary efforts to develop whole-of-government approaches to complex operations, defined as undertakings requiring the purposeful collaboration of two or more government departments or agencies. Counterinsurgency (COIN) is one specific area in which we urgently need to improve our ability to counter unconventional threats to the United States and our international partners.

This Interim Guide is an effort to synthesize theory with the recent experience of officials working on COIN for their respective agencies. It is deliberately focused at the broad national level because there exists at present no civilian literature on COIN to complement extant military doctrine. This is the first serious U.S. Government (USG) effort to create a national COIN framework since 1962, when the Kennedy Administration released the Overseas Internal Defense Policy and National Counterinsurgency Strategy in response to the war in Southeast Asia.

The Interim Guide is not an academic effort; it represents the collective experience of the contributors, all of whom are charged with some aspect of developing and executing USG COIN policies and programs. In its current form, the Interim Guide does not represent official U.S. policy or authoritative doctrine, nor is it intended to supplant the existing policies, programs, doctrine, or procedures of any agency. It purposefully diverges from some existing operational doctrine and deliberately omits detailed procedures established by specific agencies and departments. These deviations are not a judgment on the value of those doctrines and procedures; such details will be further developed within a follow-on operational level handbook. The Interim Guide is intended to provide a broad understanding of the characteristics of insurgency and counterinsurgency and the importance of synergistic interagency assistance to the efforts of the affected government to improve security and promote effective governance, rather than to discuss or advocate particular approaches or diagnostic tools developed for complex operations more generally.

The sponsors of this effort intend to use the Interim Guide as a basis for discussion and continued refinement of a final Guide and an operational level handbook, which will take into consideration presidential initiatives such as National Security Presidential Directive 44 and the April 2004 NSC Principals' decision to establish the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization at the Department of State, as well as relevant agency and department initiatives such as the Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, the Office of Military Affairs at the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Stability Operations Capabilities branches of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Joint Staff. We envision that the Interim Guide will help to inform other related efforts, and to that end, we invite comments by COIN practitioners on this document. Contact information is provided in the final Appendix to the Guide.

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Executive Summary

The relative stability of the bipolar Cold War era has given way to a more volatile international environment in which adversaries employ unconventional, and often violent, tactics including terrorism, insurgency, propaganda, subversion, sabotage, and criminal money-making activities. This Interim Guide focuses specifically on insurgency and the strategies and tactics to combat it, collectively known as counterinsurgency (COIN). Information, including intelligence; economic development, incentives, and sanctions; security and public services; and social and political resolution are all necessary components of COIN, and none is sufficient in isolation from the others; moreover, each of these four spheres depends on the others. This document is intended to provide a broad understanding of the characteristics of COIN, and to serve as a basis for interagency discussion of policy, programs, and the development of national capabilities relevant to COIN.

Insurgency is a protracted political-military campaign conducted by an organized movement seeking to subvert or displace the government and completely or partially control the resources and/or population of a country through the use of force and alternative political organizations. Insurgents exploit societal trends, grievances, and needs; insurgency is "armed politics," and while military action may be an important component of COIN, political resolution is indispensable to success. Conflict dynamics that contribute to insurgencies include societal incentives for violence; state incapacity to contain or effectively respond to violence; and regional or broader international conditions that inspire, or fail to discourage, violence. Effective COIN requires deep and detailed context- and culture-specific understanding of local and regional conditions, and ultimately must enable *the affected government* to gain the support of its population, rendering ineffective the insurgents and their tactics.

In the U.S. Government, when the President directs a national response to a current or emerging conflict, the Secretary of State manages the formal interagency assessment and planning process that will govern the USG response. Where insurgency, nascent or active, does not rise to the level of Presidential determination, interagency efforts, starting with the U.S. mission to the affected nation, may be able, in concerted action with the host nation and other partners, to help prevent or curtail the development of a serious challenge by insurgent actors to the affected government.

An integrated - and ideally, a whole-of-government - planning effort based on a common assessment of the environment and understanding of the problem is

the most effective approach to buttressing or helping to build effective government institutions in COIN. Planning will integrate civilian and military capabilities, and synchronize and sequence the activities of contributors, to help the threatened government achieve control through indigenous government institutions. An effective information campaign is indispensable to the validation and reinforcement of COIN activities.

The public face and main effort of every COIN operation must be indigenous; only the national government can address in a sustainable way the root causes an insurgency, establish its legitimacy with its populations, and remove or reintegrate the insurgents. Developing indigenous capabilities to accomplish these tasks is central to COIN, and international support is essential to the success of the effort; in fact, supporting the development of these capabilities must be the main effort of COIN.

Enlisting and enabling the support and assistance of regional and other interested partners should be a key component of any COIN plan. U.S government organizations with roles or capabilities essential to COIN include the Intelligence Community; the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, Treasury, Homeland Security, Agriculture, Transportation, Commerce, and the U.S. Agency for International Development. Other agencies, such as the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, may have relevant capabilities. The National Security Council may play a leading, coordinating, or enabling role in COIN strategy development and execution.

The Chief of Mission, supported by the Combatant Commander, coordinates with the affected nation the implementation of U.S. government support to COIN. The representatives of each department and agency on the Country Team support with their particular programs and operations the overall COIN strategy. The contributions of other national and international organizations, as well as non-governmental and private sector actors, are critical to effective COIN. Every functional contribution that strengthens or promotes accountable and effective indigenous governance responsive to the needs of its people is important; COIN is the sum of these efforts.

Chapter One

Theory and Principles

Insurgency

Definition. For the purpose of this guide, an insurgency is a protracted political-military activity[1] conducted by an organized movement seeking to subvert or displace the government and completely or partially control the resources and/or population of a country through the use of force and alternative political organizations. Insurgent activity is designed to weaken government control and legitimacy while increasing insurgent control and influence. Methods for weakening government control include guerilla warfare, terrorism, and political mobilizations, propaganda, recruitment and training, front and covert party organization, and international activity. A common characteristic of insurgent groups is the intent to control a particular area and/or population. This objective differentiates insurgents from terrorists, whose objectives do not necessarily include the creation of an alternative governing authority capable of controlling a given area or country. Insurgency is a contest with the government for support of the people and control over resources and territory.

Building a Core. Insurgents require supporters, sanctuary, money, supplies, weapons, and intelligence on government actions. Insurgents need significant support from only a small percentage of a given population to wage a robust insurgency. From most of the population, insurgents require only acquiescence or inaction. The factors that actually mobilize support for the insurgency may differ greatly from the insurgents' actual goals or ideology.

- The charisma of insurgent leaders sometimes is more important than their ideology.
- Fighters, sympathizers, and supporters may not be fully conversant with the insurgent ideology while still justifying their actions with rhetoric and symbols provided to them by insurgent propagandists.
- Actions on the ground often are related to local or private conflicts, and may have nothing to do with insurgent ideology.

Competing for the Broader Population. To gain support or at least the complicity of the people, insurgents will use both positive and negative inducements. Tools of persuasion include the provision of money, basic social services, control of land, or positions of authority within the renegade organization. Insurgents may appeal to the self-interest of various constituencies through alliances of convenience with domestic groups such as warlords, tribal leaders, political parties, ethnic groups, organized crime,

[1] Military activity in this sentence denotes activity by an armed force not authorized by the indigenous government.

and local bandits. Such partnerships may exacerbate localized conflict and mobilize support for the insurgency.

Simultaneously, insurgents may seek to erode popular support for the government through coercion and retribution. Coercion can either augment or replace persuasion as a means of mobilization of support, depending on the ability of government security forces to protect the population. If insurgents can provoke excessive government action against a population, retribution in response to death, injury, mistreatment, or dishonor can become a powerful motivator for action against the government.

Undermining the Government. Insurgents will attempt to render territory ungovernable while seeking influence over its population, although they may not themselves intend to become the governing authority. Insurgents exploit and manipulate societal trends and a population's grievances and needs by applying a wide range of both non-violent and violent means, funded by an illicit economy.

Insurgents use propaganda, including information, misinformation, and disinformation to influence potential supporters, opinion-leaders, and opponents, locally and more broadly, to promote their cause and diminish the government's resolve. They may penetrate, manipulate, or disrupt government and societal institutions and organizations. They may seek to control community action, disrupt or discredit government action, provoke overreaction by security forces, exacerbate sectarian tension which may alienate ethnic groups from each other, or provoke violence.

Insurgents may couple subversion and propaganda with open violence. Many groups use terrorism, the deliberate use of violence against non-combatants with the intention to coerce, intimidate, and modify behavior. Insurgents use terrorism to intimidate or eliminate opponents, publicize their cause, paralyze societies, and goad the government into over-reaction.

Larger insurgencies will coordinate their terror campaigns with guerrilla warfare. Insurgents, usually having less conventional military capacity than the government, will often use guerrilla tactics, including raids, ambushes, assassination, sabotage, booby traps, and improvised explosive devices. They may take advantage of mobility, stealth, deception, and surprise to weaken, discredit, or paralyze less agile government security forces.

In order to fund their activities, insurgents may foster an illicit economy, sometimes of international scope, eluding government monitoring, taxation, and interdiction. Insurgents often raise funds and weapons through criminal activities such as theft, extortion, trafficking in narcotics, arms, and people, money laundering, piracy, document fraud, bribery, kidnapping, and other black market activity. Criminal activities often drive insurgents into marriages of convenience with organized crime. Insurgents may also receive smuggled funding and supplies from foreign governments and sympathizers. Such illicit financial activities diminish government revenues, increase

corruption among local officials, and generally weaken the control and legitimacy of the central government.

The combination of propaganda and subversion, terrorism and/or guerrilla warfare, funded through illicit economic activity, undermines an affected nation's governing apparatus. When able to separate a population from the authority and services of the state, the insurgents may seek to fill the vacuum with a counter-government or parallel administrative structures to control, intimidate, or mobilize the population to their ends.

Strategies of Disorder, Provocation, and Exhaustion. If able to capture a sufficient degree of public support and effectively undermine the government's ability to exert its authority, an insurgency may be able to compete successfully with the state for control of the nation. Insurgents may seek to discredit the government by instigating civil discord, in order to diminish popular faith in the government and encourage people to turn to the insurgency to "restore" public order and security. Within the general disorder, insurgents, blended into the broader population, may commit spectacular attacks to provoke the government, frustrated by its inability to distinguish fighter from civilian, into indiscriminate reprisals that will alienate the people. The insurgents may accelerate this shift in popular support by inculcating fence-sitters with the movement's ideology through propaganda and activities that engender a sense of social identity, solidarity, and political alienation from the government. Insurgents try to manage the tempo and intensity of their activities to permit a level of effort they can sustain indefinitely. By prolonging the conflict, they hope to exhaust the opposition. The insurgents draw the government or an occupying force into a series of fruitless, expensive, reactive moves that expend political will, funds, resources, and lives. They seek to impose unsustainable costs on the government to force capitulation.

While pursuing this strategy, an insurgency may try to leverage international support from diaspora or émigré communities, international institutions, friendly foreign governments and populations, and the international media. Insurgents may directly target public opinion in countries that support the local government, thereby pressuring the sponsor to cease its assistance.

Stages. Every insurgency is different and each conflict develops differently. Insurgencies may evolve through some or all the stages of subversion and radicalization, popular unrest, civil disobedience, localized guerrilla activity, and widespread guerilla warfare to open armed conflict - or to dormancy. One or more different stages may be manifest in any given insurgency at the same time. An insurgency may actually succeed in overthrowing the government (historically a rare event), may force it into political accommodation; or may itself be simply crushed. Insurgencies may be co-opted by domestic or international terrorist groups, morph into purely criminal organizations, or wither into irrelevance. The measures used to deal with an incipient insurgency are often very different from those that are effective against mature or declining insurgencies. Thus, practitioners must understand at what stage or stages the insurgency is in order to develop appropriate and effective responses.

Transnational dynamics. Contemporary insurgencies often act on behalf of or are supported by transnational organizations with access to satellite communications, the Internet, global media, and transnational banking systems. All insurgencies need physical safe haven, and may find it in neighboring countries. Therefore, contemporary COIN must take into account regional and global dynamics as well as the internal situation of the nation most directly affected.

Cultural, tribal, ethnic, ideological and religious factors. Many insurgencies include a strong component of religious, tribal, ethnic, ideological or cultural identity (sometimes extremist) that may resonate with some subset of the target population. Insurgencies may take advantage of competing power structures, such as tribal governments, that also challenge the authority and span of control of the central government. COIN strategies must be developed with an in-depth understanding of the specific cultural, ideological, religious, political, and regional factors involved. Any of these factors may play a causal role or simply be exploited by insurgents (or government forces) for propaganda and mobilization purposes.

Counterinsurgency

Definition. COIN is the combination of measures adopted to defeat an insurgency, and ideally will include integrated or synchronized political, security, economic, and informational components that reinforce governmental legitimacy and competence while reducing insurgent influence over the population. COIN strategies should be designed to simultaneously protect the population and prevent insurgent violence; strengthen government institutions' capacity and legitimacy to govern responsibly, including redress of legitimate grievances; and marginalize insurgents politically, socially, and militarily.



Community leaders discuss the process for selecting delegates to a new district council

Characteristics. COIN is a complex, and normally a coalition, effort, conducted at the request and in direct support of the affected government. The capabilities required for COIN may be very similar to those required for peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, stabilization operations, and development assistance missions.

Purpose. The purpose of COIN is to restore the monopoly on political power and the use of force by the legitimate government. Regaining the confidence and support of the governed people is central to this objective. COIN differs from other civil-military operations not in the methods employed but in the purpose of the undertaking.

Unity of effort. COIN always involves multiple stakeholders on both sides of the conflict. Complementarity of purpose and unity of effort are required for interagency and international COIN operations.

COIN as a special environment. For civilian agencies engaged in diplomatic and development activities, COIN is less about performing a different set of tasks than is about operating in a different kind of environment. In COIN, civilians may have to execute their normal informational, economic, political, and security activities in chaotic, unstable, or actively hostile environments. Normal tasks may need to be carried out in dramatically different ways. In COIN, civilian missions may require new tools, or the use of old tools in new ways. The targeted application of any tool requires a sophisticated understanding of the context and local drivers of the specific conflict.

Primacy of non-military means. Security is a necessary but insufficient condition for COIN; security alone will not defeat an insurgency. When possible, civilian and military measures should be applied simultaneously to achieve success as in an integrated "Clear, Hold, and Build" strategy that will delegitimize and disempower the insurgency while strengthening government control over its territory and institutions.

Strategies. COIN is a response to a specific insurgency and requires in-depth assessment of that insurgency based on solid understanding of the relevant social, cultural, economic, political and security conditions, and detailed knowledge of insurgent motivation, goals, organization, and methods. There are two basic approaches to COIN strategy:

- **Enemy-centricity.** The enemy-centric approach conceptualizes COIN as a contest with an organized enemy, and focuses COIN activity on the insurgent organization. This approach emphasizes defeat of the enemy as its primary task and other activities as supporting efforts. There are many variants within this approach, including "soft" vs. "hard," direct vs. indirect, violent vs. non-violent, and decapitation vs. marginalization strategies. This approach can be summarized as "first defeat the enemy, and all else will follow."

- **Population-centricity.** The population-centric approach shifts the focus of COIN from defeating the insurgent organization to maintaining or recovering the support of the population. While direct action against the insurgent organization may be

required, it is not the main effort; this approach assumes that the center of gravity is the government's relationship with and support among the population. It can be summarized as "first protect and support the population, and all else will follow."

Each approach may be employed at different stages of an insurgency. An enemy-centric approach might work against an incipient or centrally-controlled insurgency led by a particularly charismatic or powerful individual. However, historical experience has shown that against a mature insurgency, population-centric approaches have a higher likelihood of success. The current United States (U.S.) military COIN doctrine, Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication [MCWP] 3-33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, released in December 2006, states:

> "The cornerstone of any counterinsurgency effort is establishing security for the civilian populace. Without a secure environment, no permanent reforms can be implemented and disorder spreads. To establish legitimacy, commanders transition security activities from combat operations to law enforcement as quickly as feasible. When insurgents are seen as criminals, they lose public support. Using a legal system established in line with local culture and practices to deal with such criminals enhances the … government's legitimacy."

"Victory" in COIN. A COIN effort can be said to have been successful when the following conditions are met:

- The affected government effectively controls legitimate social, political, economic and security institutions that meet the population's needs, including adequate mechanisms to address the grievances that may have fueled support of the insurgency;

- The insurgent movement and its leaders are effectively co-opted, marginalized, or separated from the population, with the voluntary assistance and consent of the population; and

- Armed insurgent forces have decamped or been demobilized, and/or reintegrated into the political, economic, and social structures of the country.

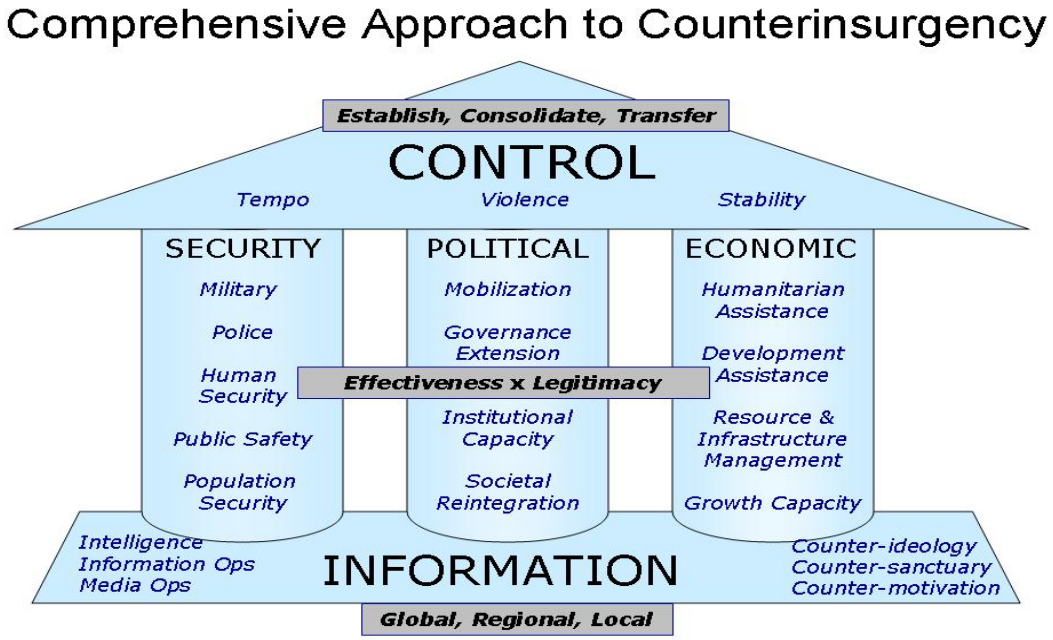
Chapter Two

Attributes and Actors

COIN Strategy Components/Functions

One highly regarded COIN theorist, David Galula, (paraphrasing Chinese General Chang Ting-chen) asserted that successful COIN campaigns are normally about 80% political, and 20% military in nature. Classic COIN theory divides counterinsurgency into four "components" to better explain how these traditionally distinct areas have to be integrated in order to achieve "victory," describing the four components as Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic.

In fact, COIN must address with equal urgency two imperatives - political action and security operations, recognizing that insurgency is first and foremost a political struggle, and that, while successful security operations will not necessarily result in a COIN "victory," security will almost always be prerequisite to political resolution. Security operations, guided and supported by an information campaign, should and often will improve the political and economic situation at the local level, increasing the social acceptability of the COIN campaign. Today, classic COIN *components* can be more usefully described as *functions*: Political, Informational, Economic, and Security.



This diagram illustrates the key functions of a comprehensive COIN framework. The frame is structured as a base (Information), three pillars (Security, Political and Economic) and a roof (Control). This approach builds on classic COIN theory but also

incorporates best practices that have emerged through experience in numerous complex operations over the past several decades.

The diagram is a conceptual model, not a template for action. It is intended to demonstrate to policy makers and program implementers where their efforts fit into a COIN strategy or campaign, rather than telling them what to do in a given situation. It is an aid to collaboration, not an operational plan. The functions should be linked to one another in ways that are not easily captured in a diagram but are described below. The general framework can be applied to COIN as well as peacekeeping operations, stabilization and reconstruction, and complex humanitarian emergencies.

The Information Base. Information is the foundation for all other activities. The collection, formulation, and dissemination of information are crucial in shaping perceptions of the conflict by all stakeholders. Substantive security, political and economic measures are critical; however, to be effective in the strategic sense, they must be integrated into a broader information strategy.



Conflict resolution radio station studio production center

- Every action in COIN sends a message; the purpose of the information campaign is to characterize the message to the target population in the area of the insurgency and often to international observers as well. Messages and themes should be aimed at enhancing the legitimacy of the affected government. Messages are delivered through media operations, including public affairs and public diplomacy as well as military information operations, with the intent to counter insurgents' ideology, undermine their motivation and popular support, and deny them sanctuary, both physical and virtual.

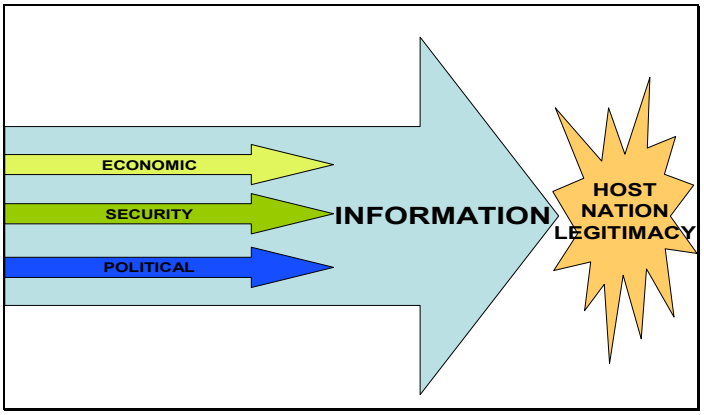
- An information strategy must address ideological, social, cultural, political, and religious motivations that influence or engender a sense of common interest and

identity among the target population. It should be based upon efforts to understand the environment through census data, public opinion polling, and the collection of cultural and "human terrain" information in denied areas. A comprehensive information strategy involves understanding the effects of operations on the population, adversaries, and the environment.

- The information campaign must be conducted at global, regional, and local levels in order to influence every level of support to the insurgency.

- An information campaign creates a narrative that enhances the legitimacy of the affected government. It must resonate with the population and be based upon verifiable facts and measurable progress rather than promises. Deeds speak for themselves, and in COIN, actions must validate rhetoric.

- Information includes intelligence, which allows units to distinguish between insurgent and civilian. With this knowledge, security forces may penetrate insurgent cells, and apprehend the members, leading to further intelligence gains.



The Security Pillar. This pillar is comprised of two key components: (1) military force to secure the population from attack or intimidation by guerrillas, criminals, terrorists or other armed groups and (2) police security, to include community policing, law enforcement, police intelligence activities, border police/patrol and paramilitary field forces. Effective police activity is often more important in COIN than military action. The concept of security also incorporates individual security, which involves the protection of human rights, and the effective functioning of civil legal institutions (courts, jails, prisons) and public safety (fire, ambulance, sanitation, civil defense), and public health (access to food, safe drinking water, and medical care.)

- While the security "pillar" may seem military centric due to the high visibility of the military's presence, the civilian security role is particularly critical in developing security sector institutions supporting the rule of law and accountable governance.

- Economic and political progress is not dependent upon a completely secure environment, nor does the ability to provide adequate security depend entirely upon on political and economic progress. The level of effort in each area will depend upon

conditions specific to the insurgency and the ability of the affected government to deal with it.



The U.S. Government delivers civil disorder management equipment and training to foreign security forces

The Political Pillar. This pillar focuses on strengthening the capability and capacity of the government to respond – *and to be seen to be responding* - to the needs of its people. Associated activities will include diplomacy, development assistance, advising and training, and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs. The military may support political efforts where civilians, because of the security environment, are not able to operate freely.

The Economic Pillar. This pillar includes humanitarian relief, such as safe water, sanitation, basic heath care, livelihoods assistance, and primary education, as well as longer-term programs for development of infrastructure to support agricultural, industrial, educational, medical and commercial activities. Assistance in effective resource and infrastructure management, including construction of key infrastructure, may be critically important to COIN efforts. Assistance must be tailored to the affected governments' capacity to absorb support and manage its outcomes.

The Control Roof. The three pillars support the overarching objective of enabling the supported government to manage the balance between insurgent activity (the tempo of operations, level and intensity of violence, and degree of instability that it engenders) such that the population will, in the long run, support the government against the insurgents — noting that this "balance" can differ from one society to the next.

Relationship between functions. Maintaining an appropriate balance among the functions is important. For example, economic assistance programs with inadequate security could create soft targets for the insurgents. Security assistance in the absence of capable political leadership and oversight could create more – and more capable – armed groups outside the control of the government. Moreover, while an action may fall within

one pillar, it often has immediate effects in the other pillars. Efforts must be integrated because effects are impossible to segregate.

The Affected Government

The national government threatened by an insurgency, nascent or active, is obviously the most important actor in development and execution of any COIN strategy undertaken on its behalf. Effective COIN requires that the major effort be, *and be seen by the local population to be*, indigenous; only the government itself can mobilize the support of the people against the insurgent movement. Foreign forces do not operate independent of, nor are political, economic, or other development assistance activities undertaken except at the request of, the government concerned.



Local community leaders and constituents discuss peace initiatives

Insurgencies often gain credibility, particularly in fragile states, where national-level leaders fail to address legitimate grievances and individuals or groups resort to violence as a means of redress. Provincial governments are usually responsible for managing resources on behalf of the national government, and may be the lowest level of government that has some type of formal internal security force that can operate in a counterinsurgency role, including the ability to hold captured insurgents in significant numbers. Local government entities perceived as illegitimate, corrupt, oppressive, or non-inclusive provide fertile ground for an insurgency to develop and operate, but are the lowest level through which the national government can deliver security and other public services. The perceived capacity of local government to provide for the population is critical to national government legitimacy.

The U.S. Country Team

All United States Government (USG) COIN strategies, plans, programs, and activities are undertaken in support of the affected government and managed through the elements of the U.S. Country Team, led by the Chief of Mission. The Chief of Mission

(COM) is the senior representative of the USG to the government of the foreign country to which accredited and is responsible for recommending and implementing national policy regarding that country, and overseeing the activities of official USG employees in the country. Where appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, the Ambassador has extraordinary decision-making authority as the senior USG official present during periods of instability and crises. Where a confirmed ambassador is not present, the Charge d'Affaires represents the Secretary of State as the senior diplomat accredited to the foreign government.

The Country Team is the central element of interagency execution. When insurgency can be identified in its early stages, the COM and other senior representatives of the Country Team may encourage government leaders to take preventive action through the use of informational, security, political and economic measures. The COM can request foreign assistance, help mobilize international support through multilateral diplomacy, and engage non-governmental organizations to help address the causes of unrest before the crisis escalates and limits political alternatives to the use of force.

Although not part of the Country Team or subordinate to the COM, a U.S. geographic Combatant Commander (CCDR), a four star general or admiral, will be tasked to plan and execute the military component of a COIN campaign if the USG decides to deploy U.S. combat forces to assist an affected government's security forces in defeating or suppressing an insurgency. The CCDR, in coordination with the COM, will usually establish a subordinate Combined Joint Task Force to conduct COIN operations in the affected area or country.

USG efforts must be designed and executed in such manner to increase both the legitimacy of the threatened government and the population's perception of that legitimacy. COIN strategy requires tailored approach that captures and integrates the range of USG agency and department capabilities. The USG may also elect to provide operational assistance to indigenous forces; such assistance will be the product of deliberate foreign policy decisions taken in Washington D.C., and, with the exception of pre-existing law enforcement or counterterrorism liaison relationships with the host nation, will be subject to the oversight of the COM. Representative capabilities of USG agencies relevant to COIN are listed in Appendix A, and COIN best practices in Appendix B.

The International Community

Considerable attention should be paid to potential contributions of the international partners during the development of COIN strategy and plans. In particular, regional partners can help prevent the establishment of external sanctuaries, prevent or slow the spread of the conflict to other areas, and provide local expertise, basing, and possibly even security assistance. Regional security organizations may be politically and materially helpful to COIN efforts.

Many U.S. allies and coalition partner have a comparative advantage in deployable capabilities relevant to COIN, e.g., training, development, and employment of national police forces (which the USG does not have.) They can also bring considerable economic development and social institution-building to COIN efforts. Coalition operations require close coordination of effort to achieve common political, economic, security and informational objectives. Early inclusion of international partners in the COIN effort, and collaborative and transparent planning, can help mitigate the effects of operational-level differences in goals, training, capabilities, equipment, logistics, culture, doctrine, intelligence and language.

Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGO)

IGOs, formed when two or more national governments sign a multilateral treaty to form such a body and finance its operations, possess legal personality in international law and their staffs enjoy diplomatic status. Most IGOs are regionally focused, and when IGO member states could be adversely affected by an insurgency in their region, the organization may act, through collective action, to deny legitimacy, sanctuary, and support to insurgents.

Non-government organizations (NGO)

NGOs are private, self-governing, non-profit organizations dedicated to promoting education, health care, environmental protection, human rights, conflict resolution or similar issues, and support the establishment or development of institutions of civil society. There are thousands of registered NGOs, some focused on disaster relief and others on long-term development. NGO activities are a direct function of the interests of their donors. In order to secure freedom of movement, including access to semi-permissive environments, NGOs generally want to be perceived by local populations as politically neutral, needs-driven organizations, and as a result, often try to minimize contact with the uniformed military or other governmental actors. This dynamic complicates coordination of government and NGO activities.



Local entrepreneurs gain access to international manufacturing technology

Key issues associated with NGOs operating in COIN environments involve the allocation of resources and provision of security. NGOs execute a variety of aid and development activities that meet the needs of a local population and should be de-conflicted with USG efforts as much as possible. Where security is problematic, NGOs may rely on COIN forces – military and otherwise - transportation and protection. Therefore, COIN planning should incorporate insofar as possible NGO activities. USG COIN planning should also consider whether NGOs operating in the affected country are promoting aims counter to the COIN strategy, domestic and/or international law, and the affected nation's aims of legitimacy and effectiveness.

The Private Sector

Multinational Corporations. Multinational Corporations (MNCs) usually become involved in counterinsurgency when their own financial interests are threatened, or when financial advantage is perceived. COIN planners should consider the capabilities, risks and advantages of MNCs with respect to indigenous government needs as well as U.S. and foreign commercial interests involved.

Contractors. Contractors provide security, training, technical expertise, and logistical support. Policy makers should be cognizant of the fact that contractors are often viewed by the local population as USG representatives and any negative behavior or interaction with the local population on the part of contractors can have an adverse impact on COIN efforts.

Grantees. The USG generally delivers development assistance through grants. USG grant managers oversee the activities of grantees to ensure that funds are used for the intended purpose, but cannot change the nature of grant once it has been authorized. COIN planners must be aware of USG-funded grantee activities in order to protect USG investment and avoid duplication of effort.

Chapter Three

Assessment and Planning

USG COIN support should include information, political, security, and economic components to strengthen the legitimacy and effectiveness of the affected government. The relative emphasis on these components will depend upon the specifics of the situation; the environment should be thoroughly assessed prior to planning and continuously evaluated throughout the course of the COIN effort. Planning should proceed based upon methodical and thorough assessment.

Assessment

A whole-of-government approach to a COIN engagement begins with a strategic-level "joint" interagency analysis of the conflict. An interagency team comprised of all relevant agencies with core competencies needed to counter the insurgency should conduct the assessment. This effort may be conducted at the direction of the National Security Council and will usually be led by the Department of State. The assessment is the first step towards developing a whole-of-government COIN strategy and supporting plans.

Insurgencies are frequently described in terms of sources and root causes, parties and actors, and drivers and triggers. The sources and root causes of insurgency can be described in terms of the stakeholders' frustrated needs and their grievances. The drivers of the insurgency can be expressed in terms of the dynamics among the stakeholders' dissatisfaction and stakeholder opinion leaders' motivations and means.

Following the assessment of these factors, analysis and prioritization of the findings leads to an integrated strategy that applies appropriate capabilities and resources against the requirements. The joint assessment process will yield a comprehensive picture of the environment and a common understanding of the nature of the problem, and serve as the basis for whole-of-government planning.

At the strategic level, analytical tools such as the Interagency Methodology for Analyzing Instability and Conflict, the Conflict Assessment Framework (CAF), and the Political Instability Modeling paper may be useful aids to the development of situation-specific information for policy-level strategic planning. The CAF, the Tactical Conflict Assessment Framework, and similar modeling tools can be used to inform programmatic, operational and tactical level plans. See Appendix C for web links to these and other assessment and modeling tools.

Planning

Insurgency evolves in stages, and COIN planning processes will be a function of when in the development of the insurgency the USG decides to intervene. Depending

upon the strength and legitimacy of, and tools available to, the affected government, the USG may play a subtle role in countering an incipient insurgency or may intervene more forcefully if faced with open warfare. Regardless of the timing, the affected government will have sought assistance from the USG because, on some level, the former lacked the necessary governmental tools to counter the insurgency that threatened it.

COIN planning should integrate civilian and military capabilities across each of the four COIN strategy functions. The purpose of whole-of-government planning is to synchronize and sequence the activities of each contributing agency into a coherent strategy that will assist the threatened government to achieve effective control over its environment by strengthening legitimate and effective government institutions. A comprehensive information campaign is the basis for all other activity, and performs an integrating function that ties other activities together.

Political, economic and security measures are developed in parallel to ensure stable progress, which is measured by developing situation-specific metrics to track growth in the effectiveness and legitimacy of the threatened country's governing institutions. U.S. Government strategy to support a specific government's counterinsurgency effort involves a tailored approach that captures and integrates the range of capabilities of many U.S. Government departments and agencies in order to support the affected government in establishing legitimate and effective institutions.



U. S. Government interagency planning meeting with NGO representatives

A whole-of-government plan should specify:

- The over-arching goal to be achieved
- Critical assumptions about the environment
- Critical assumptions about cause and effect
- Major mission elements necessary and sufficient to achieve the goal
- Essential task areas within each major mission

- Sequencing of essential tasks
- Resources available to support the plan (skilled people, relationships, expert knowledge, money, materials, and time)
- Metrics to assess progress toward the overarching goal and major mission elements

The outputs of whole-of-government assessment and planning should include detailed descriptions of:

- Dynamics driving the conflict, including those that create and support the insurgency, and those that might mitigate the conflict and defuse the insurgency
- Primary actors and factors, including opinion leaders and identity groups (insurgent groups and their supporters, legitimate government leaders and their constituencies), identity issues around which the actors coalesce (ideologies or other organizing principles), the degree to which the insurgency has subverted or penetrated the legitimate government, indigenous and external support to the insurgency, vulnerabilities of the insurgent movement
- Purpose of engagement (the "what" or mission statement for COIN campaign)
- Major mission elements and essential tasks (the "how" for COIN operations)
- Resources required; detailed description of how the programs will be funded and managed by each USG department and agency; and resource shortfalls
- Measures of effectiveness and performance indicators for each component of the plan and for the overall strategy
- Coordination and synchronization mechanisms – "business rules" for integration of activities across departments and agencies, including clear lines of authority, command, and communication
- Incorporation, where appropriate and possible, of other national, IGO, and NGO capabilities into plans and operations

In summary, whole-of-government assessment and planning leads to a common understanding of a situation and an integrated interagency approach for addressing its root causes. This process ensures the capabilities and capacity of USG departments and agencies are applied appropriately to assist the threatened government's COIN efforts. A list of useful references in the study of insurgency and COIN are in Appendix D.

Chapter Four

Conclusion

Effective COIN requires multi-faceted and integrated operations that apply civilian and military capabilities across information, security, political and economic functional areas. The goal of COIN is to help an affected government achieve control over its sovereign territory by establishing, developing, and consolidating legitimate, effective government institutions.

The USG can assist an affected government with strategies that combine information, security, political and economic elements. Traditionally, diplomatic and political actions are led by the Department of State, development by the U.S. Agency for International Development, and security activities by the Department of Defense. The complex nature of insurgency requires the integration of capabilities extant in a number of other USG agencies and departments as well, including those of other partner nations, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.



Preparations for voter registration and elections to select delegates for the national constitutional referendum in Afghanistan

Diplomatic efforts in COIN assist a government's effort to mobilize support for its legitimacy, marginalize insurgents, extend its control throughout its territory, and strengthen the rule of law. An affected government may, through development assistance, be able to mitigate the economic distress that often exacerbates insurgency. Relief could come through immediate humanitarian relief, extension of government services, or long-term economic development assistance. USAID's expertise and expeditionary culture are essential to COIN; the Departments of Treasury, Agriculture, Transportation, and Defense also have significant economic assistance capability and capacity.

Diplomacy and development are enabled by and contribute to defense. Local government's efforts should focus on population security, which include constabulary activities and intelligence. The Departments of Defense, Justice, State, and Homeland Security, as well as the national and international Intelligence Communities, possess deep expertise and significant capacity to assist the affected government in ensuring security, justice, and respect for the rule of law.

Insurgencies, and thus COIN strategies, can vary significantly from one situation to another. COIN efforts succeed if they result in a political resolution acceptable to the parties involved. Diplomacy, development and defense are interdependent at every level of COIN operations, and civil-military integration is required at the strategic, theater/operational and local/tactical levels to defeat insurgencies and protect the interests of the United States and our allies and partner nations. Most successful COIN campaigns have achieved this unity of effort through unified authority.

This Interim Guide serves to synthesize COIN theory with recent experiences of officials working in the area across USG departments and agencies. It deliberately focuses at the broad national level so as to develop civilian literature on COIN to complement extant military doctrine. As the first serious USG effort at creating a national COIN framework in over 40 years, this version of the Guide is intended to provide the basis for continued discussion among and feedback from practitioners; their input will contribute to the refinement of the document into a final version suitable for publication as an official interagency publication. The ultimate intent of this effort is to develop our national capability to conduct or aid effective COIN efforts in support of legitimate and responsible governments that respond to the needs of their people.

Contact information for the authors and contributors is listed in Appendix F.

Appendix A

U.S. Government Roles in COIN

National Security Council

The National Security Council (NSC) is the President's principal forum for consultation with senior advisors and cabinet officials on national security and foreign policy matters. The NSC staff provides advice to the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies and manages the processes through which the President's polices are coordinated and implemented.

Intelligence Community

Intelligence is central to any COIN campaign; it is the basis upon which a precise and deep understanding of the nature of insurgency, its context, and its remedies are based. The U.S. and international intelligence communities are indispensable contributors, providing intelligence support to policy makers, including indications and warning; conflict assessment tools; deployable support, including Rapid Analytic Support and Expeditionary Response teams; collaborative tools; and dedicated support to planning staffs.

Department of State

The Department of State, through its bureaus, offices, and missions overseas, leads and oversees USG support to COIN efforts. The relevant regional bureau will normally direct primary policy regarding U.S. intervention in or operations in support of other governments. Several functional bureaus and offices, including the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, will have substantive roles in the development and execution of COIN strategy. Chiefs of U.S. Missions will oversee official USG operations in the countries to which they are accredited.

Department of Defense

The Department of Defense and U.S. military forces provide a broad range of capabilities to support an integrated USG COIN effort. These include advising and training foreign military, paramilitary, internal security, and police units; planning and conducting security operations in support of indigenous security forces; intelligence, communications, and logistical support; public affairs and military information operations; medical assistance; civil affairs support; and infrastructure repair and construction. *Army Field Manuel 3-24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5,*

Counterinsurgency, and U.S. military joint doctrine describe U.S. military COIN capabilities and operations in detail.

U.S. Agency for International Development

USAID can assist USG COIN efforts by fostering economic growth, promoting human health, providing emergency humanitarian assistance, and enhancing democracy in developing countries. USAID has field offices in 100 developing countries, working in close partnership with private voluntary organizations, indigenous groups, universities, American businesses, international organizations, other governments, trade and professional associations, faith-based organizations, and other U.S. government agencies. USAID has working relationships, through contracts and grant agreements, with more than 3,500 companies and over 300 U.S.-based private voluntary organizations. USAID programs are designed to enhance institutional capacity and ameliorate the root causes of conflict.

Department of Justice

The Department of Justice, through its constituent agencies (the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Agency, the US Marshal's Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms, Tobacco and Explosives) and its components, works with other nations to combat transnational crime and international terrorist activities, including financial and operational support that may buttress insurgency operations. Justice also has offices devoted exclusively to providing overseas technical assistance that are highly relevant to COIN: the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program, which develops police and corrections institutions; and the Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training, which develops prosecutorial and judicial institutions.

Department of Treasury

The Department of Treasury operates several offices directly relevant to COIN, including the Offices of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, Terrorist Financing and Financial Crime, Intelligence and Analysis, and Foreign Asset Control, and the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. The Office of International Affairs, through its Office of Technical Assistance, works directly with foreign governments to support their efforts to improve their financial systems.

Department of Homeland Security

The Department of Homeland Security includes 22 separate and distinct Federal agencies. The Department's overarching purpose is to govern domestic security operations; however, several component agencies operate overseas, interacting and cooperate with host nation government agencies. A significant by-product of that interaction and cooperation is the development of host nation government capabilities to provide security and safety of their population. Homeland Security agencies with

capabilities most relevant to COIN are the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol; U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement; Transportation Security Agency; U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Secret Service.

Department of Agriculture

Most insurgencies occur in countries where the majority of the population is dependent upon agriculture, and where unemployed or underemployed rural youth are considered prime candidates for recruitment. Development of the agricultural sector and its institutions helps facilitate trade and increase incomes, reducing recruitment and support for insurgency. The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) executes U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) international programs, including market development, trade agreements and negotiations, and the collection and analysis of statistics and market information. FAS delivers training and technical assistance, and collaborates with developing and transitional countries to facilitate trade and promote food security. The goals of USDA's international work are to help ensure that countries critical to U.S. national security strengthen their institutions, policies, and market-based agricultural systems, thereby contributing to long-term economic and political stability; adopt regulations consistent with international standards to increase trade, resulting in economic growth and stability; and employ agricultural practices that will reduce instability, increase regional cooperation, and ensure an adequate resource base for future generations.

Department of Transportation

Transportation infrastructure is a critical component of the economic health and development of countries, factors that mitigate conditions that encourage insurgency. All facets of commerce, trade, travel, and quality of life depend on mobility. Transportation facilitates a government's ability to provide its population with basic services and security, thereby reducing the appeal of insurgency within the most likely populations of potential recruits and reduces the growth of a disaffected population. Transportation can support COIN by helping countries to strengthen their institutions, policies, and intermodal transportation systems, contributing to long-term economic and political stability; adopt regulations consistent with international standards to increase commerce trade and safety, resulting in economic growth and stability; and adopt transportation practices that promote infrastructure development for local, regional and international movement of people and commerce.

Appendix B

Best Practices

The following best practices are common to several historical conflicts and may be useful in the development of strategies, policies, and plans. It may be instructive to evaluate these best practices against COIN case studies, including the Philippines 1946-1954; Malaya 1948-1960; Vietnam 1967-1972; Laos 1964-1973; El Salvador 1981-1992; and the ongoing insurgency in Colombia. For additional best practices, see FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency, Dec 2006, pg. 1-29.

- **Long term commitment.** COIN is a long-term undertaking, and policy makers must be prepared to invest years' of effort to a COIN campaign.

- **Create a unified civilian-military authority under the right person.** Successful COIN strategies operate under combined and collaborative civil-military leadership. When led from the top, close coordination between civilian and military organizations will permeate to the tactical levels. Successful COIN campaigns can be often be directly attributed to capable, imaginative individuals in key leadership positions.

- **Respect people.** Cultural sensitivity and awareness of heterogeneous nuances of the local population affecting communities' interests and loyalties.

- **Emphasize human intelligence.** Emphasis should be placed on the development and use of intelligence sources. Important goals include: employment of police investigative techniques; strengthening counter-intelligence programs and training; developing a tips program that protects informants; offering rewards for information; identifying and constraining insurgent mobilization and recruitment forums; and de-conflicting intelligence efforts.

- **Protect and control the population.** Employ "clear and hold" operations to secure populated areas and prevent insurgent intimidation. Other methods include disrupting insurgents' access to food, supplies, and other resources from the population; ensuring effective border controls; and isolating contested areas. One might consider voluntary relocation of civilians from conflicted areas if local customs allow, and if benefits outweigh costs. Also work to eliminate sanctuaries and establish constructive presence in each community; develop procedures to reinforce isolated outposts; protect critical infrastructure; secure roads and rivers to promote unimpeded commerce; and ensure laws for reasonable searches and detention of suspected enemy personnel.

- **Strengthen indigenous political processes and institutional performance.** To the extent possible in the area of operation, address real grievances; provide full-spectrum government services; uphold the rule-of-law; conduct military Civic

Action; organize civil-military committees with multiple agencies—local as well as federal officials—and military services to ensure unity of effort; and professionalize and improve indigenous security forces, government ministries, and local officials through advisor and training programs. Work to promote democratization and self-determination as alternatives to insurgent ideology; root-out corruption; emphasize performance and national-loyalty over cronyism and patronage in official appointments; establish robust oversight programs similar to an Inspector General; employ tax breaks and other incentives to energize private investment; provide competent refugee assistance; enforce strict fire discipline and appropriate Rules of Engagement; and synchronize security and development efforts.

- **Mobilize the population to contribute to its own defense.** Organize community watch groups; enlist local population self-defense forces and auxiliary police with adequate oversight and legal framework; recruit community-improvement work details; and engage community, tribal and/or religious leaders.

- **Develop comprehensive incarceration programs.** Provide Human Rights and Law of War training to security personnel; emphasize appropriate standards of conduct; pre-establish detention and interrogation procedures and have necessary facilities and resources; develop programs for prisoners which focus on reintegration into broader society and mitigate the risk of radicalization during detention; and provide oversight of security contractors.

- **Employ robust information and psychological operations.** Inform civilians about the benefits of government security, development, and political reform; highlight insurgent brutality and criminal conduct; craft liberal reconciliation programs for rank-and-file insurgents to divide followers from leaders; challenge self-image and idealism within insurgent ranks; and expose instances when insurgent leaders display selfishness, incompetence, and corruption.

Appendix C

Website Links to Assessment & Modeling Tools

1. Political Instability Modeling
   http://www.usgcoin.org/library/USGDocuments/PoliticalInstabilityModeling.pdf

2. USAID Conducting a Conflict Assessment: A framework for Strategy and Program Development
   http://www.usgcoin.org/library/USGDocuments/CMM_ConflAssessFrmwrk_May_05.pdf

3. USAID Conflict Mitigation and Management Policy
   http://www.usgcoin.org/library/USGDocuments/USAID_Conflict_MM_Policy_Apr_2005.pdf

4. USAID Community-Based Development in Conflict-Affected Areas
   http://www.usgcoin.org/library/USGDocuments/USAID_CMM_CBD_Guide_May_2007.pdf

5. S/CRS Triggering Mechanisms for "Whole-of-Government" Planning for Reconstruction, Stabilization and Conflict Transformation
   http://www.usgcoin.org/library/USGDocuments/PlanningForRSTriggers-20070816.pdf

6. S/CRS Interagency Management System for Reconstruction and Stabilization
   http://www.usgcoin.org/library/USGDocuments/InteragencyManagementSystem-20070309.pdf

Appendix D

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Appendix E

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CAF	Conflict Assessment Framework, USAID
CCDR	Combatant Commander, Defense
COIN	Counterinsurgency
COM	Chief of Mission, State
DOD	Department of Defense
Justice	Department of Justice
State	Department of State
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service, Agriculture
FM	Field Manuel, DOD
IGO	Inter-Government Organization
MCWP	Marine Corps Warfighting Publication, Defense
MNC	Multinational Corporation
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSC	National Security Council
S/CRS	Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction And Stabilization, State
U.S.	United States
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government

Appendix F

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