Building Peace after War in Afghanistan: The Hard Job of Soft Power
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Thank you, Juliana, for the invitation to join in this panel discussion, along with my distinguished colleagues Col. Eastman and Mr. Mohan.

Building peace in any post-conflict or fragile environment is hard, indeed a very hard job! The world events and policy decisions over the last decade have given the theorists and the field-tested experts extraordinary opportunities to test their mettle. Today I want to highlight some of the development objectives to foster accountable governance and democratic institution building, and perhaps a few thoughts on where improvement is needed.

The governmental agencies, the Congress, the Academy and untold numbers of thoughtful experts in development, in foreign policy, in diplomacy and in defense matters have really wrestled with the challenge of what can and must be done following armed conflicts and wars in order to secure the gains made on the battlefield.

Depending on the factors that led to the military engagement, significant analysis is required to determine the building blocks for peaceful societies, unique to the country in question:
- Who and what and how can the necessary political reforms be set into motion?
- Who, what and how can destroyed economies be jumpstarted in order for families to provide for their own needs?
- Who, what and how can civil society be engaged or re-engaged in the rebuilding?
- How can institutions be brought into existence or re-configured to have a participative and accountable governance system?

One factor in that analysis, in fact it should be an ongoing analysis, would be a determination of the ideal balance between the role and responsibilities of governmental, public sector entities and the tangible and unique input best pursued by civil society and the private sector.

Particularly over the last decade, there has been quite an evolution, and vigorous debate, regarding the role development in general – and the assets of USAID in particular – contributes to the National Security interests of the United States. Are these unique assets deserving of more investment? The 2010 National Security Strategy states clearly the Administration's intention to "improve[e] the integration of skills and capabilities without our military and civilian institutions so that they complement each other and operate seamlessly." Under the overall objective of "Promot[ing] Democracy and Human Rights Abroad", it is part of the stated US National Security Strategy to expand democracy and human rights abroad because "governments that respect these values are more just, peaceful and legitimate."

I concur that it is critical that US policies and funding priorities must focus on "strengthen[ing] key institutions of democratic accountability – free and fair electoral processes, strong legislatures, civilian control of militaries, honest police forces, independent and fair judiciaries, a free and independent press, a vibrant private sector, and a robust civil society." The services provided by these institutions need to respond to the "needs and preferences of their citizens." A critical aspect of building peace after war is allowing citizens their own voice in the rebuilding process.

I welcome the focus today on what has been done and could be done in Afghanistan… I look forward to hearing what my colleagues have to say on that front.

The development community knows that there can be no long-term, effective and sustainable progress on any aspect of the development or the peace-building agenda unless there is participative, transparent and accountable governance at all levels. Good governance is at the core to sustaining successful, broad-based development. Experience has shown though that fostering participatory governance in post-conflict settings is all the more challenging. There have been several important lessons learned over the years about how, and how not, to engage in these environments:

- Governance systems must come from within a country to be resilient and sustainable.

- Leadership development is critical, and when there is low capacity within a post-conflict environment, leadership training and mentoring should be infused in every program. Visionary leaders who view themselves as honest "brokers of peace …or catalysts for post-conflict development" can be effective in building coalitions of change agents who bridge the gap until democratic institutions are built. [Developing National Sustainable Development Strategies in Post-Conflict Countries, UNDES]

- When funding for building democratic institutions is unpredictable, perhaps due to the vacillation of donors' priorities, the disruptions have a detrimental impact on the economic and political development programs.

- When corruption hijacks the development of a marketplace aspiring to have rule-of-law standards, progress is thwarted or even reversed. In the case of Afghanistan, an extensive analysis of the situation [in 2009] strongly recommended a "foundational" package of assistance across the government. These anti-corruption activities would focus on decent salaries for those working in the democratic institutions, the development of stronger civil service skill sets, the development of solid systems and structures for governing, as well as bolstering civil society and media advocacy and oversight.

Based on what has been learned over decades of experience, the development community has sought to change the way post-conflict or stabilization or reconstruction – choose your lines of where these terms begin and end – is done in fragile state environments.

1. The Paris Principles on Aid Effectiveness (from 2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (from 2008) have contributed to the understanding and need for the recent procurement reforms at USAID, including the expanded use of country governance systems. These development principles are resulting in the agency's striving:
    - To give more resources directly to recipient countries while at the same time helping them manage these resources more effectively;
    - To increase the role of local organizations and experts in the design, delivery and evaluation of assistance; and
    - To listen more and harmonize USG assistance programs with the country's priorities and the programs of other donors.

2. Within the US Government, strengthening national capacity of partners of the US around the globe is being pursued with "A Whole of Government Approach" and includes diplomacy and development capabilities and institutions, as well as our military and intelligence capabilities. Suffice it to say that the budgetary levels of investment in these various components of the government are quite skewed.

3.   Just as a matter of fact, the Official Development Assistance (tracked by the OECD) for the United States has steadily increased from $12.3 billion in 2001 to more than $30 billion in 2010. These are modest numbers for the development component considering the number of countries in which the US is engaged! Though quite an increase, most of the increase was funneled to Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. As the Secretary of State has noted, Iraq and Afghanistan are "the largest military-to-civilian transition since the Marshall Plan."

4.   Whether inside the USG or not, it is very challenging to keep up with the organizational changes that are happening as part of the QDDR and other internal USAID reforms. The Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs is now being called the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights. USAID has made its own internal change in the establishment of a Center of Excellence for Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance, with the intent of promoting "strong democrac[ies] committed to broad-based development." Certainly the goal needs to be that ALL development projects undertaken in this Whole of Government Approach should be based on our best analytical data and full cooperation with developing partners so that programs which are devised and implemented lead to sustainable local institutions and involvement of civil society stakeholders.

5.   Personally I am a fan of using the concept of a whole of SOCIETY approach to the challenges we face in fragile countries. Though the $30 billion in Official Development Assistance I mentioned earlier is important, such ODA assistance no longer represents the primary driver of economic growth. In fact, this represented only 9% of the total, global private-public economic engagement from the United States in 2010! The Index of Global Philanthropy and Remittances [2012] which was recently released provides good food for thought about how our democracy and governance – and all development assistance – should be invested. US private philanthropy represented 12% of that total, remittances from those working in the US 29%, and private capital flows 49%! Globally in 2010, philanthropy and remittances from the developed to the developing world were nearly twice as much as government aid ($246 billion vs. $128 billion). More could be done to partner with private sector organizations to achieve shared objectives through public/private partnership programs and embrace a whole of society approach.

6. As the USG seeks to provide assistance that is more responsive to challenges faced in conflict and post-conflict environments, the questions that should be examined sound basic but must be fundamental to the design of our programs:
   • Who are the various stakeholders related to the democratic institutions?
   • How should a program be designed that will actually get at the root causes of the conflict?
   • What impact evaluation and monitoring and evaluation systems will be put into place at the beginning of the program?
   • How will we learn from the project to see what works and what does not?

To use Afghanistan as an example, the extensive 90-page assessment of corruption identified 3 strategic objectives for USAID technical assistance and support:
   1) Building governance capacities in transparency and accountability
   2) Reducing corruption where it directly impacts the people of Afghanistan
   3) Changing the culture of corruption that subverts governance at all levels. One of the recommended components included the targeting of anti-corruption programming in a particular province, ensuring that there would be coordination among USG entities as well as the donor community. As funds directed through Afghan mechanisms are monitored, such programing would also provide expectations about progress on transparency, accountability and integrity objectives.

       One overarching concern about coordination between the development community, the diplomatic community and the military community is the question of whether tools that have been developed over the last 25 years by USAID, and particularly the Center of Excellence for Democracy,

Human Rights and Governance, are informing the programs launched by the other parts of the government? And I'm sure the military has complex problem-solving approaches which could better inform the Interagency as well. For instance,

- USAID has created tools like the *Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework and the Tactical Conflict Assessment Planning Framework* which helps analysts better understand root problems of a given conflict;
- The *Democracy and Governance Strategic Assessment Framework* has been revised and updated, particularly to be more attuned to the governance dynamics in a given country.
- There also is an extensive, virtual *Guidance for Programming in Post-Conflict Countries*. One has been developed for Economic Growth Programming and another for DG Programming.
- *The Democratic Decentralization Programming Handbook* was peer-reviewed by academics who thoroughly researched the literature and prepared papers that informed the conceptual framework for decentralization and local governance programming.
- *A Field Guide for USAID D&G Officers: Assistance to Civilian Law Enforcement in Developing Countries [January 2011]* is a very practical tool. The Government Accounting Office has estimated that over 6 years (2002-2008) in Afghanistan alone, the USG provided $6.2 billion to train and equip the Afghanistan National Police.
- The Department of Defense, Department of State and USAID have worked closely to develop a common guideline for planning and implementing Security Sector Reform [*Joint Statement on Security Sector Reform*, 2009], and work continues toward a shared assessment framework and to conduct joint assessments. More could certainly be done in this arena.

The bottom line is that there is significant field work and capturing of lessons learned over the years in this arena of building peace through soft power. Especially in post-conflict environments when there are unrealistic expectations of seeing change, the tyranny of the urgent has tended to out-maneuver the analytical work required for solid programming.

The United States no doubt will continue to face the challenges of providing assistance in conflict and post-conflict countries. In these environments where conditions can change quickly, information is hard to obtain, and local culture and leadership matter, the development community as well as the Departments of State and of Defense find themselves in situations where the circumstances are unique and the way forward is not always clear. The National Security Strategy though is right on the mark: "History has shown that new and fragile democracies which do not develop their economy, their civil society and their democratic institutions rarely survive!"