HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
SECURITY COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AND AUTHORITIES

Wednesday, March 9, 2016

U.S. Senate
Subcommittee on Emerging
Threats and Capabilities
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:31 p.m.
in Room SR-232A, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Deb
Fischer, chairman of the subcommittee, presiding.

Subcommittee Members Present: Senators Ayotte, Fischer
[presiding], Cotton, Ernst, Nelson, Gillibrand, and Kaine.
OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. DEB FISCHER, U.S. SENATOR
FROM NEBRASKA

Senator Fischer: The hearing will come to order.
Welcome, everyone.

The subcommittee meets today with a panel of outside experts to review the security cooperation strategy and associated legal authorities and resourcing of the Department of Defense.

It is my goal that today’s hearing will provide the committee with a better understanding of the framework and tools through which the Department identifies, prioritizes, and executes security cooperation activities around the world, as well as identify areas for improvement and reform as we prepare to draft the NDAA.

Put more simply, is the current strategy and framework for engaging with, training, and equipping the security forces of partner nations accomplishing the security objectives of the Department of Defense and the broader U.S. Government? And if not, what should we change?

Numerous studies over the years, including some written by our witnesses, have noted the challenges confronting the Department’s ability to plan, execute, and assess its security cooperation activities. These challenges include the growing disconnect between strategic priorities and the alignment of resources, the difficulty of navigating the
unwieldy and cumbersome patchwork of over 100 related
security cooperation authorities, and the inability of the
Department to effectively assess whether its activities are
achieving their desired outcomes.

As the Nation increasingly relies on the U.S. military
to execute security cooperation and building partnership
activities around the world, there must be a commensurate
emphasis on ensuring the Department is appropriately
postured to execute this mission effectively.

I would now ask Senator Nelson for any opening remarks
that he would like to make.
STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator Nelson: Well, thank you, Madam Chair.
And welcome.

And over the past decade and a half, the Department’s authorities to conduct security cooperation and building partnership capacity activities -- it has expanded. And that has created some observers to note this patchwork that the chairman has mentioned that allows the Department to conduct train-and-equip activities in a variety of niche areas with varying constraints. So funding for these activities has also grown, contributing to a change in the traditional balance within the State and Defense Departments.

And that expansion of authority and funding has complicated how do you set the priorities on a lot of these activities. How do you build well trained personnel and how do you develop the policy architecture to support all of this? The Department has done a lot of work in this area.

Now, what I think we need to do is improve the transparency and how do we measure the effectiveness.

So I would like to hear you all talk about it. Give us an assessment of DOD’s security cooperation and assistance activities. Discuss whether this committee should make any changes to the current authorities and talk about how the
Department can measure the effectiveness of the programs and what are lessons learned.

Thank you.

Senator Fischer: Thank you, Senator Nelson.

I would now turn to our witnesses. Your full statements will be submitted for the record. Thank you for that. And I would ask each of you if you would please introduce yourselves and then make a brief opening statement. So, Mr. Eggers, if you would begin please.
STATEMENT OF JEFFREY W. EGGERS, SENIOR FELLOW,
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY PROGRAM, NEW AMERICA FOUNDATION

Mr. Eggers: Thank you, Madam Chair and Ranking Member Nelson, and members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify on this important topic and I am honored to join my colleagues, Mike McNerney and Melissa Dalton.

I am currently a senior fellow at New America. And my testimony today is informed by my experience, first as an operational practitioner of security cooperation programs, more than 20 years ago a strategic policy advisor on such programs at the institutional level, and most recently on my research on the efficacy of U.S. security assistance programs.

Considerable media attention has shed important light on the costly failures of these types of programs, most importantly in Syria and Yemen. But this scrutiny has not yet yielded any significant debate towards reengineering a better solution. So I welcome this subcommittee’s attention to the important issue here today.

The foundations of the modern security assistance system were, obviously, assembled amidst a time where the threat environment was moving more slowly. Despite the radical shift in the global security landscape since the turn of the century, these half-century-old building blocks...
remain the foundation of a modern system. And numerous attempts, of course, have been made in the last 15 years to update this paradigm to make it more responsive and agile to the current threat environment.

And mostly this effort involved, as you have said, involved new Title 10 authorities focused on building partner capacity to address the perceived challenge of fragile and failing states, giving rise to sub-state transnational threats. And it is this effort that has largely in my view and in my research proven ineffective.

The first problem is that the framework has become a cumbersome “patchwork,” as you have said, of authorities atop this outdated foundation, which I suspect my colleagues are going to speak to.

The second problem is that building partner capacity as a means of buttressing fragile states has not been realistically implemented against the recipient nation dynamics. As a result, BPC programs have proven ineffective in fragile high threat environments where we attempt to accelerate the delivery of brand new capability.

And yet, this is increasingly what we are seeking to do, principally because building partner capacity is seen as a preferred alternative to direct and unilateral U.S. intervention is more cost effective in a time of increasingly constrained defense budgets.
So a key lesson is that the effectiveness of security assistance is a function of U.S. intent. In cases where the programs seek to make gradual improvements to existing and mature capabilities, as was the case in Colombia and the Philippines, these programs have been more effective. In other instances where the assistance is employed to either buy access or influence, the track record is mixed in this more modest and transactional mode. However, efforts to literally build new capability in high-risk theaters with political instability have largely been ineffective.

And there are four basic types of difficulties behind these challenge programs. One, security capability is being developed ahead of or in the absence of civilian governance and rule of law infrastructure. Two, tactical capability development precedes institutional, logistical and financial support to sustain those programs for the long term. Three, program planning does not adequately account for political will, corruption, or the intent to use a capability. Four, programs are too ambitious, as I have said, in that they seek to build new capabilities where they do not exist rather than reinforce existing capabilities.

Of course, a related overarching concern is the lack of a coordinated U.S. Government strategy for security sector assistance. Aside from broad guidance, there is no detailed, top-down strategy as to why the current array of
programs and activities is structured the way it is. Rather, the array of programs is generally the result of a bottom-up process driven by country teams and regional leadership.

Notwithstanding the lack of a global strategy, strategic level oversight of security sector assistance is further made difficult due to a lack of a centralized and standardized way of cataloging programs and expenditures.

To close, a few thoughts on ways this important aspect of our national security strategy might be improved.

First and as a strategic matter, we could be a bit more humble about our ability to create new security capabilities in an expedited manner in politically weak environments and in the absence of civilian institutions.

Second, programming should be vetted at the front end against an enhanced framework of selected feasibility criteria to include political will, corruption, absorptive capacity, sustainability, and so on.

Third, we should look to leverage joint authorities to enhance longer-term stabilization approaches focused on governance and rule of law efforts.

Fourth, we should anticipate that the expansion of security sector assistance will increasingly pit Leahy Amendment requirements against human rights concerns and update those requirements accordingly to manage this
expansion.

Finally, it will be important to follow through on the fiscal year 2016 NDAA requirement to develop a global strategic framework of U.S. security sector assistance.

Madam Chair, I greatly appreciate the opportunity to offer this testimony today. None of this is to suggest that security sector assistance should be abandoned in favor of greater unilateral engagement. It is simply to suggest that we need to be more prudent and judicious with expectations of what these programs can and cannot achieve.

I hope my testimony serves useful, and I look forward to assisting the committee in any way possible in the future. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Eggers follows:]
Senator Fischer: Thank you, sir.

Ma’am?
STATEMENT OF MELISSA G. DALTON, FELLOW AND CHIEF OF STAFF, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY PROGRAM, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Ms. Dalton: Chairman Fischer, Ranking Member Nelson, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am honored to testify before you today.

My name is Melissa Dalton. I am a fellow and the Chief of Staff of the International Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Security cooperation is central to meeting the challenges of the 21st century, which heightens the imperative of planning, managing, and resourcing security cooperation effectively. I will focus my remarks on three topics: applying resources strategically, measuring effectiveness, and balancing activities for a coherent program.

First, applying resources strategically. While we should strive for streamlining security cooperation authorities, we should also be cognizant of how the changing security environment may require new approaches. The United States faces an increasingly complex security environment with interlinking challenges from China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea to transnational threats including the Islamic State and Al Qaeda and their affiliates, as well as cyber. These include hybrid or gray zone security challenges with a
range of state and non-state actors in play.

With this level of complexity and a declining defense budget, the United States must leverage its relationships with partners in support of shared interests. I offer five legislative recommendations for Congress.

First, consider a new legal authority to permit Title 10 security cooperation partnerships with non-state actors, in coordination with the Department of State, to give the President and the Department more options for addressing hybrid challenges.

The default is to use Title 50 authorities and funding in these situations. However, Washington may want to publicly highlight partnerships with non-state entities for strategic purposes or link those partnerships to military activities. Through our Title 10 authority, we might create more options for decision-makers. An assessment, monitoring, and evaluation framework could help mitigate the risks of partnerships with non-state actors with established off-ramps for turning the assistance off if the program objectives are not met.

The second recommendation. Congress should consider requiring acquisition and delivery systems to be more responsive to crisis requirements. The Department has the authorities it needs to rapidly inject security cooperation to partners in crisis response situations. However,
acquisition and delivery systems are often slow to prioritize emerging requirements and may not have the appropriate manpower to staff these requirements, resulting in delays that present operational risks.

Third, Congress should consider evaluating the risks and benefits of creating a transfer authority between the Department and USAID to enable, where appropriate, DOD to transfer funds to USAID. Such a mechanism could help combatant commands better link counter terrorism efforts to USAID countering violent extremism prevention programs.

Fourth, Congress should specify roles for the military services such as organizing and allocating personnel for security cooperation activities. Currently, the services de-prioritize security cooperation in resource allocation decisions because the operational benefits are not clearly defined. Moreover, there is no security cooperation career track for military personnel.

And fifth, the Congress should consider streamlining the Office of the Secretary of Defense by, A, moving program management of security cooperation to the Defense Security Cooperation Agency under the oversight of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and B, consolidating all policy oversight of security cooperation programs, including counterterrorism and counternarcotics partnership programs to a single OSD policy office.
The Department should take two steps in this area. First, enact the security sector reform called for in Presidential Policy Directive 23 to strengthen the linkage between U.S. priorities and security cooperation investments. It should also tighten the alignment from the defense strategy and the guidance for the employment of the force to theater campaign plans and specific security cooperation activities.

The second topic I would like to address today is measuring effectiveness. The Department lacks a system to assess, monitor, and evaluate the performance of its security cooperation efforts. Congress should, therefore, consider tasking OSD to develop a framework for assessment, monitoring, and evaluation in coordination with the Department of State. This should include a rigorous front-end assessment by DOD, State, and the intelligence community of how security cooperation will affect a partner country beyond the discrete military contact.

Congress should also consider requiring combatant commands to conduct programmatic assessment, monitoring, and evaluation for security cooperation within the parameters of the policy framework.

The third and final topic I would like to address today is balancing activities for a coherent program. Current DOD policy is to create a comprehensive package of security
cooperation for partners, including institution-building and sustainment. Yet, in practice, U.S. political imperatives and operational demands, as well as partner preferences and challenges, often hinder implementation of a coherent and enduring program.

The DOD directive on defense institution building is a promising start to orienting security cooperation efforts for a more balanced and enduring approach. However, we should moderate expectations for improvement to account for long-term effects that are rarely evident in the short term.

To achieve a better balance of security cooperation activities, Congress should consider requiring DOD to define the outcome, not just the objectives, for security cooperation programs when providing congressional notification and explain how a range of tools, including institution-building, will help achieve that outcome.

In conclusion, the United States faces a daunting array of security challenges in the 21st century that only a network of partners can address together. The Department continually reaches for security cooperation to address challenges, but does not give it the investments in training personnel and policy to sustain and strategically employ it as it does for its hard power tools. Applying resources based on priorities, measuring effectiveness, and balancing activities for a coherent program will enable the United
States to better employ security cooperation as a strategic tool of national power.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Dalton follows:]
Senator Fischer: Thank you.

Sir?
STATEMENT OF MICHAEL J. McNERNEY, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY CENTER, RAND
CORPORATION

Mr. McNerney: Chairman Fischer, Ranking Member Nelson,
distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the
opportunity to testify on the important topic of security
cooperation.

I am Michael McNerney from the RAND Corporation. It is
a pleasure to appear before you along with my colleagues,
Jeff Eggers and Melissa Dalton.

Today I will focus on three questions. First, how does
the Department of Defense prioritize its security
cooporation investments? Second, how does DOD manage the
current patchwork of relevant legislative authorities?
Third, how can DOD and Congress better evaluate the
effectiveness of these activities?

Regarding prioritization, let us start with a few
numbers. DOD conducts about 3,000 to 4,000 security
cooporation events per year in more than 130 countries.
Total U.S. assistance to foreign militaries and police
forces runs between $15 billion and $20 billion a year,
about $10 billion of which comes from DOD.

So what is the bang for the buck? A recent RAND study
found U.S. investments in security cooperation were
associated with reduced fragility around the world. This
link, however, is strongly connected with certain types of
countries, less autocratic, less fragile, and with certain
types of tools, namely those tools that focus on building
human capital and institutions.

Resilient partners are the best defense against
terrorism and other threats, and resilience comes from
strong institutions and professional security forces. Some
of the most important tools for building resilient partners
reside outside DOD, for example, with the Department of
State and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

So let me mention two recommendations relevant to
prioritization.

First, Congress might consider ways to encourage DOD to
more clearly prioritize partner countries and investment
tradeoffs and to more consistently prioritize activities
that strengthen a partner’s institutions and the
professionalization of their security forces.

Second, Congress might consider ways to support DOD,
State Department, and USAID unity of effort. For example,
could DOD be authorized to transfer funds to USAID if a
military commander needs USAID’s support in preventing
violent extremism?

Regarding authorities, last week, RAND released a
report analyzing legislative authorities for security
cooperation. Based on our research and on the focused
discussions we had with stakeholders in Congress and in DOD, we created a framework to organize 106 Title 10 authorities into several categories. We identified opportunities for reducing these authorities by 15 percent from 106 to 91. We also found opportunities to revise and add authorities to improve flexibility, for example, in the areas of cyber and ballistic missile defense.

Two recommendations on authorities.

First, Congress, working with DOD, might consider RAND’s proposals for consolidating, revising, and adding Title 10 security cooperation authorities. Doing so would likely increase operational effectiveness on the ground while maintaining robust congressional oversight.

Second, Congress might consider a follow-on step to analyze how DOD and Department of State authorities can be better integrated.

The third major challenge I see in security cooperation is how DOD and Congress can better evaluate effectiveness, what is working and what is not. Understanding effectiveness starts with smart objectives, specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented, and time-bound. With smart objectives as the foundation, the next step is building a comprehensive system for what is called AM&E, assessments of partner capabilities and will, monitoring of performance, and evaluations of effectiveness.
RAND is working with DOD to help it apply lessons from various organizations like the State Department, USAID, World Bank, Millennium Challenge Corporation, and working with them to create a framework for managing AM&E more effectively.

So looking ahead to when DOD provides its strategic framework for security cooperation this spring, a key question for Congress might be how DOD’s AM&E system will improve congressional oversight, particularly through prioritized, analysis-based evaluations.

Chairman Fischer, Ranking Member Nelson, members of the subcommittee, I appreciate the time to offer this testimony. I look forward to helping the committee with its vital work.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McNerney follows:]

[The prepared statement of Mr. McNerney follows:]
Senator Fischer: Thank you all. I appreciate your opening statements.

The ranking member has to leave shortly, so I will defer and have Senator Nelson begin the questioning.

Senator Nelson: Thank you for the courtesy, Madam Chairman.

Ms. Dalton, you talked about assistance to non-state actors. Tell us.

Ms. Dalton: Thank you, Ranking Member Nelson.

What I am talking about is in the 21st century, the United States faces considerable challenges from potential adversaries that are leveraging non-state actors. If you think of China’s activities in the South China Sea, using Coast Guard and commercial shipping assets, if you think about Russia’s activities in Europe, little green men, political subversion, leveraging non-state capabilities, and Iran has a long history of leveraging non-state actors in the Middle East.

The fact of the matter is the 21st century security landscape is incredibly diffuse with power distributed across state and non-state boundaries. And so for the United States to remain competitive in that space with its potential adversaries, I think we need to get creative about who we are partnering with. And that might require us thinking through whether we have the right authorities to
conduct military activities in various parts of the world.

As I mentioned, there are currently mechanisms in other parts of the government that allow for that, but there may be an argument for considering a more public approach to highlight the partnerships that we might strike with non-state actors. We have also done this in sort of an ad hoc manner in places like Syria, support for the Kurds. And so the question is do we need a more systematic approach, given the evolution of the strategic landscape that does not seem to be faltering at this time.

Senator Nelson: Before I leave, I need to get to another question, but I would like a brief comment from the other two of you about this.

Mr. Eggers: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Nelson: Brief.

Mr. Eggers: Ms. Dalton has put her finger on an important problem. Libya and Syria exemplify the multi-dimensional conflicts we face where it is not clear that the sub-state enemy of our enemy is our friend. It is clearly not so simple in the case of Al Nusra and the even wider factualization in Libya.

However, I am also not sure that it is necessarily right to formalize vehicles for such type of support, but I do think it would be better to bring some mechanism and some discipline so that it does not sit entirely within Title 50.
There are pretty good lessons of where that has gone. It has been successful, but long-term unintended consequences need to be watched.

Senator Nelson: And the gentleman from RAND.

Mr. McNerney: Thank you, Senator.

I agree it could be a helpful approach, but it would have to be monitored pretty carefully. But I do think Title 10 can bring a more open approach, and not everything working with non-state actors has to be clandestine or covert. So why not have a more open approach to non-state actors if we do not need to operate in a covert manner with them?

Senator Nelson: Let us go to Eastern Europe. How important is it to our Eastern European allies that there are training opportunities and exercises basically for their capability, as well as reassurance? Anybody.

Mr. McNerney: I will go first.

So the research I talked about showed less autocratic, more stable countries seem to be able to use security cooperation assistance better, and Eastern Europe countries are in general a very good example of where I think the U.S. gets a good bang for the buck.

Senator Nelson: All right. So we send U.S. forces there. They train or conduct exercises with those allies, and they do it in multilateral settings. Everybody agree
with that? Okay.

Now, what about Ukraine? We are concerned in building partner capacity. We are focused on addressing the institutional problems of corruption and flawed management, and yet we have to help them build better tactical skills. Do you want to comment on that?

Mr. Eggers: I think the example of Ukraine is, as Mr. McNerney said, a good bang for the buck example where there is a high return on investment because the new threats of the 21st century are in, as Ms. Dalton said, these gray areas where the 20th century toolbox is not working. And the one thing in that toolbox that can work in this paradigm is buttressing and, as you said, reassuring our support and commitment in these areas. The South China Sea is another great example of where there are fewer tools that we can use. This is an example where the old paradigm does meet the new wave of threats in my view.

Senator Nelson: I am only 30 seconds over.

Senator Fischer: Not bad. Thank you, Senator Nelson. I would like to ask you just some basic questions about these programs. As you know, we are looking at different reforms in moving forward as a committee. And so I kind of want to do a broad view of these programs. And any of you that would like to respond to the questions, it would be fine.
Do you believe that our current structure of security cooperation authorities allows the Department to effectively being able to marry the strategic policy with appropriate operations and resources? And if not, where do you think this process breaks down?

Mr. McNerney: I would say the authorities are not the biggest problem in terms of the breakdown, but they could be made clearer, more consolidated to make it a little bit clearer for those on the ground to understand what they can and cannot do. In our report, we have got some what we call low-hanging fruit options that are very easy to consolidate and a few new ideas for authorities to enable the men and women who are working so hard on the ground to do this to feel confident that, yes, I can work with this partner to strengthen their cyber capabilities and I am not going to get shut down by a Pentagon lawyer a month later. So, yes, there is room for improvements in that regard.

But the bigger problem is often in the guidance that flows then down from the Pentagon and the need for the people on the ground to understand what is expected of them and for them to communicate with the partner how this is going to work. And that is where we usually have more problems.

Senator Fischer: And as we have seen the growth in threats, we also see a growth in the security cooperation
authorities. I talked about a patchwork and just the vast
number of authorities that are out there. I believe it was
you, Ms. Dalton, who spoke about being able to combine some
of them. How do you think that would impact our efforts,
though, in moving forward? Are we going to be able to save
some time and resources by consolidating some of these
authorities, making it more time-sensitive in many ways as
well? Again, any of you feel free to answer.

Ms. Dalton: Yes, Madam Chairman. I do think that
doing some streamlining of authorities would simplify the
choices that decision-makers and practitioners have to make
when faced with a challenge that seems to require some sort
of security cooperation, and then opening the grand menu of
100 authorities, it is quite a task.

You know, there are folks in the security cooperation
enterprise that have years of experience that are in pockets
in different offices. But oftentimes you have embassies
staffed with security cooperation officials that are very
well intended, have significant operational background, but
do not have the training on how to do security cooperation.
They have had a 2-week crash course on what the security
cooperation authorities are, but have not had a career of
looking at this issue set and so are often somewhat
scrambling in a way to define what the appropriate mix of
tools is correct for a particular application.
Senator Fischer: So as they are attempting to navigate through this process, how much time is wasted? How much of our resources are wasted? Do you have any way to gauge that? A lot, a little?

Mr. Eggers: Madam Chair, my guess is that the has evolved to the complexity of the framework, and so people are now holding essentially doctorates in how to patch together these 160 authorities to get what they need to do done. So making it consolidated and more streamlined would probably lower the bars to entry for becoming an expert planner, and these people have an immense amount of experience and knowledge to be able to work with this patchwork. But I am not sure it would save time. I think it would lower the bar to entry so that it would be more accessible and more easily trained. Again, I do not think it is one of the strategic variables impacting the effectiveness of the overall process.

Mr. McNerney: I would think about opportunity costs also. So sometimes the person at the embassy working with the partner directly -- they will not waste a lot of time. They will just say, well, I do not understand this, so I am going to do what my predecessor did, or I am going to do what we did last year because it is easy and I know it will get approved. So sometimes it can still be implemented quickly, but it might not be the most effective approach.
Senator Fischer: Thank you.

Senator Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committee. And thanks to the witnesses for being here. I will start with the positive, then questions and concerns.

So I have been a huge fan of security assistance programs. I have seen our special forces working together with the Lebanese army and thanked profusely for the commitment of our country to their special forces training. We have special purpose Marine air-ground task force training units in Africa doing a lot of work with a lot of the different countries there. They are both helping countries tackle their challenges, they are building good relations between the United States and those countries. And a lot of the work is done in areas that have been identified as near or adjacent to high-threat embassy posts so that if we were ever to need to do something quickly at a high-threat U.S. embassy, we would have the working relationships there to enable us to do it. So there are a lot of reasons for these investments.

And then finally, the work that we have done in security cooperation with Colombia has really been remarkable in the last 15 years. And so now you see Colombians that we have trained in Central America helping
the northern triangle countries deal with their violence.

You see them in the Sinai as part of the multinational force observers guarding the border between Egypt and Israel. And so we have trained them well enough that they are going out and providing stability elsewhere, which is fantastic.

So I generally am a fan, but I am really glad that the chairwoman called this hearing because I think there are potentials for confusion and overlap and how do you rationalize all this.

We had a hearing in January in the Readiness Subcommittee -- I think Senator Ernst was part of it -- where we were looking a tug of war between basically DOD and USAID over the DOD Task Force for Business and Stability Operations, which led to a lot of kind of shocking headlines about over-expenditure on what would seem like USAID activity. And even though the witnesses were sort of making a case that some of the instances were not as bad as maybe they initially appeared, they did concede actually, when they looked at it, it would be better for USAID to do this kind of work than DOD. That was a helpful concession that they made in connection with the hearing.

So I sort of am curious to have you talk really about two things -- if we are working with other nations to help them on security, the purpose is great -- how to coordinate better between what DOD provides and what State or USAID
provide first.

And then second -- and you touched on this a little bit in your testimony -- the whole question of measuring effect. It is like what are the goals you set out in advance and then how do you measure their effectiveness. The 160 different authorities not only makes it hard to plan, but it makes it hard for us to exercise oversight if the authorities are also very different. And that is something we ought to be doing to measure the effectiveness of this $10 billion annual investment.

So if you could talk about either effectiveness or coordinating among the different participating U.S. agencies.

Mr. Eggers: Thank you, Senator. I will take the first one.

One of the bright spots in the evolution of authorities, the expansion of Title 10 authorities and so forth, the innovation since 9/11 in these types of authorities that I found that people were relatively pleased with were the utilization of joint authorities and getting away from the old mechanism where it was really one or the other and there was either a coordination consultation requirement, which since they were not well defined, could create tensions and lack of coordination between the agencies. But there was a fair amount of consensus that the
innovation of using a joint mechanism for these types of authorities, while it obviously requires more work because two agencies have to come together, it also steps around a lot of the tension that was built up in the older model.

And I would defer the effectiveness question to my colleagues.

Ms. Dalton: Thank you for that question, Senator.

In regards to coordination between the Department and its interagency partners, the Presidential Policy Directive 23 calls for the creation of integrated country strategies that would originate in the embassies, and so it would involve all various members of the country teams, State, USAID, DOD, and others collaborating to synchronize objectives and priorities and activities in that strategy. And then that, in theory, is supposed to come back up to Washington to have the policy oversight of that.

The trick then is also feeding that into the theater campaign plan development. And so that linkage would need to happen in DOD, particularly in OSD and the Joint Staff. So there is interagency work afoot to try to address that, but I think we are not quite there yet.

To the point of measuring effectiveness, I completely agree that the 100 authorities that we would have to measure effectiveness against would be quite a daunting task. And so being able to streamline the authorities with -- you
know, in part one of the objectives of enhancing our ability
to measure effectiveness would be quite significant in both
creating a policy framework, how do you create parameters
for the framework around the authorities that you are going
to measure, as well as the burden on the combatant
commanders to do programmatic evaluation of security
cooperation. If you kind of narrow the number of things
that people have to look at, surely there are efficiencies
to be made.

Senator Fischer: Thank you, Senator Kaine.

Senator Cotton?

Senator Cotton: Thank you.

Mr. McNerney, you stressed in your written testimony
the importance of prioritization. Oftentimes when I hear a
conversation about security assistance and security
cooperation programs, it is focused on the Middle East where
we have been for a long time and countries in Africa that
need some very basic capability-building, you know, police
forces, shoot, move, communicate at the small unit tactic
level. But then you look in places like Southeast Asia
where we deal with very advanced militaries that still need
assistance with maritime security especially towards China
and their aggressive actions in the South China Sea.

Could you say a little bit about the qualitative
differences in security assistance across the main regions
where we are engaged, East and Southeast Asia, the Middle
East, and Europe, and how we might think about prioritizing
those efforts?

Mr. McNERney: Thanks, Senator Cotton.

So I think you are exactly right that for every region
the assistance really needs to be tailored, and even every
country has a great variety.

I think the way to think about tailoring, though, is to
start with the same fundamental tools. And so institution-
building is relevant in all regions. It is just done in a
different way. So in Europe, for instance, we work with
institutions on a more peer basis to share classified
information in a more efficient way, almost the way the U.S.
works within the interagency. So State and DOD have trouble
talking to each other. The U.S. and the U.K. might have
similar challenges working across agencies. So we work at
the institutional level in a very sophisticated way. And so
it is important to reinforce that.

Whereas, in the Middle East, we are not as close
because we do not have a NATO alliance equivalent. And so
the cooperation is not as sophisticated, and yet there needs
to be an ability to work with those partners and try to
align our values and our interests over time. And that is a
really long game, but it is well worth the investment. So
there it is less about sharing some top secret piece of
information today. It is more about how can we become
closer over the next 20 years.

In Southeast Asia, it is helping them develop the
institutions. Often it is pushing on an open door where
countries are already working to strengthen institutions,
and we can build on that, and it is basically putting seed
in fertile ground, whereas in Africa, you might get more
resistance.

So in all cases, the tools are important. You just
have to apply them in different ways. To save time, I will
not go through train and equip or professional military
education, but it is the same way of thinking for each of
those.

Senator Cotton: Ms. Dalton, would you care to add
anything? It was a CSIS report recently on the Asia-Pacific
rebalance that talked about the need for more maritime
security cooperation in the South China Sea.

Ms. Dalton: Yes. That was combined effort from my
office and the Asia team, and that was absolutely
highlighted as a priority for investment on the part of the
Department going forward, including the creation of a joint
operational center to synchronize maritime security
activities and enhance investments in undersea warfare,
electronic warfare, and ISR, among other capabilities. So
from our perspective, that is certainly a priority for
Senator Cotton: I am going to throw this out for all three witnesses because I am not sure which has the best perspective. So feel free to claim the jump ball.

In our country when we think about authorities, we have a pretty sharp distinction between Title 10 and Title 50. Suffice it to say those authorities and that distinction is not as clear cut among our adversaries and among many of our allies. And if you look at some of the challenges that countries on Russia’s periphery face, they certainly face something that we might consider closer to a Title 50 authority challenge than a traditional military challenge, even though those lines are not as clear. Russia has a larger intelligence budget for instance than the entire government budget of Estonia and Latvia.

Is that something that we need to address as a government, the fact that we have a very bright line between those two authorities but allies, countries who need capacity- and capability-building do not have such a bright line?

Ms. Dalton: Senator, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, I do think that we need to take a look at how we approach this issue of hybrid warfare and gray zones because there is a difference, as you note, between how our adversaries approach these issues and how they are task
organized to address them, and then the clear distinctions on our side.

Certainly we need to be very careful in approaching that. There are very good reasons why we have those distinctions. We are a democracy. We want to have that civ-mil distinction and have a clear distinction between our intelligence and our military activities.

But as I mentioned earlier, I do think that in order to remain competitive in this space, that it requires some creative thinking on our part in terms of how we organize and how we approach these problem sets, which may have implications for our authorities.

Senator Cotton: Mr. Eggers, Mr. McNerney?

Mr. Eggers: I would agree with Ms. Dalton. I think it is right to identify these areas as a need for focus, but really the first place to invest would be targeting these areas with greater priority with the tools that we have, as is being done with the Eastern Europe reassurance and South China Sea and so forth, before we need to get to engineering kind of new authorities that kind of go with what Putin and the Russians are doing. I think there is probably more that could be done, but I think it is right to focus on this as a problem area.

Senator Cotton: Thank you.

Senator Fischer: Thank you, Senator Cotton.
Senator Ernst?

Senator Ernst: Thank you, Madam Chair.
And thank you to the witnesses today for being here.

It is an interesting discussion.

And I am going to go back a little bit. Senator Cotton had mentioned the Middle East and the South China Sea. If we can go back to the Middle East a little bit, as we talk about measurements and what is working and what is not working, Mr. McNerney, if you can set the stage for us.

Right now if we focus on the Middle East, in particular, in Iraq, developing a Sunni fighting force is really key to defeating ISIS in Iraq, and holding and building in Sunni areas that ISIS has destroyed, that is very important. But it does not seem like we have had much emphasis coming from the Iraqi Government on actually developing that Sunni force. Now we have a Shia force that is rivaling the Iraqi Security Forces in that area and outside of Baghdad.

So if you could set the stage for us on why it is taking so long for the Iraqis to develop a Sunni fighting force and maybe any influences in that. And then I would like to move on to Ms. Dalton and talk about being creative and tailoring some of these programs that exist to retool and do better. But if you could set the stage for us, please, Mr. McNerney.
Mr. McNerney: Thank you, Senator Ernst.

I think the Middle East is obviously the greatest challenge of all in the security cooperation realm, and I think where the Department could do better is in presenting expected outcomes and risk. What we usually get is hoped-for outcomes when we get assessments. And so if there was a little more sort of skeptical assessment of what will come out of efforts, I think it then allows Congress to maybe make better judgments about what the investments are going to do.

And again, I would reiterate that that is a really long game in the Middle East. So the investments really have to be balanced between long-term and short-term goals. And at times in Iraq, being a great case, we were very short-term focused during the effort to withdraw and getting to certain levels of troops at a certain readiness standard and may not have done as good a job thinking about the political frameworks and the sort of institutional piece of that. And so we do not want to make the same mistake now. Of course, you cannot force a sovereign nation to take action, but we have a lot of tools to encourage ways of doing business that we need to have a more open dialogue about, including here on the Hill.

Senator Ernst: Certainly. And do you see other governmental forces, particularly Iranian forces -- are they
having an influence in that in why we are not able to see
greater Sunni participation?

Mr. McNerney: Well, absolutely. Iran as a next door
neighbor and having a relationship with the government
absolutely has influence there as well. And I always say
that the United States does not have much leverage, but we
have tremendous influence. By leverage, I think of a
transactional you need to do X or else we will withdraw
funding. That does not work very well. Both countries,
Iran and the U.S., have influence but it is a much more
subtle sort of soft power way of thinking, and we need to
try to think about how to use tools that help in that
regard.

Senator Ernst: Well, okay. So now we have got the
stage set with some of the issues that we have and the
influences that we have.

Now, Ms. Dalton, can you take that stage and further
develop it, retooling the way we think about the situation
and the other types of assistance or cooperation that we can
utilize in that area to do a better job? Can you maybe give
us an idea what you think perhaps could work in that area?

Ms. Dalton: Thank you for the question, Senator.

I do think that this is one of the areas where this
concept of greater engagement with non-state actors could be
helpful. And we had this one-off example of the Awakening
in Iraq in 2007-2008 where we provided assistance to the tribes at a local level and that helped turn the tide. That for a variety of reasons did not work over the long term. And so I think that that is the big lesson learned there, that there are cases in the past where we have ad hoc assisted non-state actors in places in the Middle East, but then connecting that to a broader political framework such that it is a sustainable solution such that if we empower the tribes and they set up their expectations in terms of their role in the future of Iraq, that there is some answer at the end of that for them. I think we did not close the circle on that last time. And so if we are to step our engagement with the tribes this time, that is something that we should definitely look to do better on.

Senator Ernst: Thank you, Ms. Dalton.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator Fischer: Thank you, Senator Ernst.

Senator Gillibrand?

Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

The international partners who are a focus of our security assistance efforts have a wide range of financial means. Saudi Arabia, for example, a vastly wealthy state, is capable of funding most of the capacity-building arrangements it has with the U.S. Other strategically important partners like Jordan are much more dependent on
1 U.S. financial assistance to sustain such activities.
2 When a partner nation commits its own resources towards
3 paying for U.S. security assistance, does that influence its
4 efficacy and outcome? And when partner nations are not able
5 to bankroll the assistance the U.S. provides, what reasons
6 justify or which metrics should be met to determine whether
7 the U.S. supports that relationship financially?
8 Mr. McNerney: So I have always been of the mind that
9 even the partners with the least resources need to have some
10 buy-in, and we always say you cannot want it more than they
11 do. So even a partner who is really strapped for resources
12 -- they need to buy into sustainment, maintenance over time,
13 and at least providing trained personnel who are going to
14 stay with the equipment or other assistance that we provide.
15 On the other end of the coin, a country like Saudi
16 Arabia -- I am definitely a heretic in this regard, but I
17 think the U.S. should be willing to even fund Saudi Arabian
18 participation in certain events if the U.S. feels like it
19 will not come otherwise and it is really important for us to
20 have them there. The U.K. actually does that. Sometimes
21 the U.K. will say we are doing an event on something to do
22 with professionalization and we want everyone to come and we
23 will just pay for everyone. Of course, we do not do that
24 for sound financial reasons, but there may be times we want
25 to make exceptions to that rule.
Senator Gillibrand: Anyone else?

Ms. Dalton: Senator, thanks for the question.

I would just also add to Mike’s great comments that there is also a difference in leverage, as Mike noted earlier, being a factor in security cooperation relationships. And that has an impact as you look to measuring effectiveness and the identification of what outcomes we are trying to achieve. If our partner has more of a say in terms of the dollar amount that they can commit to their security investments, that arguably puts us on a different playing field with them in terms of leverage.

And so if there is a difference in the outcomes that we want to achieve, it perhaps is harder for us to square those different outcomes. If there is a partner that is more dependent on us for resources, arguably we may have a bit more leverage. And so any differences in objectives and outcomes might be more easily bridged, I would venture.

Senator Gillibrand: Related. Since 2001, the U.S. has spent more than $100 billion on programs to build partner capacity in weak states like Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan, all producing limited degrees of success. What metrics are used to determine the efficacy of capacity-building programs there, and what might be better indicators of success?

Mr. Eggers: Senator, I think metrics I will leave to my colleague, Mr. McNerney, to address.
One of the things that I have advocated before is before we even get to the question of measuring the effectiveness of the program, vetting the feasibility of the program on the front end. I think it is going to be always difficult to really find concrete and quantitative metrics, even when these programs are well implemented and appear to be creating good results. I think it is always going to be difficult. I think it is easier to come up with principles for which these types of programs should be applied and where we think we are going to get a reasonable return on investment and focus on applying that on the front end.

Mr. McNerney: Maybe I could just add something about the way USAID creates its metrics. And they work on what is called project design, and they have a theory of change. And they have a very sophisticated way of thinking about where they want the partner to be over time and creating milestones to get there.

DOD does that sometimes but in a more informal way, and it is not clear to me DOD always engages with the partner as early in the process as, say, AID does. I always say sometimes they bake the cake and give it to the partner and say, you can put the icing on it, whereas it is better to be right in there with the eggs and the flour and the sugar with the partner right away, and that often comes out with better measures right up front.
Senator Gillibrand: Do you consider the money we spend with regard to Pakistan to be one of those partnerships or not?

Mr. Eggers: Senator, I put that in the category of security cooperation that is buying us influence and access.

Senator Gillibrand: Because we do not have any control where the money goes, and we have zero oversight and zero accountability.

Mr. Eggers: And Pakistan is not alone in that regard.

But I think there is a pretty clear acknowledgement that even where we are buying capability, it is going to have, at best, a mixed use, and the Pakistani intentions for those are not generally going to align with where we would want to see them go. In fact, in most cases, we are pretty sure they do not. But they have been at least kind of ostensibly effective in maintaining a relationship that gave us access, for instance, to supply lines in Afghanistan for the coalition.

Senator Gillibrand: Do you think our investment has paid off?

Mr. Eggers: In Pakistan?

Senator Gillibrand: Yes.

Mr. Eggers: I think it is hard to make those kinds of judgments because of the amounts of funding we are talking about are of kind of an almost unprecedented magnitude.
They, of course, are small relative to the overall cost of the effort in Afghanistan, and they were instrumental. Without many of those supply lines through Pakistan, the war effort would not have been possible. So it is really impossible to make a judgment of whether or not they were, quote, worth it. I think once we decided that this military effort and this style of engagement in Afghanistan was required, it was part of the cost of that.

Senator Gillibrand: Thank you.

Thanks, Madam Chairwoman.

Senator Fischer: Thank you, Senator.

Mr. McNerney, in your comments that you provided, you discuss the Syria train-and-equip program. And you gave that as an example for the need for better monitoring, and you spoke about the need for an alert system that would notify us earlier on when a system, when a program was failing. How do you see that program operating in practice, if we have this early alert system?

Mr. McNerney: Thank you, Senator.

I think when a project is so high-profile and so high-risk, you need to have -- and by alert system, it is not sort of a red phone type of system, but more of a way for leaders in the field to let leaders in Washington know that risk is growing or that they are seeing problems growing.

Senator Fischer: Objectives would not be met on a
schedule that hopefully had been preset?

Mr. McNerney: Yes, ma’am.

And an example in Syria, of course, there is a startup cost when you are going to train a force. There is infrastructure. There is equipment that has to be brought in. And then you are hoping that the students will show up or the trainees will show up.

Now, there should be a way to alert the system when you are starting to worry that maybe the trainees will not show up. And I find it hard to believe that the U.S. spent as much money as it did and never had any sense that the trainees would not show up. So there must have been that worry, and so that alert system is really about communicating risk and communicating it to Washington so that senior leaders in the Pentagon can come here and communicate it here.

Senator Fischer: Would you recommend having a third party be involved in this, or do you believe it could be handled within the current system that we have?

Mr. McNerney: I have never actually given that thought, but it is an interesting idea.

So I have thought about red teaming, so where you have like the CIA and others do where they have a skeptical group inside who plays devil’s advocate. I think what you might be suggesting, ma’am, would be to have sort of a third party
play that role, and I think there are groups within the U.S. that have better linkages to civil society in a country where we are working where they may have a better sense of the reality on the ground that the U.S. could leverage better. That may be a way to use a third party.

Senator Fischer: Ms. Dalton or Mr. Eggers, do you have anything to add on that?

Mr. Eggers: I would agree. I always advocate and endorse the idea of more objective assessors. I think anytime you are in the business of having people responsible for the development and implementation of programs, cognitive bias makes it difficult for them to view and assess those programs objectively.

Ms. Dalton: And, Madam, I would just add to that that if we are going to be relying on, as I myself recommended, the combatant commanders to provide programmatic assessment, monitoring, and evaluation, that the COCOMs actually have the incentive to report back positively so that they may receive more resources. So the idea of having a third party, some sort of red teaming, is probably wise.

Senator Fischer: Thank you.

Also, Mr. McNerney, in your opening statement, you suggested the need for a new authority to improve the multilateral engagement on missile defense. And could you elaborate on that?
Mr. McNerney: Yes, ma'am. So the U.S. has authorities or DOD has authorities to engage on a range of topics, but ballistic missile defense is one that has not been used in the past. And so lawyers could be nervous to allow that topic to come in. And in none of the authorities is there that sort of mission-based ability.

Senator Fischer: So we would not modify an existing authority. It would take creating a new one?

Mr. McNerney: Yes, ma'am. In fact, that was the one case, the only case, where we found you could not easily revise an existing authority. It was the only one where we said you probably need a brand new authority. In the case of cyber, we thought there are cyber-related authorities. It is just a matter of sort of extending them in different ways. Maritime security -- the same thing, but not missile defense.

Senator Fischer: And would either of you have anything to add on that?

[No response.]

Senator Fischer: Thank you.

Senator Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Thank you, Madam Chair.

This is a great hearing, really important for us.

And this is a question that is going to be out of left field, but I just would be curious because you kind of
represent the intellectual think tank community that looks
big picture at some of these questions.

The chairman of the committee, Senator McCain, is
interested in having us this year possibly as part of the
NDAA process tackle a Goldwater-Nichols type -- you know,
since 1986, look at the whole structure of the Pentagon, the
service chiefs, the civilian secretaries, the COCOMs, kind
of look at all that.

And it strikes me if you were looking at that in a
world where you are not doing a lot of cooperation with
other nations, you might set it up one way, but if you are
looking at it in a world where this kind of cooperation is
likely to be probably more frequent rather than less, you
might set things up differently. So, for example, if the
COCOMs are going to be in charge of these security
cooperation instances or if you continue with the
presidential executive order and you basically make
everything hinge around the ambassador, you know, that all
kind of fits into a structure.

Would you have any general advice for us, as we
approach the notion of Goldwater-Nichols reanalysis, about
how to factor in the reality of these security cooperation
agreements, which I think are only going to grow, how to
fact that into looking at structural questions about the way
we ought to organize our DOD mission?
Mr. Eggers: Thank you, Senator.

I had the opportunity to testify in one of the hearings in December on that question.

As it relates to this topic, my sense is that the opportunities for reform on Goldwater-Nichols are not trivial. They are significant. Most of them have to do, at least in the hearings that I observed, with programmatic and acquisition on our side. And I advocated for personnel reform in that same manner.

I think as it pertains to this, the objective of maybe revisiting the relationship between the service secretaries and the service chiefs and the Secretary may not be as related to the question of whether COMOs have the majority influence and the prerogative to shape the security cooperation and the theater security cooperation plans in their theaters. And the current system, obviously, I think is advantageous to them in that way. And I do not see the shifting the balance or the onus of ever shifting from being kind of a regional/theater approach to being one that is built more around services, if that makes sense. But admittedly, that is as much as I have thought about that very interesting question thus far.

Senator Kaine: You do not see it shifting from kind of a regional-based strategy to a service-based strategy.

Mr. Eggers: That is correct.
Senator Kaine: Okay.

Ms. Dalton: Senator, I think it is a great question. I think that one of the areas that we should collectively look at is this tightening of an alignment between the defense strategy, the guidance for the employment of the force, and theater campaign plans and who kind of orchestrates that and drives that to ensure that then connects to security cooperation activities. Right now it is a variety of actors that are involved in that process, and not everybody is necessarily on the same sheet of music. But to be clearly be able to pull the thread through from prioritization to what COCOMs are executing on the ground when they conduct security cooperation activities I think could be tightened up perhaps in thinking through who is involved with planning, how that is driven, and what mechanisms are used. And certainly those are topics to be taken up in the defense reform conversation.

Mr. McNerney: The only addition I would make, Senator, is maybe to dust off the Beyond Goldwater-Nichols reports that Jim Locher did a couple years ago. They are voluminous, but there are some interesting components in there that talk about not just DOD but how do you have a Goldwater-Nichols approach to interagency cooperation. And there may be some useful ways to improve that.

Senator Kaine: Thank you.
Thanks, Madam Chair.

Senator Fischer: Thank you, Senator Kaine.

I would like to do one more question. I will let Senator Kaine stay and ask another one too, if we can.

Mr. McNerney -- or Mr. Eggers. I am sorry. In your opening statement, you noted that concern over the problem of excess, overlapping, or stovepiped authorities is not universally shared as some stakeholders find benefit in the patchwork as a means of securing dedicated resources.

Can you elaborate more on the potential resistance to changing the current architecture of the authorities?

Mr. Eggers: Thank you, Madam Chair, and you are not the first person who stopped on that finding and found that somewhat surprising.

I myself was surprised in the course of doing research and interviews to hear people express anywhere from acquiescence to the status quo to resistance to consolidation.

Senator Fischer: Does this go to the Ph.D.s you were speaking of earlier?

Mr. Eggers: Some of them probably were doctors.

Senator Fischer: I will let you continue. Go ahead.

Mr. Eggers: And I will give you two main reasons. One is that some people like the status quo because its patchwork nature is necessarily specific in places and it
allocates resources to certain theaters or even specific and particular efforts. And they are concerned that they would lose out in resourcing if there was a consolidation that lost that degree of specificity because they would not become a priority. And having a dedicated authority with the name of their issue or their region on it is beneficial to their securing resources.

The second is one that was more particular to the State Department, which is that to the extent the proliferation of new authorities has been in Title 10 and it has been to their perception something of an encroachment upon traditional State security assistance responsibilities, that the consolidation would formalize, institutionalize some of this, quote, encroachment. And there was some sense of being cautious about consolidation for that reason, that we should be kind of slow and methodological in making sure that we do not kind of step past a certain kind of traditional boundary there.

Senator Fischer: Thank you.

Other comments? Do you have views that you would like to share?

Mr. McNerney: I would just add that we found sunset clauses can often be very valuable because sometimes, as Mr. Eggers said, it can be helpful to shine a light on a particular mission that needs to be accomplished or a
particular partner that is in dire straits, as you mentioned Ukraine. But then we should have a feeling for what is temporary and what is forever. And so the sunset clauses help keep people focused on the fact that this is a surge to focus on a particular problem and eventually things should go back to the normal process.

Senator Fischer: Where resources could be allocated by conditions on the ground.

Mr. McNerney: Yes, ma’am.

Senator Fischer: Thank you.

Senator Kaine, did you have any other questions?

Senator Kaine: You know, I have got a ton, but maybe I will do one. Let us see. Which one will I choose? Maybe I will go to Ms. Dalton.

You answered a question that Senator Ernst asked, and I wish she was here because I am going to reference her in another way too. She had a very interesting amendment on the table in the NDAA last year that I thought was one of the hardest votes I cast. I ended up not supporting the amendment, but it was around do we provide our arms directly to the Kurds in Iraq. So you indicated that we may need to be open to do security cooperation with non-state actors. And we really grappled with this as a policy matter.

So we are supporting one nation, Iraq. We have not yet said we support a devolved Iraq. But the Kurds are -- they
have been our best fighters. There is a very, very good relationship between the Kurds and the United States. And the Iraqi central government treatment of the Kurds, sometimes militias, sometimes maybe not militias but negligent in not paying oil revenue. There is a lot to complain about that.

So the debate was really about can we support a group like the Kurds that really have been good allies without undermining a policy if we want the central government to work. So we really grappled with that. And I still find that that was a tough one even looking in the rear view.

But if we were going to think about doing security cooperation with non-state or sort of lesser-than-state entities, what would your advice be to us about how we do that without weakening -- because part of what we are trying to do with security cooperation is ultimately build up institutional capacity and strength. We do not want to do it in a way that will weaken institutions or more atomize a situation that is already too atomized. So what would be some advice you could give us on the general topic?

Ms. Dalton: It is a great question, Senator.

I think that, as with all things, taking it on a case-by-case basis and evaluating what the tradeoffs are in a particular instance. So, you know, the example of the Kurds in Iraq and Syria -- were we betting on the fact that they
are the most capable militia that has proven in battle and
could create some space for us in that part of both
countries and help push back against ISIS, but on the other
hand, undermining the Government of Iraq, fraying relations
with the Turks, a whole host of issues?

And so I think in this broader question of should we be
partnering more with non-state actors, it is really going to
be a calculation of risks and tradeoffs to does it make
sense to potentially empower that actor and then diminish
the broader fabric of that country, or is the trajectory
already such that the country is already fragmenting and so
we need to place our bets on a group that could be a part of
the future of -- you know, whether it is a constellation of
-- you know, a federated approach. And so taking it on a

Mr. Eggers: Senator, I would just add that while I
think it is obvious that the 21st century power is shifting
from states to non-state actors and we have to monitor and
try and kind of adapt in keeping with that trend, I think we
should be cautious about shifting to the mode of kind of
working with non-state actors in the same way until we kind
of fully kind of shift off the Westphalian world order. Our
track record in picking these types of course is not always
good. And I think that there is a risk of slipping from
perhaps in this case backing what happens to be a very
effective force fighting for our interests to having
unintended consequences where we are stepping in the middle
of kind of a larger regional dynamic among rivals with
proxies or in other cases backing kind of an ethnicity
without a state. And there are serious consequences I think
that have to be considered as long as we are still more or
less trying to work with kind of the Westphalian world
order.

Mr. McNerney: I would say, Senator, if you can find
ways to help that non-state actor in a way that reinforces
the eventual institutions of the central government, then it
can be valuable, but, as Mr. Eggers said, that can be a
pretty tricky thing to navigate.

Senator Kaine: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator Fischer: Thank you, Senator Kaine.

I would like to thank all three of you for being here
today. The information you have provided will be most
valuable to us. Thank you very much.

We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:45 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]