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**INTERNATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT**  
policy and message guide

## DEVELOPMENT IS ESSENTIAL FOR OUR NATIONAL SECURITY

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, threats have become much more complex. While we still face traditional threats from major powers with major weapons, we increasingly face threats that originate in weak, fragile states. Weak governments are ill-equipped to end armed conflict, prevent the flow of illicit finance, and track the movement of extremist groups within their own countries. As our world has become more interconnected, threats that start in weak states can leap across borders, spreading instability.

In developing countries – especially in weak states – conflict over natural resources, flows of refugees and migrants, and food insecurity can cause instability and threaten security. A robust and effective development policy can help America:

- Fight Radicalism and Terrorism
- Reduce Crime and Weapons Proliferation
- Prevent Sudden Government Collapse
- Mitigate Refugee Flows

■ Fend Off Disease, Climate Change, and other new security threats

■ Prevent Conflict and Genocide

■ Improve the way people across the world view America

Development is not only essential for addressing these threats, it also costs far less, in terms of both lives lost and dollars spent, than being forced to engage in military action after states collapse. Effective, efficient development provides a tremendous return on investment.

## WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?

Development is the policies and actions that support nations' efforts to build prosperity, good governance, and security through the equitable and sustainable improvement of a broad range of living conditions. Development helps individuals gain the education, health, and voice in public affairs necessary to flourish and contribute to the world.

Development work is not about handouts from abroad. It is not, primarily, even about giving money. Development is about ensuring that a government can provide its citizens with the opportunity to contribute to their societies. That means providing economic opportunities, a voice in public affairs, and human rights, as well as ensuring that people have adequate education, healthcare, and environmental conditions to make use of those opportunities.

Ultimately, underdevelopment is caused by deep structural problems: a lack of strong property rights, weak and corrupt governments,

constant conflict that prevents economies from growing, degradation and misuse of natural resources, and other issues. At its heart, development is about the relationship between citizens and their government; thus, to be successful, development must be a locally led process. In the majority of countries where living conditions are improving, there is an effective government working to meet the demands of its citizens. Sustainable and equitable development happens when citizens have a voice and are able to hold their governments accountable.

In order for U.S. development policy to work, development thinking has to have a voice at the policy-making table. And that voice must be infused throughout government, not just at aid agencies. Development policy works not just through aid, but must also be considered in trade and investment decisions, environmental and natural resource policies, and issues of refugees and migration.

In the past twenty years, America has learned a great deal about what makes development assistance effective. We now know what makes development work—and we've gotten very good at it. It is time that we provide the sustained support to put this knowledge into practice.

## **DEVELOPMENT IS NOT CHARITY, IT KEEPS AMERICANS SAFE**

U.S. development work has dramatically improved the lives of people around the globe, eliminating causes of human suffering and lifting hundreds of thousands out of desperation and misery. But we do not do this only out of charity. Development is part and parcel of protecting U.S. national security. Governments that lack the capacity to respond to their own internal crises pose serious threats to Americans. It is no coincidence that we face the threat of terrorism from anti-American

extremists with strongholds in nations like Yemen, Pakistan, and Afghanistan—some of the poorest states in the world, with the weakest governments.

America must confront these threats with a serious investment in effective, efficient, and strategic development policy—aid coordinated with trade, diplomacy, and, where conflict persists, military assistance—to reduce poverty, strengthen institutions, and build security abroad.

## **SEVEN CRITICAL BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENT FOR AMERICA**

### **FIGHT RADICALISM AND TERRORISM**

It is worth remembering that al Qaeda began in the Sudan and incubated in Pakistan—weak, poor countries that often struggle to maintain territorial control and integrity, meet the basic needs of their citizens, and establish a minimum level of legitimacy by practicing effective and transparent governance. In these countries and elsewhere, such failures provide fertile soil for terrorist groups to take root, particularly when terrorist recruiters provide opportunities like education and employment that the state cannot. When this behavior wins the trust of populations, the terrorist threat

grows. Effective development strengthens weak states by helping to:

#### **Maintain territorial control and integrity**

Weak states simply have less control over their borders and land. Terrorist groups can set up training camps, offices, and operations without being detected or deterred. In 1992-93, after the failed US/UN intervention, al Qaeda moved into Somalia and took advantage of the lack of centralized authority to set up a safe haven.<sup>i</sup> *Effective, efficient development can help states control their territory and prevent terrorists from laying roots.*

#### **Meet the basic needs of their citizens**

Weak and fragile states lack the capacity and infrastructure to meet even the most basic needs of citizens. Terrorist groups gain legitimacy by providing charity to the needy. Hamas, which threatens Israel, has a significant charitable wing that has played a major role in winning support of the Palestinian people. Some analysts say 90% of Hamas activity comes in the form of social services the Palestinian Authority fails to provide, including healthcare clinics, mosques, schools, orphanages, and even sports leagues.<sup>ii</sup> Radical Islam gained strength in Pakistan by erecting schools to indoctrinate poor children—and found ready recruits, because public schools often lacked teachers.<sup>iii</sup> *Effective, efficient development can help states meet the basic needs of their citizens so citizens need not seek them elsewhere.*

### **Establish a minimum level of legitimacy by practicing effective and transparent governance**

Corruption is often both characteristic of, and the cause of, weak states. Terrorist groups gain legitimacy by presenting themselves as the honest alternative to corrupt governments that cannot be trusted. For instance, the Taliban regained strength in Afghanistan by setting up honest courts, as opposed to the government's corrupt judges.<sup>iv</sup> In Palestine, feelings of frustration at rampant Palestinian Authority corruption helped Hamas and its honest reputation sweep to victory in 2006. Effective, efficient development can help combat corruption, curb feelings of injustice, and help states win the trust of their people.

## **EXAMPLE: FOOD RIOTS**

Food security is one of the most basic human needs—and a cause of significant volatility when it is not met. In 2008, when world food prices rose, food riots destabilized country after country, including Morocco, Yemen, Mexico, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal and Uzbekistan.\* When governments face the anger of their own people and have to fight to maintain order, they have only limited ability or willingness to help America fight our terrorist threat, to provide useful intelligence, or to remain stable allies. Meanwhile, food insecurity provides terrorist groups with yet another area to take advantage of frustrations and distress and win support for their own causes. Violent groups from Hamas to the Taliban to Hezbollah all make a point of providing food for the poor, as one of the most visceral ways of buying affection.\*\* Improving food security in vulnerable places is one way development aid improves the kind of global stability U.S. national security requires.

America's recent Feed the Future program is designed to support small farmers to increase their agricultural productivity while adapting their agricultural practices to climate change. It's the kind of program that will prevent food riots in the future by teaching people to sustainably feed themselves, rather than stopping short and providing food, but not skills to efficiently produce it.

But this initiative will not succeed if other aid and trade policies are not reformed. For example, outdated and inefficient food aid programs—which provide cheap American food to poor countries—actually undermine food security. In situations where food is available locally, flooding markets with free food discourages and undercuts local agriculture. Farmers may not bother to plant, because they simply can't make a living growing food when local market prices are artificially depressed by poorly targeted food aid. That perverse incentive means that this old-fashioned way of providing food aid can actually exacerbate hunger, turn self-sufficient people into dependents, and lengthen the time it takes to get economies back on their feet.

Effective aid means supporting programs like Feed the Future, while changing how we deliver food aid so that we encourage local agriculture and build local markets, rather than killing economies we are trying to help.

\*Julian Borger, "Feed the world? We are fighting a losing battle, UN admits" *The Guardian*. February 26, 2008. [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

\*\*Shawn Theresa Flanigan & Mouna Abdel-Hamad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad: Nonprofits as Resistance Organizations". *Middle East Policy Council*. (2011) [www.mepc.org](http://www.mepc.org)

## REDUCE CRIME AND WEAPONS PROLIFERATION

The insecure borders, poor law enforcement, and high corruption of weak states allow organized crime and arms trafficking to spread quickly. For instance, Central Asia's weak, young states are at the center of the global small arms trade and help arm violent groups as far away as Africa.<sup>v</sup> Porous borders can also mean the potential spread of nuclear materials—presenting the single greatest threat to American national security should these materials fall into the wrong hands. Conversely, as states become more secure in their own economic and infrastructure development they are likely to pose less of a threat; Ukraine and Belarus, for example, have voluntarily agreed to give up their stocks of nuclear materials.<sup>vi</sup>

## PREVENT GOVERNMENT COLLAPSE

Poor, corrupt countries are easily destabilized by sudden, unexpected outbursts of citizen anger. Whether subsidy cuts, food price hikes, or demands for political change drive people to the streets, weak, corrupt states fall faster and can rapidly destabilize whole regions. Sudden regional power vacuums are often the result, which our enemies exploit. With Afghanistan's collapse in the 1990s, radical groups exploited the instability which crossed borders in Central Asia. Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan became hubs for drug trafficking and organized crime which fuel today's conflicts.<sup>vii</sup> More recently, a similar fallout has been felt throughout the Middle East as the sudden collapses of the regimes in Tunisia, Lebanon, and Egypt have stirred up instability in the wider region.<sup>viii</sup> Direct U.S. development aid has helped stabilize countries on shaky political ground—through direct aid to Liberia after the fall of dictator Charles Taylor, or via indirect assistance to organizations such as the Friends of Yemen.<sup>ix</sup>

Poverty itself may cause some countries to be destabilized by things like food riots or price hikes. But it is the government's actual and perceived responsibility for causing and fighting

poverty that makes poor countries more likely to experience conflict internally, make war on their neighbors, and disrupt their regions – sometimes to the extent that America and other countries are forced to intervene.<sup>x</sup>

## MITIGATE RAPID INFLUXES OF REFUGEES, WHO CAN CREATE STRESSES THAT LEAD TO CONFLICT

Sudden impoverishment or hostilities, severe weather, and economic failure can all cause refugees to flee *en masse* into neighboring states, heightening international tension. For example, over ten million people were displaced in the 2010 floods in Pakistan. A surge of people that large puts a major strain on already-fragile governments with scarce resources by forcing them to provide basic necessities, thereby exacerbating fears of political instability across the region.<sup>xi</sup>



## REDUCE DISEASE, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND OTHER NEW SECURITY THREATS

### Global transportation means disease can cross borders more quickly than ever

The most virulent diseases are zoonotic (capable of jumping from animals to people). From the West Nile virus to bird flu, these diseases are becoming more prevalent.

In 2009, malaria caused over 780,000 deaths, many of which could have been prevented by simple measures including bed nets and generic anti-virals. This figure is staggering, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the loss of human

capital leads to economic underdevelopment, and because of the clinical link between malaria and other diseases including HIV.<sup>xii</sup>

Development has worked in the past to deal with these kinds of threats. In the 1960s, the World Health Organization, led by the United States as its largest donor, conducted a successful campaign to eradicate smallpox. The United States contributed \$23 million a year from 1967 to 1979, a cost we have recovered many times over through the saving of productive lives, and the elimination of our need to treat this disease.<sup>xiii</sup>

### Climate change

As climate change begins to have global effects, changing precipitation patterns, natural resource degradation, extreme weather events, and rising sea levels will bring with them an entirely new set of national security threats.

Farmers who depend on long established weather patterns for planting could see their harvests significantly reduced, leading to food insecurity and even famine. Growing water scarcity and pressures on ecosystems (such as forests and wetlands) will undermine the resources that communities depend on and over which conflict can occur. Severe weather events, such as the recent floods in Pakistan, also create instability and the context for security threats to grow. When coupled with the migratory pressures of rising sea levels in coastal regions, the world will experience refugees seeking asylum in unprecedented numbers.

These conditions create fertile grounds for recruitment. According to Admiral T. Joseph Lopez, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Allied Forces, Southern Europe, “climate change will provide the conditions that

## THE EFFECTS OF MASS ATROCITIES

### CENTRAL AFRICA

The 1994 genocide in Rwanda not only devastated that country, killing approximately 800,000 in the first hundred days, but also spilled over into neighboring Burundi, Zaire (later the DRC), and Uganda.\* The flow of two million refugees seeking asylum sparked the Great Lakes Refugee Crisis, in which refugee camps were quickly taken as militarization posts by rebel factions. The region was destabilized and the Second Congo War erupted. It raged for five years, marking the world's deadliest conflict since World War Two.\*\*

### LIBERIA

In 1997, President Charles Taylor entered office and established an authoritarian regime which displaced hundreds of thousands, dismantled the country's economy, and incited a decade-long war with neighboring Sierra Leone. By the time the US and the international community intervened, three civil wars had broken out, compromising the stability of West Africa and killing more than 250,000.\*\*\* Trade in timber, diamonds, and other natural and extracted resources fueled the conflicts in the region. Today, global initiatives such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, new transparency laws in the U.S., and the actions of local organizations seek to end the flow of resources to despotic regimes and instead use resources for pro-development initiatives.

\*Alison Des Forges. *“Leave No One to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda.”* Human Rights Watch. (1999)

\*\*Joe Bavier, *“Congo war-driven crisis kills 45,000 a month: study”*. Reuters. January 22, 2008.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSL2280201220080122>; <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/01/22/us-congo-democratic-death-idUSL2280201220080122>

\*\*\*Mark Schneider, Kathy Ward. *“US Must Not Fail Liberia Again”* Los Angeles Times August 6, 2003.

will extend the war on terror.” Reducing poverty by providing these regions the tools to adapt to the effects of climate change will go a long way towards enhancing our security and stabilizing these nations. Such development programs give these areas not only the resources they critically need, but the self-sufficiency to tackle such problems on their own, without further U.S. intervention.

### PREVENT GENOCIDE AND CONFLICT

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Preventing wars from breaking out – or genocides from occurring – clearly translates into fewer lives lost to violence. It also costs far less for the United States. For example, teams from NATO, the EU, and OSC, supported by the United States, were able to successfully quell civil war in Macedonia in 2001, at a cost of only \$8 million.<sup>xiv</sup> In contrast, the slow US and NATO response in Kosovo in 1999 involved a bombing campaign that cost upwards of \$10 billion, and destroyed infrastructure as well as military



targets, while the war itself claimed 12,000 lives.<sup>xv</sup> Most conflicts bear early warning signs, which means some can be stopped before they require U.S. military intervention.

Organizations from the United States National Holocaust Memorial Museum to Harvard’s Mass Atrocities Response Operation program have documented the early warning signs of genocide and conflict within countries. We now know that the time to intervene is when we hear a minority population being dehumanized on the radio, or when factions begin to train and arm themselves, not when blood is already being shed.<sup>xvi</sup> Developing a strong civilian capability for intervening before conflict breaks out will save both money and lives. Thanks to military planners, scholars, and experts, we understand much of what needs to be done. Advocates can also work with these agencies to help them spend these funds most efficiently.

In fast-unfolding crises, it is important to get money out the door quickly, while it can make a difference. But it must also be spent effectively. We need to strengthen our early-warning monitoring and diplomatic capabilities so that we can send appropriately trained civilians to stop conflicts when they are just getting started. We must improve our foreign assistance that is directed at preventing and mitigating conflict. We need to support and help train other military and civilian forces so that the U.S. does not take on this full burden alone, but has partners who can intervene in their

## TSUNAMI RELIEF BOOSTS US IMAGE ABROAD

Feelings towards the US	US Tsunami Relief Efforts	
	More Favorable	Less Favorable
Canada	69%	17%
Great Britain	44	24
France	51	33
Germany	66	23
Spain	46	23
Netherlands	62	23
Russia	61	6
Poland	43	8
Turkey	34	24
Pakistan	26	21
Indonesia	79	14
India	54	27

regions. Meanwhile, we need to reform our security agencies so that lighter footprint forces – local indigenous actors and a limited international presence – can deploy with rapidity to deter conflict before it starts, rather than getting caught in the middle, or having to clean up the bloody aftermath.

### **MITIGATE ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT BY SHOWING THAT THE U.S. CAN BE A TRUSTED PARTNER**

Strategic relationships are essential to mitigating global threats. We can partner with countries to build their capacity to meet threats within their own borders. The good will garnered by the U.S. following tsunami relief in 2004-2005 makes the case clearly. But winning hearts and minds through aid programs is undermined when recipients perceive that the U.S. has a hidden agenda, as some perceived to be the case following flood relief to Pakistan in 2010.<sup>xvii</sup> America cannot buy friendship and good will with aid. But if we can actively work with people in developing countries to help them tackle their development challenges, then they will perceive the U.S. as a reliable, capable, and

## **PAKISTANI PUBLIC OPINION OF THE U.S.**

### **SINGLE EVENT APPROVAL RATING\***

**May 2005** (pre-earthquake): 25%

**November 2006** (post-earthquake): 46%

### **PEW POLL:\*\***

2005: 23% approval rating

2006: 26% approval rating

2007: 17% approval rating

2009: 16% approval rating

*\*[http://www.hks.harvard.edu/cchrp/sbhrap/news/Wilder\\_PakistanAidTestimony\\_12\\_9\\_09.pdf](http://www.hks.harvard.edu/cchrp/sbhrap/news/Wilder_PakistanAidTestimony_12_9_09.pdf)*

*\*\* <http://pewglobal.org/2007/03/14/americas-image-in-the-world-findings-from-the-pew-global-attitudes-project/>*

well-intentioned partner. As former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said at this year's U.S. Global Leadership Coalition Tribute Dinner, "America's interests are linked to the security and prosperity of allies and friends...We won't be able to rely on other countries to help fight the extraordinary dangers that most threaten us unless we help the global majority to fight the chronic problems that confront them each and every day."<sup>xviii</sup>

## PROVIDING EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT

“Development is a lot cheaper than sending soldiers.” - Robert Gates<sup>xix</sup>

It is true that many development dollars have been wasted in past years. In the last two decades, serious study of what works and what doesn't has yielded a strong understanding of what policies are most effective at supporting development—in particular, foreign aid, as it is the most prominent aspect of development policy.

### WHAT WORKS:

Providing funds to governments that are working to be responsive to their people and fight corruption;

Projects that allow money to be spent locally, so that aid dollars multiply as they create a stronger local economy;

Projects that are conceived of and created by the governments and citizens that will implement them – not forced upon them by donors;

Multi-year efforts that can grow and be counted on over time;

Flexible funding that can respond to realities on the ground, without vast amounts of paperwork or the need for annual renewal;

Metrics that require governments to be transparent and communicate with their citizens;

Aid that is transparent to governments, citizens, and US taxpayers; and

U.S. trade policy that promotes economic development within countries.

### WHAT DOESN'T WORK:

Giving money to regimes making no effort to be accountable to their people;

Forcing governments to buy from America or to use American contractors, rather than building projects locally that multiply their effects throughout the local economy;

Donors deciding what matters in a country, and forcing pet projects on an uninterested recipient;

Erratic aid flows that rise and fall according to donor fads. In fact, studies show that giving money erratically is even worse for development than providing no funds at all;

Metrics that measure easy to count impacts (dollars spent) rather than actual change (how many students are in school);

Trying to control everything from Washington, D.C. without knowledge of on-the-ground changes; and

U.S. domestic policy and trade policy that undermines producers in developing countries, such as domestic agriculture subsidies in the U.S. that distort markets abroad and import rules that restrict value-added goods from developing countries.

Government and non-government development groups have learned these lessons and are working hard to implement change. In 2010, President Obama signed the first ever Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) on Global Development. The PPD recognizes that development is vital to national security and calls for development to be elevated, along with diplomacy and defense, as pillars of our foreign

policy. Two months later, USAID announced USAID Forward, a comprehensive package of reforms that follow the most effective and efficient aid practices. Together, these efforts make development more effective. Congress should assist in implementing these policies that can advance the most effective means of giving aid by transferring ownership, prioritization, and control to aid recipients, ensuring transparency of funding and predictability of aid flows, and increasing the amount of funding that goes to those countries as opposed to contractors.

We know what works. We also know that development is a lot less expensive than fighting wars. According to the Congressional Research Service, the Department of Defense has spent \$336 billion on the war in Afghanistan, a number that continues to rise dramatically. However, USAID has provided only \$1.4 billion in agricultural assistance to Afghanistan since 2002, despite being the main source of livelihood for 80% of Afghans.<sup>xx</sup>

Development aid, when executed effectively, is one of the most efficient uses we can make of America's money.

## THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF U.S. DEVELOPMENT AID

“People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made.”  
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1944 State of the Union Address

America's development assistance focuses on six strategic objectives critical to American national security. It is telling that most of our aid is direct security funding—that is, money spent addressing existing crises. These security funds are important – but they work to prevent problems we're already facing from getting even worse. It is the rest of U.S. development assistance that can prevent threats from arising in the first place: funds that help states build and strengthen their capacity to govern justly and democratically, assistance that achieves real economic growth, and development programs that empower people to have a greater stake in their own futures. Over time, this kind of development can address security threats at their very core, before they spill over borders, incite violence, destabilize regions, and strike American soil.

### THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF DEVELOPMENT<sup>xxi</sup>

**Achieving Peace and Security:** Help nations effectively establish the conditions and capacity for achieving peace, security, and stability; and

for responding effectively against arising threats to national or international security and stability. (\$10.38 billion in FY 2010)

**Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance:** Promote and strengthen effective democracy in recipient states and move them along a continuum toward democratic consolidation. (\$3.64 billion in FY 2010)

**Health:** Improve the health of people, especially women, children, and other vulnerable populations, in countries of the developing world through expansion of basic health services, including family planning; strengthening national health systems; and addressing global issues and special concerns such as HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. (\$9 billion in FY 2010)

**Education and Social Services:** Promote equitable, effective, accountable, and sustainable formal and non-formal education systems and address factors that place individuals at risk for poverty, exclusion, neglect, or victimization; help populations

manage their risks and gain access to opportunities that support their full and productive participation in society; help populations rebound from temporary adversity, cope with chronic poverty, reduce vulnerability, and increase self-reliance. (\$1.91 billion in FY 2010)

**Economic Development:** Generate rapid, sustained, and broad-based economic growth. (\$4.36 billion in FY 2010)

**Environment:** Ensure that the environment and the natural resources upon which human lives and livelihoods depend are managed in ways that sustain productivity growth, a healthy population, and the intrinsic spiritual and cultural value of the environment. (\$837.3 million in FY 2010)

**Providing Humanitarian Assistance:** Save lives, alleviate suffering, and minimize the economic costs of conflict, disasters, and displacement. Humanitarian assistance is provided on the basis of need according to principles of universality, impartiality, and human dignity. It is often organized sector by sector, but requires an integrated, coordinated, and/or multi-sector approach to be most effective. Emergency operations will foster the transition from relief, through recovery, to development, but they cannot and will not replace the development investments necessary to reduce chronic poverty or establish just social services. (\$4.98 billion in FY 2010)

## THE MARSHALL PLAN

It is no accident that America's first major aid program was named for a war hero: from the beginning, national security leaders have understood how effective development supports American security.

Just sixty years ago, European countries—now with among the highest GDPs in the world—relied on food aid. Fifty percent of households lacked running water or indoor bathrooms. And radical ideologies were at risk of taking root and spreading as a result of unmet needs. \*

Following WWII, General George Marshall and other U.S. leaders worried that they had won the war, only to lose the peace in Europe to radical elements and communists who were thriving across the devastated, impoverished continent. People were starving and looking to demagogues for easy answers. Senator Arthur Vandenburg, an ardent isolationist, wanted nothing to do with aid for Europe, especially for countries we had just fought. But when he flew to the continent, one visit changed political positions he had held for a lifetime. He realized that America's security depended on getting Europe's governments working, and their economies producing, or we would have another war on our hands.

The Marshall Plan was one of the greatest foreign policy successes in U.S. history. It worked because it followed the same lessons that we had to relearn, decades later, on effective aid delivery. European countries were forced to come up with their own plans. Money went to projects they thought were important, not to the pet projects of American bureaucrats, and aid levels held steady over time. Europeans had to own and execute plans themselves, building up government capacity, and forcing governments across the continent to work together to build infrastructure and trade ties. Finally, the U.S. actually pushed Europe to buy internally, in order to build up Europe's economy. We knew that if they bought from us, they would never develop the internal economic engine we needed them to have so that they could become wealthy countries and meet their citizen's basic needs.

\*Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*. Penguin, 2006.

## DEVELOPMENT IS A SECURITY ISSUE – BUT IT’S NOT THE MILITARY’S JOB

“When... USAID had 15,000 or 16,000 people, they were deployable. They were expert. They expected to live in harsh conditions, often fragile security. But they were out there... When I came back to government (in 2004), USAID had about 3,000 people and it was basically a contracting agency.” - Robert Gates, Sept. 28, 2010

Since 2001, the U.S. military has been in a “prolonged wartime period,” the longest in U.S. history. This longstanding demand to operate in multiple theaters at once puts immense strain on our armed forces. Our military is fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and pirates in Somalia. They are training forces in Africa, and assisting anti-terrorism efforts in Indonesia. They also now need to fight in cyberspace, and counter growing nuclear threats. Development helps stabilize the world – but it is not the military’s job.

America owes it to the men and women in uniform to also support other government agencies that can help create stability. Development can reduce and manage the impact of crises that require military attention, and lessen the number of threats that require the use of force. But it must be undertaken by agencies other than the military. We should not expect the men and women we have trained in highly specialized military pursuits to take on the additional, equally difficult tasks of assisting countries in rebuilding its justice system, or creating a working agricultural sector. We must fund other government agencies with essential civilian expertise to carry out the development goals that will help create a safer world for America.

An astounding discrepancy exists between U.S. funding for those responsible for development and the military aspects of our security mission. In 2010, we spent ten times as much on the base budget for the Defense Department (\$533.7 billion)—not counting the spending on current wars (\$130 billion)—as we did on all other international affairs agencies combined (\$51.7

billion).<sup>xxii</sup> Including bases, overseas contingency operations, and supplemental funding, total spending for DOD in 2010 amounted to \$693.4 billion, while total funding for USAID was only \$1.66 billion in the same year.<sup>xxiii</sup> As a percentage of U.S. GDP, DOD received 4.7% in the 2010 budget whereas USAID received only 0.01%.<sup>xxiv</sup>



This causes a manpower problem that makes our aid less effective and our spending less efficient. We need to spend more on personnel in development agencies so that we can use our aid dollars more efficiently and waste less overall.

In 1968, USAID had 17,500 employees, but by 2000, it had been cut to fewer than 2,000. The U.S. currently has more personnel in military bands than it does diplomats at the State Department.<sup>xxv</sup> This massive cut in manpower for USAID has forced it to become largely a manager of contractors. As USAID Administrator

Rajiv Shah pointed out in a speech on January 19, USAID is “no longer satisfied with writing big checks to big contractors and calling it development... Partners need to achieve the outcomes they seek in the time they suggest. Otherwise, we will seek out those who can.”<sup>xxvi</sup> Contractors provide inefficient and less effective aid:

Contractors have incentives to overrun costs and delay projects to maximize profits.

Contractors often subcontract out, so that an aid project loses money at each level, and costs far more than it should.

Contractors have a principle-agent problem: their main goal is to please USAID, not to

get the best job done on the ground as defined by local people. This can lead to poorly planned projects and incentive misalignment.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates was so serious about the need to build up the capacities of other parts of government that he has argued for the need to increase funding for civilian counterparts operations on diplomacy and development, as well as proposing an Overseas Contingency Operations account that would allow the transfer of funds between America’s key national security agencies—the DOD, the State Department, and USAID—in response to needs on the ground.<sup>xxvii</sup>

## FRAMING THE MESSAGE

Making good development policy happen is about more than understanding this complex issue; the American people must understand how development is in their interest and in line with their values. This is especially challenging in an environment where government spending is unpopular and Americans significantly misunderstand international development.

A majority of Americans favor cutting foreign aid, believing it a much larger share of the national budget than it is.<sup>xxviii</sup> However, development advocacy groups should avoid a debate over the dollar amounts that go to development assistance; the argument only furthers the perception that development funding is essentially charity. Rather, we must frame aid, trade, and development as strategic tools, on par with military action, which help American interests, strengthen our allies, and prevent small problems from becoming big problems.

## CONNECTING WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

Messengers for development should consider audience perceptions of them. Often times, messengers come to the discussion from a deficit position, already not trusted by their audience. Consider the following approaches to gaining the trust of your audience:

**Acknowledge that spending is a real concern.** *“Lots of Americans are worried that we’re spending too much money right now, debt we’re piling on our kids. And as someone with two kids I see why this is such a big concern.”*

**Acknowledge confusion.** *“A lot of people aren’t sure what development means. They think it’s charity or wonder why we help other countries when we have lots of problems at home.”*

Whenever possible, choose messengers who have credibility on national security issues. Former senior military, recognized national security leaders, and veterans who have first-hand relevant experience are your best options.

Generally, you should look for metaphors which draw a parallel between international development and domestic issues such as education or crime prevention. This allows you to put these intellectually-unfamiliar issues into a context which many more Americans will understand and have personal experiences to reflect on.

## MAKING THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE FOR AMERICA

There is nothing wrong with focusing on the fact that development is not charity, but done to promote America’s interests. For most of the persuadable middle, this sounds like common sense, not selfishness.

**In plain language:** *“Development is essential for America’s national security because what happens overseas can have a big impact on us here at home. Countries that fall apart become havens for extremist groups and breeding grounds for terrorists. We can prevent that from happening, making the world safer for us.”*

**Name a bad guy:** *“We can help weak states get back on their feet and become strong enough to resist groups like al Qaeda.”*

**Metaphor:** *“At home, keeping kids in school keeps them out of trouble. In places like Yemen, building schools keeps those kids from joining al Qaeda.”*

**Verifier:** *“The Secretary of Defense has called for an increase in funding for development at the State Department – he knows it’s an essential part of our security.”*

**Killer example:** *“Imagine if we had helped Afghanistan rebuild back in the 80s rather than leaving. Bin Laden and al Qaeda might never have had a base to attack us from on 9/11 and we wouldn’t be in a 10-year war there right now.”*

### **COST EFFECTIVENESS**

The domestic political climate is extremely hostile to spending government money. This is an opportunity to remind people that development costs considerably less to implement than military intervention.

**In plain language:** *“Development costs a whole lot less, in lost lives and money, than getting involved in a military conflict like Afghanistan or Libya, where American interests or lives are threatened. We bear a huge cost when we get involved militarily; development and democracy-building are a whole lot cheaper.”*

**Metaphor:** *“It’s cheaper to teach a kid to read in grade school than it is to train them for a new job once they’re 40. It’s the same with development – much cheaper to build strong governments today than deal with the aftermath of collapse later.”*

**Killer example:** Preventing a genocide in Bosnia in the 90s through military intervention cost \$10 billion and cost thousands of lives. In neighboring Macedonia we got the same outcomes with development for just \$8 million.

### **LEADING THE WORLD AND PROMOTING DEMOCRACY**

Most Americans believe in American exceptionalism, the idea that our nation has a special place in the world. And since the end of World War Two, America has underwritten international security with money and with the lives of our men and women in uniform. Yet today, most Americans worry that we are losing our leading role, fear that Progressives don’t believe in that role, and fear we are losing the ‘fight for the future’ to emerging economies. International development is a way for America to lead the world, promote our values, and encourage democracy.

**In plain language:** *“America has a special role to play in the world. This is the nation that led in World War Two, rebuilt Europe with the Marshall Plan, and won the Cold War. Today we have a new fight: Making the world safe for us and for democracy. Development is how we do that.”*

**Killer fact:** Dictatorships produce more terrorists than democracies.

**Metaphor:** *“It’s easier for America to be friends and allies with a democracy just like it’s easier to be friends with someone who grew up in the same town as you – you share experiences and values.”*

## **DEALING WITH NEW AND EMERGING THREATS LIKE CLIMATE CHANGE**

It is difficult to get people to think about traditional threats in new ways; people get stuck trying to apply traditional responses to traditional threats. New and emerging threats, though, give you the opportunity to provide your audience with an entirely new frame through which to view an issue.

New and emerging threats, like the impact of climate change, are a good opportunity to introduce ideas like development. Climate change increases instability and fosters the socio-economic conditions that make terrorist recruitment easier. And the impact on failing and weakened states makes them more likely to serve as bases for terrorist organizations.

**In plain language:** *“Climate change makes the world a more dangerous place. Droughts, floods, famine, and disease destroy weak nations, turning them into safe havens for our enemies and making it easier to recruit new terrorists. Development prevents these problems before they end up as attacks on us.”*

**Important verifiers:** The military has identified climate change as a “threat multiplier” since it causes drought, flood, famine, and crop failure. Even the CIA is tracking the instability caused by changes in climate.

**Use real life stories:** *“In Afghanistan, the military has caught farmers firing rockets at our troops. Their crops had failed from drought and the Taliban was paying them a dollar a rocket to feed their family.”*

**Killer Fact:** Spending one dollar today on preparedness for disasters saves more than seven dollars in disaster response.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

“Where governments are incapable of meeting their citizens’ basic needs and fulfilling their responsibilities to provide security within their borders, the consequences are often global and may directly threaten the American people.” - 2010 National Security Strategy

Despite the predominance of the U.S. military and economic power around the world, there are limits to the effectiveness of this kind of “hard” power in addressing the complicated foreign policy challenges facing America today. The military cannot stop food riots from bringing down a government. They cannot hold back refugees who are flooding across borders and destabilizing other countries. They cannot create an effective educational system to fight the indoctrination efforts of radical, extremist schools.

Creating the conditions for American security is more than just a military effort. Lasting stability

also requires diplomats and aid personnel to build the capacity of governments to run their countries effectively and develop a self-sustaining economy that gives people hope for their futures, as well as trade and investment policies that promote local development.

To win 21<sup>st</sup> century conflicts and garner good will across the globe, the U.S. must revitalize its ability to work with other countries to develop themselves. Effective, efficient development is a crucial part of that security strategy.

## ENDNOTES

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