



# TESTIMONY

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## **Statement of Susan G. Reichle Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance**

### **National Security, Interagency Collaboration, and Lessons from SOUTHCOM and AFRICOM**

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**Before the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs  
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform  
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#### **Introduction**

Chairman Tierney, Ranking Member Flake, and distinguished members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this timely hearing with my colleagues from the Department of Defense and Department of State whom I work with on a regular basis. The purpose of my remarks is twofold: First, to explain why we in the development community believe that an integrated U.S. Government approach to crisis prevention, humanitarian response and instability is critical; and second, to outline the steps we have taken at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to make such collaboration possible.

The Agency recognizes the limits of focusing on development alone, particularly in countries at risk of instability. As a result, we are directing more attention and resources to combat the threat of violent extremism, insurgency, and the effect of international criminal networks in order to promote peace and security. USAID plays a critical role with others in the U.S. Government interagency community to combat these challenges.

Within the "3Ds" national security construct of Diplomacy, Development and Defense, USAID's collaboration with the Departments of State and Defense is essential to promoting and protecting national security. Instability and conflict created by man-made and natural disasters are among the biggest obstacles to development. There is an enormous synergy to be realized from combining USAID development expertise with Department of Defense capabilities to give leverage to the Department of State's diplomatic leadership

While the civilian-military relationship stretches back to the 1960s, it took on new urgency following major disasters. USAID posted its first Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) advisor to the Pacific Command (PACOM) in 1994 at the request of PACOM leadership, following a major cyclone response in Bangladesh. After the experience of coordinating USAID and DoD efforts in response to Hurricane Mitch in Central America, OFDA assigned a full-time advisor to the Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) in 1999, and by 2008, OFDA had advisors in each of the geographic combatant commands (COCOMs).

Soon after September 11th, the Agency made a decision to significantly enhance its ability to influence the COCOMs. During this period, I was at the National War College and saw first-hand the importance of our engagement with interagency colleagues particularly the Defense Department to ensure policy, operational, and tactical decisions were well informed. Although USAID's Senior Foreign Service corps was shrinking at the time, USAID leadership recognized the importance of creating new senior development advisor

positions, or SDAs, in each of the combatant commands. These were envisioned as officers who could address the nexus between defense and development required in addressing a range of issues, including disaster response and threats to stability such as the corrosive effect of transnational criminal networks on stability and governance in the region.

Around the same time that some of us were pressing for increased USAID representation at the COCOMs and at the War Colleges, the Agency recognized the importance of establishing an Office of Military Affairs (OMA) in USAID's Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Bureau. As this Military Affairs Office began to staff up in 2006, one of its primary responsibilities was strengthening coordination between COCOMs, USAID regional bureaus, and our missions around the world. This greatly increased USAID's ability to influence theater campaign plans, the Guidance for the Employment of the Force, and training USAID staff to work more effectively with DoD. Moreover, OMA has overseen the training of several thousand troops in conflict assessment, programming, and development principles to have a more holistic understanding of the environment where they are deployed. Finally, OMA has provided DoD with a "one stop shop" for USAID engagement, which was strengthened through the assignment of DOD personnel to OMA.

As a result of these advances in recent years, both organizations are better placed to share lessons and experiences and leverage interagency expertise to further national security and improve development outcomes. DoD's Southern Command and Africa Command are two excellent examples of this partnership.

## **Southern Command**

The challenges faced in Latin America and the Caribbean require a comprehensive interagency approach, and the link among DOD, USAID and the Department of State is critical. SOUTHCOM was among the first geographic commands to reshape itself as a combatant command with interagency presence and has since led the way in civilian-military coordination. By reorganizing itself along functional lines rather than the traditional military approach, it enabled USAID to engage more easily and effectively to achieve our joint goals in the hemisphere. While our first senior development advisor did not arrive at SOUTHCOM until 2008, USAID was an integral player at SOUTHCOM as the command was reorganized. USAID missions throughout the hemisphere worked closely with SOUTHCOM on a range of issues, from combating illicit transnational trafficking and crime to humanitarian missions and disaster preparedness. As U.S. Southern Command began reshaping itself as an interagency- oriented organization, both SOUTHCOM and USAID began to increase its joint engagement across Latin America, including Colombia.

I witnessed first-hand the important role of SOUTHCOM in promoting interagency coordination while serving as the USAID Director in Colombia. The Embassy's integrated approach was fully supported by SOUTHCOM as we collectively worked together and across the interagency to tackle Colombia's illicit narcotics production and trafficking. Recognizing the importance of this relationship, we established a position in the USAID mission to serve as a liaison with SOUTHCOM and ensure counternarcotics activities were integrated and sequenced with our interagency colleagues. The interagency coordination was supplemented by our close working relationship with our other interagency and Colombian partners on a "clear-hold-build" strategy to regain territory controlled by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, known as the FARC. The statistics are impressive and demonstrate the impact of an integrated approach supported at all levels. Since 2002, kidnappings, homicides and terrorist attacks decreased by 90, 45 and 71 percent (based on Colombian Ministry of Defense statistics), respectively, nationwide and development indicators improved significantly. In the Macarena area where the strategy was first developed, coca cultivation has plummeted by 85 percent since 2005 with minimal replanting, 45,000 hectares of legal crops have been planted in secured zones to replace the illegal economy, and the local population increasingly believes that civilian institutions will remain. Moreover, nationwide statistics indicate that 60 percent of Colombians now support and respect political institutions.

The earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12th is another example of the critical importance of interagency collaboration. The response effort represents the most broadly and deeply integrated humanitarian operation abroad in U.S. history. SOUTHCOM's interagency orientation and the close cooperation between our organizations were pivotal to the U.S. Government response. The Haiti earthquake response was built upon years of investing in developing existing processes for USAID-DoD collaboration, as well as over a decade of working together in SOUTHCOM on humanitarian relief efforts. As the USAID Administrator's coordinator of the Haiti disaster response effort, I can personally attest to the intense coordination that took place between SOUTHCOM and USAID in response to the devastating earthquake. While I spoke to the SOUTHCOM Commander, General Fraser, several times a day for several months, colleagues at all levels were communicating to ensure coordination of SOUTHCOM's support operations. As SOUTHCOM surged the number of staff supporting Operation Unified Response, we increased USAID staff

in the command. The Haiti earthquake response is an excellent example of the impact and critical nature of contributing to interagency collaboration through a combatant command. As a result of years of investment in greater civilian-military coordination, we were able to respond much more effectively.

While Colombia and Haiti demonstrate what can be achieved through an effective partnership, we recognize the need for a more consolidated USAID-SOUTHCOM approach to addressing stability targets in the region, such as in the Darien region of Panama and the tri-border area of Paraguay. USAID is working closely with SOUTHCOM to identify issues and countries for Section 1207 funding proposals this year and to review national cooperation targets and assess feedback and lessons from past 1207 programs. Looking forward, USAID will engage similarly productive collaboration with SOUTHCOM to implement programs under the Complex Crises Fund, which replaces Section 1207 authorities in the FY 2011 Budget.

At the country team level within our embassies in Latin America and the Caribbean, there is now closer consultation between military representatives and USAID staff, particularly in the preparation of medical ship visits. This partnership ensures support for host government capacity building, and in the setting of medical readiness exercises to support USAID health sector objectives. In Colombia, I had the opportunity to participate in three medical ship visits and saw the tremendous impact of these visits when the planning is well coordinated with local partners long before the ship sets sail.

## **Africa Command**

The Africa Command, or AFRICOM, provides another example of where strong interagency partnership from its inception has advanced U.S. national security interests. Beginning in 2007, USAID staff in Africa was engaged in helping DOD plan U.S. Africa Command. As AFRICOM developed from a concept similar to the SOUTHCOM model to an independent command, USAID was engaged with counterparts in the Defense Department at every step in the process. AFRICOM was intended to bring together U.S. military assets devoted to Africa's security in one unified command, but the mandate and operation of the command were the subject of lively interagency debate prior to its establishment. Our first senior development advisor, assigned to the European Command, or EUCOM, in 2007, was actively involved in the process. Other USAID officers, including senior career and political leadership, helped General Ward and his staff to define AFRICOM's mandate, coordination mechanisms, and civilian roles in the Command, as well as shaping the Command to focus on its central priority of building the capacity of African military institutions. This resulted in the establishment of a USAID senior development advisor position at the command as well as detailing two USAID representatives to the command, one to direct the Programs Division and the other to manage their Humanitarian and Civic Assistance programs and funds. Subsequently, a representative of USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance was assigned to the command.

As AFRICOM has stood up and developed its relationships with interagency partners, and senior Command officials have sought to forge strong ties with USAID. Developing capable and rightly-structured militaries in Africa is absolutely essential for Africa's development and stability and AFRICOM plays an important role in enhancing the capacity of Africa's military. We support and emphasize this crucial core function of AFRICOM in the interagency and in discussions in Stuttgart. At the same time, there are other areas where USAID and AFRICOM work closely and effectively together.

AFRICOM leadership has pressed for significant participation and officer exchanges with USAID, in general, for more positions than our small agency can provide. USAID officers in AFRICOM -- at the level of the Commander, the Plans and Program Directorate, and Disaster Response unit -- have both helped "shape" this new Command and improved the Command's civil affairs and humanitarian programs and their intended audience, and interagency collaboration in strategic, conflict-prone areas, and in disaster response.

Perhaps the best example of USAID's effect upon the Command has been where AFRICOM's office overseeing funding for development projects or what the military refers to as "humanitarian assistance," our representative has repeatedly proven the value of having a development advisor in this position. That officer has reshaped the provision of AFRICOM humanitarian assistance to be more effective and sustainable based on AFRICOM's expertise in this area. Most recently, her efforts were recognized when she won a "dissent" award from the American Foreign Service Association for her contribution to the dialogue about the Defense Department's proposed programs in the area of women's health. USAID also actively participates in logistics cooperation training which illustrates a cohesive approach to coordination at all levels.

A number of country-specific examples of USAID and AFRICOM cooperation should be noted:

- In Sudan, we engaged in shared planning on post-referendum development including conflict and security assessment of roads and local government programs;
- In Liberia, we have collaborated with the Department of State and AFRICOM on a holistic approach to justice and security sector reform;
- In the Democratic Republic of Congo, USAID and DoD undertook joint planning of community-level development in the conflict-prone eastern region with a focus on areas around military bases;
- In Ethiopia, we have developed a collaborative working relationship between a USAID-funded conflict mitigation program and AFRICOM and a Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa civil affairs and humanitarian programs; and
- In Senegal and Cape Verde, we engaged in joint planning between the USAID and World Bank regional fisheries program and the AFRICOM maritime activities.

## General Coordination

While USAID has had to adopt new approaches to deal with stabilization activities, DoD has also begun to adopt key approaches used by USAID. For example, the concepts of sustainability and capacity building are becoming central themes of DoD's efforts worldwide. We must aim to help countries build governments which promote democratic principles and can outlast, endure and dominate local threats. Indeed our recent analytical work identifying the drivers of violent extremism has been welcomed and widely used by interagency military and civilian partners. A USAID strategy, while enhancing legitimacy of a country's government must also empower the lowest levels of government, must be led by host country nationals, and must foster indigenous desire to open up societies. To be effective we must ensure that we:

1. Recognize that host country leadership is critical to our success;
2. Ensure that we have access to the kinds of resources that allow for flexible and robust responses, including Complex Crises Funding;
3. Ensure that there are adequate numbers of trained, flexible personnel in both USAID and DoD to respond to the wide variety of challenges that we face.

In addition, there are well-established development lessons that are key to success:

1. Strengthen the capacity of weak states to deliver services and build legitimate institutions;
2. Improve security locally by complementing military assistance with assistance to police and civilian oversight bodies, including the judiciary;
3. Focus on poverty reduction and employment creation programs, especially for young people and marginalized populations;
4. Understand the works and ideas of Muslim moderates; engage moderate Islamic parties and reformers who seek to promote democratic ideas based on social and political issues; and
5. Balance attention to immediate threats (Iraq and Afghanistan) with a longer-term view that addresses emerging threats (Horn of Africa, South Asia, Yemen, Sahel).

Our strategies must be implemented in an environment of learning and adaptation, and with an eye to increased collaboration and joint planning with our interagency partners, including the Department of Defense.

Since 2006, USAID has been an active participant in DoD's Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). The congressionally mandated QDR directs DoD to undertake a wide-ranging review of strategy, programs, and resources. Participation in the QDR process gives USAID an opportunity to influence the reorientation of DoD's strategy and capabilities for addressing future challenges.

At the strategic level, USAID also participates in the development and review of DoD's Guidance for the Employment of the Force, the Pentagon's highest-level planning guidance document, first issued in 2008 and updated every two years.

USAID is moving to ensure our participation in the development of Combatant Commands' Theater Campaign Plans (TCPs). USAID has contributed to the preparation of the plans for the peacetime activities

of U.S. Southern Command, European Command, Africa Command, Pacific Command, Central Command, and Special Operations Command.

USAID continues to work closely with the Navy and the combatant commands in the design and effective implementation of medical missions and hospital ship visits -- for example, SOUTHCOM'S Continuing Promise, PACOM's Pacific Partnership, AFRICOM's Africa Partnership Station -- around the world, to ensure they focus on capacity building rather than just the provision of direct medical services. Pacific Partnership 2009, for example, was developed in close collaboration with USAID Washington and overseas mission staff and treated a total of 22,037 patients, the medical team saw 11,248 patients and the dentists saw 4,487 patients. The biomedical repair team assessed 107 pieces of equipment, repairing 77 and performing preventive maintenance on 23.

USAID has a three-year interagency agreement with the Defense Department through which it provides \$15 million to DoD for AFRICOM and PACOM to provide planning and training assistance to nations' militaries in their respective regions, in pandemic preparedness. DoD's assistance helps those militaries identify, develop, and execute more supportive and better coordinated roles in their nations' civilian-led multi-sector national pandemic and disaster response plans. USAID has integrated this military-to-military program effort into its larger pandemic preparedness program effort it supports that includes similar capacity-building efforts with developing countries' civilian sectors, nongovernmental organizations, as well as regional and international health and disaster organizations.

USAID is taking concrete steps to train its staff to operate in unstable environments, to adapt USAID programs to address the causes of instability, and to work effectively with the military in the field. In addition to training our own staff, USAID coordinates with interagency partners the training provided every nine months at Camp Atterbury, Indiana to members of future Afghanistan provincial reconstruction teams, focused on civilian-military integration, personal safety, stabilization, and reconstruction.

The challenges associated with conflict, fragile states, post-conflict reconstruction, disaster response, and peace-keeping call for assistance that satisfies immediate needs and simultaneously rebuilds or reinforces the policies, institutions, and infrastructure destroyed by war or natural calamity. Often the causes of instability transcend national borders and call for regional approaches which challenge bilateral donors' ability to develop and implement programs. In short, we all need to work together, as no one agency has the tools, resources or approaches to deal alone with emerging threats. Our aim is to establish the basic foundations so that programs aimed at promoting development and poverty reduction can be effective. To this end, we along with our colleagues at the Departments of Defense and State are engaged in development of new tools and tactics for operating in these environments. We have made progress and learned valuable lessons in recent years that only reaffirm our commitment to continued interagency collaboration.

Thank you.