

has directed the National Security Staff to reinvigorate the National Security Professional Development program initiated with May 2007 Executive Order 13434. Currently 19 executive departments participate in the National Security Staff-led effort to define and draft a strategy to guide a National Security Professional Development program.”

### ***Conclusion***

The QDDR states in its concluding chapter that “to integrate all the components of America’s power, we must make the whole-of-government mantra more real. Through the QDDR, State and USAID commit to supporting a true interagency system that brings together all the U.S. agencies active overseas. In so doing we must recognize and embrace the comparative advantages, institutional mandates, and unique contributions of each agency. The theme of interagency collaboration runs throughout all aspects of the QDDR. We will turn to the personnel of other agencies before turning to contractors. We will develop inclusive planning processes. We will prepare our personnel to operate effectively in the interagency through training and detail assignments. We will develop with agency partners a response framework that outlines interagency roles and responsibilities and procedures for planning and responding to crisis...Through this interagency collaboration we will deliver the integrated power America needs to lead in the world today.” **IAJ**

*Ted Strickler is the Executive Director of the Col. Arthur D. Simons Center.*

## **The Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review: What It Suggests for the Interagency – Outside Observations**

***by John Dyson***

When Senator Clinton became Secretary Clinton one of the first things she asked of the State Department was a copy of State’s four-year plan. As a member of the Senate’s Armed Services Committee, former Senator Clinton was familiar with the Defense Department’s Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), and now Secretary Clinton expected that State had a similar document that would help her understand State’s “short-, medium-, and long-term blueprint for diplomatic and development efforts.” Upon learning that there was no such document Secretary Clinton directed the Department to develop a Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR). After a long gestation period, the first QDDR was published on December 15, 2010.

### ***Outside Reviews***

Since its release, the QDDR has been reviewed by: 1) foreign policy observers looking for a guide to the Department of State ends, ways, and means to implement the Obama Administration’s diplomatic goals and objectives; 2) development-focused non-government organizations seeking the Administration’s vision on the U.S. Agency for Internal Development’s (USAID) activities in foreign assistance and development; and 3) foreign governments comparing the 2010 National Security Strategy, QDR, and QDDR to read the tea leaves on overall United States foreign policy.

Some observers note the impact the QDDR may have on federal policy, bureaucratic reorganization, and interagency directions. Others list several external challenges in implementing its goals, such as the need for interagency and inter-governmental action, including enabling legislation.

What follows is some of the commentary.

## ***Civ-Mil Stovepipes and Integrating the Administration's Foreign Policy Goals***

Anthony H. Cordesman (Center for Strategic and International Studies) notes the QDDR “fails to address the legacy of nearly a decade of failure on the part of the State Department, USAID, and the civil departments of the U.S. government to come to grips with the need to provide effective civilian partners in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.” He observes that “the need to create a more functional relationship between the State Department, USAID, the U.S. military, and the U.S. intelligence community is not analyzed in either crisis area or where more conventional partnerships with host countries need to be improved.” Cordesman points out that several Congressional reports and Special Inspectors General recommendations seem to have been ignored in the drafting of the QDDR while there are too many “buzzwords”, “laundry lists” of general good ideas and platitudes instead of concrete plans for action.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Budgetary Concerns***

Gordon Adams (Distinguished Fellow at the Stimson Center) notes that the QDDR goal faces several important challenges, not the least of which is a reallocation of resources from DoD war fighting operations and to State/USAID governance and conflict prevention activities. He blogs:

The review had led to a decision to beef up State and USAID capabilities to handle conflict prevention and conflict resolution, making this a core mission of the Department. The effort to create capabilities at State has been going on for about six years now, but this has never been a ‘core mission,’ just a way of delivering civilian bodies to Iraq and Afghanistan to work on reconstruction in the framework of a U.S. invasion and occupation... Conflict prevention and governance need to be skills every diplomat learns; they need to be core to key embassies, they need to be at the center of attention in State planning. Hopefully, some of that will happen as the new capacity is created in a restructured Under Secretary’s office. If it were fully implemented in the promised way, it would help DoD step back from the greatly expanded missions it has given itself to remake the world through stabilization and reconstruction operations.<sup>2</sup>

The QDDR discusses the possibility of a unified national security budget starting with interagency guidance from the National Security Council. InterAction, an alliance of U.S.-based nongovernmental organizations (NGO), explains of the QDDR: “With new mechanisms such as joint mission planning, pooled funding, and the potential creation of a unified Defense Department, State, and USAID national security budget, the QDDR plans to build on the existing system as well as increase efficiency and resource allocation.” However, it worries that an intertwined national security budget might “impact funding for poverty-based programs” that are not politically expedient for short-term national security interests.<sup>3</sup>

Laurie A. Garrett (Council on Foreign Relations Senior Fellow for Global Health) sees the difficult nature of these reforms, as she says the QDDR “creates a complicated set of networks and bridges across the entire government.”<sup>4</sup> Garrett also expresses concern that third-order effects of policy changes from USAID and the State Department functioning as “interwoven entities” may derail emphasis and funding for such things as global health.

### ***Cracking Heads Together – The Ambassador as CEO***

Gerald Hyman (Senior Advisor and President of Hills Program on Governance) discusses the challenges involved in actually empowering the U.S. ambassador as a multiagency CEO:

First, the U.S. ambassador is to be the CEO of the multiagency work in any country and will ‘direct and coordinate’ the civilian efforts there. The question is the extent to which the agencies working with funds not controlled by the State Department will be ‘directed and coordinated’ or, if not, what levers the ambassador will have and what the procedures will be for implementing coordination.<sup>5</sup>

Hyman’s question on whether the ‘Ambassadorial CEO’ can ever exercise full direction and coordination is a very poignant issue as the numbers of interagency players proliferate at embassies throughout the world. In strong support for the idea that ambassadors should exercise such power, Dr. Christopher Lamb of the Institute for National Strategic Studies and Ambassador (Ret) Edward Marks argue:

The inability of the President of the United States to delegate executive authority for integrating the efforts of departments and agencies on priority missions is a major shortcoming in the way the national security system of the U.S. government functions. Statutorily assigned missions combined with organizational cultures create ‘stovepipes’ that militate against integrated operations...Presidents have tried various approaches to solving the problem: National Security Council committees, ‘lead agencies,’ and ‘czars,’ but none have proven effective. Yet one precedent of a relatively successful cross-agency executive authority does exist: the Chief of Mission authority delegated to U.S. resident ambassadors. The Congress and White House could build on this precedent to provide the President greater ability to manage complex national security problems while strengthening congressional oversight of such missions.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Training Interagency Professionals***

Stephen Johnson (Contributor to Foreign Policy’s Shadow Government), observes regarding training of the government’s interagency professionals:

Quadrennial reviews are supposed to evaluate an institution’s fitness for accomplishing expected missions and responding to crises...But it seemed less an analytical assessment than a justification for steps the secretary had already taken. State’s desire to coordinate a growing menagerie of interagency actors in its embassies got coverage, but its evolving relationship with them was brief... Addressing the workforce, the QDDR takes on perhaps the biggest weakness of our foreign affairs establishment. Foreign Service officers (FSOs) may be the department’s elite, but they must suffer a dysfunctional personnel system and inadequate training. Many go to post with little more than an orientation course since there is no congressionally authorized training float...USAID must rebuild its corps of career experts lost as contractors replaced them over the last 20 years. Meanwhile, employee unions may generally oppose more flexible hiring practices.<sup>7</sup>

### ***Getting Congress on Board***

Although some QDDR recommendations have already been internalized within the State Department, many initiatives require acceptance by other departments and agencies, while others require enabling legislation or funding.

Co-Chairs of the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN) David Beckmann and George Ingram, opine, “These reforms would pay major dividends in terms of lives saved and improved around the world—and they would make sure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are getting into the hands of people who need them. But they will only have lasting impact if the Administration and bipartisan members of Congress work together to develop and pass legislation that establishes them in law.”<sup>8</sup>

Noam Unger (Brookings Institution Global Economy and Development Fellow) says much the same thing:

There is seemingly much to like about the QDDR, such as its well-placed focus on the role of women and girls in peace-building and development, but the review raises many questions. Ultimately, to make this type of review quadrennial in fact, rather than just in name, and to leave behind a legacy of institutional reform, the administration would do well to work closely with Congress.<sup>9</sup>

Sara Messer and Larry Nowels list three major challenges the QDDR faces in bringing about tangible change in the government’s interagency operations:

**Partnering with Congress:** While the funding landscape ahead is challenging, the reforms for greater efficiency and measurable results should appeal to a Congress looking to reduce the deficit and maximize the impact of government spending. The QDDR offers a blueprint that is ahead of this debate and the State Department and USAID should seize the opportunity to forge a positive association with lawmakers.

**Making tough decisions:** President Obama’s Global Development Policy called for greater focus on where the U.S. had comparative advantage and could make the most impact...But what has not been said is where the U.S. will pull back. Gaining consensus around where to cut will be difficult, but the QDDR does not help us understand where that might take place.

**Harmonizing foreign assistance:** The report defines ‘civilian power’ as including all U.S. government agencies, not just State and USAID. But breaking down entrenched bureaucratic priorities and convincing all agencies to work under the leadership of USAID on development assistance will be daunting...The QDDR takes a leap towards streamlining and modernizing U.S. foreign assistance. Now the hard work of implementation begins.<sup>10</sup>

## ***Conclusion***

Anthony H. Cordesman critiqued, “The QDDR should have been a frank and critical effort that examined case studies in the failure to plan for effective civil and stability operations before each war, to execute effective civil operations during the initial invasions, and to develop and improve programs in the years that followed. Instead it fails to address problems that have denied the military the civil partners they need to effectively support both wars.”

While acknowledging this critique, this is the first State Department QDDR and sets benchmarks for the future rather than examining every recent decision on the genesis and conduct of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The internal State Department and USAID struggles during the development of the QDDR suggest that the process was sorely needed. The forward-looking

challenge for the QDDR is that it not become yet another ‘vacuous government report’ destined to collect dust on the bookshelf of the written and unread reports of the past.

Concerns about the comingling of development, diplomacy, and defense budgets are understandable. Whilst Secretary Gates has repeatedly expressed preferences for additional funds for diplomacy and development (stability, conflict resolution, nation building, etcetera), Congress has not followed his budgetary advice outside the Defense Department. On one hand, tying the budgets for defense, diplomacy, and development could have the effect of protecting all three from arbitrary cuts. However, there is no guarantee that Congress would not reallocate funds from the development or the diplomacy budgets to the defense budget when strict and immediate national security benefits are not immediately apparent. It is also doubtful that tying these budgets together would bring about rationalization in Congressional oversight, especially considering that since the amalgamation of agencies that went into the creation of the Department of Homeland Security has resulted in over 100 Congressional committees and subcommittees overseeing the DHS budget and management process.<sup>11</sup>

The better test for the QDDR is whether it leads to continued review of foreign policy and the Departments of State, Defense, USAID, and other interagency players in diplomacy and development, and more importantly, an integrated, cohesive, whole-of-government foreign policy that serves U.S. national interests in the 21st century. This metric is ongoing, and progress will be judged based on how the administration socializes with Congress to move forward from this starting point. This executive and legislative dance requires both partners to move their feet, the interagency orchestra to play the tunes, and the State Department to increase America’s confidence in its core diplomatic competencies. **IAJ**

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## NOTES

- 1 [http://csis.org/files/publication/101221\\_QDDR\\_Review.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/101221_QDDR_Review.pdf)
- 2 <http://www.capitalgainsandgames.com/blog/gordon-adams/2078/state-department-steps-show-me-money>
- 3 <http://www.interaction.org/article/reading-fine-print-qddr>
- 4 [http://www.cfr.org/publication/23653/weighing\\_an\\_ambitious\\_qddr.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/23653/weighing_an_ambitious_qddr.html)
- 5 <http://csis.org/publication/qddr-new-language-same-focus>
- 6 <http://www.ndu.edu/press/lib/pdf/strategic-perspectives/StrategicPerspectives-2%20.pdf>
- 7 [http://shadow.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/12/21/qddr\\_no\\_bulls\\_eye\\_but\\_generally\\_on\\_target](http://shadow.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/12/21/qddr_no_bulls_eye_but_generally_on_target)
- 8 [http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/12/16/ngo\\_community\\_likes\\_state\\_s\\_qddr\\_but\\_worried\\_about\\_implementation](http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/12/16/ngo_community_likes_state_s_qddr_but_worried_about_implementation)
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