

# Worth Noting

**Compiled by Elizabeth Hill**

## **Anti-ISIL Strategy to Include Civilian and Military Agencies**

President Obama met with military and civilian leaders on July 6, to discuss the strategy to degrade and ultimately destroy the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The strategy includes multiple elements of American power, including military, intelligence, diplomacy, and economic development.

The President acknowledged that countering ISIL will be a long campaign, and noted that in many areas ISIL is “dug in among innocent civilian populations,” and that “It will take time to root them out.”

The American strategy against ISIL will require coordination among multiple U.S. government departments and agencies, as well as international partnerships. According to the President, “Partnering with other countries, sharing more information, strengthening laws and border security allows us to work to stem the flow of foreign fighters to Syria as well as Iraq... And working together, all nations are going to need to do more. But we’re starting to see some progress.” **IAJ**

## **Updated National Military Strategy Released**

The Pentagon recently released a new National Military Strategy. This is the first update to the National Military Strategy since 2011, and follows the release of the 2015 National Security Strategy in February, as well as the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review.

The updated strategy reflects the new global security situation, which includes threats from both traditional state actors and transregional networks of sub-state groups. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey noted in his introduction of the document that “Since the last National Military Strategy was published in 2011, global disorder has significantly increased while some of our comparative military advantage has begun to erode.”

The strategy specifically calls out Iran, Russia and North Korea as aggressive threats to global peace, and also addresses concerns about U.S. technological superiority and terrorist groups like the Islamic State. The new National Military Strategy focuses on the importance of partnerships to maintain the delicate security balance around the globe, highlighting interagency and international cooperation, and stating that “Timely interagency planning and coordination also will be leveraged to develop holistic options that serve to integrate all elements of national power.” **IAJ**

## **Report Examines Cybersecurity Bills**

In mid June the Congressional Research Service (CRS) released a report comparing three bills that address information sharing and related activities in cybersecurity. The bills, two from the House of Representatives and one from the Senate, are the Protecting Cyber Networks Act (PCNA, H.R. 1560 as passed by the House), the National Cybersecurity Protection Advancement Act of

2015 (NCPAA, H.R. 1731 as passed by the House), and the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act of 2015 (CISA, S. 754).

According to the CRS report, all three bills focus on information sharing among private entities and between those entities and the federal government. The bills also address the structure of the information-sharing process, liability risks for private-sector sharing, and privacy concerns related to information sharing.

The bills limit the use of shared information to purposes of cybersecurity and law enforcement. The bills also limit other government use, and potential misuse, of shared information, and include provisions to shield information shared with the federal government from public disclosure. **IAJ**

## **White House Establishes Interagency Hostage Recovery Fusion Cell**

President Obama announced the completion of the review of U.S. hostage policy on June 24. The review has been under way for over a year, and was originally announced in November 2014.

The U.S. hostage policy has been heavily criticized by government officials, members of the U.S. military, and the families of American hostages. Among the complaints are dissatisfaction with a “dysfunctional” bureaucracy and a lack of interagency cooperation. Families of the U.S. hostages also reported feeling threatened by the agencies that had been tasked with the safe return of their loved ones.

The President announced that he had issued a new Presidential Policy Directive aimed at returning American hostages and supporting their families, signed a new Executive Order that would ensure better coordinated hostage recovery, and that the full report on the hostage policy review would be released. The President also announced that a senior diplomat will be designated as a Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs and the creation of an interagency Hostage Recovery Fusion Cell.

The Hostage Recovery Fusion Cell will include the Departments of State, Defense, Treasury, and Justice, as well as the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Representatives from other agencies may be added as needed. The fusion cell is currently “up and running” at the FBI, and aims to improve how the government develops hostage recovery plans, tracks developments in specific cases, shares information with families, and provides information to Congress and the media. **IAJ**

## **USAID Updates Civilian-Military Cooperation Policy**

In early June, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) released their updated Civilian-Military Cooperation Policy. The new policy builds on the previous policy, which was issued in 2008.

The 2008 Civilian-Military Cooperation Policy established the foundation for cooperation between the USAID and the Department of Defense (DoD). The 2008 policy also established civilian-military cooperation as fundamental to a whole-of-government approach to contemporary national security challenges.

The updated policy builds on the 2008 policy’s foundation, and incorporates what USAID has learned from working with DoD, including lessons learned from experiences in Iraq, Afghanistan,