

CSO utilizes many tools in analyzing conflict, including rapid conflict assessments, scenario-based brainstorming sessions, and open-source trend analysis and scenario modeling. CSO can then build on that analysis through interagency strategic planning or support to host nation stabilization planning. It can also incorporate conflict analysis into Joint Regional Strategies, Functional Bureau Strategies, and Integrated Country Strategies. CSO provides operation support of local initiatives through its network of civilian responders, which includes experts in strategic communications, security sector reform, election assistance, community mediation, international negotiations, rule of law, and civilian-military relations. When collaborating with interagency and other partners outside the U.S. government, CSO can also offer lessons learned and best practices on a variety of issues.

Prior to committing to an engagement, CSO examines the situation, evaluating U.S. national security interests, urgency for action, and opportunities for impact within the next 12 to 18 months. CSO also works with a select number of countries to test innovation where there is opportunity to learn from new approaches to conflict prevention and mitigation.

CSO is part of State Department's "J Family," a team of offices and bureaus that contribute to conflict prevention and crisis response missions. This team also includes the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL); the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL); the Office of Global Criminal Justice (S/GCJ); the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM); and the Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT).

CSO's work is defined by four core principles: agility, strategic focus, local ownership, and partnership. CSO partners with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Defense, and other U.S. government agencies, as well as other offices and bureaus within the State Department. USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) is a major player in CSO's conflict and crisis operations, as are the Joint Chiefs of Staff and regional Combatant Commands within DoD, and the Civilian Response Corps.

In 2012, CSO provided non-lethal equipment and training to the Syrian civilian opposition, increasing their effectiveness against the assaults of the regime. The training provided by CSO covered transition planning, civil administration, civil resistance, strategic communications, and countering sectarian violence. In Belize, CSO supported the office of the prime Minister, strengthening a gang truce and training 38 local mediators. CSO also supported efforts aimed at weakening the Lord's Resistance Army in Central Africa. **IAJ**

Homeland Security Partnership Council Established

On October 26, 2012, the Obama Administration established the White House Homeland Security Partnership Council. The Executive Order increases the U.S. government's ability to develop local partnerships to support homeland security priorities. This collaboration enables the federal government and its partners to use resources more efficiently while strengthening homeland security capabilities.

The Council will foster local partnerships between the federal government and the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, foundations, community-based organizations, and state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and law enforcement agencies. Council members will include representatives from a variety of executive departments, agencies, and bureaus. Prospective Council members will be nominated by their agency heads before being selected by the Steering

Committee.

The Steering Committee will govern the Council, and will be made up of representatives at the deputy agency head level. **IAJ**

Simons Center Debuts Bigger, Better Bibliography

The Simons Center recently debuted their newly redesigned interagency bibliography available in the “Resources” section of their website (www.TheSimonsCenter.org). The new bibliography builds on the Center’s previous work in this area, and now includes over 1,200 annotated entries on interagency topics. The bibliography includes government reports, declassified documents, theses, monographs, interviews, articles, and other texts on topics ranging from national and homeland security to counterterrorism to legislation to humanitarian aid and peace keeping.

The bibliography includes documents from U.S. government departments and agencies, all branches of the military, academicians, NGOs, and international organizations. The entries have been organized by topic and tagged with keywords, making research on the Simons Center’s website easier than ever. Researchers and other interested individuals now have the option of browsing the bibliography by topic or using the site’s built in search engine to search for documents related to their interests.

The Simons Center is constantly adding new entries to the bibliography, and is looking forward to watching it grow and expand. If you know of a report, book, or other text that you believe would be an asset to the Simons Center’s interagency bibliography, please contact the Program Assistant at ehill@TheSimonsCenter.org. **IAJ**

Report Identifies Mechanisms for Collaboration

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report in September 2012 identifying mechanisms to implement interagency collaborative efforts. The report, GAO-12-1022, also examined the implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 Modernization Act of 2010, which was established to improve government performance.

GAO-12-1022 identifies the mechanisms that the federal government uses to lead and implement interagency collaboration. The report also identifies issues that should be considered when implementing these mechanisms. While conducting their research, GAO reviewed literature dealing with interagency collaborative mechanisms and interviewed various experts in the field of collaboration. GAO also reviewed previous reports involving collaborative mechanisms.

In the report, GAO stated that federal agencies use a variety of mechanisms to implement interagency collaborative efforts, including the use of a presidentially-appointed coordinator, agencies co-located within one facility, or the use of interagency task forces. These mechanisms can be used to address policy development, information sharing and communication, capacity building, and a variety of other purposes.

GAO also found that additional issues should be considered when implementing these mechanisms, including outcomes and accountability, leadership, participants, and resources. Other issues to consider included the organizational cultures of the participating agencies, the roles and responsibilities of those involved, and any documented agreements between participating agencies. **IAJ**