IRREGULAR CONFLICT,
THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE,
AND
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY REFORM

by

Franklin D. Kramer
Senior Fellow
CNA
I. Introduction

War, as Clausewitz has described, is an important way of achieving political aims. Yet it requires violent means, significant societal disruptions, and large costs. It is no wonder that Sun Tzu cautioned that “there has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefited.” The United States has, however, been engaged in a period of long wars—most notably, Afghanistan for 10 years and Iraq for eight. In fact, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, William Lynn has argued that one of the three salient characteristics of current wars is their increasing duration, along with their often asymmetric nature and an expanded access to lethality both in high-end and low-end conflicts.

This report offers a series of recommendations on how to undertake irregular conflicts—the “long wars” in which the United States has engaged—in a more effective and less costly manner. The report, derived from the efforts of a workshop held jointly by CNA, the National Defense University, and the United States Institute of Peace, proposes a triad of actions that, if implemented, could affect the duration, asymmetry and lethality of irregular conflict engagements and operations. The workshop utilized as a starting point recommendations by Quadrennial Defense Review Independent Review Panel, and therefore had a somewhat greater orientation toward the military side of such efforts (with later planned workshops having a greater focus on the civilian side)—but, as will be clear from the this report and the analysis below, an overriding conclusion is the absolutely critical need for effective integration among military and civilian efforts.

The report has three sections: the first on integrated operations, the second on enhanced capabilities, and the third on expanded education. None of the recommendations are intended as panaceas—irregular conflicts present very difficult problems. Moreover, it is important to avoid overgeneralization. Context matters a great deal in warfare generally and even more so in irregular conflicts where social, cultural and psychological elements play key roles. Afghanistan is not the same as Iraq, and neither presents the issues in the precisely the same manner as faced in a Pakistan, Balkan or Haiti situation.

1 Clausewitz, On War, Book One, Chapter One, para. 24, at p. 99 (Howard and Paret ed. and trans).
2 Sun Tzu, The Art of War, chapter 2, para. 7 at p. 73 (Griffith trans.)
4 See Kramer, Irregular Conflict and the Wicked Problem Dilemma, in PRISM (July 2011) at p. 75 et seq.
5 See Malkasian and Myerle, How Is Afghanistan Different From al Anbar (February 2009).
The recommendations offered are substantial, but there are some reasons to believe that significant reform can be undertaken if wisely pursued. First, there are the obvious budget pressures on the United States. As many have pointed out, the United States alone has spent well over a trillion dollars in the last decade on irregular conflict, moneys that otherwise would have been available for different purposes. Much of the expenditure has come about because the United States counterinsurgency strategy is heavily manpower dependent. Two Presidents from different parts of the political spectrum have seen fit to utilize “surge” efforts to meet irregular conflict requirements, and this dependence on very large numbers of non-host country manpower has high costs. The pressure to reduce costs can be used as a catalyst for reform. As a simple mathematical calculation, even a ten percent saving would have garnered some $100 billion, a highly valuable consideration in an era of fiscal constraint.

Second, while changing a highly effective strategic approach would make little sense, the fact is that the results of our counterinsurgency efforts have not been overwhelmingly positive. While there is no doubt that significant gains have been made in each of Iraq and Afghanistan when measured against the most difficult times in those countries, neither of those countries presents a fully satisfactory security situation—as exemplified to the frequent reference to the “fragility” of the security situation in Afghanistan. If “clear, hold, build” is a quick shorthand for the current counterinsurgency strategy, it would be highly desirable for the “build” portion to be much more effective—and there are reasons also to review the “clear” and “hold” portions to see if they likewise could be done more efficiently and effectively. Accordingly, like costs, the desire for more positive consequences can be an important catalyst for change.

In short, changes which offer a more effective and lower cost approach to irregular conflict fit both the needs of warfare and the budget requirements of a fiscally constrained circumstance. Such proposed changes are set forth below.

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7 “While the momentum achieved by the Taliban in recent years has been arrested in much of the country and reversed in some key areas, these gains remain fragile and reversible.” White House Report on Afghanistan and Pakistan, April 2011, at p.8.
II. Proposed Reform

The reforms set forth below—integrated operations, enhanced capabilities, and expanded education—are discussed separately, but effective results will require actions in each of these arenas. Mutually supportive change integrated into policy, operations, capabilities, and education and training will be the requisite effort that accomplishes the desired end results.

A. Integrated Actions

At least since the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986, the DOD has focused on the value of integrated operations—“joint” when among services, “combined” when with other nations. Key elements include planning, training and operating together. Yet when the United States has undertaken very consequential actions as in Iraq and Afghanistan, “jointness” among military and civilian organizations has been too limited and often only the result of good ad hoc arrangements among leaders in the field. All too frequently, there have been problems of the left hand not having sufficient knowledge of what the right hand is doing—or, when there is knowledge, a failure to resolve conflicting approaches.

The QDR Independent Review Panel pointed quite clearly to the problem, stating:

“All of the civilian departments and agencies involved in the whole of government effort face the need to adapt their internal cultures, processes, and structures to work comprehensively together to meet 21st century challenges. . . . But each agency has its own perspective on national security challenges, its own methods of operation, its own personnel system, and its own culture. Enhancing a whole of government culture requires the development of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that both transcend and integrate the department and agency into this comprehensive perspective on national security.”

As the Panel stated, the problems are structural, procedural and cultural, and include planning, training and operations.

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1. Comprehensive Planning

Effective interagency planning is a critical element of responding to irregular conflict, and it has two key elements. First, to be effective, planning must be adaptive—circumstances change and the plan must change over time or, if initial efforts are not working, change in substance. Planning requires not only efforts prior to a conflict, but also throughout its duration. Periodically, what was the best action for one time will require revision at a later time. The United States has been reasonably capable of being adaptive, as is exemplified by the decisions to surge forces in both Iraq and Afghanistan after earlier actions were less successful.

Second, however, adaptiveness alone is not enough. Effective planning also requires a comprehensive interagency approach to all key elements of resolving an irregular conflict—and comprehensive planning arguably is the least well undertaken aspect of United States efforts at the strategic level over the past ten years. The QDR Panel noted that this is not an easy task: “The number and diversity of potential participants and their likely relationships suggest the complexity and scale of the challenge.”9 Thus, while the operational and tactical elements of the military elements of strategy have received good planning efforts, other elements of strategy—governance; non-military security such as police and courts; economics; and social/cultural factors--have not been planned for in a comprehensive and organized integrated fashion.

It should be clear that this analysis does not question either the good faith or the very substantial efforts of numerous persons, both civilian and military. The argument is not that there is no planning –but that there is insufficient comprehensive integrated planning that would allow for a more effective overall strategy.

To accomplish the type of effective planning called for here, four sets of actions need to be taken.

--First, at the policy level, Congress should mandate the necessity of comprehensive interagency planning for irregular conflicts, similar to the requirements it mandated under Goldwater-Nichols. As the QDR Panel noted, “Although, to an extent, this will be event-dependent, time can be saved by

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9 Id. at p. 34.
studying likely future contingencies in advance and identifying now the critical organizational participants and the appropriate relationships among them.”

Second, the President should designate a senior policy planner in Washington who will report to the National Security Council. That does not mean reporting to the staff of the National Security Council but to the President, Vice President, Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense plus whomever else the President designates to be on the NSC. That senior planner will receive the agency plans and have the authority to cause them to be integrated. The interagency process will still work to develop goals and even proposed methods—but then those goals and methods will be encompassed in an integrated plan.

Third, a critical element of this approach will be to have the State Department and the Agency for International Development speak with one voice, as is ostensibly the case but not so often true in fact. State has created, but then not been able to use well, its Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stability, and an office with the type of mandate intended for S/CRS probably is the best positioned entity to coordinate planning for State/AID—but only if given the authority and backing of the Secretary of State. As a result of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, State is contemplating creating a new Bureau for Conflict and Stabilization Operations. Depending on how organizational changes are undertaken, the head of S/CRS or of the new Bureau, if of sufficiently high rank and commensurate experience, could even be designated the overall planning head, as suggested above.

Fourth, in the field, there will be a requirement to integrate the military and civilian planning. The relevant combatant commander for the military should integrate military plans with a designated senior civilian theatre planner who should have authority over all civilian agencies and their plans. It is possible that the civilian planner would be the ambassador, but it may be sensible to have a designated person, along the lines of a special envoy who is less subject to the immediate politics of the host nation.

2. Integrated Operations

Planning in an integrated fashion is only part of effective integrated actions. Most importantly, field operations also need to be integrated—and, to do that effectively, training and budgeting likewise need to be integrated.

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10 Id.
a. Operations

From an operational perspective, there is no single best method for military and civilian entities to operate together. As noted above, context will differ in different irregular conflicts, and undoubtedly will also change over time. Senior leaders should have the flexibility to use multiple approaches and to change them as called for by changed circumstances. The concept is not a straitjacket, one-size-fits-all approach, but rather flexibility within the inviolable principle of integration.

It is, however, critical to have an organized common effort. The QDR Panel called for a “unity of effort.”¹¹ A key point here is the necessity to understand the resources and capabilities of each deploying entity and the way that they will each see and react to the environment in which they are deployed. Because specific tasks will, of course, differ, different requirements can often lead to different methods, different analysis of desired end result and various opportunities for conflict. It is critical to bring those differences into a common approach.

That, of course, raises the question of who is in charge. One oft-cited model is the relationship in Iraq between the military, headed by General Petraeus, and the civilian side, headed by Ambassador Crocker. During their common tenures, the dual-head approach worked well. But there may be circumstances where a single head would be more effective. It is notable that in the two examples cited by the QDR Panel—Provincial Reconstruction Teams and the Africa Partnership Station—there has been a single command structure. Particularly when the security situation is highly unsettled, there are potentially strong reasons for unity of command—and that approach should not be ignored out of hand, but neither should it be simply adopted as the default position.

The reality is that there can be risks in either direction. To be sure, there are understandable concerns that over-militarizing an effort might cause other key elements to be ignored or misunderstood. But it is an equally legitimate concern that an absence of structure and a lack of integrated direction can confound attempts to organize integrated operations, creating a real prospect for significantly negative results. In sum, organizing the proper command approach—whether unity of command or unity of effort—is one of the key aspects of responding to irregular conflict, and should be given a high degree of analysis within each particular conflict.

¹¹ Id. at p. 37.
b. Training

The proper focus on training also will be a key factor. As the QDR Panel noted, “Success in military operations requires . . . a commitment to train in the way we expect to operate,” but that there was not such a commitment across the whole of government approach. Training utilizing an interagency approach will help uncover some of those differences among agencies noted above, and deploying with personnel who were trained together will mean not only that there is a common reference background but also the more evolved human relationships which make integrated efforts more likely.

There are two broad elements to training – pre-deployment training and baseline training designed to develop, teach, and sustain operational-level skills and processes necessary for building a set of “whole of government” capabilities and capacities. Pre-deployment training does take place to some extent now on an integrated basis, but it could be significantly enhanced. Longer-term training does not. The QDR Panel found that “The Department of Defense needs to contribute to training and exercising these civilian forces with U.S. military forces so that they will be able to operate effectively together,” and even recommended a “biennial (every other year) exercise involving both the international community and the national agencies.”

Integrated training will generate much more effective integrated operations and, for that reason, should be a key element of responding to irregular conflict. One of the key real life obstacles to integrated training is costs, and that raises the broader issue of budgeting for irregular conflict.

c. Resources

No strategy can be effectively implemented without adequate resources. And while the expenditures on the United States’ long wars have been very high, they have not always had the flexibility that would allow them to be most effectively utilized. The general constraint has been the Congressional requirement for the separation of agency funding streams and the limitations on transferring from one agency to another budgetary authority that circumstances have shown would be more desirable (and there are also limits on whether an agency can transfer its own funds from one type of expenditure to another).

12 Id. at p. 32.
13 Id. at p. 44.
Congress has provided some assistance, particularly in so-called 1206 and 1207 situations where DOD money has been available for transfer to State for the purposes of security assistance including counter-terrorism and stability and reconstruction. Moreover, for the FY 2012, DOD and State have advanced the concept of pooled funding. Deputy Defense Secretary Lynn explained it as follows:

“For FY 2012, the State and Defense Departments have proposed an important new tool, the Global Security Contingency Fund, also known as the “pooled fund.” This fund would allow us to provide assistance for security forces and institutions and rule of law and stabilization programs in key nations. One of the unique aspects of this proposal is that it would allow us to provide targeted assistance within the budget cycle whenever we have a strategic opportunity or see a threat emerge. This fund is based on a new model of interagency coordination, one that emphasizes the links between defense, diplomacy, and development, and enables our departments -- in close consultation with Congress -- to respond jointly and effectively to a broad range of transnational challenges. Initial funding of $50 million has been requested for the State Department together with authority for State or Defense to provide additional funds.”

The broad approach of enhanced flexibility to support integrated operations needs to be expanded. One useful way to do this would be to have a common State/Defense Overseas Contingency Fund where money could be allocated as the President determined. Reporting could be undertaken to Congress, and some limitations could be established along the lines of existing reprogramming requirements. The key point is that flexible integrated operations require flexible integrated funding, and the annual—and longer—ordinary budget cycle does not provide for that flexibility.

5. Non-Governmental Organizations and Integrated Operations

Integrated operations will not be achieved by only integrating governmental entities, though that is obviously highly desirable. Contractors and other non-governmental organizations are extensively engaged in the conduct of an irregular conflict, and their actions need also to be integrated. The QDR Panel focused on the contractor portion of this issue and recommended:

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14 Statement of William J. Lynn, III Deputy Secretary of Defense before the Senate Budget Committee March 10, 2011, at p.3.
“designating an Assistant Secretary of Defense-level official to oversee and standardize management of contractors in contingencies; increasing the number and improving the training of contracting officers; integrating contractors and contractor-provided tasks into contingency plans; and integrating contractor roles into pre-deployment training and exercises.”15

But contractors are not the only non-governmental entities heavily engaged in irregular conflict. Particularly in governance and social efforts, including health and education, non-profit organizations play important roles. Not all such organizations are willing to engage with the U.S. government in the course of a conflict, but increasingly many are. To the extent possible, integrating their activities as part of an overall effort will have high value.

B. Enhanced Capabilities

While the failure sufficiently to integrate planning and operations is a highly significant issue, it is only one of the critical problems faced in dealing with irregular conflict. A second equally, and often more, significant issue surrounds the question of capabilities. Capabilities issues arise in three different ways: i) first, there are some important things that we simply do not know how to do or, at least, not how to do well; ii) second, there are often situations in which we do not take advantage of what do know; and iii) third, as discussed in the section on integrated operations, we often do not integrate capabilities that we do have and, therefore, get a less than desirable result.

The QDR Panel discussed the problem of the lack of capabilities as follows:

“The problem is that the civilian government departments and agencies do not have the needed capability or capacity to adequately support needed whole of government and Comprehensive Approach strategies. . . .16

“As just one example, we need to strengthen our ability to improve governance of failing states so that we do not have to deploy our military because a failing state became a failed state that threatens our vital interests. But governance is a civilian function. We need to define the capabilities required for these kinds of missions and then draw together the civilian departments and agencies that have or need to develop these capabilities and ensure that they are organized for

15 QDR Panel, supra note 8. at 39.
16 Id. at p. 33.
rapid deployment overseas. This is one example of how a whole of government approach could reduce our need to resort to our military.”

The Panel was very clear on the benefit of having such effective capabilities:

“In addition, coming in after a military operation with the whole range of civil skills required for post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction will contribute to reducing the duration of a military deployment and accelerating the point where the military can shift to a supporting role and ultimately hand over security to either international peacekeeping or indigenous forces. Such an approach can ultimately shorten the duration of U.S. military deployments to these troubled regions.”

Improving capabilities is not a simple task. All the entities and people who have been working these problems previously have sought to be effective. Being more effective so that better results will be generated will require three broad types of actions: better focused resources; greater understanding of host nation context and a lessons learned capacity that can align capabilities with context; and clearer objectives so that there are not conflicting requirements that offset one another.

1. Focused Resources

In terms of focused resources to enhance capabilities, there are three actions that could be promptly taken, two within the ambit of the DOD and one involving a broader effort:

The simplest action that the DOD could undertake would be to increase and more effectively integrate its Civil Affairs capabilities. There simply are not enough Civil Affairs personnel in the military. Moreover, for any officer or senior enlisted personnel who can be expected to be involved in irregular conflict—which is essentially everyone—civil affairs training is a necessity. The area is fundamentally under-resourced in terms of dollars, time spent, and personnel. Moreover, Civil Affairs efforts all too often are not sufficiently integrated with civilian efforts. The good news is that changing this situation would not require large expenditures of funds—but it would require a reallocation of personnel toward this set of activities.

17 Id. at p. 34.
18 Id. at pp. 34.-35.
The second action that the DOD could undertake is to increase its information gathering capabilities and cultural and contextual understanding of the host nation. Lack of information and understanding makes more difficult knowing how to use non-kinetic actions to generate effects (and such knowledge would also enhance understanding of kinetic actions consequences). The DOD has recognized this problem to some important extent in the context of Afghanistan. In a well-known article, Major General Flynn wrote:

“Eight years into the war in Afghanistan, the U.S. intelligence community is only marginally relevant to the overall strategy. Having focused the overwhelming majority of its collection efforts and analytical brainpower on insurgent groups, the vast intelligence apparatus is unable to answer fundamental questions about the environment in which U.S. and allied forces operate and the people they seek to persuade. Ignorant of local economics and landowners, hazy about who the powerbrokers are and how they might be influenced, incurious about the correlations between various development projects and the levels of cooperation among villagers, and disengaged from people in the best position to find answers—whether aid workers or Afghan soldiers—U.S. intelligence officers and analysts can do little but shrug in response to high level decision-makers seeking the knowledge, analysis, and information they need to wage a successful counterinsurgency.”

There is no question that since General Flynn’s salvo, a greater effort has been undertaken in Afghanistan. But, entirely apart from how successful that has been, the need exists to institutionalize that approach. Doing so is partly a matter of reorienting intelligence efforts and partly a matter of providing the right education and training so that such efforts can be effective. Again, the good news is that this is not a requirement for large, new funding, but rather for focused reallocation within the context of existing budgets. The main issue, as with Civil Affairs discussed above, will be the recognition by senior officials in the DOD of the value of such reallocation in the context of constrained funding.

The third area in which existing capabilities could be better used is outside of the DOD ambit, but should very much fall under the concept of a unity of effort approach. Most specifically, there are existing capabilities in the health, education and agricultural areas whose use could be better integrated with other efforts. Once again, this is not to say that there has been no effort in this area. Most obviously, in both Afghanistan and Iraq, significant efforts have been

undertaken in precisely these areas. The issue is rather integration into an overall effort—and the value of those actions to creating a reasonably stable host country. Integrating nongovernment organizations, contractors, and universities into the planning process and coordinating field activities can have an increased multiplier effect.

2. Improving Capabilities

In the United States approach to irregular conflict, it is well-established that much of the effort will go toward three important tasks: training the host nation military; enhancing non-military security, especially police and judiciary; and generating effective governance. It is also fairly clear from the results of U.S. efforts that these are not tasks that are easily accomplished. For example, in his 2010 report, Lieutenant General William Caldwell stated, “Before November 2009 there were insufficient resources to properly conduct the [police training] mission.”

Resources, however, were not the only deficiency; a second factor has been the design of training itself. In an earlier interview, General Caldwell stated, with respect to police training, “We weren’t doing it right. . . . It is still beyond my comprehension.”

And, of course, the host nation itself presents challenges beyond resources and training design. In Iraq, a review group led by General James Jones found the Iraqi Police Service and the national police to be incapable and ineffective; relevant factors included under-resourcing, sectarianism, and the dysfunctional nature of the Ministry of Interior under which they served.

There are no easy solutions to these problems; otherwise, they would have been put in place already. There are, however, some important steps that could be taken to ameliorate them and give better results over the longer term. The initial focus needs to be on process and lessons learned.

Improving training for the host nation military can be utilized as a model. Without denigrating prior or existing efforts, it is worth remembering the very high costs in terms of casualties and resources of the extended efforts that have been required in Iraq and Afghanistan because host nation forces have not been able to fully meet requirements. It seems fair to say that in general the United States largely trains other militaries in the U.S. model. There are many reasons

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20 NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan, Year in Review (November 2010), 3.
for this, not least of which is that this is what the military knows best and that this is a highly effective model if it can be made to work.

But it is this last point that needs to be considered. The U.S. model demands significant resources and highly educated and committed personnel. Often, neither of those will be available in a host nation. Accordingly, the question becomes whether a model more oriented to the capacities of the host nation can be utilized. To ask this question is not to answer it, but there certainly are some in the United States military—and particularly the Special Forces—who are capable of training to a different model. An important challenge for the DOD should be to determine if training host nations can be significantly improved, particularly by consideration of non-U.S. modeled militaries. To be sure, training on the U.S. model can have accomplishments. There are, for example, ongoing improvements in the Afghan forces. Yet, despite such improvements, United States and NATO forces are scheduled to remain in country until the end of 2014—which will be a 12-year effort—and it seems fair to ask whether focused analysis could offer ways to reduce such large and long-term programs.

This same set of questions arises in the context of the police and judiciary. Police and judiciary raise complementary but different problems. Effective resolution of these issues requires, at a minimum, a very good understanding of the culture and context. However, to the extent that they exist, U.S. capabilities are oriented to U.S. model, and often reliance for improving the police and judiciary is placed on military which does have some capability—particularly to be able to run a large program for police—but how effective such programs will be over time is not clear.

A key question is whether a rigorous analytic effort focused on lessons learned could lead to improved results. In the overall context of irregular conflict, funding for such an analytic effort would be small, but the implications could be large. A review to be effective would need to take account not only of lessons learned within the U.S. government, but also of learning and information from entities outside the USG including non-governmental organizations (non-profits and contractors) as well as the host nation and other governments that have been engaged on these issues. Part of the effort might simply be a rigorous literature review since there has been a good deal written on these topics. But the greater

effort likely would be empirical analyses, focused on specific cases, which might illuminate best practices that have been effective.  

Governance is the third arena in which improvement is called for. It is fair to say that certain aspects of governance usually are done reasonably well, and, in particular establishing structured efforts such as elections or formal government structures. However, other matters such as ensuring participation in governance, accountability of officials, and limitation of corruption generally are much more challenging.

The recent White House report makes clear the problems in the context of Afghanistan:

“While the Afghan government made advances in its capacity and effectiveness at the national level, it is still lacking at the sub-national level. Accountability at all levels remains weak. . . .

“Despite some small improvement in the training of judges . . . progress in the judicial sector was overshadowed by serious questions about the Afghan government’s political commitment to fight corruption.”

For this very difficult set of governance problems, it seems clear enough that we do not have a good set of answers, and yet they are critically important. Once again, the value of a serious funded analytic program based on lessons learned and seeking information from empirical analysis seems to be in order.

C. Expanded Education

Implicit in the discussions above regarding improved operations and enhanced capabilities is the assumption of appropriately educated personnel competent to take the actions necessary to achieve effective results in irregular conflict. The breadth of the background required was stated by the QDR Panel:

“Officers today must be prepared to wage war among civilian populations, to partner with contractors and civilian experts from our own and other societies in

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24 The QDR Panel made a recommendation along these lines: “Ensure the integration of lessons learned from the current wars within the programs of instruction of Department of Defense education and training institutions.” QDR Panel, supra note 8. at p. 46.
25 Id. at pp. 30-31, 32.
26 A number of suggestions in this section are based on the presentation by Karen Guttieri of the Naval Postgraduate School as part of the workshop.
rebuilding shattered neighborhoods, to segregate local populations with confusing ethnic or religious rivalries, and to advise senior political leaders about how to avoid—as well as win—wars in ambiguous settings against unconventional and uncertain enemies.”

Given the breadth of knowledge required, the assumption of competence is not necessarily warranted under today’s circumstances. Yet even though education is more limited than it ought to be in terms of scope and reach, the problem of generating adequate education could be substantially resolved within the constraints of fiscal limitations. Four actions would make a significant difference.

First, the breadth of professional military education should be expanded. At different times in the career process, required courses need to include such diverse subjects as how to understand different cultures, how to build organizational structures, and how economics and security interact. There are no specific places within the military now to receive such education, but the DOD regional centers—there are five, one for each of Europe, Asia-Pacific, Near-East/South Asia, Africa, and Latin America—might be the basis of curriculum development and potentially the provision of courses. The State Department’s Foreign Service Institute could also be engaged in the development and provision of appropriate curriculum.

Second, such an educational approach should not be limited to the active duty military. Reservists and Guard personnel are frequently engaged in irregular conflict and should be given the same educational opportunities, which they do not now have. Distributed education capabilities could be enhanced and utilized to achieve such ends. Certainly also, State and AID personnel should be regularly involved—and other civilian agencies similarly should have some international expertise. Indeed, the QDR panel stated that a “cadre of national security professionals with perspective, experience, education, and training in the Comprehensive Approach must be developed.” Moreover, if it were possible within fiscal constraints, contractors and other non-governmental personnel should be included in the education effort, just as they will be included in actual operations.

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27 QDR Panel, supra note 8. at p. 75.
28 The QDR Panel recommended to “Establish authority for a consortium of existing U.S. government schools to develop and provide a common professional national security education curriculum. Id. at p. 41.
29 Id. at p. 37.
30 The QDR Panel stated:” Improving education and training requirements for contractors, particularly those supporting complex contingencies abroad, is also essential.” Id. at p. 29.
Third, education and assignments should be linked. All too often regional educational opportunities are followed by assignments with no relationship to the region. Indeed, with some frequency, officers receive education and then leave the service shortly after. To offset this last problem, the QDR panel recommended that “Officers selected for senior service school should be obligated for at least 5 years of additional service after graduation.”

Fourth, education for irregular conflicts should take advantage of expertise outside the military. One could hypothesize three or four levels of courses with the military perhaps providing levels one and two, the State Department levels two or three, and perhaps outside organizations such as the United States Institute of Peace or a university providing levels three or above.

III. Conclusion

Irregular conflicts present challenges that need more effective solutions than have been achievable to date. A combination of integrated operations, enhanced capabilities, and expanded education offers the prospect for significantly better results. Implementing the recommendations set forth above is achievable within the current fiscal constraints and would go far to improve international security in the highly globalized world of the 21st century.

31 Id. at p. 76.