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U.S. Policy toward Fragile States: An Integrated Approach to Security and Development

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For the United States, the experiences of the past several years have driven home a reality of international life in the twenty-first century: It is no longer possible for the world's richest and most powerful country to remain indifferent to the fate of the planet's impoverished, insecure, and misgoverned countries. On both moral and strategic grounds, the United States has a stake in promoting development—broadly conceived as effective institutions capable of delivering economic growth, human security, and good governance—in the world's most fragile countries.¹ One of the principal foreign policy priorities for the next U.S. administration must be to formulate a more balanced approach to addressing the inextricably linked security, governance, and development challenges in failing, failed, and war-torn states. This new strategy must place more emphasis on prevention than on reaction and rely at least as much on civilian as on military instruments.

Despite unprecedented rhetorical attention to fragile states since September 11, 2001, the American strategic

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mindset has not fundamentally changed. U.S. policy has remained a set of fragmented half-measures. Spurred in part by the Iraq fiasco, the Bush administration took tentative steps to improve U.S. capabilities to help advance stability and reconstruction in post-conflict countries. However, the United States still lacks a preventive strategy to promote effective and legitimate institutions in fragile states and arrest their descent into instability and violence. Moreover, its policies remain remarkably self-contained, divorced from the actions of other governments and international institutions. The next administration will have a prime opportunity to lead a bold international effort to engage fragile states. A more successful U.S. approach to the challenge of fragile states will require five critical tasks:

1. Making a strategic commitment to preventing state failure.
2. Adapting U.S. development aid and policy to the fragile states' unique conditions.
3. Formulating a truly "whole of government" response.
4. Investing seriously in civilian capabilities needed to promote security and development in fragile states.
5. Embracing multilateralism to accomplish goals the United States cannot achieve on its own.

This chapter will deal with each of these tasks in turn but first examines the broader context.

What are fragile states and why do they matter?

Growing U.S. and international attention to the problems of fragile states reflects the confluence of national security concerns and the drive for poverty alleviation. During the 1990s, many in the U.S. foreign policy community regarded poorly governed, economically stagnant, often unstable states among developing countries primarily as humanitarian issues.² The 9/11 attacks stimulated a strategic reorientation. The 2002 National Security Strategy asserted that for the first time the United States faced a greater threat from weak and failing states than from conquering ones.³ Development actors began to adopt this thinking as well. A 2003 report by the U.S. Agency for International Development, *Foreign Aid in the National Interest*, declared, "When development and governance fail in a country, the consequences engulf entire regions and leap across the world. Terrorism, political violence, civil wars, organized crime, drug trafficking, infectious diseases, environmental crises, refugee flows and mass migration cascade across the borders of weak states more destructively than ever before."⁴ This view is also widely shared by other donor governments and multilateral institutions.⁵

Although the causal connections between state fragility and transnational threats are variable,⁶ weak and badly governed states can incubate

and transmit threats to global security.⁷ Beyond bringing misery to their inhabitants, they can provide havens and operating bases for transnational terrorists, as al Qaeda found in Afghanistan and Sudan. From Burma to Colombia, Haiti to Sierra Leone, such states provide a haven for the production and transit of drugs, as well as trafficking in other illicit commodities. They can spawn violent conflicts and humanitarian catastrophes that spill over borders to destabilize regions, as in the multiple wars of Central and West Africa in the 1990s. Fragile states can also accelerate the spread of global pandemics, from HIV/AIDS to emerging diseases such as avian flu, and leave oil-importing countries like the United States vulnerable to disruption of foreign energy supplies with severe strategic and economic implications.⁸

Parallel with these growing security imperatives, the international development community is devoting new attention to the dilemmas posed by poorly performing countries,⁹ which lack the capacity and often the will to pursue pro-poor policies, rendering traditional models of donor engagement ineffective. Over the past decade, these states have often been left behind, as donors direct a growing proportion of their aid to good performers, based on the belief that assistance is most effective in sound institutional and policy environments.¹⁰ The Bush administration's Millennium Challenge Account embodies this selective approach, directing aid to countries that "rule justly, promote economic freedom, and invest in people."

The United States and other donors have struggled to develop strategies and instruments for the other end of the development spectrum, composed of some fifty-odd weak and failing or (in the current euphemism) "fragile" states, home to perhaps a billion of the world's inhabitants. Such countries suffer from deficits in one or all of four critical dimensions of state function: security provision, political institutions, economic management, and social welfare delivery. In the security realm, these states may strain to maintain a monopoly on the use of force, protect their populations from external and internal threats, control their borders and territory, provide public order, and ensure safety from crime. Politically, they may lack legitimate institutions of governance that can check political power, protect basic rights and freedoms, hold leaders accountable, deliver impartial justice and efficient administration, and permit broad citizen participation. In the economic sphere, they may struggle to design and implement basic macroeconomic and fiscal policies and to develop and enforce a legal and regulatory climate conducive to private enterprise and growth. Socially, they often fail to invest in and deliver basic services such as health and education.

There is no universal agreement on the number and identity of the world's fragile states, though most analysts suggest a number between forty and sixty.¹¹ In practice, state fragility is not an "either/or" condition but varies along a continuum of performance, as well as across areas of state function.

Some fail across the board, others only in certain areas. (A comparison of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with Colombia proves the point: The Democratic Republic of the Congo performs poorly in all categories of state function, whereas Colombia scores well on political, economic, and social welfare, but miserably on security, being unable to control 40 percent of its territory.)

All analysts agree that fragile states are highly concentrated in but not limited to Africa. Compared with other developing countries, such states are on balance more prone to suffer from low growth and to be farthest from the Millennium Development Goals.¹² Their inhabitants are more likely to be poor and malnourished; endure gender discrimination; lack access to education, basic health care, and modern technology; and suffer chronic illness and die young. They are also fifteen times more prone to civil war than member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Violence in fragile states is both more extreme and longer lasting than conflict in other developing countries.¹³ Such countries are the overwhelming source of the world's refugees and internally displaced persons, and include some of the world's worst human rights abusers.¹⁴ Clearly, advancing human development—as well as human security—requires dealing with the plight of the world's “bottom billion.”¹⁵ Success in this effort also demands that donors transcend traditional development assistance to address issues such as trade, investment, governance, and security.

And yet the world's fragile states are a heterogeneous lot. This diverse group encompasses countries in a wide variety of circumstances, including conflict-ridden countries (the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sri Lanka), countries recovering from war (East Timor and Liberia), economically stagnant, aid-dependent countries (Zambia); politically inept countries (Bangladesh), resource-rich poor performers with autocratic regimes (Angola), brittle dictatorships (Burma and the Democratic Republic of Korea), collapsing countries (Zimbabwe), and tenuous transitions from authoritarian rule (Kenya).¹⁶ Crucially, state fragility is not merely a question of inherent capacity, but also of will—namely, the willingness of the governing regime to engage with donors and to pursue constructive policies and reforms intended to provide its citizens with fundamental political goods. Distinguishing between a governing regime's ability to deliver the goods versus its commitment to do so enables us to identify four broad categories of these states:

- States with both the will and the way.
- Weak but willing states.
- States with means but not the commitment.
- States with neither the will nor the way.

These analytical distinctions should inform the mix of incentives that external actors deploy in engaging poor performers as disparate, for example, as

Mali and Zimbabwe. Given the diversity of fragile states, generalized one-size-fits-all international policy responses will not remedy their multitude of ills.

Recent U.S. policy

Like other Western countries, the United States continues to struggle with the challenges of engaging fragile states.¹⁷ Since 9/11, the U.S. government has made tentative progress in designing new strategies and instruments to help restore security and promote recovery in war-torn contexts. The difficulties in stabilizing post-invasion Afghanistan and particularly Iraq prompted the Bush administration to belatedly recognize nation building as a mission the United States could not afford to ignore. In summer 2004, the State Department created a new Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. In late 2005, National Security Presidential Directive 44 gave that office lead responsibility within the U.S. government to plan and manage future U.S. government involvement in preventing and responding to state failure and post-conflict recovery.¹⁸ Despite this ostensible authority, inadequate support from senior administration officials, vulnerability to bureaucratic turf wars, and a lack of resources have impeded the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization from fulfilling its ambitious mandate.¹⁹ To date, the office has not developed a robust civilian capacity for post-conflict recovery that could make a tangible difference in the field.

More dramatic has been the shift at the Department of Defense. Stung by criticism of its failure to stabilize Iraq after deposing Saddam Hussein, the Pentagon approved Directive 3000.05 in November 2005. The directive, titled "Military Support for Security, Stability, Transition and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations,"²⁰ established stability operations as a core military mission, on a par with war-fighting, and called for the uniformed services to alter their doctrine, organization, leadership, training, exercises, materiel, facilities, and planning accordingly. The document also emphasizes that given limited civilian U.S. government capabilities and the exigencies of insecure environments, the military must be prepared to carry out a wide range of security, stability, transition, and reconstruction activities, including retraining police, rebuilding physical infrastructure, reviving market economies, and developing institutions of representative government. Meanwhile, the U.S. Agency for International Development has created an Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation and, in 2005, released a Fragile States Strategy. It has also created a new Office of Military Affairs to serve as a liaison with the Department of Defense.

These post-conflict initiatives remain piecemeal and incomplete. Yet they far outpace any U.S. government efforts to help prevent weak and failing

states from collapsing in the first place. Nearly seven years after 9/11, the United States still lacks a strategic, governmentwide approach that goes to the roots of institutional weakness, political instability, and violent conflict in fragile states. Instead, it has a loose collection of largely disconnected initiatives. At the State Department, the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization presides over a semiannual process with the National Intelligence Council to identify global hot spots for possible conflict prevention efforts and, along with the National Security Council, chairs a low-level interagency working group on conflict management and mitigation.²¹ The Pentagon, for its part, coordinates an interagency effort on “ungoverned areas” or stateless zones that could be exploited by terrorists and other illicit actors to harm the United States and its allies,²² while the regional Combatant Commands (including AFRICOM, the recently created Africa Command) are working to build the security capacities of friendly weak and failing states to control their borders and territories.²³

Hopes that the Bush administration would develop a more rigorous approach to fragile states rose in early 2006, when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced a sweeping “transformational diplomacy” initiative to promote the emergence of “democratic, well-governed states” in developing countries. Her plan included a significant reform of U.S. foreign assistance. Henceforth, U.S. foreign aid would be targeted toward five strategic objectives: promoting peace and security, investing in people, promoting economic freedom, supporting just and democratic rule, and providing humanitarian assistance. The new foreign aid framework proposed ways to meet these objectives in five categories of aid recipients: partnership, transforming, developing, rebuilding, and restrictive countries. Unfortunately, this new typology ignored fragile states and their unique development, governance, and security challenges.²⁴ Foreign aid reform also forced the U.S. Agency for International Development to abandon its promising Fragile States Strategy, which the agency had envisioned as the basis for a governmentwide approach to poor, conflict-prone countries with weak institutions. This hodgepodge of efforts left the United States without a systematic method for engaging fragile and post-conflict states, endangering U.S. national security and undercutting its development policy.

A new direction: reconceiving U.S. strategy toward fragile states

Because the sovereign state remains the building block of international society, the new president should announce, as a top foreign policy priority, the goal of helping to reform and strengthen weak and failing states among developing countries. To ensure a more effective U.S. approach to fragile states, the next administration should fill five current gaps in U.S. policy.

Task 1: Make prevention the priority

To start, the new administration must make preventing state failure a key objective of its foreign policy. Current U.S. engagement with fragile states remains almost entirely reactive, with the executive branch awaiting the outbreak of a major crisis to trigger a U.S. policy response. Adopting a more preventive stance will require winning over the American people to the imperative of state building, an enterprise that collides with a strong noninterventionist strain in U.S. political culture, to say nothing of a still-influential conservative ideology that favors shrinking the scope and size of government. The new president must persuade the public that there is no better bulwark against instability than strong, effective, and accountable states capable of providing their citizens with basic political goods.²⁵

Persuading U.S. policymakers and legislators of the benefits of preventing state failure and violent conflict will be an uphill battle. Despite the intuitive awareness that prevention is cost-effective, it remains difficult to attract official attention, mobilize political will, or invest resources before a full-blown crisis. Moreover, the impact of preventive action is notoriously difficult to evaluate, and successful outcomes can seem banal: “nothing happens.” To overcome inertia, the next administration should sell the prevention strategy to the American public as cost-effective in terms of U.S. dollars and lives, and initiate cost-benefit studies to assess the utility of prevention.

Draft an interagency fragile states strategy. In its first 100 days, the next administration should draft a comprehensive and authoritative U.S. strategy for weak and failing states in the form of a new National Security Presidential Directive. This document would not only establish preventing state failure as a U.S. national security priority but also offer a template for timely, integrated country planning for fragile states and a protocol to guide a U.S. government-wide response to a deteriorating situation in any particular country. It would provide a policy framework for executive branch agencies, requiring them to assess current conditions, explain U.S. national interests at stake, define the scale of U.S. ambitions and the objectives of U.S. policy, identify points of U.S. and international leverage, define the tasks for each phase of engagement and the tactics and instruments to achieve these ends, establish divisions of labor among U.S. agencies, identify international partners and their prospective roles, and create benchmarks to measure progress.

Empower a lead actor. The White House must designate a single, high-level focal point within the U.S. government for planning and implementing country-specific prevention, mitigation, and response efforts. Although National Security Presidential Directive 44 appears to assign this authority to the State

Department,²⁶ the question of leadership is far from settled.²⁷ The next president should designate the National Security Council—the sole entity to direct and coordinate all executive branch departments—as the U.S. lead in managing all conflict prevention and response activities. The White House should create a new National Security Council senior director for conflict prevention and response, with responsibility for developing civilian-military doctrine and U.S. capabilities for these tasks, leading contingency planning to head off state failure and internal conflict, and running country-specific task forces to prevent conflict and run post-conflict operations.²⁸ The precise strategy will vary according to the causes of weakness, particularly whether poor performance is rooted in inadequate capacity or weak political commitment.

Improve intelligence and early warning. The next administration should greatly expand U.S. human intelligence collection in fragile states—particularly in Africa—which atrophied during the 1990s and has only recently begun to recover. It should develop a more finely tuned system to measure and predict political and economic instability, based on a combination of structural indicators that change slowly (such as infant mortality and gross domestic product per capita), dynamic variables that reveal short-term trends, and analyses by respected country experts. In addition, the new administration should fund more open-source research and ease restrictions on sharing of unclassified information among U.S. agencies (including embassies, U.S. Agency for International Development missions, and Department of Defense operational units) and with other governments, U.N. agencies, nongovernmental organizations, development professionals, and private sector actors, who are sometimes better positioned to understand local dynamics.

Early warning, however, is rarely the issue; the true hurdle is early action. To help overcome bureaucratic resistance among risk-averse policymakers, the next administration should create an automatic triggering mechanism, whereby the National Security Council would direct relevant State Department bureaus and National Security Council regional directorates to formulate a “whole of government” strategy for any country integral to U.S. interests that enters a predefined danger zone.

Task 2: Tailor development aid and policy to fragile state realities

Realizing a more effective U.S. policy toward fragile states will require transforming the machinery, magnitude, design, and evaluation of U.S. development assistance.

Overhaul the structure of U.S. foreign aid and development policymaking. The first step is for the next president to transform a U.S. foreign aid system that

experts on both sides of the political aisle agree is in need of modernization.²⁹ The ideal outcome would be the total overhaul of the Foreign Assistance Act and the creation of a cabinet-level Department for Global Development, empowered to formulate a national development strategy, control its own resources, and engage the Departments of Defense and State on an equal footing in shaping policy toward fragile states (see chapter 10 by Herrling and Radelet). To support this effort, the White House should also designate an interagency coordinator of U.S. foreign aid policy and assistance in the Executive Office of the President. This official (who would replace the current State Department director of foreign assistance) would lead interagency deliberations to determine overall country and sector allocations to meet the multiple objectives (including, but not limited to, development) of U.S. overseas aid.³⁰

Expand the aid pool. Beyond improving the organization of U.S. foreign assistance, the next administration should devote a greater share of its official development assistance to fragile states and work with other donors to ensure that no countries are left behind. Today, the overwhelming allocation of bilateral U.S. aid to fragile states goes to a handful of countries, particularly Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan—two battlegrounds and a key frontline state in the “global war on terrorism”—as well as several major recipients of HIV/AIDS spending (including Ethiopia and Kenya). Beyond these priority countries, bilateral U.S. aid per capita varies enormously among fragile states but tends to be much higher in post-conflict countries such as East Timor and Liberia than in teetering states such as Bangladesh and Yemen.³¹ Although one would not expect the United States to be everywhere at the same level of funding, ad hoc selectivity can contribute to the phenomenon of “aid orphans,” countries that are essentially abandoned by the donor community.³²

Of course, providing aid to poor performers is a risky proposition, given frequently high corruption, low absorptive capacity, and repressive regimes. But if the risks of engaging fragile states are high, so are the costs of allowing them to “stew in their own juice.”³³ Moreover, evidence suggests that fragile states’ absorptive capacity often exceeds expectations and that carefully focused foreign assistance can raise growth, lower poverty, improve health and education, and reduce the risk of conflict even where states have weak policies and institutions.³⁴ In general, the United States should treat aid to fragile states like venture capital, liable to have a higher rate of failure than typical investments but with a potentially higher long-term return if it succeeds.

Focus on conflict prevention and state building. In addition to providing more aid, the next administration must ensure that this assistance is tailored to local political realities and designed to build local ownership and capacity.

The starting point for U.S. aid interventions must be a deep understanding of the political economy of fragility in each recipient country. In highly divided societies, the donor community must consider the likely impact of their assistance on underlying drivers of instability and be prepared to practice a form of “peace conditionality,” by using aid to reward those constituencies working for peace and to marginalize those undermining it.³⁵ Beyond promoting peace, the emphasis of external action must be on state building, or improving the institutional capacity of the state to perform its basic functions. Where the governing regime has demonstrated a commitment to delivering goods to its citizens, the United States should put local officials in the driver’s seat, with the goal of codifying the foreign assistance relationship in the form of a Millennium Challenge Account–like “contract,” spelling out mutual obligations and establishing a common understanding of the process of institution building. In less promising contexts, where a regime’s will or capacity is truly negligible, the United States and other donors should support those state structures capable of meeting basic human needs, while supporting service delivery through nonstate actors and working with local civil society to encourage political reform.³⁶ If the state needs to be bypassed altogether, the United States and other donors should build into the aid framework an eventual regulatory role for the state.³⁷

A recurrent dilemma for external actors in fragile states is the tradeoff between delivering services rapidly to a needy population and building sustainable national systems to do so in the future. The donor community often exacerbates this predicament by channeling vast quantities of aid through their own service providers (rather than host-government ministries) and by poaching local talent. In doing so, donors undercut both the effectiveness and legitimacy of the state, in essence substituting for it.³⁸ The United States can help end this pattern by reducing the vast proportion of its aid that is currently “tied” to U.S.-sourced goods and service providers.³⁹ It should also work with other donors to overcome a common pathology in post-conflict assistance, namely, that the aid spigot varies inversely with the absorptive capacity of the recipient. The United States should help ensure that post-conflict aid tapers in, rather than being turned off just as it becomes effective.

Monitor and evaluate progress. The failure to take monitoring and evaluation seriously—a recurrent weakness of U.S. foreign aid—wastes valuable time and money. This failing is particularly common within the U.S. government. Current performance indicators to assess the effectiveness of its foreign assistance reforms are geared primarily to measure inputs (money spent) or outputs (programs implemented), rather than the impact of programs on conditions on the ground. Establishing appropriate benchmarks for progress

is particularly tricky in fragile states, given the lack of baseline data and the multiple goals (including growth, security, and good governance) that donors pursue simultaneously. Beyond endorsing regular monitoring by the Government Accountability Office of the effectiveness of U.S. development assistance, the next president should commit the United States to joining the new International Initiative for Impact Evaluation.⁴⁰

Task 3: Leverage all U.S. policy tools

As the Commission on Weak States and U.S. National Security underscored in 2004, fragile states pose interconnected security, governance, and development challenges that cannot be addressed with traditional development tools alone.⁴¹ Accordingly, the next administration must adopt a “whole of government” approach, bringing the entire panoply of policy instruments at its disposal to promote state effectiveness in developing countries.⁴² Beyond more effective development aid, the United States needs to promote balanced economic growth, encourage legitimate and accountable governance, and improve security and the rule of law.

Today, U.S. engagement with poorly performing states is often little more than a collection of independent, parallel, bilateral diplomatic, military, aid, trade, and financial relationships, each influenced by the institutional mandates, cultures, priorities, and time frames of respective U.S. agencies. A truly integrated approach would use coherent country plans outlining how the entire U.S. government, working with international partners, intends to integrate aid and other policy instruments to advance reform across the mutually dependent economic, political, and security spheres. Critical U.S. tools will include trade and investment policy, democracy promotion, rule of law assistance, security sector reform, and more balanced counterterrorism assistance.

Expand trade and investment, cushion shocks. For many of the world’s most fragile states, such as Niger and Yemen, economic prospects are dismal. These countries will likely remain aid dependent for the foreseeable future. In other more functional states such as Mali and Pakistan, however, the United States and other donors can promote growth and poverty reduction by enhancing access to markets, providing political risk insurance to encourage foreign direct investment, and supporting new financial instruments to cushion them from external shocks. To expand trade opportunities for fragile states, the United States should lead a successful conclusion of the Doha Round of World Trade Organization negotiations that eliminates tariffs and nontariff barriers to trade in agriculture, upon which so many fragile states depend (see chapter 7 by Elliott). In addition, the United States should eliminate duties and quotas

on imports from three categories of countries: heavily indebted poor countries, least-developed countries, and Sub-Saharan African countries.⁴³

To overcome the risk barrier to private investment in fragile states, the next administration must work with Congress to reform the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to promote U.S. private sector investment in a greater range of labor-intensive manufacturing and assembly sectors (including textiles, apparel, and agribusiness) and broaden the capital loan guarantees and export credit insurance provided by the U.S. Export-Import Bank to U.S. businesses operating in risky transitional contexts.⁴⁴ Finally, many fragile states rely on a narrow range of commodities vulnerable to disruptions in the global market and local conditions. The International Monetary Fund and World Bank can help cushion the macroeconomic impact of such exogenous shocks by helping governments in developing countries hedge against volatility in foreign exchange, interest rates, commodity prices, natural disasters, and extraordinary drought. These initiatives would leverage private sector interests to improve the political economy and stability of some of the world's most beleaguered states.⁴⁵

Pursue realistic democracy promotion. In recent years, U.S. democracy promotion has been discredited by the Bush administration's sweeping rhetoric and naïve expectations, by its association with military force, by the modest U.S. investment of resources, by the inconsistency (and in some eyes, hypocrisy) of U.S. policy, and by the erosion of U.S. commitment to the rule of law abroad and civil liberties at home. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake for the United States to abandon its support for democratic governance in fragile states. If the United States stands for anything globally, it is for the inalienable right of all people to choose their own government. Although democracy provides no guarantee of good policy choices, history shows that legitimate, transparent, and accountable institutions that protect individual liberties, allow freedom of speech, and provide checks against abusive power promote political stability, human security, and economic growth. Accordingly, the next president must reaffirm U.S. support for democracy assistance, while recognizing the limits of outside interventions.

The new administration should draft a governmentwide strategy for democracy promotion to improve coherence among the many U.S. agencies now involved in delivering assistance for public administration, political party development, legislative capacity building, public education, civil society, anticorruption campaigns, independent media, and other sectors. It should devote a greater share of the federal budget to democracy assistance (particularly for consolidating fragile democratic transitions), engage partners in the Community of Democracies and other forums to make democracy

promotion efforts a multilateral undertaking, and reduce inconsistencies by holding friends as well as adversaries to account. At the same time, the accent must be on realism.

The next president should honestly acknowledge that democratic transitions take time and are often reversed; that elections can be divisive and unpredictable in highly divided (particularly post-conflict) societies; and that U.S. policy may appear hypocritical in some cases, given the scope of U.S. national interests.⁴⁶

Expand U.S. rule of law capabilities. Five years after the fall of Saddam Hussein, the United States still lacks the capabilities to help fragile states grapple with a range of challenges related to public security and the rule of law that frequently arise in the aftermath of state failure or war. Unlike many Western donors, the United States does not possess constabulary forces that can perform critical missions falling between traditional peacekeeping and policing, including crowd control and the protection of high-value installations. Nor can it mobilize and deploy adequate numbers of civilian police, criminal investigators, judges, prosecutors, attorneys, court staff, and corrections officers essential to public security and justice. Particularly problematic has been the U.S. model of dispatching for international police service and training efforts personnel who are not part of a national police force, but are privately hired individual subcontractors. Such efforts, under the purview of the overstretched International Narcotics and Law Enforcement bureau of the State Department, have been plagued by poor performance, limited accountability, and occasional instances of gross misconduct. As Robert Perito bluntly states, “The provision of uniformed, armed police with executive powers and the authority to use deadly force is an inherent function of government.” It is not one that can be left to the private sector. The next administration can begin to address these shortcomings by consolidating all U.S. efforts to advance the rule of law abroad—including International Narcotics and Law Enforcement–run civilian police programs, and the Department of Justice’s International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program and the Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance, and Training program—within a single office at the State Department. As proposed by the U.S. Institute of Peace, the office should also be charged with managing a new Rule of Law Reserves, a permanent cadre of qualified individuals drawn from the U.S. citizenry that can be deployed for service in crisis zones as temporary federal employees.⁴⁷

Take an integrated approach to security sector reform. Beyond developing its own ability to deploy rule of law professionals, the United States must revamp its fragmented approach to security sector reform in weak and war-torn

states. Currently, security sector reform authorities and programs are divided haphazardly among the Departments of Defense, Justice, and State and the U.S. Agency for International Development, with no clear interagency mechanism to determine programmatic or funding priorities. Moreover, security sector reform is rarely integrated into a broader agenda of good governance and development, but is instead pursued independently with an emphasis on generating large numbers of security forces and ensuring their operational effectiveness rather than institution building, professionalism, and democratic accountability. The shortcomings of this approach have been evident in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Civilian control over professional security forces is one of the hallmarks of an effective, legitimate state. The rule of law and impartial justice must circumscribe the provision of order and security.⁴⁸ To help realize this goal in fragile states, the United States needs a governmentwide security sector reform doctrine. It would include protocols to govern cooperation among the Departments of Defense, Justice, and State and the U.S. Agency for International Development in training various security forces; designing and implementing disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes; and reforming the security-related ministries in fragile states. The administration should also launch a review of statutory restrictions that overly constrain the U.S. government's ability to provide assistance for security sector reform.⁴⁹

Bolster the civilian dimensions of counterterrorism efforts. Since 9/11, the Bush administration has launched several interagency regional efforts to build the capacities and will of fragile states, particularly in Africa, to address the terrorist threat. These include the Trans-Saharan Counter Terrorism Partnership, the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, and the East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative. The main drawback of all these programs to date is their overwhelmingly military nature. Although all U.S. players involved agree that the counterterrorism strategy should focus 80 percent on governance and development activities, and only 20 percent on the military effort, actual budgets have been closer to the reverse, making it difficult to address the underlying chronic sources of economic and political stagnation and instability.⁵⁰ The next administration should correct this imbalance by making greater investments in the governance and development components of state building.

Task 4: Invest in civilian capabilities

A better U.S. response to the security and developmental challenge of fragile states requires more than new strategies; it demands new resources, particularly investments in the civilian capabilities critical for effective preventive

action and state building. Beyond channeling a greater share of federal spending to civilian U.S. agencies, particularly the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development, the next administration should create fast-disbursing contingency funds and constitute an expeditionary cadre of civilian personnel that can intervene early enough to make a difference in volatile environments, fragile states, and war-torn countries.⁵¹

Avoid overly militarized approaches. A key first step will be to restore some semblance of balance between the civilian and military components of U.S. engagement with fragile states. Despite a significant increase in total U.S. foreign aid during the past several years, the federal budget remains heavily skewed toward military expenditures.⁵² This shortchanges investments in civilian components in America's national security apparatus best equipped to address the roots of weak governance, insecurity, and chronic poverty in developing countries. Since 9/11, the Pentagon has emerged as a direct provider of foreign assistance, particularly to states deemed to be of special concern in the global war on terrorism. Between 2002 and 2005 alone, the Department of Defense's share of total U.S. official development assistance nearly quadrupled from 5.6 percent to 21.7 percent, and the department now has special authority to conduct development work in Afghanistan, Iraq, and priority countries for counterterrorism. The Pentagon is actively seeking expanded and permanent authority for a larger range of pre-conflict settings as well, in order to build the capacities of partner countries to control their territories and borders. The creation of AFRICOM, the military's new interagency-oriented Combatant Command for Africa, reflects a growing aspiration to shape the trajectory of fragile states by alleviating the underlying sources of instability and conflict on the continent.⁵³

There is much that is positive about the AFRICOM initiative, which promises to rationalize the Department of Defense's approach to the continent and provide a platform for more consistent engagement with African militaries. Likewise, the Pentagon's concern with state fragility and its desire to ensure a "whole of government" approach to the African continent are commendable. At the same time, unless carefully managed, the initiative carries some risk of militarizing (symbolically but also substantively) U.S. engagement on the continent, particularly given the tremendous disparity in resources available to the Department of Defense compared with those available to civilian agencies. The Pentagon exacerbated these perceived fears of militarization by its initial sweeping (and often clumsy) explanation of AFRICOM's mandate, which suggested that the new command would be the hub to integrate all U.S. policy on the continent. The next administration can alleviate these concerns by emphasizing that the command's activities

will primarily focus on building professional and accountable militaries—and that these activities will be firmly embedded in a larger U.S. government strategy determined within civilian-led policymaking frameworks, notably within the National Security Council in Washington and under the authority of the U.S. ambassador in the countries concerned.⁵⁴ If AFRICOM places most of its energy and resources on security sector reform, it could make a significant impact in reducing state fragility.

More generally, the next president must work with Congress to bolster the capacities of civilian agencies to assume much of the burden in fragile states currently being shouldered by the Pentagon. The growing reliance on the Department of Defense to achieve U.S. foreign policy goals reflects an underlying structural mismatch between the authority ostensibly granted to the Secretary of State to lead the country's global engagement and the meager resources actually allocated to the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development to fulfill this mandate. The massive budget and capabilities of the Pentagon exert a constant gravitational pull, eroding civilian leadership of U.S. foreign policy. This leaves the United States well resourced to fight wars but not to address the causes of political instability and state failure, leading to an over-reliance on soldiers to conduct post-conflict activities, from policing to infrastructure, which should more appropriately be undertaken by civilian agencies and actors. The imbalance in funding deprives civilian agencies of resources to build up their own workforce and technical expertise to respond to unforeseen contingencies and provide critical aid to fragile and post-conflict states. Accordingly, the next president should submit to Congress a "smart power" budget⁵⁵ that promises to adequately fund the international affairs account,⁵⁶ which should be increased by 50 percent.

Create flexible resources for crisis response. The U.S. government does not possess a single nonhumanitarian contingency account to deliver aid in response to violent conflict or in support of a new democratically elected government.⁵⁷ Interagency meetings on crisis countries therefore quickly devolve into food fights over who will pay for any policy intervention. As a partial response to this dilemma, the Bush administration repeatedly sought \$100 million from Congress for a revolving Conflict Response Fund to jump-start planning and early action in response to complex emergencies.⁵⁸ Denied these funds, it has had to use elaborate workarounds, including so-called Section 1207 funds that permit the Pentagon to transfer to the State Department up to \$100 million for reconstruction activities.⁵⁹ The next administration must redouble efforts to secure a contingency fund for the State Department and scale it up significantly to \$1 billion, as recommended by the bipartisan Commission on Weak States and U.S. National Security.⁶⁰

Build surge capacity to deploy civilians rapidly. Afghanistan and Iraq have led to the recognition that the United States needs a standing cadre of qualified civilian personnel who could deploy rapidly to conflict and post-conflict settings in sufficient numbers to make a tangible difference on the ground. In this spirit, the bipartisan Stabilization and Reconstruction Management Act of 2004 called for the creation of a civilian reserve of several hundred staff, on call for service in global hot spots.⁶¹ Spurred by this legislative initiative, the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization built a three-tiered model of civilian capabilities consisting of first responders within the State Department itself, an augmented core of technical experts across various sectors within the wider U.S. government, and expertise mobilized from outside the federal government. Unfortunately, progress in developing these human resources has been glacial. Under-resourcing has led to inadequate civilian capabilities, with serious consequences such as unfilled civilian slots in Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and Iraq. To help overcome this inertia, the next administration must transform the incentive structure within the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and other civilian agencies, and ensure that career advancement rewards service in hardship environments, as well as service across agencies.⁶² The White House should also push harder on the Hill to ensure the emergence of a larger civilian reserve drawn from the wider citizenry, an objective that President Bush embraced (but provided no funding for) in his State of the Union Address in January 2007. Bush's fiscal year 2009 budget request sought \$248 million from Congress for a Civilian Stabilization Initiative to begin developing the required civilian capabilities, but the legislative fate of this effort remained in doubt at the time of this writing. If Congress balks and the next administration fails to move this agenda forward, pressure will grow for the Pentagon to build up its own cadre of civilians capable of fulfilling this expeditionary mission, akin to a U.S. colonial service.

Task 5: Reach out to the world

Embrace multilateralism. Perhaps most importantly, U.S. efforts to bolster weak states cannot succeed if the United States goes it alone. To leverage the capabilities and investments of international partners, the next administration must make a renewed commitment to multilateralism by reaching out to major governments among developed and developing countries, engaging like-minded groupings such as the Group of Eight (G-8), and working through regional and international organizations to forge consensus on the challenges and requirements for effective state building, including equitable burden sharing.⁶³ The rationale for multilateral engagement is entirely

practical: The United States is rarely the largest single donor in any one fragile state, making it unrealistic to assume that U.S. programs designed and implemented in isolation will achieve their goals. A new commitment to multilateralism will require greater U.S. sensitivity for the perspectives of fellow donors, who will sometimes have differing views about ways to balance the security, development, and governance components of external assistance.⁶⁴ The G-8—already a leading forum to tackle issues of global poverty, governance, conflict prevention, and peacekeeping—is one promising institutional vehicle for advancing the state-building agenda. But effective multilateral cooperation on state building must also engage major regional players and emerging donors in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East, both on a bilateral basis and within forums like the still-nascent G-20. The United States will also need to offer strong support for parallel efforts within the United Nations, regional bodies, and the World Bank.

Expand support for U.N. and African Union peacekeeping. The United Nations is being called upon as never before to keep (and at times enforce) peace between warring parties, as well as to pick up the pieces when the shooting stops. Today, the United Nations is deploying more than 100,000 “blue helmets” in twenty-odd peacekeeping operations around the globe. The complexity and pace of these undertakings have stretched the modest capacities of the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Given its modest budget and capabilities, the department has struggled to develop robust doctrines; procure logistical support from member states; ensure the quality and discipline of contributed troops; negotiate an effective division of labor with regional organizations; and integrate the humanitarian, development, governance, and security components of its interventions. The often fickle attitude of the United States toward U.N. peace operations has not made these tasks any easier. Since the end of the Cold War, Washington has repeatedly pressed the U.N. Security Council to authorize new operations with ambitious mandates, while sometimes withholding the political and financial support the United Nations needs to get the job done. The United States has also used the world body as a convenient scapegoat for failures that reflect shortcomings in its membership. The next administration must change this dysfunctional dynamic by persuading Congress that the best way to optimize U.N. performance and leverage America’s 25 percent share of annual peacekeeping assessments is for the United States to serve as a reliable (if demanding) supporter of U.N. peace operations, rather than a fair-weather friend.⁶⁵ The United States should also fully support efforts by the U.N. Secretary-General to implement the new vision of U.N. “integrated missions” as a natural complement to its own “whole of government” effort.

It is equally important for the next administration to empower and equip regional organizations—particularly the African Union—to monitor and mediate brewing conflicts, launch preventive deployments, and undertake multidimensional peace operations. The African Union seeks a larger African role in addressing violent conflict on the continent. Meeting these aspirations will require greater U.S. investment in building the capacity and professionalism of African militaries, as well as providing logistical and material support for African Union troop deployments, whose shortcomings were revealed in the Assistance Mission in Sudan deployed to Darfur. With this in mind, the next president should endorse and expand support for the valuable Africa Contingency Training Assistance program and accelerate implementation of the G-8-sponsored Global Peace Operations Initiative to train at least 75,000 peacekeeping troops around the world, beginning with Africa.

Invest in post-conflict peace building. The U.N. Peacebuilding Commission, a promising creation of the 2005 U.N. High-Level Summit, deserves strong political and financial support from the next administration. Washington should contribute at least \$50 million to the associated Peacebuilding Fund (which it has so far abstained from supporting) and mobilize support from other member states to expand the commission's mandate to include conflict prevention. Furthermore, Washington should increase its support for the World Bank's engagement with fragile states—notably the activities of the Fragile States and Conflict-Affected Countries Initiative. This should include backing an expansion of the World Bank's Low-Income Countries under Stress Trust Fund, as a multilateral model for delivering financial assistance quickly to weak and failing states that have limited access to other means of financial assistance.

Minimize negative externalities of globalization. Finally, beyond reinvigorating these partnerships, the next administration will need to catalyze multilateral cooperation to cut global taproots of state fragility. Although the concept of “weak and failed states” focuses attention on internal contributions to state fragility, the dynamics of the global economy—particularly its illicit components—can also undermine good governance and state capacity in the developing world. Priorities for multilateral action include shutting down international havens for ill-gotten gains by tracking and regulating financial transactions whereby political looters seek to stash their cash (see chapter 5 by de Tray and Moran),⁶⁶ by insisting on transparent revenue management in the exploitation of natural resources through the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and similar efforts,⁶⁷ by shutting down the illicit economies that fuel violence in many of the world's conflict zones,

and by ending the sale of both heavy weapons systems and small arms to poorly governed countries.

Conclusion

The consequences of state fragility and failure for U.S. values and security are real—and potentially ominous. Yet the United States cannot improve its policy toward the world's fragile states by relying on traditional development aid alone. Rather, it must draw on a broad range of national instruments of power and influence, as well as international partnerships. Addressing the interconnected security, governance, and development challenges of fragile states will require significant integration among—and adaptations by—the historically distinct development, diplomatic, and defense communities within the U.S. government that constitute the so-called 3Ds. Achieving greater unity of purpose in building sustainable institutions of governance in some of the world's most precarious states will oblige individual agencies—not just the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Pentagon but also other relevant departments such as Commerce, Justice, and Treasury—to step out of their traditional lanes, mandates, and time frames. This agenda will also demand greater patience and a higher tolerance for political risk from the U.S. foreign policy and aid bureaucracies, as well as a larger, more flexible pool of resources from congressional paymasters.

The next administration can get off to a good start by formulating a comprehensive, governmentwide strategy that makes preventing state failure a foreign policy priority, designates clear leadership for interagency coordination, assigns roles and responsibilities to relevant departments, promotes better intelligence and analysis of states at risk, and creates mechanisms to link early warning to early action. It should simultaneously adapt U.S. development aid and policy to the unique conditions of weak and poorly governed developing countries, by (among other things) targeting more assistance to fragile states, tailoring aid to the political context, building local capacity rather than substituting for it, and monitoring and evaluating progress. To complement these reforms, the new administration should strengthen the nondevelopment dimensions of U.S. assistance by expanding trade and investment opportunities, embracing more realistic democracy promotion, and improving security and rule of law assistance in fragile states. Pursuing this ambitious agenda will require the United States to rebalance the military and civilian components of its engagement and to create new flexible U.S. aid windows and civilian surge capacities for rapid crisis response. Finally, the new president will need to embrace multilateral cooperation in order to alleviate global sources of instability and weakness and to share international burdens with like-minded governments and institutions.

Notes

1. Commission on Weak States and U.S. National Security 2004, p. 6.
2. Mandelbaum 1996. Condoleezza Rice adopted a similar position as an advisor to presidential candidate George W. Bush. See Rice 2000.
3. White House 2002.
4. USAID 2003, p. 1.
5. U.N. Secretary-General's High-Level Panel 2004, p. 9; Council of the European Union 2003; U.K. Prime Minister's Strategy Unit 2005.
6. Patrick 2006a.
7. Crocker 2003.
8. Patrick 2006b.
9. Torres and Anderson 2004.
10. See in particular Burnside and Dollar 2000.
11. For a useful survey of recent efforts to identify and, in some cases, rank fragile states, see Rice and Patrick 2008. Rice and Patrick use twenty well-established indicators to rank all 141 developing and transitional countries according to four core sets of state function (with each of the four weighted equally), identifying fifty-six weak states. Other lists can be found in DFID 2005 and in Fund for Peace 2007.
12. DFID 2005.
13. Collier and Hoeffler 2004.
14. Freedom House 2004.
15. Collier 2007.
16. For more detail, see Patrick 2008a.
17. For a survey of seven Western donor governments, see Patrick and Brown 2007a.
18. White House 2005.
19. For more detail, see Patrick 2007a.
20. DoD 2005.
21. Krasner and Pascual 2005.
22. Lamb 2007.
23. See CSIS 2007.
24. Most were lumped into the catch-all category of "developing" countries, although some are captured under the "rebuilding" and "restrictive" headings.
25. Fukuyama 2004, pp. 3–5.
26. Along with the National Security Council, the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization co-chairs a regular policy coordination committee on stabilization and reconstruction.
27. There is no formal linkage between Directive 3000.05 and National Security Presidential Directive 44. The Government Accountability Office has chided the Pentagon for failing to link its implementation of Directive 3000.05 to parallel civilian efforts (GAO 2007).

28. To empower the civilian side of the interagency, the senior director could be dual hatted as the head of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization.
29. HELP Commission 2007.
30. The director of foreign assistance, a position created in January 2006 as part of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's "transformational diplomacy" initiative, serves simultaneously as administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development. The director has control over all U.S. Agency for International Development and State Department foreign assistance accounts. Patrick 2007b.
31. In fiscal year 2007, the Bush administration's budget request to Congress sought \$26 per capita for Liberia and \$18 per capita for East Timor, but only \$1.30 and \$.35 per capita for Yemen and Bangladesh, respectively. Patrick and Brown 2006, p. 7.
32. OECD/DAC 2006a. Plausible aid orphans in recent years include Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Congo, and Niger. Levin and Dollar 2004; McGillivray 2006, pp. 11–12.
33. Chauvet and Collier 2004.
34. Chauvet and Collier 2006; Levin and Dollar 2004.
35. Boyce 2000.
36. OECD/DAC 2007a.
37. OECD/DAC 2007b.
38. Ghani, Lockhart, and Carnahan 2005.
39. "Tied" aid requires that the funds to procure goods and services be spent in the donor country itself.
40. Evaluation Gap Working Group, 2006.
41. Commission on Weak States and U.S. National Security 2004; Collier 2007.
42. OECD/DAC 2006b.
43. Cline 2003.
44. Moran 2003.
45. For one such proposal, see Miguel 2007.
46. Paris 2004.
47. See Perito 2004.
48. Ball 2005.
49. Candidates for review and potential amendment include Section 541 of the Foreign Assistance Act, which precludes the U.S. Agency for International Development from providing education and training to foreign militaries, and Section 660 of the act, which prevents the agency and the State Department from using security assistance funds to train, advise, or offer technical assistance to internal security forces (including police, corrections, and paramilitary forces) in many fragile states.
50. For more detail, see Patrick and Brown 2007b; CSIS 2007.

51. See remarks by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates (Gates 2007).
52. The Bush administration's proposed federal budget for fiscal year 2008 reflected this trend. Of the total \$2.9 trillion requested, defense spending amounted to a whopping \$623 billion, or 21.5 percent of the federal budget, outpacing investments in civilian aspects of global engagement (\$39.49 billion) by a factor of some sixteen to one (the ratio rises even higher if the Bush administration's supplemental requests to fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are included). Bazzi, Herrling, and Patrick 2007.
53. See CSIS 2007.
54. Patrick and Brown 2007b.
55. See Armitage and Nye 2007, pp. 63–67; Pemberton and Korb 2006.
56. The International Affairs (or “150”) Account funds the operations and assistance streams of the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development.
57. Existing funding arrangements—including the International Disaster and Famine Assistance, Emergency Migration and Refugee Assistance, Transition Initiatives, and the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations accounts—do not provide sufficient authority or resources to respond adequately to threats and opportunities in fragile states.
58. Such an account would be available, subject to presidential determination and justification to congressional committees, to be transferred to government agencies for implementation.
59. Section 1207 funds are named for a provision of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2006.
60. Commission on Weak States and U.S. National Security 2004.
61. Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act of 2004 (S. 2127), February 25, 2004.
62. To further this objective, some have called on Congress to pass legislation akin to the landmark Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, which—in addition to creating the Joint Chiefs of Staff—made “joint” service a precondition for career advancement.
63. Relevant organizations include the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the African Union, the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.
64. Compared with most other Western governments, the United States continues to place heavy emphasis on the short-term security challenges posed by fragile states, as opposed to the long-term requirements of development, including the creation of strong indigenous institutions. For more detail, see Patrick and Brown 2007a.
65. This section draws on Patrick 2008b.

66. The World Bank estimates that some \$40 billion a year is stolen by corrupt leaders around the world, including 25 percent of gross national product in some African countries. Hoge 2007, A7.
67. The U.K.-sponsored Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative insists that resource-rich countries demonstrate transparent and accountable public revenue management as a condition for bilateral and multilateral public sector financing of extractive industry projects. The next administration should also support the “Publish What You Pay” campaign championed by the nongovernmental organization Global Witness to discourage multinational corporations from subsidizing venal and autocratic governance, and the related “Publish What You Lend” campaign, which presses financial institutions to reveal how much they lend to resource-rich governments in anticipation of future revenues.

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