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Ofc Dep Asst Secretary of Defense for Force Health Protection & Readiness Prog, International Health Division, 5113 Leesburg Pike Sky 4, Suite 901, Falls Church, VA, 22041

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Medical Stability Operations:
An Emerging Military Health Skill Set
Objectives

• Discuss medical stability operations (MSO) definition and associated concepts

• Review foundation doctrine and policy for MSO

• Discuss emerging organizations and missions that support MSO

• Identify key global challenges that will affect such operations now and in the future

• Discuss MSO end states
The International Health Division (IHD) supports the Department of Defense (DoD) leadership and other stakeholders by:

- Developing and informing policies
- Conducting analyses
- Providing subject matter expertise
- Making recommendations on health issues in:
  - Medical stability operations (MSO)
  - Humanitarian assistance & disaster response (HA/DR)
  - Foreign medical capacity-building
Definitions

• Stability Operations

  Stability operations is defined as an **overarching term** encompassing various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted **outside the United States** in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief. (DODI 3000.05, “Stability Operations”, Sep. 09)

• Medical Stability Operations

  **Military health support to stability operations** (DoDI 6000.16, Military Health Support for Stability Operations”, May 2010)
“Stability Operations are a core US military mission that the DoD shall be prepared to conduct and support. They shall be given priority comparable to combat operations and be explicitly addressed and integrated across all DoD activities.” DoDD 3000.05
Why Medical Stability Operations?

• High level interest
• Realities of recent and current operations
• Complements military doctrine and concepts on stability operations, cooperative security, irregular warfare, and building partnership capacity
• Stimulates future action to improve application of health engagement
• History
Great White Fleet response to the Italian earthquake and tsunami (1908)

The Philippines (1899-1908), Cuba (1902), Haiti (1915-1934), the Dominican Republic (1916-1924), Nicaragua

Post WWII Germany, Austria, and Japan (1945)

US in South Korean conflict (1949)

South Viet Nam – 1954-1975

Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, Panama (1989)

Operation PROVIDE COMFORT, Persian Gulf (1991)

Operation RESTORE HOPE, Somalia (1993)

U.S. forces in Haiti (mid-1990s)


Asian tsunami (2004)

Pakistan earthquake (2005)

Peru earthquake (2007)

Honduras flooding (2008)


Haiti Earthquake (2010)
MSO Policy and Doctrine

- **National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44**
  “Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization”

- **DoD Instruction 3000.05 (reissued DoD Directive 3000.05)**
  “Stability Operations”

- **DOD Instruction 6000.16**
  “Military Health Support for Stability Operations”

- **Joint Pub 4-02**, “Health Service Support”
- **Joint Pub 3-57**, “Civil Military Operations”
- **Joint Pub 3-07** (draft), “Stability Operations”
- **Joint Pub 3-08**, “Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations”
“We cannot simply confront individual preventable illnesses in isolation. The world is interconnected, and that demands an integrated approach to global health.”

President Barack Obama
May 5, 2009
Institutional Challenges

• There are increasing requirements for MHS engagement in stability operations, yet incomplete strategies, support, policy and guidance
• There is no dedicated non-Defense Health Program (DHP) funding for joint and Service missions and mandates
• There are conflicting organizational responsibilities and priorities
• It is challenging to develop and maintain relationships with interagency partners due to agency cultures, engagement priorities, personnel rotation, congressional restraints, etc.
• We must learn to better communicate the value of the DoD international health mission to internal and external audiences
Health & Stability Operations

- Combatant Command humanitarian assistance programs are designed to promote health and stability
  - Defense HIV/AIDS Prevention Program
  - Medical training initiatives with the Africa Partner Station and Global Partner Station

- Mentoring and Training of Afghan National Security Forces
  - Reopening of the Afghan National Military Medical School
  - Enhanced recruitment of medical professionals, to include female cadets for the first time in Afghanistan’s history
Health & Counterinsurgency Operations

- Insurgents use medicine to influence local populations
  - Afghan insurgents destroyed health clinic in southeastern Afghanistan in January 2009
  - Hamas and Hezbollah provide health services to influence populations
- U.S. and Coalition forces use health and medicine to legitimize the Coalition and Afghan government
  - Construction of health clinics and water facilities in both Afghanistan and Iraq
  - Animal health
Health & Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Response

• DoD conducts annual humanitarian civic assistance, medical outreach and disaster response training missions
  – SOUTHCOM: USNS Comfort
  – PACOM: USNS Mercy

• DoD provides medical aid following natural disasters
  – Indonesia Tsunami
  – Earthquakes in Pakistan, Peru, Costa Rica, Haiti

• The Congressional appropriation “Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid” (OHDACA) allows DoD to:
  – Build Schools and Clinics
  – Distribute Excess DoD property
  – Provide Transportation of Privately Donated Goods
Joint Medical Challenges in Stability Operations

- Commander Objectives
- Strategic Communication
- Civ-Mil Coordination
- Medical Stability Operations
- Population Stress
- Health Sector Assessment
- Health And Security
- Cultural Aptitude
- Capacity Building
Desired End States

**Stability Operations:** Full host nation responsibility across the mission elements in the contexts of a new domestic order resolving earlier sources of instability to ensure a viable sustainable peace (Joint Operating Concept)

**Medical Stability Operations:**
- Health sector improvements that enhance security and stability
- Stepwise support to capacity building suitable to local and/or international standards
- The transition of sustainable projects and programs to the host nation
The US military has a long history of providing health care to people in under developed areas and conflict zones. DoD provided large-scale services in Southwest Asia during the Vietnam Conflict, with far-reaching benefits for all involved. The skills developed by Special Forces medics during this period founded a tradition of health care assistance that continues around the world.

Today, DoD partners with other U.S. government agencies, non-governmental agencies, international organizations and other governments to support the development of health services capabilities abroad. The goal of these activities is to promote stability and security for people in areas with little or no other support. DoD helps countries develop their own health care systems and to use them to protect their citizens.

The “whole of government” approach in support of these states and foreign governments with disaster response efforts, and to situations where communities and nations face threats from contagious diseases. The DoD’s involvement ranges from providing dedicated professionals, heavy lift and logistics, organizational skills and an unparalleled ability to work in dangerous, remote, challenging and hostile areas.
Questions?