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The U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) was established by the Department of Defense in 2007 to great fanfare and controversy. Promoted as a promising model of "interagency unity of effort," AFRICOM has faced challenges meeting this objective. This paper provides three prescriptive enablers that promote greater interagency unity of effort between AFRICOM and U.S. Embassy Country Teams (ECTs) in Africa to advance U.S. national security interests in Africa.

The three enablers include 1) AFRICOM directly supporting U.S. Embassy Country Team Mission Strategic and Resource Plans (MSRPs) ; 2) AFRICOM synchronizing its "military diplomacy" initiatives with U.S. Embassy Country Teams (ECTs) to advance their "smart power" goals; and 3) the Department of State (DoS) and U.S. government agencies with representation on U.S. Embassy Country Teams in Africa institutionalizing operational best practices to bolster interagency unity of effort between ECTs and AFRICOM.

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PROMOTING INTERAGENCY UNITY OF EFFORT BETWEEN AFRICOM AND U.S. EMBASSY
COUNTRY TEAMS (ECTs) IN AFRICA

By

Irvin Hicks Jr.

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in satisfaction of the requirements of the Joint Maritime Operations (JMO) Department.

The content of this paper reflects the views of the author and do not represent the views of the Naval War College, the Department of the Navy or the State Department.

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Abstract

The U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) was established by the Department of Defense in 2007 to great fanfare and controversy. Promoted as a promising model of "interagency unity of effort," AFRICOM has faced challenges meeting this objective. This paper provides three prescriptive enablers that promote greater interagency unity of effort between AFRICOM and U.S. Embassy Country Teams (ECTs) in Africa to advance U.S. national security interests in Africa.

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Contents

Introduction

The establishment of a Combatant Command for Africa known as (AFRICOM) in 2007 was to symbolize the United States government's new engagement with the African continent. Long considered a troubled continent of limited concern to U.S. national security interests, the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania by Al Qaeda changed the dynamics of a traditionally anemic relationship. Chronic political instability and civil wars throughout the African continent created vast impoverished spaces susceptible to exploitation by Al Qaeda and other anti-western terrorist organizations for use as venues for training and operational planning.[1] Africa's ascendancy as a strategic source of crude oil exports further emphasized the need for the U.S. government to re-assess its national security policy towards Africa. This new command was meant to exemplify a military-civilian "interagency unity of effort" that promoted U.S. strategic and military objectives with a "whole of U.S. government" approach. Unfortunately, the divide between AFRICOM's conceptual objectives and interagency execution remain a "work in progress." Difficulties in securing interagency civilian augment staffing, interagency disputes over institutional authorities and prerogatives, and insufficient institutionalized interagency operational best practices have hampered AFRICOM's effectiveness.

To improve the degree of synergy achieved by the geographic Combatant Commander and other U.S. government agencies, the U.S. government should develop, promote and implement three overarching initiatives to enhance AFRICOM's and U.S. Embassy Country Teams' (ECTs) operational effectiveness. Specifically, AFRICOM should directly support ECT Mission Strategic and Resource Plan (MSRP) priorities, and synchronize its "diplomatic" activities with ECT "Smart Power" goals. Additionally, the Department of State (DoS) and U.S. agencies with representation on ECTs in Africa should institutionalize operational best practices to bolster interagency unity of effort with AFRICOM.

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[1] Lauren Ploch, Congressional Research Service, Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa, p. 1.

Background

The Department of Defense (DoD) established AFRICOM in 2007 in response to a U.S. Congressional mandate. This mandate stipulated that U.S. military operations and activities for the African continent were to be consolidated under one command. This requirement replaced a structure that divided the Africa Area of Responsibility (AOR) between the U.S. European Command (EUCOM), the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), and the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM). The U.S. Congress' desire for a more coherent and efficient command structure resulted in AFRICOM being assigned AORs that consisted of all countries in Africa except Egypt.[2] The driving assumption underlying Congress' mandate was that unifying AFRICOM into a single command would result in a more focused and efficient command that would be able to act nimbly to events that transpired on the Continent.[3] AFRICOM supporters viewed its inception as the epitome of "smart power" – a carefully blended mix of "kinetic and non-lethal power" with formidable capabilities but guided by the signature ingredients of "soft power."[4] AFRICOM's "soft power" would be predicated on the belief that complex crises and emergencies could be averted by coordinating the activities of U.S. military and civilian agencies more efficiently and effectively. This "unity of effort" would have significant civilian participation in military operations, and greater harmonization of best practices among interagency partners that engage in defense, development and diplomacy.

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[2] Lauren Ploch, *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the role of the U.S. Military in Africa,* Congressional Research Service, 10/2/2009, p. 1.

[3] Melinda Brouwer, *AFRICOM-A Different Kind of Command*, Foreign Policy Association, 2/10/2008, pp. 1-3.

[4] Phillip Seib, AFRICOM's *Still Undefined Future*, University of Southern California's Center of Public Diplomacy, 12/6/2011, pp. 1-2.

AFRICOM's "whole of U.S. government approach" was designed to serve as a model for the transformation of the U.S. national security architecture and operational processes. AFRICOM would take the lead on military issues but play a supporting role to the Department of State (DoS) on diplomatic matters and to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) on development issues. This operational idea would require a major break with conventional doctrinal mentalities, as well as established institutional authorities of the armed services and other U.S. government agencies.[5] By having AFRICOM focus more on preventing instead of fighting wars, this approach unwittingly intruded on DoS' and USAID's institutional prerogatives. The end result was the blurring of traditional roles, responsibilities, and authorities between defense, development, and diplomacy. For example, AFRICOM's provision of HIV/AIDS care and treatment to African militaries and their families is the type of initiative that would be traditionally administered by USAID.

Reacting to the "blurring" of traditional prerogatives, AFRICOM's critics, American and African, accused the U.S. government of militarizing its foreign policy towards the African continent. While involved in its creation, both DoS and USAID expressed their concern that AFRICOM activities would usurp and stigmatize diplomatic and development initiatives that fall under the operational province of ECTs, and undermine the authority of Chiefs of Mission.[6] The DoD's asymmetric advantages in manpower, resources, and capabilities vis-à-vis DoS and USAID only served to exacerbate this alarmist reaction. AFRICOM's critics concluded that its true mission objectives are to (1) ensure that the United States has principal access to Africa's

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[5] Lauren Ploch, *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa*, Congressional Research Service, pp. 4-5.

[6] Steven J. Olson and David A. Anderson, *Building Interagency Capabilities at U.S. Africa Command*, Interagency Journal Vol. 2, Issue 2, Summer 2011, pp. 19-20.

strategic minerals and petroleum reserves; (2) assert uncontested sea control over strategic

access points in the Gulf of Guinea, the Gulf of Aden, and the West Indian Ocean; (3) establish a

security umbrella over the Continent to keep a watchful eye on the potential rise of violent

religious extremism among its large Muslim population; and (4) use Africa as a platform to

undermine China's strategic objective of securing mineral and petroleum rights throughout the

African continent to fuel its dramatic economic growth.[7] Critics also agree that AFRICOM may

overestimate its capabilities, intrude upon matters that are DoS or USAID responsibilities, and

engage in activities beyond its core mandate and institutional competencies.

AFRICOM remains committed to playing a significant role in development activities, and it

has sought to ameliorate its critics' concerns by assuring them that AFRICOM's initiatives will

be in support of DoS and USAID objectives. AFRICOM senior leaders point out that its

initiatives must be approved by Chiefs of Mission and USAID Mission Directors in all host

nations before it engages in any activities. These are strong rebuttals, but the fact that African

governments continue to resist the establishment of an AFRICOM headquarters on the Continent

suggest that AFRICOM has not successfully ameliorated African concerns about its true

intentions. Securing African "buy-in" is critical for AFRICOM to establish legitimacy and

credibility among its African military and civilian interlocutors. Securing this requisite "buy-in"

can best be achieved by having AFRICOM plan, develop, coordinate and implement its

initiatives through the 54 ECTs in Africa who are in tune with host nation sensibilities and

priorities, as well as U.S. national security strategic goals and objectives in their AOR. The

following three enabling initiatives provide a prescriptive roadmap to bolster interagency unity

of effort between AFRICOM and ECTs.

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[7] Olayiwola Abegunrin, *AFRICOM: The U.S. Militarization of Africa*, Concerned Africa Scholars, 12/2007, pp. 1-3.

Directly support U.S. Embassy Country Team's MSRP priorities

U.S. government agencies will need to implement initiatives with an eye to efficiency of purpose and economies of scale in an era of severe budgetary constraints. Robust interagency unity of effort will be the operational *modus operandi* for all instruments of U.S. national power for the foreseeable future. AFRICOM has promoted itself as a model of "interagency unity of effort" by filling many of its staff positions with non-DoD civilians from various U.S. government agencies. Securing and integrating DoS and USAID personnel within AFRICOM's command structure has been and remains a high priority. For example, the Deputy to AFRICOM's Combatant Commander responsible for Civil-Military Activities (CMA) is an Ambassador from DoS. AFRICOM also has several senior USAID Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) who are responsible for coordinating AFRICOM's policies and initiatives on such issues as disaster response, threats to regional stability, transnational crime, and democratic governance.[8] Six other civilian agencies have embedded staff at AFRICOM, including the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Energy, and the National Security Agency.[9]

While securing the expertise of non-DoD civilian staff has enhanced AFRICOM's operations, the sustainability of this approach is in jeopardy due to looming and severe U.S. government-wide budget cuts. The impact of these cuts on DoS and USAID will further complicate AFRICOM's ability to fulfill its civilian augment staffing needs despite the "integrated" intent of its organizational chart. Integrating AFRICOM's current civilian staffing capabilities into its

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[8] Melinda Brouwer, AFRICOM – *A Different Kind of Command*, Foreign Policy Association, 2/10/2008, p. 2.

[9] John H. Pendleton, Director for Defense Capabilities and Management, *Interagency Collaboration Practices and Challenges at DoD's Southern and Africa Commands*, General Accounting Office testimony before the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, U.S. House of Representatives, 7/28/2010, pp.11-12.

command structure continues to be a challenge. For example, AFRICOM's senior leadership admitted to the General Accounting Office (GAO) that it has had difficulties determining where to include non-DoD interagency personnel within its command structure. Several embedded civilian officials from non-DoD agencies informed GAO that their expertise was not being put to maximum use. They also noted that there was little incentive within their agencies to be seconded to AFRICOM because such an assignment would not be career enhancing upon their return to their parent agency.[10]

AFRICOM's reliance on civilians from non-DoD agencies may not be sustainable, and it should find other ways to leverage U.S. government civilian capabilities and Africa expertise. The solution to this potential dilemma lies in the 54 U.S. interagency ECTs that represent U.S. national security interests throughout Africa. Instead of promoting initiatives from its headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany, AFRICOM should develop, plan, coordinate and implement initiatives that directly support ECT Mission Strategic and Resource Plans (MSRPs) priorities. For the uninitiated, MSRPs are country-specific interagency "business plans" that outline U.S. government strategic goals and priorities in an ECT's AOR.

ECTs have been operating in post-colonial Africa since the 1960s, and are well established models of unity of effort, unity of command, and interagency collaboration. Defense Attaches or the most senior military official assigned to an embassy typically serve as DoD's representatives on ECTs. They also have served as Liaison Officers (LNOs) between ECTs and AFRICOM. History has shown that U.S. government initiatives that have been planned, developed, coordinated, and implemented with the input and guidance of ECTs have the greatest potential to

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[10] Ibid.

be effective and sustainable.[11] The U.S. government can no longer afford not to explore the cost efficiencies and operational effectiveness that can be garnered by having AFRICOM promote initiatives that directly support ECT MSRP priorities. The first step in this direction is to have AFRICOM's "military diplomacy" initiatives synchronized with ECTs to advance the U.S. government's "smart power" goals.

Synchronized "Military Diplomacy" to advance ECT Smart Power goals

The U.S. government's promotion of "smart power" is built on the foundation of interagency unity of effort by all instruments of U.S. national power. These instruments include diplomacy, information, military, economics, intelligence and development. AFRICOM contributes to this effort by promoting initiatives that strengthen the military capabilities of African partners and regional organizations in its AOR. This exercise in "military diplomacy" is achieved through security cooperation agreements that are the cornerstone of AFRICOM's initiatives. Significant attention is paid to building African operational capacity, institutional infrastructure, and human capital.[12] AFRICOM is also charged with helping to professionalize African militaries. This responsibility includes preventing the escalation of HIV/AIDS infection rates among African security forces and providing care and treatment to service members and families infected or affected by the disease in 40 countries.[13] AFRICOM also offers senior military leaders opportunities to participate in exchange programs to educate them about the U.S. military, its subordination to civilian authority, and American culture.

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[11] Lamb, Christopher J, and Marks, Edward, Chief of Mission Authority as a Model for National Security Integration, Center for Strategic Research, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, 2009, pp. 14-15.

[12] General Carter F. Ham, *Commander's Intent statement*, U.S. AFRICOM Command, http://www.africom.mil?AboutAFRICOM, 3/26/2012,pp.3-4

[13] Ibid.

All of these soft power "military diplomacy" initiatives share the same set of challenges –

sustainment, delivery on pledges of support, and the provision of resources. Mitigating these

challenges can best be achieved by synchronizing AFRICOM's "soft power" initiatives with

ECT "smart power" objectives. For example, AFRICOM should provide the assistance of senior

military and civilian officials to support to ECT high profile or time sensitive "smart power"

initiatives.[14] It should also establish regularly scheduled visits to all ECTs by senior military and

civilian advisers to keep AFRICOM abreast of their smart power priorities, and to identify

opportunities to improve interagency synchronization. Areas for improvement include

AFRICOM (1) providing ECTs with regularly updated lists of their civilian and military staff

members based on assigned AORs; (2) coordinating the Combatant Commander's visits to

Africa more closely with DoS and ECTs to ensure that messages, pronouncements, and pledges

of support made to African military, civilian, and media interlocutors are fully synchronized; (3)

establishing a central office so that ECTs can communicate and synchronize initiatives through

one AFRICOM entity;[15] (4) creating an Information Operations campaign to systemically

coordinate and synchronize talking points and strategic communications with ECTs; and (5)

establishing an interagency office responsible for negotiating Status of Forces Agreements

(SOFAs) with African governments.[16]

Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs) establish the framework under which U.S. military

personnel operate in a foreign country, addressing how the domestic laws of the foreign

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[14] Email interview with a Senior Military Attaché assigned to a U.S. Mission in Africa, 3/292012.

[15] Email interview with a Political Officer assigned to a U.S. Embassy in Africa, 3/28/2012.

[16] Email interview with a Charge d 'Affairs to a U.S. Embassy in Africa, 4/15/2012.

jurisdiction shall be applied toward U.S. military personnel while in that country.[17] ECTs lack

the staff, capacity and time to be fully engaged in these important but time consuming

agreements. Establishing an interagency office responsible for managing and negotiating SOFA

agreements with ECT assistance, when required, would further enhance synchronization between

AFRICOM and ECTs.

AFRICOM and ECT officials interviewed for this research paper agreed that synchronizing

interagency unity of effort would result in best practices to effectively promote "smart power"

objectives. The idealized "best practices" operational environment would entail AFRICOM and

ECTs working in close collaboration, engaged on a regular basis, sharing resources on a

consistent and systemic basis, and ever vigilant about catering to stakeholder's interagency

sensitivities and bureaucratic processes. The end result would be the laying of a foundation to

institutionalize best practices in interagency unity of effort akin to "sticks in a bundle that are

unbreakable."[18]

Institutionalize best practices at ECTs to bolster unity of effort

Sustaining an interagency unity of effort operational environment can only be achieved by

institutionalizing best practices. The 2012 Congressional Research Service's (CRS) report found

that the three common problems with the current interagency cooperation system throughout the

U.S. government are (1) a lack of strategic planning and interagency operational planning,

particularly between civilian and military agencies; (2) structural deficiencies in the U.S.

government's ability to conduct missions abroad, which result in agencies (civilian and military)

operating independently, reluctant to divert scarce resources and personnel from their core

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[17] R. Chuck Mason, *Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA): What Is It, and How Has It Been Utilized?* Congressional Research Service, 1/5/2011, p. 1.

[18] Kenyan proverb. http://www.famousquotes.com, 2011.

missions; and (3) the assignment of U.S. government personnel untrained in interagency collaboration and unfamiliar with other agencies' authorities, missions, bureaucratic procedures, capabilities, and corporate cultures.[19]   Institutionalizing the following three best practices will mitigate the critical weaknesses cited in the CRS report. This approach will also strengthen operational planning between AFRICOM and ECTs.

The most effective way to promote interagency operational planning between AFRICOM and ECTs is through the annual MSRP development and implementation process. This interagency exercise provides AFRICOM with the best opportunity to recommend and influence ECTs initiatives before they are submitted for approval by Chiefs of Mission and parent agency headquarters. Conversely, AFRICOM's development of country-specific initiatives should be based on ECT MSRP priorities to promote efficiency of effort and economies of scale. AFRICOM or ECT initiatives that fail to follow unity of effort best practices should be rejected by AFRICOM's Combatant Commander and ECT Chiefs of Mission. Program funding should be withheld by parent agencies pending the completion of this mandatory process, and the senior leadership responsible for promoting unity of effort between AFRICOM and ECTs should be sanctioned during their performance review. Changing "stove pipe" individual and institutional mindsets begins with the senior leadership. Requiring senior leaders to operate as models of interagency unity of effort is the starting point to repair structural deficiencies in the U.S. government's missions in Africa and other geographic AORs.

Changing the way ECTs have been traditionally structured is another way to address structural deficiencies in U.S. government missions abroad. The operational construct for contemporary ECTs needs to be redesigned to reflect the national security foci and priorities of a

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[19] Nina M. Serafino, Catherine Dale, Pat Towell, *Building Civilian Interagency Capacity for Missions Abroad: Key Proposals and Issues for Congress*, Congressional Research Service, 2/9/2012, pp. 12-14.

post-9/11 operational environment. The DoS and U.S. government agencies with representation

on ECTs in Africa should establish an "ECT in Africa Interagency Working Group" that would

be tasked with developing a new operational blueprint for the 54 embassies in Africa to improve

their interagency unity of effort. AFRICOM and U.S. regional, non-government, and private

sector entities with operations in Africa should also be members of this working group. Reforms

for consideration should include the establishment of two deputy chiefs of mission (DCMs)

under Chief of Mission authority at embassies with a sizeable interagency footprint. One DCM

would be responsible for coordinating and synchronizing ECT interagency programming

initiatives, while the second DCM would be responsible for managing, monitoring and reporting

on the impact that ECT interagency initiatives are having on the host nation in their AOR. The

two positions could be encumbered by DoS FSOs or the DCM responsible for programming

initiatives could be filled by officials from a non-DoS agency such as DoD or USAID.

Reforming ECT command and control structures to reflect the interagency architecture of

today's foreign policy priorities would further institutionalize an interagency unity of effort

corporate culture. Changing ECT corporate culture may also entail assigning ECT personnel

office space by functional responsibilities instead of agency affiliation. For example, DoD

personnel tasked with supporting USAID capacity building or disaster relief initiatives could be

physically located at the USAID office instead of DoD's. Their fitness report could be written

by the USAID mission director with input from DoD's senior ECT representative. A

performance review statement could be written by either the DCM responsible for programming

initiatives or the Chief of Mission. The review statement would assess the DoD employee's

effectiveness at promoting interagency unity of effort.

This innovative operational and personnel appraisal construct would apply to other ECT interagency personnel seconded to a non-parent agency. Functional expertise and interagency operational effectiveness in pursuit of MSRP or AFRICOM objectives would take precedence over agency affiliation. Changing the way ECTs have traditionally operated would include reconstituting occupants in the Chiefs of Mission's executive suite. For example, ECTs with significant AFRICOM or law enforcement initiatives should have the senior DoD or DHS representative sharing office space with the DCM(s) and the Chief of Mission to promote easy access, regular engagement and communications, and a synchronized command and control architecture. Empowering ECTs so that they can effectively promote interagency unity of effort should be the driving factor behind reforming ECTs' structural and operational architecture.

ECTs build the American image abroad and implement national security strategy. Without an effective and empowered ECT, there can be no prospect of success in achieving overarching national security objectives.[20] The desired end state for all embassies is a highly effective interagency ECT that is entrepreneurial, collaborative, agile, and capable of taking and managing risks.[21] The Center for Strategic & International Studies' (CSIS) "Embassy of the Future" project identified three elements needed to empower ECT operational architecture.

The first and most important element is the need for ECT senior leaders to be strong leaders, capable managers, and articulate communicators of U.S. national security objectives. They must have the requisite inter-personal skills to promote interagency collaboration, and a corporate culture mindset that values and rewards "unity of effort." The second key element is the

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[20] Robert B. Oakley and Michael Casey Jr, *The Country Team: Restructuring America's First Line of Engagement,* Joint Force Quarterly 47, 4th quarter, 2007, p 146.

[21] U.S. State Department and USAID QDDR, *Leading Through Civilian Power, the First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, 2010, p. 160.

codification of Chiefs of Mission authorities to underscore their role as the President's personal representative in an AOR. Such a codification would also affirm their supervisory responsibilities over all U.S. government agencies represented at an ECT in their AOR as stipulated in the President of the United States' Letter to Chiefs of Mission. The third element would be the establishment of a new interagency personnel management process that would empower Chiefs of Mission to appraise, reward, and assign ECT personnel under their authority to duties and responsibilities they deem necessary to meet MSRP or AFRICOM's objectives.

Reforming ECT personnel management policies would include authorities allowing senior and mid-level ECT supervisors to write performance reviews on subordinate personnel (civilian and military) who are not from their parent agency.[22] While none of these empowerment elements directly apply to AFRICOM, DoD has a vested interest in supporting reforms that enable ECTs to serve as effective interagency partners that can assist AFRICOM achieve its mission objectives.

Counter-argument

Critics may see this approach as nothing more than well-meaning platitudes that will not improve interagency unity of effort. They may be concerned that U.S. government agencies that make up ECTs are more interested in achieving their organization's parochial programming initiatives. Furthermore, an argument may be advanced that in many cases the ECTs lack the staff, interest or desire to engage in the lengthy and, sometimes contentious process of interagency unity of effort. From this perspective, Chiefs of Mission are seen as beholden to DoS' senior leadership because their ability to further their career advancement or secure another ambassadorship depends on satisfying DoS' parochial interests. In many cases, the Chiefs of

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[22] George L. Argyros, Marc Grossman, Felix G. Rohatyn, Commission Co-chairs, *The Embassy of the Future,* Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2007, pp. 47-49.

Mission dominate the MSRP process by directing that his or her civilian-focused pet initiatives take precedent over other MSRP projects. Civilian agencies on ECTs take their cue from this style of leadership and collaborate as a cabal to promote civilian focused MSRP initiatives at the expense of DoD projects. ECTs' effectiveness as reliable partners remains suspect due to the fact that interagency engagement ranges from inexperienced to indifference when it comes to DoD concerns and initiatives. MSRP "business plans" are, in many cases, generic in scope and biased towards civilian agency "soft power" initiatives. They are "interagency" in form but not in substance, and they lack the analytical rigor that would be of value to AFRICOM's initiatives. Embracing the proposed construct would relegate AFRICOM to a functional role of supporting ECT MSRP initiatives that do not advance AFRICOM's mission objectives. This construct would also fail to effectively promote interagency unity of effort or help advance U.S. national security interests in Africa.

From this point of view, AFRICOM would be better served by concentrating its efforts on core DoD priorities, expending its limited resources on securing unity of effort and inter-governmental collaboration with African militaries and civilian interlocutors. "Going it alone" is the most effective way to achieve the Combatant Commander's mission objectives. The budgetary, staffing and resource disparity between AFRICOM and ECTs simply makes AFRICOM subordinate to and dependent on a parochial and institutionally weak partner. To paraphrase a Senegalese proverb, "it is better to travel alone than with a bad and "resource-challenged" companion!"[23]

Rebuttal

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[23] Senegalese proverb, *African proverbs* compiled by Charlotte and Wolf Leslau, 1985, p. 50.

Despite the bureaucratic tendency toward parochialism, infighting, and the sub-optimization of agency goals over more strategic efforts, promoting U.S. national security interests in Africa through interagency unity of effort is the only viable future. This modus operandi applies to both peace and war time theaters. This operational idea is memorialized in DoD's Joint Publication (JP) 1, "Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States," which states that "when the United States undertakes military operations, the Armed Forces of the United are only one component of a national-level effort involving all instruments of national power. Instilling unity of effort at the national level is necessarily a cooperative endeavor involving a number of Federal departments and agencies."[24] This directive clearly applies to ECTs with DoD's JP 3-08 asserting that "U.S. Embassy Country Teams are the foundation for rapid interagency consultation and action on recommendations from the field and effective execution of U.S. programs and policies.[25] The President of the United States, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, and other senior leaders throughout the U.S. government have embraced interagency unity of effort as a mandatory operational idea to address the country's current and future national security challenges. A senior DoD official observed that U.S. military officers who are unable or unwilling to operate as interagency collaborators to advance the U.S. government's unity of effort will become obsolete. The "going it alone" approach is no longer feasible nor is it practical in today's resource and budgetary constrained operational environment. Failure by

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[24]U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, Joint Publication (JP) 1, 3/20/2009, p. II-1.

[25] U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Inter-organizational Coordination during Joint Operations*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-08, July 24, 2011, Page IV-4

either AFRICOM or ECTs to embrace and promote the principles of interagency unity of effort puts both institutions at risk of becoming obsolete. One hand cannot catch a buffalo![26]

Conclusion

With challenges come opportunities, and AFRICOM will continue to face a myriad of challenges that includes ameliorating African skepticism over its intentions and mission objectives. It will also have to address interagency concerns that it will intrude on the traditional roles of the DoS and USAID. The fact that AFRICOM will face internal and external challenges should not be surprising since it is a relatively new geographic command. Its inception was based on a logical assessment that U.S. national security interests in Africa would be better served by a unified command capable of promoting U.S. military interests on a continent replete with instability, anti-western terrorist groups, and humanitarian crises. Africa's challenges provide the U.S. government with an opportunity to implement new operational processes to bolster interagency unity of effort.

Leveraging ECT capabilities, institutional credibility, and presence in 54 countries presents AFRICOM with the opportunity to achieve its goal of evolving into a more focused and operationally efficient command. AFRICOM's quest to serve as a model of a carefully blended mix of kinetic and non-lethal power that is guided by the signature ingredients of "soft power" requires an experienced guide. ECTs have the experience, operational architecture, and AOR situational awareness to be effective guides.

The logic that inspired the creation of AFRICOM is consonant with the operational idea that AFRICOM should directly support ECT MSRPs and synchronize "military diplomacy" initiatives with ECTs to advance "smart power" goals. Institutionalizing best practices will

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[26] West African proverb. www.Afriprov.org. 11/2010.

strengthen civilian-military interagency unity of effort and provide the U.S. government with an opportunity to transform its national security architecture to address challenges in a post 9/11 operational environment. This seminal moment also provides AFRICOM and ECTs with an unprecedented opportunity to develop interagency initiatives that promote U.S. national security interests in Africa with greater efficiency of purpose and economies of scale in preparation for an era of severe budgetary constraints.

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