

## A STABLE AND SECURE AFRICA: LEVERAGING THE STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

## **A STABLE AND SECURE AFRICA: LEVERAGING THE STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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The security and stability in Africa continues to be challenged by numerous factors including poverty, weak governance and persistent violent conflict - the result having national security implications for the United States. In 2007, President Bush formally announced the formation of United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) recognizing the emerging strategic importance of Africa. Supporting AFRICOM's Theatre Security Cooperation Plan, the National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) is emerging in Africa and provides unique capabilities that assist in building capacity across the military and civilian sectors. This Strategy Research Paper (SRP) examines the African region and how to leverage the capabilities of the SPP to enhance security and stability in Africa. The paper outlines the historical context in Africa and identifies shortfalls that contribute to regional instability. The paper identifies the United States interests in the region focusing on the Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of State (DoS) strategies. Finally, this SRP describes the National Guard SPP, outlines its capabilities and provides recommendations on how to best leverage the SPP to support these strategies in Africa.

## A STABLE AND SECURE AFRICA: LEVERAGING THE STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Africa is a continent that is rich with natural resources but hampered by poverty, weak governance and persistent violent conflict - legacies that continue to adversely impact political and social institutions and civil-society within the region. Porous borders and ungoverned spaces contribute to the problem and create a potential safe haven and breeding ground for violent extremist organizations. The lack of adequate security in the region compounds the situation. The capacity of Africans to provide for their own security is limited and correspondingly, local and regional stability and development is tenuous. Underdeveloped nations contribute to regional and global insecurity and instability – factors that ultimately threaten the security of the United States and the broader international community.

As the United States' interests in the African region increase, it relies on the military as a primary instrument to execute foreign policy. With an objective being a stable and secure Africa where Africans have the capacity to provide for their own security and development, the United States Government (USG) focuses efforts on assisting partners through programs designed to build institutional capacity throughout foreign governments, civil society and the private sector. Assisting in building capacity requires a balanced approach that spans the military and civilian sectors. The Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of State (DoS) assist in developing and building capacity through programs targeting economic, health, education and security assistance sectors. Though this requires an interagency approach, the reliance on the DoD to accomplish these activities has placed an increased emphasis for the

military to undertake a full range of activities. This broad spectrum of emphasis placed on the military requires a balanced approach and diverse skills that span diplomatic and defense related sectors. The National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) is a program that provides these capabilities.

The SPP is an established program that is uniquely qualified to assist in meeting the objective of a secure and stable Africa by supporting both the Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) and the U.S. Chiefs of Mission strategies. With a proven record of success, the SPP currently has sixty two partnerships that span every United States Geographic Combatant Command (GCC). That number was recently increased with an eighth partnership within U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM). The SPP provides capabilities across both the military and civilian sectors that build trust and confidence through long-term relationships while building the capacities of international partners. This ability to span both the military and civilian sectors while establishing enduring, personal relationships within the host nation's communities and government agencies allows the SPP to aptly meet USG objectives.

#### African Colonial and Cold War Legacies

To fully appreciate the current situation and challenges in Africa, it is important to understand the legacies of the colonial and Cold War periods. During the late nineteenth century, European powers including France, Portugal and Belgium colonized Africa to gain access to the abundant natural resources in the region. With the exception of Liberia and Ethiopia, the entire continent of Africa south of the Sahara was colonized during the last two decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Spanning approximately eighty years, the colonial period “transformed the historical political geography of Africa” and continues to negatively impact the continent.<sup>2</sup> During this

period, African social groups and established trading areas were separated and divided during the process of creating new boundaries – boundaries that met the needs of the colonial powers, not Africans.<sup>3</sup> The goal was not trying to unify the population; in fact, “as a method of control, ethnic groups were often pitted against each other.”<sup>4</sup> These artificial boundaries continue to be a source of tension and conflict in Africa today.

The colonial period ended in the 1960’s for the majority of African countries creating a political vacuum that Africans were not prepared to fill. The old colonial system focused on controlling the population and exploiting the natural resources not on building institutions or developing the capacities of the population to adequately govern themselves. The African leaders, who came to power, were accustomed to an authoritarian government that was based on force and as the African countries transitioned to independence, the new leaders used the military as a power enforcement apparatus.<sup>5</sup>

The Cold War period and the ideological race for domination saw many African nations as pawns in the East-West struggle for power.<sup>6</sup> At that time, both the United States and the Soviet Union were more interested in supporting client regimes than developing the political and civil institutions of individual countries.<sup>7</sup> This continued to perpetuate the struggles African countries were having with their recent independence.

### Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Africa today is a continent that receives significant international interest and “has moved from the margins to the mainstream (if not center) of U.S. foreign policy.”<sup>8</sup> Although advances are being seen in the areas of democratization, economics and conflict prevention in Africa, humanitarian crises and violent conflict stemming from weak governance, limited access to adequate health and education services and

extreme poverty continue to restrict further progress.<sup>9</sup> Africa holds tremendous mineral and energy resources with mineral reserves that account for 30% of global resources and oil production that accounts for 12% percent of the world's production.<sup>10</sup> Although abundant in resources economic development has not progressed, in fact, the percentage of foreign investment, gross domestic product and world trade has collectively regressed since the 1960s.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, thirty-five of the forty-eight least developed countries are in Africa and over 40% of the Sub-Saharan population lives below the international poverty level.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, Africa relies on external assistance for its survival - this reliance having a negative impact on development and the capacity of Africans to address these situations.<sup>13</sup>

As a legacy of the colonial period many African countries struggle to govern themselves, protect their borders and provide essential services for their populations. Though regional, these shortfalls have a significant impact on the security of the United States and the international community. Porous borders and ungoverned spaces contribute to fragile states and are a potential breeding ground and safe haven for terrorist organizations. In addition, these areas provide a venue for transnational crime including trafficking of humans, drugs and small arms which resources violent extremist organizations. Finally, the inability of a government to provide adequate security presents a direct challenge to its authority and its ability to provide essential services and promote development. These factors ultimately cause instability and add up to national security implications for the United States.

### U.S. Interests and Strategies

The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report (QDR) acknowledges that “America’s interests are inextricably linked to the integrity and resilience of the

international system” and further defined these interests as “security, prosperity, broad respect for universal values, and an international order that promotes cooperative action.”<sup>14</sup> These four enduring interests are closely intertwined with the African continent. Combating violent extremism and preventing its spread into ungoverned areas within fragile states, developing and ensuring access to natural resources, promoting human rights and responding to humanitarian crises connect the interests of the United States closely with Africa. To ensure U.S. national interests are met, one of the overarching goals of the United States strategies for diplomacy, development and defense is to help build the capacity of international partners.<sup>15</sup> Building the capacity of the international system while working with partners toward a common goal promotes regional and international stability and helps prevent and deter conflict.<sup>16</sup>

*U.S. National Security Strategy.* The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (NSS) is the defining document that establishes the foundation from which subordinate strategies such as the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and the Department of State (DoS) Strategic Plan evolves. The NSS is built on two pillars: “promoting freedom, justice and human dignity ...” and “confronting the challenges of our time by leading a growing community of democracies.”<sup>17</sup>

From these two pillars nine essential tasks are outlined that the United States must address in achieving its strategic objectives. These tasks focus on human dignity, strengthening alliances and working with others, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) prevention, economic growth, democracy, transforming America’s national security institutions and globalization.<sup>18</sup> Within the context of Africa and the U.S. strategic goal of “an African continent that knows liberty, peace, stability and increasing prosperity”<sup>19</sup> this

list can be reduced to four primary areas of focus. These four areas are: (1) human dignity, (2) alliances and partnerships, (3) economic growth and (4) democracy. Though the NSS was written by the previous administration, these four areas remain applicable to Africa today as indicated by the recently released 2010 QDR and similar areas emphasized by the current administration.

President Obama, in his speech in Ghana in July 2009 delivered a similar focus to that outlined in the NSS. He sees “Africa as a fundamental part of our interconnected world – as partners with America ...” and he stressed the importance of democracy, a vibrant private sector and civil-society.<sup>20</sup> In this speech, he outlined four areas that are critical to the future of Africa - democracy, opportunity, health and peaceful resolution of conflict.<sup>21</sup>

The 2010 QDR outlined that “sustaining existing alliances and creating new partnerships are central elements of U.S. security strategy.”<sup>22</sup> Building partnerships, forming enduring relationships and sharing common interests are critical to realizing national security strategic objectives. In the regional context of Africa, the QDR further stated that the United States will work with African partners to enhance stability and prosperity through capacity building, assisting fragile states and addressing humanitarian crises.<sup>23</sup>

*U.S. National Defense Strategy.* With the core responsibility of defending the homeland and protecting the American people, Secretary of Defense Gates outlined five objectives for the National Defense Strategy (NDS). These objectives are: (1) defend the homeland, (2) win the long war, (3) promote security, (4) deter conflict and (5) win our nation’s wars.<sup>24</sup> The recently released QDR provides a similar emphasis to that of

the NDS - prevailing in today's wars, preventing and deterring conflict and preparing to defeat adversaries.<sup>25</sup> As indicated by the QDR, achieving success in these objectives requires working with international partners and building partner capacity.

In the NDS Secretary Gates described a "new jointness" as a way to integrate and unify interagency efforts. This concept requires a whole of government approach and includes activities that are critical to long-term success such as economic development, institution building, and good governance.<sup>26</sup> According to Secretary of Defense Gates, "Where our government has been able to bring America's civilian and the military assets together to support local partners, there have been incredibly promising results."<sup>27</sup>

*U.S. Department of State Strategic Plan.* The joint mission of the DoS and USAID is to advance freedom by "... helping to build and sustain a more democratic, secure and prosperous world composed of well-governed states ..."<sup>28</sup> To achieve this end, this strategic plan outlines seven strategic goals. These goals are: (1) achieving peace and security, (2) governing justly and democratically, (3) investing in people, (4) promoting economic growth and prosperity, (5) providing humanitarian assistance, (6) promoting international understanding and (7) strengthening consular and management capabilities.<sup>29</sup> Including initiatives supporting civil-society and the private sector, education, health and security cooperation, this strategy highlights the importance of volunteerism and community action and that "the individual American citizen is one of our greatest public diplomacy assets."<sup>30</sup>

This strategic plan's mission and strategic goals remain unchanged in the current administration as indicated by the DoS *Fiscal Year 2009 Agency Financial*

*Report* where Secretary of State Hillary Clinton restated the same mission and strategic goals.<sup>31</sup> Further refining these goals for Africa, Johnnie Carson, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, outlined four priority areas of focus for Africa in his remarks to the Council on Foreign Relations. These areas are democracy and governance, economics, conflict resolution and prevention and transnational threats.<sup>32</sup>

Realizing the interdependency of USG agencies and the need for stability operations skills in the DoD, two policy directives were signed into law within ten days of each other in 2005. The Department of Defense Directive (DoDD) 3000.05 and the National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 44 transformed the way both the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of State (DoS) function and integrate together. These two directives form the foundation for current interagency efforts.

DoDD 3000.05 provided guidance and defined stability operations as a core mission that the DoD shall be prepared to conduct and support. The United States conducts stability operations to advance U.S. interests and values with short term goals of providing security and humanitarian assistance and a long term goal of developing “indigenous capacity for securing essential services, a viable market economy, rule of law, democratic institutions, and a robust civil society.”<sup>33</sup> It emphasizes that successful stability operations require integrated civilian and military efforts. Further, with respect to Africa, a DoD report to Congress in 2007 on the implementation of DoDD 3000.05 stated that AFRICOM’s success will be its ability to “synchronize and integrate governmental, non-governmental, and private sector partners.”<sup>34</sup>

NSPD-44 formalized the management of interagency efforts. NSPD-44 states that the “United States has a significant stake in enhancing the capacity to assist in

stabilizing and reconstructing countries or regions ... and to help them establish a sustainable path toward peaceful societies, democracies, and market economies.”<sup>35</sup> It established the DoS as the lead agency for USG interagency actions and that the “United States should work with other countries and organizations ... to promote peace, security, development, democratic practices, market economies, and the rule of law.”<sup>36</sup>

Merging the NSS, QDR, NDS and DoS Strategic Plan in the context of Africa, there are five priorities that emerge for achieving United States strategic goals. These five areas of focus are: (1) Peace and Security, (2) Good Governance, (3) Investing in People, (4) Economic Development, and (5) Humanitarian Assistance. These areas will be discussed in more detail later.

## AFRICOM

In response to Africa’s increasing strategic importance to the United States, President George W. Bush introduced U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) as the sixth GCC in 2007. AFRICOM’s organizational structure includes key interagency personnel to better “advance collaboration between DoD and other USG agencies.”<sup>37</sup> This organizational structure allows AFRICOM to more effectively utilize “soft power” in its efforts in building a stable security environment.<sup>38</sup> This point is critical to the command’s success as there is fear, both domestically within civilian agencies and within the internationally community, that the establishment of AFRICOM represents the militarization of U.S. relations in Africa.<sup>39</sup>

AFRICOM’s strategy is based on sustained security engagement - building strategic relationships with Africans and working closely with the U.S. embassies and chiefs of mission to execute U.S. foreign policy.<sup>40</sup> AFRICOM’s activities are focused on

achieving three strategic end states as directed by the DoD Guidance for Employment of the Force. These end states are:

(1) African countries and organizations are able to provide for their own security and contribute to security on the continent. (2) African governments and regional security establishments have the capability to mitigate the threat from organizations committed to violent extremism. (3) African countries and organizations maintain professional militaries that respond to civilian authorities, respect the rule of law, and abide by international human rights norms.<sup>41</sup>

To accomplish these goals, General William E. Ward, AFRICOM's commander, focuses on Theatre Security Cooperation (TSC) as a primary means and notes that "Theatre Security Cooperation programs remain the cornerstone of our persistent, sustained engagement."<sup>42</sup> In Joint Publication 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, security cooperation is cited as a "key element of global and theater shaping operations."<sup>43</sup> TSC activities include multinational exercises, training and education and security and humanitarian assistance.<sup>44</sup> These activities stem from formal programs such as International Military Education and Training (IMET), Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) and the Military-to-Military (MIL-MIL) contact program.

TSC programs complement the U.S. embassy chief of mission's country plan and must be approved by the chief of mission - therefore country teams are heavily vested in activities and programs. AFRICOM works closely with the country teams developing and implementing plans to assure that the desired effects are realized.<sup>45</sup>

The State Partnership Program is an integral part of AFRICOM's TSC program. Through its close relationship with a single country and corresponding U.S. embassy country team, the SPP helps bridge the military and civilian sectors. One of the main benefits to the SPP is its unique feature that its personnel are both citizens and

soldiers/airmen. The ability to address both military and civilian issues and the perspective National Guardsmen provide gives the program unique capabilities not often found in other organizations. The resulting partnerships foster long-term relationships between individuals from their respective communities, private sector organizations, government and military organizations. It is not uncommon to have individuals involved in a specific partnership for more than a decade. This long-term partnership is built on mutual trust and understanding and helps build the foundation for development on a larger scale.

### SPP Background

The State Partnership Program was formed in 1993 as a result of the breakup of the former Soviet Union, collapse of the former Warsaw Pact and subsequent transition of many of these former communist countries to democratic governments. The government of Latvia asked for information on military support to civilian agencies and the organizational structure and functions of the National Guard. The National Guard Bureau began work on a concept plan that later develop into the SPP. The initial plan brought together “grass roots” America and the U.S. military through the National Guard with the intention of developing long-term institutional and personal relationships.<sup>46</sup>

A multi-agency delegation lead by the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and including civilians on a humanitarian mission and experts in disaster planning travelled to the Baltic’s to begin establishing a relationship. This meeting’s focus was on military and humanitarian issues stressing the close military-civilian relationship of the National Guard. This close military-civilian relationship became the “hallmark of the Guard’s program.”<sup>47</sup> From these initial days it became evident that the true success of the program lay in its ability to connect people at the lowest levels through contacts

“between National Guard members, their families, the civilian community and the peoples of the host country.”<sup>48</sup>

The SPP’s unique capabilities stem from the construct of the National Guard. The citizen-soldier/airman in many cases is a “part-time” military member with “full-time” civilian employment. The connection to the civilian workforce and ties to communities in their state allows National Guard participants to have a breadth of experience across both the military and civilian sectors and provides them the ability to facilitate relationships within both areas. This dual status is unique to the National Guard and provides a breadth of experience not seen in other organizations.

### SPP in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

There are currently sixty-two individual state partnership programs worldwide located in each GCC – twenty-one in U.S. European Command, twenty in U.S. Southern Command, eight in U.S. Africa Command, six in U.S. Pacific Command, six in U.S. Central Command and one in U.S. Northern Command. The eight partnerships in Africa are California-Nigeria, Michigan-Liberia, New York-South Africa, North Carolina-Botswana, North Dakota-Ghana, Utah-Morocco, Vermont-Senegal and Wyoming-Tunisia.<sup>49</sup>

The State Partnership Program’s mission is to:

Enhance regional combatant commanders’ ability to build enduring military-to-military, military-to-civilian, and civilian-to-civilian relationships that enhance long-term international security while building partnership capacity across all levels of society.<sup>50</sup>

Its four strategic goals which are derived from U.S. national and defense strategies are:

(1) Build partnership capacity to deter, prevent and prepare (2) Build partnership capacity to respond and recover (3) Support partner’s defense reform and professional development and (4) Enable and facilitate enduring broad-spectrum security relationships.<sup>51</sup>

Goals one and two emphasize military-civilian and interagency cooperation and focus on developing a nation's or region's capabilities to dissuade/avert attack, prepare for disasters and respond/recover from attacks or disasters. Examples of activities toward these goals include anti/counter-terrorism, disaster preparation/response and transnational crime deterrence/response.<sup>52</sup>

Goal three focuses on assisting "nations in transforming defense structures and personnel to meet challenges of the twentieth-first century." Examples of activities include civilian control of the military, military-civilian and interagency cooperation and officer/non-commissioned officer professional development.<sup>53</sup>

Finally, goal four focuses on "activities designed to build a nation's capabilities to cooperate and collaborate regionally and globally on ... security and socio-political issues in support of DoS and other lead agencies." Examples include the areas of peace and stability, health, education, economic and agricultural cooperation.<sup>54</sup>

The SPP operates across three domains supporting the achievement of its strategic goals: military-to-military (MIL-MIL), military-to-civilian (MIL-CIV) and civilian-to-civilian or Civil Security Cooperation (CSC) activities.<sup>55</sup>

The State Partnership Program's MIL-MIL activities directly support the Geographic Combatant Commander's TSC plan. The authority for these activities is Title 10 United States Code (USC) and guidance comes from the GCC Country Campaign Plan (CCP) and the U.S. Chief of Mission's Mission Strategic Plan (MSP). Funding for these activities comes primarily through the GCC. These MIL-MIL activities include but are not limited to personnel exchanges and familiarization visits focusing on specific task or technical training, military exercises and professional development. The

list of potential events and activities is extensive and is determined through collaboration between the host nation, GCC and state partner.<sup>56</sup>

The State Partnership Program's MIL-CIV activities promote defense and security cooperation in areas such as emergency management, disaster response and critical infrastructure protection. The authority for these activities is Title 10 USC and guidance comes from the GCC CCP, the MSP and the National Guard's (NG) Annual SPP Plan. Funding for these activities comes primarily through the National Guard Bureau. Activities in this realm capitalize on the National Guard units' experience in civil disaster preparedness and military assistance to civil authorities. Specific events may include an emergency or disaster response exercise and coordination between military and civilian agencies of the state partner and host nation.<sup>57</sup>

The State Partnership Program's CSC focuses on contacts and activities to promote civilian cooperation between the sponsoring state and the host nation to include education, economic development and cultural exchanges. The authority for these activities is Title 22 USC and guidance comes through the MSP and the NG's Annual SPP Plan. This effort truly capitalizes on the diversity of civilian industry and government skills in the National Guard and its connection to local and state government businesses, education and civilian organizations. Activities are varied and include private organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and National Guard State sponsored activities. Examples in the CSC sector may include education and community-to-community cultural exchanges and private industry partnerships between the state partner and host nation.<sup>58</sup>

The CSC arena integrates effectively with the NDS where Secretary of Defense Gates stated that the United States must continue to develop its civilian base and work with “organizations and people outside of government” which he cites as a resource with enormous potential. He further stated that we can better utilize our universities and industry to assist in “long-term improvements to economic vitality and good governance.”<sup>59</sup>

### Leveraging the SPP

As determined previously, five priorities in achieving the strategic goals of the United States with respect to Africa emerge when comparing the NSS, QDR, NDS and DoS Strategic Plan. These focus areas are (1) Peace and Security, (2) Good Governance, (3) Investing in People, (4) Economic Development and (5) Humanitarian Assistance. The SPP supports the interagency efforts in achieving their goals in these areas.

*Peace and Security.* Local and regional peace and security enhances stability which provides opportunities for development. Maintaining the peace, resolving violent conflict and providing security for infrastructure, agriculture and the population are essential to prosperous societies. Both the SPP’s MIL-MIL and MIL-CIV programs provide assistance in these areas. A professional military that responds to and supports its legitimate government and a security force with the capacity to provide security across multiple domains is a critical part of this framework.

During the colonial, independence and Cold War periods, developing military professionalism and fostering military-civilian relations were not emphasized and African militaries were characterized by corruption and human rights abuses. This focus has shifted and today African militaries find themselves promoting stabilization,

reconstruction, and governance and increasingly responding and answering to civilian authorities.<sup>60</sup>

One of the core functions of the SPP in the MIL-MIL arena is the professional development of the partnered nation's military. Continued utilization of the SPP supporting the GCC security cooperation programs must remain a priority engagement method in this realm. As African militaries transition toward civilian control and improve military-civilian relations the SPP experience in this realm should be leveraged to achieve these goals. Further developing the military institution, its personnel and their relationship to civilian authorities is critical to long-term peace and security.

There is a significant requirement in Africa to provide land, air and maritime security due to illegal trafficking of small arms, drugs and humans. The SPP activities in the MIL-CIV sector that focus on border and infrastructure security and anti-trafficking provide assistance in developing African capacities to combat these problems.

*Good Governance.* In this realm, the SPP provides significant benefit in both the MIL-CIV and CSC sectors. Professional development of military personnel, military institution reform and emphasizing the military as subordinate to civilian authorities is critical to providing a foundation for continued transition to democratic governance, establishing transparency and the rule of law. The citizen-soldier/airman construct of the National Guard and the National Guard units' experience in military assistance to civilian authorities provides a broad experience base in this realm.

The SPP CSC program provides a unique venue for connecting individuals from the sponsoring states and the host nation's local and regional governments. Along with promoting leadership transparency, accountability and human rights there needs to be

community involvement, individual ownership and “participatory governance.”<sup>61</sup>

Sponsoring states understand the importance of local community organizations and can assist in developing similar relationships between organizations and their African partners. For instance, partnerships such as cooperatives, charities, foundations and professional organizations have a track record of success within the United States. The SPP can assist with building similar relationships with like organizations in their African partner’s country. Vibrant civil society organizations are critical to successful democratic governance. Democratic principles of government perpetuate and ultimately provide the foundation for the development of more civil organizations and increased community and individual involvement in governance.

*Investing in People.* There are significant benefits to be realized from investing in adequate health and education services, which is part of the SPP’s CSC program and directly related to development. In the context of Africa, there are significant health issues including HIV/AIDS and limited access to basic education. Africa has the lowest primary school completion rate in the world.<sup>62</sup> Civilian partnerships focusing on education and health issues particularly targeting women and youth are critical areas in Africa. Enabled through the SPP, partnerships between institutions in health and education are an opportunity where the SPP could provide assistance. For instance, USAID’s Africa Education Initiative (AEI) focuses on increasing access to quality basic education through scholarships, textbooks, and teacher training programs.<sup>63</sup> Leveraging the SPP ties to local schools provide an avenue for collaboration and potential assistance to the AEI.

Education initiatives such as exchanges and partnerships between universities have demonstrated success in the SPP. In 2007, enabled through the SPP between the Vermont National Guard and Macedonia, The University of Vermont and SS. Cyril and Methodius University of Macedonia formed a collaborative agreement promoting educational and scientific exchanges.<sup>64</sup> Similar partnerships and academic exchanges based on common interests benefit both partners and provide for future development in Africa.

A National Guard MIL-CIV program used successfully in the United States that could provide similar benefit in Africa is the National Guard Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) program. Africa is a hotspot for drug trafficking - approximately 27 percent of the cocaine bound for Europe transits West Africa.<sup>65</sup> The National Guard DDR program works with local, state and federal groups that provide drug education and mentoring to youth. The benefit of drug education for youth has been proven effective in the United States and adopting a similar program in Africa could provide similar results.

*Economic Development.* Economic development is critical to a thriving society. Africa has been hampered by lack of economic growth and development and suffers from an inadequate distribution of wealth. The SPP CSC program is uniquely postured to work with small businesses, private industry and public-private partnership. Partnerships including organizations such as local Chamber of Commerce, business development organizations or private companies could have a significant and positive effect on the host nation's economic development.

Agriculture is an area in need of development and modernization in many African countries. Africa's economy is focused on agriculture and 70% of households depend

on it for income yet “agricultural production remains at the subsistence level” and there is difficulty with development, job creation and market integration.<sup>66</sup> Agricultural development assistance can be effectively provided by the NG. Agriculture Development Teams (ADT's) have already been developed in the NG and are serving in Afghanistan. The ADT is proven and could provide similar benefits in Africa. In addition, state land grant universities and local and state professional agriculture organizations provide a wealth of knowledge and experience and facilitated through the SPP could serve as possible partners.

*Humanitarian Assistance.* From natural disasters to crises resulting from conflict and genocide, the continent of Africa is no stranger to events requiring humanitarian assistance. The focus in this MIL-CIV arena includes disaster/crisis prevention, response and mitigation. The NG requirement and commitment to supporting civilian agencies with disasters at both the state and federal level make it uniquely qualified to assist African countries. The citizen-soldier/airman construct of the NG and its resulting connection to state and local fire and police personnel and to state emergency management and homeland security personnel provides a breadth of experience for assistance. The ability to cover the spectrum from local “first responders” to state and federal government coordinators, incorporate full interagency involvement. This type of partnership could yield significant success in many African countries.

### Conclusion

The world continues to become more interconnected and the security and stability of one country impact others around the globe. The United States' interests and security are integrally connected to the continent of Africa. While Africa continues to evolve in its independence and the number of democratic governments is on the rise,

the continent still suffers from weak governance, enduring violent conflict and slow economic development.

The SPP can effectively assist African partners in realizing success in remedying many of these factors. With its citizen-soldier/airman construct, the SPP is uniquely positioned to develop enduring relationships and partnerships – from the individual level to communities and government. It is this person-to-person connection and community involvement from the sponsoring states' military and civilian sectors that form the foundation and provide the means for supporting both the combatant commander and the chiefs of mission in achieving U.S. goals.

Although the SPP is a valuable and essential part in the execution of USG foreign policy there are resource constraints and limits to the number of partnerships that can be established. There are a finite number of NG states and territories available to enter into partnerships – a number that is far less than the number of countries available. The current high operational tempo of NG units also creates a strain on the sponsoring states participation. Because of these facts, it is critical that partnerships created are established in areas critical to the U.S. strategic interests and that activities are developed specifically focusing in areas that provide the best return on investment for all parties.

The National Guard SPP continues to develop and expand in Africa. In these partnerships, the best return on investment can be made by focusing unified efforts in the areas of peace and security, good governance, investing in people, economic development and humanitarian assistance. Leveraging the unique capabilities and established programs of the National Guard SPP offers valuable assistance in these

areas and provides an often overlooked asset in the achievement of USG strategic objectives in Africa.

## Endnotes

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