Center for American Progress

State Legitimacy, Fragile States, and U.S. National Security

By the CAP National Security and International Policy Team   September 2016

State Legitimacy, Fragile States, and U.S. National Security

By the CAP National Security and International Policy Team   September 2016

Contents

Introduction and summary

When the 45th president of the United States takes office in 2017, he or she will inherit a century-old mantle of global leadership. The new president will immediately confront questions about America's influence in the world and its ability to protect American interests and maintain global peace and stability.

Today, some of the greatest threats to U.S. national security originate from the very forces of growing interconnectedness that the post-World War II order has enabled. For years, global businesses and expanding communications have been connecting the peoples and nations of the world together at faster and faster rates, and these changes have produced tremendous opportunities and prosperity in the United States and around the world. But at the same time, the rise of global interconnectedness means that it has become easier for transnational security threats—from terrorism to organized crime—to spread. These threats, which increasingly overlap to comprise an illicit world that parallels the state system, put at risk the international system that has upheld peace and prosperity. In addition, other transnational threats—from climate change to health pandemics—increasingly threaten the United States and countries around the world and require coordinated, effective efforts to tackle them.

The majority of these threats originate in or are exacerbated by areas where a state's citizens do not see their government as legitimate, or where legitimate governments are unable to extend their lawful powers across their entire geographies. From states in open conflict in the Middle East to states in Latin America and Africa that still struggle with vast ungoverned territories, the lack of legitimate governing institutions is an invitation for illicit transnational forces to grow. Terrorists find their greatest safe haven in countries where governments cannot or will not control their territory; pandemic diseases go undetected and untreated due to governments not properly addressing health care needs; organized criminal groups can create regional and global networks when corrupt governments are complicit or absent; and climate change wreaks even greater havoc when there is no effective government to take steps to mitigate the threats. The missing links in all of these cases are legitimate governing institutions that can reflect the will of their people, respond to their needs, and extend their authority across the entire populace.

The United States has been aware of this challenge for a long time but has a mixed record of addressing it effectively. When it invaded and occupied Iraq, the Bush administration sought a quick fix by trying to impose democracy on a foreign nation, leading to disastrous consequences. In contrast, over the past 20 years, the United States has successfully partnered with the government and people of Colombia to support their efforts to build a legitimate government and combat terrorists and criminals in their own backyard. The United States needs to incorporate these lessons going forward.

The United States must also strengthen international responses to the challenges that can grow in areas with no legitimate governments. The United States and much of the world has relied on regional and international institutions to help address global challenges, but too often they seem incapable of offering credible solutions, whether it is the European Union's response to the Syrian refugee crisis or the United Nations' response to the conflict in Syria. Meanwhile, the European Union's recent financial troubles, followed by Great Britain's referendum vote to leave the European Union, have cast a long shadow on what many believed was one of the world's most successful and capable international institutions. Without international institutions capable of bringing together key players to share the burden of tackling serious global challenges, more and more countries depend on the United States for answers even as they recognize that the United States cannot solve the world's problems on its own.

While the United States will always take immediate action to address urgent dangers in order to stave off major threats before they arise—and to sustain global support for the institutions that have kept the peace for 70 years—the United States must employ a long-term strategy. The United States must help strengthen the legitimacy of fragile states across the world and focus efforts in particular on supporting willing partner countries whose instability and fragility could pose direct threats to U.S. national security. States that cannot prevent threats from taking root within their borders must be supported by the United States in partnership with the rest of the world—with other nations, with regional and international organizations, and with private-sector entities willing to collaborate toward common aims.

The focus of this international effort must be on supporting the legitimacy of states and their ability to tackle their own challenges effectively. Governments with true legitimacy are ones that have internal support for the system of government, expressed voluntarily by the people. Supporting these states would mean channeling U.S. resources and diplomacy toward bolstering the elements of states that endow

> Governments with true legitimacy are ones that have internal support for the system of government, expressed voluntarily by the people.

them with legitimacy. These elements include, for example, a recognized justice and dispute resolution system perceived as fair, usually through the rule of law; the provision of basic services for citizens; the assurance of fundamental physical security for civilians; and governing institutions deemed accountable by the citizenry.

As opposed to attempting to impose democracy on others, this approach would start from the premise that international support is most effective when governments and societies have the will to strengthen the elements of a functioning, legitimate state.

To make this policy approach a reality, the United States should join together with its G-7 partners and, together, select international institutions to create International Compacts for Governance, Prosperity, and Security that would serve as the vehicle to provide external support for the growth of legitimate and capable governments in those countries interested in making significant reforms and investments. The compacts would offer significant financial assistance and other combined resources from the G-7 countries, international donors, and organizations. For fragile countries with the necessary political will but a lack of capacity, the opportunity to enter into a compact would create a strong incentive to undertake important reforms and invest in the building blocks of legitimate governments that can tackle their own challenges effectively. These compacts would not model an external imposition or traditional conditionality; rather, they would be negotiated arrangements that meet certain criteria and become joint plans outlining how international actors will support the domestic-led and -driven efforts of a recipient country.

Furthermore, these international compacts would leverage the in-depth knowledge and experience of multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, or IMF, by engaging these institutions throughout the compact creation and implementation process. In particular, the United Nations would have to play a central role in such an international compact program. Its global reach, its experience working on the ground in conflict and post-conflict environments, and its expertise in working on all of the issues related to building legitimate governance make its involvement crucial.

This is not only a more effective strategy but also a cost-effective one as well. For instance, Plan Colombia—a joint plan between the United States and Colombia to stabilize a weak country threatened by illegal armed groups—cost the United States about $8 billion over 15 years. This is roughly the same cost as just 27 days of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. And although it was originally met with

skepticism, Plan Colombia reduced violence, stemmed the flow of narcotics to the United States, and built more effective and accountable institutions. Today, the nation is emerging as a stronger, more prosperous country. Over time, Plan Colombia has helped create a peace process that appears poised to end a 40-year-old insurgency. The lessons learned from Plan Colombia can inform the broader U.S. foreign policy approach to tackling transnational threats.[1]

Confronted with what seem like immense challenges to national security, some political voices in the United States on both the left and the right want to try to seal America off from the world rather than continue its leadership and engagement. But these days, many of the greatest threats—from terrorism to pandemic disease—know no borders, and these critics ignore the fact that there is no way for the United States to withdraw inward and avoid threats from abroad. Others seek instead a return to the previous decade when the United States misused its military and gutted its economic strength. For them, anything short of the use of U.S. military power signals a lack of resolve or leadership. But the wasteful employment of American power through so-called preventive war in Iraq and a costly military occupation has already proven disastrous.

In 2005, the Center for American Progress published "Integrated Power," a national security strategy for the United States that advocated integrating all of the tools of American power in an effort to tackle threats to U.S. security, including ones from weak and failing states.[2] More than 10 years later, this approach remains sound, and U.S. leaders must now focus the tools of U.S. power on creating partnerships with countries that have the political will to build stronger, more legitimate societies.

The nation's leaders must garner the experience, expertise, and vast resources of the United States to lead a multilateral effort to strengthen the legitimacy of fragile states. Not only will this provide the best chance for the United States to prevent and manage transnational threats to the nation, but it will also improve the quality of life for the people of these countries—the most sustainable long-term path to upholding global security.

The threat: Fragile states and the illicit world

The world's illicit transnational forces include terrorists and organized criminal groups that thrive in fragile states and often hold territory beyond the reach of the established authorities. These forces pose direct threats to the United States. If the nation is to adopt a foreign policy aimed at preventing these threats from harming U.S. interests, it must take aim at the places where these illicit forces grow.

Fragile states are often home to illicit transnational movements. This includes, of course, the Islamic State, or IS, which controls territory in Iraq and Syria.[3] From these territories, IS has destabilized the region and launched and inspired terrorist attacks around the globe. Similarly, the border areas between Afghanistan and Pakistan are home to the Taliban and Al Qaeda, both of which operate in a relative safe haven out of the reach of either government. Libya is quickly presenting a potential new threat: IS is setting up camp and posing serious risks beyond Libya's borders as its government struggles to unify and govern its territory. But it is not just terrorists that threaten the United States and other countries around the world. Transnational criminal organizations in Central America, human traffickers and drug smugglers in Southeast Asia, and warlords in Africa all operate with relative impunity in the territories they control. Around the planet, especially within fragile states, an illicit world has grown in parallel to mainstream nation states.

While some fragile states have given rise to immediate threats such as IS, there are far more fragile states that may not yet present a direct threat to the United States and its interests but very well may become threats in the future—and it is difficult to predict exactly where those new threats may arise. Before each became a source of danger to the United States, there was no consensus that major threats would emerge from Afghanistan, Somalia, or the Balkans. Therefore, it is vitally important for the United States to recognize the importance of strengthening fragile states now to prevent threats from emerging in the future.[4]

In the case of Somalia, after the overthrow of President Mohamed Siad Barre's regime in 1991 and the descent of the country into political and humanitarian chaos, the United States engaged first in August 1992 by sending food aid through Operation Provide Relief. A few months later, the United States sent in troops to assist with U.N. efforts for famine relief through Operation Restore Hope.[5] In the fall of 1993, during the first Battle of Mogadishu, two U.S. Black Hawk helicopters were shot down by Somali militia forces, leading to the deaths of 18 U.S. soldiers and hundreds of Somalis. At the time, television networks broadcast the footage of the U.S. soldiers being dragged through the streets of the capital, turning the tide of American public support against U.S. engagement in current and future peacekeeping operations. Following the speedy withdrawal of all U.S. troops by March 1994, Somalia largely drifted from U.S. attention. Years later, extremists were able to take advantage of the lawlessness that ensued and eventually turn Somalia into a breeding ground for terrorist recruitment and operations.[6] At the time of the U.S. withdrawal, few would have predicted that Somalia would become the prominent terrorist and criminal haven it is today, housing groups capable of carrying out large-scale, devastating attacks abroad, as well as piracy at sea.

Similarly, prior to 2011 there was little concern in policymaking circles that states in the Middle East would collapse and unleash threats of war, terrorism, and refugee flows that would directly affect the United States and Europe. Yet we now face exactly that situation.

Take Jordan as an example. As discussed at length in CAP's 2014 report "Jordan in the Eye of the Storm," Jordan is situated in the heart of a very tumultuous region, with the Syrian civil war to the north, an increasingly unstable Iraq to the east, and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the west.[7] Thus far, Jordan has been resilient in the face of myriad challenges and pressures from its neighbors and has been a critical host in the region, taking in more than 710,000 refugees, roughly 90 percent of whom are Syrian.[8] However, given the current state of many of its neighbors and the pressures facing Jordan internally, the United States cannot take the country's current stability for granted. For these reasons, helping Jordan build a stronger, more sustainable country is clearly in the interests of the United States.

In addition to these security threats, other transnational challenges such as health pandemics and climate change are much more difficult to address in countries without effective, legitimate governments. Without effective health care systems, countries are less capable of preventing diseases from spreading across borders. And fragile states have a more difficult time planning for effective and efficient economic growth strategies to mitigate pollution and to adapt to the effects of climate change.

More fragile states are likely to fail and cause chaos that directly affects the lives of Americans. These states need to build more sustainable and legitimate governments and societies to prevent threats from developing. The United States should support their efforts and proactively lead international and regional institutions to do the same.

The legitimacy challenge

The manner in which the United States supports fragile states must rest on assumptions about what forms of government are most durable. While the literature on this topic is enormous and the debate often vigorous, this report is grounded in the belief that time and history have shown established democracies to be the most sustainable and resilient forms of government.[9] When the people have a say in their government, it is more often viewed as legitimate. In strong democracies, people advocate for policy change, and there are rarely strong movements that advocate for the overthrow of the democratic system.

Legitimacy itself is a complicated and evolving notion that means different things in different places and times. As with any analysis of a governing structure or type, there is a spectrum of what one might consider a so-called legitimate government. Many argue that the only truly legitimate government is a democratic one. Some governments may be deemed legitimate because they have external legitimacy in the form of recognition by other states and/or at the United Nations. Others might be referred to as legitimate in part because of their citizens' sense of nationalism that provides either explicit or implicit support for the government.

Whatever the definition, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has made clear that "donors need to pay much more attention to legitimacy." It recommends that donors start by understanding the local perceptions that affect thinking about legitimate governance in each specific country, recognizing that it may be different in each place and that the imposition of a strict model will not work.[10]

Because the sources of legitimacy vary from country to country, for the purposes of this report, legitimacy is defined simply as widely held, voluntary support of a governing system. This report does not define specific countries or governments as legitimate or not legitimate. Instead, this report outlines what CAP believes to be key elements that play a significant role in constituting a legitimate government,

elements that can provide for sustainable, effective governance that reflects support by its people. These are not absolute requirements, and the way in which the United States and other international actors support the growth of these elements of legitimacy will differ depending on the situation. But they provide a way to approach supporting legitimacy in fragile states and offer a starting point for the United States and others in crafting policies.

The rule of law

The World Justice Project defines the rule of law as a system "in which the following four universal principles are upheld:

- The government and its officials and agents as well as individuals and private entities are accountable under the law;
- The laws are clear, publicized, stable, and just; are applied evenly; and protect fundamental rights, including the security of persons and property and certain core human rights;
- The process by which the laws are enacted, administered, and enforced is accessible, fair, and efficient;
- Justice is delivered timely [sic] by competent, ethical, and independent representatives and neutrals who are of sufficient number, have adequate resources, and reflect the makeup of the communities they serve."[11]

One of the sources of citizen anger at governments that are not legitimate is the unfair and often arbitrary application of law to different groups. This is why the fair, transparent, and effective application of the rule of law—often through independent judicial systems—is a key element of a legitimate state.

Political accountability

The World Bank has broadly categorized accountability as involving two distinct stages—answerability and enforcement.[12] Answerability here involves "the obligation of the government, its agencies, and public officials" to provide information and justification about their decisions and actions "to the public and those institutions of accountability tasked with providing oversight."[13] Enforcement "suggests that the public or the institution responsible for accountability can sanction the offending party or remedy the contravening behavior."[14] There can be institutions of accountability—such as a judiciary or parliament—that are considered providers of "horizontal accountability" across governing structures. Likewise, there can be vertical

accountability whereby citizens, media, and civil society can "enforce standards of good performance on officials."[15] While there are many different ways to encourage accountability among governments and state institutions, those most often referenced include elections, a free press, and checks and balances in political systems.

Equitable economic growth

Economic growth in fragile states can be defined by an increase in gross domestic product; the consumer price index, a gauge of inflation rates; job opportunities; housing starts; and the stability of sustainable local and state-owned enterprises.[16] Equitable economic growth is key to legitimacy because support for governments inevitably wanes when prosperity does not rise. And while a lack of economic growth can often result in the election of a new government in strong democracies, the absence of economic growth can lead to greater political instability in fragile states.[17]

Service delivery

Government institutions that administer services—from energy to health care to sanitation—are essential to a basic quality of life for a nation's people.[18] Because these services are often administered by the states and are associated with the state, an essential component of a legitimate government is the ability to administer these services effectively and equitably. Without effective services, people lose faith in the basic competence of their government.[19]

Education

One of the most important public services is education. Investing in public education increases job opportunities, economic engagement, and political and civic cohesion—all of which help build a state and its government. Education consistently leads to job opportunities, because educated civilians are better equipped to enter the job force, making them more competent applicants and productive and knowledgeable contributors to a stable society.[20] Studies have found that wages are positively correlated with years of education—especially in states with higher levels of inequality—and that education ultimately provides opportunities for nations to collaborate and globalize diplomatically.[21]

Furthermore, investing in public education allows for the spread of global ideas and has been shown to have a significant positive effect on communities, organizations, and societies with regards to social change and justice.[22] Education can be a tool that states use to engage and cooperate globally, building an accurate, shared sense of history among the people while investing in and empowering citizens.

Security

Perhaps the most elemental definition of the state is that it controls the monopoly right and means to the use of force. When the state loses this exclusive control, few of the other elements of legitimacy—accountability, economic growth, or the rule of law—matter. In many of the fragile states that suffer from the highest levels of violence, the state's monopoly on the use of force is challenged or lacking in parts of its territory.[23]

Understanding how best to support the legitimacy of a state is a key step toward building proactive and forward-looking policies to help enable states to tackle their own challenges and to prevent threats to the United States and other nations from emerging.

Supporting legitimate states to counter the illicit world

In his recent paper "A Better Approach to Fragile States," CAP's John Norris makes the case for shrinking the number of fragile states and helping countries move into the category of relative peace and increasing prosperity. Such a strategy to diminish the pool of fragile states argues for a focused, international effort in those countries best positioned to make a lasting leap out of the fragile category.[24]

While the United States has a strong interest in strengthening fragile states around the world, the priority for the United States must be those states in the neighborhood of ongoing conflicts and instability or states dealing with their own illicit forces and that are therefore especially susceptible to illicit threats and state failure. These countries, such as Jordan, Tunisia, Ukraine, and the Northern Triangle countries of Central America—El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala—are struggling with illicit forces that pose direct threats to U.S. national security.

Of these countries, the states most likely to make an enduring move out of fragility are those willing to make hard choices: to genuinely share power, to include traditionally marginalized groups in the life of the nation, to combat corruption, and to make smart investments in broad-based economic growth and essential social services.

Today, the investments necessary to succeed in partnering with these states are minimal compared with the vast resources needed if a state collapsed or if it allowed a major threat to the United States to emerge from within its borders. Dedicating time and resources to confront potential challenges is always difficult, but it is a necessary endeavor in order for the United States to have the best chance to reduce more significant and costly threats in the future.

At this point, it is important to note that, while the purpose of this paper is not to recommend a strategy for defeating IS or the Taliban, those threats are direct consequences of fragile states and require the highest priority in U.S. foreign policy. Of course, there is no simple recipe for success, as each conflict is different and will require different approaches by the United States and the international community.

But one common principle is that it will be very difficult if not impossible to help strengthen the legitimacy of the state until current conflicts have been resolved or at least mitigated through political or military settlements. Therefore, the approach recommended in this report would not work for states such as Syria or Yemen until the violent conflict has subsided and a somewhat functioning government has been created.[25] However, in the aftermath of conflict or in the face of a persistent insurgency, the sort of approach recommended herein has a better chance at success.

What works?

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has employed several approaches to support the emergence of democracies and capable, accountable states to become reliable U.S. partners and pillars of peace and prosperity. The United States has experienced many successes, but it also has a fractured and inefficient system for determining priorities for foreign assistance, which hampers its ability to achieve broader foreign policy goals. As Norris makes clear in his report, the United States and many other international actors are "easily distracted donors" that too often reward underperformance.[26]

The world is too complex and diverse a place to expect a completely consistent and uniform approach from the United States. However, there are specific ways that the United States can work with international partners to use its influence, assistance, and resources to support the emergence of sustainable, legitimate states that both deliver for their people and contribute to regional and global peace.

To have the best chance at success in an inevitably difficult enterprise, it is vital to understand what has worked in the past. Below are some past endeavors that were intended to support the strengthening of legitimate and effective governments in other countries. These can serve as examples from which the United States can draw lessons.

Accession of Eastern Europe to the European Union

The process of integrating Central and Eastern Europe into the European Union after the Cold War was one of the most successful experiences of incentivizing countries to take difficult steps to reform political and economic institutions. While there is evidence of backsliding in recent years in some countries, the appeal of EU membership and the integration process itself resulted in the strengthening of democracy

in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe—a process that also helped boost economic growth. The model is simple: The European Union offered the incentives of massive economic and technical assistance, as well as the benefits of membership in the European Union, including the free flows of people and goods. In exchange, the prospective member states overhauled their political and economic systems in line with volumes of pages of requirements from the European Union—which recipient countries met in part through EU technical and financial assistance.[27] While there is nothing that compares to the incentive of EU membership because of its vast markets, the model of a multilateral compact has proven effective when there are willing partners on both sides.

Plan Colombia

As CAP Senior Fellow Dan Restrepo and his colleagues make clear in their recent piece on Colombia, the support that the United States has provided to Colombia in its fight against a narco-insurgency over the past 15 years has been crucial to Colombia's emergence as a more stable, prosperous, and democratic country and serves as a potential model for U.S. support for other fragile states.[28] As outlined earlier, Plan Colombia was comprised of significant financial assistance from the United States, spread out over many years. This support included security assistance, as well as support for economic development and the strengthening of the effectiveness of Colombia's rule of law institutions. Perhaps most importantly, the Colombian government dedicated the vast proportion of funds that went toward Plan Colombia—nearly 95 percent—with the United States providing a relatively small but focused investment.[29] The combination of assistance focused on security, economic growth, and the rule of law—a focus that shifted over time along with the needs—is a good example of a comprehensive approach, one that recognized the reinforcing role that various forms of assistance had on one another in strengthening the Colombian state.

Millennium Challenge Corporation

The Millennium Challenge Corporation, or MCC, operates an independent U.S. bilateral assistance program founded in 2004. The goal of the MCC is to provide substantial amounts of economic assistance over a long period of time to support economic growth in low-income countries that already have the foundations of

good governance and legitimacy. In return for this long-term financial assistance from the United States, the partner countries must meet a set of criteria ensuring transparent, accountable institutions and agree to a compact that sets out the terms of how the money will be used.[30] It is relatively easy to imagine an expanded MCC-type program that invests in all aspects of legitimate states—strengthening institutions, the rule of law, and security, as well as economic growth.

G7+ and the New Deal for engagement in fragile states

The g7+ is a voluntary group of 20 self-identified fragile and conflict-affected states working to transition out of fragility. It helped to establish the "New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States" in 2011 as part of its aim to promote country-owned and -led initiatives for development.[31] The New Deal provides guiding principles for international engagement in fragile states, which include peace- and state-building goals; principles focused on state-led planning and priority setting; and principles focused on trust between states and international actors.[32] While some bilateral pilot projects have begun, these initiatives are driven by voluntary principles intended to guide decisions made by respective governments, but they do not create any binding commitments or mechanisms to administer assistance and national efforts. Yet the existence of this g7+ process is a sign of interest on the part of fragile states to put in place effective and streamlined approaches to supporting their ability to tackle domestic challenges and grow.

Deauville Partnership with Arab Countries in Transition

Similar to the g7+, in 2011 the G-8 launched an international effort called the Deauville Partnership with Arab Countries in Transition, aimed at supporting states in the Arab world undertaking democratic transitions through a more coordinated response. The partnership includes G-8 member countries and international financial institutions, as well as the European Union, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. The Deauville Partnership priorities include economic stabilization, job creation, improvements to government and participation, and global economic integration.[33] However, as with the g7+, to date its impact has been limited, as this effort has been voluntary and not based upon mutual accountability mechanisms.

Each of these initiatives has experienced different levels of success over the years. The g7+ and Deauville Partnership have suffered so far from a lack of political will and are in some ways hampered by their nature as voluntary partnerships with no mechanism for ensuring that countries keep to their commitments. But the MCC, EU accession process, and Plan Colombia have all exhibited degrees of success, in no small part because all of them are based on a similar model: a binding compact agreed to by both donor and recipient countries with very specific criteria and terms, supported by significant amounts of assistance.

International Compacts for Governance, Prosperity, and Security

With all of these models and experiences from which to learn, it is now time to try a more robust international compact approach to supporting fragile states that entails binding commitments. While external actors can only have so much influence on the trajectories of fragile states, the bigger the incentive, the more likely the United States and others will be in getting the governments and key constituencies in fragile states to take the difficult steps necessary to build legitimate governments and societal structures.

The template for International Compacts for Governance, Prosperity, and Security is simple: Donor countries offer a long-term commitment of funding, resources, and political support in return for recipient countries' agreement to take specific steps—political and economic reforms—to strengthen the building blocks of a resilient, legitimate government. The compacts would be administered by an International Compact Secretariat, which would be staffed by officials from the member countries and other select international institutions. Because the compacts would coordinate the various policies and assistance of member countries, the secretariat would require a relatively light staffing footprint focused on coordinating the efforts of existing mechanisms in the G-7 countries. This relatively small staff—housed in a central secretariat, as well as in compact recipient countries—would be dedicated to ensuring the coordination of the G-7 countries in implementing the compacts.

The three pillars of this approach are: G-7 countries as the core group, crafting, organizing, and running the compacts; the United Nations and other key multilateral institutions participating in the crafting of the compacts and aligning efforts to ensure that activities are not duplicative; and the U.S. adjusting its own policies to support this multilateral approach. Guiding all of these efforts would be a focus on helping partner countries tackle their own greatest challenges.

Helping states build more legitimate, capable, and sustainable governing systems is difficult and outside actors such as the United States can only have so much influence. It is therefore vital for the United States and others to organize their efforts in the most effective way possible to offer support for interested countries. Compact candidate countries would have to express an interest in receiving a compact. Fundamentally, for any compact to succeed, it would require not only the buy-in of the partner country but also significant political and economic investments as well—the main drivers of any changes must be domestic. The United States and the rest of the world can only play a supporting, albeit critical, role.

The G-7 in the lead

To succeed in crafting effective compacts, the United States would need to work with other partners that have the resources, political will, flexibility, and alignment of interests. Therefore, the G-7 should lead the proposed International Compacts for Governance, Prosperity, and Security program. The G-7 countries—Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States—are consistently among the top 10 development assistance contributors in the world in terms of total volume. G-7 countries contributed $92.24 billion in overseas development assistance in 2015 alone, which amounted to 71 percent of funding from the top 25 overseas development assistance contributors.[34]

The G-7 countries also have robust, long-standing agencies and programs that have been delivering similar assistance as is proposed herein under the international compact program; this assistance will be essential in achieving greater improvements in compact recipient states. The international compact program would continue to utilize these pre-existing agencies and tools with efforts from all G-7 countries being streamlined and coordinated at a centralized secretariat to achieve the greatest possible results in target countries. By pointing their individual efforts in the same direction, the effects can be magnified. Furthermore, many of these agencies—from the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID, to the U.K. Department for International Development to the Japan International Cooperation Agency—already work closely together.

The interests of the G-7 countries are closely aligned, and therefore an initiative led by the G-7 would be much less likely to run into problems of implementation. It seems highly unlikely, for instance, that G-20 countries such as China, Saudi Arabia, and others would agree to binding conditions that prioritize aspects of good governance such as political accountability. The G-7 countries would be willing to uphold the high standards of criteria for compact candidate countries—

including standards for the rule of law and political accountability—that are not only essential to building legitimate governments, but are also the types of criteria that some other G-20 or U.N. member countries may be unlikely to support.

The United Nations and multilateral collaboration

In an ideal world, assistance programming for fragile states would be streamlined under such institutions as the United Nations, the IMF, and the World Bank. However, at least initially, it is more realistic to begin the streamlining process within the industrialized democracies in the G-7. That being said, the G-7-led effort must engage multilateral institutions and leverage their experiences, relationships, and in-depth knowledge in each compact recipient state.

First and foremost, the G-7 will need to enlist the United Nations as a central partner while planning and conducting the international compact program, as the United Nations already has on-the-ground assets and in-depth experience in most, if not all, potential compact recipient states. The G-7 also can use its own influence and position within the United Nations to synchronize current U.N. efforts with international compact program efforts to ensure that they complement each other. Representatives of key U.N. agencies—such as the United Nations Development Programme—must have a seat at the table in crafting the international compact program to avoid conflicts between programs and to provide advice on how best to ensure that ongoing efforts complement each other.

One long-term goal of engaging with the United Nations as a central partner in the international compact program would be to push for U.N.-wide reforms in dealing with fragile states. Should this new compacts approach succeed, it could lead to greater U.N. engagement and possibly U.N. ownership of the program in the future, which would allow for even greater participation by other actors in the international community.

Additionally, the G-7 countries can utilize their leverage in other major multilateral organizations, such as the World Bank and the IMF, to bolster even greater support for creating compacts with states outside of the proposed G-7 mechanism. To do so, the G-7 countries would use their voting shares and influence within other international organizations to steer tools of those organizations to support the efforts of the international compact program. This arrangement would have the benefit of allowing for more flexibility in crafting compacts

while enabling the G-7 countries to garner the support of other international institutions that would be most useful in supporting aspects of compacts in recipient countries. For instance, engagement with the International Monetary Fund could work well, as the IMF has very high standards for countries that receive its loans, and the IMF's aims of encouraging economic reforms already dovetail with the goals of the proposed international compact program.

The World Bank also would be an important partner. Collectively, the G-7 holds 40 percent of the voting power in the World Bank's International Development Association, which lends to governments of middle-income countries and credit-worthy low-income countries. The G-7 also holds 42 percent of the voting power in the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which provides interest-free grants and loans to the poorest countries.[35] Furthermore, within the International Development Association, 71 percent of financial donor contributions come from the G-7 nations.

Changes to U.S. policy

Especially since the end of the Cold War, it has been difficult for the United States to garner the necessary support to focus long-term resources and attention on foreign policy challenges. Arguing today for dedicating vastly more assistance, time, and energy toward regions in Africa, Central America, or even parts of the Middle East is an uphill battle, even when a strong case for U.S. national security interests is made. For example, the national concern over instability in Central America that led to children fleeing to America in 2014 faded quickly from national attention.

An international approach such as what is recommended above would be ambitious and would require that the United States address a number of obstacles that often prevent it from enacting successful policies in supporting fragile states.

First, the United States would need to embrace a multilateral approach to foreign assistance and foreign policymaking, at least with respect to a handful of states. Coordinating policies multilaterally is difficult and requires agreement not only on priorities at the outset but also on implementation. For this reason, the United States—like most countries—usually approaches foreign assistance decisions bilaterally. In order to create an international compact program, however, the United States would need to ensure that its policies toward those states chosen as compact recipients were coordinated with the other partners involved in the inter-

national compact program. This is no easy task. Once compact agreements were signed, the U.S. State Department would need to establish regular working level channels with the G-7 through the International Compact Secretariat to ensure regular policy level coordination as each compact was implemented.

Second, it would be necessary to reform how the United States approaches security assistance and security partnerships with fragile states. The United States needs to more effectively coordinate security assistance with overall foreign policy goals for specific countries, ensuring that security policies—whether training militaries or providing financial assistance—are integrated fully with political and economic goals. This also requires reforming the way that the U.S. government conducts security sector assistance and coordinating among the varied U.S. Department of Defense and State Department entities involved in security assistance programs.

As supported by the 2010 U.S. National Security Strategy and the 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, security and development are heavily inter-dependent and best approached in a comprehensive manner.[36] Aligning U.S. foreign security policy with development and defense funding would strategically and effec-tively utilize U.S. tools to establish more legitimate and secure states. This has long been a goal of the United States, and there have been many attempts and proposals to restructure the U.S. foreign policy bureaucracy to achieve it.

The international compact approach can help achieve this goal, at least with respect to U.S. policies toward recipient countries. Because each compact agree-ment would predetermine the types and amounts of assistance, it would force the U.S. government to align policies without having to change the bureaucratic structures that determine U.S. foreign policy. Through international cooperation and aligned focuses from nations with the most resources, an international com-pact program would set in motion the cohesion of different governmental depart-ments in pursuit of the overall foreign policy goal of establishing more legitimate and secure states. It would be best for the executive branch to go to Congress and get legislative buy-in for each compact, providing both funding and congressional political support for the long-term efforts. A signed, detailed blueprint for policy and programs enshrined by the executive branch and Congress at the outset of a compact agreement would ensure that all relevant agencies and offices work toward the same ends, rather than subjecting some of them to the leadership of an ad hoc task force or subsuming one agency's programs under the authority of another. The U.S. team at each respective U.S. embassy in the compact recipient country would coordinate efforts on the ground with other implementing part-ners and the International Compact Secretariat.

Third, the United States would need to pass its own legislation to establish the nation's ability to support these international compacts, which would require significant multiyear funding to be effective. The fact that these compacts would place a heavy emphasis on demonstrable results should resonate with members of Congress regardless of their party orientation. While Congress has often been reluctant to provide multiyear funding for assistance, international compacts—similar to MCC compacts—would only release spending for demonstrated results that are approved by the International Compact Secretariat, offering a very reasonable assurance of their relative effectiveness.

If a separate legislative vehicle for compact funding were not available through the normal appropriations, the most obvious way to resource the international compacts would be to link them to existing pools of assistance, as well as to the Overseas Contingency Operations, or OCO, account. OCO developed out of the supplemental funding for the so-called Global War on Terror after the September 11, 2001, attacks and was initially designed to support the extraordinary costs of engagement in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and then later in Iraq. The account has continued to evolve since that time, and it remains an important source of funding for USAID and the U.S. departments of Defense and State. While it would be better for OCO to be brought back into the base budgets with increased spending levels for relevant agencies, as long as OCO persists, directing it toward these compacts makes sense in terms of reducing risks to U.S. national security by investing to prevent contingencies.

Selection and compact creation

In determining which countries would be eligible for a compact under the proposed program, a core set of indicators would be used as threshold criteria:

1. Criteria of good governance
2. National security interests of the United States and other G-7 members
3. Political will of the recipient country to accept and implement a compact

In the first category of good governance, candidate countries would have to meet specific criteria that proved that they have the basic building blocks to enable legitimacy to grow. While not exhaustive, some of the indicators would include the rule of law as measured by the World Justice Project,[37] political rights as measured by Freedom House,[38] and perceptions of corruption as measured by Transparency International.[39] Countries would have to meet a certain level on these indicators to be eligible for a compact, but they would also be some of the key challenges facing fragile states that a compact would work toward improving.

Second, the United States and its international partners would further narrow the list of potential compact recipient countries that met the above criteria based on the strategic interests of both the recipient and donor countries. The United States would have to prioritize those countries that pose the highest threats to U.S. national security, including countries where terrorists and narcotics traffickers already have a significant foothold. One good barometer for this determination will be the location of potential recipient countries relative to other unstable countries and regions. As many studies have shown, the spillover effect of conflict is a strong factor in the spread of conflict to neighboring countries.[40] In order to prevent the spread of conflict in already volatile regions, the international compact program would attempt to target fragile states within these regions that meet the minimum threshold outlined above.

Third, candidate countries would have to demonstrate the political will to participate in the program, expressed through the signing of a compact agreement that requires committing to significant reforms and efforts to build legitimacy and the expenditure of vast domestic resources in pursuit of compact goals.

Without a willingness to take difficult domestic steps to improve legitimacy, the compacts would be ineffective.

Of course, as with all foreign policy initiatives, this effort could raise questions about whether the G-7 would just try to reward their friends with compacts, or allow other strategic interests to override a clear lack of willingness on the part of a potential recipient country to take the difficult steps necessary to build legitimacy. At the end of the day, the indicators noted above would provide guides to the International Compact Secretariat and the G-7 on how to assess the risks of investment in each potential compact recipient country. But the G-7 countries would have to agree among themselves on each country selected as a compact recipient. The process—assessing indicators signaling that security interests are at stake, that good governance and political will exist, and that there is agreement from all G-7 countries—would provide a strong foundation for sound decision-making.

Countries would first have to express interest in entering into a compact. The International Compact Secretariat would analyze each candidate country against the criteria for compacts; for those that met the basic criteria, the secretariat would enter into negotiations to design a compact. Each negotiated compact would then have to be approved by the secretariat and the G-7 leaders. Once a country was selected as a compact recipient, the International Compact Secretariat would conduct a joint analysis between the G-7 and the recipient country to determine the areas in need of reform and assistance, and the compact would be tailored accordingly. Special emphasis would be placed on an inclusive process for identifying recipient country priorities, and the process itself would be a mechanism for encouraging greater social cohesion and reconciliation.

One aspect that would receive particular attention in the compact design process would be domestic resource mobilization. Compacts would need to focus on supporting the transparency, accountability, and governance of resources for development, including domestic resources. For countries trying to emerge from conflict, ensuring transparent and accountable management of public resources is essential to guaranteeing that these assets and revenues are channeled toward inclusive economic growth and development. Furthermore, this is a necessary aspect of garnering political support from donor countries. If a recipient country is not willing to mobilize its resources, it will be difficult to convince donors to mobilize their own.

Compact implementation

Given the inherent difficulties for fragile states in avoiding—and emerging from—conflict and fragility, the United States and its partners should use all of their policy tools to support partner countries making this difficult transition. And though governments and international institutions would be the primary supporters of this effort, there are important roles that nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs, and the private sector could play.

While compacts would be tailored to fit the needs of each country, each compact would include policy tools and assistance strategies aimed at the below six areas. Each compact agreement would outline specifically the projects to be covered by compact funding, as is the case with MCC compacts. Also similar to the MCC model, outcomes would be designed by the International Compact Secretariat and partner governments to measure the progress made in each area. Included below are illustrative examples of the types of programs in each area that might be employed.

Rule of law

In order to promote the rule of law in compact recipient states, compacts would provide technical and financial assistance to support such programs as training judiciaries to deliver justice in a more timely manner and professionalizing customs agents to combat border corruption, while ensuring the inclusion of local actors that work on these issues in order to build local capacity. The American Bar Association's Rule of Law Initiative is one tool that illustrates the type of assistance that can be helpful. For instance, in Morocco, it helped to establish a human rights clinical legal education program at the University of Hassan II in 2007.[41] This clinical program, now supported by the university on its own, was the first such program in the region and continues to offer training for students and recent law graduates on human rights, labor law, and legal skills.[42] Additionally, the Rule of Law Initiative provided technical support to Morocco's Anti-Corruption Commission, which eventually helped lead to the passage of freedom of information legislation.[43] Following countrywide rule of law assessments to determine gaps and needs, compact administrators would design similar programs to those highlighted here in order to improve rule of law in compact recipient states.

Political accountability

To promote government accountability, compacts would provide technical and financial assistance to support such drivers of accountability as local and national elections, as well as initiatives to improve freedom of speech and the press. Recipient countries would have to agree through the compact negotiation to ensure freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and voting rights. At the same time, the compact could provide specific assistance—largely through NGOs and government affiliated institutions such as the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy—to support local NGOs and institutions such as independent elections commissions. There are a wide variety of tools that could be leveraged, including the World Bank's experience providing technical assistance to parliaments.[44] Technology could also play an important role, as evidenced by Ushahidi, a Kenyan-born tech company created to monitor and report postelection violence, which focuses on building open-source software for advocacy, development, and humanitarian response.[45] In partnership with compact recipient states and following a countrywide accountability assessment to determine gaps and needs, compact administrators would design similar programs both within and outside of government institutions in order to more holistically improve government accountability.

Economic growth

The compacts would also focus on unlocking economic growth potential. Some activities could be similar to those currently employed by the MCC, such as investing in agriculture and infrastructure projects that are identified as having particularly important potential for yielding economic benefits. In addition, the compact would employ other policy tools to help spur economic growth, such as through consideration of preferential trade deals and market access such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which enhances market access to the United States for partner sub-Saharan African states.

Service delivery

As discussed above, one of the hallmarks of good governance is the ability to deliver public services and goods, including water, sanitation, energy, transportation, health care, and education. More than any technical capacity building or financial assistance, countries receiving compacts would have to agree to make

tough political decisions to put in place laws and guidelines that ensure transparency, anti-corruption measures, and the proper use of resources with regards to the deliverance of public services, thus contributing to strong and accountable government bureaucracies. The compact could provide specific financial and technical support to help with that process and to train necessary staff, but the big lifts would have to be undertaken by the recipient country.

Past successful programming in this area has been conducted by many organizations, including the World Bank. For example, the World Bank has supported citizen monitoring of service delivery in the health and education sectors in Rwanda, which led to the creation of Citizen Report Cards and Community Score Cards. These tools quantitatively and qualitatively monitored citizens' ability to voice their grievances to authorities regarding access to and quality of services such as government primary education and health care, as well as the government's accountability to citizens to provide these services and respond to grievances across the country.[46]

Education

Education can be a critical factor in the international compact program's implementation. For example, a wide variety of U.S. Fulbright programs, funded by the U.S. Department of State, provide educational opportunities for both U.S. and international students and professionals. They can also help promote education reform in developing states and build an avenue for strong people-to-people ties between those in the United States and in fragile states.[47] In Indonesia, the United States has provided many different types of educational support, from supporting more than 4,000 scholarships for Indonesians to study in the United States and Indonesia since the 1950s to supporting Teacher Training Institutes that help improve the quality of teaching in thousands of schools across the country.[48] These scholarships and training opportunities are force multipliers, enabling beneficiaries to go on to strengthen their countries in a variety of ways, be it in business, government, or the education sector. Another source of international support for Indonesia's education sector has come from the World Bank, which has dedicated hundreds of millions of dollars to education projects and works with Indonesian ministries to support their own efforts to improve the education system. The international compact program would ensure that recipient states receive appropriate resources to promote these educational opportunities.

Security

From Iraq to Afghanistan and beyond, there are plenty of examples of the United States and others attempting to build capable security forces in other countries and coming up short. Building security forces is perhaps the most difficult task, but the United States has had successes, such as helping the Philippines fight an insurgency in its southern territory. While recognizing the limitations here, the international compact program would provide training for security services and, in specific circumstances, would consider special arrangements for peacekeepers in areas where violence or instability remains. But compacts would not operate in countries where there is ongoing, large-scale violence or conflict. Recipient countries would have to ensure that militaries and security services were under civilian control and that they were abiding by international standards of professional conduct that respects human rights. Two U.S. examples of initiatives aimed at boosting security in fragile states that could inform the international compact program's approach are Plan Colombia and the Security Governance Initiative.

As discussed in a previous CAP report, U.S. funding under Plan Colombia enabled Colombia to greatly increase its security capacity.[49] More specifically, from 2000 to 2008, the United States gave $844 million to Colombia's Army Aviation Brigade, allowing it to "nearly triple its aircraft fleet to more than 100 helicopters," and $104 million to the Colombian military, leading to an increase in the number of ground forces.[50] Furthermore, U.S. funding was provided for advising and training the Colombian military, expanding the number of professional soldiers in Colombia from 20,000 in 1998 to 83,000 in 2014.[51] And Plan Colombia included significant, congressionally mandated human rights requirements that went a long way toward helping to professionalize Colombia's armed forces.

More recently, at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit in 2014, President Barack Obama announced a new security assistance initiative known as the Security Governance Initiative, or SGI.[52] The U.S. government committed $65 million to the initiative in its first year, with additional funding to come in subsequent years "commensurate with maturing program needs and expansion into additional countries," to assist six targeted African countries in strengthening their security sectors.[53] The initial participant countries are Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Tunisia.[54] In a recent review of the SGI, the U.S. State Department has pointed to initial areas of success in each of the countries. To date, the SGI has taken a "comprehensive, whole-of-government approach" to its implementation and conducted joint analyses that have gone into the creation of Joint Country Action Plans that guide program

design and monitoring in each of the countries.[55] Additionally, the SGI has engaged with key stakeholders, including local and international civil society organizations, international donors, and partner country representatives.[56] One specific example of SGI programming in Kenya has involved assisting the Kenyan government in drafting an integrated border management strategy; creating legislation "to prevent illicit trafficking of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), dual use technology, and conventional weapons"; and conducting an assessment of "current human resource management systems infrastructure for both the National Policy Service Commission and the National Police Service."[57]

Prime countries for compact exploration

There are a variety of different countries around the world that would be potential candidates for the proposed International Compacts for Governance, Prosperity, and Security. This approach, of course, will not be the solution to all of America's foreign policy problems, nor will it be a magic bullet for supporting legitimate governance everywhere. Some countries that are vitally important to U.S. national security, such as Iraq, might not be prime candidates until after current conflicts have subsided. Other countries might not be willing to receive a compact because autocratic governments do not want to make the reforms necessary. In some cases, it may be prudent for the United States and the G-7 to offer a compact—even if acceptance is unlikely—to potentially influence a country and show that there is a strong willingness to provide support if the terms are right.

That said, there are a number of countries that seem well-positioned to be compact recipients. The following list is illustrative rather than exhaustive.

Tunisia

Five years after the Arab Spring, Tunisia remains the one country in the Middle East where a popular uprising overthrew a dictator and where it is still relatively stable and citizens are attempting to build a democratic country. While perhaps not as strategically critical or as large as other states in the Middle East, Tunisia is important not only as a symbol of the possibility for genuine democratic reform in the region but also to prevent the instability gripping Tunisia's neighbors from spreading further. Tunisia also has been a massive source of fighters for IS, with more fighters from Tunisia joining the terrorist group than from any other country in the region.[58] Moreover, Tunisia's relatively small size, in conjunction with a government attempting to implement democratic reforms, makes Tunisia a strong candidate for receiving an international compact. Former U.S. Deputy Secretary of State William Burns and former Jordanian Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher have called for just such a compact approach by the international community to support Tunisia's transition to democracy.[59]

Jordan

As outlined earlier in this report, Jordan is under tremendous stress right now, and if Jordan were to collapse or weaken significantly, it could pose direct threats to U.S. interests, including a widening of terrorist strongholds, a further destabilized Iraq, and threats to Israel. While Jordan already receives a significant amount of both economic and security assistance from the United States, an international compact—including a variety of assistance to help build stronger political accountability, service delivery, economic growth, and security—could boost Jordan's ability to tackle some of its most pressing challenges. But Jordan would need the political will to take steps—including political and economic reforms—that would be very difficult and that the monarchy might not be willing to take.

Egypt

Egypt has long posed a difficult dilemma for U.S. policymakers who believe that the United States needs to balance U.S. interests in a stable Egypt with interests in more political and economic openness, which many believe are essential for Egypt to be stable over the long run. The overthrow of President Hosni Mubarak in 2011 has brought these dilemmas to the fore of U.S. policy in recent years. After the ouster of President Mohammed Morsi in 2013, the United States implemented a temporary delay in delivering certain types of military assistance to Egypt.[60] The United States ended its delay a little more than a year later when it recognized that the security interests in countering terrorism were being undermined and it had witnessed fairly broad popular support for the move initiated by Morsi's successor, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.[61] Sisi held new elections for president and the parliament and organized a new constitutional referendum in an environment criticized by many international observers as suffering from severe constraints on basic freedoms of speech and assembly. These steps were implemented at a time when Egypt also saw a government campaign to arrest several prominent critics.

During this period, the United States largely remained on the sidelines and did not offer meaningful incentives or disincentives to shape Egypt's actions. An alternative to this approach is for the United States, certain members of the G-7, and key regional partners to offer an international compact linked with an IMF reform package to help boost Egypt's economic prospects. This compact could include security assistance more focused on targeting terrorist groups, including those with radical ideologies, and it could provide positive incentives for Egypt to open up space for more political debate and for basic freedoms, an essential ingredient in the fight against terrorist ideologies.

Myanmar

After decades of dictatorship and military rule, Myanmar has embarked on a genuine transition to democracy over the past few years. But significant challenges remain, including spurring economic growth, ending decades-long conflicts with ethnic militias, and continuing political reforms. These challenges have posed threats beyond Myanmar's borders in the past in the form of drug trafficking from areas controlled by ethnic militias,[62] as well as the more recent instances of refugees fleeing discrimination and violence in Rakhine state.[63] The new government of Myanmar that took office in 2016 appears committed to continuing along this democratic path, and there is intense interest from the international community in supporting Myanmar's efforts to do so—a potentially ideal combination for an international compact.

Northern Triangle of Central America

While many fragile states exist in neighborhoods that fuel and exacerbate fragility, the Northern Triangle area of Central America—comprising Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador—is a particularly difficult challenge because narcotics traffickers and gangs operate across borders with impunity. For this reason, an international compact would have to encompass all three countries—either individually or combined into one compact—and encourage them to work together on tackling their own internal and transboundary challenges. In their report on addressing the Central American refugee situation, Dan Restrepo and Silva Mathema outline some ideas for a longer-term U.S. approach to helping the Northern Triangle nations build stronger, more accountable, and resilient countries that can stem the flow of refugees and foster more legitimate and stable states.[64] Building on existing U.S. programs, such as the Central America Regional Security Initiative that aims to bolster regional security, an international compact for these countries together would take these bilateral efforts to the next level.

Nigeria

Nigeria is the world's seventh-largest country by population and the most populous country in Africa, but it is wracked by corruption, the internal insurgency of Boko Haram, and intense poverty, among other issues.[65] However, the peaceful transfer of power from former President Goodluck Jonathan to current President

Muhammadu Buhari following the largely free and fair general elections in 2015 marked the first time in the nation's history that an opposition candidate won a presidential election. It demonstrated a critical moment for democratic consolidation in the country. Furthermore, President Buhari, who ran on an anti-corruption platform, has made efforts to root out corruption in the country, such as the trial of Nigeria's former National Security Adviser Sambo Dasuki, who is accused of diverting more than $2 billion earmarked for fighting Boko Haram under Jonathan's administration.[66] President Buhari also has had some success in pushing back Boko Haram from areas they once controlled.

Despite these and other moderate successes, much still remains to be done to combat corruption and other challenges.[67] Given Nigeria's continued commitment to democracy, rooting out corruption, combatting Boko Haram, and improving the country's economy—as well as its critical role in stabilizing the region—the nation represents a promising candidate for an international compact, should Nigeria be open to it. A compact could bolster the government's anti-corruption efforts and provide critical security sector assistance to help professionalize the Nigerian military and combat Boko Haram.

Kenya

Kenya has faced myriad challenges in recent years, such as terrorist attacks, electoral violence, and International Criminal Court indictments for its leaders. And similar to other countries mentioned here, Kenya also has struggled with widespread corruption and democratic backsliding, which has the potential to create the conditions for another wave of electoral violence around the scheduled 2017 general elections. The combination of these various challenges, if left unresolved, could create long-lasting destabilizing effects in the country, which would have serious implications for both regional and international security. As such, Kenya—should it prove a willing partner despite its anti-Western rhetoric of late—would represent another promising candidate for an international compact. The compact could provide assistance to the Kenyan government to ensure that the 2017 general elections pass as peacefully as the 2013 elections. This assistance could include supporting Kenya to continue to strengthen the institutions created and reformed in the aftermath of the 2007 election violence, such as the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission.[68] Furthermore, the compact could bolster the government's attempts to reform the notoriously corrupt national police force through newly instituted vetting processes for officers.

Ukraine

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014, the international community has banded together to support Ukraine's sovereignty and attempted to bolster its stability with a variety of assistance, including loans from the International Monetary Fund.[69] With the nation still fighting a battle against Russian-backed militants in eastern Ukraine and struggling to get its economy and government on a stable footing, it would be a prime candidate for an international compact. Ukraine's ongoing challenges with corruption, building efficient institutions, and security mean that it could benefit from a boost in international support. But it would need to make some difficult reforms to build trust and legitimacy in its government, as Victoria Nuland, U.S. assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs, made clear earlier this year on a trip to Ukraine when she criticized the government's handling of corruption.[70] Helping Ukraine would send the right message to NATO and other countries on Russia's eastern flank about the commitment of the United States to supporting their sovereignty.

Conclusion

The continued growth of powerful transnational challenges poses grave and persistent threats to the security and well-being of the United States. America's approach needs to be updated to include new foreign policy tools and new approaches.

The heart of the new foundation for U.S. foreign policy should be an investment in the efforts of nations at risk of collapsing and unleashing global threats to build legitimacy and to escape the trap of repression followed by upheaval. International Compacts for Governance, Prosperity, and Security could transform how the international community works in partnership with fragile states to improve their legitimacy and security over time.

The United States will need the political will and leadership to support steady, long-term, and carefully designed investments in fragile states. This will also require rebalancing U.S. foreign policy resources toward development, diplomacy, economic statecraft, and justice sector reform, while maintaining the world's most powerful military. All of these tools are required to move from a focus on countering terrorism to a focus on defeating extremism and enabling other nations to build the legitimacy they need themselves. This is the strategy that will most effectively and sustainably ensure America's national security—and, indeed, global security as well.

Endnotes

1 Dan Restrepo and others, "The United States and Colombia: From Security Partners to Global Partners in Peace" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2016), available at https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/report/2016/02/02/130251/the-united-states-and-colombia-from-security-partners-to-global-partners-in-peace.

2 Lawrence J. Korb, Robert O. Boorstin, and the National Security Staff of CAP, "Integrated Power: A National Security Strategy for the 21st Century" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2005), available at https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2005/06/07/1528/integrated-power.

3 The Islamic State, or IS, is also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or ISIL; the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, or ISIS; and Daesh, its Arabic language acronym.

4 In a recent CAP report, John Norris makes the case as to why the United States should focus on supporting the stability and growth of fragile states and provides some ideas as to how the United States can support these countries through bilateral means. This report takes a look at the aspect of supporting legitimacy in fragile states as a way for the United States to work with the international community to address threats to national security, focusing in particular on those fragile states where illicit forces such as terrorists and narcotics traffickers have taken root. These two papers are complementary policy analyses and options for the United States. John Norris, "A Better Approach to Fragile States: The Long View" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2016), available at https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/report/2016/06/22/139897/a-better-approach-to-fragile-states.

5 U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian, "Somalia, 1992–1993," available at https://history.state.gov/milestones/1993-2000/somalia (last accessed July 2016).

6 NPR Staff, "What a Downed Black Hawk in Somalia Taught America," National Public Radio, October 5, 2013, available at http://www.npr.org/2013/10/05/229561805/what-a-downed-black-hawk-in-somalia-taught-america.

7 Brian Katulis, Hardin Lang, and Mokhtar Awad, "Jordan in the Eye of the Storm: Continued U.S. Support Necessary With Ongoing Regional Turmoil" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2014), available at https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/report/2014/06/12/91448/jordan-in-the-eye-of-the-storm.

8 U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, "Jordan: UNHCR Operational Update" (2016), available at http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/UNHCR%20Jordan%20Operational%20Update%20-%20May%202016_0.pdf.

9 While there is a large amount written on this topic, a relatively recent and convincing case as to why democracies are best for encouraging economic growth and peace can be found in Morton Halperin, Joseph Siegle, and Michael Weinstein, *The Democracy Advantage: How Democracies Promote Prosperity and Peace*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2010).

10 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, "The State's Legitimacy in Fragile Situations: Unpacking Complexity" (2010), available at https://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-peace/conflictfragilityandresilience/docs/the%20States%20legitmacy%20in%20FS.pdf.

11 World Justice Project, "What Is the Rule of Law?" available at http://worldjusticeproject.org/what-rule-law (last accessed July 2016).

12 World Bank, "Accountability in Governance," available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/Resources/AccountabilityGovernance.pdf (last accessed July 2016)..

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Richard Kohl, Matthew Lutkenhouse, and Bruce Bolnick, "Fragile States Indicator: A Supplement to the Country Analytical Template" (Washington: U.S. Agency for International Development, 2006), available at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnadg262.pdf.

17 Rolf Maier, "Growth and Equity in Fragile States" (The Hague, Netherlands: Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, 2010), available at http://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/2010400_cru_publicatie_maier.pdf.

18 Mark Baird, "Service Delivery in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States" (Washington: World Bank, 2010), available at http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01306/web/pdf/wdr_service_delivery_baird.pdf.

19 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, "Do No Harm: International Support for Statebuilding" (2010), available at http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-peace/conflictfragilityandresilience/docs/do%20no%20harm.pdf.

20 Patti McGill Peterson, "Global Higher Education as a Reflection of International Relations," European Association for International Education, September 5, 2013, available at http://www.eaie.org/blog/global-higher-education-as-a-reflection-of-international-relations; Dana Mitra, "Pennsylvania's Best Investment: The Social and Economic Benefits of Public Education" (Philadelphia: Education Law Center, 2011), available at http://www.elc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/BestInvestment_Full_Report_6.27.11.pdf.

21 Melissa S. Kearney and Phillip Levine, "Inequality Undermines the Value of Education for the Poor," Brookings, March 16, 2016, available at http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/social-mobility-memos/posts/2016/03/16-inequality-undermines-education-value-for-the-poor-kearney-levine.

22 Mirka Martel and Rajika Bhandari, "Social Justice and Sustainable Change: The Impacts of Higher Education" (New York: Institute of International Education, 2016), available at http://www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Publications-and-Reports/IIE-Bookstore/IFP-Report-1#.V45GPesrLcs.

23 Eileen F. Babbitt, Ian Johnstone, and Dyan Mazurana, "Building Legitimacy in Conflict-Affected and Fragile States" (Medford, MA: Institute for Human Security, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, 2016), available at http://fletcher.tufts.edu/~/media/Fletcher/Microsites/Human%20Security/Building%20Legitimacy%20in%20Conflict%20and%20Fragile%20States.pdf.

24 Norris, "A Better Approach to Fragile States."

25 See, for example, Vikram Singh and others, "After the Paris Attacks: Defeating ISIS and Preserving American Values" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2015), available at https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/report/2015/11/19/126018/after-the-paris-attacks.

26 Norris, "A Better Approach to Fragile States."

27 European Commission, "European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations: Steps Towards Joining," available at http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/steps-towards-joining/index_en.htm (last accessed August 2016).

28 Restrepo and others, "The United States and Colombia."

29 Ibid.

30 Millennium Challenge Corporation, "About MCC," available at https://www.mcc.gov/about (last accessed August 2016).

31 g7+, "New Deal Implementation," available at http://www.g7plus.org/en/our-work/new-deal-implementation (last accessed July 2016).

32 Ibid.

33 U.S. Department of State, "Deauville Partnership with Arab Countries in Transition," available at http://www.state.gov/e/eb/ecosum/2012g8/deauville/ (last accessed August 2016).

34 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, "Official Development Assistance 2015," available at http://www2.compareyourcountry.org/oda?lg=en (last accessed June 2016).

35 World Bank, "G7 – OECD/DAC Data" (2010), available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/CFPEXT/Resources/299947-1257810404718/G7.pdf.

36 The White House, *National Security Strategy* (2010), available at https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf; U.S. State Department, *Leading Through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (2010), available at http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/153108.pdf.

37 World Justice Project, "WJP Rule of Law Index 2015" (2015), available at http://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index.

38 Freedom House, "About *Freedom in the World*: An Annual Study of Political Rights and Civil Liberties," available at https://freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-world (last accessed July 2016).

39 Transparency International, "Corruption Perceptions Index," available at http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview (last accessed July 2016).

40 See, for example, Halvard Buhaug and Kristian Krede Gleditsch, "Contagion or Confusion? Why Conflicts Cluster in Space," *International Studies Quarterly* 52 (2008): 215–233.

41 American Bar Association, "Rule of Law Programs in Morocco," available at http://www.americanbar.org/advocacy/rule_of_law/where_we_work/middle_east/morocco/programs.html (last accessed June 2016).

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Stefano Migliorisi and Clay Wescott, "A Review of World Bank Support for Accountability Institutions in the Context of Governance and Anticorruption." Working Paper 2011/5 (Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank, 2011), available at http://ieg.worldbank.org/Data/reports/ieg-gac-accountabilityfinal.pdf.

45 Ushahidi, "About Ushahidi," available at https://www.ushahidi.com/about (last accessed July 2016).

46 Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa Rwanda Chapter, "Rwanda Citizen Report and Community Score Cards" (2006), available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/Resources/244362-1193949504055/4348035-1298566783395/7755386-1298566794345/7755368-1298581402948/63_Rwanda.pdf

47 Fulbright U.S. Student Program, "About," available at http://us.fulbrightonline.org/about (last accessed July 2016).

48 U.S. Agency for International Development, "Education," available at https://www.usaid.gov/indonesia/education (last accessed July 2016).

49 Restrepo and others, "The United States and Colombia."

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 The White House, "Fact Sheet: Security Governance Initiative," Press release, August 6, 2014, available at https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/08/06/fact-sheet-security-governance-initiative.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

55 U.S. Department of State Bureau of African Affairs, "Security Governance Initiative: 2015 Review" (2016), available at http://www.state.gov/p/af/rls/2016/253906.htm.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Yaroslav Trofimov, "How Tunisia Became a Top Source of ISIS Recruits," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 25, 2016, available at http://www.wsj.com/articles/how-tunisia-became-a-top-source-of-isis-recruits-1456396203.

59 William J. Burns and Marwan Muasher, "We Can—and Must—Save Tunisia From Its Troubling Recent Descent," *The Washington Post,* April 13, 2016, available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/we-can--and-must--save-tunisia-from-its-troubling-recent-descent/2016/04/13/959de1e8-00ce-11e6-9203-7b8670959b88_story.html.

60 Josh Rogin, "Senator: Obama Administration Secretly Suspended Military Aid to Egypt," The Daily Beast, August 19, 2013, available at http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/08/19/senator-obama-administration-secretly-suspended-military-aid-to-egypt.html.

61 Roberta Ramton and Arshad Mohammed, "Obama Ends Freeze on U.S. Military Aid to Egypt," Reuters, March 31, 2015, available at http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-egypt-military-idUSKBN0MR2GR20150401.

62 Shibani Mahtani and Myo Myo, "Myanmar's New Opium War: Vigilantes, Villagers Clash Over Drug Trade," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 25, 2016, available at http://www.wsj.com/articles/myanmars-new-opium-war-vigilantes-villagers-clash-over-drug-trade-1458935295.

63 Eleanor Albert, "The Rohingya Migrant Crisis," Council on Foreign Relations, June 17, 2015, available at http://www.cfr.org/burmamyanmar/rohingya-migrant-crisis/p36651.

64 Dan Restrepo and Silva Mathema, "A Medium and Long-Term Plan to Address the Central American Refugee Situation" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2016), available at https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/report/2016/05/05/136920/a-medium-and-long-term-plan-to-address-the-central-american-refugee-situation.

65 U.N. News Centre, "UN Projects World Population to Reach 8.5 Billion by 2030, Driven by Growth in Developing Countries," July 29, 2015, available at http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51526#.V8bWY_krK70.

66 BBC, "Nigeria's Sambo Dasuki Charged Over '$68M Fraud,'" December 14, 2015, available at http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35093785.

67 Ibid.

68 Shumbana Karume, "Kenya: The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission," Ace Project, available at http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/em/electoral-management-case-studies/kenya-compromised-independence-of-the-emb (last accessed August 2016).

69 International Monetary Fund, "Ukraine and the IMF," available at https://www.imf.org/external/country/ukr/index.htm?type=55 (last accessed August 2016).

70 Isabela Cocoli, "US Urges Ukraine to Jail Corrupt Officials," Voice of America, April 27, 2016, available at http://www.voanews.com/a/ukraine-nuland/3305145.html.

Our Mission

The Center for American Progress is an independent, nonpartisan policy institute that is dedicated to improving the lives of all Americans, through bold, progressive ideas, as well as strong leadership and concerted action. Our aim is not just to change the conversation, but to change the country.

Our Values

As progressives, we believe America should be a land of boundless opportunity, where people can climb the ladder of economic mobility. We believe we owe it to future generations to protect the planet and promote peace and shared global prosperity.

And we believe an effective government can earn the trust of the American people, champion the common good over narrow self-interest, and harness the strength of our diversity.

Our Approach

We develop new policy ideas, challenge the media to cover the issues that truly matter, and shape the national debate. With policy teams in major issue areas, American Progress can think creatively at the cross-section of traditional boundaries to develop ideas for policymakers that lead to real change. By employing an extensive communications and outreach effort that we adapt to a rapidly changing media landscape, we move our ideas aggressively in the national policy debate.

Center for American Progress