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The Limits of Influence: U.S. Security Cooperation in the Age of Strategic Competition

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
International Security Advisory Board

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United States Department of State
Washington DC 20520

November 12, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARY BONNIE D. JENKINS

SUBJECT: International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) Final Report: The Limits of Influence – U.S. Security Cooperation in the Age of Strategic Competition

This report responds to your request of March 12, 2024, that the Board undertake a study to advise the United States Government on the effectiveness of security cooperation and arms transfers as tools of influence in the context of strategic competition. The report was drafted by members of a study group chaired by Heather Hurlburt. It was reviewed by all ISAB members and unanimously approved by all ISAB members present at the ISAB plenary meeting on October 30, 2024.

The study group noted several recurring themes in their discussions: first, influence is diffuse and develops over time; second, the U.S. Government confronts hard choices and conflicting priorities as it tries to determine how to be effective under conditions of strategic competition; and third, all of those who spoke to the group stressed the need for an approach to strategic competition grounded in values and the rule of law, even when that is difficult.

This report includes findings and recommendations for the Department and interagency that reflect Board members' share belief that strategic competition that is not merely reactive or shaped by our adversaries' choices. These findings and recommendations center on improving clarity and transparency of definitions, policy goals, and effectiveness measures; encouraging

the U.S. Government to be realistic in its expectations of outcomes; and learning from ongoing security cooperation efforts to incorporate beneficial practices.

My board colleagues and I stand ready to brief you and other members of the Administration on this report.

Hon. Edwin Dorn
Chair
International Security Advisory Board

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I. Executive Summary with Findings and Recommendations

Security cooperation, security assistance, arms transfers, and arms sales are a longstanding part of U.S. efforts to strengthen partners, reinforce and extend the reach of the U.S. military, and get other nations to align and stay aligned with our policy priorities and values.

The strength of the NATO alliance over time, and more recently Ukraine's achievement in holding off Moscow after the 2022 full-scale invasion, are two among many military successes of the U.S. approach to security cooperation and arms transfers. The sheer volume of U.S. arms transfers, and the large and growing distance between the United States and its competitors in the arms trade, are evidence of success in meeting military security, military influence and interoperability objectives, as well as supporting the U.S. defense industrial base and stretching taxpayer defense dollars further through economies of scale. Whether measured by number of partner countries, augmentation to U.S. military capacities, or contribution to the U.S. defense-industrial base, the *military and economic* effects of U.S. security cooperation and arms transfers are significant.

Increases in military spending among key allies and partners, and the turn to industrial policy – including in key defense sectors – are also transforming the landscape. Simultaneously, the role of U.S. assistance in conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza has raised significant debates about the function and oversight of U.S. security cooperation programs.

Against this backdrop, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Bonnie D. Jenkins (T) requested that the International Security Advisory Board undertake "a brief study on the effectiveness of security cooperation and arms transfers as tools of influence in the context of strategic competition."

As opposed to the military outcomes cited above, influence is a murkier lens through which to view security cooperation and arms transfers – as well as how strategic competition is reshaping the field. We found that the government often lacks clear definitions of what

political influence is, when security cooperation aims to increase it, and whether those aims are met. We also concluded that ambiguity is not likely to change.

The study group repeatedly observed its government interviewees struggle to come up with unambiguous case studies where U.S. security cooperation and arms transfers could be directly tied to influencing political outcomes. Individuals with decades of experience in the assistance sector stressed the need for humility and modest expectations in that area, noting that U.S. efforts would always struggle to overcome leaders' perception of their own core interests or grand sweeps of history. "I don't know that in any situation we get the kind of influence that provokes an absolute break," said one.

The study group recommends a way of thinking about strategic competition that is not merely reactive or shaped by our adversaries' choices. An approach that is, in a word, strategic. This should incorporate clear thinking and hard choices both about where we choose to compete, and how we deploy our values when we compete. Across agencies, inside and outside government, the study group heard several themes repeated: first, that influence is diffuse and develops over time. Security cooperation programs are not a substitute for alignment between governments on policy and principles. Second, that the U.S. government must make hard choices and prioritize to be effective under conditions of strategic competition. Third, we heard experts in and outside government struggling with the challenge that strategic competition seems to pose to an approach that prioritizes values and the rule of law – but wishing to see policy decisions that stand by core values even when that is difficult.

Below we offer a set of recommendations for how the T family of bureaus,[1] and the incoming Administration, should engage with the question of influence and the contemporary critiques of its programs. We explicitly do not assess any particular current security cooperation relationship, but we believe that our recommendations offer a path for considering how the enterprise as a whole is affected by the outcome of particular policy choices.

I. The policy community lacks clarity on the influence-related aims of security cooperation and arms transfers. It also lacks shared, transparent criteria and

[1] The three T bureaus are: the Bureau of Arms Control, Deterrence, and Stability (ADS); the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation (ISN); and the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM).

measures of policy effectiveness. Where these measures do exist, they are rarely incorporated in high-level decision-making, or applied to sensitive cases.

T and the Political-Military Bureau (PM) should:

- Make public the definitions and effectiveness measures PM has developed, including the factors underlying its models, with the aim of building support for clear goals and approaches to security cooperation policy.
- Use T's role in the Department of State (State) and interagency processes, to the highest levels, to surface data-driven conclusions about the effectiveness of various types of security cooperation, short- versus long-term considerations, and impacts of decisions that go beyond a particular country, conflict or region. Recommendations and more detailed analysis follow below.
- Where T and PM receive contradictory input on goals, or conflicting assessments of likely outcomes and risks, from bureaus and agencies, T and PM staff should bring them openly to decision-makers for consideration, including through a split-memo process.

Decision-makers on security cooperation and arms transfers, throughout the interagency and in Congress, should:

- Given the paucity of social science evidence in its favor, diminish expectations that security cooperation and arms transfers – particularly small-scale or short-term programs – will produce influence outside the defense sphere.
- Revise the interagency approval and oversight processes to mandate rigorous specification of a project's goals, provide a framework and timeline for measuring progress against them, and engage risks and competing interests earlier in the process.
- Adopt an approach to security cooperation and arms transfers that:
    - more selectively targets security assistance to a smaller number of countries (thus answering implementer concern that resources are too thinly-spread to be effective);

- o builds institutional capacity-building (including but not limited to security sector governance) into all security cooperation relationships;[2]
- o begins new or resuming-from-scratch partnerships with non-lethal aid and training only, building to lethal and complex systems as partnerships prove durable and stipulating conditions of use with regard to technology and intellectual property, governance and rule of law, human rights and civilian harm in offer letters and contracts, and other end-use requirements. Include "tripwires" in agreements that would trigger review and reassessment of cooperation in case of violation–as assessed by existing resources in relevant State bureaus, offices and embassies–once again allowing for the split memo process.

II. The strategic competition framework is very different from security cooperation rationales that were previously in place (Cold War, Global War on Terror). But neither the interagency nor the larger body politic has had a democratic debate about what strategic competition should mean for our security cooperation and for our armaments export industries. As a result, views across the interagency and within agencies lack coherence on how strategic competition should shape security cooperation and arms transfers.

<u>The incoming National Security Council should</u>:

- Issue early policy guidance on U.S. strategic competition goals in the security cooperation sphere. In particular, articulate that the affirmative U.S. policy goal is to build lasting security partnerships where those serve our key national interests and promote our values – and that this should take priority over one-off efforts to deny Moscow or Beijing a partnership.

[2] While DoD programs are required to include institutional capacity-building, they are not necessarily integrated as critical program design elements.

T and PM should:

- Undertake or commission more and deeper analysis of how key competitors are approaching security cooperation, including a sober view of their strengths, weaknesses, aims and effectiveness. T should undertake or commission this work where it is able, and partner with others at State and across the interagency, including the Intelligence Community and the Office of Net Assessment at the DoD, to produce analysis that can be widely shared in classified and unclassified forms.

State and the DoD should jointly:

- Improve training and professional evaluation for implementers to emphasize the importance of openness and humility toward partners, in a world where other states have many options for security articles.

III. Foreign partners, stakeholders, government employees and the public desire greater clarity on the challenge of real or perceived tradeoffs between upholding U.S. norms and values around the rule of law and human rights and seeking short-term security gains in a world of strategic competition against undemocratic regimes.

Given that one aim of strategic competition is to preserve a society built on the rule of law and democratic values, the next administration should emphasize with actions as well as words that it will uphold the law – and norms and values –even when this produces short-term opportunities for less-scrupulous actors.

The incoming Administration and Congressional leaders should address this question openly – and on the basis of transparent, publicly-available information. This necessitates doing the assessments proposed above and making a summary of them public, even if a more detailed version is kept internal. It also requires assessing long-term as well as short-term impacts, and incorporating broader outcomes into risk assessments.

IV. The bureaucratic process of security cooperation and arms transfers has seen some unprecedented success in moving arms and training quickly to Ukraine; however, partners and outside observers still perceive it to be untransparent, problematically slow, and inequitable in whether and how conditionality is applied. The study group identified limited opportunities to improve timing, and significant room for development in transparency, monitoring, evaluation and learning – valuable in their own right but also essential to making good strategic choices in future.

T and PM should:

- Lead a government-wide review of how security and weapons programming for Ukraine was expedited from 2022 onward, aimed at identifying successful process innovations that could be replicated and scaled up, as well as weak points where further improvement is needed, considering both process timing and effectiveness of assistance provided. Alongside or separately from similar reviews by other U.S. government agencies, a State focus that incorporates broader diplomatic aims and shortcomings would be of value.

The interagency should:

- Improve speed by identifying a set of conditions under which partners can qualify for automated third-party transfers, to increase efficiency and reduce administrative burden where all partners are aligned with United States interests.
- Improve oversight, transparency and accountability by:
    - Including a more robust assessment of human rights and civilian protection concerns in risk assessments, including the number of Leahy Law violations;[3]

[3] The term "Leahy law" refers to two statutory provisions prohibiting the USG from using funds for assistance to units of foreign security forces where there is credible information implicating that unit in the commission of gross violations of human rights (GVHR). Fact Sheet, "About the Leahy Law," Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, 20 January 2021, https://www.state.gov/key-topics-bureau-of-democracy-human-rights-and-labor/human-rights/leahy-law-fact-sheet/#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20Leahy%20law,of%20human%20rights%20(GVHR).

  - Improving public and Congressional transparency throughout the process, including by instituting Congressional notification on delivery, reinstituting public accessibility of 655 reports and allowing for external submissions.

<u>T and State should work with Congress to</u>:

- Rationalize the different requirements for transparency and oversight (Leahy law, etc.) across different categories of security cooperation;
- Reform and extend mandates for end-use monitoring to clarify that the actual use of weapons, and its effects, are what is to be monitored; this must include adequately funding monitoring;
- Commit to data-based policymaking in its own approaches to what training and materiel are and are not provided where and to whom.

<u>The incoming National Security Council should</u>:

- Retain the focus expressed in the 2023 Conventional Arms Transfer Policy and National Security Memorandum 20 on making arms transfers consistent with U.S. norms and values; make and implement a commitment to greater transparency around oversight processes and their findings.
- Identify and implement ways to make the highest-level deliberations on security partnerships more informed by effectiveness data as well as more cognizant of likely effects beyond the immediate scope of a transfer.
- In the event that Congress does not act to rationalize mandates for end-use monitoring, use executive authority to clarify that the actual use of weapons, and its effects, are what is to be monitored.

II. Introduction and Use of Terms

Security cooperation, security assistance, arms transfers and arms sales are a longstanding part of US efforts to reinforce and extend the reach of the U.S. military – and to get other nations to align and stay aligned with our policy priorities and values. Existing infrastructures, attitudes and legacy programs predate the emergence of full-blown strategic competition with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the intensified security rivalry with Russia. Significant increases in military spending among key allies and partners, and the turn to industrial policy – including in key defense sectors – are also transforming the landscape. Simultaneously, the role of U.S. assistance in conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza has raised significant debates about the function and oversight of U.S. security cooperation programs.

Against this backdrop, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Bonnie D. Jenkins (T) requested that the International Security Advisory Board undertake "a brief study on the effectiveness of security cooperation and arms transfers as tools of influence in the context of strategic competition."

> "The International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) is requested to undertake a brief study on the effectiveness of security cooperation and arms transfers as tools of influence in the context of strategic competition – both for the United States and competitors. These Terms of Reference use the term "security cooperation" broadly to mean programs and activities designed to build the capacity and capabilities of partner security institutions and forces – not only those carried out by the Department of Defense, as defined in Title 10 of the U.S. Code – regardless of how they are funded." (See the study's full Terms of Reference at Appendix A.)

The study group found that U.S. Government (USG) does not have a shared definition of what influence is, or a process for specifying when influence is one of the aims of a particular cooperation program. This makes it more challenging to assess risks and tradeoffs, build consensus across controversy, or evaluate and learn from failures. The Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM) and the Department of State (State), and the interagency more broadly, have put significant effort in recent years into definitions and monitoring and evaluation

criteria. But the study group perceives that those efforts either are subject to varied interpretation or struggle to gain buy-in at senior levels – or on the Hill.

Security cooperation and arms transfer programming is the object of two distinct and somewhat contrary critiques: on the one hand, a concern that it moves too slowly, and is too limited by human rights conditionality to be effective in intense competition with Russia and China; and on the other, that failure to adhere to human rights conditionality is doing long-term harm to U.S. global influence in a world of strategic competition, undercutting short-term security gains.

This study explores how strategic competition is reshaping the field for security cooperation and arms transfers, looking at our chief competitors' approach as well as our own, as well as how the T family[4] might engage with the contemporary critiques of its programs.

We begin, however, with an overview of the legal frameworks or mandates that govern security cooperation and arms transfers. Security cooperation, arms transfers, influence and strategic competition all have specific meanings in the context of U.S. national security policy, narrower than how they may be understood by the general public, and can vary by agency. In addition, security cooperation and arms transfers are a subset of the larger universe of ways weapons and know-how flow from the United States to other countries. We provide brief overviews of some of these terms below, while recognizing that there is a lack of standard terminology, which complicates and hinders discussions on these topics.[5]

Key to governing the security cooperation and arms transfers regime are Title 10 and Title 22 authorities. The Department of Defense (DoD) and State operate under distinct legal frameworks for arms sales, primarily defined by Title 10 and Title 22 of the U.S. Code. Title 10 focuses on military readiness and operational efficiency, whereas Title 22 emphasizes diplomatic considerations and human rights. Each framework has its advantages and disadvantages, shaping how the United States conducts arms sales and navigates international

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[4] The three T bureaus are: the Bureau of Arms Control, Deterrence, and Stability (ADS); the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation (ISN); and the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM).

[5] Congressional Research Services, "U.S. Security Assistance and Security Cooperation Programs: Overview of Funding Trends," (2018).

relations. Achieving a balance between these authorities is essential for effective and responsible arms transfer policies.

Under Title 10, the DoD has a military-centric authority that addresses the organization and functioning of the armed forces, enabling the DoD to effectively manage military operations and readiness. This includes Direct Military Assistance (DMA), which empowers the DoD to engage in military-to-military cooperation and strengthen defense partnerships. However, the limited oversight and focus on military objectives can result in less attention to human rights issues and the risk of arms being used in conflicts that violate international norms. Moreover, coordination between the DoD and the State can be challenging, potentially leading to inconsistencies in foreign policy execution. This military emphasis can also contribute to arms races or escalate tensions in unstable regions.

Conversely, Title 22 authorities within State center on foreign policy, allowing for the consideration of human rights and diplomatic relations in arms sales, thereby promoting responsible transfers. The Title 22 review process involves various stakeholders, including Congress, which enhances accountability in decision-making. By aligning arms sales with broader diplomatic objectives, State can foster regional stability and conflict resolution. However, the comprehensive review and oversight processes can lead to slower approval times, which can impede timely support for allies or partners, a common concern within the arms transfer community.

Arms sales may also be influenced by political pressures, which can prioritize political relationships over strategic military needs. Furthermore, the overlap between Title 10 and Title 22 can create confusion about jurisdiction and authority in arms sales, complicating their implementation.

Additionally, The International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) is a framework and set of Department of State regulations that governs and controls the export of defense-related items. ITAR operates within a broader U.S. law, which sees further overlap with Title 10 and Tile 22.

ITAR, in relation to Title 10, is enforced under the authority of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA). This act provides the legal foundation for regulating the export of defense articles and

services, ensuring that military technology is controlled and that sales align with national defense strategies. ITAR is also linked to Title 22 through the AECA and it provides a framework for Foreign Military Sales (FMS), including the necessary diplomatic requirements for arms exports to foreign nations.

PM and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) are fundamental to the USG's approach to arms transfer and security cooperation. PM is responsible for shaping U.S. foreign policy concerning military affairs and security assistance. This includes policy development to govern arms transfers, interagency coordination with entities like the DoD, and diplomatic engagement with foreign governments to foster understanding of U.S. military sales policies.

In contrast, DSCA focuses on the operational execution of the FMS program and other security cooperation initiatives. It manages the logistics, contracts, training, and support services related to military sales, acting as the implementation arm for the policies established by the PM and other governmental bodies.

Key to the infrastructure is the FMS program which enables the USG to facilitate the sale of military equipment, services, and training to foreign governments. Grounded in U.S. laws and regulations, the primary objectives of FMS are to bolster the security of allies and partners, support the U.S. defense industry, and enhance global stability. As this working group understands it, FMS begins when a foreign government submits a request for military equipment or services, which is then reviewed by various agencies, including the DoD and State. Once a proposed sale is approved, Congress is notified, allowing for a review period. After Congressional approval, contracts are negotiated between the foreign government and U.S. defense contractors, followed by the delivery of equipment and necessary training and support services.

An additional component to the FMS process is the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) program, which provides financial assistance to foreign governments for the purchase of U.S. defense equipment, services, and training. FMF helps subsidize the costs of arms purchases for allied nations that may lack the budget for essential military capabilities. Typically offered as grants or loans, FMF aims to promote regional stability, align with U.S. foreign policy objectives, and enable partner nations to achieve greater self-sufficiency in their defense capabilities. Overall,

FMS, supported by FMF, seems to be vital for international military cooperation, with PM coordinating the political dimensions and the DSCA managing practical execution – both essential for the effectiveness of U.S. arms transfer policies and security cooperation initiatives.

Influence is one of several goals of U.S. security assistance, in addition to the specific security objectives and interoperability that tend to be DoD priorities in developing security cooperation and arms transfer programs. Notably, National Security Memorandum 18, the 2023 White House policy on Conventional Arms Transfers, frames a broad set of goals without specific reference to influence:

> "The transfer of defense articles and services is an important tool for achieving United States foreign policy and national security objectives by helping allies and partners increase their contributions to global security, as well as by promoting shared interests with allies and partners. Acquisitions of United States defense articles and services by trusted allies and partners reinforce diplomatic relations and deepen military interoperability, in turn shaping the international security environment in a manner that furthers United States foreign policy and national security interests."

While influence can be broadly understood as the U.S. ability to shape the perspective, position and behavior of a partner country, a specific definition and measurements of influence have proven elusive.

The study group was struck by the definition offered by Dafna Rand and Stephen Tankel, analysts who have served multiple tours in government. They place influence after military needs and access in identifying three disparate components of influence: "relationship-building… reassur[ing] allies and partners… [and]… shap[ing] a country's behavior."[6] As they write:

[6] Rand, Dafna and Tankel, Stephen. "Security Cooperation and Assistance: Rethinking the Return on Investment," Center for a New American Security, (2015) p 10,11.

> "Strategically, the specific goals of security assistance and cooperation are often inadequately articulated. In other cases, disparate objectives are not prioritized and in some cases may actually conflict with one another."[7]

Strategic Competition

Both the Biden and Trump Administrations have characterized U.S. competition with the PRC and Russia as the highest national security priority. Strategic competition entails contending with those adversaries across multiple domains – economic, technological, military, ideological – and in multiple geographies without escalating to armed force. The 2022 National Security Strategy states:

> "…the post-Cold War era is definitively over and a competition is underway between the major powers to shape what comes next. No nation is better positioned to succeed in this competition than the United States, as long as we work in common cause with those who share our vision of a world that is free, open, secure, and prosperous. This means that the foundational principles of self-determination, territorial integrity, and political independence must be respected, international institutions must be strengthened, countries must be free to determine their own foreign policy choices, information must be allowed to flow freely, universal human rights must be upheld, and the global economy must operate on a level playing field and provide opportunity for all."

III. Security Cooperation and Arms Transfers' Place Within Overall USG Security Policy

The landscape of USG programs that provide training, weapons and other forms of military cooperation to allies and partners is massive and complex. While U.S. implementers must differentiate exactingly among programs with different authorities, restrictions, and even goals, the study group heard many times that recipients are simply interested in a road map to get the

[7] Ibid, p 3.

capabilities they seek. This study does not attempt to delve into the reasons behind this complexity. We do, however, note that the task of deriving broader policy influence from arms sales is made more challenging by a structure that posits that some programs and sales have influence as a goal, while others have more narrow and tangible military goals only – and this division is often invisible to partners and the U.S. public alike.

A 2017 Government Accountability Office report sets out the major lines of effort as follows:[8]

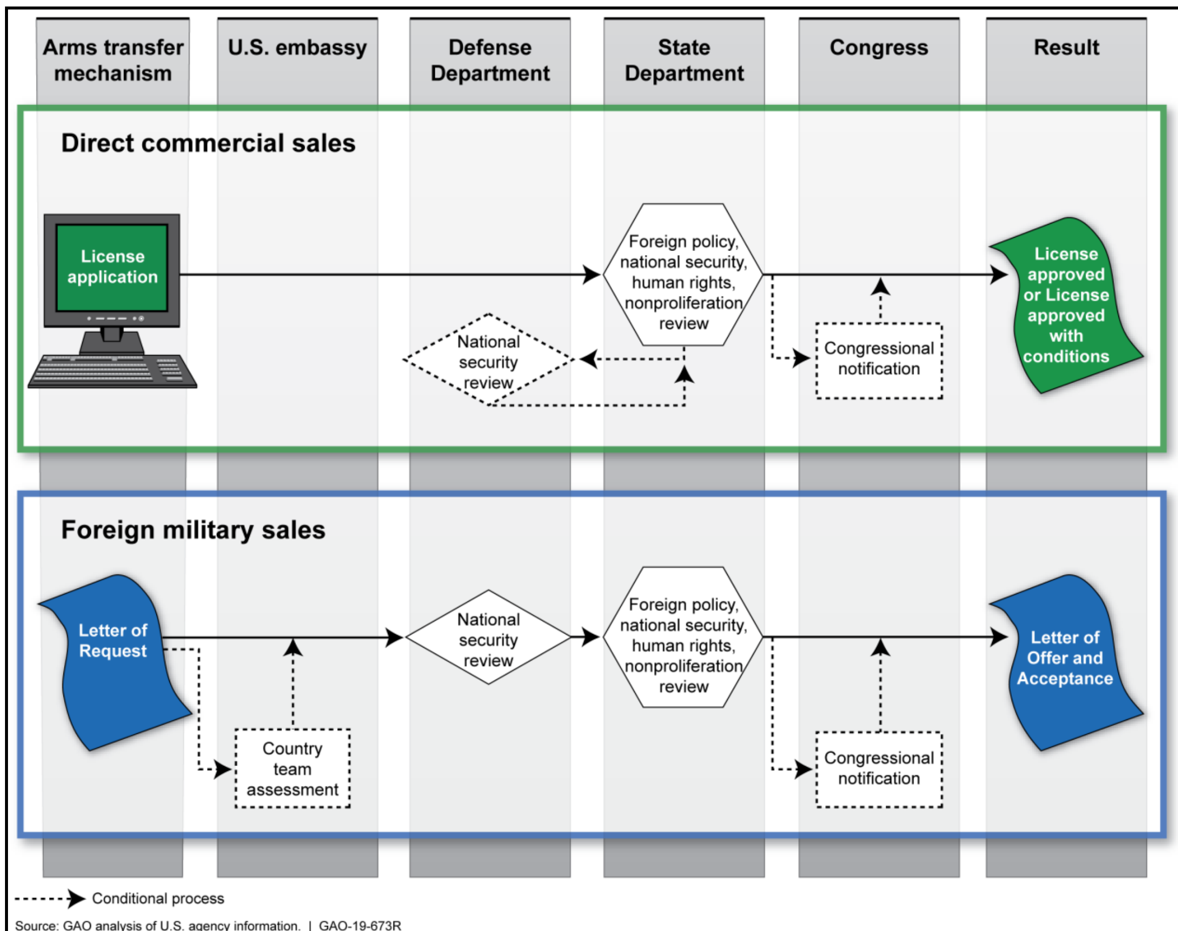
> "DoD has the primary role in managing and executing a majority of security cooperation efforts authorized under Title 10 of the U.S. Code and various public laws. DoD defines security cooperation as activities undertaken by the Department of Defense to encourage and enable international partners to work with the United States to achieve strategic objectives. [Security cooperation] includes all DoD interactions with foreign defense and security establishments, including all DoD-administered security assistance programs, that: build defense and security relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests, including all international armaments cooperation activities and security assistance activities; develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations; and provide U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access to host nations.
>
> State has the primary role in managing and executing a majority of security assistance efforts authorized under Title 22 of the U.S. Code and various public laws. DoD's Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) also administers some of State's security assistance efforts. According to State officials, State does not have a formal, documented definition of security assistance and instead refers to the Foreign Assistance Act for a working commonly understood definition. However, DoD has defined security assistance as a group of programs authorized by Title 22, U.S. Code, as amended, or other related statutes by which the United

[8] GAO-17-255R, Building Partner Capacity: Inventory of Department of Defense Security Cooperation and Department of State Security Assistance Efforts, https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-17-255r.pdf

> States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services by grant, loan, credit, cash sales, or lease, in furtherance of national policies and objectives. The Department of Defense does not administer all security assistance programs. Those security assistance programs that are administered by the Department are a subset of security cooperation."

In addition, some legal authorities are provided directly to the President who, in turn, delegates agency roles through executive orders to one or both of these agencies or to other agencies.

Figure 1: Direct Commercial Sales and FMS Review Process for Arms Transfer Requests That Result in Authorization[9]



[9] Government Accountability Office, "Conventional Arms Transfer Policy," GAO-19-673R, 5, September 9, 2019, https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-19-673r.

IV. Defining and Measuring Influence

The strength of the NATO alliance over time, and more recently Ukraine's achievement in holding off Moscow after the 2022 full-scale invasion, are two among many military successes of the U.S. approach to security cooperation and arms transfers. The sheer volume of U.S. arms transfers, and the large and growing distance between the United States and its competitors in the arms trade, are cited by many as evidence of success in meeting military security, military influence and interoperability objectives, as well as supporting the U.S. defense industrial base. The most frequently-referenced public estimate puts the U.S. share of arms sales from 2019-2023 at 42% of the global total, larger than the next eight exporters combined.[10] Whether measured by number of partner countries, augmentation to U.S. military capacities, or contribution to the U.S. defense-industrial base, the *military and economic* effects of U.S. security cooperation and arms transfers are enormous.

On the question of political influence, however, neither inside government nor in the academic sector is there a clear, shared definition of what influence is or how it can be measured. Nor is there a stock of clear success stories around the United States gaining direct political influence through security cooperation and arms transfers.

Current and previous White House documents setting out policy parameters for arms transfers and security cooperation do not offer a definition. Publicly-available materials from PM and the DSCA do not cite influence as one of the purposes of security cooperation and arms transfers:

> "The Bureau of the [sic] Political-Military Affairs (PM) builds enduring security partnerships to advance U.S. national security objectives."[11]

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[10] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/fs_2403_at_2023.pdf https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/fs_2403_at_2023.pdf.

[11] Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs homepage, https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-arms-control-and-international-security-affairs/bureau-of-political-military-affairs/.

> "The purpose of Security Cooperation is to encourage and enable ally and partner actions that support mutual security goals consistent with U.S. national security objectives."[12]

As one Defense Department official succinctly noted, "at their core, Defense Department programs are supposed to buy down U.S. military risk."

When it comes to influence, the study group heard repeatedly that, while security cooperation and arms transfers were unsatisfactory tools for shaping non-military outcomes, they often appear to be the best or only tools at hand. As for what influence is, one interlocutor remarked, "you know it when you see it." We use a relatively simple think tank definition: "generally understood as the development of relationships, sway, leverage, or soft power that can be used to shape the behavior of a recipient state."[13]

The study group repeatedly observed its government interviewees struggle to come up with unambiguous case studies where U.S. security cooperation and arms transfers could be directly tied to influencing political outcomes. Individuals with decades of experience in the sector stressed the need for humility and modest expectations, noting that U.S. programming would always struggle to overcome leaders' perception of their own core interests or grand sweeps of history. "I don't know that in any situation we get the kind of influence that provokes an absolute break," said one.

USG officials and outside analysts tend to think of the security cooperation relationship – and the outcomes that are most easily specified – in transactional terms. That is, the United States assists its partners to enhance their military capability – through training, equipment sales, equipment donations, maintenance, etc. – in exchange for favorable behavior by the recipient.

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[12] Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Strategic Plan 2025, April 2021, 5, https://www.dsca.mil/resources/publications/strategic_plan_2025/DoD_security_cooperation_outcomes_measuring_success.

[13] Yousif, Elias. ""If we don't sell it, someone else will:" Dependence & Influence in US Arms Transfers," [Issue Brief] Stimson Center, 30 March 2023, https://www.stimson.org/2023/if-we-dont-sell-it-someone-else-will-dependence-influence-in-us-arms-transfers/.

Some of those behaviors can be very specific, such as in granting overflight clearance, or broader, through the development of stronger, long-lasting partnerships.

The development of influence through long-term security cooperation, by contrast, requires a more subtle, careful and patient approach than the tit for-tat implied by the narrative of competition with great power rivals over each individual arms sale. In the 1960s, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Samuel Huntington compared the United States' relationship with its NATO allies and the Soviet Union's with the Warsaw Pact members.[14] They did not specifically foresee that NATO would long outlast the Warsaw Pact, but would not be surprised at the outcome, because they stressed that the United States was much more successful than the Soviet Union in dealing with allies, in large part because it was flexible whereas the Soviet Union was rigid. In the strongest security cooperation relationships, from NATO's Partnership for Peace in the 1990s to its evolving relationships with its Indo-Pacific allies, the parties have shared the aim of building something together, rather than gaining influence for its own sake.

At perhaps the opposite extreme is the challenge the United States has faced in West Africa and the Sahel in the last decade, seeking to build effective counterterrorism partnerships rapidly and deny openings to Moscow and Beijing while starting from extremely low levels of overall partnership and shared objectives. After a coup in 2023, Niger's military junta terminated its security partnership with the United States, which had been a significant regional ally in counterterrorism efforts. The extent of Russia's influence on Niger's decision to cut ties with the United States remains uncertain. The junta was able to tie Washington to the unpopular former colonial power, France, and leverage alternatives offered by Moscow, with little consequence despite early security successes and extensive U.S. security investment. This experience offers important, though challenging, lessons for prioritization and expectation-setting. Simply prioritizing states for their balancing role in a multi-polar world – without a strategy to build deeper relationships over time and pace deployment of lethal capabilities accordingly – may not be enough.

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[14] Brzezinski, Zbigniew, and Samuel Huntington. *Political Power USA/USSR.* New York: Viking, 1964. Political Power: USA/USSR - Samuel Huntington (contemporarythinkers.org).

Use Case: Partnership for Peace

NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), a 1990s U.S.-generated program that supported former Warsaw Pact militaries as they went through intense changes, had an extremely high success rate in producing civilian-controlled militaries, which in turn played a part in allowing many participant countries to transition successfully to NATO and EU membership and extend Euro-Atlantic values and behavior further across the continent.

From the beginning, the effort had broad influence goals: to ensure that militaries did not block the political and economic reform efforts taking place in former communist countries, and that leaders of the armed forces who were used to operating in authoritarian regimes would learn democratic norms such as budget transparency and civilian control over the military.

PfP had significant advantages that are unlikely to be repeated in most instances but are worth understanding when thinking about influence efforts in security cooperation. The Central and Eastern European countries were eager to join Western institutions and saw PfP as providing a pathway to NATO membership (and helpful to European Union membership as well). Having been on the outside looking in for so many decades, Central and East European nations now had their chance to build the ties with the West they so desperately sought as they emerged from behind the Iron Curtain. And the United States and its allies provided significant political and economic assistance to these nations to help them along their democratic reform path; the military-to-military ties were part of a broader outreach effort that was understood to be mutually beneficial for the West and for the target states, many of which would over time become formal allies.

The one significant failure of the program was with Russia, which joined PfP after it was established at a time when Moscow hoped the program would serve as a substitute for NATO membership for Central and Eastern Europe. Russia did build ties with the alliance in the 1990s, including by joining the NATO-led implementation force (IFOR) to provide peacekeeping in the Balkans after the signing of the 1995 Dayton Accords. A variety of events soon led the partnership with Russia to fray, including, at the end of the decade, the conflict in Kosovo, the

admittance of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO, and the rise to power of Vladimir Putin on the eve of the new millennium.

A number of major U.S. alliance relationships (Japan, Canada, South Korea) may also be viewed as successes for influence gained through security cooperation. Like PfP, however, these cases all included the prospect of not just U.S. security cooperation but a U.S. security guarantee. And while Israel and Saudi Arabia have provided recent examples of the difficulty of exercising U.S. influence over allies' military and political decisions, the challenge is as old as U.S. policies offering weapons and materiel to partners.

Academic researchers and analysts – notably including analysts who have transitioned between academia and government – express significant skepticism about the overall effectiveness of security cooperation and arms transfers.

> "…many security assistance and cooperation interventions fail to accomplish U.S. objectives as a result of both strategic and structural deficiencies." (Rand and Tankel 2015)

What the literature does convey, amid many caveats, is that regime type, durability and breadth of relationship, type of assistance, and core alignment of the partner matter tremendously. The literature doesn't consider the effectiveness of using security cooperation to deny another state influence, which is at the heart of some approaches to strategic competition. Moreover, simple metrics – such as the stereotypical measuring influence by a country's UN voting record – offer little of utility in the complex reality of policymaking. While studying the effects of security cooperation and arms transfers programs is important, no algorithm is going to emerge that resolves complex tradeoffs or prioritization dilemmas.

Given these challenges, the study group recommends that T and the Department focus resources on building the enduring partnerships that are most important to the U.S. and where the partner and U.S. share goals, recognizing that this will sometimes mean forgoing short-term gains, and shifting mindset away from a transactional "what have you done for me lately" approach to influence.

V. Assessing How Strategic Competition Shifts Security Cooperation Frame

As noted above, a bipartisan consensus perceives security cooperation and arms transfers as a domain of competition between the United States and the PRC and the United States and Russia. This perspective layers on top of the industrial competition that has long existed between the U.S. and other major arms producers – including treaty allies.

In practical terms, this means that specific transactions or programming are proposed with the intention of blocking or limiting Russian and PRC relationships with potential partners. That lens can produce significant time pressure and urgency on an already over-stretched system. At the same time, this increased tactical pressure feeds back into a system that has little ability to carry out long-term prioritization, or assess the long-term hazards of a transaction that may have clear short-term benefits.

A DoD official noted that "many of our security cooperation paradigms date from a permissive, unipolar environment – which strategic competition means we no longer have" and noted in particular the worry that we are spreading ourselves too thin to be effective over the long term.

The interagency needs thoughtful guidance on how to prioritize short- versus long-term gain – and support for sticking with those priorities in the face of inevitable pressure from key constituencies when short-term opportunities arise.

In addition, the study group observes that U.S. decision-making frequently presumes parallelism among U.S., PRC, and Russian security cooperation – that all three are equally effective, and that any "loss" for one produces an equivalent gain for another. However, we encountered no evidence to support this view in government or academic analysis. Many analysts do not perceive the arms transfer policies of the Xi and Putin regimes as parallel to Washington's approach in aims, methods or scope. More and deeper analysis is needed, and flowing from it, priorities on *which* aspects of Moscow and Beijing's approaches it is most urgent for Washington to combat.

Russia's Approach

Russia's war against Ukraine has prompted a significant decline in Russia's arms trade – it has dropped from second to third in total sales. With proactive efforts by the United States and its NATO allies, Moscow has also lost 19 of its 31 pre-war clients, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. The Russian war in Ukraine has led the Kremlin to purchase military equipment from Iran and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), amid worries that those countries are gaining not just financially but influence of their own with Moscow – including potentially support for their nuclear programs. The Iranians recently transferred Fath 360 close-range ballistic missiles, and the DPRK regime has provided millions of artillery shells and rockets.

Even as Moscow has had to import weapons, it remains a sizable and aggressive player in regional arms markets and in providing security through its quasi-private security firms. Despite the death of its leader Yevgeny Prigozhin in 2023, the Wagner group and its successor organizations (such as Africa Corps) operate throughout Africa, helping regimes brutally suppress opposition rebel groups.[15] These Russian operatives have carried out acts of political violence in Libya, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, Mozambique, Sudan, and Mauritania, and more recently these forces have deployed to Burkina Faso and Niger to provide those regimes military training and security. While the Russian government has clearly viewed its support for these regimes as a way to increase Moscow's influence, in some cases the activities have been designed for private business purposes. The Wagner Group went into Central African Republic in 2018, for example, to shore up the government in return for logging rights and access to a gold mine.

[15] Dalton, Ben and Rondeaux, Candace. "The Wagner Group Legacy: Reshaping Russia's Shadow Armies" New America, September 30, 2024, https://www.newamerica.org/future-frontlines/briefs/the-wagner-group-legacy/.

In 2022, a RAND study summed up the Putin regime's approach to security cooperation as "essentially opportunistic,"[16] and one that sees embarrassing the U.S. as a goal in itself.

It is entirely understandable that Moscow's opportunistic orientation would provoke opportunistic responses from U.S. policymakers. However, the mixed record of U.S. engagement in West and Central Africa, in response to real or perceived Russian inroads, suggests the limits of those responses. Moreover, if the perception that Washington and Moscow are essentially interchangeable becomes firmly entrenched it will do deep damage to broader U.S. engagement strategies, which rest on an idea of long-term mutuality (trade access, climate finance, development assistance) entirely absent from the Russian approach.

The PRC Approach

The PRC had historically been a smaller player in the global arms market, with a focus on lower-end, less-sophisticated products. Its training programs are a fraction of the size of comparable U.S. efforts worldwide. Surveys of training recipients assess that PRC programs are less sophisticated and valued.

However, Beijing has moved dramatically to change its position. Over the last two decades it has significantly increased its arms sales, developed more extensive in-China training programs and moved to upgrade the sophistication of equipment sold.[17] Additionally, Chinese private security companies have moved into African and other global markets alongside Russian, U.S. and other competitors.

Observers report that PRC cooperation offers several advantages. Weapons are cheaper and may arrive faster. Partnerships are offered irrespective of the human rights records of units and individuals involved. And rather than emphasize subordination of the military to legitimate

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[16] Grissom, Adam R., Samuel Charap, Joe Cheravitch, Russell Hanson, Dara Massicot, Christopher A. Mouton, and Jordan R. Reimer, "Russia's Growing Presence in Africa: A Geostrategic Assessment," Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2022, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR4399.html.

[17] Kardon, Isaac (2021) "Research & Debate—Pier Competitor: Testimony on China's Global Ports," Naval War College Review: Vol. 74 : No. 1 , Article 11, https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol74/iss1/11.

civilian authority, Beijing focuses on the fusion of military and state – particularly appealing to less-democratic actors.

As the scholars Sheena Chestnut Greitens and Isaac Kardon note, Beijing's most successful and intensive security assistance programs tend to focus on regime security and internal security. This takes advantage of Beijing's suite of sophisticated technologies for surveillance and information control, and fits snugly with the regime's narrative that it offers control and predictability to partners, as distinct from the unpredictability of democratic systems that may seem to prize process over regime survival.[18]

The asymmetry between U.S. and Chinese approaches poses both an opportunity and a challenge. While some U.S. officials may promote an over-optimistic view of Chinese capabilities: "It's their goal to have everyone speaking Chinese and going to Chinese schools," said one senior official. U.S. policy should take a more nuanced view, as expressed by Kardon:

> "'Long-term strategic competition' should not imply that our strategic objectives are perfectly counterposed. There are certain clear asymmetries: China and the U[nited] S[tates] are not competing to be the dominant global security provider, and the PLA is not postured or prepared for high-end conflict outside of East Asia."[19]

The wide variance in goals and methods raises the question of whether, as in other areas of strategic competition, contesting every sale or cooperation program put in place by our opponents is wise. The study group recommends a way of thinking about strategic competition that is not merely reactive, or shaped by our adversaries' choices. An approach that is, in a word, strategic. This should incorporate clear thinking and hard choices both about where we choose to compete, and how we deploy our values when we compete.

First, the study group heard multiple views on what strategic competition implies for security cooperation and arms transfers. One Administration interlocutor suggested that the USG

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[18] Chestnut, Sheena, Isacc Kardon, Playing Both Sides of the U.S.-Chinese Rivalry, Foreign Affairs, March 15, 2024, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/playing-both-sides-us-chinese-rivalry.

[19] Kardon, Isaac, Statement for the Record, U.S. Congress, Senate, U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Hearing on China's Military Diplomacy and Overseas Security Activities, 118th Cong., 1st sess., January 26, 2023, https://www.uscc.gov/hearings/chinas-military-diplomacy-and-overseas-security-activities.

pursue an approach of identifying a small number of sectors in which, should key states be approached by Beijing or Moscow, "we need to be able to make a better offer." Others offered a broader approach defined by keeping particular adversary capabilities or weapons systems out of particular regions – such as keeping Russian and PRC fighter jets, and the support that comes with them, out of Latin America. "If it's just keeping China or Russia out, that's good in itself."

Some clarity on priorities and goals is needed across agencies and, ideally, in Congress; otherwise even a sector as large and powerful as U.S. arms manufacturers and trainers risks being spread too thin and spending precious resources on lower-value targets.

Second, the study group heard consistently from interlocutors across Defense, State, the arms industry, and Congress that strategic competition should not lead the U.S. to dispense with norms and standards. We discuss specifics further in our section on process improvements, below.

Finally, the study group identified a need for significantly more analysis of 1) when Russian and PRC efforts are successful by recipients' standards, and when they are not; 2) what shapes countries' tendency to accept Russian and/or PRC security cooperation, and 3) what makes countries choose security cooperation with the United States in a three-way strategic competition world. We saw extensive evidence of the work the T bureaus and their partners within State, and the DSCA, have done to bring facts and metrics to bear on the policymaking process around security cooperation and arms transfers. It was less clear that evidence and metrics are used in making decisions at the political level. As strategic competition continues to change conditions on the ground rapidly, this will need to change. T can promote that change by developing its metrics and assessments as transparently as possible, ideally making them available beyond the interagency.

VI. Process and Reporting Improvements

The study group heard two separate, though related, concerns from a variety of agencies and stakeholders about how the process of security cooperation affects outcomes: first, that the

process of approving and providing arms transfers either is too slow or is incorrectly perceived as too slow because of a small number of cases. Second, many interlocutors inside and outside of government had views on how the processes for imposing human rights-based conditionality could be improved – both in the initial approval process and during monitoring and evaluation after a transfer or a cooperation program has taken place. Below we explore the T family's role in both of these challenges, and consider potential process improvements.

When and How Might the Process Move Faster?

In fact, most partnership and sales decisions move relatively fast, and where the hangups involve the production process itself, they are entirely outside of T's purview. With this said, the T family was able to make adjustments that resulted in unexpectedly fast movement of armaments to Ukraine, especially in the immediate aftermath of Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. It will be important for the T family and the interagency – including at leadership levels -- to review what worked well – and what did not – from that process. In particular, the study group heard that review requirements are a significant delay in third-party transfers, even when both parties involved are close U.S. allies or partners where there are not significant concerns about end use. It should be possible to establish waivers that speed this particular sub-category of transfers.

More generally, however, the Ukraine case also illustrates the stark limits of State's ability to speed up the process. First, because armaments production is in the end a private sector endeavor. As one briefer said:

> "I used to think industry could turn on a dime… but I've learned big publicly-traded companies cannot pivot as fast as we [government] can. We can see lots of demand for an item but companies won't shift until they know the demand is coming. You can't tell them, 'oh, just open a second line.'"

Second, where arms transfers become enmeshed in Congressional politics, there is little beyond explaining the stakes that State can – or should – do, given our constitutional system of checks and balances.

We also heard warning notes about the future, as strategic competition foresees both more high-tech transfers to a wider range of states and more oversight of high-tech components. Across the interagency, review processes are not resourced to sustain the level of scrutiny demanded when our most sophisticated weapons systems are shared. Future planning and prioritization will need to take this into account.

As a senior official outside the T family said, "T's job is to put forward how a given partnership/sales decision will affect other security partners." Noting that direct commercial sales, which make up two-thirds of total sales, go much faster than U.S. government-funded sales, one interlocutor remarked that the latter "are designed to be deliberate and slow."

The Place of Human Rights Conditionality in a World of Strategic Competition

Almost all of our interlocutors – from government and industry, State, Defense, and Capitol Hill – expressed support for U.S. values and human rights norms playing a role in security cooperation decision-making. The study group heard significant anxiety about how the United States competes as hard as it can with the PRC and Russia – *and* the overarching belief that we derive an advantage in that competition from our values and norms. Difficult though it may be, security cooperation professionals want to adhere to our values and be perceived to be doing so.

Second, are we adequately valuing the tradeoff between the short-term gains from partnering with any given government versus the long-term reputational losses the United States suffers when we are seen to compromise those principles?

Several briefers encouraged evaluating the question of U.S. influence not just from the perspective of risks of abandoning a security assistance relationship but also from the potential benefits of doing so. As one briefer put it: "I'm a capitalist but I'm an American first. I don't want bad guys to get deals." The study group found that the relationship between our norms and values and our security and industrial motivations is more complex than is often understood. Industry perceives reputational risks where human rights violations are

widespread. Moreover, where allies elect not to supply armaments due to human rights and international law concerns, industry must decouple supply chains, causing disruptions and delays.

The study group did not come away feeling that more tools are needed. Rather, in the words of one long-time official, "we are consistently disappointed in the Administration for not using the tools we have." Below we highlight a few ways the process for imposing human rights-based conditionality could be improved, which an incoming Administration will wish to review.

First, the process of clearing new initiatives satisfies no one – it both often feels too slow to the offices and missions developing deals, and too pro forma to offices attempting to identify risks and downsides. To some degree, this is inevitable and even appropriate, as it represents different interests coming to agreement on challenging questions. The study group heard several specific approaches which we believe would produce better substantive policy processes. First, offices and missions originating security relationships could go out of their way to seek out challenging viewpoints early on, rather than leave this task for later – an approach which might actually produce more regularized and timely decisions.

Second, T could mandate that goals and conditions are specified at the beginning of the State clearance process, and tied to a tailored review process where conditions warrant. The articulation of a review process both creates greater clarity about expectations and creates room for a reward structure if after some period reviews are deemed no longer necessary.

Third, the study group heard from multiple briefers that the timeliness and level of detail (e.g. subcategories of assistance, munitions types, and country totals) of publicly-available reporting had deteriorated. In assessing how to sustain public and Congressional support for robust security cooperation, a new administration will want to revisit its approach to transparency – particularly if the concern prompting less disclosure is legal rather than policy-related.

Finally, the most difficult tradeoff decisions are made at the political level. As noted above, T needs to ensure that information and conflicting views are fully represented to Cabinet principals – including or especially when that information suggests that U.S. law mandates a course of action, or that data-informed analysis strongly prefers one course over another. The

study group observes that the government officials who carry out security cooperation want, and long-term success in strategic competition requires, principals to make choices that align with U.S. law and frequently-stated human rights norms, even when there are short-term costs.

VII. Appendix A – Terms of Reference

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
ARMS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
WASHINGTON

March 12, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY ADVISORY BOARD (ISAB)

SUBJECT: Terms of Reference – ISAB Study on Security Cooperation and Arms Transfers as Tools of Influence

The International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) is requested to undertake a brief study on the effectiveness of security cooperation and arms transfers as tools of influence in the context of strategic competition – both for the United States and competitors. These Terms of Reference use the term "security cooperation" broadly to mean programs and activities designed to build the capacity and capabilities of partner security institutions and forces – not only those carried out by the Department of Defense, as defined in Title 10 of the U.S. Code – regardless of how they are funded.

Policymakers have long viewed arms transfers and more broadly security cooperation as tools for strengthening partnerships that preserve and extend the United States' global influence. The importance of such tools has only increased in the era of strategic competition, which the National Security Strategy frames as a contest to shape the international order. In this context, the United States seeks to leverage security cooperation tools to build coalitions of allies and partners that advance the U.S. vision of a world that is free, open, prosperous, and secure. Conversely, the United States seeks to offer alternatives to countries that have historical security ties to Russia or the People's Republic of China (PRC), or where those competitors seek to make new inroads through offers of equipment, training, or other military-to-military engagements.

U.S. officials must continually weigh the impact of U.S. security cooperation activities on bilateral relationships and regional security, as well as the relative importance of competitors' security "cooperation" efforts, to make decisions about how best to leverage limited tools and resources to advance U.S. objectives. More specifically, the Conventional Arms Transfer Policy requires the U.S. government to consider on a case-by-case basis, among other criteria, the degree to which a proposed transfer increases U.S. access and influence in the support of strategic, foreign policy, and defense interests. Yet there is no universally agreed definition or measure of influence as it pertains to partner alignment with U.S. values and policies, and it is virtually impossible to isolate security cooperation as a variable in bilateral and regional contexts. This makes judgments like those required for arms transfer decisions inherently challenging. Fortunately, there is a growing body of research regarding what makes security cooperation effective or ineffective at advancing discrete U.S. goals (such as influence) and the role of security cooperation in strategic competition.

A more evidence-based understanding of the relationship between security cooperation (including arms transfers) and influence will strengthen the Department of State's ability to make decisions that advance U.S. interests and undermine competitors. Accordingly, it would be of great assistance if the ISAB study on security cooperation and arms transfers as tools of access and influence could examine and assess:

- Under what circumstances – foreign policy, national security, economic – do arms sales and security cooperation foster greater alignment between partners' policies and behavior and those of the United States?

- What, if any, are the common factors and characteristics (e.g., regime type, threat perceptions, security sector governance, domestic politics, economic outlook) that lead countries to engage the United States, the PRC, Russia, or some combination of these as security partners? To what extent do security cooperation programs and activities shape these preferences?

- How and to what extent do new or increased PRC or Russian arms sales correlate to decreased U.S. sales and influence? What kind of sales are zero-sum?

In the conduct of its study, as it deems necessary, the ISAB may expand upon the tasks listed above. I request that you submit a completed study to the ISAB Executive Directorate no later than September 30, 2024.

The Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security will sponsor the study. The Assistant Secretary for Political Military Affairs will support the study. Samuel Ryder and James Turnwall will serve as the Executive Secretary for the study and Michelle Dover and Scott Bohn will represent the ISAB Executive Directorate.

The study will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of P.L. 92-463, the "Federal Advisory Board Committee Act." If the ISAB establishes a working group to assist in its study, the working group must present its report or findings to the full ISAB for consideration in a formal meeting, prior to presenting the report or findings to the Department.

Bonnie D. Jenkins

[Updated October 2024 to reflect additional Executive Secretary]

VIII. Appendix B – Members and Project Staff

Board Members

- Hon. Edwin Dorn (Chair)
- Ms. Sherri Goodman (Vice Chair)
- Dr. Daniel Byman
- Hon. Patricia Falcone
- Dr. Julie Fischer
- Dr. James Goldgeier
- Dr. Gigi Kwik Gronvall
- Dr. Gregory Hall
- ADM Cecil Haney, USN (ret.)
- Dr. Eboni Haynes
- Ms. Julie Herr
- Dr. Michael Horowitz
- Ms. Heather Hurlburt
- Hon. Shirley Ann Jackson
- Amb. (ret.) Laura Kennedy
- Dr. Susan Koch
- Dr. Edward Levine
- Dr. Jeffrey Lewis
- Hon. Jamie Morin
- Hon. Eric Rosenbach
- Dr. Ian Simon
- Ms. Lyric Thompson
- Dr. Paul Walker
- Dr. Heather Williams
- Mr. Jon Wolfsthal

Study Group Members

- Chair: Ms. Heather Hurlburt
- Dr. James Goldgeier
- Dr. Eboni Haynes
- Dr. Susan Koch
- Dr. Jamie Morin
- Hon. Eric Rosenbach
- Ms. Lyric Thompson

Project Staff

- Mr. Samuel Ryder, Executive Secretary, ISAB
- Mr. James Turnwall, Executive Secretary, ISAB
- Ms. Michelle Dover, Executive Director, ISAB
- Mr. Scott Bohn, Deputy Executive Director, ISAB
- Ms. Thelma Jenkins-Anthony, Senior Advisor, ISAB

IX. Appendix C – Individuals Consulted by the Study Group

March 29, 2024

Mira Resnick	Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political Military Affairs, U.S. Department of State

April 10, 2024

Gregory Roberts	Deputy Director, Strategy and Resource Coordination Unit, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, U.S. Department of State
Dr. Sarah Detzner	Advisor, Security Sector Governance, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, U.S. Department of State

April 19, 2024

Ken Comer	Senior Advisor, Regional Security and Arms Transfers, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, U.S. Department of State
Peter Evans	Deputy Director, Regional Security and Arms Transfers, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, U.S. Department of State
Briefer	Bureau of Intelligence and Research, U.S. Department of State

May 22, 2024

Christopher Le Mon	Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State

May 31, 2024

Jessica Stern	Special Envoy, Office of the U.S. Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons, U.S. Department of State

M.A. Keifer Buckingham	Senior Advisor, Office of the U.S. Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons, U.S. Department of State
Aimee Breslow	Acting Chief of Staff, Office of the U.S. Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons, U.S. Department of State
Suzanne Goldberg	Senior Advisor, Office of the U.S. Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons, U.S. Department of State
Kerry Ashforth	Acting Team Lead, Marginalized Populations, Office of Global Programming, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State
Stephen Stark	Senior Advisor, Office of the U.S. Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons, U.S. Department of State
Nathen Huang	Senior Advisor, Office of the U.S. Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons, U.S. Department of State
Michael Schnabel	Senior Director, Boeing Government Operations

June 26, 2024

Briefer	Bureau of Intelligence and Research, U.S. Department of State

July 2, 2024

Salman Ahmed	Director, Policy Planning Staff, U.S. Department of State
Dak Hardwick	Vice President, International Affairs, Aerospace Industries Association

July 3, 2024

Kelli Seybolt	Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, Department of the Air Force

July 18, 2024

Tim Rieser	Senior Advisor, Senator Peter Welch

July 25, 2025

Michael Miller	Deputy Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, U.S. Department of Defense
Lt. Col Colin Bacus	Military Advisor, Office of Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific Island Affairs, U.S. Department of State
COL Christopher Martin	Senior Military Advisor, Policy Planning Staff, U.S. Department of State
Jenny Hoang	Director for Defense and Policy Strategy, National Security Council, Executive Office of the President
Dr. Stephen Tankel	Director for Defense and Policy Strategy, National Security Council, Executive Office of the President
Briefers	Bureau of Intelligence and Research, U.S. Department of State

September 4, 2024

Rachel Stohl	Senior Vice President of Research Programs, Henry L. Stimson Center
Elias Yousif	Fellow and Deputy Director, Conventional Defense, Henry L. Stimson Center
Annie Shiel	U.S. Advocacy Director, Center for Civilians in Conflict
Jeff Abramson	Senior Non-resident Fellow, Center for International Policy
Brian Finucane	Senior Advisor, Forum on the Arms Trade, Center for International Policy

Alex Noyes, PhD — Fellow, Brookings Institution

Holly Haverstick — Director, International Affairs and Foreign Policy Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard

James Baker — Director, Office of Net Assessment, U.S. Department of Defense

September 17, 2024

Melissa Benkert — Director for International Cooperation, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Sustainment), Assistant Secretary of Defense Industrial Base Policy ASD (IBP), U.S. Department of Defense

September 24, 2024

Kenneth I. Juster — Former Ambassador, Distinguished Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations

October 7, 2024

Mara Karlin — Visiting Fellow, Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology, Brookings Institution and Professor, Johns Hopkins University- SAIS