

PROMOTING PROFESSIONALISM
THROUGH SECURITY COOPERATION:
A LOOK AT THE EUROPEAN AND
LATIN AMERICAN REGIONS



BY MARYBETH PETERSON ULRICH



ROLE OF **A**ERICAN MILITARY POWER

A PROGRAM OF THE ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

**Promoting Professionalism
through Security Cooperation:
A Look at the European and
Latin American Regions**

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Latin American Regions**

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Contents

FOREWORD	7
INTRODUCTION	9
DEFINING PROFESSIONALISM	10
SECURITY COOPERATION DEFINED	11
APPLYING A COMPREHENSIVE CONCEPT OF PROFESSIONALISM IN TWO VARIED REGIONS	14
SECURITY COOPERATION AND U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY	15
PROFESSIONAL MILITARIES AND U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS	16
Military-to-Military Contacts	17
Combined Training	18
Military Training and Education Programs	21
Combined Education	26
Exercises	27
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING CURRENT APPROACHES TO SECURITY COOPERATION	30
Understand the Nature of the Problem	30
Adopt a Strategic Approach	32
Clearly Articulate Ends	32
Innovate Ways	33
<i>Encourage Regional Cooperation</i>	34
<i>Leverage Assessment Mechanisms</i>	34
<i>Be Patient</i>	35
<i>Build on Successes</i>	35
<i>Strive for Coordination and Consistency</i>	35
Adjust Means and Resources	36
CONCLUSION	37
REFERENCES	38
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	44

FOREWORD

The U.S. military has historically interfaced with the militaries of other nations as partners and potential partners. Today the combination of a preeminent—and some would say dominant—American military and the conditions of global insecurity have made this interaction even more critical and expansive. The U.S. military uses a variety of tools to “shape” the armed forces of allies and friends so that their professionalism more closely approaches that of competent militaries in service to democracies. These tools, however, are limited by political and resource considerations despite their important contribution to enhancing stability, refining civil-military relations, and ultimately helping to achieve the goals set forth in the U.S. national security strategy

With its program on the Role of American Military Power (RAMP), the Association of the U.S. Army set out in 2000 to further explore how the level of professionalism of military forces affects conflict prevention, and the conduct of conflict and post-conflict operations. In her study, Dr. Marybeth Peterson Ulrich takes a practical look at U.S. military diplomacy as expressed through regional security cooperation. Her work draws on extensive field interviews with practitioners engaged in exercises and security assistance measures that seek to bring allied militaries closer to U.S. standards of professionalism.

The concept of military professionalism itself requires periodic redefinition and reflects unique regional culture. RAMP held roundtables in 2000 on engagement with Latin American and European partners to explore concepts of professionalism and ways these concepts have been imparted through engagement.

Focusing on these two regions, the resulting study charts changes in engagement activities, which have come to be called “theater security cooperation,” and outlines military-to-military activities in their many forms. What emerges is a picture of the vital role played by U.S. programs aimed at enhancing professionalism and how greatly they contribute to the building of capabilities in our allies’ armed forces. In this paper, Dr. Ulrich builds on her book, *Democratizing Communist Militaries*, probing many agencies currently involved in security cooperation. She evaluates the impact of these programs and draws some conclusions. Finally, she proposes recommendations for sharpening the tools of security cooperation to improve our partnerships, widen the U.S. global reach, and better prepare the United States and our partners to work in coalition worldwide.

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INTRODUCTION

Interaction between militaries throughout the world has been a regular feature of diplomatic relations since the beginning of the modern international system. Opposing military forces have routinely met on the battlefield, and these occasions were opportunities to experience first-hand the professional qualities of one's adversary. Apart from wartime confrontations, many states visit foreign militaries in peacetime to glean lessons of professionalism as a prominent part of their strategy to make their militaries more capable. Peter the Great toured Western Europe in the early 18th century and returned home armed with the ambition and expertise to create a professional Russian navy. General George Washington employed the expertise of Prussian General Friedrich von Steuben, Polish-born General Casimir Pulaski from the Russian Army, and Bavarian-born Baron de Kalb from the French Army to instill sufficient professionalism in the Continental Army to defeat the professional British forces in the American Revolution. Emory Upton conducted a grand tour of the world's armed forces in 1876 and 1877 and drew upon his impressions garnered abroad to make his recommendations to professionalize the U.S. military.¹ A key ingredient to improving the professionalism of a state's armed forces has long been to apply and adapt the lessons learned abroad to one's own military institutions. The U.S. military has been both a beneficiary of such professional exchanges throughout its history and an advocate of promoting professionalism in the militaries of allied and friendly partner states.

The 21st century international system is fraught with multiple transnational threats emanating from all over the world. The United States is in need of reliable coalition partners and allies that are able to directly aid the United States in its pursuit of its national security objectives while also playing a positive role in maintaining stability and democratizing at home. Each U.S. regional combatant command pursues a deliberate strategy for interacting with the military forces of states within its area of responsibility (AOR). Additionally, the Joint Staff, the military services, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), and national security agencies such as the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) all carry out security cooperation programs. Focusing primarily on the programs that the regional commands conduct, this study assesses and analyzes the effectiveness of U.S. military security cooperation in fostering the development of military professionalism in Europe and Latin America. In both regions, the focus is on militaries serving states that are still engaged in the democratization process. Accordingly, the militaries serving Western Europe's advanced democracies are not the subjects of this study. The aim is to chronicle the substance and rationale of this particular element of security cooperation across two regions—Latin America and the former Eastern bloc—and to offer recommendations for improving the impact of current efforts.

DEFINING PROFESSIONALISM

Military professionalism is a rich and complex multidimensional concept. In the late 1950s and 1960s, scholars Morris Janowitz and Samuel Huntington each laid important cornerstones in the academic debate that would eventually burgeon into the vast literature that has come to encompass the topic within the broader discipline of civil-military relations. Janowitz, the Dean of military sociology, posited that the military profession was a distinct and significant group in society worthy of detailed study. His classic work, *The Professional Soldier*, set out to paint a social and political portrait of the professional soldier. He argued that since 1945 the strategic imperatives of the Cold War resulted in a shift from mass armies mobilized for wartime to the ongoing need for armies “in being.” These institutions then took on unique characteristics as their ranks were filled with self-selected volunteers. These all-volunteer forces have the capability to master the technical competencies necessary to engage in modern warfare. Janowitz also predicted that these forces in being would also increasingly assume social and political roles that civilians would have to properly monitor. He suggested that ongoing political socialization would be required to ensure that members of the military appropriately interact with policymakers and understand the expectations that the civilian leadership places on the military profession.

In *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington provided the basis for the understanding that the officer corps has earned the status of professional because this group is recognized as possessing unique expertise essential to the functioning of society.² His classic division of professionalism into three essential components—expertise, responsibility, and corporateness—is still widely taught today throughout the professional military education system. Huntington made the case that, much like a doctor or lawyer’s professional knowledge is critical to the community, the military professional possesses critical knowledge and expertise upon which society depends for the continuation of its survival. He identified the military professional’s essential skill as “the management of violence.”³ Adapting this concept to the 21st century strategic environment, the critical skill of the present-day military professional could be the application of the military instrument of power across a wide spectrum of threats. This focus on professional military expertise and competencies is the basis of the capabilities-centered approach to professionalism that is dominant today.

Huntington’s view that military professionals have a unique societal responsibility to their client, the state, is another important facet of professionalism. Military professionals have a shared responsibility to be as competent as possible in their military expertise to achieve the ends that their political leaders designate.⁴

However, military professionals must ensure that the pursuit of military capability and national security does not threaten the political character of the state. Huntington argues that, “the military institutions of any society are shaped by two forces: a functional imperative stemming from the threats to the society’s security and a societal imperative arising from the social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant within the society.”⁵

In *Democratizing Communist Militaries*, Huntington’s “competing imperatives” argument is taken a step further by positing that military professionals serving democratic states must go beyond the requirements of competently employing military force to achieve political ends that all political leaders expect of their militaries. Military professionals in service to democratic states must strive to maximize the pursuit of national security without compromising democratic values. Military leaders and civilian leaders with oversight authority for the development of military professionals must monitor the growth in functional professionalism to ensure that it does not outstrip the parallel need to preserve the state’s democratic institutions. In *The Armed Forces and Democracy in Latin America* J. Samuel Fitch develops a theory of democratic professionalism applicable to the Latin American context that has as its centerpiece rejection of any military claim to a suprapolitical role as national guardians.⁶ Such approaches call for the development of a special brand of professionalism—democratic military professionalism—and the processes of internalizing democratic values as a key aspect of the military socialization process.⁷

A comprehensive definition of military professionalism will consider the unique institutional attributes of modern-day armed forces in being, the constant and ongoing pursuit of armed forces to enhance their technical capabilities, and the societal obligations that modern day militaries, particularly those in service to democracies, assume.

SECURITY COOPERATION DEFINED

Short of direct military intervention and the stationing of troops abroad, peacetime engagement with foreign militaries in recent times has had two main dimensions: security assistance and military-to-military contacts. Security assistance refers specifically to programs that the U.S. State Department approves and administers and that the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) carry out. *The Joint Staff Officer’s Guide* defines security assistance as “the group of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, as amended, or other related statutes by which the United States provides defense

Promoting Professionalism

articles, military training, and other defense-related services by grant, loan, credit, or cash sales in furtherance of national policies and objectives.”⁸ Specifically, security assistance includes arms transfers, foreign military sales (FMS), direct commercial sales (DCS), and International Military Education and Training (IMET).

Military-to-military contacts generally fall outside the purview of security assistance and are another major component of the U.S. effort to influence the professionalism of foreign militaries. The military-to-military concept seeks to exploit the common bonds of military professionalism across states to influence institutional processes and behavioral patterns within them.⁹ Military-to-military contacts may also be more broadly pursued as a diplomatic instrument to achieve U.S. foreign policy ends. Military-to-military activities may include face-to-face professional interaction at the individual or unit level, sharing of military expertise on particular topics, exchanges of personnel at various levels, inter-military competitions and conferences, and direct military training.

Before Donald Rumsfeld became Defense Secretary under the Bush administration, the U.S. Department of Defense had used the term “engagement” to refer to the interaction between the U.S. military and foreign militaries: “all military activities involving other nations intended to shape the theater security environment in peacetime.”¹⁰ The engagement concept was used to capture the interaction between the U.S. military and foreign militaries across the full scope of military diplomacy. Since 2001, however, DOD shifted to the term “security cooperation” to encompass the same broad range of military-to-military activities. Activities subsumed under the auspices of security cooperation include multinational exercises, military exchanges, military training, and military education.

The rhetorical shift from “engagement” to “security cooperation” was meant to signal a major change in DOD’s approach to military diplomacy. “The Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) concept is transformational. It represents a distinct shift from general engagement to shape the security environment in peacetime to reciprocal bilateral and multilateral cooperation that promotes US strategic interests.”¹¹ While military-to-military relations in the era of engagement were not necessarily aimed at directly contributing to the achievement of a particular U.S. national security interest, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld’s more focused Theater Security Cooperation¹² approach is more narrowly conceived to do just that. The Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) defines TSC as consisting of

“Those defense activities conducted by combatant commanders with allies, friends, and potential coalition partners that support U.S. defense strategy, advance defense policy goals and, in the immediate term, enable the war on global terrorism. TSC goals include (1) advancing mutual defense or security arrangements,

- (2) building the capabilities of allies, friends, and potential coalition partners for self-defense and coalition operations, and
- (3) affording U.S. Forces greater access to support training and military operations.”¹³

While this study is being conducted, the U.S. military is only beginning to transition from “engagement” to “security cooperation” as its preferred strategic guidance to combatant commanders formulating and executing their plans for interfacing with other militaries in their AORs. Indeed, only draft concepts of the new strategic guidance have been released. Personnel in the field report that, though they are aware that a shift in rhetorical emphasis has occurred at the Pentagon, they have discerned no significant differences in the execution of the engagement strategies. In response, policymakers at the Pentagon contend that there is a natural lag as the new guidance filters to the field.¹⁴ Meanwhile, skeptics contend that the shift in rhetorical emphasis will make no appreciable difference. While Congress has historically paid keen attention to a few select security cooperation programs such as Plan Colombia¹⁵ and the Nunn-Lugar Program,¹⁶ the advancement of some sort of “what’s in it for us” argument has always been required to ensure continued funding.¹⁷ However, to properly assess U.S. efforts to positively influence the development of military professionalism, it is useful to be aware of the shifts in thinking that are gradually changing the overall character of the U.S. relationship with foreign militaries.

While fostering professionalism is the focus of this study, activities that contribute to increased professionalism are often the second- and third-order effects of interactions that may have been planned primarily to achieve other ends. For instance, a multilateral search-and-rescue NATO exercise may be planned, the primary purpose of which is to rehearse NATO procedures in a specific area and to give commanders confidence that such activities can be conducted in coalition. However, by encouraging professionalizing militaries of partner states to participate, another secondary objective may be accomplished. The partner states’ participants will witness first-hand the organization and competencies of the long-time allies and have the opportunity to extract significant lessons to apply to the professional development of their own military institutions.

This study explores US security cooperation strategies in search of ways to enhance the military professionalism of selected allies and friendly states. While fostering professionalism is rarely the primary aim of US security cooperation programs, encouraging the development of professionalism is a major thread that has characterized the nature of U.S. military-to-military relationships. This study’s aim is to highlight this feature embedded within U.S. military diplomacy and to suggest ways to more deliberately design programs and adapt aspects of existing

Promoting Professionalism

activity to more effectively foster military professionalism within potential coalition partners around the world.

APPLYING A COMPREHENSIVE CONCEPT OF PROFESSIONALISM IN TWO VARIED REGIONS

The multidimensional concept of professionalism outlined above will play out quite differently in Europe and Latin America. Although much of security cooperation activity takes place with developed nations' militaries, this study's focus is on professionalizing militaries within democratizing states. In Central and Eastern Europe, the challenge is to overcome the legacy of communist governments; while in Latin America, the task is to consolidate the democratic gains made in the wake of military rule and to develop a model of military professionalism that eliminates the role of the military as a moderating power in the political system.¹⁸

The two theaters pose marked contrasts in regional contexts, which consequently have implications for the development of professionalism goals. The authors of the TSC guidance for the European Command (EUCOM) paint the picture of a generally stable theater within which democracies are becoming more consolidated and economies are gradually progressing. The professionalism objectives of U.S. security cooperation are aimed at reforming the remaining vestiges of Soviet-style armed forces and building democratic and collaborative national security institutions. Military intervention in politics is not a fear. Indeed, one key challenge of adapting patterns of professional behavior from the communist era is to develop political savvy within the armed forces to collaborate effectively in democratic policymaking processes. In all dimensions of professionalization, the trend lines are positive and gains gradual.¹⁹

In Latin America the regional context is quite different. U.S. strategic planners note that all contextual trends are negative. The theme in this region is that of "emaciated democracies" trying to preserve their democratic gains against the odds of struggling economies, weak democratic institutions, incomplete social reform, and, in some cases, the real threat of insurgency. Military intervention in politics remains a fear because of Latin American militaries' legacies of political interference and because many of the underlying societal problems that were the impetus for previous interventions remain unresolved. The key challenge for outside actors attempting to influence military professionalism in this context is to foster patterns of behavior in which the military plays the most positive role possible as various negative political scenarios potentially play out in the region.

SECURITY COOPERATION AND U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

The Bush Administration's national security strategy is replete with references to the importance of relying on the capabilities of America's allies and friends to achieve its overall objectives.

"The United States should invest time and resources into building international relationships and institutions that can help manage local crises when they emerge."²⁰

"America will implement its strategies by organizing coalitions—as broad as practicable—of states able and willing to promote a balance of power that favors freedom There is little of lasting consequence that the United States can accomplish in the world without the sustained cooperation of its allies and friends in Canada and Europe."²¹

"In the Western Hemisphere we have formed flexible coalitions with countries that share our priorities, particularly Mexico, Brazil, Canada, Chile, and Colombia Therefore we have developed an active strategy to help the Andean nations adjust their economies, enforce their laws, defeat terrorist organizations, and cut off the supply of drugs."²²

It is clear that the U.S. comprehensive strategy depends on sustained coordination and collaboration with foreign national security structures and includes a significant role for working with foreign militaries. The security cooperation agenda should not, therefore, be viewed as a secondary priority but as a key means of attaining U.S. national interests.

PROFESSIONAL MILITARIES AND U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS

U.S. security cooperation efforts have paid rich dividends over time. General James Jones, USMC, Commander of U.S. European Command, (EUCOM) notes in his Theater Security Cooperation Strategy that since September 11, 2001, the vast majority of the ninety-three nations in the EUCOM AOR have offered or provided intelligence, basing and over-flight rights, forces, equipment, and other forms of key support to U.S. efforts to combat terrorism.²³ This assistance would not have been possible without years of engagement aimed at building relationships through security cooperation programs. A specific component of this overall effort has been the building up of the capabilities of allied and friendly armed forces through interactions aimed at enhancing their professionalism.

Indeed, the achievement of U.S. interests in Europe and Latin America depends on the performance of militaries from the region working together with U.S. forces or having the professional capacity to address threats in cooperation with regional armed forces. Sustaining gains in the war on global terrorism requires intensified military-to-military dialogue, especially in the field of intelligence operations, and the continued expansion of U.S. access to bases in the region for training and the conduct of operations.²⁴ Facilitating the development of professional armed forces will increase the chances of the United States achieving other key goals and interests, such as stemming the proliferation of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapons and countering the effects of their use; promoting regional stability; and stemming the flow of drugs.

Ensuring the continued viability of NATO as Europe's preeminent security organization will be easier if our newest allies and newly invited friends can increasingly share the burden of peacekeeping, nation building, and other tasks on the spectrum of military operations as their armed forces become more interoperable with NATO. The EUCOM security cooperation strategy features some goals in this area, such as assigning itself the specific priority to assist Poland with its six-year modernization plan to make one-third of its forces interoperable with NATO.²⁵ The EUCOM strategy also specifically identifies "reformed and effectively structured militaries" as an important security cooperation objective essential to the achievement of U.S. counterterrorism objectives in Eurasia. A particular focus in this regard has been the Georgia Train and Equip Program (GTEP), which seeks to enable the Georgian military to deal with terrorist activities within its borders.²⁶

U.S. Southern Command's (SOUTHCOM's) top strategic priority after its general mandate to assist overall U.S. efforts in the war on terrorism is to assist Colombia in regaining its stability and security to contain the spread of regional instability.²⁷ Additional priorities include promoting the competence and

interoperability of the region's most able militaries—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Colombia²⁸—so that these states may participate in multinational coalitions aimed at peacekeeping and disaster-response operations within the region and out of area. For the second-tier militaries of the Caribbean and Central American states, the goal is to improve their collective capability to conduct humanitarian relief operations in their own sub-region.²⁹

To achieve the global and regional-specific strategic ends identified above, interoperable forces, or at least more able national forces, are required. Focused security cooperation activities aimed at enhancing professionalism as well as leveraging opportunities to take advantage of potential professionalism gains embedded in other engagement activities are important elements of the U.S. security cooperation strategy. Among the many security cooperation activities in which the United States participates, four stand out as being particularly relevant tools toward fostering the development of professional armed forces:

- military-to-military contacts
- combined training
- military training and education programs
- exercises

Each of these efforts is examined here in turn with a critical eye toward assessing their effectiveness at promoting professionalism in the armed forces of U.S. friends and allies.

Military-to-Military Contacts

The Joint Contact Team Program (JCTP) has been the primary vehicle for coordinating military-to-military contacts in former Eastern bloc countries since 1992.³⁰ Coordinated through the Offices of Defense Cooperation (ODC) collocated with U.S. Embassy country teams, the JCTP coordinates bilateral military-to-military events in the host country. The most frequent type of JCTP event involves the deployment of small subject matter expert teams to conduct information-based exchanges with host country personnel. Other types of events include visits of host country personnel to U.S. bases in Europe or the United States, conferences, and exchanges. Event programming is constrained by the “nonlethality” and “no training” prohibitions imposed on the JCTP at its inception. When the program was launched, program managers were careful not to tread on the State Department's authority over and responsibility for the actual training of foreign military personnel. Hence, they agreed to the “no training” stipulation.³¹ Nevertheless, an enormous amount of activity has taken place through the program which has provided at least an important information base for professionalizing the militaries of postcommunist countries.³²

Promoting Professionalism

In Latin America, routine military-to-military contacts are coordinated through various security assistance organizations in the region. The largest and most influential of these are the Military Groups (MILGPs). The United States has MILGPs in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. Less robust organizations also charged with the military-to-military mission include Military Liaison Offices (MLOs), Offices of Defense Cooperation, and the Military Assistance Advisory Groups (MAAGs).³³ SOUTHCOM strategists write that “MILGP efforts promote democracy and democratic institutions, revitalize economies, and foster reform of regional militaries to adopt more appropriate roles and missions.”³⁴

Observers agree that it is easier to improve specific competencies through military-to-military contact programs than to inculcate values. In Latin America, a recent assembly of experts on military-to-military contacts reached a consensus that while regional militaries generally welcomed assistance efforts aimed at improving technical and tactical proficiencies, attempts to change military professional culture are less enthusiastically received.³⁵ The group also concluded that transferring values about military professionalism, human rights, and civil-military relations is difficult to measure and is probably ineffective, unless other institutions in the host country also support the change.³⁶ Effecting gains across the entire spectrum of professionalism, including the infusion of “democratic military professionalism,” is difficult to achieve, just as it is to balance the overall strategic ends of positively influencing good governance and military proficiency.

Combined Training

Combined training between U.S. and host nation armed forces in Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America takes place within two programs: Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) and Counter-Drug/Counter Narcotics Training (CD/CN). The two programs have distinct objectives and varied parameters for their execution, yet each contributes significant gains to the professionalization of host nation armed forces.

JCET encompasses the Special Operations Forces (SOF) training of foreign militaries. By law, 50 percent or more of the training benefit must accrue to U.S. forces.³⁷ Theoretically, the friendly force’s training benefit should be incidental to the primary purpose of improving the readiness of U.S. SOF. For instance, a U.S. Army SOF unit may deploy to Chile for six weeks to work with the Chilean military in a training program largely focused on fulfilling the Chileans’ objectives related to small-unit tactics. U.S. forces will reap significant readiness benefits from practicing their small-unit tactics and enhancing their Spanish language skills. In the final two weeks of the deployment, the U.S. unit may conduct training apart from the Chilean forces to focus on its readiness and to ensure that U.S. forces enjoy the majority of the training benefit.

CD/CN activities, in contrast, are aimed exclusively at contributing to the counterdrug or counternarcotics mission of the host country. The host country's armed forces and police consequently determine the substantive elements of the combined training activities. Additionally, the Department of State Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) take the lead in coordinating these activities, with DOD and Department of Justice (DOJ) playing supporting roles. It is difficult to clearly demarcate the benefits gained by U.S. and host forces in these programs. Those who participate in JCET and CD/CN activities attest to the positive impact they can have on the development of professionalism in the host nation's armed forces – especially the value gained through interoperability. Others note that the programs are ad hoc and episodic. A U.S. Army SOF lieutenant colonel just leaving battalion command reported that U.S. Special Forces have been using the combined training events in Latin America to make progress on several long-term objectives related to the professionalization of Latin American armed forces. Key among these has been a focus on building a doctrinal capacity.³⁸ Doctrine has long been perceived to be a weakness in the SOUTHCOM AOR. For the most part, Latin American armed forces have been slow to institutionalize doctrine.³⁹ A particular challenge for these militaries has been to develop doctrine related to combined arms, joint operations, and the integration of forces. Many of the doctrinal inroads have been made as the result of a long-time engagement with U.S. armed forces through combined training events. U.S. SOF personnel observe that now the challenge is to refine the various doctrinal concepts that have been developed over time rather than introduce new concepts.⁴⁰

Another major focus of professionalization has been to develop the tactical skills of armed forces within the Americas. The small teams of Army SOF, Navy SEAL squads, Marine Corps Riverine Training Teams or Air Force Special Tactics Teams are especially suited to building up a professional capacity from the bottom up while focusing on the smallest units. The U.S. forces usually work a level up to facilitate a greater reach within the host nation ranks. A SOF company on a JCET aimed at improving the integration of fire may work with the battalion staff of the host nation's armed forces. SOF battalion staff may, in turn, work with host nation brigade staff.

A professionalism deficit related to both problem areas identified above is the development of a professional noncommissioned officer (NCO) corps. This has been a long-identified need in both regions, and, is indeed an issue at play in militaries worldwide which are comprised of a conscript-officer corps mix. Furthermore, the slowness in accepting and institutionalizing doctrine relevant to an NCO corps has stalled the progress of this fundamental component of professional armed forces. Almost without exception, Latin American armed forces have

Promoting Professionalism

yet to overcome the obstacles of their societies' class systems to bridge the gap between their upper- and middle-class officer corps and their lower-class and often poorly educated enlisted forces.

The postcommunist states of the former Eastern bloc, on the other hand, are beset by a Soviet legacy of professionalism within which the NCO corps did not play a prominent role. Brigadier General John C. Reppert, a former U.S. defense attaché to Moscow summed up the Soviet legacy with the following remarks, "The problem is that all officers are professionals and all conscripts are not professional. Officers, by definition, cannot perform an NCO's function because they have no enlisted experience."⁴¹ General Reppert was referring to both an NCO's leadership and technical functions. In the Soviet system, the junior officers accomplished many of the technical tasks that NCOs perform, while the leadership role bridging the officer corps and conscripted ranks went unfilled.⁴² While much work has been accomplished through engagement programs such as JCTP, and many other multilateral efforts have been made to address this shortfall in professional interoperability, the progress has largely been in the area of building up NCOs with respect to technical expertise. The doctrinal shift needed to embrace NCOs as key leaders within a professional military has yet to be made.

In Latin America, U.S. security cooperation programs have been particularly charged with ensuring that gains are being made in the human rights dimension of military professionalism. "The first big challenge faced by Latin America's armed forces after the transition period to democratic political regimes... was how to escape the past. The crux of the problem was and remains human rights."⁴³ SOF personnel contend that the most effective way to influence professional attitudes in the human rights realm is to integrate such concepts into particular training scenarios rather than directly confront Latin American counterparts in a way that is perceived as "gringo preaching."

For example, a host nation's standard doctrine for conducting a drug lab raid may be to use combat tactics that employ tremendous force and result in many casualties. Such a scenario may involve, however, numerous noncombatants and family members on scene at the time of the raid. U.S. SOF personnel might suggest that other alternatives could have been employed to achieve the objectives of shutting down the lab while also limiting the loss of innocent life and the negative political fall-out from such an indiscriminate attack. Perhaps more surgical means, such as snipers, could have been used and greater effort made at target discrimination.⁴⁴ Such an interaction with U.S. forces within the context of a combined training event could and does positively influence the development of more human-rights friendly doctrine while also improving the overall professionalism of host nation armed forces in terms of capabilities and appropriately interacting with its democratic society.⁴⁵ Overall, combined training programs when properly fo-

cused, can contribute to the professional development of armed forces in both regions, while making significant contributions to U.S. regional interests. Many countries have become accustomed to working with U.S. forces while they gain the professional skills needed for actual coalition operations.

Participants point out that the payback in terms of U.S. interests has been the result of long-time and continuous engagement. They point to the importance of maintaining an “investment mentality” that focuses on the long-term gradual improvements resulting from relatively small expenditures, but sustained over time. Short-term gains may be less apparent in security cooperation environments that diffuse engagement efforts across AORs that are comprised of 93 and 30 countries.⁴⁶ Specific recommendations for improving the effectiveness of combined training activities toward professionalizing allied and friendly militaries include maintaining some level of continuous engagement with all actors in the regions while also incorporating a more widely understood prioritization scheme. SOF personnel expressed concern that the United States has a tendency to “focus on the current hot spot of the day.” Such an approach to security cooperation can lead to tunnel vision and a loss of influence, possibly resulting in stalling the progress of professionalization of allied and friendly armed forces.

Prior to September 11, 2001, in the era of zero-growth resourcing for SOF, there was some discussion in DOD of dissolving the 7th Special Forces Group, which was dedicated to the SOUTHCOM AOR to fully man the remaining groups serving the other regions. The rationale was that SOUTHCOM was generally quiet and other regions were a greater priority in a constrained resource environment. In the wake of 9-11, SOF resources became plentiful and the cost-cutting measure never took place, but the possibility of such a dramatic scaling back of engagement demonstrated a complacent attitude toward the region. Continued fulfillment of U.S. regional interests depends, to a certain degree, on continuous engagement with professional armed forces in the region.

Military Training and Education Programs

The security cooperation effort aimed most directly at professionalizing the militaries of U.S. friends and allies is International Military and Education Training (IMET), through which foreign military personnel participate in U.S. military educational programs. A wide variety of courses for U.S. personnel—some 2,000, including topics ranging from counterintelligence to helicopter repair to military justice systems—qualify for IMET funding.⁴⁷ Because of the key role that military education plays in an officer’s professional development, IMET is a critical tool in influencing the professionalization process of those militaries that participate. This program is one of the foreign military assistance programs that the Department of

Promoting Professionalism

State (DOS) funds. The Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) administers the program; DOS and DOD share responsibility for its overall management.

In fiscal year 2003 alone, the U.S. government enrolled approximately 9,000 officers from 130 countries in 275 military schools.⁴⁸ Since 1950, nearly 600,000 foreign military personnel have participated in IMET or its predecessor program.⁴⁹ The stated objectives of the IMET program are to

- further regional stability by leveraging the “military to military” concept
- enhance the ability of allied and friendly militaries to work in coalition with U.S. forces by participating in common professional military education programs
- project to IMET participants how militaries in service to democracies maintain basic democratic values and adhere to human rights norms.⁵⁰

It is important to note that while other militaries offer security assistance programs to train and educate foreign military officers, the global scale of the U.S. effort is unprecedented. “There is no comparable historical example of so many diverse sovereign states augmenting the professional development of their armed forces by entrusting so many potential national leaders to the education and training of another state.”⁵¹

A key goal of the IMET program has been to build relationships between U.S. officers and their foreign counterparts that the United States will continue to cultivate as the officers progress toward positions of senior leadership. The hope is that among the foreign alumni of U.S. military schools is a cadre of foreign military leaders well-versed in U.S. culture, history, military doctrine, and professionalism and predisposed to consider American policy preferences or to facilitate access to other influential members of the government. This “Rolodex” of foreign leaders serves as a resource to gain access to both people and space in times of crisis.⁵² For instance, the United States and Uzbekistan have been cultivating military-to-military-ties since 1995, which included the participation of thirty to forty Uzbek personnel at the Defense Language Institute and the Air Command and Staff College.⁵³ These contacts proved invaluable when the United States sought access to Uzbek bases to wage the War on Terrorism.

The opportunity to immerse in U.S. culture while participating in U.S. military education pays significant dividends in terms of the professional development of foreign armed forces. EUCOM’s *Theater Security Cooperation Guidance* touts IMET as “perhaps our most important tool for promoting long-term beneficial change in foreign militaries, as foreign military and civilian leaders encounter first-hand the American civil-military culture.”⁵⁴

Foreign interest in U.S. professional military education (PME) is multidimensional and includes the desire of foreign political leaders to expose their rising military officers to the U.S. model of democratic civil-military relations, the opportunity to gain greater insight into U.S. military operations, and the benefits of networking within the global security community.⁵⁵ By and large, positions in U.S. PME programs are considered to be plum assignments and may be key discriminators for future officer advancement within foreign armed forces. The U.S. Army War College reports that more than 50 percent of its foreign alumni reach the general ranks.⁵⁶ Indeed, many countries reserve their war college seats for general officers. Senior service college billets have become more sought after in recent years as more have become accredited to grant U.S. master's degrees—an opportunity rarely available in foreign armed forces. Clearly, those countries willing to send their most promising officers to the United States—often for periods up to one year, when English language training is received en route to PME—demonstrate the extent to which foreign armed forces value this particular professionalization tool. Observers note, however, that not all IMET participants are destined for key leadership positions in their armed forces and that beyond requiring threshold levels of English language proficiency, the U.S. has only limited influence in the selection of foreign officers for its programs.

U.S. policymakers are convinced that IMET is a low-cost program with the potential to yield great access to current and future military and civilian leadership. In the Bush administration, IMET has found strong supporters in Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Powell, who both advocate increasing U.S. investment in this program. In recent years, IMET funding has hovered around the \$50 million mark, but it will gradually increase to the \$100 million level by fiscal year 2004.⁵⁷ Powell was willing to double the State Department's budget over time if DOD would program expenditures to build up the classroom space, instructors, and other infrastructure costs related to substantially increasing the number of foreign students in U.S. education and training programs. DOD has set aside \$15 million in the Program Objective Memorandum (POM) for this purpose.⁵⁸

Since 1991, a portion of IMET funding has been earmarked for the participation of civilians who perform defense-related functions. This initiative has been dubbed Expanded IMET (E-IMET). Civilian defense officials, legislators, and members of selected nongovernmental organizations take part in courses focused on the management of defense bureaucracies, defense resource management, the creation of military justice systems that protect human rights, and the overall promotion of civilian control of the military. In Latin America, 30 percent of the IMET budget is reserved for E-IMET courses specifically geared toward defining and institutionalizing proper civil-military relationships. In some cases, the tailored country work plan calls for even greater shifts from past spending patterns. For

Promoting Professionalism

instance, in Guatemala, 100 percent of the IMET funding is in the E-IMET category in an effort to professionalize the civilian defense establishment and bolster its oversight of the military.⁵⁹

Critics of IMET range from those who have suggestions about how to make a widely respected program more effective, to think tanks that oppose engaging militaries with poor human rights records. For instance, a “Foreign Policy in Focus” report deplored the Bush administration’s intentions to dramatically increase both combined training events and IMET participation. The report noted that of the 130 countries designated to participate in IMET in 2003, fifty-one have poor or very poor human rights records according to the State Department’s annual report on human rights.⁶⁰ IMET supporters respond that by extending participation to countries such as Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, which have great needs for professionalization within their militaries and for democratization of their post-Soviet institutions, the United States will gain “influence in a critical sector of society which often plays a pivotal role in supporting, or transitioning to, democratic governments.”⁶¹

Although IMET has undoubtedly contributed to the forging of thousands of relationships between U.S. military personnel and the international officers who have attended U.S. courses and the facilitation of access to these graduates’ countries, IMET’s capacity to foster professionalism is constrained by several factors. First there is the issue of the Department of State and the Department of Defense’s split administration of the program. DOD is currently touting its transformed approach to security cooperation with its increased emphasis on assessment and focused engagement aimed at reaping tangible benefits to U.S. interests, but DOS decisions on how to spend are largely made apart from DOD guidance. Defense officials admit, “we would be hard-pressed to say that the way they [DOS] spend IMET money lines up with the Defense Strategy.”⁶² Priorities set out within the regional security cooperation strategies may not be in sync with IMET funding.

Analysts contend that there is a lack of synergy and coordination within the Security Cooperation system, with DOD failing to play effectively in the system. For instance, the regional Combatant Commanders (formerly called Commanders-in-Chief) may address IMET issues in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, but they may not bring up the same issues before the Foreign Relations Committee, which has jurisdiction over IMET. Interagency cooperation must improve before DOD and DOS reach a consensus on regional ends and programmatic resourcing.⁶³

As mentioned earlier, another issue limiting IMET’s effectiveness is that the United States has little input into the student selection process. In many cases, “countries don’t say, who are our best ten lieutenant colonels?” and then send

those with the potential to be generals.”⁶⁴ Indeed, by and large, U.S. military schools have limited control over the admission of their student populations beyond the main cohort of the school. For instance, the U.S. Army War College may have confidence that its active duty Army officers in the class have been strictly vetted for attendance, but it does not have an admissions process that vets other elements of the class. The remaining 50 percent of the class is largely comprised of representatives from foreign governments, U.S. federal agencies, and other services who have great autonomy over whom to send. Similarly, the schools have no control over where their foreign graduates work after graduation. Graduates may or may not serve in positions that utilize their newly acquired professional expertise. Additionally, the governments of the foreign students may or may not have laws requiring graduates of foreign institutions to remain on active duty for a prescribed period of time.

Most of the U.S. schools do not have mechanisms in place to follow up on their international students once they return home. As Margaret Daley Hayes, the Director of the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, noted, “We should follow up with IFs (International Fellows) better. What do they take away? Where do they go? How did their careers progress? This really is a basic accountability issue.”⁶⁵ This comment speaks to the fundamental rationale of the IMET program—future access to the graduates of U.S. schools and programs. In practice, there is no “Rolodex” of U.S. graduates to formally reference in times of crisis. Tracking down former students seems to depend on the efforts of individual officers to maintain their personal friendships.

Although all participants must successfully test at prescribed levels of English, fluency in the English language repeatedly surfaced as a factor limiting the ability of international officers to absorb much from the curricula. Faculty and students widely recognize that there is a great range of English language proficiency among the international officers. “English language deficiencies are most pronounced in written performance. It is generally understood, though never stated, that those without good English-language skills are not held to the same standards as those with fluent command of the language.”⁶⁶ Some advocate that these officers should have the opportunity for a total English language-immersion experience before class begins. Some go even further to suggest that international officers should be deliberately exposed to U.S. concepts of leadership, officership, NCO corps, and the role of the soldier before beginning the course so they are better prepared to engage their U.S. and foreign counterparts.⁶⁷

International officers who attended U.S. staff and war colleges reported that the curriculum short-shifts coverage of alliance operations, coalition warfare, peace-keeping, international organizations, and other non-U.S. centric issues.⁶⁸ At the

Promoting Professionalism

staff and war colleges there is also a virtual absence of curriculum that addresses the thematic objectives of the program, such as the role of the military in a democracy, knowledge of democratic institutions in general, democratic values, and protection of internationally recognized human rights. IMET courses may include an information program that informally exposes international officers and their families to different aspects of U.S. culture and the American way of life. But there is little evidence of attempts to deliberately tailor curricula to ensure that international officers have sufficient opportunities to study these issues in-depth as part of their academic experience.

Combined Education

DOD has also created five regional institutes focused on engaging civilian and military leaders in tailored regional defense studies curricula.⁶⁹ The regional defense centers bring together national security professionals in an academic environment to gain the professional expertise needed to cooperate regionally on national security issues. Among these are the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Germany and the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies located at the National Defense University in Washington, DC.

The Marshall Center is a jointly funded U.S. and German institution organized like a senior service college to provide a multi-lateral forum for defense studies. The focus of the curriculum is the conduct of national security institutions in democratic states.⁷⁰ It offers international education programs for military and civilian officials in courses of varying length through its resident program. The Marshall Center is currently studying the prospect of offering its courses through distance education to increase the exposure of its curricula to security professionals throughout the region. More than 2,400 military and civilian officials from 47 nations have graduated from resident courses since the center was dedicated in 1993.⁷¹

The Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (CHDS) was established in 1997 in response to a need recognized at the first Defense Ministerial of the Americas held in July 1995. Unlike the Marshall Center, the CHDS's primary purpose is to develop civilian defense specialists. The mainstays of its curriculum are defense policy planning, defense resource management, executive and legislative leadership, civil-military relations, and interagency operations. Seventy-five percent of its participants are civilians. Like the Marshall Center, the CHDS is also exploring opportunities to offer distance education courses in its region. CHDS Director Margaret Daly Hayes noted that, "There is a huge demand. The requests to participate are five times more than what we can handle."⁷² Since 1998, when the inaugural course was launched, 1182 fellows have completed the resident course.⁷³

The IMET and E-IMET and combined education programs can contribute more to the professionalization of foreign militaries if several initiatives are adopted. First, DOD and DOS should more closely coordinate their strategic guidance and assign resources according to interagency consensus on regional priorities and priorities within regions. Staff and war colleges should also be directed to track their graduates more closely along the lines of traditional alumni associations. Among the regional centers, both the Marshall Center and the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies have instituted alumni associations to better track graduates, but many of the U.S.-based military education programs have no such mechanism.

The Offices of Defense Cooperation (ODC) in both regions should continue to work closely with host country personnel to encourage the selection of appropriate candidates for U.S. education programs. The aim is to fill each IMET seat and seat at the regional centers with national security professionals who will be in a position to make the greatest contribution to their defense establishments after graduation. Greater resources should flow to the facilitation of English language capability through both U.S. and in-country programs to ensure that the pool of qualified applicants is sufficiently large. Finally, U.S. military schools should be directed to create more curriculum opportunities tailored for the professional development of their international officers. Indeed, many defense experts and academics interviewed agreed that it was not necessarily safe to assume that the U.S. officers who become the international students' classmates have a strong understanding of democratic processes, civil-military relations, and democratization issues.

Exercises

Through a Joint Staff-directed program, each regional command supports vigorous exercise programs that serve the dual functions of supporting the readiness of U.S. forces and improving the interoperability of allies and friendly nations who may be potential coalition partners. Exercises are a primary means of extending U.S. influence in a region by demonstrating U.S. commitment, developing capabilities in specific mission areas such as peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, and building upon goodwill within host nation populations through the construction of host nation infrastructure. Exercises provide "tailored opportunities to sustain positive trends in the development of both appropriate roles and missions, and cooperative, interoperable capabilities to respond to shared challenges."⁷⁴ Exercises undoubtedly contribute to the professional development of participating armed forces as they become familiar with U.S. and NATO doctrine, procedures, standards, and equipment.

Promoting Professionalism

In the European theater, exercises represent the largest single component of security cooperation in terms of money, manpower, and effect.⁷⁵ EUCOM executes seven types of exercises. Of these, NATO Article V, NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP), and In-the-Spirit-Of (ISO) PfP exercises as well as the Developing Country Combined Exercise Program (DCCEP) most directly engage the professionalizing militaries of the former Eastern bloc.⁷⁶ NATO Article V exercises focus on improving the allies' ability to carry out NATO contingency plans. Participants include NATO nations and partner nations when invited. NATO PfP exercises foster partner forces' interoperability with NATO forces. A particular emphasis is placed on partner staffs working alongside allied staff officers within a multinational headquarters. All NATO and partner nations are invited to participate. The U.S. sponsors In-the-Spirit-Of PfP exercises which involve the United States and one or more partner nations. The United States and partner states tailor the ISO PfP exercises to meet partner country and theater security cooperation objectives. These exercises do not receive NATO funding and do not require NATO approval. The DCCEP facilitates the participation of developing countries (designated by the U.S. Agency for International Development) in multinational exercises. The focus is on developing particular mission-essential capabilities that would enhance U.S. interests in the region.⁷⁷

Several major exercises occur annually in the European theater of operations. The largest of these is Strong Resolve, which in 2002 involved the participation of more than 40,000 service members from twelve NATO countries, including 2,800 U.S. troops. The exercise scenario mainly focused on coming to the defense of a NATO member (Norway) that had been attacked, but it also included a track for a simultaneous peace enforcement operation in Poland. Other major exercises in the theater included Victory Strike, Dynamic Mix, and Baltops. Victory Strike included more than 5,000 V Corps soldiers and Polish military forces in a combat operations scenario. Dynamic Mix was the largest exercise in the Southern region in 2002; it involved Article V and crisis-response operations and included the participation of over 5,000 service members from fifteen NATO countries. Baltops is a major annual maritime exercise that focuses on a variety of peace support operations at sea. In 2002 more than 3,000 personnel from twelve NATO and partner states participated.⁷⁸

SOUTHCOM has three main elements to its exercise program: operational exercises, multinational (Foreign Military Interaction [FMI]) exercises, and engineering and medical exercises. The operational exercises focus on improving the readiness of SOUTHCOM personnel to carry out contingency plans in the region. The FMI exercises vary in scope from seminars to full-scale exercises involving major combat units. Partner states have the ability to develop a range of

skills, including counterterrorism, humanitarian assistance, and peacekeeping capabilities. The largest joint and combined service exercise held in the region is Cabanas. Cabanas '02 featured the participation of 1,200 soldiers from ten Latin American countries and 300 U.S. troops. The two-week exercise focused on United Nations (UN) peacekeeping tasks, such as tactical troop movements, food distribution, de-mining, and security and police operations.⁷⁹

U.S. personnel responsible for executing exercises concur that they make significant contributions to the professionalization of friendly militaries. These experts report that exercises are often epiphany-like experiences for participating units that may not have previously participated in realistic training. "Sometimes once they see it, they know what they want."⁸⁰ Firing live rounds and spending extended periods in the field may be infrequent or nonexistent events for participating units. It is common to hear U.S. personnel tell the story of former Warsaw Pact officers' first introductions to professional NCOs. These officers are invariably stunned by the phenomenon of professional NCOs. Professionalizing militaries are very motivated toward participating in exercises. One U.S. officer related the anecdote of a Polish serviceman who had been injured in a car accident, but "came to work because he didn't want to miss an exercise with the Americans."⁸¹

The U.S. and friendly states face significant challenges to optimizing the gains of their joint participation in exercises. Participating countries often lack a training plan through which they could make the best use of exercise participation. If the friendly nation's exercise participation was part of a broader training plan, a more systemic professional impact could result. A strong training philosophy is a key element of a professional force.⁸²

U.S. personnel also report that small and bilateral exercises conducted with the same units over time have a more lasting effect on leaving a professional imprint than single opportunities without follow-up. However, in Europe, with the selection of seven new NATO members, the trend will be toward multinationalizing existing opportunities instead of adding more bilateral exercises.⁸³ There is also a broad consensus on the need to build the leaven necessary to pass on the professional lessons gained through exercise participation to the rest of the military. Such a train-the-trainer methodology can result in exercise participants passing on their experiences to the rest of their respective forces.⁸⁴

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING CURRENT APPROACHES TO SECURITY COOPERATION

There are myriad reasons why the United States has not optimized its opportunities to enhance the professionalism of friendly states in Europe and Latin America. The comments that surfaced most often during interviews with U.S. personnel working in the field and studying the issue within the military academic community are the basis for the following recommendations for improving the impact of current efforts and the approach to security cooperation:

- Understand the problem.
- Adopt a strategic approach.
- Clearly articulate ends.
- Innovate ways.
- Encourage regional cooperation.
- Leverage assessment mechanisms.
- Be patient.
- Build on successes.
- Strive for coordination and consistency.
- Adjust means and resources.

Understand the Nature of the Problem

The U.S. impact on fostering professionalism in the armed forces of the former Eastern bloc and Latin America will be necessarily limited unless the United States makes greater progress toward understanding the fundamental nature of the problem. The postcommunist and the Latin American militaries have diverse historical experiences—each significantly affected by long periods of service to authoritarian regimes—that continue to hinder the development of professionalism in the armed forces of these regions.

“Military professionalism does not exist within a vacuum that is completely unaffected by changes within the society it serves, especially revolutionary changes. States in transition face the problem of an increasing level of disparity between societal and military values. . . . The task of achieving civilian control and military professionalism in states undergoing democratic transitions is complicated by the shift in the political system from authoritarianism to democracy.”⁸⁵

Practitioners must recognize that the militaries in postcommunist Europe and the Latin American region have a social-political-historical context from which all their respective present-day reforms proceed. It is also important to note that these differences may not result in commonly shared views of professionalism between Western counterparts and their partner militaries in Latin America or the former Eastern bloc. Officers from each of the regions are also quick to argue that they *are* professional, so the dialogue must be careful to focus not on whether a particular unit or partner military is professional, but whether professionalism has been adapted fully to be appropriate for the present social and political contexts and if the outputs of the system result in adequate capabilities to meet the governments' national security and political goals.

Identifying key potential "high impact" areas on which to focus security cooperation tools will lead to gains in professionalism more quickly. For instance, practitioners and scholars widely acknowledge that the lack of a professional NCO corps is a major limitation to systemic reform in both regions. Greater focus and concentration of resources need to be directed at this linchpin issue. Real success in the development of NCO corps could be the catalyst for further systemic change that results in dramatic changes in capabilities.

Another area that could serve as a catalyst is military education. This issue is of particular concern in the former Eastern bloc where military education systems have not yet been significantly adapted to the postcommunist era. Experts also agree that military education in the Americas has not sufficiently adapted in the post-authoritarian era to properly socialize officers to service in democracies.⁸⁶ Military education is the crucible of professional development and the prime socialization tool for officer and NCO corps alike. Innumerable military-to-military exchanges may be unable to overcome the influence of a friendly nation's military education system that posits contrary concepts and ideas. IMET is an invaluable tool for exposing key personnel to the U.S. military education system and the brand of professionalism that it espouses, but unless indigenous military education systems are adapted to achieve the same ends, systemic change in this area will remain elusive. For instance, Poland has asked for help to set up its own home grown professional military education system for both military and civilians.⁸⁷ Similar opportunities should be sought out and supported.

A third critical area in both regions is the development of competent defense resource management systems and long-range strategic planning skills. E-IMET programs and the regional centers do great work in this area, but much more needs to be done. Observers report that defense ministries in both regions face a dearth of civilian expertise. As a result, ministries of defense (MODs) are unable to either effectively contribute to the development of appropriate defense strate-

Promoting Professionalism

gies or efficiently and rationally allocate defense resources. In some cases, it may be appropriate to radically shift security cooperation resources from military recipients to the civilian defense bureaucracies to encourage the proper development of influence among these forces in the national security process.

Finally, a key aspect of understanding the nature of the problem is recognizing the significant cultural barriers to defense reform in general and professionalization specifically. One scholar recommended reinitiating a country studies program to raise the knowledge level of security cooperation practitioners to better tailor their efforts in each country.⁸⁸ As one practitioner noted, “militaries *always* want to become more professional and work with Americans. The problem is all the factors that work against us.”⁸⁹ In each region, local legal systems, defense bureaucracies, varied degrees of effective parliamentary oversight, lack of defense resources, underdeveloped doctrine, and poor equipment are obstacles to more rapid professionalization.⁹⁰ Military-to-military programs are notorious for their cookie-cutter “one-size-fits-all” approaches. Greater awareness of the distinct needs of each case will result in greater progress.

Adopt a Strategic Approach

Practitioners and scholars alike consistently lamented the lack of a strategic approach to the overall security cooperation effort. Strategy, in this sense, refers to the ability to clearly articulate the ends of the policy, identify ways or courses of action through which to accomplish the ends, and then allocate resources accordingly to achieve policy success. Applying the strategic thought process to professionalize partner armed forces necessarily entails a clear understanding of what “professional armed forces” means in each case, clearly identifying levers for facilitating change and directing security cooperation resources accordingly.

Clearly Articulate Ends

In both regions it is essential to reach a consensus on what the goals of professionalization are. Clear ends must not only be stated, but practitioners must understand what they mean. It is not sufficient to state the goal of building professional armed forces without taking the next step of clearly defining the objectives.⁹¹

In Europe, there seems to be a fairly strong consensus, that the term “professional armed forces” is largely incorporated by the concept of being interoperable with NATO armed forces. There is a clearer sense of what sorts of missions professionalizing armed forces would undertake: NATO Article V and non-Article V missions such as peacekeeping. The main problem is coordinating the means or security cooperation tools to most effectively achieve these ends. How-

ever, practitioners should continue to monitor progress in the values-based dimension of professionalism and not take this aspect of professionalization for granted.

In Latin America, observers throughout the security cooperation community repeatedly expressed frustration that it was unclear to them why the United States wanted to work with militaries in the region. “We do not have a clear idea of what we want the local military to do. We have to clarify why we are working with them. To do what? Why have SOUTHCOM exercises to do peacekeeping? Are we suggesting that we want to do coalition operations with them?”⁹² Another observer noted, “a 2001 SOUTHCOM document mentioned ‘interoperability with the Southern cone’ fourteen times. To what end?”⁹³ With the exception of working with the Colombians in counterdrug operations and the U.S. Navy’s cooperation with several regional navies,⁹⁴ experts agree that the United States does not signal any long-term plans to work professionally with Latin American armed forces.

By and large, the United States tends not to view Latin American armed forces as players on a larger world scene, even though Argentina was in the Gulf War,⁹⁵ and Bolivia, Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina have all participated in UN peacekeeping operations.⁹⁶ However, several new security cooperation initiatives were announced at the 2002 Defense Ministerial of the Americas. The first was to strengthen regional naval cooperation via more collaborative planning processes. The second called for encouraging the contribution of niche capabilities to contribute to the broader task of creating regional peacekeeping capabilities.⁹⁷ Overall, experts remain skeptical about the prospects of more focused security cooperation in the region absent a clear articulation of ends.

Innovate Ways

U.S. personnel responsible for executing security cooperation programs in each region expressed frustration that program activity often consisted not of what was needed, but what was available. Instead of adapting existing means or crafting new approaches to better achieve the strategic policy ends, tools on hand were applied. A related issue is the long-held mindset operative in both the JCTP in Europe and the MILGPS in Latin America that more security cooperation events equate to the more rapid achievement of success. A shift toward a more qualitative approach centered on focused “high impact” events would be more on target toward professionalizing armed forces.

Promoting Professionalism

Encourage Regional Cooperation

Security cooperation practitioners in Europe have often noted that the NATO alliance—the NATO PfP program in particular—is one of the critical external factors driving the professionalization of Europe’s postcommunist militaries. For example, NATO’s Membership Action Plan (MAP) helped to define clear criteria for reform and provided guidance on how to flow security cooperation resources to the region. Latin America, however, lacks such a mechanism. Experts have suggested that Latin America could build on the gains achieved through increased regional economic cooperation⁹⁸ to begin to institutionalize regional security cooperation. David Pion-Berlin proposed a Southern Cone defense system to deal with the common threats of illegal border transgressions, narcotrafficking, terrorism, and immigration.⁹⁹ Colonel Joseph Nunez of the U.S. Army War College has advanced the idea of forming a strategic community in the Western Hemisphere, building on the existing structure of the Organization of American States (OAS). The military arm of this new security architecture would consist of standing brigade-size multinational units, initially from the most advanced militaries in the region: the United States, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. These units would be fully outfitted and trained to deploy regionally or outside the region to fulfill regional security interests.¹⁰⁰

Encouraging regional security cooperation through such a mechanism could focus on both U.S. interests in the region and the objectives of the member states. Less advanced militaries in the region could, in the near term, focus on contributing niche capabilities to the force much along the same lines that the postcommunist militaries now contribute to NATO. In general, military professionalism would be fostered through cost sharing, joint problem solving, and reorienting the military away from an internal focus toward external missions.¹⁰¹

Leverage Assessment Mechanisms

The full implementation of assessment programs in each region is another means that observers note is now underutilized. Security practitioners in Europe report that DOD assessment efforts in aspirant and recently allied NATO countries contributed greatly to these countries’ ability to focus security cooperation and national resources. Such mechanisms have the advantage of charting change over time and tracking change in all relevant functional areas, such as military education, personnel reform, pay, housing, pensions, and promotion systems.¹⁰² The absence of something akin to a NATO accession process in Latin America has not led to the similar implementation of assessment tools. Indeed, security practitioners there worry that the shift from “engagement” toward the supposedly

more focused “security cooperation” may lead to the underassessment of long-term gains. Assessment mechanisms are existing tools with great potential to be adapted or created anew to track performance and focus cooperation as long as practitioners keep in mind that U.S. interests span from the short to mid to long term.

Be Patient

Cultural change, particularly change in the strategic culture, happens slowly in both Latin America and the former Eastern bloc. In contrast, the American culture is one of instant gratification. This is especially true in the Congress, which looks for immediate results to justify the continued spending on a particular program. Program managers must be realistic and understand that the militaries of the nations in the Eastern European and Latin American regions are unlikely to meet U.S. expectations in the short term. A long-term approach cognizant of the importance of slight shifts in the short term will be more successful.

Build on Successes

Concentrating graduates of U.S. security cooperation programs in select units will facilitate the eventual transformation of the unit from its present state, but it will not lead to systemic change. Foreign militaries as a whole will benefit from a train-the-trainer approach when rotating their retooled and highly trained “elite troops” back to their standard units. Similarly, if a breakthrough is occurring in one of the linchpin areas of professionalization, such as building an NCO corps or transforming a military education system, it should be possible to divert resources to achieve greater near-term depth in these areas. A related concept is to exploit opportunities to help develop niche capabilities, that is, the opportunity to specialize in particular capabilities to contribute to multilateral operations. The idea of niche contributions is especially popular in Europe, countries can make such contributions without increasing defense spending.

Strive for Coordination and Consistency

The lack of coordination and program consistency is a frequent lament of security cooperation practitioners. Observers have pointed repeatedly to the need to improve coordination at multiple levels.

- Coordination between host governments and the United States on how best to achieve mutual interests is often lacking.
- Coordination within the U.S. interagency process may be inadequate.

Promoting Professionalism

- Coordination among multinational actors has been limited.¹⁰³

Increased focus should be placed on leveraging these opportunities to ensure that similar programs do not conflict with each other and other programs are complementary.

Adjust Means and Resources

Finally, a more strategically oriented approach to security cooperation will adjust resources to ensure that adequate means are selected to achieve the stated strategic ends. A specific complaint in this area is that there is often an imbalance in the amount of resources being poured into a country from across the U.S. interagency system. While a holistic approach to democratization and the development of military professionalism might emphasize public diplomacy and development targets, the agencies that provide these funds are dollar and people poor. DOD, in comparison, is dollar and people rich, which may result in an over-militarization of assistance within both the national security sector and the country overall.

By far the greatest complaint, however, is a shortage of resources to execute the strategy. In Latin America, where the average Foreign Military Financing (FMF) budget is \$3–5 million, practitioners complain that very little can be achieved with such limited financial resources. In Europe, security cooperation is funded more generously and other national actors are more actively engaged. However, practitioners worry that present levels of funding may decline as the security cooperation focus shifts east toward the new NATO-selects and remaining aspirants. Indeed, there are concerns that the main sources of funding for security cooperation activities with Eastern European militaries, the Warsaw Initiative Fund (WIF), and the DCCEP may be drying up.

CONCLUSION

Promoting professionalism in foreign militaries is a complex enterprise—both conceptually and programmatically. Many contend that such efforts are bound to fail, while others prematurely declare victory over partial successes. A realistic goal is to set a course somewhere between these two extremes. The United States has a vast security cooperation system bustling with activity, yet it is experiencing limited success in the area of fostering professional armed forces. A focused, coordinated, and balanced strategy that clearly articulates ends, innovates ways, and adjusts means will build on the successes that activities to date have yielded.

Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, attending both the Defense Ministerial of the Americas and the NATO Prague Summit in November 2002 noted,

“The two meetings took place a half a world apart, and yet I was struck by the similarities of objectives at both gatherings. In both Europe and the Americas, free nations are seeking to consolidate the democratic gains and adapt their institutions to . . . deal with the new, dangerous threats of the 21st century.”

“There are some who thought that with the end of the Cold War, that NATO might be somewhat less relevant. I’ve seen a lot of articles and editorials and columns over the years. Instead, the opposite’s the case. More countries are seeking to join, and our decades of security cooperation among the NATO allies is paying off as new threats emerge.”

“The same is true of the institutions of the inter-American system. The need for the nations of our hemisphere to work together had not diminished at all. It has grown, as has the need for the institutions that facilitate hemispheric cooperation.”¹⁰⁴

Increasingly, the globalization of security calls for like-minded polities pooling defense resources to achieve their common national security ends. The United States relies on its coalition partners to help implement its comprehensive strategy. Security cooperation programs are critical tools for sustaining engagement with foreign militaries. These relationships are crucial to the effective application of U.S. power and to the ability of partner states to realize their national security objectives through the effective application and subordination of military power.

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²⁹ *Ibid*, A-8.

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³¹ Ulrich, *Democratizing Communist Militaries*, p. 54-60.

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Promoting Professionalism

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Promoting Professionalism

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