

Security Cooperation

How It All Fits

By Taylor P. White

Department of Defense (DOD) security cooperation activities support or are combined with other assistance programs and often are a part of nation assistance. This often occurs in a manner that may appear confusing or convoluted to the joint warfighter. This article portrays how the programs and activities converge. Although the various terms and activities in show in the accompanying figure appear to have simple names and meanings, they in fact have strict definitions based on funding and authorities. While some of the activities directly support one another, others have distinct boundaries between their definitions and functions. The joint community is beginning to address the framework of security cooperation in a new joint doctrine publication, Joint Publication (JP) 3-XX, *Security Cooperation*. It is important to embark with clear definitions and understanding of the complex relationship among these terms to facilitate understanding by the joint force.

Security cooperation is referred to in both joint professional military education programs and joint staffs as a tool to be employed by combatant commands. However, in other settings, it is a set of programs managed by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency. Extensive review of joint doctrine and policy reveals that the definition of *security cooperation* appears to encompass these areas and more. After expanding our understanding of security cooperation, other terms such as *security force assistance*, *foreign internal defense*, and *security assistance* provide additional specificity for the tasks being

conducted, yet some of these actions fall outside security cooperation. Even though security cooperation spans the range of military operations and is inclusive of large-scale operations conducted in support of foreign nations, it is not all-encompassing of security related support from U.S. agencies other than DOD.

Nation assistance is support rendered by foreign forces within another nation's territory based on mutual agreements.¹ While this term is used to describe the comprehensive approach to assisting other nations, the definition associated with *nation assistance* has two limitations: it does not encompass support to regional organizations, and it is only assistance by foreign forces. A better, broader term is *foreign assistance*, which is assistance to foreign nations ranging from the sale of military equipment to donations of food and medical supplies to aid survivors of natural and manmade disasters.² When examining the current definitions for *foreign assistance* and *nation assistance*, we find significant overlap:

*Foreign assistance to foreign nations [ranges] from the sale of military equipment to donations of food and medical supplies to aid survivors of natural and man-made disasters. U.S. foreign assistance takes three forms: development assistance, humanitarian assistance, and security assistance.*³

This term is likely to resonate with the State Department, which has an Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance and a designated foreign assistance budget.

*Nation assistance—assistance rendered to a nation by foreign forces within that nation's territory based on agreements mutually concluded between nations.*⁴

The term *nation assistance* is not often used in policy or strategy. For example, the current National Security Strategy mentions foreign assistance three times but does not use the term *nation assistance*. The first opportunity to create some clarity is to replace the term *nation assistance* with *foreign assistance* in the upcoming revisions of JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*, and JP 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*.

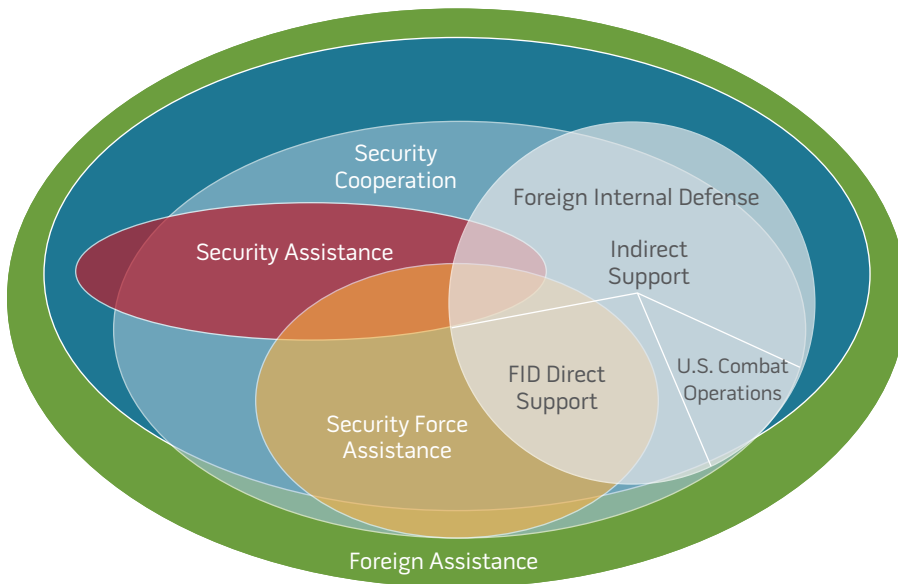
If foreign assistance were to replace nation assistance in joint doctrine, the definition would include that portion of security cooperation that falls outside the realm of nation assistance in figure 1. Foreign assistance then encompasses all of security cooperation and reduces some of the ambiguity. Security cooperation then focuses strictly on the DOD contribution to foreign assistance and encompasses all DOD interactions with foreign defense establishments to build both national and regional defense relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests, 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.⁵

Having addressed the larger constructs, it is possible to review and clarify the relationships between other programs and activities that occur within them. First is *security assistance* with a specific definition in relation to both DOD and State. It refers to a group of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, as amended. These programs are funded and authorized by State to be administered by DOD through the Defense Security Cooperation Agency.⁶ This is the process by which the United States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services. That portion of security assistance outside of security cooperation in figure 1 reflects State and other civilian agency involvement.

Foreign internal defense, one of the 11 core activities of special operations, is frequently thought of as only small engagement teams training foreign forces. Actually, it represents more to include

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Security Cooperation Framework



the “participation by a foreign government in any of the programs taken by a host nation to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to its security.”⁷ It encompasses involvement in the internal defense of a host nation by both civilian and military agencies. As long as there is an internal threat to the host nation, any support provided by the United States to that nation falls under the definition of *foreign internal defense*. Large-scale U.S. counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and counterdrug operations conducted in support of a host nation are just as much foreign internal defense as using special operations forces to train and advise foreign security forces.

This range of support to a host nation is captured in the three categories of foreign internal defense. The first is indirect support, with emphasis on strengthening national institutions through economic and military capabilities that contribute to self-sufficiency. The overlap of security assistance and indirect support in figure 1 reflects State Department–funded programs administered by DOD, which provides training and/or equipment to a foreign nation facing an internal threat to its security. Second is direct support, involving everything short of combat operations that provides direct military assistance to the host nation civilian

populace or military when it is faced with a threat beyond its capabilities. This support does not overlap security assistance in figure 1 because these activities involve the employment of the joint force in a supporting role, are joint or Service funded, and do not involve the transfer of arms or equipment. This support is typically in the form of logistics and intelligence support to the host nation. The final category of foreign internal defense is U.S. combat operations and is meant to serve only as a stopgap measure until host nation security forces are able to provide security for the population. This includes major operations against internal threats but remains strategically defensive in nature. Although not widely recognized as such, the United States conducted foreign internal defense campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan after the establishment of the host nation governments.

All three categories of foreign internal defense can take place simultaneously, with security assistance programs providing funding and equipment to the host nation (indirect support), intelligence-sharing with the ministry of defense (direct support), and American forces conducting large-scale counterinsurgency operations (combat operations). The level of U.S. involvement is driven by the political decisions of its elected leaders, the host nation’s capability and capacity, and

the nature of the threat, but all efforts must be in support of the host nation’s programs for internal defense and development. The United States can assist in the development and assessment of these programs, but they must be administered by the host nation with all activities across all categories of foreign internal defense working toward a common objective. Based on the intensity and scope of the threat (for example, terrorists, violent criminal enterprises, or an insurgency), the United States could support some of the defense and development programs through routine security cooperation activities.

To promote U.S. interests and support allies and partners around the globe, the United States often provides security force assistance to train host nation forces. Security force assistance is DOD’s contribution to a unified action effort to support and augment the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions toward achievement of specific objectives shared by the U.S. Government.⁸ The approaches used by the joint force to build relationships and promote U.S. security interests vary widely from country to country.

Some U.S. partners already possess extensive security capability (qualitative) and capacity (quantitative), and it is important to develop interoperability with these partners through bilateral exercises and military-to-military exchange and education. Other partners’ security forces benefit from security force assistance that focuses on the sustainable development of the foreign security forces’ capabilities and capacities. These efforts represent only DOD activities, but they can be applied to all types of security forces and supporting institutions. Defense ministries and training institutions can be the target of security force assistance as well as local police and border patrol forces. These activities include organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding and building, and advising and assisting, but they must be conducted with, through, and by the foreign security forces.

As security force assistance is only a DOD activity, it remains fully inside the

realm of security cooperation in figure 1. A portion of *security force assistance* falls outside of the definition of *nation assistance* in the figure because the United States can provide security force assistance to regional organizations such as the African Union (another instance where *foreign assistance* should replace *nation assistance*). As shown in figure 1, some security force assistance activities are funded by security assistance programs, but only those that contribute to the sustainable capacity and capability of the host nation security forces. Some international military sales involve subsequent military training on the operation and maintenance of the equipment. While selling equipment does not constitute *security force assistance*, some subsequent military training on the equipment would fit into its definition.

Security force assistance is a primary tool to support partner nations when an internal threat is present. When the United States conducts indirect and direct support foreign internal defense, security force assistance is the means to bolster the host nation's efforts to counter internal threats. These security force assistance activities must be conducted with, through, and then ultimately by the host nation's forces, never as a substitute. The employment of U.S. forces in combat operations is a separate category of foreign internal defense and does not directly improve the capability or capacity of the host nation's forces. U.S. combat operations establish the time and space necessary to develop a host nation's forces until security can be provided with, through, and ultimately by them.

As previously discussed, *security cooperation* is a broad term encompassing many related but nonhierarchical programs, operations, and activities encompassing ends, ways, and means. Ends are the desired objectives or endstate. Ways are the sequence of actions, methods, tactics, and procedures most likely to achieve the ends. Means are the resources required to achieve the ends, such as forces, weapons systems, funds, will, and time to accomplish the sequence of actions. For the DOD contribution to foreign assistance, joint and Service operations and campaigns represent the

ways as they guide the employment of the joint force toward a common objective and the desired endstate. Security assistance programs and security force assistance activities are part of the means in an ends-ways-means methodology.

Successful National Security Strategy, supported by foreign assistance and security cooperation, typically encourages a whole-of-government approach using all U.S. Government instruments of national power. This approach is supported by the joint force through interagency coordination. A more comprehensive approach designated as *unified action* integrates activities of the military, other interagency partners, multinational partners, and intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations for unity of effort by all participants in a given activity, operation, or campaign. Much thought must be put into what type of foreign forces we are supporting or enabling. Equal thought must be placed on the strategic endstate for the security cooperation and foreign assistance efforts supported by the United States and the future use for the foreign security forces the Nation is supporting. Washington cannot expect to create foreign forces in its own image; the history and culture of the host nation must define the organization and ethos of its security forces. We must also take the nature of the threat and the operational environment into account when training and equipping foreign forces. Not all partners will fight wars of proxy for the United States. Instead they will use their forces as they deem appropriate, so security force assistance could dramatically shift the balance of power in underdeveloped regions or create other undesired or unanticipated consequences.

Grouping together the various security cooperation-related topics aids in budgeting and appropriating resources to accomplish strategic objectives. The employment of military forces, however, should never be obfuscated by unnecessary redundancies in language and definitions. It is important for the joint force commander and a joint staff to understand both the means available and the ways to sequence operations. Joint doctrine consists of the fundamental

principles that guide the employment of U.S. forces in coordinated action toward a common objective. It is important for future joint doctrine to define and explain the relationship of security cooperation terms to facilitate understanding by the joint force.

JP 3-XX, *Security Cooperation*, is expected to address the many related terms and programs that support our nation's foreign policy. This emerging doctrine must refrain from forcing the security related topics into a hierarchal relationship. It must explain the supporting relationships while properly defining the ends, ways, and means of employing the joint force in support of security cooperation activities and related joint operations (for example, foreign internal defense). The future revision of JP 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*, should be synchronized with the development of JP 3-XX, while also expanding the discussion of the third category of foreign internal defense, U.S. combat operations, to consider large-scale counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations conducted in support of a host nation. Joint Doctrine Note 1-13, *Security Force Assistance*, will also assist the joint force commander in identifying tools and resources for assisting foreign forces. However, none of these documents should be viewed as *the* synchronizer of all DOD activities; rather, each should highlight its unique planning considerations and use of existing programs to support strategic objectives. JFQ

Notes

¹ Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, August 11, 2011, revised).

² JP 3-29, *Foreign Humanitarian Assistance* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, March 17, 2009).

³ JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, November 8, 2010, as amended through January 31, 2011).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ JP 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, July 12, 2010).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.