



Marines with 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division, and the Jordanian Armed Forces conduct clearing exercises during Intrepid Maven 23.4 on 11 July 2023 in Jordan. Intrepid Maven is a bilateral exercise among U.S. Marine Corps Forces, U.S. Central Command, and Jordanian Armed Forces designed to improve interoperability, strengthen partner-nation relationships in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, and improve both individual and bilateral unit readiness. (Photo by Cpl. Khalil Brown, U.S. Marine Corps)

# Beyond Train and Equip in U.S. Security Cooperation

Bilal Y. Saab

**U**.S. security cooperation has undergone monumental changes over the past six years.<sup>1</sup> That is worth celebrating because,

for a couple of decades, this enterprise was mired in red tape, inefficiency, and ineffectiveness, impacting America's interests abroad and its reputation as a

security partner of choice.<sup>2</sup> However, the set of historic reforms that were issued in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (including additional ones in subsequent years) have not benefited from a thorough reevaluation of how the United States should conceptualize, execute, and manage security cooperation both in Washington and out in the field, in ways consistent with the requirements of the new strategic and fiscal environment.<sup>3</sup> The very substance and ideas that inform and guide the execution of long-term U.S. security cooperation are still a work in progress. The result is a U.S. government workforce that lacks both the intellectual and the practical training in all the elements of security cooperation—not just the tactical and operational aspects of the enterprise but also its institutional enablers.

Security cooperation deserves better. This is a major pillar of U.S. statecraft and an invaluable asset for the United States in its strategic competition with China. If properly designed, security cooperation can leverage, strengthen, and expand America's network of global allies and partners—its biggest competitive advantage—in support of U.S. and collective security interests.<sup>4</sup> The stakes are high. The United States has a strategic obligation to get security cooperation right.

## First, What Is the Goal?

There is little point in discussing and arguably much harm in pursuing and evaluating U.S. security cooperation without first having a crystal clear idea of what the United States is trying to accomplish through that vehicle, and for how long, *together with its partner*. Any confusion or mismatch in U.S. and partner objectives will hurt if not altogether torpedo the operation.

My focus in this article is on long-term and holistic U.S. security cooperation—the kind that seeks to help the partner not just acquire weapons, train better, or accomplish specific operational objectives but also to develop full-spectrum and sustainable military capability that could be used for national defense and collective security purposes. Supporting steady-state and theater-shaping operations, U.S. security cooperation in this context is meant to assist the partner in converting its defense budget into effective combat power through the development of a solid defense foundation that incorporates and leverages healthy habits, norms, procedures, and processes of defense management.

While there are many lessons learned from U.S. security cooperation with international partners mired in active security crises or engaged in combat against adversaries—Afghanistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Georgia, and currently Ukraine to name a few—there are fewer from situations where the United States is trying to help the partner methodically reform its defense institutions and restructure its armed forces.<sup>5</sup> Of course, there are always limits to any lessons-learned exercises because America's partners are all different, with unique cultures, needs, preferences, abilities, and capacities. Each partner's defense governing structure should be a reflection of the sociopolitical culture and environment in which it operates. A one-size-fits-all U.S. policy is a recipe for disaster; only a tailored approach works.

That said, just like there are universal values and norms in politics that are hard to challenge given their proven impact on political and societal development—such as legitimacy, inclusiveness, representation, free elections, the rule of law, the separation of church and state, and an independent judiciary—there are principles in defense that are indispensable for military development—such as the delegation of authority, the empowerment and promotion of lower ranks in the military, readiness, jointness, decentralization, teamwork, and inter- and intradepartmental cooperation and coordination. All those concepts and practices are not American or Western *per se*; they are cross-cultural. With that assumption or realization in mind, it then becomes useful if not imperative for Washington to develop some kind of a template or general framework for security cooperation with partners seeking to holistically enhance their combat power for the long term by investing in the structural enablers of military capability. As of this writing, such a template, at least one that is rigorous and coherent, does not exist in the U.S. Department of Defense.

## Back to Basics

If the United States is to assist a partner develop effective and sustainable

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military capabilities, it must acknowledge that as important as defense strategies, military doctrines, and capability-based assessments are, they matter little if the partner is unable to produce employable combat power from the resource planning process and resulting budget.<sup>6</sup> Any U.S. methodology for conducting institutional capacity building with a partner, therefore, must first account for the partner's ability to deploy and employ combat ready forces.

Unfortunately, the United States has ignored such

to emphasize training and equipment in security cooperation and paying lip service to defense institution building. Instead of uncovering the institutional roots of the JAF's combat weaknesses, American advisers have conducted capability-based assessments that have been useful for informing tactical and operational upgrades including the recapitalization/restructuring of the JAF's U.S.-supplied F-16 fleet but futile for the critical goals of readiness and sustainment, which remain elusive.<sup>8</sup>

Although militaries worldwide operate and are

“One obvious example of an overequipped yet less militarily effective partner is Saudi Arabia. Its immense wealth and high-tech military arsenal notwithstanding, Saudi Arabia is one of the most underwhelming partners of the United States.”

advice with many international partners. Jordan, one of the largest recipients of U.S. military assistance in the world, is a classic example. The Jordanian army has leveraged U.S. training and equipment better than many other U.S. partners. Its commitment to professional training, developed initially with the help of British troops based in the country until 1956–1957 and from then on with the U.S. military; its adherence to higher (but still lacking) standards of equipment maintenance (at least of its air assets); and its reasonable ability to absorb U.S. advice on some but not all doctrinal, tactical, and operational matters all make it one of the better students and counterterrorism partners of the U.S. military in the Middle East. However, despite Washington pouring dozens of billions of dollars in the Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF) for several decades, the Jordanians have important deficiencies in their human capital, their force development, their defense management systems, and their strategic-level institutions.<sup>7</sup> This makes them vastly incapable, now and for the foreseeable future, of sustaining and ultimately graduating from U.S. military assistance, which is the Achilles' heel of most U.S. military assistance programs around the world.

That Jordan is starting from an almost nonexistent defense institutional foundation—the country has no standing ministry of defense, and concomitantly, no civilian defense professionals—explains a lot, but the United States has not done the country any favors by continuing

organized differently, each must fulfill six basic functions to effectively perform their national security duties: organize, train, equip, deploy, employ, and sustain. Identifying deficiencies in any of these functions during the U.S. scoping process will highlight opportunities for U.S. engagement on institutional capacity building with the partner.

“Organize” refers to the military's ability to design the proper organizational force structure to achieve national security objectives; “train” is the ability to achieve a level of proficiency necessary to conduct successful combat operations; “equip” includes the ability to provide units with the necessary equipment in sufficient quantity and with adequate funding for them to conduct prompt and sustained military operations across all relevant domains; “deploy” is the ability to select and move the correct forces at the correct time and in the correct formations; “employ” is the ability of units to conduct prompt and sustained combat and noncombat operations; and “sustain” is the ability to maintain, generate, and present combat forces across all phases of operations to include train, deploy, and employ.<sup>9</sup>

Even the briefest of descriptions of these six military functions should immediately underscore a fundamental problem with the dominant, and partial, U.S. security cooperation approach of “train and equip.” The “train and equip” model fails to adequately account for the functions of organize, deploy, employ, and sustain,

and, thus, it often ends up creating well-equipped, sometimes even overequipped partners who still cannot deploy, employ, and sustain effective combat power for the conduct of military operations in support of collective security interests.

One obvious example of an overequipped yet less militarily effective partner is Saudi Arabia. Its immense wealth and high-tech military arsenal notwithstanding, Saudi Arabia is one of the most underwhelming partners of the United States (its performance in its war against the Houthi rebels in Yemen is only the latest proof of that). Its inability to leverage its extensive national assets is what makes the Saudi army so incredibly disappointing. Perhaps unsurprisingly, also substandard is U.S.-Saudi security cooperation, despite Riyadh being the largest arms sales customer of the United States in the world, with more than \$100 billion in active Foreign Military Sales cases.<sup>10</sup> Similar to Jordan, U.S. security cooperation engagement with the Saudi armed forces has focused on training and equipment, more or less overlooking institutional capacity building over the years (although for a brief period of time in recent years, there was some U.S. engagement on structural defense reform, but it was terminated for a host of reasons, some political). That the Saudis ended up with the majority of their national force fighting in Yemen, for example, is precisely why they need a force sustainment system. They could not effectively rotate their troops. Several units were stuck in Yemen for more than four years mainly because the Saudi military does not have force rotation policies. It is no wonder those troops were exhausted and ultimately less capable in combat operations.<sup>11</sup>

From a planning perspective, the Saudi example and many others illustrate how U.S. defense management personnel must know not only how to improve the partner's military capability but also *how much* of it is needed in terms of human personnel and equipment. Too little might jeopardize the objectives and too much might harm sustainment. Finding the right balance necessitates a resource planning process.

## Methodology

After identifying basic and glaring deficiencies in any of the partner's six military functions, the United States will need a practical defense management methodology to address both the structural and the operational readiness of the partner, which are two

very different things. Producing structural readiness is a defense planning system.<sup>12</sup> The former measures the ability of a unit to deliver its planned operational capability solely in terms of a planned budget, and the resourcing levels that planned budget affords to the unit measured in people, equipment, facilities, training, and other supplies such as spare parts and munitions.

A joint force employment system, on the other hand, creates operational readiness, which the U.S. Army defines as "the ability to provide and support Combatant Commanders operational plans with trained and ready forces in the quantity and with the capabilities required."<sup>13</sup>

The defense planning system, future-oriented in nature, addresses the organize, train, and equip functions. Thus, it lives to the left of the budget. The joint force employment system, which focuses on employing the present force, lives to its right since it tackles the deploy, employ, and sustain operational functions. The defense planning system includes strategy planning, capability planning, program and budget planning, acquisition planning, and joint concept development.<sup>14</sup> It is meant to build a budget that generates the force. It is the foundational planning system that drives all other defense management planning processes. Because it drives both short-term and long-term processes, its outlook is across multiple time frames. It prepares programs and budgets annually, it conducts joint capability planning biannually, it resources those capabilities in the midterm, and it considers an industrial strategy for long-term future planning. The activities and processes associated with the defense planning system are organizationally aligned with the partner's civilian defense establishment or ministry of defense. This allows for an integrated approach to planning and resource management whereby planning functions are in line with resource authorities and legal authorities are consistent with public law.<sup>15</sup>

Properly managing a nation's armed forces on a day-to-day, near-term basis requires a joint force employment system to deploy, employ, and sustain those forces. This system executes the defense budget by integrating force sustainment, joint force management (which includes human resource management, defense resource management, and logistics), and joint force employment processes. These three elements allow a partner's ministry of defense to make day-to-day risk

decisions relative to how forces are generated, allocated, and employed in defense of the nation.

## What Right Looks Like

The United States showed what successful long-term U.S. security cooperation is when it worked with Colombia, Georgia, and the Philippines on holistic defense reform.

**Colombia.** The government of Colombia leveraged U.S. foreign aid to

upgrade and redesign the country's armed forces throughout the 2000s. This process, which escalated in early 2008, has sought to enable the Colombian defense and security sector to address evolving threats more effectively in the twenty-first century beyond narcoterrorism through a set of reforms in defense management including capability-based force planning, budget planning, and human resource management. Defense transformation in Bogotá led to serious inroads in the war against narcoterrorism, pushing the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, after suffering significant military losses, to reach a historic agreement with the government in 2016 through which the former promised to declare all its assets and hand them over to the Colombian authorities.<sup>16</sup>

U.S. support of Colombia's defense restructuring officially started in January 2010 and has continued since. At the institutional level, American advisors have worked very closely with the Colombian Ministry of National Defense, as well as its police and armed forces, to develop a capability planning and development model.<sup>17</sup> This construct lays out the requirements for the Ministry of Defense and the Colombian army, navy, air force, and national police to connect their budget submissions to their national security objectives and then monitor and evaluate progress toward their overall strategic objectives.

Despite the relative weakness of state capacity in Colombia throughout its modern history, the U.S. effort to help Colombia revamp its Ministry of Defense and strengthen its law-enforcement capabilities has been particularly effective, generating outcomes that have proven to be long lasting. These include better civilian oversight of the armed forces, more coherent

defense policy guidance, institutionalization of various planning and budgetary processes, and cultural changes within the Ministry of Defense that now emphasize sustainment and intra- and interdepartmental coordination.<sup>18</sup>

**Georgia.** One critical lesson the country of Georgia learned from the 2008 confrontation with Russia was that an arms buildup does not equate with real combat power. For years, the Georgians kept growing their military, though with little strategic logic or planning, despite NATO's counsel to trim and sustain the force and pay close attention to interoperability with Western partners.<sup>19</sup> The humbling outcome of the 2008 war began to change the Georgians' attitude toward military development, with Tbilisi seeking to reorganize its armed forces and drastically reform its defense enterprise with the full-fledged support of the United States and NATO.

In February 2017, the Georgia Defense Readiness Program (GDRP) was officially born and the training component was launched on 1 May 2018.<sup>20</sup> A bilateral security cooperation framework on which the United States embarked at the invitation of the Georgian government, the GDRP has sought over the past few years to support the Georgian Ministry of Defense and train all of Georgia's nine light infantry battalions on national defense missions through live-fire exercises. In that respect, the program has two main components: one for tactical and operational training and one for institutional development.

Before the GDRP began in earnest, the Georgians had met certain prerequisites to demonstrate their seriousness with respect to embracing defense reforms, including completing a Strategic Defense Review, making a budgetary plan to implement it, and reallocating funds to support unit readiness requirements. The Georgians also committed to cutting back on funding for legacy programs and systems that were diverting resources from readiness objectives.

Although key challenges remain in terms of planning, resourcing, and budgeting for training and sustaining the readiness of their military, the Georgians, with U.S. and international support, have made key strides with their Ministry of Defense and General Staff in rationalizing the organization of their forces, inculcating command responsibility for readiness standards, streamlining their human resource



An Egyptian Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon departs a U.S. Air Force KC-10 Extender aircraft assigned to the 908th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron after practicing aerial refueling 4 September 2023 over Egypt during Exercise Bright Star 23. Bright Star is a multilateral U.S. Central Command exercise held with Egypt across air, land, and sea domains that promotes and enhances regional security and cooperation, and improves interoperability in irregular warfare against hybrid threats. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Emily Farnsworth, U.S. Air Force)

management system, and optimizing their acquisition and procurement processes to preserve resources for their readiness goals.

The United States is well-positioned for long-term success in Georgia in large part because top leadership in the U.S. government for many years have considered the relationship with Tbilisi as a foreign policy priority in the region and a key asset, especially now in an era of increased strategic competition with Russia. The significance of consistent, high-level U.S. political support when it comes to building stronger strategic and military ties with any foreign partner is absolutely huge. More practically, the fact that the GDRP's two parts—the tactical/operational and the institutional—worked hand in hand was invaluable. This helped the Georgians, whose institutional capacity was quite weak prior to U.S. and NATO involvement, better absorb U.S. equipment and resources.

**The Philippines.** At the invitation of the Philippine government, the United States has provided advice and mentorship on defense restructuring to its treaty ally since the late 1990s. From 2003 to 2016, the Philippine government, with the technical and financial support of the United States, prioritized the implementation of deep institutional reforms that centered on strategic planning, operational and training capacity, logistics, human resource management, acquisition, civil-military operations, and budget management.<sup>21</sup> This required not just reform but a total transformation of the defense and security sector, and the Filipinos in charge understood and internalized it as such in their new strategic documents. They agreed to reengineer all their systems of planning, programming, budgeting, logistics, procurement, and management, and retool their personnel architecture by professionalizing the workforce, all of which required legislation and various



A marine from the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit confers with marines from the Philippine Reconnaissance Marines 19 April 2023 in preparation for close quarters training during Exercise Balikatan 23 in the Philippines. Balikatan is an annual exercise involving U.S. and Philippine armed forces designed to strengthen bilateral interoperability, trust, and cooperation. (Photo by Cpl. Austin Gillam, U.S. Marines)

other government procedures that sought to replace the old with the new and make sure the old did not creep back into the system.

Over the years, the Filipinos have improved the most in the areas of strategic planning and resource management. But human capital development remains a big challenge, mainly because culture has been an inhibiting factor. The process of developing and empowering Philippine noncommissioned officers has had to face significant cultural hurdles due to the patriarchal nature of Philippine society.<sup>22</sup>

The Americans did a few other things right, and the Filipinos too. According to a team of U.S. defense management specialists assigned to the transformation project, U.S. strategic communications with all levels of the Philippine Armed Forces was comprehensive. The Philippine authorities provided solid access to the American advisers at both lower and higher levels, and both sides coordinated closely and often and worked

hard toward the institutionalization of reform measures to ensure their longevity.<sup>23</sup>

## Challenges and Lessons Learned

It is safe to say that the less developed the partner's defense institutions are, the more difficult long-term U.S. security cooperation will be. Also straightforward is the assumption that the larger and more comprehensive the defense institution building project is, the harder it will be to implement it simply because the challenges that would have to be overcome, whether cultural, political, financial, or otherwise, would be greater.

With partners who are starting almost from scratch and truly learning the basics of defense management, perhaps the United States could focus on those partners' smaller and more elite combat units that are capable of contributing effectively to coalition operations. The quick reaction forces (QRF) of Jordan, the special operations forces (SOF) of Lebanon, and the Counter

Terrorism Service (CTS) of Iraq are good examples of manageable U.S. security cooperation engagements that have been deemed as reasonable successes.

A recent addition to Jordan's SOF family thanks to heavy U.S. investment, the QRF was born in 2014 to serve as a strategic mobile reserve force.<sup>24</sup> Responsible for internal and external security operations, it is an air-mobile, combined-arms battalion with two permanent infantry companies and one rotational infantry

melted away in 2014 as Islamic State terrorists swept across Iraq, the one bright story of that experience is the country's CTS. The CTS was at the forefront of the anti-Islamic State fight, gaining serious capabilities along the way and ultimately defeating the enemy and liberating Iraqi territory thanks in large part to years of U.S. advice and assistance.<sup>27</sup>

Yet for all the accolades of these three examples of U.S. security cooperation programs, not one is sustain-

“ The bulk of U.S. engagement centers on activities it knows best—training, equipping, and teaching the partner how to create a joint force, with very little if any regard for defense planning processes and institutional capacity building. ”

company. The QRF is largely well-trained for complex operations including counter incursion, air mobility, and night operations, and it has integrated fire support and aviation support planners. It is well organized and capable of sustaining operations for twenty-four hours against an irregular platoon-sized threat.

What the United States has been able to accomplish with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) over the past decade or so, and its SOF particularly, is nothing short of miraculous, given the country's systemic chaos and recent economic collapse.<sup>25</sup> The United States essentially was able to transform the LAF from a decrepit force mocked by all its regional peers to a professional military that has earned the respect of U.S. Central Command's leadership. There is no question that the most remarkable fruit of U.S. assistance to the LAF, which was holistic in nature, was the 2017 Fajr al-Jouroud operation against the Islamic State.<sup>26</sup> Although Lebanese troops did the fighting and managed to evict the scores of Islamic State fighters from northern Lebanon, the Americans were with them every step of the way, planning, brainstorming, and rehearsing together before the start of combat operations, and providing various forms of nonkinetic support during battle.

Although U.S. security cooperation in Iraq since the 2003 U.S. invasion is often characterized as a catastrophic failure given the dozens of billions of dollars of U.S. investment in an Iraqi security force that

able mainly because of both the United States and the partner's lack of sufficient investment in and commitment to institutional capacity building.

Access is a major challenge the United States faces with many of its partners. Whether it is because of lack of trust, vulnerability, or extra sensitivity to state secrets, many partners restrict or deny the United States access to information about its national security institutions and armed forces. This makes it incredibly hard for U.S. defense management specialists to engage and provide effective assistance.

Because of reduced access or lack of support on the part of the partner, the United States ends up emphasizing technical and tactical aspects of security cooperation. Under these circumstances, the bulk of U.S. engagement centers on activities it knows best—training, equipping, and teaching the partner how to create a joint force, with very little if any regard for defense planning processes and institutional capacity building.

Should a partner commit to a defense reform program and express a desire to work with Washington, both parties should establish a permanent U.S. security cooperation office within the ministry of defense or some other national security institution of the partner. This would strongly communicate U.S. commitment and help underscore U.S. credibility. That is the model Colombia pursued for more than a decade. Afghanistan had a version of that model, too, until everything



collapsed in 2021 and the United States withdrew all its combat troops and military advisers.

## Managing Expectations

Institutional capacity building with any partner, large or small, capable or less capable, requires a high level of patience and an ability to shape expectations—things at which Washington typically is not very good. With these time-consuming and politically sensitive defense reform initiatives, it is almost always better to go slow and steady than fast and reckless—a piece of advice that applies to both Washington and the partner. Progress must be observable and recognized, however, otherwise the motivations of the partner are likely to fade.

It is high time the United States looks at and treats security cooperation more seriously and holistically. If the new/old concept of “by, with, and through” has any

chance of succeeding, then the capability and the capacity of America’s partners to contribute to collective security interests should be a chief U.S. concern. This cannot be limited to the partner’s ability to shoot, move, and communicate; how well the partner is generating and sustaining its armed forces and fulfilling all the necessary military functions should be a key U.S. interest as well.

By any objective measure, Ukraine has fought against Russia’s invading forces better than what most defense analysts and practitioners anticipated. The challenge now, as this conflict has turned into a war of attrition, is how to sustain its military effort and bolster its defense institutions and planning processes. This is where holistic security cooperation is paramount. ■

*I would like to thank Patrick Goodman for his invaluable insights.*

## Notes

1. For an overview of the reforms, see “Security Cooperation,” Department of Defense (DOD) Open Government, accessed 5 October 2023, <https://open.defense.gov/Transparency/Security-Cooperation/>. For assessments of the reforms, see Bilal Y. Saab, “Broken Partnerships: Can Washington Get Security Cooperation Right?,” *Washington Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (Fall 2019): 77–89, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2019.1663120>; and Bilal Y. Saab, “Enabling US Security Cooperation,” *Washington Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (Summer 2021): 89–99, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2021.1956188>.

2. For an examination of the problems of U.S. security cooperation in the Middle East and more broadly, see Bilal Y. Saab, *Rebuilding Arab Defense: US Security Cooperation in the Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2022); Mara Karlin, “Why Military Assistance Programs Disappoint,” *Foreign Affairs* 96, no. 6 (November–December 2017): 111–20.

3. Liana W. Rosen, “Security Cooperation Issues: FY2017 NDAA Outcomes,” Congressional Research Service (CRS) In Focus No. IF10582 (Washington, DC: CRS, 6 January 2017), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10582/2>. To create a security cooperation workforce development program, as instructed in the fiscal year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act in September 2019, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency established the Defense Security Cooperation University (DSCU). DSCU has sought to train, certify, and provide for the long-term development of the security cooperation workforce in the United States and around the world. In June 2023, the DOD issued recommendations to strengthen foreign military sales, among which is the creation of a Defense Security Cooperation Service on par with the Defense Attaché Service.

4. The 2022 *National Defense Strategy* states that “we will leverage security cooperation and capacity building with partners, backed by a monitor-and-respond approach that takes advantage of the deterrent value of the Department’s ability to deploy forces globally at the time and place of our choosing.” Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2022 *National Defense Strategy* (Washington,

DC: DOD, 2022), 13, <https://uploads.mwp.mprod.getusinfo.com/uploads/sites/23/2022/11/2022-NATIONAL-DEFENSE-STRATEGY-NPR-MDR.pdf>.

5. For lessons learned from security cooperation from Afghanistan and Iraq, see Department of Defense Office of Inspector General (DODIG), *Special Report: Lessons Learned from Security Cooperation Activities in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Africa*, Report No. DODIG-2022-142 (Washington, DC: DOD, 3 October 2022), <https://www.dodig.mil/reports.html/Article/3177119/special-report-lessons-learned-from-security-cooperation-activities-in-afghanistan/>; for U.S. support to Saudi Arabia’s war in Yemen, see Joyce Sohyun Lee, Meg Kelly and Attthar Mirza, “Saudi-Led Airstrikes in Yemen Have Been Called War Crimes. Many Relied on U.S. Support,” *Washington Post* (website), 4 June 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/interactive/2022/saudi-war-crimes-yemen/>; for an overview of U.S.–Georgia security cooperation, see Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, “U.S. Security Cooperation with Georgia Fact Sheet,” U.S. Department of State, 16 June 2020, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-georgia/>; for an overview of U.S.–Ukraine security cooperation, see Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, “U.S. Security Cooperation with Ukraine Fact Sheet,” U.S. Department of State, 21 September 2023, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-ukraine/>.

6. Patrick Goodman, defense management specialist, conversation with author, 15 June 2023.

7. Jeremy M. Sharp, *Jordan: Background and U.S. Relations*, CRS Report No. RL33546 (Washington, DC: CRS, 23 June 2023), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL33546/71>.

8. Saab, *Rebuilding Arab Defense*, 87–110.

9. Patrick Goodman, defense management specialist, conversation with author, 10 July 2023.

10. Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, “U.S. Relations with Saudi Arabia Fact Sheet,” U.S. Department of State, 11 May 2022, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-saudi-arabia/>.

11. Saab, *Rebuilding Arab Defense*, 51–86.
12. Goodman, conversation, 10 July 2023.
13. For more on the difference between operational and structural readiness, see “What is Military Readiness?,” Institute for Defense & Business, accessed 5 October 2023, <https://www.idb.org/what-is-military-readiness/>. For a definition of operational readiness, see Army Regulation 525-30, *Army Strategic and Operational Readiness* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office, 9 April 2020), [https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR\\_pubs/DR\\_a/pdf/web/ARN15118\\_AR525\\_30\\_FINAL.pdf](https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ARN15118_AR525_30_FINAL.pdf).
14. Strategy planning is the process by which the partner’s ministry of defense identifies the most pressing security concerns that capability planning should consider and that a military must be prepared to address. It defines the missions required to meet those challenges and describes approaches to address them. Capability planning is the process by which defense analysts determine if planned capabilities are sufficient to meet national objectives articulated by strategy. Program and budget planning is the process by which funds are allocated among defense objectives, ensuring the optimal combination of capabilities within the given budget. Joint concept development is the process by which military planners describe how the services will operate together to achieve military objectives.
15. Patrick Goodman, “How a Military Runs: The Defense Planning and Employment System” (unpublished manuscript, 16 March 2023).
16. Bilal Y. Saab, “U.S. Security Cooperation Deserves a Fair Evaluation,” *War on the Rocks*, 2 May 2003, <https://warontherocks.com/2023/05/u-s-security-cooperation-deserves-a-fair-evaluation/>.
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23. Ibid.
24. Saab, *Rebuilding Arab Defense*, 93.
25. Ibid., 125.
26. Bilal Y. Saab, *Assessing US Assistance to the Lebanese Armed Forces* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy & International Affairs, March 2023), 6–8, [https://www.aub.edu.lb/ifi/Documents/Assessing\\_US\\_Assistance\\_to\\_the\\_Lebanese\\_Armed\\_Forces.pdf](https://www.aub.edu.lb/ifi/Documents/Assessing_US_Assistance_to_the_Lebanese_Armed_Forces.pdf).
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