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PANEL ONE: Post Conflict Reconstruction

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AMB. PASCUAL: One of the things Jennifer and I want to try to do is to give you a sense of some of the lessons that we have tried to learn on stabilization and reconstruction issues and some of the difficulties of learning lessons on stabilization and reconstruction as well, but let me just take one second to deal with the broader question of why should we care.

One of the things that we have come to learn is that in today's world, conflict is a reality. Since World War II, there have been 54 U.N. peacekeeping missions; 41 have actually been since 1991. So in the last 15 years, there have been 3 times as many international peacekeeping missions as we saw prior to that. One of the things we have come to learn, tragically in some ways after 9/11, is that this should actually matter to us. When there are governments in conflict and there are voids in governance, that can create a foundation for international terrorism, organized crime, and weakness in governance that could also lead to the spread of infectious diseases or the incapacity to deal with things like infectious diseases and poverty. Indeed, those kinds of threats are direct threats that we can feel in the United States, and so we have to think about these issues differently than we might have thought about them 25 years ago.

In that context, what I would like to try to leave with you are 10 lessons on stabilization and reconstruction issues.

The first of these is actually the fact that stabilization and reconstruction is almost a misnomer, that there are multiple stages of transition that we have to think about. Generally, we focus on the process of stabilizing a society, of bringing in peace and security and order, dealing with humanitarian needs, jumpstarting an economy, beginning a political process. But that is really an opening stage, and it is usually characterized by the international community playing a leading role in affecting what happens within a

country. If it is based on the international community's lead role, that in and of itself does not become sustainable, and it has to transition at some stage to local ownership.

Some of the other key factors that have to be addressed or other key stages that I think have to be addressed are first dealing with the roots of conflict, those very factors that led to the conflict to begin with, things like political exclusion, discrimination against ethnic groups or religious groups, corruption within a society, unequal distribution of natural resource wealth that can lead to conflict in a society.

The third stage I would offer is one of building the laws and the institutions of a market democracy, those elements of an economy and a political system and a rule of law that are necessary in order to try to bring order to a society, things that we tend to take for granted, things like regulatory systems, tax systems, political parties, Parliaments, the functioning of court systems, civilian control of the military.

And finally, a fourth stage that I would suggest is the development of civil society or civic institutions that could provide checks and balances on government.

It is not to say that you have to do all of these things and get them perfectly right in order to have a stable transition, but if you don't get a critical mass of each of those, then it is very easy for states to lapse back into conflict, and it is one of the reasons why we have seen in the research that has been done that 43 percent of states that have gone through conflicts actually lapse back into conflict within five years.

If we look at it from a perspective in contrast to, let's say, transition in the former Soviet Union, where there was no war and we think that it took eight to nine years to get some consensus in Russia or Ukraine around economic policy to move from a contracting economy to beginning to achieve economic growth. Then put that into a situation, say, in Africa, where you have just been through a war, where there is virtually no literacy, there

are no comparable resources in the society. It gets us to begin to recognize that this process of transition is a multiyear process; it takes time. And if we do not stick with it, we will get a lapse back into conflict.

The second lesson is the importance of peace agreements and how they are written. It may seem like a funny thing, but so often peace agreements are actually understandings and don't get written down. What we have learned over time is that it is absolutely critical to put down in writing what the timetables are for peace; what the requirements are for participation by political groups; what funding expectations should be from outside sources because in many cases there are expectations that are built up in a society, and then you get a population that becomes disillusioned when those expectations aren't met. It is also critical to have a sound peace agreement to be a foundation for international support because indeed if you try to put in international peacekeepers without the context or a framework for peace to begin to operate with, they themselves are not going to be able to achieve that peace.

The third lesson is that transitional security is a fundamental requirement to facilitate a lasting peace in any society. We can talk about what the ideals should be — that you have military operation or international peacekeepers that create an environment which allow you to work with local police forces and local military; build up their capability; transition to perhaps, say, international policing capabilities; and eventually, when you have built up your indigenous capacity, your international peacekeepers and police can phase out. The reality is that that timing hardly ever works, and that there are major gaps.

We saw some of those gaps in Iraq, for example, when the military, the U.S. Military, had no orders or instructions on the maintenance of stability and order. As a

result of that, they lost that critical monopoly on the use of force. Over time, what we have learned is once you lose that monopoly on the use of force, it is extremely difficult to gain it back again. Hence, we have to be sensitive to these gaps in transitional security, of who has the capacity to maintain it, who has instructions for stability and order, and how international capabilities are going to be meshed with the building of an indigenous capacity.

As that capacity for policing locally is developed, it is critical to link it in as well with the development of court systems and penitentiary systems. Since Jennifer is doing a lot of work on this subject, I will let her talk about that further in her remarks.

The fourth lesson is the importance of transition to local governance. You can have outside peacekeepers and the international community begin to maintain an environment of peace, but it is only an environment, and it is not sustainable if you don't start to grow a local capacity for governance which has credibility with its own people and can maintain ownership over the kinds of political decisions that have to be made in society.

This is difficult to do because you have just been in an environment where parties have been at war. There is not a lot of clarity about which particular group should have dominance on the ground. It is often difficult to have local ownership that broadly extends itself to a wide range of groups within a society. Yet, at the same time, what we have also learned is if you don't have indigenous groups and organizations that become the foundation for governance, international peacekeepers cannot actually sustain the peace in that environment. Hence, the example again that we see in Iraq. The U.S. military and international forces could create an environment to transition to local governance, but without a firm local government to actually have a credible posture

within, it would be difficult for international peacekeepers to impose a peace on that society. Eventually in Iraq, we have to get a local government which is credible and can call off the militias and create an environment politically that allows for security and for economic reconstruction to develop.

The fifth lesson is on economic reconstruction, and there is a lot that we can say on this, but let me just make a couple of points. First is that it is absolutely critical in order to sustain an environment for peace, but it cannot substitute for external security or even internal security and it cannot substitute for local governance. Unless you have some element of security, unless you have some element of political transition, it is very, very difficult to try to get economic growth to be able to be sustainable. It is also important when you think about economic development in a society after conflict to think about developing a new economy, not just rehabilitating the old, but what kinds of businesses can be developed, small scale enterprises can be developed that can begin to sustain a population.

In many cases, we have become fixated with the importance of infrastructure investments, and I don't want to say that that isn't an important thing to do, but we also have to think about what are some of the critical requirements for a given society to be able to put people back to work in the near term.

The sixth lesson, I would say, is the importance of trying to create a transparent regime for wealth management. Ironically, so many of the societies where we have seen conflict have been societies where there have been massive natural resources. If there isn't a capacity to equally share those natural resources or have a sense that most ethnic groups or religious groups can benefit from those resources, there can be a tendency to lapse back into conflict. Again, hence, what we see in Iraq. If the Sunnis do not have a

sense that they will be able to benefit from the oil wealth of that nation, it will be difficult over time to get them to buy into any kind of lasting governance for that society.

The seventh lesson I would offer is the importance of involving women in all aspects of peace agreements and the implementation of peace agreements. The basic reality is that it is 50 percent of the population that is affected, but they are also going to bring a more practical perspective to some of the critical issues that have to be addressed in sustaining the peace — education, health care, division of water, division of land — creating an environment of trust in the implementation process.

The eighth lesson is the importance of effective decentralization. This is a tricky issue because in some countries, decentralization can come to mean empowering regional warlords that promote separatism. In the end, what you want to try to do is stimulate local initiative and local activity, recognizing that you cannot depend on what usually are extremely weak governments to be able to deal with the needs all around the country. Yet, at the same time, if you cannot help regional governments or provincial governments be able to develop themselves in context of the national strategy, there is a real danger in developing separatist tendencies.

Let me just say a word about the provincial reconstruction teams that were put in place in Afghanistan and are being developed in Iraq. There were positive initial experiences with these, particularly in Afghanistan. They created an environment in which there was a sense of security, and I think were absolutely critical in facilitating the successful elections of October, 2004, in Afghanistan. But after that, there was the critical challenge of development. Some of the brigade commanders told me, they said that they did development by opportunity. If there was a well that needed to be fixed, they fixed it. If there was a school that needed a classroom, they added it. But this was

not something that was sustainable.

What we have not been able to do is build up the civilian capabilities associated with those provincial reconstruction teams to have groups of civilians who can work with provincial officials to develop provincial development strategies that tie into a national strategy. Hence, there is a real danger that these provincial reconstruction teams could stagnate or, in fact, could be unsuccessful because right now they do not have an effective exit strategy of how to move from a military lead to a civilian lead. It is particularly, particularly important in Afghanistan right now because not only is this a major U.S. involvement but NATO is involved there in a significant way. If NATO in the end finds that it cannot engage in this kind of area activity, undertake it successfully, and exit successfully, it is going to be extraordinarily difficult to get NATO to do this in other parts of the world.

The ninth lesson I would offer is the importance of building a U.S. capacity to engage in stabilization and reconstruction. This is one of the things that I was doing in my previous job that Strobe alluded to, in building an office for reconstruction and stabilization in the State Department, which in fact actually serves as an interagency body and includes representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, the Joint Forces Command, USAID, the Treasury, CIA, and others.

The capacity that needs to be developed there, I would say, is four-fold. The first is to actually serve as a joint staff type of capability that brings together the civilian parts of the government to allow them to operate within a common U.S. Government strategy in a way that is interoperable among agencies, something we have not had in the civilian world in the past and which the military has struggled with since the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation and took them a good 15 years to build their joint staff

capabilities. We need to do that for the civilian world and between the civilian world and the military world.

It is critical to develop a capacity to quickly deploy individuals who can staff U.S. embassies or capabilities on the ground to develop and manage programs. That is a particular skill set that has largely been stripped from the U.S. Government, and certainly USAID has lost as a result of staff reductions over time. It is necessary to have a reserve capability to bring in critical skills like police, police trainers, and rule of law experts. From that, it is critical to have the capacity to tap into a fourth skill base, contracts and grants with the private sector, NGOs, firms, universities, think tanks.

In order to do all of this and have the resources to actually move people quickly, I think the requirement is on the order of \$350 million a year. I would say a bargain. If you put this in the context of Iraq, if we had had a greater capability of getting people on the ground early with plans in hand and a greater capability of making a difference before there was instability in that environment and if we could have, as a result of that, brought home one division from Iraq one month early, that would save \$1.2 billion, just one month early for one division.

And finally, the tenth lesson I would offer is the importance of building a multilateral and international capability. A U.S. capability here is not for the purpose of unilateral action. I would offer that it is as part of a contribution of a contribution to a multilateral effort that has to take place in dealing with issues related to conflict.

There was an important development over the past year with the development of a peacekeeping commission at the United Nations, but right now it is just a shell. It is an approval that was given at the level of the U.N. Security Council. The General Assembly still has to nominate its members. So does ECOSOC. There is an opportunity to shape it

as a capacity in the U.N. system for the first time that can walk across peacekeeping operations to humanitarian operations to long term development-related activities and integrate them in an effective way. But if we can't fill that shell in some meaningful way, it is not going to take us much further.

So there are 10 lessons that I will offer that perhaps we can build on in the discussion. Let me turn to Jennifer to add to that a broader perspective on some of the experiences that we have had and intellectual lessons that we have learned from the reconstruction and stabilization experience.

MS. WIDNER: Thank you. I am not sure I am going to offer lots of lessons now, but I thought we might get into that in questions and answers.

Given the occasion and we have a number of Woodrow Wilson alumni in the room, I thought what I would do is talk about the rationale and some of the challenges associated with the new program at the Woodrow Wilson School to try to draw some lessons about what works and what doesn't, not only in post-conflict settings but also in failing states where we are likely to get a high level of violence, states that have failed because of low, very low levels of economic growth, a negative or shrinking economy, as well as sporadic violence that we might not call civil war yet.

I thought maybe it would be most helpful if I divided my remarks into three parts. One is just to offer some facts again about the significance of this problem, why we ought to pay attention to it. Second is to talk a little bit, Tom Caruthers fashion, about how hard it is to draw lessons in these settings. There are actually some real hurdles to doing this effectively. I think Ambassador Pascual pointed to some excellent priorities with which I would entirely agree. But once you get down to good practices for particular kinds of institution-building, I am not sure we actually know very much, and I want to say why I

think that is and maybe what we can do about it. And then I want to conclude with a few remarks about the particular kinds of things that we are trying to get off the ground at the Woodrow Wilson School and invite your comments and revision of some of those ideas.

Then I am happy to talk about lessons drawn from the African experience when we move to questions and answers because I think there are some interesting insights from a continent which is not all failing. We have 11 real success stories emerging on the continent right now since 1990.

Let me first offer a few facts which ought to be familiar to some of you if you have waded around in this subject area for a while. Economist Paul Collier, who is now at Oxford and was at the World Bank as head of the research staff not long ago, has written an interesting paper on policy turnarounds in failing states, and he is only looking at low income states. So he is not commenting upon those higher income states. But through econometric analysis, with which one may not thoroughly agree, he finds that in the low income failed states, the expected duration of failure is about 59 years. That is not in our lifetime or in the lifetimes of the leaders of those countries or most of the citizens of those countries would we expect to see a failing state turn around into a more successful state. This is a severe problem. Without outside help, most of these failed states will continue to fail during our lifetime.

His second finding is that outside help, while essential for bumping any of these countries over the threshold into recovery, must assume a radically different form from what it has had in the past. Aid contributed in very small amounts can actually hinder the turnaround, and of course that is what hesitant foreign donors — hesitant because they are not sure how their money is being used — are going to do. They are going to parcel out small bits of money here and there. That, he finds, does not work. Aid is only

effective when it is big, roughly 30 percent of GDP in these kinds of situations. Now, one can dispute some of these figures, and we can talk about that later, but I think it is an interesting observation.

Technical assistance as opposed to funding big infrastructure projects, institutional development projects, is only useful in the first couple of years. We can imagine one reason why that might be, that it is important for countries to have ownership, and if technical assistance means continued foreign control, it is not going to go very far.

Unfortunately for many of those beloved academic theories and theories in policy circles these days, the level of democracy doesn't seem to make much difference for these particular things and whether there is a turnaround or not. What does make a bit of a difference, and I suspect this relates to a lot of other more important things, is the proportion of people who have a high school education. Those with more are more likely to experience a turnaround.

Well, this analysis certainly isn't ironclad. It has been disputed, but I think it is an interesting point of departure. It is a little bit different from what we are trying at the Woodrow Wilson School. We are actually trying to focus on what do we know about the solution to particular kinds of problems that people on the ground from these countries face when they try to build an institution. So, for example, in the area in which I work, often with court systems, what do we know about what makes a homegrown effort to produce a better court system, a more independent judiciary actually work or not? We are beginning to accumulate some wisdom about that by looking at the range of experience across countries where you have had higher levels of judicial independence evolve over time versus lower.

We are very interested in filling a gap that I think Ambassador Pascual referred to,

and that is once foreign assistance gets out there, it is very important to have people on the ground from those countries who have some ideas about how to build up the strength of these institutions.

Let me say, first, a few words about how hard it is to actually draw lessons about what works in these contexts from an academic perspective, since I am from an academic institution, and then say a few words about how we are trying to address these problems at the Woodrow Wilson School.

As you all know, being in Washington D.C., the language of best practices, lessons learned, lessons identified is all over as a buzzword. If you were to surf the web right now, you would find good practice guidelines, lessons learned on almost all of the web sites of NGOs and others involved at UNDP and others involved in the subject area. I think that is very important. The only way we can begin to build in one setting is to begin to look at what happened in other settings or improvements over time within the country in which we are working.

From an academic's perspective, one always asks, well, how reliable are these lessons? If you look closely, you also see that they are based on one success or a few successes that that particular organization feels it had with a particular program. As an academic, I would like to look a little bit more broadly. Typically, when we are trying to generate reliable statements about whether a program works or not, we try to control for a whole range of factors, hold a lot of things equal. We try to look across successes and failures and see what was common to the successes but not in evidence in the cases of failure, and then we like to double-check those initial findings with the people who are on the ground at the time.

The problem with these post-conflict settings and with failing states is that they

subvert all the kinds of things that we take as essential to generating reliable conclusions in academic research.

First, most people out in the field don't actually like to talk about the project that failed, and we see a lot of that right now. The problem is that if your funding stream, your job is contingent upon the success of that project because legislatures in the United States and other parts of the world are trying to measure the successful projects and continue to fuel the successful projects. We don't look at the failures. We don't advertise the failures. To draw reliable good practice guidelines, we actually have to look at the failures. Somehow, you have to get people to confess, and that is hard.

One of the things we are thinking about at the Woodrow Wilson School is oral histories after the fact, taking people out of that context when they are no longer dependent for their incomes on this particular project. Then, can you give us a candid sense of what worked and what didn't?

The second thing that subverts the ability to draw nice reliable lessons is that these are very volatile environments. Lots of things are changing all the time. In academic research, you want to hold a whole lot of factors constant in order to draw a clear causal inference about what was doing the work, whether the program actually worked. Volatile conditions subvert that goal. Economists who work on economic shocks, economic crises get a little bit closer to trying to solve some of the problems associated with volatility than a lot of us do, but it is very hard.

The third thing is that the duration of the program may matter. It may matter a lot. In medical research, we say, hey, if you want to know whether a particular medicine worked or had terrible side effects, you would want to see what happens after it is has been used for a fairly long period. Of course, that is the last thing in the world anybody

is doing right now. We are drawing conclusions very rapidly about programs that have often been in place only a few months. Partly, that is driven by Congressional priorities. Congress often says you have to report in after six months, and then we will make some judgments, and that may just be too fast. You could cut off good programs too quickly with too short a duration.

Fourth, often it is the conjunction of several circumstances coming together that produces the success or failure of a program, and we can all relate to this in terms of the kinds of things that we do in our daily lives. Sometimes it is bringing three things together that is essential before you begin to see a result for good or for ill. Again, we tend not to look at that when we are drawing best practice guidelines at this point.

Finally, in post-conflict settings and failed states, information is scarce and the sources of information are rarely trusted. The voice of rumor is very, very strong in these settings as they are often in some pockets of the United States or over some issues in the United States. And so you often see a lot of herd behavior and fad behavior, and whether something works may be a function of whether you provided the kind of bell weather or responded to the bell weather issue that people on the ground thought was terribly important as a sign of success, whether it really was or not. In Iraq, being able to provide electricity very rapidly appeared to many to be an indication of whether other aspects of reconstruction would work. We don't find that kind of behavior quite so often in stable settings, but I do I think very strongly in these highly volatile contexts.

I think these are reasons why it is actually quite hard to draw good lessons about what works in these settings. When I am talking about good lessons, again, I am not talking exactly about what Ambassador Pascual was talking about. I am talking about whether we know how to make a court system work or how to build a police force.

If it is hard to draw clear lessons, what can we do?

I think, first, we want to pay a lot of attention to context. I would like to see a lot of our NGOs and government organizations begin to show us decision trees, to say: Hey, if you have this kind of contextual factor present, what has been tried and what is the range of experience on that issue? Probably there should be several nodes to those decision trees, each focusing on a particular kind of context. We rarely see those.

A second is I think we need to begin to think about detailed histories, descriptions of projects as important forms of knowledge. We rarely see these, too. We really need the gritty detail about what was done in a particular case, not the kinds of four or five variables that academics often look at but rather the kinds of things that we need to include in policy histories.

Third, I think we need some carefully pared qualitative comparisons, and we need to shed some of the big cross-national regressions that I think are likely to yield wrong results in these cases.

And four, I would love to see us create some experimental zones, places where ideas from people on the ground could be tried out and where others could observe the success or failure. If you will permit me just a brief indulgence into my African interest here, there are a number of agricultural research organizations in Africa that have found that the best way to spread good news about how to do a project in Africa is to try it on an experimental farm and bring people in to see the results, and then give them the seeds of the variety that they liked best, so they can then go try elsewhere. I think that model is something that we ought to try more often. It gives people more local ownership. It also plays on that need to see examples that are coming from people on the ground before others will begin to adopt them. I would like to see us do more of that, and I think we

can learn some important lessons from that.

What are we doing at the Woodrow Wilson School in this regard? Well, we are beginning each fall to run a number of policy workshops that involve our second year Master's students or mid-career students. We send them out in the field. They have to look at a particular problem, look at the particular experience over a number of countries in dealing with that problem, and report back to a client, a Blue Ribbon Panel, and to the practitioner who is leading the workshop about what they found. And we find that their conclusions are often not wholly reliable, that they tend also, as NGOs and others, to argue for solutions they happen to like rather than solutions the data support, but it is a first step and it provides some training for them, responding to some of the training needs you pointed to.

The second thing that we are doing then is using those workshops as a point of departure. They are wonderful points at which to collect lots of different case experiences. Then we launch a more academic center that involves oral histories and some systematic case studies to try to refine them.

The third dimension, which we haven't launched yet because many people are talking about something similar and we are trying to assess what will truly work and be a contribution that an academic institution could make, is some way to provide access to this information to people on the ground, not just donors but people on the ground in these countries, some multilingual resource. Obviously, it would probably have to be electronically-based, and that presents some problems on its own. But how to provide access? So we have played around with the idea of creating a kind of web portal for these kinds of findings that would allow ideas to bubble up from the ground. I am sure many of you have heard similar ideas elsewhere here.

Let me stop there. I am happy to talk about lessons that I think we are getting from the African experiences as we go forward, but I think I would like to throw the conversation back to Ambassador Pascual who has far more experience on the ground than I do.

AMB. PASCUAL: In fact, why don't we throw the conversation open to you and give you an opportunity to raise your questions?

MR. CRAIG: I am John Craig, retired AID officer.

I have been reading very carefully the accounts of what is going on in Iraq. The *New York Times*, in particular, and Mr. Rosen, who I gather is an Iraqi, has given this picture of 100,000 people who have been hired and given guns to guard the oil pipelines. These hit squads, not hit squads, they are supposed to be squads that can go out and deal with the bad guys. It turns out that they take turns taking out the bad guys and taking out their personal enemies. It looks to me as though you have got such a mess there that there are no good guys to start working with. I am wondering if there is any ray of hope that you see or if this is just a case of complete chaos and there isn't much that one can do about it.

AMB. PASCUAL: There are a number of issues that are embedded there, and I can comment on a few. Jennifer, I don't know if you want to also comment on this.

First of all, on the situation in Iraq, it is a good illustration and one of the points I was trying to make, that when you lose control of the use of force, when you lose that monopoly on force and then you have to depend on ad-hoc methods of providing for security, such as militia groups that are staffed for a particular purpose, it becomes much more difficult to maintain a stable environment. Hence, a very simple lesson that emerged from these experiences is to ask the questions: Who is responsible for stability

and order in the transition process? Who is going to take responsibility for protecting infrastructure, for major buildings, for historical sites, for political leaders?

If you don't have an answer to those questions, if your answer is I don't know, then you have a real problem and you should rethink whether in fact you should go in to begin with or whether you redesign your plan. If you don't do that, you are potentially getting yourself into an irresponsible situation.

The second point is it becomes extremely difficult to control these militia groups if you don't have some kind of political understanding. If, in Iraq, we can, in fact, get a stable government in place, then there has been some progress on that. If there is an effective set of negotiations that makes the Sunnis believe that they will get some benefits from oil wealth, and that is a very critical question because the constitution which was written and which was passed and which was hailed as a success for democracy basically says that each of the provinces has the ability to write law for the development of oil resources which, you might imagine, the Kurds and the Shiites are going to develop this in a way that benefits their own areas and excludes the Sunnis. So the Sunnis are basically hanging in there with the prospect of some revision to that constitution. If they cannot get a sense that that will happen and they will benefit, it will be extremely difficult in fact to bring some element of security around the oil and pipeline system.

The final thing I would offer is the importance of dealing with transparency on issues like natural resources and wealth. In Iraq, it was only in April that meters were ordered for the oil wells. We actually don't know how much is being stolen in Iraq right now because there is no capacity to actually understand how much oil is being produced. For that matter if you don't know how much oil is being produced, how to reconcile it with shipping documents and letters of credit, a basic tool that you would use in any kind

of situation in order to try to control corruption, there is potentially billions of dollars of oil that has been stolen, and we actually have no understanding of how much.

If we can't get our hands around these issues and help the Iraqis get their hands around these issues, then it is going to be difficult to bring peace and stability because there will be a sense that you can launch your own missions and become wealthy independently without actually having to pay any cost for it.

MS. WIDNER: I am not sure that I can add. Certainly in the Iraqi case, you are the expert here. We have seen some development of related situations in Nigeria and other oil-producing African countries, and again transparency is part of what is important. There, we know a little bit more about how much is being lost. One estimate is at least 70,000 barrels per day in parts of Nigeria. That is a lot of money.

MR. DESSLER: Mack Dessler (?), Woodrow Wilson, 1965 and 1971, and University of Maryland.

Ambassador Pascual has told us how excruciatingly hard it is to do reconstruction. Professor Widner has told us how excruciatingly hard it is to understand reconstruction.

I am reminded of a principle I was reminded of by my late colleague at Maryland, one time Princeton Professor, Mansur Olsen (?), when I was seeking career advice — I knew what advice he was going to give me — about whether to go to Maryland. He said, “Mack, you should go to Maryland; don't take that other offer” — even though it was a higher salary and it was a chair — “because in going to Maryland you are going to have about a 35 percent change in your life. That is about as much as you can do. The other place you go, it is going to be about 75 or 80.”

Now this may sound silly but perhaps the connection is evident. What Ambassador Pascual has given us for Iraq and which we have all been sort of mindboggled by

watching this is everything seems to be up. There is sort of no base, no continuity. Now this leads me to what I guess will be a question which is, first of all, can you name some successes, not necessarily in Iraq, not necessarily whole countries, though it would be nice, and is it possible that these successes are places where a lot of these variables were either stable or something that could be left alone for a while, so you had a limited number of things you could work on without having everything?

We seem, in Afghanistan where we probably pretty much had to do and Iraq which some of us think we didn't have to do, but in both cases we seem to be in situations where so much is up. Political, economic, violence, everything is sort of up. Anyway, that is the question if it is a question.

AMB. PASCUAL: Let's maybe get a couple of other questions or comments on the floor.

MS. DANIELS: Hi, my name is Sherry Daniels. I am in the State Department Foreign Service, and I am just in between assignments, now back from Israel.

My question is really for both of you in terms of whether it can be drawn as a "lessons learned" under your lesson about transitional security. Is there something in the Bosnia experience or in the Kosovo experience or in previous, earlier in the century, the 21st Century that you can say about force levels when you compare to World War II? How much international security is enough security? In Bosnia, I think the length of the security, of the S4 and I4 protection, is it a success yet at 10 years? But, basically, is there anything you can say about force levels that you care to offer?

MR. TALBOTT: Thanks, Carlos. Let me add, if I could, one question, and this is particularly for Jennifer because of her area of expertise. It has to do with what she and indeed you too, Carlos, see as the role, not of global multilateral institutions but of

regional and sub-regional institutions.

Here, Jennifer, taking the list of issues, considerations, and recommendations you made, what would you say about the role of the African Union, ECOWAS, SADC, that kind of thing? First of all, as a species, are they evolving in the right direction where they can be more helpful on this kind of thing? I think it is particularly important, especially in the case of Africa because that is the continent maybe where this problem is most acute, although it is found elsewhere as well. Carlos, maybe you will have some observations in this regard, too.

MS. WIDNER: I will go ahead and try to respond to a couple of sets of questions.

Certainly, in the African setting, responding to your question about whether there are any success stories, there are some. It depends a bit on your definition of a failing state. If you are prepared to accept that some states are failing but haven't had the very, very high level of violence that you see in Iraq, then there are a number of success stories I think both in Africa and in Latin America. The classic one that people point to in Africa is certainly Mozambique. Uganda has some problems now and has some continuing conflict in the north, but in many respects it has turned around. Benin looked as though it was really going to fracture. That was one of the early, early turnarounds, but it is a tiny place. So it hard to know how far you want to generalize from that.

Somaliland, again, part of Somalia splits off, does well on its own, the international community won't recognize it, but it has done rather better. Then there are a number of other cases where we have seen no particular violence but the breakdown of infrastructure and rule of law and a turnaround from that. One could even put in that a country like Tanzania, dirt poor, had a rule of law problem back in 1979 but pulled back from it. Looking at that transition is possibly helpful.

I think the violence does complicate it enormously. There may be fewer cases in the African setting that are that illustrative, but perhaps some in Central America that would be interesting to look at.

On the regional side, we have the kinds of problems with the African Union, SADC, ECOWAS that I think you would expect to find. They are new, relatively. Some of them are newer regional organizations. They are coming out of states that are often themselves failing. The capacity is low. It is building. They often don't have the kind of mandate you would need to intervene effectively in a Darfur. SO I guess I would say that I have limited expectations of how helpful they could be.

But I think the really interesting work is below that level. In East Africa, you have, for example, the emergence of the East African Bar Association, a collaboration between judges. You see some of this in other regions as well, where the fact that you have three countries circulating lawyers among themselves, watching one another's activities means that somebody who blows the whistle and says, hey, there is something going on in X country, has people in two other countries to back him up, and it becomes that much harder for a government to close that down, that statement of hey, not all is well. I think we are seeing some very useful examples of cooperation along those lines.

We need to see it more, but we are beginning to see some of it in Customs. A lot of the flow of arms could be regulated more effectively if Customs operations were cleaned up. That needs to happen, and that has to happen on a regional basis. I think that is where the action really is. It is not with some of the larger organizations, although they have certainly made enormous strides from where they used to be. I wouldn't want to close that down, but I would say that without bigger mandates and much bigger capacity, they are not the solution to a lot of the very pressing problems in Africa.

AMB. PASCUAL: Let me try to build on a few of those points.

First of all, in the difficulty of this process, yes, it is extremely difficult. I think it is important to think about it in the context of moving out of an environment of war, where that state's history of order has been authoritarian rule that has been imposed from the top, and we are now hoping that the society will now transform into something which is based on openness and freedom and competition with a rule of law that will mediate how individuals operate vis-à-vis one another, a court system to mediate the disputes, and an electoral system to serve as checks and balances on the leadership of a country.

When you put it that way, this is a radical transformation, and it is not going to happen in a short period of time. You can't impose it because you are fundamentally changing people's lives. If there isn't a belief in what is being done there, it is going to obviously fail. And it is going to require a period of sticking with that process of transition and supporting that transition as you get indigenous groups beginning to believe in that process of transformation and where they are seeking to take their society.

Unfortunately, the Western concept of transition usually doesn't operate within those timeframes. It is usually a year or two years. Certainly, Congressional funding cycles don't operate within that context. It is why we get into so many clashes over funding and frustrations over funding issues.

Just an example from my experience in Ukraine, not a post-conflict situation, certainly one of tremendous transition, but in the early years, the U.S. Congress used to earmark year after year \$225 million for Ukraine. Those of us who were working in the Administration would say it is too much money because they actually aren't ready to use it yet. They haven't developed a concept of where they are trying to take the society. By the time the Ukrainians started to get their act together on economic issues, at that stage

when we began to argue there is a need for additional resources because now there is a concept of how the economy should function, the U.S. Congress' perspective was hey, we gave you your \$225 million a year; you misutilized it and therefore we are not going to increase the funding level. So there is usually this disconnect between the capacity of the Congress to fund and, in fact, on basic absorptive capacity issues.

The irony of an immediate post-conflict situation is an international community comes in and it is providing a great deal of services. It is a lot easier to spend money in that kind of environment. As you transition to local ownership, you start to run into problems because suddenly you have local groups that have to figure out for themselves: Where is it that we want to go? What do we do? The absorptive capacity suddenly radically drops. That is where, ironically, you get your frustration because you have got a certain amount of expectation built up with the international community's role. Funding gets provided, but then when you have to depend on locals to actually do the job, it takes a period to build up the capability to do it. So it is hard to do.

In terms of the "success stories," Mozambique is one that is indeed regularly cited. I was in Mozambique from 1989 to 1991. One of the ironically positive things in Mozambique was that it absolutely hit rock bottom. There was nothing else that you could take out of that society. In fact, when you got some element of peace and stability combined, ironically, with market reforms that the government started to put in place in about 1989-1990, the agricultural sector just shot up. So you got very positive development there.

On Bosnia and Kosovo, let me use that as a transition to your question on the force levels. The rule of thumb that some have pointed to is one officer or one military presence for every 20,000 population. If you would extend that to Iraq and you

discounted the need to provide for some kind of security provision in the Kurdish-held areas, assuming the Peshmerga could do this on their own, the kind of force level that would have been required in Iraq is 450,000. In Afghanistan, the shortage of troops, relative to that rule of thumb, is even greater. So what has happened is that in the lessons we have learned on the kind of international military peacekeeping presence that has been successful in sustaining peace over time has not been replicated in some of these recent major conflicts like Afghanistan and Iraq.

It raises the question of whether or not any individual country can actually sustain that kind of effort. The obvious answer is no. We have a very difficult time actually maintaining 150,000 troops there, much less any larger, reinforcing the importance of being able to approach these kinds of initiatives on a multilateral basis.

Just a word on regional institutions, Strobe, I think the regional institutions do need, over time, to play a more effective role. There are many cases where it is going to be very difficult to get the U.N. to be able to move quickly on peacekeeping functions. Sudan is a good example. If, in fact, from the outset we had tried to get a U.N. mission deployed in Darfur in 2002 and 2003, when we were putting in what eventually became 7,000 African Union peacekeepers which was still too low, we still would be waiting. The U.N. mission in Sudan, which is the force in the south, was authorized at 13,000 troops. It was supposed to be completed last November. When I last checked, the deployment was about 80 percent complete. That is for 13,000. You can see the difficulty that is going to arise in Darfur when it transfers to a U.N. mission. If there is not a capacity to build on the African troops that are already there, it is going to be extraordinarily difficult to build up to a 20,000 troop level. It is going to be difficult to build up to 20,000 troops anyway.

In Africa, you have basically got three forces that are relatively reliable on a consistent basis. The Nigerians, bad as they may be or inadequate as they may be, Nigeria is one of the principal contributors to peace in Africa and certainly has been in ECOWAS. Second is the Rwandans, and the third are the South Africans. By the time you get done with those three, you take a huge drop down which is the other point that essentially rises. If you want an African peacekeeping mission, not only do you have to provide the troops, you have to put uniforms on them, you have to give them equipment, you have to give them transport, the whole set of works.

The other issue where there is a huge, huge capacity is on airlift capacity or transport capacity. Every time we want to move a peacekeeping mission anywhere, there is a huge set of issues that come up on simply how to get them there. The U.S. has a certain amount of capacity, but it is not adequate for everything that needs to get done. Ironically, the countries that do have significant capacity are Russia and Ukraine which has not, in fact, been very effectively tapped. In many cases, for example, in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States was contracting with Ukrainians and Russians to provide airlifts of troops from Central Europe for, say, Polish peacekeepers that were being brought into Iraq because we didn't have the capacity to actually lift them.

We have time for one last question.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Gary Mitchell, from *The Mitchell Report*.

The question really comes from thinking about Jennifer's experience specifically in Africa and also her mentioning the oral history concept. It, first of all, reminded me, there is a wonderful African proverb with which you may be familiar, which is "The tales of the hunt will always glorify the hunter until the lions have their own historian." It makes me wonder.

In this case, it raises two questions for me. One is are we asking the right people, and are we asking the right questions? Let me just flesh that out to say, and this is also to your 10 points of learning, Carlos, when we are studying success, are we studying it from the standpoint of the U.S. Administration's perspective and the allied NGOs, or are we talking to Iraqi's upon whom this was thrust? Ditto in any other African country, for example. To what extent are we asking the indigenous people the questions? Are we talking to them?

Then second, as you pointed out, Jennifer, it is difficult to get people to talk about their failures, but it is not necessarily difficult to get them to complain. So are we structuring this conversation in a way that allows people to talk about it in that sense of what didn't work?

It also made me think about something you were saying. In the medical world at NIH, I don't think they look at the work that they are doing on Alzheimer's, for example, as failures. They look at what is working and what is not working. So I am hoping that turned into a question.

MS. WIDNER: Let me just say a few words. I think one of the really unfortunate things is that, by and large, very few organizations working in these areas have asked people on the ground what works, and I am hoping that we can begin to overcome that. The obvious reason for it is there isn't a lot of money to go out and canvas people very systematically, and most of these are emergencies where people feel, hey, we just gotta get the job done. But I do think this is an important dimension that has been overlooked, particularly because I would like to see our Woodrow Wilson School project attend more to the perspectives, the ideas of people on the ground in some of these critical areas.

There have been some efforts to monitor public opinion about government at large,

including whether you can trust local government officials. There are barometers out there and a new Arab barometer that is going to do the same. But I don't think it gets to the particulars of a program. I would like to see us do more, and I don't think we do a lot in that way right now.

Then how do you get people to talk about their failures? We have tried to cook up a whole lot of schemes for this. One kind of innocent way is to say: Well, look, what would you do different if you could do it over again? Or if you were providing advice to somebody in another setting, and you give them some parameters, what do you think would port to that other setting? Sometimes you can get them to start going down the road about what didn't work. You almost always have to detach. You have to present the information anonymously, so as not to jeopardize the funding stream.

I think this is something that we will continue to find problematic, unless the donor agencies change the way in which they allocate the funding and reward collecting data on what didn't work and reward turnarounds. That you could do with a slightly longer time horizon, I think.

AMB. PASCUAL: One of the things I would add is in addition to collecting the data, we have to digest it. For example, there are thousands and thousands of hours of oral history that have been done on diplomats who have served in Iraq which have been put together in History of Iraq project, virtually, totally untapped and unmined, not systematically organized in any particular way thus far.

In terms of learning from indigenous people, it is absolutely the right question and not enough of it happens because it means that you have to get on the ground; you have to do surveys of local groups. There is some work that has been done, particularly by non-governmental organizations, but generally most of the learning that gets done is done

from an American perspective rather than a perspective of indigenous peoples.

I want to thank you very, very much for giving us time to share some of these ideas with you for the questions and answers. We have lots of very interesting and exciting panels still to come.