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HOW SECURITY COOPERATION ADVANCES U.S. INTERESTS

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. O'HANLON: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to Brookings. I'm Mike O'Hanlon with the Foreign Policy studies program here, and I have the distinct privilege today of welcoming Lieutenant General Charles Hooper, "Hoop" Hooper as he's often known, the director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, to Brookings.

General Hooper is a remarkable student of the world and of military affairs. He is fluent in Mandarin. He is the U.S. Army's senior foreign area officer. He has spent overseas time in Africa Command, in Egypt, in China. He really has learned the world from every vantage point and every continent that the U.S. military operates on, and we're thrilled to have him today. So could you please join me in welcoming the general to Brookings? (Applause)

A couple more words of introduction about General Hooper. He studied at West Point and graduated there in 1979. He also has studied at Harvard University. We were sharing reminiscences a few minutes ago about a Brookings all-time great Bill Kaufmann, who I think was one of the fathers of American defense studies as we think of it in the modern era and who was my mentor here for a while in my early days in the early 1990s. General Hopper spent time with him in the late 1980s at Harvard, where he was Bill Kaufmann's research assistant and teaching assistant. And this was a reflection of Kaufmann's good judgment, seeing that this fine young man had a distinguished future ahead of him and has really now served all over the world with the Army, including in operational units, like the 82nd and the 101st.

So I'd like to begin with a conversation up here with General Hopper, if you'll permit it, and then we'll go to you for some discussion and some questions and answers.

And General, if I could, I wanted to begin just by asking you since we have a crowd that undoubtedly has some real experts on what you do, but also some generalists who think more broadly about foreign policy and may not know as much about the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, could you just tell us a little bit about what your agency does, its mandate, how it's located within the Pentagon, even how it affiliates and works with the State Department? Because obviously, you're dealing with overseas partnerships and relationships.

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, thank you, Mike, and thanks very much for having me. And good morning, everybody. I am the director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency and it's the agency that does more and is known by less people than anybody else in Washington, so I always welcome the opportunity to tell everybody about it.

The Defense Security Cooperation Agency is mandated by Congress to execute all security cooperation, some on behalf of the State Department, much on behalf of the Department of Defense, writ large and worldwide. It is most known for being the executive agent for foreign military sales, and that's what most people know about us. But we're also responsible for excess defense articles. We are the executive agent for all five Department of Defense regional centers, so the Marshall Center in Germany; the Inouye Center, Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, in Hawaii.

We're also responsible, and we'll talk a little bit about this later, for what I call institutional capacity-building. That is the complement to foreign military sales that ensures that our partners have the human resources and the defense institutional development to properly utilize the equipment we buy for them in the interest of national security.

Our headquarters is here in Crystal City, in Washington. We also work with the Security Cooperation's officers worldwide. We work with the COCOMs. And we're under actually, and this is unique for the United States, we work for the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. So we work for Mr. John Rood. And the reason I say that is in many countries, the acquisitions and the arms sales come under the acquisitions or the logistics directorates or work directly in some of our competitors, for those companies, those state-owned companies. But here in the United States security cooperation and arms sales is a policy tool and not a tool for anything else. So that's basically kind of a snapshot of what DSCA does.

MR. O'HANLON: So, great. That's very helpful. And let me ask a couple more follow-up questions just to continue to refine our understanding.

So a command like Africa Command, where you spent three years, which does a lot of training in the field, is all of that training essentially under your purview? Or the parts that do not involve U.S. weapons transfers or sales, are they potentially separate and you coordinate, but you're not in

charge of that? Is that correct?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, that's a very good question. The geographic combatant commands still have the responsibility for executing security cooperation in their respective commands. We work by, with, and through those commands. The weapons sales portion of it, or the defense articles and services portion of it, comes directly under DSCA's supervision. Some of the training exercises and other things we work collaboratively with the combatant commands. And then in some cases, for example, in institutional capacity-building, we work together in a synergistic fashion to effect that security cooperation.

So it's equal parts. Some things we're principally responsible for, some things the combatant commands are responsible for, and some things we work jointly together.

MR. O'HANLON: And as we start to paint this picture of your responsibilities and how you work with others, I also wanted to bring in foreign military assistance and financing. And my understanding is that there are parts of foreign military assistance of various types that we give through the State Department and other types we give through DOD. It depends a little bit on the recipient and the nature of the aid. Could you help us understand that a little bit, too? Because I'm sure some of that money is what's being used to buy the weapons that you're overseeing the transfer of.

GENERAL HOOPER: Absolutely. And that's also a very good question. So let's start on what we call the Title 22 on the State Department side.

We are the executive agent. The State Department has responsibility for foreign military sales and we are, in effect, the executive agent for the State Department in foreign military sales. Now, there are two real big components of security cooperation. One is what we call Title 22, which is the State Department supervised element for which we are the executive agent. The other half of it is the Title 10 piece.

So, for example, as a result of the Fiscal Year '17 NDAA, we had several different authorities and a disparate group of authorities that were all consolidated into one, the majority into one authority, 333, Section 333, that many of you may be familiar with. And this constitutes the Title 10 security cooperation piece.

The biggest way to distinguish between the two is our State Department responsibilities are principally focused to a great extent on defense articles and services, whereas our Title 10 responsibilities fall, in many cases, more into the realm of institutional capacity-building, exercises, and other types of things like that.

MR. O'HANLON: That's interesting. So you could think of it the hardware, sort of the weapons, the hardcore stuff, that's through State. The people side, the softer side, the software side is through DOD.

GENERAL HOOPER: Right.

MR. O'HANLON: It's almost the opposite of what some people might guess.

GENERAL HOOPER: Right. And we, in many respects, serve as a catalyst to bring all of that together at the national level.

MR. O'HANLON: So thank you. That's helpful to me. Much of that I knew, some of it I didn't, and I was rusty on a good chunk. And I'm sure others in the audience probably appreciated the primer, too.

But now moving into some of the more interesting specific cases of where you're doing your work around the world. If I could just help myself and the audience through you, you know, get a little bit of a hierarchy of where we partner most intensively, where most of our activity is right now.

We clearly have important recipients of U.S. weaponry and other military equipment among the major allies in Europe and East Asia. We have a lot of recipients in the Middle East, including most of the most controversial cases, which I'm sure we'll get to. And then we have a lot of smaller recipients here and there around the world. And then, of course, we have the war theater in the broader Middle East.

So that's the way I begin to categorize the recipients of our security assistance and weapons transfer. Is that sort of how you think of it? So it's the major industrialized allies; it's the war countries; it's the broader Middle East, including countries that are not Iraq or Afghanistan, but still have some pretty high-profile issues associated with them; and then finally, it's all the smaller countries, which are very important in their own right. I'm thinking of the Colombias and the Kenyas and places around the

world where, you know, the dollar totals may not be as big, but the importance of what you're doing for those countries' own security could be pretty high.

Is that a useful way to begin to create a taxonomy or do you think of it in a different way?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, I start -- and I want to get to the question you ask because it's obviously a very good one, but let's start at a bit of a more strategic level. Okay?

First let's talk about the strategic guidance that we've received. And so in the last couple of years, I will tell you, I've never seen a time where there's been more clearly articulated strategic guidance from the national level. We had the Fiscal Year '17 National Defense Authorization Act. And to your point, the second item that we have that helps to categorize how we move forward on this and how we think about it is the National Defense Strategy, the 2008 National Defense Strategy.

So security cooperation has been elevated to a tool of first resort globally before we get to the sections of the globe, and it is articulated in the number two line of effort in the National Defense Strategy, which is strengthen alliances and attract new partners. And so if you notice, that's a very simple, clear statement. It doesn't really focus on any particular area of the world. And obviously, we look at different areas of the world differently, but it clearly articulates that as the ultimate strategy goal, which is how I look at it.

The third thing I'd mention is the updated conventional arms transfer policy. It was updated last April, that essentially says that we want to provide all of our allies and partners with defense articles and services faster, we want to reduce the timeline. So as I think about it that's the first level.

Now, getting to your point, we do look around the world, obviously. This is, as I said, a policy tool, so we follow policy direction in terms of determining which areas of the world are most important. But I think that the construct of strengthening our existing alliances and attracting new partners works globally and it helps us to keep a global perspective as opposed to becoming drawn down into any particular region of the world.

MR. O'HANLON: Great. So if I could now, you know, before I get to a couple of the high-profile and sensitive cases maybe we could warm up by talking about a warmer, fuzzier case like Colombia. And it's a country where I've had the privilege of traveling and working on an advisory panel

when a former student of mine became the Colombian Minister of National Defense and General Kelly was at SOUTHCOM and we had an informal alliance working group. Could you just use that example or a different Latin American case if you prefer, to explain just some of the sort of day-to-day workings of how your agency is operative in the field?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, it's interesting because Colombia, of course, now at this point is a very mature case, but a clear example of a successful security cooperation collaboration on both the Title 10 and the Title 22 side. I just had an opportunity last August to travel to Colombia with former Secretary Mattis and we were able to go down there.

I was able to take my new sergeant major. We have a sergeant major now; it's the first sergeant major ever for the security cooperation enterprise. And that's important because when I'm sitting in overstuffed chairs drinking tea, he's the one that goes down and tells me whether or not our allies could actually use the equipment that we're providing them with.

And so we went down to Colombia and the bottom line is this: that's been a very successful program in Colombia. Obviously, the Colombians have gotten to the point now where they have a self-sustaining defense capability with our assistance.

And, in fact, to give you an example of how good it is, we're about to work with them to turn over some helicopters to them. We've been training their mechanics for a while. My sergeant major went down and because when I was sitting talking to the minister of defense, I wanted him to go down and tell me whether or not they could actually fix the helicopters. Okay? And he came back and told me, sir, not only can they repair the helicopters, but they're good enough to teach other people in Latin America how to repair U.S. helicopters. So that's an example of a very successful program we've had.

In terms of other countries in Latin America, I'd like to point Ecuador. As many of you know, the Ecuadorean government a number of years ago decided that they wanted to expel our security cooperation's officers. They wanted to sever security cooperation ties. Of course, recently, there was a change in government and I had the honor of hosting the Ecuadorean minister of defense a few months back. They reestablished and reinvigorated their relations with the United States and the new administration. And the first thing they wanted to do was strengthen defense ties and reestablish defense

ties.

So we reopened our office in Quito. The minister came up to talk to me and we're working with him very closely now to reinvigorate that relationship. This is an example of how security cooperation has changed.

In the past you wouldn't see a minister of defense come to DSCA. I mean, he'd go see the Secretary of Defense and perhaps they'd have a discussion and three weeks later, we'd have the results of the discussion and the task or what to do. In this particular case, he actually came to DSCA before he met with his counterpart in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. And we had an opportunity to walk him through many of the cases that he -- things that he wanted from us and not only what he wanted, but what they wanted to accomplish. And this is a new change in security cooperation, as well.

We're trying to move our partners away from just telling us what they want to buy and asking the question what do you want to do? Because if you ask the question what do you want to do, we can lay out a full range of options for you. If we have a conversation on what you want to buy, that may not be the best fit for what you want to accomplish.

And so in Latin America, and the third example I'd look to in Latin America, in a country where strengthening alliance and working hard, is Argentina. We're working very hard to work with Argentina. As many of you know, Argentina has had some financial issues. We will not abandon our relationship.

In the United States, one of the differences between us and our strategic competitors is our commitment to a long-term relationship. So in the case of Argentina, we work very closely with the Argentine government to work through their financial issues, to continue to provide them goods and services, working flexibly with them to continue to strengthen that relationship.

MR. O'HANLON: Fantastic. I do now want to talk a little bit about some tough cases in the Middle East. And I realize we may or may not be able to get at the full policy discussion for each of these. That may or may not be something you want to fully get into, but obviously, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and UAE are countries where we've had some challenges, maybe even others, as well, like Qatar. And I just wanted to first just throw that at you as a group of countries and ask how you think about cooperating

when the relationships are embedded in more complex and often fraught kinds of broader policy environments? How do you, just as a general principle, approach your job? And then maybe we can talk a little bit about some of those specific cases and countries.

GENERAL HOOPER: Okay, very good. So globally, just to give you a bit of context, on a day-to-day basis we manage 14,000 open foreign military sales cases with 185 countries. And we do that in concert with our good colleagues at the State Department; our colleagues on the Hill in Congress, both staffs and members; the interagency; working closely with the under secretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment. So we work 14,000 cases. Many of those cases, and the ones that you mentioned, there are some contentious issues.

MR. O'HANLON: One hundred eight-five countries?

GENERAL HOOPER: Yeah.

MR. O'HANLON: More than 90 percent of all the world's countries?

GENERAL HOOPER: Yes.

MR. O'HANLON: Stunning. Okay, sorry to interrupt.

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, which is why we are the partner of choice and we want to remain the partner of choice globally and worldwide.

So to answer your question, we understand that there are many cases such as the ones that you've mentioned that are very contentious, but I will tell you a couple of things. Number one, we still move forward in our relations with all countries, and even those especially contentious countries, on a case-by-case basis. Remember, this is a policy tool. Okay? We understand and recognize the economic importance of it and economic security is national security, but ultimately, these are policy tools. So in the case of the countries you mentioned we always proceed forward cautiously.

There's an inherent tension in what we do. We want to provide our allies and partners with sufficient capabilities so that they may partner with us to achieve our common security goals. By the same token, we want to make sure that those weapons and articles and services are used in a responsible manner, in a manner that is consistent with our values. Okay? And sometimes that is tough, but we work together on a day-to-day basis. We take a look at those countries.

And I'm not going to speak to the issues that are better answered by the State Department and others, but in answer to your question we work with our colleagues in the interagency. Security cooperation, while we lead, is a collaborative process with a lot of stakeholders. Our job is to give best military advice and to provide the ramifications of our actions should we provide capabilities or whether those capabilities should be reduced or other.

MR. O'HANLON: So recognizing what you just said, that you're not going to want to fully analyze and assess the entirety of the U.S.-Turkey relationship, nonetheless I want to ask a little bit more on that and one or two other cases.

GENERAL HOOPER: Sure.

MR. O'HANLON: And let me get right to the crux of the F-35 issue with Turkey where we know that to the extent Turkey takes receipt of the S-400 Russian air defense system, my interpretation is that it's pretty much game over for the F-35 collaboration from a U.S. Government point of view because that's considered one of our crown jewels of stealth technology. The idea of having Russian equipment and maybe Russian technicians co-located with the F-35 is simply a nonstarter for the U.S. Government.

And Turkey may think of this right now as more of a negotiating ploy, but it really isn't. We're really going to be quite hardline on that issue even if it means having to relocate the production of certain parts for the F-35 that currently happens within Turkey. Am I correct? Or is that something that you don't really want to get into at that level?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, listen, Turkey is a NATO ally. Turkey is a partner in the F-35. As many of you know, we have made it abundantly clear, and what I mean "we," our government and all aspects of our government to the best of my knowledge, have made it abundantly clear to the government of Turkey the ramifications of taking receipt of the S-400.

At the same time, as an ally we have laid out a range of options that perhaps Turkey could take advantage of that would allow them not to take this step. What I can say is the ball is in Turkey's court. We have made it clear.

MR. O'HANLON: Have we also given them options that if they do take the S-400 we'll be very unhappy and we won't be able to continue presumably F-35 cooperation, but there are still other

things we can continue to do with them? Is that a fair statement?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, we have made it very clear the ramifications of the Turks taking receipt of the S-400.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay. (Laughter) Let me now go to -- having not gotten too far on that one, let me try Saudi Arabia. (Laughter)

On Saudi Arabia, of course, this has been a controversial issue in U.S. strategy for quite a while and the Congress has decided to assert its prerogatives on arms sales or attempt to do so by talking about how we're not comfortable, the Congress is not comfortable seeing ongoing support for equipment the Saudis are using in the war in Yemen. And of course, Secretary Mattis himself had decided to suspend air refueling cooperation almost a year ago. So the Pentagon and the Executive Branch were willing to do that. Then Congress wanted to go further and actually cut off certain kinds of equipment and weapons transfers, and that's sort of getting into the area where there's been a congressional-Executive Branch tension within our own government. Can you update us on where that stands with regard to Saudi Arabia?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, listen, the specifics of our relations with Saudi Arabia are best spoken to, once again, by the State Department. What I can say is that in all -- as I said before, there's an inherent tension in what we do. We want to provide our partners with capabilities that help further our own interest and enhance their own defensive capabilities while, by the same token, trying to work to ensure that our values are sustained in doing so.

From our perspective as DSCA, we've taken a number of steps to enhance, for example, end-use monitoring. We've taken steps to enhance our approach towards avoiding civilian casualties. DSCA just hired, as a matter of fact, a senior civilian casualty advisor at the SES level to work with us.

We're expanding the curriculum at our Defense Institute for International Legal Studies to provide more instruction on avoiding civilian casualties for all of our allies that have these contentious issues. And we will continue to work with our colleagues in the Congress and the State Department and others to focus on some of the contentious issues of our relationship with some of our allies in a way that, hopefully, reflects our interests and our values.

MR. O'HANLON: So right now the Pentagon is assuming that we'll continue to provide equipment to Saudi Arabia, but we will try very hard to improve the care with which they employ it on the battlefield. Is that a good summary?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, I think we are working holistically to improve our ability to ensure that the defense articles and services that we provide to the best of our ability are used in ways that are consistent with our interests and our values.

MR. O'HANLON: On Afghanistan, let me, if I could, turn there.

GENERAL HOOPER: Sure.

MR. O'HANLON: And I assume you've got some responsibilities and some ongoing activities there, as well. And again, it's embedded within a broader issue of the war effort and the peace effort, but I wanted to ask about any progress that you would identify or any frustrations you would identify in regard to cooperation with the Afghan National Security Forces. There have been recent news reports about difficulties keeping their pilots from going AWOL when they're in the United States. There have been concerns about how fast their air force is improving, partly because we didn't really get started with that part of the effort until late in the game. There have been other concerns that the Afghan Security Forces are inherently prone to corruption or turnover rates such that they're not able to build up the human side of their capabilities even as we try to give them a lot of weaponry.

From your vantage point, how do you see that effort going? And, you know, a lot of people feel like the Afghan war effort is gradually slipping away from us, gradually headed in the wrong direction. Do you have any kind of a more hopeful interpretation from what you see in your job?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, I always have a hopeful interpretation. You know, one of the things that's kept me going, and as you articulated, I mean, I've been involved in security cooperation for most of my time, all of my time as a general and most of my time as an officer. And if there's one thing I've learned is that if the only thing that is certain in life is if you do nothing, nothing will change. Now, if you do something, you have a probability of somewhere between 0 and 100 percent that you will make a positive change. But if you do nothing, then you have the probability of change is zero.

So Afghanistan, okay. Obviously, we've been working to improve the Afghan armed

forces for quite some time. DSCA is involved in helping with the material provision to the Afghan National Army, but one of the things I'd like to talk about that we do at the Afghan defense institutions that a lot of people don't hear about is something we call the Ministry of Defense Advisory Program. So DSCA, one of the programs, and this is, you know, people normally associate us with FMS, but we are responsible for the Ministry of Defense Advisory Program. This is program that trains civilian advisors from across the interagency to go to Afghanistan, to be embedded in the Afghan Ministry of Defense, to help them with their institutional capacity-building.

One of the things we've learned and one of the things I've learned as a defense attaché, a security cooperation's officer, a J-5, the underlying design feature of most of our military equipment, most United States military equipment is that it is sustained, maintained, and operated by functioning institutions and individuals who are educated. Okay. We have the blessing of wishing that away. Okay. We assume that away because everything here works.

If you want to maximize the effectiveness of the military capability you're providing a country you must work on their institutional capacity. So our Ministry of Defense advisors work in the Ministry of Defense finance department, infrastructure department. What are they doing? They're trying to work with their Afghan colleagues to teach them how efficient, effective administration, the minimization of corruption can create value and help to sustain those defense institutions.

And I'm very proud of the work that they're doing. We're going to continue that work. And, in fact, when I leave here, our Ministry of Defense advisors, they have an exercise out at Muscatatuck, at the training area in Indiana, and when I leave here I'm actually flying to Indiana to participate. There's a village they've built out there. We have Afghan role-players out there to teach them how to negotiate with their Afghan colleagues and how to become advisors.

And I tell them, they often ask me the same question you do, well, how are we making a difference? We've been there so long. And, you know, I tell them if you get there and you're working with your colleague, and remember your colleague was there when you got there, they'll be there when you're gone. Right? But if you pick one or two things that you impart on them, it may be efficient, effective financial management, if you can impart on them that that creates value, okay, and corruption doesn't,

then you will have been successful.

So in answer to your question there are some issues. There are challenges in this, there's no question about that. But from our perspective, we've recognized the importance of institution-building in Afghanistan and we're going after it and we're helping to improve it.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Wide-ranging and very helpful answers. I think I'll leave it at that point for now with my questions and bring in others. And please wait for a microphone and identify yourself.

Should we take one question at a time or do you want to do a couple at a time?

GENERAL HOOPER: I can do a couple at a time.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay. So we'll start here in the front row and then we'll got to the third row for round number one, if we could. So all the way up here.

GENERAL HOOPER: Mr. Finelli's in the back. Please make sure you ask his question.

MR. O'HANLON: Oh, is he?

GENERAL HOOPER: Yes, he is.

MR. O'HANLON: Frank, how are you? Good to have you here.

MS. MARASHU: Thank you very much. My name is Aveli Marashu and I'm a Romanian transatlantic diplomatic fellow working at State.

GENERAL HOOPER: Congratulations.

MS. MARASHU: Thank you. I was wondering if you tell us a bit about Ukraine, about U.S. cooperation in Ukraine, and also how the relationship with your European partners is in this regard.

GENERAL HOOPER: That's a very good question.

MR. O'HANLON: You want to take that one or you want to add one more to your queue?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, this is a pretty big one.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay.

GENERAL HOOPER: Do you mind if I just take that one? (Laughter)

MR. O'HANLON: Let's do it.

GENERAL HOOPER: I changed my mind, we'll take them one at a time.

Okay, so that's a very good question and let's start with Ukraine. Obviously, we're very interested in assisting the new government of Ukraine as we did with the old one in resisting some of the aggression that they've been confronted with and so we work very hard to provide them with the articles and services that they have requested. We work in training the Ukrainian armed forces. We've assigned a senior retired Department of Defense official to be a senior advisor to the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense. That's retired Lieutenant General Keith Dayton is there working with them. And so we work very hard.

In terms of our European partners, this is a perfect example of how we're working with our new -- our European partners, particularly our Eastern European partners, and our Eastern European NATO partners for further fidelity to help transition them from old Soviet equipment to United States equipment. And we've working very hard on that.

Just a couple of months ago I was in Bulgaria and then I was in Croatia, and I worked very close with Poland. Romania, I worked very close with Romania, as well. All of those countries are in the process of looking at replacing their old Soviet equipment with U.S. equipment to improve NATO interoperability and work with us. And so I'm working very hard to work with them as they transition from their Russian and Soviet equipment.

I would also tell you that many of those countries, their economies are still evolving. They may have resource challenges. And we're looking for creative ways to work with them to provide them with the best capabilities in the world at a price that they can afford. And we're working with them to provide it as quickly as possible.

So I have a whiteboard in my office, okay, and it has a lot of stuff on it. In fact, it's over crowded with stuff. But the two words at the top are "speed" and "price point." Okay? Because I want to get it to our European allies at a price they can afford and I want to get it to them as fast as possible.

Did that answer your question? Okay, good.

MR. O'HANLON: The gentleman here in the third row, please.

MR. GOLD: Zack Gold, CNA. General, good to see you outside of Cairo. Thanks for being here.

GENERAL HOOPER: It's good to be here.

MR. GOLD: My question is more broadly about assessing, monitoring, and evaluating our security cooperation. Obviously, the policy in place, looking at return on investment, it's somewhat easy to measure whether our partners are getting better. But it's somewhat more difficult to measure the relationship and also to measure access. So how can you measure that we're having an impact no access that wouldn't otherwise be there without the cooperation?

For example, when the U.S. Government withheld funding for security cooperation to Egypt, we continued to maintain the Navy access through the Suez Canal because we paid for it. So can you talk about how we would measure access and the relationships going forward with security cooperation?

GENERAL HOOPER: Okay, and that's a very good question. And we have, in accordance with the Fiscal Year '17 NDAA, we've stood up a whole section and devoted significant resources to the issue of assessment, monitoring, and evaluation. How do you measure what is essentially inherently a human endeavor in many cases?

Access is one measure of effectiveness. And I would tell you that in the case of Egypt, using Egypt, you used Egypt for an example, yes, we pay for it, but what we don't pay for in Egypt is we don't pay for priority access in Egypt. So, for example, and for those of you that don't know, when you transit to Suez Canal, no different than Panama or anywhere else, you have to pay. What many of you don't know is because of our close relationship with Egypt, whenever, we can receive priority access to the Canal. And in fact, I will tell you, in my entire tenure there, we were able to get a ship through from notification to transit in 24 hours. Okay. That is extraordinary when you consider the amount of traffic that goes through the Suez Canal. And the Egyptians provided that even after we reduced and suspended temporarily our aid. So it's relatively easy in the case of Egypt because you can count the number of transits that are every year. It's about 100.

And also overflight. In 2016, 2,100 aircraft overflew Egypt, U.S. combat aircraft. Okay. And this is in a country where, I mean, they were very generous in their flexibility.

The answer to your question is you have to -- obviously, it takes a lot of subjective and objective analysis to determine whether or not what you're doing is working. Are you receiving the

access to overflight? Does the country have the inherent capacity to defend themselves? Does the military show efficiencies and effectiveness with respect to that other thing I talked about, institutional capacity-building? Is it relatively corruption-free? Is there subordination of the military to civil authority?

So there are objective and subjective metrics. The answer to your question is it isn't easy. It just isn't. But we're working very hard as best we can to codify subjective and objective measures of effectiveness. And the simple fact of the matter is, and this is something I stress, if it ain't working, we need to stop doing it and do something else. It's what my dad used to say, you know. If what you're doing isn't working, then do something else.

MR. O'HANLON: Let's go to Frank in very back, please.

MR. FINELLI: Thank you so much. Frank Finelli with the Carlyle Group. General Hooper, thanks so much for your remarks.

I'd be interested in your assessment of China's international defense sales policies and programs and how those have changed since you were posted in China as an attaché.

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, obviously, this gets to the heart of the great power competition that we are currently engaged in. China has become much more aggressive in terms of their attempts and their efforts to make sales overseas and make sales abroad. They're trying to encroach upon markets that were formerly dominated by the United States in terms of providing defense articles and services. And they're trying to make inroads into areas where we have exercised dominance for quite some years. Unmanned aerial vehicles is a good example of that.

And so when we talk about DSCA's role in great power competition, our role in great power competition is to ensure that we provide all of the tools, metrics, and efforts to ensure that we not only sustain our market share and our position as the provider of choice against encroachment by our strategic competitors like China, but expand it. Now, there's a couple of things that distinguish how we do business from perhaps how the Chinese do business.

Number one is our great power competitors have perfected the art of transactional diplomacy. We are in the interest of -- we have four values of DSCA, but the last one is commitment. The United States remains committed to long-term relationships. For us, the point of sale, to paraphrase

Churchill, is not the end, it's not even the beginning of the end, it's merely the end of the beginning. So that's what distinguishes us from our Chinese competitors.

Number two, we talk about the integrity of the U.S. process, many stakeholders, many legal reviews to ensure that the process remains corruption-free. And I always tell our partners and allies around the world when you do business with the United States, the books are always open.

Now, I was talking one of our international partners not too long ago, a senior partner, someone I've known for a while, and we were talking about this, Frank, about doing business with the Chinese and we had a conversation about it. And he said, you know, I do business with many of your competitors. Okay. But I'm not sure I trust them as much as I trust you. Okay? Your systems drive me crazy. Your process drives me crazy. But with you, I always know what I'm getting and I know it's the right thing and I know where my money's being spent. Okay.

I'm okay with that. And I think that distinguishes us from other countries' approaches.

The last thing I'll mention to you is our stuff is better. It's just better. And our stuff offers -- as we know, we're in the information-based age of warfare. So our equipment, our articles and services, offer countries not only the best kinetics and mechanics in the world, but access to the -- potential access to the information that will make them much more efficient and effective in support of our mutual interests and also reduce the probability and possibility of the civilian casualties and collateral damage. Okay. And as far as I know, we're the only great power in this competition that is focused on and cares about the value-based elements of this.

So, yes, they're very aggressive. I'm very familiar with how they do business. I've spent a good part of my adult life there. But I'm absolutely confident that we can succeed in this competition and that we will remain the partner of choice.

MR. O'HANLON: Stay in the back for a minute or so. The gentleman right there, Hannah, right next to you essentially, just to -- no, right there.

MR. ISACSON: Thank you very much and thank you, General Hooper. I'm Adam Isacson from the Washington Office on Latin America.

And just on the last answer on processes that drive you crazy, I'd like to ask about the

Leahy law, which is now codified in Title 10 and Title 22 prohibiting assistance to foreign military units that violate human rights with impunity. Do you feel that the Leahy law has, after all these years, been sort of -- the vetting has been institutionalized and it's now a smooth process?

And also, it does not apply to foreign military sales. What would change for you if it did?

GENERAL HOOPER: I think, by and large, I think that it has been institutionalized. I can go by my own experience as a security cooperation officer. It was something that we did routinely and it was mandatory that we do.

Countries often push back on it. They feel sometimes it's an infringement on their sovereignty. But nevertheless, they understand that if they're doing business with the United States, this is something that they have to participate in.

If it were applied to foreign military sales, we would adhere strictly to the law and move forward with that. And once again, I think this speaks to the integrity of the U.S. approach to security cooperation that distinguishes us from our strategic competitors. So if it were applied, we would obey the law. And you know what? We'd still be successful and we'd still be consistent with not only our interests, but our values, as well.

MR. O'HANLON: Come here to the second row, the gentleman here.

MR. STONE: Thanks. Mike Stone from Reuters. Thank you for coming.

I wanted to ask, going back to Frank's question, about China. On Friday evening, the eve before Acting Secretary of Defense Shanahan spoke at Shangri-La, the United States authorized four countries in the South China Sea to receive about \$47 million worth of category 2 smaller UAVs. They also received foreign military financing in order to do that. Is the category 2 UAV going to be used as a tool to help take market share for long-tail [sic] U.S. strategic relationships? And was the timing of that announcement a factor in the decision to release any of that?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, I'm not going to speak whether -- what timing was. I mean, you can certainly ask OSD Public Affairs or others about the timing of it.

What I can say is we've had a longstanding relationship with our Southeast Asian partners to improve maritime domain awareness. We've been working with them for quite some time.

Most of them, as you know, are archipelagos, the Philippines and others. And so we've been working on maritime domain awareness for quite some time. And so the fact that we would continue to work on that and that we would announce that we're continuing our work on providing them with UAVs and other capabilities is not particular unusual.

MR. O'HANLON: Go to the gentleman in the back and then we'll work our way up and take Doug after that.

QUESTIONER: Thank you very much. Dong Quou with China Review News Agency of Hong Kong.

The latest Pentagon's Pacific report talks about Taiwan's partnership with the United States amid a rising China. Would you like to elaborate in terms of the arms sales to Taiwan? And some people in this town are calling for recognizing the arms sales to Taiwan. Is the United States considering doing that? Thank you.

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, as you know, as a result of the Taiwan Relations Act, the United States by law has an obligation to provide Taiwan with sufficient defense articles and services. This is an issue I've worked for quite some time and we have continued to provide -- to work with those authorities on Taiwan, work closely with them to provide them the defense articles and services that they need.

I'm not going to speak to whether or not -- because it's variable. The question you ask in terms of how the characterization of our arms sales to Taiwan, I'm not going to speak to that except to say we continue to aggressively execute the law with respect to the Taiwan Relations Act in providing them articles and services and working with them to ensure they have an appropriate defensive capability.

MR. O'HANLON: Doug here in the sixth row.

MR. BROOKS: Thank you. Great discussion. Doug Brooks, International Stability Operations Association. We're with the service contractors.

My question is on the evolution of ACOTA in Africa. Where is it going in the future with what's been happening lately?

GENERAL HOOPER: I have to be honest, I haven't kept up with ACOTA. That is a State Department program almost exclusive. And on a day-to-day basis I don't have direct involvement with ACOTA. I did when I was the AFCOM J-5, obviously, but I wouldn't feel comfortable speaking to where it is right now.

MR. O'HANLON: That's the Africa Contingency Operations and Training Assistance Program, right?

GENERAL HOOPER: Mm-hmm.

MR. O'HANLON: The gentleman here in the second row. Sorry to keep you running all over the place, Hannah.

MR. PERKINS: General, good morning. Charles Perkins with APAC.

One of the important aspects of the new conventional arms transfer policy is the economic component. Could you talk a little bit about how DSCA deals with American industry, whether they're competing or it's a single source in both the marketing and the processing and production of an FMS case?

And also, I guess the second part of that is, as you say in the National Defense Strategy strengthening our international partners is vital. And part of that for the more economically developed foreign partners is they will obviously also want a piece of the pie, if you will. They will want sometimes to tailor a system to their own unique needs. They'll want, you know, coproduction. In general, could you talk about DSCA's role within the broad issue of international industrial cooperation and sales?

GENERAL HOOPER: Absolutely. And thanks for asking that question.

This time, and I talked a little bit about the documents that have created this almost perfect storm that allows us to move security cooperation reform forward, one of the significant elements of that is our close relationship with U.S. industry. And now I want to define what I mean by "close." And what I mean by that is we work across the board with all U.S. industry hand-in-hand as Team America to put forward U.S. solutions to our partners' interest.

Now, on a day-to-day basis, obviously, we work with many of the defense industries as we're moving forward FMS cases and others. One of the first things I did when I got here, you know, we

have our security cooperation's officers overseas. And many of the members of our business community had complained that sometimes it was hard for them to meet with security cooperation's officers. And so one of the first things I did is I made a video. Okay. I made a video for a security cooperation's officers that said working with industry. And so it's about a 25-minute video and the video starts out by telling them all the things you can do. You can discuss the budgetary processes of the country. You can do this. And I only saved the last 10 minutes for all the things they can't do. But I wanted them to understand that I wanted them to work more closely with industry.

When I was in Egypt, when we cut off -- we suspended aid to Egypt, and it just so happened because of my background I knew the Chinese attaché, the Russian attaché, and the French attaché, okay, and they all came to me. And, you know, in those cases they have a very -- those three countries have a very close working relationship between the military and the defense industry. And I watched how they operate hand-in-hand.

Now, I'm an old Army athlete and I hate lose. Okay? And so I decided if I ever had an opportunity when I came home and if I ever had an opportunity to have this one a job, that I would work to forge a closer relationship with industry. Part of that is under the supervision of Ms. Lord, the under secretary for acquisition and sustainment. She meets periodically with industry heads. She always invites the director of DSCA to sit at the table with her. And I regularly report and have collaboration with the industry associations: AIA, NDIA, and others. So, I mean, that relationship is strong and vital and we work very closely with them.

We currently track around the world, we're currently tracking about 50 international competitions. That's where the United States is a participant in a competition for jets or helicopters around the world. We represent, DSCA represents the interest of all American entries into those competitions. And when the country down selects which U.S. platform they're interested in, we are all in behind them to support them and advocate for them, working with our colleagues in the Department of Commerce. So that's the kind of relationship we have to have.

The bottom line on security and economics is economic security is national security. We have adopted that. We have embraced that at DSCA and we work closely with our colleagues at

Commerce, closely with our colleagues all around the interagency and in American industry to make that a reality.

MR. O'HANLON: Courtney here in the second row, please.

MS. McBRIDE: Good morning, General Hooper.

GENERAL HOOPER: Good morning.

MS. McBRIDE: Courtney McBride with *The Wall Street Journal*.

Just on a related note, I'm just wondering how are the discussions of third country restrictions for PESCO and EDF affecting DSCA? How are you involved in some of those negotiations or talks?

GENERAL HOOPER: Can't say, I'm sorry. It's okay.

MR. O'HANLON: Good try. (Laughter) Fourth row here, please.

GENERAL HOOPER: Yes, sir.

MR. CARLSON: Good morning. Bill Carlson. I'm an intern at the Organization of American States.

I was wondering if I could pick up on the tension you identified between capacity-building and values. You pointed to some of the programs that the U.S. has implemented to ensure that our aid is used in accordance with our values. Could you point to specific circumstances or cases where improved training on human rights has led to increased respect for human rights? Or is that something we can't evaluate in the short term?

GENERAL HOOPER: Well, you know, that's an interesting question because we have efforts, very precise efforts all around the world and I'm trying to think of a specific example where it has. But, I mean, for every specific example I give, you can give an instance where that particular country backslid or something happened. So it's very difficult for me to give a consistent case.

What I can tell you is the vigorous application of our values and the attendant mechanisms behind it has changed the shape of how countries react with us. And they understand that they're going to be under close scrutiny, and use monitoring as a classic example. I know there's been a lot of discussion and a lot of reports on end-use monitoring in the last few months.

Working with our State Department colleagues, we had a robust, very robust, and we have a very robust system of end-use monitoring checks. We have enhanced that to add random checks to our regular checks, for example. We're working on increased curriculum at our Defense Institute for International Legal Studies and that what will soon be the Defense Security Cooperation University to include more courses in that. Going back to the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies, they are sending more and more mobile training teams overseas to talk about our values and law of land warfare, law of armed conflict, avoiding civilian casualties.

So, I mean, like I said, I could pull out examples, you could pull out corresponding examples of backsliding. The bottom line is this: we're the only great power that cares about this, in my view, in the great power competition. We have devoted significant resources to it. We continue to devote significant resources to it. And we're going to continue to push the ball forward so that, hopefully, the next time you ask that question I could give you a definitive example of a country where this has taken place.

MR. O'HANLON: Not that you need my help, but I would personally give Iraq as an example. Because when the Iraqi Army in 2013 and '14 completely folds without our help, it's pretty hard to even have a conversation about human rights practices. And they're certainly a lot better today, despite their imperfections, but just anyway.

I thought there was a hand in the very far back, but maybe not. Okay, then about 10 rows in. See the first hand, Hannah, just two rows from you? The woman right there, yes.

MS. ARABIA: I'll stand, otherwise you can't see me.

MR. O'HANLON: Great, thank you.

MS. ARABIA: Thank you for being here today. Christina Arabia, Center for International Policy.

I'm curious about two parts of the foreign military sale process -- or one part. With the new conventional arms transfer policy how much quicker are you able to get foreign military sales out from notification to the actual delivery?

GENERAL HOOPER: Okay.

MS. ARABIA: And the second part is with President Trump's emergency declaration kind of expediting the arms sales process for Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan, how does it affect the process at DSCA, if it does at all?

GENERAL HOOPER: Okay. Let me answer the first question first. This goes to one of the four areas of reform that we're focusing on, and this is effective execution. And there's a couple of things we've done and we're doing to more effectively execute and reduce the timeline.

First of all, a lot of people don't know this, but we process 50 percent of our cases in 52 days or less. Okay. Fifty percent of our cases in 52 days or less. Now, obviously, there are more complex cases that take a longer time, but here's some of the things we're doing to alleviate that.

The first one I'll tell you is very general, is raising the level of transparency and information exchange. If you guys were to go to DSCA.mil right now, you'd find a series of videos on that website, okay, videos on everything from end-use monitoring to FMS 101 to what is a foundational document to -- because why? Because we've discovered that if you provide information to allies, partners, stakeholders on how the process works, the process moves faster. So that's number one.

Number two, and I've been very blessed as DSCA director and very honored when former Secretary Mattis was still in the Pentagon, he brought the DSCA director everywhere he traveled, and I found myself going with him. Why? Because he realized that about 10 minutes into his counterpart visit that his counterpart was going to ask where's my stuff? Or here's some more stuff that I'd like and here's the list. But the importance of that in speeding up the timeline is the DSCA director has firsthand knowledge of the requirements and the questions to act on immediately.

The third thing we're doing is we have come up with a construct we call Strategy to Capabilities. Okay. And what that means is many times the delay in processing FMS is at the very beginning. And it goes back to that question I talked about, don't tell me what you want, tell me what you want to do. My dad used to say, you know -- everybody know the carpenter's rule? Measure twice, cut once. Okay? If you measure once, you might have to cut the same piece of wood 10 times. If you measure twice, you only have to cut it once. So if you get the requirements right in the beginning, the process moves faster.

And lastly, we have developed as a result of the Strategy to Capability construct a set of proactive timelines. We talk to industry about these, whether we can hit these gates in these types of suspenses, and we share them with our partners. And what we say to our partners is if you get this right, okay, and if you follow this timeline, we can get you this capability in whatever it is, a year, two years, or whatever. If you miss a gate or we miss a gate, this is what will delay it. So we're all operating on the same page now. Okay. And, in fact, when we came up with this construct, the bumper sticker we used was it's hard to all be on the same page if there's no page. So we now have a page that's been adopted by the combatant commands and others.

To your second question, and, once again, on the specifics of these issues I'll leave that to our State Department colleagues to discuss with respect to the second issue you raised. But I will say is this, we respect and have worked closely and continue to work closely with our congressional colleagues on those 14,000 open cases for 185 countries. We have a very valued process that we work through, we will continue to work through with our colleagues and we're going to continue to move forward.

MR. O'HANLON: I'm going to ask one last question, take the prerogative and extend a minute or two after 11:00, if we could.

GENERAL HOOPER: Sure, yeah.

MR. O'HANLON: But because it's sort of been Indo-Pacific week with the Shangri-La dialogue and discussion of U.S. strategy and, of course, the renaming of Pacific Command and Indo-Pacific Command last year, I wanted to ask you about India and Pakistan.

GENERAL HOOPER: Sure.

MR. O'HANLON: And just finish on that note, bittersweet I suppose, but one happier than the other at the moment. But I wanted to just ask, General, if you could give us any guidance about how you think about each of those relationships from where you sit.

GENERAL HOOPER: Okay. Let's take the harder of the two first, the Pakistan relationship. So I've been a soldier and a security cooperator for quite some time. I grew up in the Asia-Pacific region, very familiar with our very tense, very contentious relationship with Pakistan. Obviously,

we have at the present to signal to the government of Pakistan that we are not particularly happy with many of their policies and many of the steps that they've taken. We've curtailed and suspended a great deal of their military assistance, consistent with what we've done at other points in the relationship.

Obviously, Pakistan remains a critical nation in the South Asian equation. We have done so to get their attention that they will, hopefully, change their policies. And once that takes place, we will look at how we will kind of reinstate and re-ramp up our relationship with Pakistan.

Our relationship with India, to end on a positive note, I think is moving very nicely forward. And as an Asia-Pacific soldier, who for many, many years had worked on the U.S.-India relationship and seen the difficulties and the challenges of it, I'm very gratified to see how well we're moving forward.

I will tell you there's a couple of countries that I've repeated and I've talked about all the countries we're responsible for, there's a couple countries I've been to more than three times in two years. And I know that doesn't seem like a lot when you consider the number of countries we're responsible for. I've been to India four times in two years. And that's hugely significant.

The signing of a COMCASA, a COMSEC agreement, with the Indians is huge, which allows us to move forward with their defense partner status. We're currently in the process of working with the Indians on a number of platforms and a number of capabilities to move the relationship forward. So I'm very, very, very positive about that relationship, the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest democracy working together and moving that forward.

So there's always going to be that inherent tension in South Asia between the two. Obviously, we will continue to have relations with both countries and those relations will be characterized by how the behavior of those two countries acts in support of our interest or contrary to it.

MR. O'HANLON: Fantastic. Please join me, everyone, in thanking General Hooper.

(Applause)

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