



# **US Doctrine and Joint Warfare: Planning and Implementation**

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**D**efence  
Report.

## **Executive Summary**

The US constantly looks to the future of its strategic environment to understand where its military, security, economic, technological, and informational challenges might lie, and how “old” or present dangers are expected to change. Today the US military operates in a complex strategic environment in which both “old” persist and new dangers frequently emerge. This report addresses key features of the US military in what is referred to as the “new security environment” of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It considers formulations of the US military as a joint force and criteria that might set it apart from a non-integrated or non-joint force. Aspects of planning and implementation expected to meet some of the major security challenges of the contemporary period, as outlined by the US government, are examined. How operations can be conceived of as *effective* is no simple task; but can be undertaken by looking at cases in which the US and its various military services engaged in large scale combat operations. “Operation Iraqi Freedom” and “Operation Enduring Freedom” provide the bases for looking at joint planning and execution in practice, and the challenges of joint operations that take place in conjunction with civil-based organizations and agencies. While this report makes a preliminary assessment of the lessons learned from two major US operations, many different perspectives can be applied to these in order to outline key challenges of joint operations as well as the principles and structures, which the US and its allies might be able to employ in order to achieve success in future strategic, operational, and tactical planning and execution.

## Introduction

The US and its military today, faces a much different range of threats in a very different security environment than it did decades ago. During the Cold War, the US and its allies contended with a monolithic threat that came in the form of the Soviet Union and operated in a security environment defined by bipolarity. Today, the US faces multiple threats, both conventional and unconventional. While many of the “old” dangers (i.e., nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, among others) still persists as part of the threat matrices that occupy the US security agenda, a much wider range of factors contribute to a more dangerous and more unpredictable security environment. The US has also increasingly looked to partnering within its own borders (i.e., amongst US military service) and amongst organizations and states around the world to enhance its abilities to ensure security and stability, and to protect its national interests. This report looks at key features of the US and its military within a new security environment. First it considers conceptualizations of the US military as a joint force and how it implements planning. Second, and on a more substantive level, it looks at examples of effective operations using existing cases in order to outline the key challenges of joint operations, as well as the principles and structures that can be used to inform successful operations in the future.

## Joint Doctrine Development and Warfighting

Joint Vision 2020 establishes a useful template for bringing together the capabilities of multiple military services. Each of the services of the US military possesses its own unique ability and skillset. Combined, the services are able, according to the vision and strategy of the US government through its publication; bring to the table a coherent and unified structure with innovative leadership. “The traditional concepts of maneuver, strike, protection, and logistics are leveraged with *technological advances and information superiority* to produce improvements that are potentially so powerful that they become, in effect, new operational concepts.”<sup>1</sup> The operational concepts include:

- *Dominant maneuver* – the multidimensional application of information and maneuver capabilities to provide coherent operations of air, land, sea, and space forces throughout the breadth, depth, and height of the battlespace to seize the initiative and control the tempo of the operation to a decisive conclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> Federation of American Scientists (FAS) “Joint Warfighter S&T Plan – Chapter II: Vision and Strategy,” no date, [https://www.fas.org/spp/military/docops/defense/97\\_jwstp/jw2.htm](https://www.fas.org/spp/military/docops/defense/97_jwstp/jw2.htm) (accessed 1 Apr. 2015).

- *Precision engagement* – the capability to accurately locate the enemy, command and control friendly forces, precisely attack key enemy forces or capabilities, and accurately assess the level of success.
- *Full-dimensional protection* – the capability to protect our forces at all levels and obtain freedom of action while they deploy, maneuver, and engage an adversary.
- *Focused logistics* – the capability to respond rapidly to crises, shift warfighting assets between geographic regions, monitor critical resources en route, and directly deliver tailored logistics at the required level of operations.<sup>2</sup>

Joint warfighting planning has become enhanced due to the ideas of increased flexibility and responsiveness. These elements are key in bringing about a military force that is expected to operate in a new and emerging security environment defined by both conventional and unconventional threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. When services are brought together, the concept of “Total Force” emerges. The concept encompasses the ability to the US military to “build the most effective force for 2020” by underscoring the necessity of becoming “intellectually, operationally, organizationally, doctrinally, and technically” proficient and unified in its approach to contemporary security threats.<sup>3</sup>

Joint doctrine development strengthens joint warfighting planning by expanding the scope of vision of current and future military forces. The range of military operations is greatly expanded due to a building of “synergy of the core competencies of the individual services, integrated into a joint team.”<sup>4</sup> The following figure depicts this expanded range.

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<sup>2</sup> Federation of American Scientists (FAS) “Joint Warfighter S&T Plan – Chapter II: Vision and Strategy,”; US Department of Defense (DoD), “Joint Vision 2020,” 2000, [http://www.fraw.org.uk/files/peace/us\\_dod\\_2000.pdf](http://www.fraw.org.uk/files/peace/us_dod_2000.pdf) (accessed 1 Apr. 2015).

<sup>3</sup> US Department of Defense (DoD), “Joint Vision 2020,” p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Figure 1: Range of Military Operations<sup>5</sup>

<b>RANGE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS</b>			
	<b>Military Operations</b>	<b>General US Goals</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>COMBAT</b>	War	Fight & Win	Large Scale Combat Operations Attack / Defend / Blockade
	<b>NONCOMBAT</b>	Military Operations Other Than War	Deter War & Resolve Conflict
		Promote Peace & Support US Civil Authorities	Freedom of Navigation Counterdrug Humanitarian Assistance Protection of Shipping US Civil Support

An increased range of operations complements the new security environment in which the US and its military services are expected to operate. A number of persistent trends characterize this new environment: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the rise of modern competitor states, violent extremism, regional instability, transnational criminal activity, and competition for resources.<sup>6</sup> The question of how joint doctrine and development may lead to ideas and capabilities that enhance joint warfighting planning cannot be addressed without taking into consideration the environment in which that joint warfighting is expected to take place. The two operate in concert because a joint force will have to respond to the threats presented by its environment. The factors mentioned facilitate the rise of a security environment in which there is likely to a higher degree of unpredictability, greater complexity, and probably much more dangerous than in the past.<sup>7</sup>

**Effective Translation: From Policy to Practice**

Doctrinal planning and preparation provide the very basis for military operations given that without proper preparation in terms of planning the implementation

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

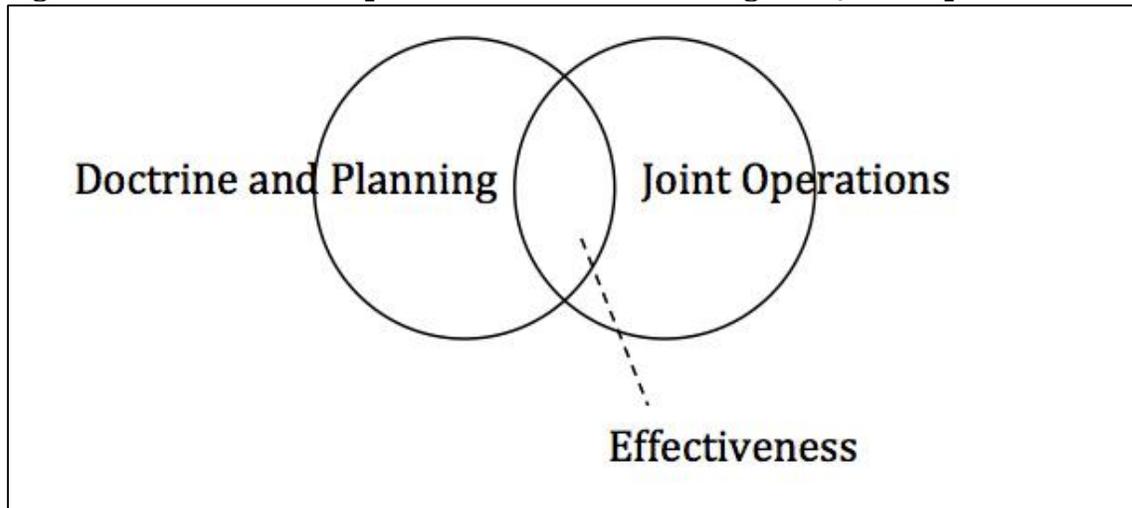
<sup>6</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) "CJCSI 3141," 2011, [http://www.dtic.mil/cjcs\\_directives/cdata/unlimit/3141\\_01.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/cjcs_directives/cdata/unlimit/3141_01.pdf) (accessed 1 Apr. 2015), p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

phase of a military's activities would be disastrous. Both doctrine and planning are therefore seminal features of US military services and their operations. They specify fundamental (if even basic) direction for a state's military from national to international domains. They are also essential determinants of how a state's military and its various elements act in the face of military conflict, the prevention of war and violence, military development, and the use of force for the defense of critical national interests. Effective joint operations are further tied to state (political) sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

The terms *doctrine* and *planning* are inherently conceptual in nature and may have different meaning prescribed to them. Within the context of the US and the US military, doctrine is critically understood as a formulation of means and ends. It represents an essential roadmap for what and how the US will go about fulfilling its major objectives and obligations. I take planning and doctrine as means to effective (joint) operations. Accordingly, joint operations are intrinsically tied to planning and doctrine though conceptualizations of *effectiveness*. This is ultimately one of the major purposes of national security documents, including JP 5-0,<sup>8</sup> JOPES,<sup>9</sup> and CJCSI 3141.<sup>10</sup> Figure 2 illustrates the overlap between the concepts of doctrine and planning so as to yield a desired effectiveness.

**Figure 2: Interrelationship of Doctrine and Planning, and Joint Operations**



The essence of the US NSS<sup>11</sup> (via the NSC) involves taking into consideration political and military situations on select levels or in certain spheres such as those

<sup>8</sup> US Department of Defense (DoD), "JP 5-0 Joint Operation Planning," 2011, [http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new\\_pubs/jp5\\_0.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp5_0.pdf) (accessed 1 Apr. 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), "User's Guide for JOPES," 1 May 1995, <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/doctrine/other/jopes.pdf> (accessed 1 Apr. 2015).

<sup>10</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) "CJCSI 3141".

<sup>11</sup> The White House, "US National Security Strategy," 2010, [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf) (accessed 1 Apr. 2015).

mentioned above. They can also be considered and based on elite-level prognosis, guides politico-military development, requirements, and possibilities of the state, its allies, and dangers in the world to ensure security through joint operations. The process builds on a general strategic approach of the US and its forces. Part of the role of doctrine is to consider *transformation* in different contexts of all types of danger in the world and link them with political and military threat. This is particularly true of the US military and the currently security environment as explained previously.

“Burden sharing,” stated within the NSS, is a requisite part of strengthening the political and military architecture of the US with the view of meeting the challenges in the contemporary international system.<sup>12</sup> It represents a distinct part of US military doctrine and informs that manner in which any and all services operate to achieve collective security (i.e., by services working together and through joint [multinational] partnerships and effort). Joint operations effectiveness is essentialized in the NSS by referring to an engagement on strengthening and the galvanization of collective action by US departments and agencies (particularly those of the US military).

The NMS<sup>13</sup> outlines the “disciplined action of force” in order to ensure operational success. The NMS underscores the concept of Joint Force and applying it against the transformation of danger to threat. The effectiveness aspect of the general relationship is ensured through the integration of core military competencies transcending all elements of the national government. Within the scope of effectiveness are considerations for capabilities and constraints (i.e., geographic conditions as part of the contemporary security environment). Capabilities or competencies encompass complementary practice, multi-domain power projection, joint forcible entry, maintaining joint force access to theaters of operations and other vital regions, and the general ability of the US’ forces to fight.<sup>14</sup> All three concepts ([1] Doctrine and planning; [2] Effectiveness; [3] Joint Operations) share a strong relationship. It is nearly impossible to separate the three and still view the US military as a joint force. The relationship shared by effectiveness and joint operations are predicated (in part) on the work of, for example, DoD agencies, field activities, and others: (1) US Army, (2) US Marine Corps, (3), US Navy, (4) US Air Force, (5) US Coast Guard, and (6) US Army National Guard.<sup>15</sup> There is growing interdependence fostered as a result of the relationship between these and other services.

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<sup>12</sup> The White House, “US National Security Strategy,” 2010.

<sup>13</sup> US Department of Defense (DoD), “The National Military Strategy of the United States of America,” 2011, <http://www.army.mil/info/references/docs/NMS%20FEB%202011.pdf> (accessed 1 Apr. 2015).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> US Department of Defense (DoD), “Military Services,” 2013, <http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/milservices.html> (accessed 1 Apr. 2015); Each of these services also includes a reserve component.

Planning, it might well be argued can only be truly effective, if command, planning, operations, intelligence, logistical support, communications systems support, and information management come together to support overall mission planning. Each of these areas shares distinct relationships with another.<sup>16</sup> These relationships are based upon the interaction of individuals, units, services, and departments.<sup>17</sup> Taken together, there is a comprehensive network of relationship being built in order to serve larger national security concerns and interests. Initial planning may be undertaken to provide strategic, operational, and tactical options for higher levels of command. Specific tactical and operational missions should directly link with larger (strategic) level security considerations (i.e., objectives) JP 3-05.1.<sup>18</sup> Since operations can range in size and can be tailored to unique and often unpredictable situations, the dynamics of military engagement, security cooperation, situational response, and larger campaigns can vary extensively. The flow of information is critical in making this network function appropriately.<sup>19</sup> “It provides, according to JP 3-05.1, “a centralized point for the handling, tracking, and recording of information.”<sup>20</sup>

### **Joint Planning and Execution: Lessons from “Operation Iraqi Freedom”**

An interesting relationship can be observed between strategy, operations, and tactics. In some cases, a strong strategy is able to make up for tactical errors during the course of a military campaign. Joint planning, according to the JCS, includes:

the requirement to plan for all six phases of a mission, which include Shape (Phase 0), Deter (Phase I), Seize the Initiative (Phase II), Dominate (Phase III), Stabilize (Phase IV), and Enable Civil Authority (Phase V). Occupation is included in Phase IV (Stabilize).<sup>21</sup>

It is important to acknowledge these conditions because should one of them fail to fall into place at both the strategic and operational levels, then tactical operations could prove disastrous and fail to achieve their objectives. “Operation Iraqi Freedom” offers a solid case in point in terms of how success can be obscured by a lack of improper strategic, operational, and tactical planning and implementation. The overall campaign demonstrates that faulty planning at any

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<sup>16</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), “User’s Guide for JOPES,” 1 May 1995, <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/doctrine/other/jopes.pdf> (accessed 1 Apr. 2015), p. 20.

<sup>17</sup> US Department of Defense (DoD), “The National Military Strategy of the United States of America”.

<sup>18</sup> US Department of Defense (DOD), “Joint Special Operations Task Force Operations,” 26 Apr. 2007, [https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp3\\_05\\_01.pdf](https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp3_05_01.pdf) (accessed 1 Apr. 2015).

<sup>19</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), “User’s Guide for JOPES”, p14.

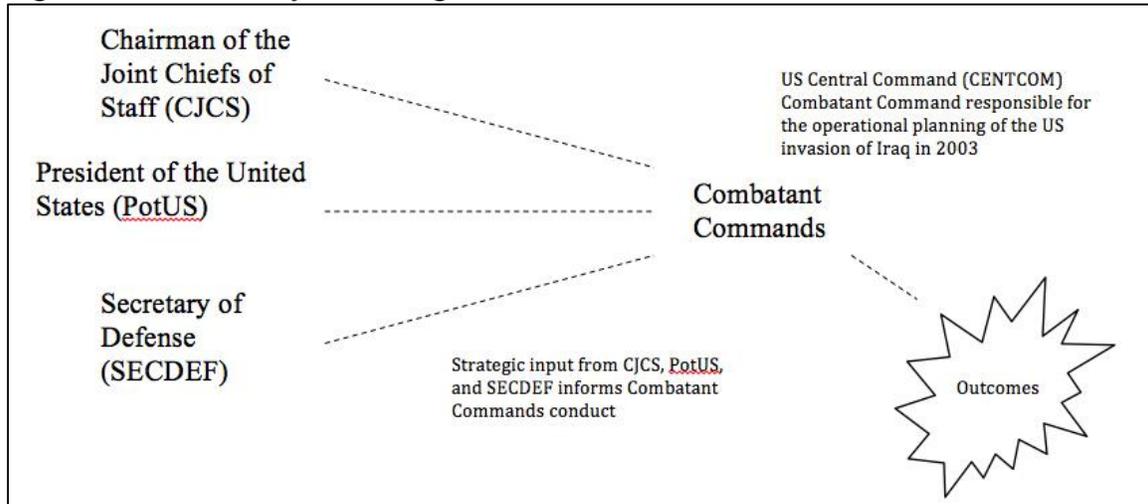
<sup>20</sup> US Department of Defense (DOD), “Joint Special Operations Task Force Operations”, p. xiv.

<sup>21</sup> Matthew R. Hover, “The Occupation of Iraq: A Military Perspective on Lessons Learned, 2012, *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 94, No. 885, <https://www.icrc.org/spa/assets/files/review/2012/irrc-885-hover.pdf> (accessed 1 Apr. 2015); Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) “CJCSI 3141,” Chapter III, Section C.

single level can actually have positive effects on the structure and coordination of military forces and potentially future campaigns.

Contemporary US military, according to Figure 3, planning can be depicted as follows:

**Figure 3: US Military Planning**<sup>22</sup>



Considering the broader picture (including the much broader objective of deposing former-leader of Iraq Saddam Hussein), “Operation Iraqi Freedom” has been referred to as a success. Looking at the military aspect of the campaign, US services performed their duties to achieve the overarching objective as established by PotUS. What the US military was hesitant to engage in, however, were length stability operations and the much more daunting exercise of nation building for no simpler reason than the latter is simply not what the US military was designed for. It is still the responsibility of CENTCOM to plan for the implementation of Phase IV in any operation or campaign in any theater of operation. When the US military was successful in moving through the initial phases of the military campaign, there were considerable obstacles in their way by the time Phase III need to be faced.

A fundamental flaw in US campaign preparation was the failure to focus on civil-military operations before the US launched its military invasion.<sup>23</sup> Moreover:

owing to the fact that civil affairs officers and units were in short supply, this lack of training was extremely detrimental to initial stability operations, because these civil-military operations tasks fell to combat units untrained for the job.<sup>12</sup> This was particularly true during the days

<sup>22</sup> US Department of Defense (DoD), “JP 5-0 Joint Operation Planning,” 2011, [http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new\\_pubs/jp5\\_0.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp5_0.pdf) (accessed 1 Apr. 2015); Figure based on JP 5-09 description of US military planning.

<sup>23</sup> Hover, “The Occupation of Iraq: A Military Perspective on Lessons Learned”, p. 342.

and weeks following the fall of Baghdad, when the military had the initiative but had also created a power vacuum in Iraq.<sup>24</sup>

Pre-deployment training was stated as one of the main reasons for civil affairs resources unable to fulfill their duties to their fullest. While their primary purpose was to tend to the needs of the Iraqi government, they were burdened with issues pertaining to internally displaced persons (IDPs), oil fields that were set ablaze, chemical decontamination, among other factors.<sup>25</sup> What US military doctrine of the previous decades has underscored was the need to win battles as opposed to winning wars. Moreover, adhering to the older doctrine kept them from adapting not necessarily to methods of warfighting but rather the types of wars that they would have to fight in the future. The Iraq War clearly demonstrated that warfighting methods had to align with an understanding and awareness of the types of war that services and their personnel would be facing.

The US military can be accreted with winning a wide spectrum of battles in Iraq following the invasion of 2003. What also stands as a stark realization is that failure to win the war in Iraq ultimately led to renewed battles for which the US military has proven itself largely ill-equipped to address. Acclimatizing to this reality may be an unfinished success story; however, what is more apparent is that the US demonstrated through its withdrawal that certain gaps existed in its military's practice of planning and implementation.

### **Challenges of Joint Operations: The Case of Afghanistan**

Military operations in Afghanistan, as part of "Operation Enduring Freedom," tested the skillset of US military services and individuals within those services in a way that has not been witnessed since US operations in Vietnam. At the same time, the war in Afghanistan added the unique ingredients of interagency players, and both international and non-governmental organizations (IOs or public interest groups) from multiple regions to the situation. One of the most apparent challenges in an environment such as Afghanistan is the difference in interpretations of multinational operations. A good bridge between the obfuscated fields of war and peace in Afghanistan is stability operations. Stability and stabilization became a focus of all major force contributions to the region by 2003. Some, such as Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF), maintained their focus on combat operations due to increased insurgent activity and enemy forces. However, despite ongoing combat operations on multiple fronts and in careful but complex coordination with friends and allies, attention was simultaneously captured by the need to rebuild Afghanistan on multiple levels.

Political and military dimensions of the operation in Afghanistan meant that a great deal of unity of effort was required. It was often the case that too much

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<sup>24</sup> Hover, "The Occupation of Iraq: A Military Perspective on Lessons Learned", p. 342.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 343.

distance could be found between military commanders at various military installations and bases, and political officers in Kabul and elsewhere. By 2003, it was estimated that over 1,600 NGOs were registered with the Ministry of Planning in Afghanistan. Although many of these are Afghan NGOs, the international and multinational ones could be found in relatively large numbers.<sup>26</sup> There are now four NGO coordinating bodies in the country: (1) Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau (ANCB), (2) Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR), (3) Islamic Coordination Council (ICC), and (4) South West Afghanistan and Baluchistan Association for Coordination (SWABAC).<sup>27</sup>

One of the most persistent problems regarding the operations of so many international and multinational organizations in Afghanistan revolves around the issue of security. Taliban and other insurgent forces retained control of areas over the past decade of operations and continue to do so. With both insurgents and aid workers in the country, the US military's responsibilities in many areas multiplied; this is especially the case given that many were eager to commence with humanitarian missions, stabilization programs, and building programs. The United Nations (UN) Country Team alone constituted over 20 organizations spread throughout the country.<sup>28</sup> Funding for programs was also hindered by ongoing combat and security operations. Since 2001, military and security assistance represented more than half of all of the funding that the US (provided by DoD) sent to Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup> By 2009, the priorities in United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan's (UNAMA) mandate were extensive. They included:

- Promote more coherent support by the international community to the Afghan Government;
- Strengthen cooperation with ISAF [International Security Assistance Force];
- Provide political outreach through a strengthened and expanded presence throughout the country;
- Provide good offices in support of Afghan-led reconciliation programs;
- Support efforts to improve governance and the rule of law and to combat corruption;
- Play a central coordinating role to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid;
- Monitor the human right situation of civilians and coordinate human rights protection;
- Support the electoral process through the Afghan Independent Electoral Commission;

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<sup>26</sup> CHR Michelsen Institute (CMI) "Afghanistan Peacebuilding," no date, <http://www.cmi.no/afghanistan/themes/ngos.cfm> (accessed 1 Apr. 2015).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Rhoda Margesson, "United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan: Background and Policy Issues," CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, 30 Jul. 2009, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/128823.pdf> (accessed 1 Apr. 2015).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

- Support regional cooperation in working for a more stable and prosperous Afghanistan.<sup>30</sup>

Although coordinating so many organizations while maintaining security and continuing with combat operations in Afghanistan has been so simple task for the US military and its allies. A several key lessons can be drawn from the Afghanistan case that may be used to successfully integrate such actions in the future. First, a clear delineation between combat operations and stability operations needs to be conceptualized prior to the application of force. When the moment comes to initiate stabilization operations, commanders and policy makers need to be confidence that pre-operations training and procedures were undertaken in preparation for stability missions and programs. Second, it is important to understand the environment in which military, and international and multinational organizations are entering. By environment, one can infer the concept of history.

Understanding the country and the culture is part of knowing its history. Many development plans had become problematic and eventually led to the loss of billions of dollars of funding. Third, national governments need to be aware that war remains a political process and as such, requires the collocation of military personnel at high-ranking levels in a way that allows them to *know* the political dimensions of nation building and reconstruction programs. Fourth, allotting the appropriate amount of time to rebuild a country is essential. In a sense, Afghanistan was a rushed project of the US and its allies. The cliché about Vietnam that, “it was not a ten year war, but a one-year war fought ten times,” finds a place in the context of Afghanistan. Nation building efforts could not appropriately move forward without the understanding of what was to come in the next few months.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Margesson, “United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan: Background and Policy Issues”, pp. 22-23.

<sup>31</sup> Joshua Foust, “Five Lessons We Should Have Learned in Afghanistan,” Public Broadcasting System (PBS), 19 Jul. 2012, <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/need-to-know/opinion/five-lessons-we-should-have-learned-in-afghanistan/14284/> (accessed 1 Apr. 2015).

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