

# CIVILIAN RESPONSE

Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization



## Responding to the Crisis in Georgia

page 4

## This month's features...



Photo:  
Paul Turner

### Crisis in Georgia

On August 7, 2008 Russia invaded Georgia, driving deeply into Georgian territory and occupying strategic positions, cutting Georgia in two. (page 4)

#### Table of contents

- 2 Congress Authorizes the Civilian Response Corps
- 3 Stabilization and Reconstruction: Lessons from Sri Lanka
- 4 Interagency Response to the Georgia Crisis
- 5 Building Partnerships: Ambassador Herbst Visits India and Nepal
- 6 Moving Forward on the Civilian Response Corps
- 7 Partner Profile: The Department of Health and Human Services

### Stand-Up of the Civilian Response Corps

In September, eight U.S. Government agency partners signed a Memorandum of Agreement on standing up the Civilian Response Corps' Active Component. (page 6)



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## Congress Authorizes the Civilian Response Corps

By Terry Heide

The "Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act of 2008" authorizing the Civilian Response Corps was included as Title XVI of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2009, which was signed into law by the President on October 14, 2008, as P.L. 110-417. Title XVI is essentially the same language as H.R.1084, which passed the House under unanimous consent earlier in 2008, but was held up in the Senate. Title XVI also permanently establishes S/CRS in the Department of State.

Although included as part of the FY09 National Defense Authorization Act, Title XVI actually amends the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. et seq.) and the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a et seq.).

Day-to-day operations of S/CRS and the establishment of the Active and Standby components of the Civilian Response Corps

will not change much in light of the authorization because S/CRS was already working in accordance with the provisions of H.R.1084. A copy of Title XVI can be found at [www.crs.state.gov](http://www.crs.state.gov). However, here are a few provisions to note:

- The Coordinator shall be nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, and report directly to the Secretary of State.
- Includes authority to provide assistance for reconstruction and stabilization crises.
- Authorizes the establishment of a "Readiness Response Corps" composed of Active and Standby components.
- Authorizes the establishment of a "Civilian Reserve Corps."
- Requires that State Department and USAID personnel make use of existing U.S. Government training and education programs, such as at the Center for Reconstruction Studies at the Naval Post Graduate School and at National Defense University.
- Extends certain Foreign Service Benefits

to deployed personnel.

- Authorizes the use of reimbursable and non-reimbursable details for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of the act.
- Requires that State Department and USAID develop an interagency strategy to respond to Reconstruction and Stabilization operations, and outlines what that strategy should include.
- Requires that a report be submitted to Congress within 180 days of enactment, and annually every year thereafter for the next 5 years, and prescribes what that report should include.

Although Title XVI uses the same terminology for the Active and Standby components, it refers to them as part of the Readiness Response Corps. It also refers to the Reserve component as its own separate Corps (i.e. Civilian Reserve Corps). S/CRS, however, will continue to refer to one Civilian Response Corps made up of Active, Standby and, when funded, Reserve components. ■

# Stabilization and Reconstruction: Lessons from Sri Lanka

(Article originally posted on the Department of State's DIPNOTE Blog, Dec. 17, 2008)

## Bringing stability and security to the East.

By Claire Sneed

In October 2008, the U.S. Mission in Colombo hosted staff from USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) and the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). They came to Sri Lanka to help develop the scope of work for the Embassy's two-year civilian stabilization program. This effort builds upon a ten-month engagement with the U.S. Embassy in Sri Lanka to bring stability and security to the East as it transitions to civilian rule. As a result of both the Embassy's efforts and broad interagency coordination, Sri Lanka's project was among nine selected to receive FY09 monies available through Section 1207, which provides Department of Defense funds for civilian-agency led stabilization and reconstruction in areas of critical strategic importance to the United States.

### History of S/CRS support

The program for eastern stabilization emerged through a robust process initiated in September of 2007 when the U.S. Embassy requested support from Washington to address new opportunities in eastern Sri Lanka. These opportunities emerged in July 2007 when the Government of Sri Lanka effectively reclaimed control of areas that had been held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

In response to this new opportunity, S/CRS facilitated a process that involved a series of interagency discussions, a scoping mission to the Eastern province, a briefing on results of the scoping mission to the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), and a subsequent meeting with Ambassador Robert O. Blake in Washington, D.C. In order to create a shared understanding of the issues, S/CRS organized a full-day, interagency conflict assessment exercise involving seventeen U.S. government agencies and offices that



*Vocational training prepares former combatants to reintegrate into their communities. (Photo: Claire Sneed)*

identified the key factors driving and mitigating the conflict in the Eastern Province. The Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF) is a methodological tool for assessing conflict dynamics in countries affected by or at risk of conflict. The tool is available through the Department of State Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) website, [www.crs.state.gov](http://www.crs.state.gov).

In January 2008, an assessment team, including USAID conflict and regional specialists, S/CRS facilitators and a Department of Justice police reform expert, traveled to the region to solidify the conflict assessment findings and provide recommendations for an integrated Eastern Province stabilization strategy. On the basis of this assessment, the Embassy submitted a proposal for a stabilization program aimed at improving the economic and social integration of areas vulnerable to conflict, reintegration of former combatants, and increased training for a civilian Tamil police force in the East. In July, the 1207 selection committee awarded \$8 million to Sri Lanka for the two-year multi agency program, with USAID and the Department of Justice as the primary implementers.

### Mission Results

In light of this ongoing stabilization project and the current situation in Sri Lanka, there were several goals for this recent mission.

First, it was imperative to reassess conflict dynamics in the Eastern Province and recommend potential revisions to the proposed project. If changes were needed, it was important to create a detailed scope of work that would guide the eventual program implementer. Finally, it was imperative to recognize that there must be consensus among the broader country team and Washington proponents for the proposed way forward.

After assessing the situation on the ground, the team found that the dynamics and priorities in the East had evolved since January. While there were visible signs of improved security in some areas of the East, many citizens and nongovernmental organizations voiced a perception that security had worsened since the April elections. Despite the fact that these elections symbolized a commitment to democracy and could lead to the devolution of government authority to the local level, the newly elected authorities enjoyed relatively little public support.

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At the same time, the Government has invested in large-scale public infrastructure and development projects in the East, but these projects had yet to command the confidence of the people nor create material benefits for them. Likewise, while most of the populations displaced by conflict have been returned to their homes, or to sites located nearby their original homes, little had been done to help them resettle and secure their access to [continued on page 8]



# Interagency Response to the Georgia Crisis

**S/CRS staff form an integral part of the interagency response to the recent conflict in Georgia.**

By Erica Iverson & Jason Lewis-Berry

On August 7, 2008 Russia invaded Georgia, driving deeply into Georgian territory and occupying strategic positions, cutting Georgia in two. The European Union brokered a ceasefire agreement on August 12, but it quickly became clear that the conflict had severe humanitarian and economic consequences in Georgia, as well as significant political and security repercussions throughout the region.

Within hours of the break-out of conflict, the State Department, Department of Defense, and USAID each stood up crisis operations centers. S/CRS became an integral part of State's Georgia Task Force, which monitored developments on the ground and provided updates to senior policy-makers. Nine S/CRS staffers and Civilian Response Corps officers participated in the Task Force.

Meanwhile, five S/CRS staff and Civilian

Response Corps officers deployed to support interagency coordination in the field. A Conflict Prevention Officer joined the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), which had arrived in Georgia on August 14. By late August, three more S/CRS staff deployed to Tbilisi to support assistance coordination. Finally, an S/CRS planner deployed to European Command in Stuttgart to support integration of civilian and military planning.

Ambassador Herbst visited Georgia as part of an interagency delegation focused on identifying urgent humanitarian and economic stabilization needs. The delegation's collective assessment was reflected in the announcement by President

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Bush of a \$1 billion U.S. pledge for humanitarian, reconstruction, and economic assistance—demonstrating a strong U.S. commitment to Georgia.

Responding to a conflict between Georgia—a young, democratic ally of the U.S.—and Russia, a major world power with broad international influence, is complex. The USG needed to employ the right mix of diplomatic, economic, military, humanitarian, and public diplomacy tools. This complex task required interagency coordination that ensured all U.S. efforts were effectively supporting rapidly evolving policy positions. To bring these tools together, the Department of State announced the creation of the Georgia Coordinating Group (GCG) shortly after the crisis occurred, under the leadership of Ambassador Stephen Mull. Already familiar with the issues and players thanks to its work on the Task Force, S/CRS was tasked to staff the GCG. The GCG was comprised of eight staff, drawn from all branches of S/CRS, along with a representative from USAID's Office of Europe and Eurasia.

The U.S. response to the Russia-Georgia conflict crystallized around four strategic objectives articulated by senior policy-makers: 1) Support Georgia; 2) Resolve the Conflict; 3) Consequences for Russia; and 4) Bolstering U.S. Regional Interests. Under Ambassador Mull and later the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs' (EUR)

Protestors form a human chain during the "Stop Russia" Protest in Tbilisi on November 1, 2008. (Photo: Paul Turner)



leadership, the GCG facilitated a whole-of-government approach to achieving these key objectives. To that end, the GCG fulfilled the following key functions:

## **S/CRS dedicated \$100 million of 1207 funds from FY08 and FY09 to provide assistance to the people of Georgia.**

maintaining a common operating picture for the interagency; ensuring that all efforts were linked to strategic objectives; and, coordinating interagency implementation of the latest policy guidance.

In order to fulfill these functions, the Georgia Coordinating Group hosted interagency coordination meetings, developed strategic planning tools to assist in the coordination and implementation of policy, produced and distributed daily reports to the interagency, helped develop and facilitate working groups to coordinate U.S. assistance, and maintained a classified portal to provide all interagency stakeholders the latest information on Georgia and the U.S. response. GCG staff

embedded within EUR also provided a much needed surge capacity to the Georgia Desk and the Office of the Coordinator for Assistance in Europe as they worked through a deluge of taskings that may have overwhelmed normal staffing levels.

The Georgia Coordinating Group ceased operations on October 31, transitioning key functions to EUR. S/CRS remains engaged in the USG Georgia response in a supporting role.

In the meantime, S/CRS' Conflict Prevention Division has worked closely with Embassy Tbilisi and the interagency community in Washington, DC to determine how to meet the reconstruction and stabilization needs of Georgia. S/CRS dedicated \$100 million of Section 1207 funds from FY08 and FY09 to provide assistance to the people of Georgia.

As a result of this commitment, a team with representatives from S/CRS, State's Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia (EUR/ACE), USAID's Office of Europe & Eurasia (USAID/E&E), and USAID's Office of the Chief Operating Officer (USAID/COO) visited Georgia to review and coordinate with the Embassy, USAID, and Mission plans for use of 1207 and Economic Support Fund/Freedom Support Act (ESF/FSA) funds in Georgia in the wake of the August conflict. The team looked at both previously approved and pending proposals for FY08 and FY09 1207 funds, and reviewed proposed priorities for FY09 and out-year FSA spending. The visit included meetings with Embassy and Mission assistance providers, including USAID, State's INL/Justice, Treasury, Customs, other international donors and senior Georgian government (GOG) officials.

The team found widespread recognition and appreciation in Georgia for U.S. leadership and speed in providing assistance to Georgia. GOG officials were extremely appreciative of the \$250 million provided in budget support (which was released during the team's visit), as well as humanitarian assistance to the IDP population and support for winter wheat planting sponsored by the USAID mission. ■

## **Building Partnerships: Ambassador Herbst Visits India and Nepal**

By Hsueh-Ting Wu

### **Deepening Cooperation with India**

Ambassador Herbst traveled to India and Nepal November 6-7, 2008 to meet with his counterparts and discuss potential areas of cooperation in reconstruction and stabilization. In India, he met with the Indian Joint Secretaries for the UN and Americas, as well as the Indian Afghanistan Joint Secretary. India is already a robust international partner in peacekeeping. In fact, India is one of the top five providers of UN military personnel and civilian police in the world. Ambassador Herbst's meetings with Government of India officials were an opportunity to share lessons and engage in discussions about how to deepen cooperation for increasing civilian reconstruction and stabilization capacity.

Ambassador Herbst's visits to India demonstrate the commitment of S/CRS and the U.S. Government to strengthen cooperation with key international partners for reconstruction and stabilization and to build global capacity and enhance direct partnerships.

### **Investing in Nepalese Security**

Following New Delhi, the Ambassador traveled onward to the U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu, Nepal to discuss projects underway that are funded through Section 1207 (a funding authority that allows the Secretary of Defense to transfer up to \$100 million to the State Department for initiatives focused on preventing or responding to conflict). 1207 is currently funding a \$10 million project, focused on local security and rehabilitation in conflict-affected areas of southeastern Nepal. The Ambassador also heard directly from key Nepalese political party representatives, including a representative of the ruling government Maoist party, speak about the integration process of the military and former Maoist-insurgents. ■

# Moving Forward on the Civilian Response Corps

**Eight U.S. Government agencies come together to enhance the whole-of-government response to the challenges of reconstruction and stabilization.**

By Melanne Civic

In September 2008, eight U.S. Government agency partners signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on standing up the Civilian Response Corps' Active Component (CRC-A). The MOA sets out the terms and respective responsibilities, commitments and goals establishing this new Corps. The Agencies that will form the initial CRC-A include USAID; the Department of Agriculture; the Department of Commerce; Health and Human Services; the Department of Homeland Security; the Department of Justice; the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, and the Office of the Coordinator for Re-

The easy part was agreeing to the shared goal of a unified, coordinated approach—the hard part was determining how to get there...

construction and Stabilization; and the Department of Treasury. The MOA also allows for additional domestic Agencies to sign on to it in the future as needed.

Again and again through the lengthy process of nine months, reaching agreement was characterized by various participants as a seemingly Sisyphean task -- each advance was met with push-back from all

sides and new challenges. Yet, throughout the process, everyone remained committed to establishing this new capability, and understood that such is the nature of trying to create something new within a system, particularly in one as large as the U.S.

The Agreement defines an innovation within the government where participants are simultaneously employees of their Agency as subject matter experts relating to reconstruction and stabilization, and members of a cohesive and perpetual "whole of civilian government" system. The Corps members will be paid for through Department of State funds, and the whole-of-government system will be managed by the U.S. Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Re-



Government. Ambassador Herbst, Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization,praised the finalization of the MOA as a "serious achievement demonstrating the steadfast ability of the U.S. Government interagency to come together with shared interests and goals to address the critical process of whole-of-government reconstruction and stabilization."

construction and Stabilization (S/CRS). These Corps members will participate in S/CRS-coordinated training, Washington-based planning, and overseas field-based R&S operations and activities. Active Component members will be experts, mentors, program managers and implementing officers, training and operating together in cross-Agency teams. They will

also collaborate with the U.S. Military through exercises and experiments, and in civilian-military stability operations in the field.

Over the months, representatives of the initial eight Agencies -- policy experts and attorneys -- came together to discuss their Agency's roles in this system, and ways to work within this whole-of-government approach. For domestic agencies for whom international R&S is not a part of their core mission, the process added an additional

shared understanding.

Previously, domestic Agencies, to the extent that they were involved in overseas reconstruction and stabilization activities, were called upon on an ad hoc basis to fill in a gap in expertise, and had little to no involvement in the planning stages or decisions on programming or allocation of resources. "Under this MOA, now we will have the capacity and the mandate to be involved in R&S assessment, planning and decision-making from the get-go -- we'll be a vital, continual and collaborative participant in R&S activities," said one Agency representative. By being part of a system that coordinates activities more fully across the U.S. Government, the intent is to achieve a synergy of resources and capacity.

"We see this as a seminal event -- not just the Department of State, USAID and the Department of Defense working together to advance national security goals, but highlighting the potential for all Agencies with core competencies now to be leveraged for an effective response . . . a bellwether approach for planning and policy that the U.S. Government is engaged in across the spectrum of operations," said one senior Agency official. He then added, "this MOA demonstrates that we're starting a new chapter on our approach to national security with greater efficiency, effectiveness and higher quality collaboration than in the past." Officials acknowledged that multiple Agencies of the U.S. Government must be ready and capable to be engaged in R&S operations, and this MOA is a concrete step to realize the new policy strategy of the whole-of-government approach in the Executive Branch.

Partner Agencies are very much looking forward to the day that the interagency Civilian Response Corps personnel are recruited, trained, and deployed to operations. Thus, the conclusion to the lengthy and at times arduous negotiation process was that we reached the precipice; the figurative boulder was pushed up to the top of the mountain and held in position. Through this and related processes, the U.S. Government is institutionalizing the foundation upon which all else will be built. ■

## PARTNER PROFILE: The Department of Health and Human Services

By Diana S. Hadzibegovic M.D., M.P.H



HHS along with seven other executive agencies will participate in the creation the

Civilian Response Corps' Active and Standby component which are comprised of "permanent employees skilled in crisis response," from which skilled personnel can be mobilized rapidly in response to crises.

Within HHS, reconstruction and stabilization (R&S) operations and activities are coordinated within the office of Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR). HHS can assess, consult, provide technical assistance and evaluate public health medical services and public health systems. The breadth of expertise HHS has to lend to R&S efforts span the breadth of public health, including public health assessments and disease control, particularly in emergency environmental health services. HHS also offers consultation, technical assistance and support in health care systems, mental health systems, as well as health services to at-risks populations, and food and drug safety.

As the primary Federal Agency responsible for public health and medical emergency planning, preparations, response, and recovery, HHS's elite team of highly qualified public health professionals and subject matter experts will undoubtedly benefit the significance and the impact of the CRC. ■



layer of policy considerations. "I'm not saying we expected it to be easy, but we didn't expect it to be so complex and even contentious at times either," commented one Agency partner. The easy part was agreeing to the shared goal of a unified, coordinated approach-- the hard part was determining how to get there, while at the same time learning how to communicate across distinct Agency cultures, and to find a path to

[continued from page 3] livelihoods, particularly for fishing families now relocated to inland areas. Finally, while initial efforts have been made to demilitarize political parties, there was no systematic approach to addressing the needs of thousands of former combatants or their communities.

As a result of these changes, the team decided that the original 1207 project merited a new strategy that focused on improving local security and decreasing incidences of violence. The USAID elements, implemented through a flexible, quick-response small grants mechanism, would focus on a community security and reintegration approach tailored to the needs and issues of each community. This approach would engage citizens, police and local government in security related problem-solving. It would also provide skills training, employment and counseling needs for demobilized former combatants. The Department of Justice, through the International Criminal Investigation and Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) would support training for newly recruited Tamil-speaking civilian

police in the East, and facilitate community-based policing in collaboration with USAID. The Department of Defense (SOCPAC) has agreed to continue its separate funding for social infrastructure improvements (schools and health facilities), which would complement community-defined needs, provide employment, aid confidence-building and the reintegration process. Final rounds of meetings with the country team, bilateral and multilateral partners, and other USAID implementing partners reinforced possible areas of complementarities and ways in which the 1207 resources could be leveraged to achieve the mission's stabilization goals. Ultimately, the collaborative process has yielded a broad-based constituency in Sri Lanka and in Washington that aims to increase stabilization and promote peaceful change through a common and complementary strategy.

#### **Lessons Learned**

There are several key lessons that can be extracted from this engagement with the U.S. Mission in Sri Lanka. The first lesson is that while time is often scarce, there is an

important place for facilitating discussions amongst interagency partners, particularly relating to assessment and strategic planning. Second, such facilitated discussion can often yield new resources and better leveraging of those resources. Third, representatives of the U.S. Government do not always speak the same language, see, or interpret what they see, in the same way. Facilitation can enable a common vision to emerge across agencies and interests. In the case of Sri Lanka, where interagency country team collaboration and coordination is integral to daily operations, the facilitated conversation has helped to raise visibility in Washington and has helped to leverage new interest and resources. In addition, by broadening the conversation, a facilitated process can aid the expansion of the U.S. Government's leverage with a wide variety of domestic and international proponents. ■



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