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Security Sector Capacity Building and Corruption

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Security Sector Corruption's Vital Role in Kleptocracy

- Security sector is not an innocent bystander, but a key player in kleptocracy
- Maintaining a kleptocratic regime requires a high degree of coercion, especially violence or the threat of violence
- Security sector—especially key leaders—often incentivized against conflict resolution or establishment of rule of law, an inclusive market-based economy, and democratic reform

Current American security assistance doctrine assumes government and its security forces seek legitimacy; in a kleptocracy, this assumption is not valid.



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“Coup proofing” often leads to deliberate inefficiencies

- Kleptocratic regimes’ “winner takes all” governance means plenty of elite jostling at the top; often insurgencies at the margins
- Typical kleptocratic security sector structures
 - Numerous armed actors in varying combinations of legal, illegal, and grey area
 - Personal body guard, “Republican Guard,” intelligence service, or special forces unit answers personally to kleptocratic leader
 - “Normal” military forces often poorly paid, equipped, and led
 - Intelligence services seem to spend more time spying on each other than actual state enemies
- Human rights violations by various armed actors, including government actors



Corruption Hollows Out Security Forces

- Military budgets diverted to personal use by politicians or military leaders
- Overpriced contracts &/or contracts that are never completed
- Poor quality equipment or no equipment
- Equipment and personnel diverted for private, commercial , or criminal purposes rather than security-related ones
- Ghost soldiers & even whole “ghost units”
- Poor leadership—promotions based largely on who you know or what you’re paid rather than merit

Result: local citizens may rely on their own self-defense, insurgent groups, or even criminals rather than their own security forces

In highly corrupt & predatory states, official military forces may be just militia or criminal groups with more formalized uniforms and government ID cards.



Effects on US National Security:

- Predatory governments' actions help ignite new crises & no amount of US equipment or training may be able to “fix” the problem
 - Afghanistan: US spent \$85 billion (2002-2017)
 - Iraq: US spent ~ \$26 billion thru 2012 (\$3.4 billion on equipment)
 - US spent \$1 billion on Mali, and the troops it trained took part in a coup that ultimately brought Al Qaeda in the Islamic Magreb to the fore
- US military assistance as an inadvertent contributor to corruption / predatory behavior
 - Creates new powerful actors; new winners and losers; new balances of power amongst corrupt patronage networks
 - Creates new sources of money and patronage
 - US training & equipment can inadvertently make a predatory security force a more efficient and better equipped predatory one
 - Can unintentionally make the corrupt governments pact stronger & more exclusionary
- Predatory governments are unlikely to forward US policy goals of economically sustainable, democratic governments that are solid American allies

Policy Recommendations: First Do No Harm



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- Mainstream transparency, accountability, and counter-corruption (TACC) into all lines of DoD, DoS, DOJ, and DHS security-related assistance; Establish doctrine and policies for TACC
- Establish DoD point of contact for anti-corruption efforts and relevant training for personnel
- Improve training on corruption for all FSOs and other DoS personnel, especially those with high risk posts or programs
- Corruption risk assessment and mitigation strategies for security assistance programs
 - Overall political economy assessment, including a corruption assessment; map key patronage networks;
 - Red team how US security assistance programs may affect the local political economy, including corruption and conflict dynamics
 - Risk mitigation plan for corruption-related issues
- Better transparency in contracts/contractors
 - Beneficial ownership information required on US foreign assistance contracts
 - Anti-corruption clauses for termination if necessary
 - Clawback clauses to recover US taxpayer money
 - Special Inspector Generals for substantial and high risk aid programs
 - Vendor vetting and Task Force 2010-like organizations to investigate contractors and corruption risks
- Establish strong oversight functions through special inspectors general

Policy Recommendations: Security



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Assistance to Host State

- **Mainstream** transparency, accountability, and counter-corruption (TACC) into all training and assistance programs throughout all phases
- Establish appropriate **training** requirements for contracting officers, FMS, and deploying personnel working with host state
- Establish TTPs for personnel to **monitor and report** corruption; develop guidelines for response
- Push host state establishment of **TACC in host forces**
 - Independent, vetted, and resourced inspectors general & internal affairs with high level backing
 - Capacity development (not replacement) for personnel and logistics systems established as “good enough” for local context
 - Parliamentary and civil society oversight
- Strong **Procurement, Contracting, and Budgeting Transparency**
 - Maximum transparency; minimize security waivers only to critical security and intel issues
 - Beneficial ownership information requirements
 - Anti-corruption clauses for termination if necessary
 - Clawback clauses
 - Limit or forbid offset contracts
 - Contracts in accordance with Open Contracting Partnership standards



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Thank You

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