

The question of state-building is both important and complicated as the United States has economic and security-based interests in a stable and predictable international system. Failing and failed states necessarily destabilize this system and, as such, there is a substantial United States interest in promoting state-building worldwide as a means to achieve this stability. Current conventional wisdom on state-building emphasizes the necessity of Democratization in weak states as the primary means to achieve economic progress and governmental capacity to ensure internal and external security. It is the finding of our group that this emphasis is misplaced. Rather than using Democratization as the means to a viable state, we believe democracy must come from an already viable state. Furthermore, we believe that the United States must engage in a more efficient, calculated and multi-lateral approach to state-building in the coming administration. In addition, these efforts must be directed towards both local and regional levels in areas where there has been demonstrable success which can serve as a model for other nations to follow in the future.

The decision for the United States to embark upon a state-building effort must be arrived at carefully and with consideration of many different factors. The simple fact is that the United States does not have the resources or domestic political constituency to support all the reconstruction and stabilization efforts that may seem morally necessary or advantageous. Thus, we believe that before the United States enters into such an effort, a series of criteria must be met. First, the destabilization or continued instability of a nation must pose either an immediate and imminent threat to vital United States security or economic interests or a severe long term threat in which the short-term outputs of the United States mitigate much larger outputs in the future. Second, these efforts must be focused on either failed states, or states in danger of failing. Third, there must be an effort to achieve popular support for the effort from the American public, as any effort without this support will be hindered and likely to fail. This third criteria is especially important when the United States intervenes to stop a large humanitarian crisis or to prevent unacceptable human rights abuses in a foreign nation.

When the United States begins a program of state-building, we believe that certain aspects of the program must take precedence at certain moments. Unless a state can provide security for its citizens, any efforts at economic or political reform will be unable to achieve their intended aims. As such, we believe that the primary goal of all state-building operations must be providing for a secure and stable environment. After this environment is achieved, we believe that the United States must aid in the development and reform of the economy, particularly allowing for increased diffusion of wealth and the opportunity for increased social mobility. After the state is secure and economically self-sustainable, we believe that popular support for democratic reform will arise. As such, U.S. support for proper security and economic reforms will result in organic democratization, which in turn should result in mature democratic nations and a stable international system.

If economic growth and progress towards a liberal democratic society are our end goals, we must first provide people with the security to be able to address these issues for themselves, free from the immediate threats of violence and open warfare. In view of current limitations to our national budget and the great stress already placed upon our military forces in the field, we recommend that the United States seek alternatives to unilateral military force as a means for providing this security. Our first priority in

achieving this goal must be to reach out to other nations, organizations and coalitions to demonstrate to them the mutual benefits of our mission and establish legitimacy through these multilateral efforts. In this way we can disseminate the burdens of both costs and personnel while giving parties most affected by situations that would require international reconstruction and stabilization efforts the greatest opportunity for initiative in its future development. We can use either hard or soft power to address the many security challenges we face today. Our military focus should include funding, training and advisory support for existing security forces where available. Where none exist, the same type of assistance may be directed towards multilateral efforts with the United Nations or neighboring states who share our priorities and goals within the region. Finally, a renewed focus on diplomatic mediations between conflicting factions will help to diffuse tensions and encourage peaceful coexistence.

Once a state has become capable of providing security for its citizens, the United States and the state in question must focus on developing a strong, self-sustainable economic system. Economic development is essential for maintaining stable societies and political institutions capable of fulfilling their own interests. These societies will be fostered through the steady privatization and liberalization of transforming economies. The Millennium Challenge Corporation's (MCC) criteria, which emphasizes ruling justly, encouraging economic freedom and investing in people, should serve as the guiding principles of our policies. This criterion will ensure the efficient use of our limited national resources and will fuel the creation of capable civil societies. U.S. resources should be concentrated on policies that build infrastructure to facilitate trade and capital movement and the creation of programs that will support micro-lending either by the government or businesses who will grant individuals the opportunity to create bottom-up growth in their societies. Support for non-governmental organizations that focus on education initiatives and providing greater opportunities for market participation will also enhance the development of human capital. By instituting such policies and using the prospect of MCC funds as leverage for reform, we hope to increase the growth rate of developing economies. Economic participation is a cornerstone of every mature, functional democratic government. As such, we believe that promoting an economically involved citizenry will speed democratic reform in these countries without other U.S. political reform initiatives.

Given the issues outlined above, we are of the opinion that the United States must be focused on how to appropriate the necessary elements for actualizing these programs through the variegated resources of the U.S. government. We believe that there is currently an insufficient vehicle that bridges the gaps between the various institutions, agents and organizations which are currently utilized for reconstructive projects in the international community. Our vision to remedy the current situation consists of a governmental council that is capable, receptive, and nimble to the requirements of various interests and is resilient to the volatility of domestic and international political affairs. This council would be housed within the U.S. State Department and chaired by a newly appointed Undersecretary for Reconstruction Efforts. Included on this council would be representatives of the Departments of Defense, Transportation, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Education, HUD and Treasury, as well as other governmental agencies including the EPA, SBA and others. In addition to experts from various fields critical to sustainable development drawn from the government, the

Council would also include liaisons to non-governmental organizations and international organizations, such as the IMF, UN, NATO and World Bank. This Council would serve as the means for synthesizing and integrating the various policy proposals into a cohesive singular plan. Moreover, should conditions change, this Council would be able to efficiently alter the overall plan to mitigate the effects of the new environment. It is our group's opinion that such an organization would be an impressive new tool for capably funneling all relevant policy organizations and relevant intelligence into effective solutions that can meet any crisis or situation. This, the Council for Reconstruction Efforts, is an exciting and innovative approach that we believe will be able to meet the demands of the modern international system.