

GLOBAL SECURITY ENGAGEMENT

A New Model for Cooperative Threat Reduction (2009)

The National Research Council report on strengthening and expanding Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) programs concludes that a new approach to CTR is needed to combat current threats. The White House should lead the reformulation of U.S. Government (USG) CTR programs as an active coordinated global tool of foreign policy. The Department of Defense (DOD) CTR programs should participate in these efforts by continuing traditional CTR programs and expanding into new activities, partnerships, and geographic locations beyond the former Soviet Union (FSU).

Key Recommendations

- Create a “CTR 2.0” global security engagement program under strong White House leadership based on partnerships, sustainability, and transparency.
- Provide greater flexibility and authority to CTR programs across the government and engage traditional and non-traditional security departments and non-government organizations in USG CTR.
- Expand DOD CTR programs globally and engage partners across DOD, including the Unified Combatant Commands.
- Capitalize on opportunities to enhance U.S. national security through new CTR efforts in the Middle East, Africa and Asia, based on traditional CTR programs and new efforts, such as bolstering emergency and disaster preparedness, strengthening port and industrial security, and combating smuggling.

The original CTR programs, which were designed to deal with immediate post-Cold War challenges, must be changed if they are to effectively address contemporary threats. Current USG CTR programs must be made more flexible and responsive, with a stronger focus on building partnerships with other nations through broader inclusion of international and non-governmental organizations and personal relationships. A key to the United States' future security will be the ability to build a broader network of partners who are committed to enhancing global security; this network can be a trip wire to warn the U.S. of potential dangers. New ways to gauge the success of projects will be needed given the heightened focus on partnerships and relationship-building.

The National Research Council committee responsible for the report recognized that many CTR tools across the USG have already been modified to meet evolving circumstances. But to meet the magnitude of new security challenges, particularly at the nexus of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, more deeply embedded cooperation involving security and threat reduction is vital. The committee refers to a new global security engagement model as “CTR 2.0.” This shorthand, drawn from the software industry, reflects both step-by-step problem solving and the on-going applicability of many existing CTR approaches to new challenges and new regions. The committee defines CTR 2.0 as a set of programs and projects to be undertaken by the United States, as part of a cooperative network that includes a wide range of countries, international organizations, and non-government partners, to prevent, reduce, mitigate or eliminate common threats to U.S. national security and global stability that have emerged since the end of the Cold War.

Background

The CTR Program, often referred to as the Nunn-Lugar Program, was created in 1991, to assist the FSU to safeguard and dismantle its vast stockpiles of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, related materials, and delivery systems. CTR programs have established impressive records of accomplishment over more than a decade and a half of operation. For less than a total of seven billion dollars over 15 years, the programs have deactivated thousands of nuclear warheads, neutralized chemical weapons, safeguarded fissile materials, converted biological weapons facilities for peaceful use and redirected the work of former weapons scientists and engineers, among other efforts. USG CTR programs should be justifiably proud of their accomplishments. However, with the exception of one project in Albania, DOD CTR activities have been limited to countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union. While a number of Cold War legacy tasks remain to be completed in Russia and other FSU countries, the U.S. Congress has urged DOD to look more specifically beyond the FSU and has made a number of legislative changes in the DOD CTR program authorization to open the door for DOD CTR to operate globally.

Congressional Mandate

Section 1306 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 directed the Secretary of Defense to engage the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study analyzing options for strengthening and expanding the DOD CTR Program. Congress also provided the authoring committee with a number of points to be addressed during the study, including interagency coordination, program sustainability, involvement of non-government organizations and how to encourage international partnerships and funding.

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