

Julian Barnes: [00:06](#) [inaudible]. Hello everybody. My name is Julian Barnes. I'm a national security reporter with the New York Times. Um, thanks for joining us here. Um, when confronted with almost any, uh, national security problem in the world, whether it's in Africa, in the Middle East, Central Asia, the solution proposed by the United States, uh, and its allies has often been to build up local forces. Um, supporting partner forces had been the cornerstone of American national security strategy for decades. Uh, training, equipping defense cooperation is what is the foundation of many of America's partnerships and alliances around the world. Today we're gonna talk about those partnerships we're gonna talk about if the oft repeated saying by with and through actually works, uh, we're going to talk about where defense cooperation has worked and where it's failed. Um, this is not just relevant, I think we'll see today to counterinsurgency in counter terrorism, but also perhaps to the great power competition.

Julian Barnes: [01:16](#) We've talked about a lot here this week. Um, we have two great panelists. Um, Lieutenant General Charles Hooper is the director of the, uh, defense security cooperate, uh, cooperation agency. I encourage you to read his full bio, uh, where you'll learn. He's a mandarin speaker, a Kennedy, uh, school graduate and, uh, most senior, uh, army, a foreign area officer. Um, but to this discussion today, I want to highlight just a couple things. Uh, he's been the defense attache in Beijing. He was the director of strategy and plans for Africa Command, uh, and chief of the military cooperation, uh, office in Egypt. Uh, Dr Myla Carlin is a professor and director of Strategic Studies at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies where she earned her phd. She served no fewer than five secretaries of defense, uh, including and served in a variety of roles including deputy assistant, secretary of defense for strategy and force development.

Julian Barnes: [02:20](#) This means she knows what the Pentagon can do well and what it can't do so well. Um, most important for this discussion here today, uh, she is author of building militaries in fragile states. Uh, a book that stands as one of the most insightful critiques of the American strategy of building partner forces. And that's where we want to start today. Uh, professor, what, what's been flawed about the American approach here to building local forces? Why has this not worked when we've, in some cases put millions, in some case, billions into these projects? You know, it's not the panacea

Mara Karlin: [03:00](#) we want it to be. And that's really crucial to acknowledge and it's not the panacea because we often take a technical approach

to how we work with partner militaries. We ignore that building a military is a political exercise. It is inherently political and we need to treat it as such. And getting this right matters. All of you remember five years ago when Isis was running across Iraq as \$20 billion in us assistance, melted and large swaths of the Iraqi military ran away. I'll give you another example though that I think hits pretty deeply. The U s military spent five years trying to build south Vietnamese military spend, about a half a billion dollars, hundreds of people working on it. It didn't work. And so what did we buy for that failure? We bought 58,000 Americans dead, right? We bought some serious baggage coming out of that conflict. So we have to recognize that our approach has been flawed and it needs to be changed.

Julian Barnes: [04:01](#)

General, I want you to react to that. Is She right? Has Our approach been flawed? What are you doing? What are your colleagues doing to improve it?

Charles Hooper: [04:12](#)

Okay, well, uh, first of all, just to introduce myself again, I am lieutenant general Charles Zuber. I'm the director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, the agency that does more and is known by fewer people in Washington than any other agency in the belt.

Julian Barnes: [04:28](#)

Thank you. Thank you.

Charles Hooper: [04:31](#)

Um, I worked directly for the undersecretary of defense for policy. Um, Mr John Rood, who many of you just re, uh, heard just before lunch. Um, and I will tell you, and let me start off with the optimistic piece. Now I do this for a living. I was trained by the army to be a security cooperations officer. And in my 20 years doing this, I have never seen a better time and better alignment within the inner agency to do this. So an answer to the question we have learned from the lessons of history. Um, right now we have a national defense and national security strategy that prioritize strengthening alliances and attracting new partners. The administration has put forward a conventional arms transfer policy that is allowing us to streamline and reform our processes, uh, that has facilitated better alignment and better cooperation between the Department of Defense, the State Department, our industry partners, the Department of Commerce, the White House, the National Security Council, and has provided clear guidance that is a, it is a priority to provide our partners not only with the best military equipment in the world and make no mistake the United States produces the best military equipment in the world, but as also prioritized the building of institutions in these countries, allowing them to better manage their resources,

training and educating their officers and noncommissioned officers, allowing them to have better logistics, maintenance, supply institutions that will allow them to utilize the equipment that we provide them.

- Charles Hooper: [06:02](#) Um, and from the congress, we have a mandate in the fiscal year 17 national defense authorization act to reform the security cooperation enterprise, realign it to make it more agile and to ensure that we increase the probability of success in our endeavors. So we have learned from history, uh, and we have all the tools we need to move forward successfully.
- Speaker 5: [06:24](#) Professor [inaudible],
- Julian Barnes: [06:26](#) you look at this very closely, you're familiar with the reforms that Congress tried to push through. You're, uh, familiar with what the general is trying to do. What do you think, is it enough? What more do we need to do to prevent another Iraq in 2014
- Mara Karlin: [06:43](#) there are some really good steps being taken. And to make it clear, I'm a big believer in reform, not rejecting this process whatsoever. It is important that we work with partner militaries that we work by with and through others. It is in our interest to do so. This is not merely altruistic. Um, I think increasingly the Pentagon and thanks to in particular to pressure from Capitol Hill, uh, has focused on measures of effectiveness, has increasingly gotten comfortable to step back and say, so how is this going? How are we doing? Um, are we willing to ask those hard questions? Why are we building these militaries? What is it we want them to be able to do? Sometimes we want them to be able to fight. Sometimes we actually just want them to not be difficult in other circumstances. Sometimes we want them to vote with us in the United Nations. There's a Pineapple of reasons why you might do this, but it's important that inside the family you have those honest conversations about why that is the case.
- Julian Barnes: [07:38](#) Because the kind of security cooperation you're going to do with the country is going to depend on what that outcome is.
- Mara Karlin: [07:46](#) Absolutely. How we work with those partners. We mean, it really seems to me we have to be willing to recognize that these are not excel spreadsheet efforts, right? That this is inherently political, which means we have to be willing to use our leverage and articulate to our partners the kinds of changes we would like to see. Whether that being clear about what their military is mission should be, how it's organized and their leadership. All of

which are key components of any successful force. We have to put our most capable people in. People like General Hooper for example, people who know kitty, know how to work with partners, understand the security cooperation enterprise. There's a lot of evidence unfortunately that that hasn't always been the case. If you read the latest report out to the Special Ed special investigator, uh, for off for Afghanistan reconstruction, he says that is overwhelmingly not been the case in Afghanistan. The, uh, government accountability office said we didn't assess most of these efforts and how well they've gone to train and equip partners over the last few decades. That's really problematic. And then, you know, just among ourselves, we have to be willing to say what's our role and under what circumstances do we need to change that role. Sometimes we work by with and through

Julian Barnes:

[08:56](#)

others. Sometimes we got to do it ourselves. You mentioned that Cigar Report on Afghanistan, \$84 billion have gone into training and equipping the Afghan security forces. Uh, that report saw a little coordination between the U S and NATO. It saw that the u s did not involve Afghans in decision making. Uh, it pointed out that casualty rates among Afghan soldiers are incredibly high, perhaps unsustainable. And the Cigar report suggested that this system was not sustainable after the United States and NATO left. We have a peace discussions that are talking about removal of us advisers from Afghanistan. General, what is the future? How can this cooperation well, what went wrong in Afghanistan, in your mind, in the past? And can this, the Afghan security forces survive without substantial numbers of NATO trainers working with them on a daily basis?

Charles Hooper:

[10:06](#)

Well, first of all, let me begin by saying I'm not going to pass judgment on our efforts in Afghanistan. Everybody knows how complex this effort has been. First of all, Nan, as we used to say back in jersey, it ain't over. Okay. So I'm not going to pass judgment, uh, on our efforts in Afghanistan. What I can tell you about is how we switched some of our emphasis in working with the Afghan national forces in terms of helping to prepare them to meet the challenges of the future. And let me start off by saying that yes we do, we still continue the material support to the Afghan national forces. Absolutely. Still we do. We still have advisers in the field assisting them. Are there challenges? Of course there are. But I'll tell you where my focus is as the executive agent in Washington security cooperation, I focus on a program that many of you have probably not ever heard of before.

Charles Hooper: [10:51](#) It's called a Ministry of Defense Advisory Program, the motor program. So when I got, when I got to, uh, the Defense DSCA and I started asking around specifically about our efforts in Afghan Afghanistan and in Iraq, um, they started to brief me on the motor program. Okay. Now the ministry defense advisory program places civilian volunteers from across the interagency. That is, we have volunteers from commerce, from state, from any of our cabinet departments. And it places them in the Afghan Ministry of Defense to assist the Afghan Ministry of Defense in strengthening those capabilities, those institutional capabilities within the Afghan Ministry of Defense that will help them hopefully to manage the resources that we provide them and they provide themselves better. And I made it a personal crusade to get directly involved in this. So I review every volunteer that goes to the Ministry of, uh, to, to the Afghan motor program. Um, I speak to every class that goes, ah, I go to their, they have their final exercises.

Charles Hooper: [11:53](#) We have a wonderful training facility out in Mascoutah Tuck, Indiana. I don't a national guard facility out there. We have a whole village built. We bring in Afghan roleplayers players from all over the world and we put them through this. And so why do I just pay this so much attention? Because to your point, it is the strengthening of the institutions within the Afghan government that will help us to move forward and learn from the mistakes that we've made. Teaching them resource development, teaching them, um, proper financial management, teaching them that corruption is bad for business. And that the, the effect, the extent to which you reduce corruption increases your efficiency and effectiveness and creates value. So that's where we placed a lot of our emphasis. Now, every time I talked to these classes of volunteers, say, you know, we've been here for eight, you know, almost 18 years, what can I do that's going to make a difference?

Charles Hooper: [12:43](#) And I tell him, I told him the same thing, go in and find the one thing you think you can be impactful on. It may just be I'm teaching them effective financial management or the value in that. You concentrate on that one thing. And if you can accomplish that before you go and leave that for your successor, you will have accomplished something. This is an enormously complex process. But you know what? In the old days they used to say, the only thing you know for certain, the only thing that's certain in life is if you don't try, nothing will change. If you do try, you have anywhere between zero and 100% of being successful. So that's the emphasis that we're placing now in security cooperation in Afghanistan.

- Julian Barnes: [13:23](#) Professor, what kind of individual can do that task? The general is talking about, it's enormously difficult to go into, uh, Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior in a country that has, uh, different traditions, different cultures than the United States, and essentially impose best practices. What is the person, what is the personality? What are the attributes that that can make that work?
- Mara Karlin: [13:56](#) Absolutely. An institution building is exactly the right approach. We should not be focused on how much training we're giving them or how much equipment we're giving them. That's important to be sure, but at the end of the day, if you want to transform these militaries, which is often the case, right? We want them to go deal with problems so that the u s military doesn't have to. That is our goal. And so if you want to do that, the sorts of people collaborating with them matter a lot. And unfortunately there's a lot of evidence that cigar report is just one great example that says we haven't always sent the right folks. We haven't always sent folks who know how to work with partners who understand the security cooperation enterprise who actually, no kidding. Understand defense planning, enforced development, right? How do you build a military? How do you think about the future wars this military may be worried about?
- Mara Karlin: [14:42](#) And based on that, where should they bet in hedge where they're putting their money? That is all crucial, uh, to do. And, and it's why kind of the institution is important. If we don't send those people, we're not going to have the effect we want. And unfortunately, there are so many examples where we haven't, I mentioned that, that a example of the, just before the Vietnam war breaks out, right where the u s tries for five years to build a, The v the South Vietnamese military, while the guy running that program had been demoted, right? He didn't know what he was doing. He didn't care about what his instructions were from Washington. There's example after example, he didn't get along with the u s ambassador. When you have that kind of clash, you are not going to have success.
- Julian Barnes: [15:24](#) So this is the strategy. The U s doesn't just pursue with uh, more developing countries like Iraq and Afghanistan. We have had a security cooperation with allies like uh, uh, and partners like Saudi Arabia. Right? So we have put, Saudi Arabia has purchased incredible amount of the United States arms. There's the uh, military officers who've spent a good chunk of their career training the Saudi Arabian military. Um, recent events do not suggest that the Saudi Arabian military is an effective force to bring stability to the region. Yemen does not look so good

right now. Um, the, uh, they are not necessarily a provider of stability sometimes. Okay. What do you think went right or wrong professor in that scenario?

Mara Karlin:

[16:19](#)

So some folks will say to you, it's the Saudi's money, right? They're using their own money and so there's nothing we can do and I will just tell you, I think that is flat out wrong. At the end of the day, they are trying to get us equipment and they're trying to get us training and it's all well and good to make money, but we would want to do it from a strategic perspective. I should also note for a long time, folks didn't actually expect the Saudi military to do anything. Right. And so there's been this kind of open question up until recently. What happens if they try to fight? Unfortunately, if you look at yet, I mean you've seen and it's pretty darn ugly what has happened. So they have not had the capabilities that one would have expected. They have rather disparate efforts throughout their military in terms of how they've been equipped in terms of their training. One would like to think that they're learning from it. One would also like to think that they're watching the conversation in Washington, particularly on Capitol Hill, highlighting just the horrific civilian casualties and their missteps left and right. I don't know that one should be sanguine that that's happening though

Julian Barnes:

[17:23](#)

general to put you on the spot. Do you want to react to that?

Charles Hooper:

[17:27](#)

Okay. First of all, I, um, well obviously there's a lot to unpack there. Um, I want to take issue with one of the words you use. You use the word impose. Okay. So I'm a big, I'm a big fan of John Kenneth Galbraith and one of my favorite books, he wrote a book called the anatomy of power. And gallberry says essentially, and it was an epiphany for me. Bob says, there's three ways to get people to do what you want them to do, okay. You got the money, you can pay him to do it. If you have the power, you can force them to do it or you can convince them it's in their interest, not yours. Their interest to do what you want them to do, okay. There isn't a professional soldier on this planet that wants to be no told. He doesn't know what he's doing, even if he doesn't.

Charles Hooper:

[18:06](#)

Okay. Now in position is a very interesting word because going back to Mars and we talked about this, her historical examples, okay. We've studied in my agency, we studied the Vietnam build up from the beginning to the end. In fact, we had matched boot com in the author to talk about his latest book about Edwin Lansdale. He was surprised we actually have an Edwin Lansdale conference room. Okay. Uh, and he talked about some

of the strong points in the mistakes that Edwin Landsdale made both in the Philippines and in Vietnam. And we talked through that. Part of it was the imposition piece. When you impose yourself, you are subject to the law of unintended consequences. Okay. Now what we've done in some cases and in the case of some of our allies and partners is we've taken an approach we call strategy to capabilities where we go into our partners and we say, okay, what is it?

Charles Hooper:

[18:55](#)

Don't tell me what you want. What do you want to accomplish? Okay. Uh, and we start with that. And then from that we derived the capabilities that are necessary. And from that we derive our, the systems, the weapon systems and systems that they might be able to use. And we take a values based approach to this. And Mr Rue talked a little bit about the values based approach to this. Our partners understand that if you receive the best equipment in the world, here are the parameters within which you and use it. And oh by the way, they also understand that the underlying premise of this equipment is that it is maintained and and used by functioning institutions. We have the blessing to wish that away. Okay. When I put my hand back, somebody that puts a paycheck, a magazine or a ration into it, I don't even think about it. Most of our partners don't have that. So that's the approach we're taking to be more efficient and effective. And we're taking that approach with all of our allies, those in the Middle East and those around the world. And we're finding they're very receptive to that. So instead of going in and saying, you need to do this, I go in and say, so you did that, how's that working for you?

Mara Karlin:

[20:01](#)

You're like, if I could just add, you don't need to be blustering. You don't need to be boarish nope. Right. You just need to be willing to have a conversation. And what has been surprising to me in a positive way, and I suspect there's been general Hooper's experience as well, they often want to know what you're thinking from the u s perspective. They want to know what your priorities are. They want to know when do you expect them to be fighting next year, your military and when are you not expecting them to do so? So you don't need to do it in a sort of a pseudo colonial way, but you do need to be willing to articulate it.

Charles Hooper:

[20:31](#)

Absolutely. Absolutely. And you need to demonstrate how, how changing their practices will create value for them. And value may be met. Value may be measured in a number of ways. Value might be badgered and an increased, ah, in a more favorable positive international profile. Value may be measured by them in if you do this this way, you will be a more efficient

and effective military force. And Oh, by the way, you won't have half the problems receiving the best technology and weapons in the world that you might be having now. So there's several ways to create this value, but in having that frank conversation with them, you can get to the heart of the matter and move forward.

Julian Barnes: [21:11](#)

Professor, um, we've focused a little bit on the case studies where this hasn't worked. Um, where do you think in history or recent times, uh, is an example of building up a partner? Military has led to stability, has advanced, has fulfilled us strategic goals.

Mara Karlin: [21:31](#)

So there are positive examples. I don't want you all to just here doom and gloom. Uh, one of my favorite examples is actually looking at Greece just after World War II. And this is not the grease of your summer vacations. This is a grease that looks a lot more like Syria today. To be frank, it's infrastructure is destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of people have died from starvation. It is facing a pretty robust insurgency supported by Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. And the U s goes in to work with this military. And there's a story there about how the u s operates both internally and vis-a-vis the partner. So working with the partner, the U S is willing to articulate its views and it helps the Greek military figure out what its mission is. It helps it reorg. It helps push out a lot of incompetent leaders, indeed, much of the senior military leadership. And then there's also the inside story, which is that the u s military puts in superstars to work on it. You have unity of vision both inside the u s government in Athens and also vis-a-vis Washington. And perhaps a bubble. There is a willingness continually in that administration to step back and assess how's this going and under what circumstances do we need to become combatants? So under what circumstances do we need to stop this by, within, through idea and just do it ourselves

Julian Barnes: [22:55](#)

general at times, US policy has been to express displeasure with a ally or a partner or a friend of me by taking back security cooperation, reducing it, cutting it off. Often Pakistan after their nuclear tests is held up. You are in Egypt. When, uh, the u s governments, uh, rolled back, uh, cutoff stopped, halted some of its assistance. What was that experience like? Can you talk a little bit about the pros and cons of using security cooperation as a political tool in that way?

Charles Hooper: [23:32](#)

Uh, I can't actually. Um, uh, and as, as Julian was saying, I was the defense attache to Egypt immediately following, um, the ouster of President Morrissey and, and we had expressed our

displeasure by suspending their military. And so, uh, my instructions were to go and preserve the mill, the mill relationship as we move forward. Um, I wanna tell you a quick anecdote that's relevant to this. So I was into a young assistant army attache in Beijing and in those days we lived in these Soviet style apartment blocks. Well, my neighbor was the assistant, uh, Egyptian air attache. Okay. Uh, and, and he had just converted from Meigs, uh, to the American F 16 fighter. And I don't think there was anybody in the planet prouder to be an f 16 pilot then that guy was, so he had studied in the states and on the basis, and I called this the basis of commonality on the basis of his transition to u s equipment.

Charles Hooper: [24:24](#)

He was no longer one of them. He was one of us. His kids were about same age as my kids. They loved microwave popcorn. Um, which was okay for Mr. Hooper. Cause Mr. Hooper didn't have to get up to get the kids microwave popcorn. They could do that themselves. But we developed a relationship. We, we exchanged meals and things. Uh, after our tours were done, he went his way and I went mine. 20 years later, I get to Egypt as a defense attache. The relationship is at a low, my instructions are preserved. The military relationship, I'm going to my first meeting with the head of the major general head of Egyptian air force PQME and, and the, the suspension had hit the air force particularly hard because the majority of their fourth, fourth generation equipment is us. And you, you know where this story's going. So I walk in and I look at him and he looks at me and he smiles and says, maybe this meeting won't suck after all.

Charles Hooper: [25:14](#)

Okay. But the point of the point of that, the point of this is the point of this is those relationships are important. So in answer to the question, it was tough going, but I'll tell you, this is where our strengthening our reliance and in partnership comes in for all of their faults and flaws. The entire Egyptian military leadership is a product of the U s professional military education system. Everybody from the president of duel, Fatah cc Fort Benning Army War College, the defense, the defense minister, Army War College, uh, the, uh, the chief of defense, the U s Army Army School, Fort Knox, Kentucky, the commander of the Navy, Newport, Rhode Island, every senior air force pilot in the Egyptian military flew us equipment. And so the bottom of the answer to your question is even at that low point, whenever I call, they always answered my phone call. Okay. And I never heard them once say a bad thing about their experiences in the United States as military officers with their families.

Charles Hooper: [26:23](#)

You know, Maya Angelou, the poet says, people will forget what you said. They'll forget what you did, but they'll never forget

how you made them feel. So that military relationship with Egypt and the fact that those officers were felt positive positively and proudly about their affinity and their affiliation with us equipment, their time in the United States, that bridged a very difficult time in that relationship. And I'll tell you something else, um, on average in a given year, we transit about 98 times through the Suez Canal, okay? And we had a goal to get a ship through the Suez Canal from no notice notification until passage 24 hours. And we never missed that. Okay? In any given year, 2,100 US aircraft overfly Egypt, and even at the low point in that relationship, we had no problems transiting Egypt during that time. So that investment in a longterm partnership institutionally served us well even during that downturn in the relationship.

Mara Karlin:

[27:25](#)

So if I might add, Churchill has this wonderful quote, ah, however beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally assess the results. And I think this Egypt example is perfect. So what you're hearing is that we got this passage through the Suez. We get this overflight and key points. The reason the u s has this relationship with Egypt is because of the Camp David Accords, right? You have a cold peace between Egypt and Israel. This is why it may not be terribly important that the Egyptian military isn't that competent, right? It may not matter as much that they aren't great at fighting threats that they have to deal with or perhaps threats that we are somewhat concerned about because we get these other things about it. What is important though is to have that honest conversation and say, you know what, we're getting all these other things and so it's all right. We want to maintain this. The Bang is worth the buck.

Charles Hooper:

[28:17](#)

Let me real quick please. Couple of, a couple of examples of, because we talk about historical vignettes and successes. Let me talk about a couple of, of very contemporary successes, um, around the world. Uh, let's start with Ecuador. Previous Ecuador regime administration had kicked out US security cooperation's personnel in the embassy in, in Quito, uh, close the office. The minute that the administration changed, they wanted us back. Within a week we had opened that office again. And then within 60 days, I had met in Washington with the new minister of Defense of Ecuador to start the process of moving forward. So now the Ecuadorians had a choice of our strategic competitors. They immediately came back to us. Second example, um, many of you know that, uh, the Bangladesh military, uh, had some issues with the royal hinder crisis on their border. Some of their, some of their, um, their neighbors, uh, were on the opposite side of the issue. Um, their Chinese equipment and their Russian equipment did not perform very well. And I got a

message from the ambassador saying they want to talk to us about shifting from their traditional suppliers, our strategic competitors to the United States. Within a week, I was on a plane to DACA to talk to them within 30 days we had an inner agency team seated in DACA talking to them about transitioning. So people are looking towards us in this strategic competition

Mara Karlin: [29:41](#)

and it's important that

Julian Barnes: [29:42](#)

they look towards us and not toward Moscow and not toward Beijing. So if I might just add one more point, because there are more contemporary examples. Right. And I, I want to add to these important points, general Hooper's making. So again, this is not just go, you know, do doom and gloom. It's important to recognize the u s military is complicated and so are other militaries, right? Or violent non state actors. So if you look at our partners in Syria, they've done a mighty good job dealing with Isis. Now they've caused a whole lot of thorns in our relationship with Turkey. That's complicated. If you look at our partners in the Lebanese military, they've been able to counter all Qaeda affiliates, Isis or gets you name it. They're not necessarily able to deal with the threats from Hezbollah. But we are able to get cooperation on key challenges of mutual concern.

Julian Barnes: [30:28](#)

There is goodness there. However, perfect. Oh, we're going to take your questions in just a second. So be thinking of that. I want to ask one more before we do that, which is, you just talked about, um, you know, Russian and Chinese, uh, cooperation versus U s cooperation. We, this great power competition that's emerging may look a lot like the cold war in one respect, where we are vying for influence with different countries around the world. Uh, it may less be a direct, uh, conflict as a something that involves proxy forces. How does, can the U s compete with, uh, China's, uh, Belton road in Africa? Can the U s compete with a Russian arm sales that are often cheaper than the United States? How does it, uh, how does security cooperation play into the great power competition?

Charles Hooper: [31:21](#)

Okay, first of all, not only can we compete, we're going to win. Okay. And I'll tell you why we're going to win. And Mr Rudy talked a little bit about it. The values based approach that we take that distinguishes us and sets us apart and above from our competitors who are mostly interested on in a transactional relationship and the point of sale. Um, that's how we're going to win. Uh, we talk about in, in the agency we talk about the transparency of the u s process. Everything you want to know

about buying arms from the United States is online. We talk about the responsiveness of the U s approach. Um, we're getting things out faster by working. We talk about the integrity of the U s approach. Um, I've met with the Minister of Defense of India about 10 times in the last, in the last two years. Um, and she's very detailed woman and she has a list of things and she often asked, well, general hooper, why is this, this, this price and why is this, this price? And I tell her every time, madam minister, the books are always open when you do business with the United States was as important because there've been some arm scandals involving our competitors involved in that. And the last one is the commitment to a longterm relationship. Okay.

- Julian Barnes: [32:26](#) Questions? Anyone here in the front? If a wait for the microphone so the world can hear you. Yeah.
- Mara Karlin: [32:35](#) Huh.
- Audience Member: [32:38](#) Listening to all, how do you consider the Turkish buying equipment from Russia?
- Charles Hooper: [32:46](#) Well, and sir, I appreciate your question. Um, our leadership in the last few days as you know. And, and for those of you who are not aware, um, there has been an issue with the Turks procuring the as 400 system and the United States has taken steps that we had articulated, uh, quite often and loudly, uh, in terms of responding to that, the acquisition by the church, uh, the leadership has been very articulate and very complete and describing the steps we're taking. Uh, we have taken definitive steps to register our displeasure with the acquisition of this system. Uh, and we will continue to register those, but I can possibly add to what my leadership's already talked. I mentioned on this right there in the back. There's a microphone right there. Yo.
- Audience Member: [33:29](#) Thank you very much. Kevin Klein, Homeland Security Advisor for the state of Colorado. Um, general hooper. Could you talk a little bit about the special relationship that our national guards have and take the Jordanians with the Colorado guard?
- Charles Hooper: [33:42](#) Yes. For those of you that don't know, um, many of our states and the National Guard Bureau, uh, many of our states have one-on-one bilateral relationships with our foreign partners overseas. So Colorado has a Isaac partnership with Jordan on New York or California has a partnership with Nigeria and others. And, and this, these are very helpful because, um, as as Maura knows very well as there's sometimes cyclical approach

to security cooperation that happens from time to time. The consistency of the relationship between our state national guard bureaus, um, and our partners is absolutely essential towards building that longterm partnership, that longterm relationship. And it is also an excellent example of submit civilian subordination or military subordination to civilian authority and how the citizen soldier in, in a, in a country operates and how he conducts themselves. So the state partnership program is an essential tool. It's even more essential in places like Africa where we have limited resources and limited true presence. Um, and so they do a fantastic job. And as a matter of fact, I'm working with the bureau now. One of the advantages I have is general lane Gal who's the head of the National Guard Bureau. He had my job in Egypt. So he understands the importance of that and we're looking to put actually national guard personnel in DSCA to further solidify the relationship between the security cooperation effort and the state partnership program.

Audience Member: [35:10](#)

Um, also there in the back there. Hi, Jonathan Landy. I'm a reporter with Reuters. Um, I'd like to plumb this question of values based, um, of the values based basis that you make these judgements on, particularly in the case of Saudi Arabia with the enormous suffering and civilian casualties. It is caused with us weaponry, uh, and the humanitarian suffering that it has with the blockade with the humanitarian blockade with the Egyptian military, which killed hundreds of protesters in the streets, staged a coup and overthrew a democratically elected president and is, has been way less laying waste to villages in the Sinai and killing civilians there, um, in a war that we have in a war against supposedly al-Qaida that we have absolutely no visibility into and that they have denied the United States the ability to have visibility on as well as the fact that you have general cc who doesn't appear at any co at any rate at this point to be ready to hold democratic elections. So could you square the values based judgments you make on arm sales with those examples please. And I want you both to react to that. Okay? You want to go first?

Charles Hooper: [36:29](#)

Doesn't matter. I can go for it. Listen, there are always, they're always going to be inherent tensions in our provision of security cooperation to sovereign nations. Is it, why are there inherent tensions? Because we are providing potentially lethal capabilities to sovereign nations in order to, in order to further our own and our collective security objective goals. But nevertheless, we're doing that. And I will tell you, for those of you that don't know, every time we sign an agreement with the country to provide them with these systems, these weapons in

these systems, they have to submit our to end use monitoring and monitoring checks, um, by the United States, um, and they make a commitment to do so. Now we do this all over the world and over 180 countries. We can't be everywhere at once. Are they going to be incidents that absolutely are, but I'd like to address a couple of things to address that.

Charles Hooper:

[37:20](#)

Number one, we are the only great power who cares about the values that are attached to the use of our equipment. I don't see any of our competitors, you know, losing any sleep over holding their recipients accountable, much less than themselves. And we do hold ourselves accountable for that. So that's number one. Number two, we have made, we have taken increasing steps, um, to further refine the restrictions on the use of our equipment. Number one, and for example, by instituting not only periodic and use monitoring checks, but now we've instituted random and use monitoring checks. We've expanded the curriculum at the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies, which comes under DSCA and has responsibility for teaching the law of armed conflict, the law of land warfare, um, and, and avoiding civilian casualties. We have increased the curriculum and the Cape, the capacity of that institution, and we're sending mobile training teams to all of our allies and partners to help them to understand, as I said before, not only that this is con that they need to use our equipment consistent with the values, but the value that's created by doing so.

Charles Hooper:

[38:33](#)

I'm number three in the area of, of avoiding civilian casualties. We're taking increasing steps both in our organization, um, and in the department in Indian or agency to ensure that we minimize the probability of civilian casualties. For example, in our agency, we just brought on, um, a senior civilian casualty of Borden's advisor. Uh, an extraordinarily qualified person, uh, who has experienced in nongovernmental organizations as well as in government and in the private sector. And her job is to help advise on how we can further expand our efforts to ensure that weapons are used consistent with our values and to ensure that we provide our allies and partners with the instruction or the, or the information necessary to reduce the probability as being casualties. So we are taking steps to do that.

Mara Karlin:

[39:25](#)

So there's always a balance between us, national security interests and what our partner is doing. I think Saudi Arabia is a perfect example of this need for constant reassessment. So when the Saudi say they're going to go into Yemen, the Obama administration says, Hey, you're going to fight for the first time. Let's see how we can help you out. Now we have years and

years of evidence that actually they're not getting better at it and that u s assistance isn't doing a whole lot. So hence the need to reassess and absolutely rethink it. I will say though, along this idea of civilian casualties, the u s military has gotten a lot quieter about its role in civilian civilian casualties as well. In the last few years, there's been a lot less transparency, unfortunately on what role the u s military has had in exerting civilian casualties in various conflicts around the globe.

Julian Barnes: [40:13](#) Should we be willing to cut off completely a country that behaves in a way that we don't like? I mean, ending, uh, kicking, uh, officers out of u s military schools stopping all cooperation. Is that a viable, um, strategy, uh, in, in, in a situation where a country is, uh, engaged in a war with humans, that's a humanitarian disaster or human rights violations?

Mara Karlin: [40:39](#) Look, it depends, right? You want ideally want to have a whole of government relationship with a country. It is dangerous if the most capable folks in a country happened to be the ones with guns, right? You want not just your Pentagon but also your State Department and other parts of your inner agency working with them to the extent you see consistent and egregious violations, a lack of willingness to listen to what the United States is saying and to make appropriate changes. You don't want to rethink relationships, however you don't want to threaten that and then not be willing to follow through.

Julian Barnes: [41:10](#) Other questions from the audience there in the back. We'll raise two microphones over to you and we have a winner. Thank you very much. You mentioned Egypt. I wanted to hear a little bit more about the rest of Africa, especially as you mentioned with this kind of pull back of US forces throughout the continent and because that's happening at the same time as Russia, China increasing ties

Audience Member: [41:34](#) with the continent and China establishing their first overseas military base there.

Charles Hooper: [41:38](#) Okay. Well first of all I want to clarify, it didn't say there was a pullback, but certainly there is less voice presence in the African continent than perhaps other theaters that we have. Um, uh, we have Africa is a good example and I was, for those of you that don't know, I was a director of security cooperation programs for Africa and in Africa. We've, we've taken enormous efforts, uh, to improve our institutional capacity building in many of those African nations because frankly that's what will be of most assistance to them in addition to providing them with art defense articles and services appropriate to their

situation. Um, quick example in Africa, I was just in Kenya about two months ago now. Kenya flies the Fiv Tiger fighter, it's about a 40 year old fighter. Those fighters are still fight flying and operational, still participating in combat operations, uh, American fighters.

Charles Hooper: [42:27](#) What Northrup Mothra product y because we worked with the Kenyans to develop a culture of maintenance excellence and those spiders take off and land every day passing Chinese helicopters at a five years old that don't run. Okay. So that's the kind of impact we've had. The impact we've had in Liberia where, uh, we of course Liberia coming out of horrific civil war is now has a stable government now has an armed force that is more respectful of the people. I was just with their chief of defense in Botswana after the Paris air show. So Liberia, we've had success Africa, I mean in a, in a canyon, we've had success. Morocco was one of our most stable partners, uh, in North Africa. So we've had a lot of success in Africa.

Mara Karlin: [43:12](#) You know, while Africa is a kind of low cost, small footprint, economy of forces, the euphemism, uh, kind of, uh, area of responsibility for the u s military. One of the reasons you have so many good examples is general hooper is noting is because you do have this whole of government approach at the combatant command where it is so tightly knit with the development folks, with the state folks in a way, frankly, that I don't know that you see otherwise. Um, I just want to emphasize though, as much as we're talking about our partners and our allies and their flaws and our flaws, we have to remember the u s military does not win wars on its own. It never has and it never will. We don't become a country without the French help. We need others. We have to figure out how to work with them most effectively and most efficiently, but we got to have them on our team.

Audience Member: [44:01](#) We are out of time, and that's a great place to end. Please join me in thanking our high energy

Speaker 5: [44:06](#) handle. Thanks.

Audience Member: [44:14](#) We will now take a short break and resume at two 15 promptly.