

## Institutional Reform of Foreign Defense and Security Partners

Aaron C. Taliaferro ([ataliafe@ida.org](mailto:ataliafe@ida.org)) and Wade P. Hinkle ([whinkle@ida.org](mailto:whinkle@ida.org))

U.S. partners and allies interested in reforming their defense governance and management practices often turn to the United States Government (USG) for support. For 25 years, staff from IDA's Systems and Analyses Center have helped provide this support.

**Reform is not a static experience.** At the beginning of a nation's reform process, IDA establishes a team of cross-disciplinary, culturally literate subject matter experts (SMEs) able to understand the needs of its USG sponsors and the foreign partner. Working with those stakeholders, IDA SMEs collaboratively assess the foreign partner's needs and design a plan to address priority challenges. In response, IDA SMEs conduct research and provide reports and analysis on effective management practices that are tailored to the partner's need. These are provided directly to foreign government officials or delivered through seminars, workshops, or small-group sessions. Support is provided over many years through episodic engagement conducted by a stable SME team, which establishes trust between participants.

**Nations seeking U.S. assistance have impetus.** For example, in 1999, the Armed Forces of the Republic of the Philippines (AFP) had become unable to effectively perform their essential missions. The Philippine Department of National Defense (DND) requested U.S. assistance in reforming the governance and management of its defense sector. From 2004 to 2012, IDA SMEs helped develop and implement management processes and systems that improved the DND's ability to plan, allocate, and control the use of defense resources so the AFP would once again be capable of accomplishing their priority missions. In another example, the impetus for reform was a desire



Quezon City, Philippines, January 2008: Filipino emissaries Antonio C. Santos (Undersecretary for Defense Affairs), Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr. (Secretary of National Defense), and Emmanuel Feliciano (Assistant Secretary for Plans and Programs) participated in an IDA-led simulation.

among leaders of the Colombian Ministry of National Defense to exercise more control over the strategic planning, budget, and personnel decisions of the military services and national police. Further, they wanted to be able to make data-driven decisions informed by analysis and a future-looking perspective, rather than rely on annual budget drills as the basis for force planning. Important elements of success in Colombia were the research and analysis capacity of IDA SMEs and the Colombian



Bogota, Colombia, October 2010: IDA's Wade Hinkle discussed Colombia's reform efforts with Yaneth Giha (Vice Minister of Defense) and Mauricio Vargas (Defense Ministry's Programming and Budget Director).

government's perception that U.S. participation meant that the processes, tools, and methods being developed would be credible.

**IDA's proven methods and skilled workforce can meet the needs of USG foreign partners.** Consistent engagement, diverse skills, and workforce continuity contribute to IDA's ability to effectively meet the needs of USG partners and allies interested in reforming the management of their defense and security sectors.