

PEACE AND SECURITY MAPPING PROJECT SUMMARY FINDINGS

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1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

Peace and security policy work for the coming period with a new Administration represents both historic opportunities and challenges, and suggests new priorities that are less defensive and more proactive:

- **Building the best climate in which to make substantive policy change.** The challenge is to expand the opportunity for bold policy-making that captures the imagination of new leaders in the same way that climate change has. It is particularly important to cultivate more receptivity in geographic areas where the populations are less familiar with, and traditionally less supportive of, peace and security goals. It would also be crucial to assess and coordinate the resources of organizations working in these areas in order to maximize effectiveness. The strategy that emerges could provide an approach for both policy and communications that could be augmented by citizens, policy makers and journalists.
- **Continuing to push a positive policy focus in the media during the early days of the new Administration.** Because of the distractions of analyzing emerging new policies and the personnel distractions related to the appointment process, activists can forget how important it is to continue to keep up a high profile in the media about strong progressive positions on peace and foreign policy matters. As everyone is aware, the right will not take a holiday from pushing its perspective and will try to dominate the news cycles with undermining messages of fear and danger.
- **Working productively with the leaders in power:** For the last eight years the peace and security community was on the defensive. In the new environment, organizations expect to have regular access to make their case at high levels. In this changed climate, the challenges are:
 - How to give the Administration the space to execute a particular set of strategies, while, at the same time, maintaining independence and the ability to disagree.
 - Understanding what's achievable in the first few months and establishing reasonable expectations and how to define success in both the short and long term.
 - Coordinating strategy and tactics such that groups are not using opposing tactics while trying to advance the same goals.
- **Managing increased workloads within organizations while maintaining focus on organizational goals:** This includes: changing approaches to working supportively for policy change while maintaining independence; expanding work to cover the executive branch; expanding work to put forward positive, practical solutions, rather than criticism; scrambling to identify the non-legislative options that can be accomplished quickly.
- **Maintaining adequate funding:** Given the importance of the transition and opportunities in the early months of the new administration and in the context of the economic crisis, early funding for groups would be a strategic investment. Coordination is important, but so is making sure that the groups doing the coordinating have the resources they need to do their core work.
 - It's a tragedy that this unique opportunity coincides with the downturn in the economy and funders' reduced capacity. Funders might reflect on balancing the short-term opportunity with longer term needs and opportunities.
 - Many groups would like to see funders more strategically coordinate their grant making with each other, work with groups more closely to fill gaps as they become apparent, minimize overlaps, and recruit new funders.

2. POLICY

The peace and security groups report tremendous agreement about priorities and about what's achievable. While there is a mandate for changes in national security policy, without strong pressure throughout the legislative policy environment, momentum and the prevailing forces will keep the old policies in place. Our examination of the survey of participants' policy priority statements does not reveal how diverse but related efforts will be coordinated, such as reconciling nuclear weapons goals with those of conflict resolution, development and diplomacy. Furthermore, organizations surveyed have different goals that could unwittingly clash with each other without some coordination. For instance, how can arms policy work be coordinated with work around development/conflict/diplomacy to further all issue agendas? Also, will the human rights community's efforts to reframe the debate around torture, rendition and the threat of terrorism enhance or undermine this community's efforts around nuclear weapons?

Coordination should include discussions of the range of policies and strategies being pursued, the diverse approaches to particular objectives, the spectrum of targeted agencies and branches of government, and the dynamic nature of world events. ***Our recommendation is that participating groups collaborate with funders in devising a means of overall strategic coordination and periodic strategy assessment regarding policy goal and across communities at regular intervals throughout 2009 and beyond. This would be over and above PSI meetings.***

NOTES ON POLICY AREAS

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

There's a sense of optimism about moving forward on nuclear weapons policy because of President Obama's campaign commitment to non-proliferation; groups are trying to leverage that commitment to become policy. Furthermore, the widely discussed statements in favor of nuclear disarmament by conservative hawks Kissinger, Perry, Schultz and Nunn have put abolition back on the table. A significant number of policy recommendations have been developed, from the voluminous National Security and Nonproliferation Briefing Book to papers detailing recommendations for downsizing the nuclear weapons complex. In general, most leaders expect the economy will consume much of the President's attention in the early months, but that, nevertheless, important issues can begin to be addressed, especially through the budgeting process and other non-legislative means.

- **STAYING AHEAD OF THE CURVE ON POLICY POSITIONS.** It is highly likely the Obama Administration will present peace and security organizations with opportunities to advocate both publicly and with lawmakers for reordered priorities that will shift focus from weapons development to socially beneficial projects such as climate change and severe weather modeling and forecasting, earthquake modeling, energy research, drug discovery, transportation planning, economic modeling, cost-effective renewable energy technologies. All these are strategies that could conceivably be proposed to simultaneously combat carbon emissions and proliferation threats while promoting human and economic development. Organizations may need additional resources to more fully develop their plans for such advocacy, conduct the appropriate research and build the necessary relationships, such as with environmental, economic development and labor organizations.
- **ENSURING THE ARGUMENTS FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS REDUCTION AND ELIMINATION REINFORCE THE ARGUMENTS FOR SHUTTING DOWN THE WEAPONS COMPLEX AND BUDGET REPRIORITIZATION:** There is a real danger that various arguments and justifications for each targeted objective could inadvertently create cognitive dissonance that the audience would resolve in favor of justifying the present system. For instance, if advocates for abolition continue to use the threat of terrorists obtaining a nuclear weapon as a main reason to eliminate all

weapons, opinion research has clearly demonstrated that most audiences immediately favor efforts around stockpile stewardship, or bombplex, as the answer rather than anything that implies unilateral disarmament.

- **COORDINATING NUCLEAR OBJECTIVES with OBJECTIVES RELATED TO ARMED CONFLICT, AND BALANCING SUPPORT FOR BOTH.** This would include coordinating with advocates whose priorities include: stemming the small arms trade; eliminating military assistance to human rights-violating nations; and establishing more uniform systems to manage post-armed conflict scenarios.

MILITARY BUDGET

There are promising opportunities for reprioritizing the military budget because: 1) of broad agreement that there are excesses in the military budget that are not in the country's best interest; 2) the downturn in the economy has focused the country specifically on budget issues; and 3) the Obama Administration seems open to new approaches. Administration officials are reaching out, and access has opened up for our community. The Administration may even be open to broad new concepts such as reforming the process by which the military and defense budget is created.

At the same time, it is challenging to generate and sustain public momentum and attention to the details of a defense appropriations bill. The key budget issues and analyses don't attract broad public interest and issues of waste, fraud and corruption aren't as glamorous as they once were. Also, there are difficult public perceptions to overcome that see defense jobs and security needs as unassailable. Another factor is the sheer structural and procedural resistance of DOD and Congress to allow outside input into this process. Last, there are key framing problems: No one is willing to toy with the "military" budget because 1) it is unpatriotic to do so; 2) the military is perceived to be critical to security and reducing it would be dangerous; and 3) the military is seen as one of the only parts of government that actually works. We need to find a common language for approaching the budget question, and reprioritizing specific line items, in a way that skirts these landmines.

- **LINKING MILITARY BUDGET ISSUES TO CURRENT ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING:** Organizations involved with the Unified Security Budget see it as a primary tool with which to engage Congress and the public, with the economic crisis providing the opening for a conversation on shaping the priorities and structure of the military budgeting process, including a shift of resources to conflict resolution and peace keeping missions. These organizations are convening collaborative sessions on strategy, policy and media. Individually and in collaboration, they are publishing research, conducting briefings, and getting USB to key members of National Security transition team.

3. STRATEGY

Though this summary deals with both the short and longer term opportunities, the launching point for the conversation with the groups surveyed was what the groups were putting into place for the first 100 days and beyond. Though some individual groups are definitely scrambling to identify the non-legislative options that can be accomplished quickly in first months of administration, overall, coordinated strategizing is occurring around each policy issue, many of which are longer term in nature. Work is prioritized based on a collective assessment of the pace at which that particular issue will be addressed. As an example of the nuances within the approaches, some community members see initiating new negotiations with Russia on a new nuclear arms reduction agreement as a top issue because the existing START treaty runs out in December 09, so the Administration's work on that will begin right away. At the same time, others see the CTBT as a key issue because Obama has said he'd pursue Senate advice and consent as soon as possible. Obviously, it will be important to time the roll-out of these campaigns strategically so they can be mutually reinforcing, and such that they will both build toward the long term goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons.

Coordination of national level advocacy, strategy, media work

Although agreement largely exists on policy *priorities*, as mentioned earlier, there is some disagreement about strategy and tactics. This is exemplified in positions regarding the push for Reliable Replacement Warheads. A few influentials within the community believe going along with it will be the best way to win support from skeptical Republicans for CTBT, and that, after all, the program technically would be replacing existing warheads. Yet a good portion of the community's leadership agrees that it is premature to be considering this kind of trade off ---the votes may be available without that concession. In both viewpoints the over-arching goals are the same, but there may be some friction over the timeframe and which tactic to approve at which time. Also, there are questions of how to balance policy oriented campaigns with efforts to put forward infrastructure changes for sustained impact, working more at an agency level.

The surveyed groups generally have a lot of knowledge of what each other is doing and have a history of collaborating in many and varied ways---formally and informally---depending on the issue. These coordination efforts seem to center around research, publications of studies, educational tools, letters and statements regarding policy priorities, lobbying, and outreach to national media.

- **However, there does seem to be a need for groups to coordinate an overall strategy and agree on prioritizing tactics to achieve mutually agreed upon goals, including developing a timetable for introducing controversial tactics.**
- **There is also a need for the groups to understand how the new Obama Administration works, its "partnership model" concept, and how it can be applied tactically to winning our issues.**

Building a more targeted, focused communication infrastructure within and among peace and security groups

One of the lessons WWW learned from their media process last year was the need for better coordination among groups and spokespersons active in the media. Groups are taking these lessons to heart and working to strengthen their communication networks.

- Still, the surveyed groups recommended that funders and organizational representatives work together to expand and support strategic media and communications coordinated efforts. They further emphasized that focus be placed on sophisticated media strategies, taking full advantage of new media vehicles where appropriate (blogosphere, viral video, social networking, Twitter, etc.) and capacities for creating media echo chambers on targeted issues (echo chamber refers to the coordination of multiple source points and media vehicles around a specified message, amplifying its reach and impact).

Funders: Funders should talk with each other to coordinate efforts and ensure that all participants in a collaborative effort can also accomplish significant organizational goals in addition to policy and issue-focused goals.

Coordination of efforts in key parts of the country where grassroots support will be a key driver for policy change: building and networking media relationships, grassroots organizations, technical and professional expertise, foundation resources, existing databases, think tanks, etc.

Building supportive climates in strategic geographic areas outside the beltway seems to have been given the least attention by funders and the groups. Ensuring that grassroots groups in these areas apply the kind of pressure needed to convince Washington elite to change course is important, and the time couldn't be more ripe given the general population's willingness to embrace change. Developing a supportive climate would entail building media relationships and an infrastructure of alliances that will support progressive policy directions in peace and security. The groups participating in this survey represent a wide diversity of policy supporters: some organizations have strong connections with veterans, others with religious denominations, scientists, union members, etc., and many have significant grassroots networks.

- ***Groups should work together to identify the highest priority states/districts/media markets around the country, places where it will be most essential to build a supportive climate for new policy and launch a concerted campaign to inform the opinions of constituents in these areas.***
- ***After agreeing on the key areas, funders might do well to immediately provide resources to conduct an inventory of media, professional, informational and grassroots assets in key areas and to buttress organizational capacities, as needed, to implement these regional strategies.***
- ***In addition, it would be useful to provide resources for organizations to engage in training around advocacy and lobbying guidelines.***

With the ushering in of the Obama Administration, a new progressive era could be at hand. The degree to which: 1) Obama supporters can be organized around our issues, 2) international issues can be included in Obama's short list of priorities, and 3) our community can plug into the social/civil technological movement that the Obama phenomenon has created, depends on the energy and initiative of the peace and security community. The community's capacity to coordinate, thanks to the tireless efforts of PSI, WWW and countless other working groups, is sophisticated enough to rise to the opportunity at hand, and with some further effort, the peace and security community's agenda could move to the 'front burner' for the first time since the 1980's.

Thanks to all who participated in this survey.

Appendix A

Interviews conducted with:

1. Danielle Brian, POGO Project on Government Oversight
2. Tom Andrews, Win Without War
3. David Culp, FCNL
4. Lisbeth Gronlund, Union of Concerned Scientists
5. Bill Hartung, New America Foundation
6. John Isaacs, Council for A Livable World
7. Marylia Kelly, Tri-ValleyCAREs
8. Daryl Kimball, Arms Control Association
9. Miriam Pemberton, Foreign Policy in Focus
10. Lisa Schirch, 3D Security Initiative
11. Susan Shaer, Women's Action for New Directions
12. Jacqueline Shire, Institute for Science and International Security
13. Heather Hurlburt, National Security Network
14. Ivan Oelrich, Federation of American Scientists
15. Christopher Paine, Natural Resources Defense Council

Information was also gathered for a few additional organizations based on published and web-based documents.