

TESTIMONY OF  
PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR  
POPULATION, REFUGEES, AND MIGRATION  
RICHARD L. GREENE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MAY 13, 2003

BEFORE THE

HOUSE GOVERNMENT REFORM SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING THREATS, AND  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

EMBARGOED UNTIL 2:00 PM, MAY 13, 2002

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss humanitarian assistance following military operations. Providing effective humanitarian assistance is critical to establishing stability in post-conflict situations, and is in keeping with America's core values. We appreciate your support on humanitarian issues and your recognition of the important role humanitarian organizations play in responding to complex emergencies. Helping to ensure that these organizations are ready to respond to a humanitarian crisis is an important responsibility of the State Department.

#### HOW WE WORK

At the State Department, in the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and elsewhere, we work closely with the United Nations and other multilateral partners to assess humanitarian needs as a basis for determining appropriate levels of support.

Under the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act (MRAA), PRM's priorities are to assist refugees and conflict victims, working primarily with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and other international organizations. In addition, we provide support to NGOs who assist in implementing and supplementing the work of these international organizations in every major crisis.

Within the administration, there is a defined division of labor, consistent with our Congressional mandates, between State and USAID on humanitarian issues, with the Secretary of State assuming overall responsibility. PRM primarily supports efforts to assist refugees (including returnees) and other conflict victims. USAID usually focuses on internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the other general humanitarian needs of civilians, including food.

#### OUR APPROACH

Our approach incorporates many lessons from previous post-conflict assistance efforts. It includes the following elements:

First, our approach views civil/military cooperation and coordination as absolutely essential - from the first stages of planning and assessment to the eventual hand-over to nationally led institutions. We do everything we can from the beginning to ensure that military plans take into account vulnerable non-combatants and the humanitarian infrastructure so that there is minimal damage to both. For Iraq, the multi-agency Humanitarian Planning Team (HPT) and numerous exchanges between senior State and DOD officials underscored the importance of incorporating effective humanitarian response into our overall Iraq campaign efforts. The pre-conflict phase included extensive discussions regarding which tasks should be performed by the military. This civil/military exchange continues on a daily basis on a whole range of humanitarian assistance issues in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The military also plays an important role during conflict in addressing humanitarian needs, but civilian organizations should take over in post-conflict settings.

Second, our approach relies on the expertise of the main providers of humanitarian assistance worldwide, the UN humanitarian agencies and other international and non-governmental organizations. They have the technical expertise and experience to assess the needs of refugees and internally displaced persons across the sectors of protection, food, water, sanitation, health, shelter, and education.

Third, the prompt and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance depends upon a permissive environment, with adequate security and public safety measures in place, in which the UN and other civilian relief agencies can operate safely and effectively. Security is an absolute pre-condition for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, reconstruction, and the development of civil society. Clearly the most pressing concern of humanitarian agencies in parts of Iraq and Afghanistan is the absence of a permissive security environment.

Fourth, our approach identifies a clear linkage between the establishment of effective coordination mechanisms among the humanitarian agencies operating on the ground and how well assistance programs work. In Afghanistan, for example, the Afghans and the international

community developed a new mechanism for coordinating humanitarian and reconstruction assistance efforts. This initiative, called the "Program Secretariat" structure, twinned UN agencies with counterpart Afghan government ministries. The UNHCR twinned with the Ministry of Rural Development and the Ministry for Refugees and Returnees, emphasizing training for Ministry staff at the provincial level, the Ministry of Health was twinned with the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Ministry of Education was twinned with UNICEF for primary schooling. Under this structure, the UN and the Afghan government worked together along with NGOs, bilateral donors, and international financial institutions to set sector priorities, develop strategies for addressing them, and solicit required resources. This "twinning" effort helped to build the capacity of the Afghan Government to plan, direct, and manage aid programs.

Our emphasis on effective coordination mechanism is also why we strongly supported the recent re-entry to Baghdad of the UN's Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq and other UN international staff to join the almost 4000 UN national staff who remained in Iraq during the conflict.

Fifth, our approach aims to leverage the capacity of these skilled, experienced and internationally-mandated humanitarian assistance organizations. We establish coordination mechanisms, such as the humanitarian operations centers in Kuwait, Cyprus, and Jordan that were set up to facilitate contingency planning and humanitarian response for Iraq. Such mechanisms make possible direct access between humanitarian planners and military officials on the myriad of logistical and security issues (e.g., security assessments, air and ground transport of supplies, protection of civilians). We share U.S. humanitarian assessment information with these organizations so that we all have the benefit of the best available data. We also provide significant early funding and facilitate cross-border access.

Sixth, our approach emphasizes the importance of early and significant funding. We build our funding requirements and decisions around the needs of the populations our partners assist. In Afghanistan, the 2001 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act provided the USG the ability to jumpstart the efforts of the key international humanitarian organizations - thus averting a humanitarian

disaster. In Iraq, the Emergency Wartime Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2003 provides \$2.4 billion for relief and reconstruction that serves a similar purpose. In addition, the U.S. Emergency and Migration Assistance (ERMA) Fund also allows the USG to respond quickly.

Seventh, our approach supports the assessments and work plans done by the international organizations for the international community. We also work closely with our NGO partners to get their assessment of the needs in an affected country as they play an important role in filling critical gaps in the programming done by international organizations. Our funding decisions are based on needs and activities outlined in the work plans, which are closely coordinated among agencies. To facilitate funding, we have developed - and posted on our webpage - guidelines to help NGOs prepare proposals that target our funding priorities. Our efforts to get changes to the OFAC licensing process will allow NGO recipients of our funding to receive their licenses concurrently with the cooperative agreement. Furthermore, the President's decision last week to remove sanctions imposed by the United States against Iraq's old government is another way we are facilitating the efforts of our private sector partners to contribute to humanitarian relief and reconstruction in Iraq.

Eighth, also on the critical funding issue, our approach emphasizes the importance of international burden sharing. Both the civilian and military components of the USG have played crucial roles in trying to secure fair share contributions from other international donors.

#### CONCLUSION

Finally, each post-conflict humanitarian relief operation has its own set of unique circumstances. But, we do not have to reinvent the wheel each time. We apply the policies that we have developed to respond in a manner that conveys respect for the individual beneficiaries of our efforts. Providing humanitarian assistance in post-conflict environments is an extraordinarily challenging task. We have worked hard to coordinate planning and implementation within the USG and to forge good working relationships with our key UN and NGO partners in providing humanitarian assistance in complex humanitarian emergencies. We will continue to do everything possible to facilitate the great work they do on behalf of the

international community. Strong civilian/military cooperation has been the foundation for these efforts.