



Next State Planning

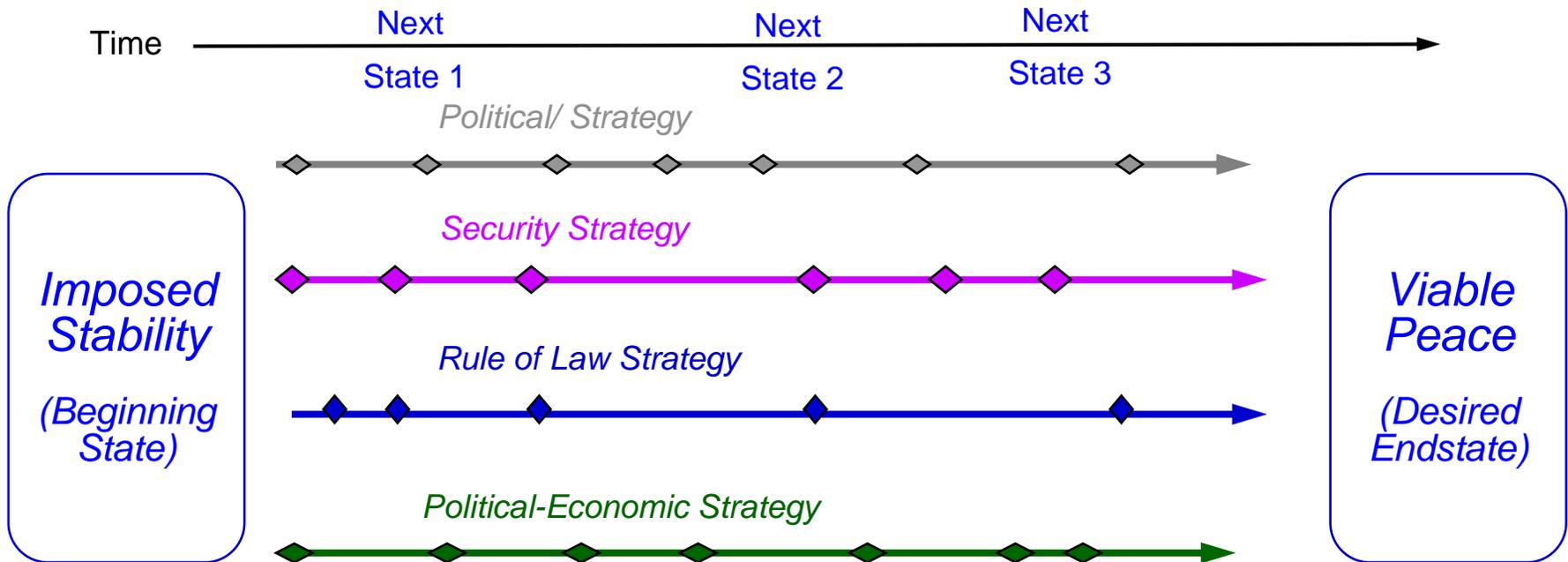
A “Whole of Government” Approach For Planning And Executing Operational Campaigns

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19 June 2007

An Integrated Campaign Plan

**Multiple Independent, But Coordinated Lines Of Effort
With A Strategy To Transform Conflict And Bring About
A Desired Endstate**

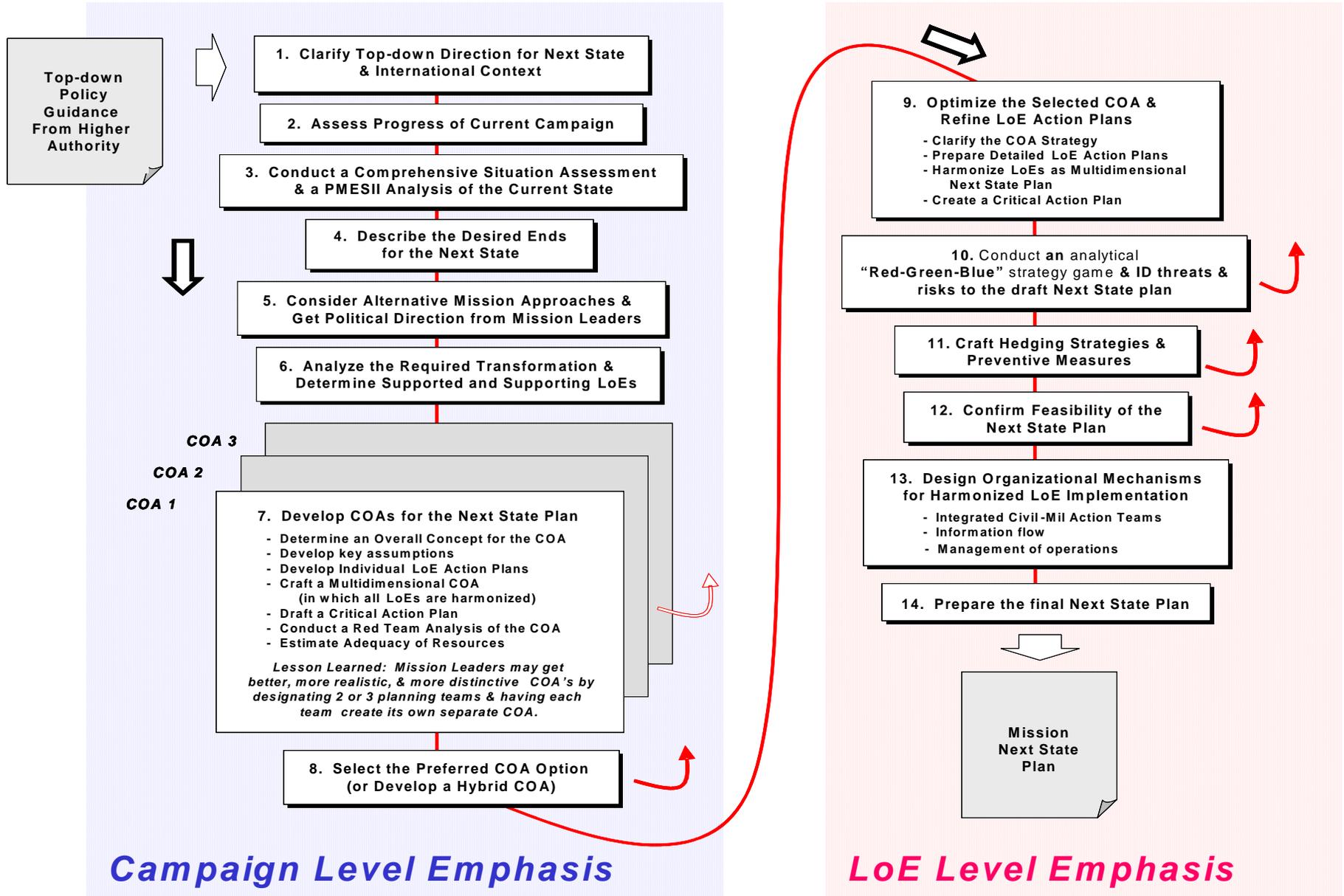


◆ **Critical Benchmarks that Signify Key Turning Points (Decisive Effects)
in the Transformation Process**

Levels of Planning

- A *Mission-level Campaign Plan* is the overarching plan covering about three years to achieve the projected PMESII-wide ends of the intervention. It identifies the series of intermediate Next States that describe achievable progress in steps which involve several Lines of Effort.
- A series of *Next State Plans* are the intermediate plans covering about three-six months to bring about critical benchmarks among various Lines of Effort across the entire mission. The series of next states are nested within the overall *Mission Campaign Plan*.
- Any number of military and civilian agency *Operations Plans* are prepared for conducting operations and activities covering about three weeks or less to achieve specific benchmarks in a timely fashion within each Line of Effort. The various operations plans are nested within the current *Next State Plan*.

Planning Process



Campaign Level Emphasis

LoE Level Emphasis

Step 1: Analysis of Top-down Direction and International Context

Understand guidance, mission aims and objectives, resources available

- What is the US interest in the situation?
- What are the key aims of the coalition?
- What is the acceptable form and extent of the intervention?
- What resources can be anticipated?
- What assets are to be made available?
- What constraints (e.g., ROEs) must be followed?
- What endstates are acceptable?
- What timelines are acceptable to leading organization?
- What assumptions have been made by the higher headquarters?

Step 3: Comprehensive PMESII Assessment of Situation and Next State

Situation assessment

- Economic: size and nature of the economy in the region, key products / skills, economic differences between the persecuting and persecuted groups, key actors
- Political: kind of government in the region; government strengths; key actors; degree of popular support
- Social: size and makeup of the populace in the region; size and relative influence of various ethnic groups and religious groups, the persecutors and persecutees in particular; nature of historical animosities and conflicts; key actors
- Infrastructure: scope and status of operation in the region, differences between infrastructure available to the persecuting and persecuted groups, key actors
- Information: key information propagation methods in the region, key media, influential people on both sides of the conflict, key actors
- Military: strength of various forces, key assets, key actors, degree of loyalty of forces to military leaders, degree of loyalty of leaders to the government.

Step 3: Comprehensive PMESII Assessment of Situation and Next State

Answer key questions

- Who are the key actors?
- What do they want?
- How are they likely to proceed if Blue does not intervene?
- How do they draw support?
- How do they interact?
- How does the desired Next State contribute to the over-all mission?

Step 4: Description, Specification of Desired Ends for the Next State

Development of Candidate Next States

- Does this endstate condition conflict with the policy aims for the intervention?
- Does it support the overall political process?
- Does it solve the problem for the long term, or does it leave the door open for potential new problems in the future?

Next State Selection

- Typical Next State objective spans all the major Lines of Effort, and is achievable in a relatively short (three to five month) time frame
- Generally, it culminates in a publicly recognizable event
- These types of events require concerted action across multiple Lines of Effort

Step 7: Course of Action Development

A creative activity, coupled with realism in judgment

- Clarify the Course of Action's Operational Concept
- Develop Individual Line of Effort Action Plans. Each Line of Effort Action Plan is crafted by a small number of planners who are experts in the topic
- Design a Multi-dimensional Course of Action that revolves issues among Line of Effort's and links, sequences, and harmonized various Line of Effort actions to get the job done (i.e., create the desired conditions of the Next State).
- Define the Critical Action Pathway for the Course of Action
- Conduct a Red Team Analysis of the Course of Action and adjust accordingly
- Ascertain the Course of Action's Resource Requirements in general terms
- Employ sensitivity analyses in order to identify important values of controllable variables and to assess the robustness of the Course of Action .

Step 9: Next State Plan Optimization and LoE Refinement

Process Of Fleshing Out Plans

- Beginning at an Line of Effort endstate, all precursor states are identified
- For each of these precursors, all of their precursors are identified
- For each of these 2nd order precursors, all of their precursors are identified, and so forth, until the initial state is reached
- Other necessary conditions are identified, in particular, those beyond Blue control

- As the Next State plan comes together ensure
 - All constraints are satisfied (e.g., constraints in assets, resources, environmental conditions, political conditions, and so forth)
 - Cross-task conflicts are identified and mitigated
 - Plan is efficient as well as effective
 - Plan is synchronized (or harmonized). This process deals simultaneously with the *problem* of identifying and eliminating cross-task conflicts, and the *objective* of identifying and exploiting cross-task synergies
 - Next State planning ensures
 - A comprehensive set of activity alternatives is identified and maintained
 - Constraints, such as execution times, are monitored and not frozen prematurely

Step 12: Analysis of Feasibility

- Ensure that a proposed solution is consistent with the known (or assumed) limitations in resources, policy, timeliness, robustness and probability of success, cross-Line of Effort dependencies, etc
- Lower-level planning assumptions (within an Line of Effort) still hold true when they are rolled-up into an end-to-end summarization of the complete Next State transition Course of Action
- Ensure consistency and synergy across multiple concurrent Next State transition efforts
- At the Campaign Plan level
 - Review all Next State planning efforts to resolve interference and enhance synergy between them
 - Task component Line of Effort entities to provide necessary feasibility estimates so that the feasibility of the global Campaign Plan can be assessed.
 - Violation of constraints typically requires iteration of one or more previous steps in the process depending on its seriousness and extent

Step 14: Preparation of the Next State Plan

- Preparing detailed implementing instructions to responsible agencies and organizations. Provides guidance to military and civilian planners of operations and activities across the mission.
- Tasking are given in terms of the achievement of desired endstates (at the appropriate level of abstraction), constraints, and dependencies.
- Identification of dependencies and ensured that (within the context of the plan) they will be satisfied
- Once planning and execution of operations and activities begin
 - Feedback and redirection based on the actual experience
 - Feed-back from lower executing levels on a continuing basis as execution of the plan unfolds.
 - Evaluation of an assumptions

Way ahead

- As we look further out into the future, the need for a planning process with Next State Planning like characteristics will grow rather than diminish
- Critical need to eliminate stove-pipe planning by independent organizations in isolation because it both misses opportunities for synergy (loss of efficiency) and in many cases leads to unanticipated and undesirable secondary effects in areas outside a given Line of Effort
- Future crisis intervention must be multi-dimensional, holistically considering the full PMESII state as a system of systems, and opportunistically exploiting the full range of national capabilities (DIME) to achieve long-term political and economic stability

Next State Planning provides a comprehensive process for reaching long term goals by identifying and focusing on a series of intermediate achievable “stepping stones” leading to the desired endstate.