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National Security Council Interagency Process

Introduction

In National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 266, I directed that the recommendations of the President's Special Review Board, including the model for the National Security Council (NSC) system, be implemented in full. To that end, I chartered a review of the structure of senior interagency groups and regional and functional interagency groups established pursuant to, or under the authority of, presidential Directives or applicable memoranda. This review was designed to identify such changes in the interagency process as might be necessary or desirable to realize fully and promptly in practice the Special Review Board's recommendations, including the specific recommendation that the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (the "National Security Advisor") chair the senior committees of the NSC. The present Directive reflects changes in the interagency process I have authorized as a result of that review.

Interagency Groups

Interagency groups can provide an effective medium for the development of advice and policy for consideration by the President. They achieve their goal when they provide thorough and clear analyses of all policy choices, coordinate policy implementation, and review policy in light of experience.

NSDD 2, dated January 12, 1982, established the senior interagency structure. It created three functional senior interagency groups (SIGs) -- one on foreign policy, chaired by the Secretary of State; one on defense policy, chaired by the Secretary of Defense; and one on intelligence policy, chaired by the Director of Central Intelligence. Subsequent Directives and memoranda established some 22 additional SIGs and 55 interagency groups (IGs), including certain groups chaired by the National Security Advisor or members of the NSC staff. IGs

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in turn typically have established working groups and task forces to assist in, and support, their work.

After five years' experience, a review of the interagency process was due, even without the impetus of the Special Review Board's report. This review revealed that many interagency groups, although formally established, have not met or ceased to meet when the circumstances that brought them into being changed; and that new interagency groups have come into being to deal with contingencies as they have arisen. As the Special Review Board noted, these groups have not, in every case, served the goal of effective policy deliberation.

To improve the interagency process at large, and to implement the Special Review Board's recommendations, I therefore am directing or authorizing the following:

1. National Security Council. As specified in NSDD 266, the NSC shall be the principal forum for consideration of national security issues requiring presidential decision. The functions of, and participants in, the NSC shall be as set forth in the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, and NSDD 266. The NSC shall meet at the direction of the President.
2. National Security Planning Group. The National Security Planning Group (NSPG) shall be a committee of the NSC. The President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Treasury, the National Security Advisor, the Chief of Staff to the President, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall attend NSPG meetings. The NSPG shall meet, as circumstances warrant, to monitor and review the development and implementation of national security policy on behalf of the NSC. The responsibilities of the NSPG with regard to covert action shall be as provided in a separate presidential Directive revising NSDD 159.

The National Security Advisor or the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (the "Deputy National Security Advisor") shall be responsible for the attendance, agenda, and conduct of such meetings at my direction. The Directors of the United States Information Agency and the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the heads of other Executive departments and agencies, and other advisors to the President shall be invited by the National

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Security Advisor, acting at my direction, to attend NSPG meetings as matters on the agenda of such meetings shall dictate.

3. Senior Review Group. A Senior Review Group (SRG) shall be the Cabinet level interagency group for the consideration of national security issues. The SRG shall be comprised of the National Security Advisor, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chief of Staff to the President, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The National Security Advisor shall invite the attendance of heads of such other Executive departments or agencies, and of such senior officials within the Executive Office of the President, as matters on the agenda of SRG meetings shall dictate. The National Security Advisor shall chair the SRG, which shall meet at his request or the request of its standing members, to review, coordinate, and monitor the implementation of national security policy on behalf of the NSC.

4. The Policy Review Group. The Policy Review Group (PRG) shall be the senior sub-Cabinet level interagency group. The PRG shall be comprised of the Deputy National Security Advisor, a representative of the Office of the Vice President, and an Under or Assistant Secretary or other senior official of equivalent rank of the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Office of Management and Budget, and, as matters on the agenda of the PRG dictate, of the Executive Office of the President and other interested Executive departments and agencies. The Deputy National Security Advisor shall chair the PRG, which shall meet regularly at his request or the request of its standing members. The PRG's primary responsibility shall be to review and make recommendations concerning national security policy developed through the day-to-day functioning of the interagency process, including such senior interagency groups and regional and functional interagency groups as may hereafter be formed or authorized to continue in existence as provided in paragraph 5 hereof. The PRG shall assume the functions described in NSDD 30 and previously exercised by the Crisis Pre-Planning Group and those described in NSDD 207 and previously exercised by the Terrorist Incident Working Group. The Planning and Coordination

Group (PCG), as provided in a separate presidential Directive revising NSDD 159, shall continue to be the senior sub-Cabinet level interagency group responsible for covert action.

Matters considered and recommendations for follow-on action made by the PRG shall be referred to responsible Executive departments and agencies. Recommendations made by the PRG shall be submitted for consideration by the SRG, NSPG, or NSC, as appropriate.

5. Other Interagency Groups. Within their respective areas of authority as set forth in NSDD 266, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and the Director of the United States Information Agency may approve the continuation of existing senior interagency groups and regional or functional interagency groups to the extent necessary or desirable to promote an effective NSC process; by June 30, 1987, the National Security Advisor shall be notified of those interagency groups they have determined shall continue to function.

The National Security Advisor is authorized to approve or direct the formal establishment of additional senior interagency groups to the extent required for an effective NSC process, and to approve the continuation of such existing senior interagency groups as may be chaired by members of the NSC staff.

NSDD 2 and other presidential Directives and applicable memoranda, to the extent inconsistent with this Directive or with NSDD 266, are rescinded.