**ROGER W. JONES AWARD NOMINATION for EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP**

**Ms. HILDA ARELLANO**

**Essay 2:**

Through coaching and mentoring direct – hire staff and Foreign Service nationals, Ms. Arellano’s **COMMITMENT to EFFECTIVE CONTINUITY of GOVERNMENT** is unparalleled.

**USAID/Egypt** Cairo as a training platform for rebuilding USAID’s staffing capacity. Her vision supported the training role and that USAID’s program history and policy exposure in Cairo was unparalleled. The Ambassador increased by ten USAID’s NSDD 38 levels. She has developed a comprehensive training and mentoring operation that blends classroom training with specific job responsibilities and field exposure, structuring rotations in Lebanon, Morocco and Yemen as well as Egypt. She appointed a DLI-coordinator and held regular feedback session with new officers as well as with their mentors, supervisor and senior FSNS to monitor progress.

Ms. Arellano engaged all USAID staff in an exhaustive analysis of current performance resource flows and pipelines. She chaired regular sector team meetings, using these to mentor staff by providing clear guideline so her expectations and desired outcomes. She insisted that the mission must operate under radically different parameters and required ramped-up attention to impact and results management. This message required special care and sensitivity since most FSNs. Were e trained during the heady years when Egypt was the Lartet development program in the world. . Ms. Arellano also used regular town hall and staff meetings to highlight USAID/Egypt’s expanding regional service role and link this to a future where regional responsibility will be on a par with bilateral program functions. She cited the fact that we recently agreed to SUAID/Cairo’s role as payment station for USAID/Iraq. In this context, she drew attention to Cairo’s high-priority role as a training platform for rebuilding USAID under the Development Leadership Initiative, as well as a center of excellent for service deliver worldwide. Challenging USAID/Egypt with this vision for change, Ms. Arellano ensured that staff remain motivated and with much higher moral that would be expected in the prolonged period of uncertainty.

Ms. Arellano’s main accomplishment has been her positive, visionary and seasoned senior-level approach to change management for the USAID mission and our work with the GOE, as Egypt became less aid-dependent – the end-game for USAID.

**USAID/Iraq** Leading the Iraq mission of over 200 employees, with over 20 “satellite” offices”, in the middle of the most dangerous war zone (at that time) cementing our continued effectiveness on the ground. Despite the tragic murders of FSN staff and the frightening threat to FSNs impelling some to flee, she found ways to motivate her staff to serve. Especially remarkable is the fact the FSNs continued to run the gauntlet of serious personal mortal danger daily, as did the staff at many of the PRTs wherever they convoy, clear checkpoints or even sit at their risks or in their residences. That she arranged for 98% fully staffed continuity for the incoming Mission Director spoke mountains of her professionalism and commitment.

Deteriorating security directly affects the ability to recruit and retain local staff as intimidation and threats to Iraqi staff and their families became more common. Two valued Iraqi staff members were murdered close to their homes. Mr. Arellano joined forces with the Embassy leadership to develop a package of incentives and enhanced security measure. This resulted in a 35% adjustment for difficulty of working conditions, along with a survivor’s death benefit. Flexible scheduling allowed staff to better navigate the dangerous commute while affording them temporary sanctuary in USAID housing should they need it. The mission’s capacity to recruit and retain much-needed local staff improved significantly.

With strategic visioning, Ms. Arellano recruited, hired and deployed ten senior experience USDH officers to help double the number of PRTs, focusing them on the most dangerous sites of red zone Baghdad and Anbar to reach deeper into local government levels, enhancing our credibility and effectiveness. USAID’s Deputy Administrator exclaimed Ms. Arellano as “personifying the most outstanding model of what we are looking for at the high-test level of leadership for the future of USAID.”

A secret of Ms. Arellano’s stellar performance in Iraq was insisting without compromise on only the best qualified staff best matched to USG needs. The result: USAID was able to marshal enormous financial resources and respect from the USG Interagency for development in Iraq because USAID staff delivered results that were described by the US Marine Corps 3-star General in the White House as “phenomenal” and “heroic”. Ms. Arellano has kept morale up even after her FSNs were terrorized (and one killed) by the enemy and after rockets hit our USAID compound. She has able to simultaneously manage highly productive relations with two radically different Chiefs of Mission and command respect of our Military top brass.

Ms. Arellano improved inter-agency coordination with Embassy sections and agencies on specific priorities. She immediately adjusted all USAID programs and staffing targets to support 2007 metrics in line with the “Surge” and took a lead role in the interagency planning process. Her lobbying for inclusion of sufficient program resources was 100% successful. Ms. Arellano led a detailed review of the FY07 to ensure that increased expenditures under the “Surge” would be replenished in a timely fashion to allow all programs to proceed at an accelerated rate at that critical moment.

Further, Ms. Arellano played a catalytic role in recalibrating the National Capacity Development program toward the urgent interagency priority of the government of Iraq budget execution. Under her guidance, partner organizations for economic governance local government strengthening and capacity development were jointly working with the US Treasury and the PRTs to enable the GOI to manage its resources effectively.

**CONCLUSION**