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THE NEW STRATEGY FOR AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN AND DEVELOPMENTS IN U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

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APRIL 2, 2009

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CONTENTS

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF HEARINGS

2009

Page

HEARING:

Thursday, April 2, 2009, The New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan and Developments in U.S. Central Command and Special Operations Command 1

APPENDIX:

Thursday, April 2, 2009 51

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2009

THE NEW STRATEGY FOR AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN AND DEVELOPMENTS IN U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

STATEMENTS PRESENTED BY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

McHugh, Hon. John M., a Representative from New York, Ranking Member, Committee on Armed Services 2

Skelton, Hon. Ike, a Representative from Missouri, Chairman, Committee on Armed Services 1

WITNESSES

Flournoy, Hon. Michèle, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, U.S. Department of Defense 5

Olson, Adm. Eric, USN, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command 13

Petraeus, Gen. David H., USA, Commander, U.S. Central Command 8

APPENDIX

PREPARED STATEMENTS:

Flournoy, Hon. Michèle 55

Olson, Adm. Eric 106

Petraeus, Gen. David H. 59

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

Counterinsurgency Guidance by Gen. David D. McKiernan, USA, Commander, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), Afghanistan ... 113

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING:

[There were no Questions submitted during the hearing.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING:

Ms. Giffords 120

Mr. Heinrich 121

Mr. Langevin 119

Mrs. McMorris Rodgers 119

THE NEW STRATEGY FOR AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN AND DEVELOPMENTS IN U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Thursday, April 2, 2009.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:02 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ike Skelton (chairman of the committee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. IKE SKELTON, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MISSOURI, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning.

Today, the House Armed Services Committee meets in open session to receive testimony on the new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan and developments in the United States Central Command and Special Operations Command.

Our witnesses today are the honorable Michèle Flournoy, under secretary of defense for policy; General David Petraeus, commander, United States Central Command; and, Admiral Eric Olson, commander of the United States Special Operations Command.

And we certainly welcome each of you and thank you for being with us today. This is a very, very important hearing.

As we begin to consider the new Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy, let me say, it is about time.

Glenn Miller had a famous piece, a famous song entitled "At Last," and I think we could probably hum that along now, because we have not had such a one since the early part of our efforts in Afghanistan.

As any student of military history can tell you, you can lose even with a good strategy, but there is no way to win with no strategy. And for the last seven years, I feel we have had no strategy in Afghanistan and, for a period of time, it has been getting worse.

So it pleases me greatly that the administration undertook a serious policy review and came up with a real strategy to address Afghanistan and Pakistan, and we have finally realized that this important region can no longer be called America's forgotten war.

I think that this strategy largely gets it right. The President, almost a week ago, got it right when he pointed out that the ultimate focus of our efforts is to eliminate Al Qaeda and remove the sanctuaries from which they are constantly planning attacks against us.

That is the right goal and we should always remember that.

I strongly supported the President's decision to add 17,000 troops in Afghanistan and I support his most recent decision to add another 4,000 as trainers and mentors for the Afghan security forces.

As the President has noted, we can bring our troops home when the Afghans themselves can carry the burden of security.

But we won't win a counterinsurgency fight in Afghanistan through military means alone, and I think our witnesses will speak of that.

So I am glad our strategy calls for a real increase in civilian assistance to that country and, even more, ask our allies to increase their efforts. This is not just America's war.

I am also pleased that the strategy recognizes that success in Afghanistan will require more effective action on both sides of the border. Destroying Al Qaeda and their sanctuaries in Pakistan will require disrupting terrorist networks, advancing democratic government control, and promoting economic stability in Pakistan.

We must also develop a mutually beneficial long-term U.S.-Pakistan partnership and work with international partners on these efforts. None of this will be done quickly or easily. But the administration's new strategy is an important step, I believe, in the right direction.

But the strategy on both sides of the border, Afghanistan and Pakistan, must have accountability. What we are missing at the moment is details on how the strategy will be achieved, how progress will be measured. How will we assure that the Pakistanis step up and become real partners? What is the proposed new Pakistan counterinsurgency capability fund and how will it propose changing existing authorities?

How will we effect real civil-military coordination on the ground in Afghanistan? What are the metrics we will use to measure progress of our forces?

These are details that we are looking for from the hearing today.

Very shortly, this Congress, including this committee, will take action to authorize and appropriate funds to support our Afghan and Pakistani partners.

Measures of accountability must and will be part of that effort. I hope our witnesses will take the opportunity here today to talk about what approaches may be the most productive, the most productive, in ensuring these partners make progress.

We are committed to a long-term relationship, a consistent relationship both for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

But the Congress and the American people are being asked to put up a significant amount of resources over a sustained period. So there must be accountability and there must be a measurable return on this investment.

I now turn to my good friend, the ranking member, the gentleman from New York, John McHugh, for comments.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN M. MCHUGH, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM NEW YORK, RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. MCHUGH. I thank the distinguished chairman. As always, I deeply appreciate his remarks and particularly today, as you noted, absolutely on point, as usual, this is a very important hearing.

Of course, the thing that makes it important, beyond the weighty topics that are before us, are our distinguished panelists, and I want to add my words of welcome to each of you.

Madam Secretary, particularly to you, you are no stranger to this committee room, as we discussed, but I believe this is your first appearance in your new position, and I want to add our words of congratulations to you and that we look forward to your comments.

Mr. Chairman, I noted to a friend yesterday that for all of the great challenges that we face as a nation and that come through this door that are under our charge, fortunately, one of them is not a crisis of leadership.

We have two extraordinary examples of that fine leadership that has worked so hard to help bring us through some extraordinarily troubling times.

And, General and Admiral, I want to personally thank you for the great job that you do. And a particular word of appreciation, I know both of you feel very strongly about this, as well, to the brave men and women in uniform that you lead in the important challenges that this nation has called upon you to face.

Let me just add a couple of comments, and beginning with Afghanistan. Like the chairman, I welcome the President's strategic direction for the fight.

In my view, he laid out a framework of the strategy that is intended to win in that theater. But I do worry that the plan, through no fault perhaps of anyone, is starting to become all things to all people.

And let me state, very simply, we cannot allow a minimalist approach to creep into this strategy, and Congress, those of us on this committee, has to ensure the plan is fully funded, fully resourced, and ably executed.

And as I look at the strategy, it appears very clearly it is based on the advice of commanders on the ground, and that is the right way to proceed, and it includes many longstanding objectives that I know many in this Congress and in this room today support and have advocated, and I just want to outline, very briefly, a few of those.

A commitment to fully resource a new counterinsurgency strategy that is designed to protect the Afghan population and dismantle, disrupt and destroy Al Qaeda and, equally important, its affiliated networks.

An expansion of the Afghan National Security Force, again, I believe an important step. But for all of its merits, in my opinion, I think we are going to have to go even beyond the current numbers and perhaps as much as double the previously authorized levels for both the Afghan Army and the police.

And on a cautionary note, I would just add that I would advise against viewing the expansion of the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) as simply an element of and not an alternative to a population-based counterinsurgency strategy.

And the acknowledgment that victory in Afghanistan will require a regional approach, the President got this right, in my judgment, and he places a heavy emphasis on working with Pakistan in the troubled areas, particularly the border of Afghanistan.

I believe that Islamabad must be a part of the solution in the region, but here, too, a word of caution. We cannot allow our efforts on the Pakistan front to distract from our push for progress in Afghanistan.

And, finally, on Afghanistan, the 21,000 troops headed to southern Afghanistan is an important step in providing our commanders with the capacity needed to conduct clear, hold and build operations. In my view, this should but a first step.

And we need to discuss the status of potential added force structure as we go forward in the days ahead.

Let me now move to U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility (CENTCOM AOR) and briefly comment on Iraq. The President's objective, again, to withdraw U.S. combat forces from Iraq, as I have said previously, is one that I believe we should all pray for, plan for, and work toward.

One concern I have is it still remains a fragile situation and while we pray that nothing of this nature should happen, we have to work to mitigate any risk to our troops and their missions.

Iraq faces significant challenges in 2009, including the national parliamentary election this December. I think it is critical we remain open to revisiting the plan if the situation on the ground deteriorates and violence increases, and our commanders, most importantly, must have the flexibility they need in order to ensure our hard fought gains are not put at risk.

Finally, in the CENTCOM AOR, a word on Iran. We do have some challenges in the CENTCOM AOR. Tehran continues to pose a serious national security challenge. The shadow of Tehran looms over Iraq, Afghanistan, the Levant, the Gulf and beyond.

The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps Quds Force is the terrorist organization that is increasingly capable and effective. Its support of Lebanese Hezbollah and Hamas defy efforts to stabilize the region.

And while estimates vary as to how close the Iranians are to developing and obtaining a nuclear weapon, there should be unanimity that we, this Congress and this administration, cannot allow Tehran to obtain nuclear weapons, period.

A nuclear Iran will only expand on its record of regional mischief and threaten our partners and friends. And we hear a lot about diplomatic engagement and economic sanctions and it seems to me that Tehran poses a military threat that requires military planning, and I would like our witnesses to comment on how the military might be positioning itself to deal with the range of challenges posed by Iran.

Let me conclude with just a few words about United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM).

Admiral, oftentimes, the activities of your force remain below the radar screen and beyond the public eye. SOCOM has, as you know so very well, played a vital and central role in our military's efforts since September 11, especially in the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

Your forces have been deployed around the world, conducting missions that range from high end kinetic operations to softer engagements, but equally important, like building wells and providing medical care.

And thanks to SOCOM's efforts and yours, Admiral, Al Qaeda and other violent extremist groups have been disrupted and kept off balance in places like Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa and elsewhere.

But as you know, too, these threats are persistent and require continued vigilance and dedication on our part.

We all recognize that SOCOM will remain heavily engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan even after conventional forces are drawn down. I think it will be important for us to understand how you see SOCOM's role in these theaters of operation and what concerns you may have in ensuring your forces have the appropriate support they need to continue to effectively conduct their missions.

Again, to all of you, thank you so much for being here.

And, Mr. Chairman, with that, I would yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Secretary, we thank you especially for your appearance before the whole House two days ago for the classified briefing. We appreciate your coming over.

So we will recognize you at this time, Madam Secretary.

STATEMENT OF HON. MICHÈLE FLOURNOY, UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Secretary FLOURNOY. Mr. Chairman and Mr. McHugh and other distinguished members, thank you very much for providing me and the General and the Admiral with the opportunity to testify before you today on the administration's policy review on Afghanistan and Pakistan.

I think the best articulation of this new strategy was the President's speech last Friday, where he very clearly stated our strategic goal.

It is a very clear one, and that is to disrupt, to dismantle and defeat Al Qaeda and its extremist allies in the region.

And to do so, we must eliminate their safe haven in Pakistan and, also, work to prevent its reemergence in Afghanistan.

Preventing future terrorist attacks on the American people and on our allies is absolutely vital, and I think there is no disagreement there.

We have learned at too high a price the danger of allowing Al Qaeda and its extremist supporters to have safe havens and access to resources to plan their attacks.

This is why we have troops in Afghanistan and it is why we must intensify our efforts to assist Pakistan.

To achieve our goals, we need a smarter and more comprehensive strategy and, as both the Chairman and Mr. McHugh stated, we need to have the resources to fully implement it.

A critical aspect of this new strategy is the recognition that Afghanistan and Pakistan are two countries, but that they comprise a single theater for our efforts and for our diplomacy.

Al Qaeda and its extremist allies have moved across the border into Pakistan, where they plan terrorist attacks and support operations that undermine the stability of both countries and, indeed, the entire region.

The President has appointed Special Representative Holbrooke to lead both bilateral efforts with these countries, but, also, important trilateral discussions and regional diplomatic efforts.

And from the defense side, we will be working to build the counterterrorism and counterinsurgency capabilities of both countries so that they can be more effective in this fight.

Pakistan's ability to dismantle the safe havens on its territory and defeat both terrorist and insurgent networks within its borders are absolutely critical to the security and stability of this nuclear arms state.

And it is in America's long-term interest to support Pakistan's restored democracy by investing in its people and their economic wellbeing.

We seek a strategic partnership with Pakistan that will encourage and enable it to shift its focus from deterring conventional war to actually conducting more effective counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations.

So we will be urging Congress to support forthcoming proposals, such as the Kerry-Lugar legislation on the Senate side, that would authorize civilian and economic assistance, as well as support for our proposals for a Pakistan counterinsurgency capability fund, to develop more effective military means to defeat terrorist and insurgent networks.

This support, both military and economic, will require us to see improved Pakistani performance.

We must also develop a long-term partnership with Afghanistan. Like Pakistan, Afghanistan suffers from severe socioeconomic crisis that exacerbates its political situation.

These are the root causes of the insurgency that Al Qaeda and the Taliban have been exploiting.

Building effective Afghan capacity to address these root causes, while simultaneously taking the fight to the enemy, are important components of our new strategy.

The U.S., along with our Afghan partners and our international allies, is committed to fully resourcing an integrated civilian-military counterinsurgency strategy.

This strategy has to aim to do three key things. The first is to reverse Taliban gains and secure the populations in the most troubled areas of the south and east of Afghanistan.

Second is to really accelerate our efforts to build the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces, both the army and the police. These are critical elements of the strategy.

Building up the Afghan security forces should enable us, over time, to transition from an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) international-led effort to an Afghan-led counterinsurgency operation.

To do so, we have got to meet the requirements on the ground of our commanders for additional training capacity. This is the rationale behind the President's decision to deploy an additional 4,000 U.S. troops to serve as trainers for the Afghan security forces.

In addition, all of the American units who will be deploying in the coming months will be partnered with Afghan units to try to help build their capacity.

But beyond strengthening the military side of the mission, we must also intensify our civilian assistance and better integrate that assistance with our military effort to promote more effective governance in Afghanistan and better development from the bottom up.

Working with the U.N. and our allies, we will seek to improve coordination and coherence to support Afghan development priorities.

Ensuring free and fair and secure elections will also be a critical near-term goal.

We will also complement efforts at the national level to build capacity in the ministries and so forth with more bottom-up initiatives aimed at building capacity at the district and local and provincial levels.

This is really where the Afghan people have their direct experience of Afghan institutions and governance.

Combating corruption will be a critical part of our effort to reinforce Afghan institutions at all levels of the government. These efforts also must address the root causes of the insurgency, build accountability, and give the Afghan people more reason to support and invest in their own government.

Defeating the Taliban-led insurgency will require breaking its links to the narcotics industry and we have to work to build a more effective counternarcotics strategy.

This means building Afghan law enforcement capacity, developing alternative livelihoods for farmers, and reforming the agricultural sector on which the vast majority of the population depends for sustenance.

As we regain the initiative in Afghanistan, and we fully expect we will, it will not be easy, but we expect that we will regain the initiative, we must also support an Afghan-led reconciliation process that attempts to flip the foot soldiers to peel the insurgents away from the insurgency and reconcile them to Afghan society and integrate them into the state.

If we are successful in these efforts, this should make it more easy to isolate and target the irreconcilable core elements of the Taliban and their extremist allies.

Our men and women in uniform and our allies and our civilians on the ground have been toiling bravely in Afghanistan for a number of years. Nearly 700 of our soldiers and Marines have paid the ultimate price; 2,500 or more have been wounded.

I think that one of the best ways we can honor their service and their sacrifice is to put in place an effective strategy going forward and to fully resource that effort so that we can be successful in bringing this war to a conclusion.

And so I am here today to urge you to provide your full support. This strategy seeks to build a bridge to increased Afghan self-reliance and to increased Pakistani capability and capacity for effective counterterrorism and counterinsurgency.

Ultimately, we will seek to transition responsibility in both of these fights to our partners, and our vital interests will demand no less than success.

We will expect to come to back to you in the future once budget requests are sent to the Hill to ask for concrete assistance in sev-

eral areas—support for the deployment of additional troops, support for accelerating the growth of the Afghan national security forces, support for counternarcotics funding, for additional Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP), which is critical to the effectiveness of our commanders on the ground, for humanitarian assistance and the like.

On the Pakistani side, we will be seeking your support for the security development plan, including the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capabilities Fund, counternarcotics funding there, coalition support funds, and so on.

So we hope that this is the beginning of a conversation in which we can engage together in figuring out the best way forward.

I would also encourage you to engage with your allies on committees that deal with the civilian side of the equation, because our investment in our own civilian capacity and the ability to deploy that capacity to partner with the military on the ground will be absolutely critical to the success of this strategy and our efforts going forward.

Finally, I want to assure you that we do not think of this as America's war. We think of this, of defeating Al Qaeda and dealing with its extremist allies, as an international challenge and an international responsibility.

This is a burden that the international community must share. And so you will see the President in Europe this week, others in the administration, going to our partners in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), going to the European Union (EU), going to the region, to ask them to commit whatever they can commit in the way of capability, capacity and assistance to fully resource this effort together as an international community.

This is something that we must do for the American people, for our allies, and for the international community.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Flournoy can be found in the Appendix on page 55.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

General Petraeus.

STATEMENT OF GEN. DAVID H. PETRAEUS, USA, COMMANDER, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

General PETRAEUS. Mr. Chairman, Congressman McHugh, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the situation in the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility (AOR) and to discuss the way ahead in Afghanistan and Pakistan, together with Under Secretary Flournoy and the commander of the Special Operations Forces that are so critical to all that we do in the AOR, Admiral Eric Olson.

As Under Secretary Flournoy noted in her statement and as President Obama explained this past Friday, the United States has vital national interests in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

These countries contain the most pressing transnational extremist threats in the world and, in view of that, they pose the most urgent problem set in the Central Command Area of Responsibility.

Disrupting and ultimately defeating Al Qaeda and the other extremist elements in Pakistan and Afghanistan and reversing the

downward security spiral seen in key parts of these countries will require a sustained substantial commitment. The strategy described last Friday constitutes such a commitment.

Although the additional resources will be applied in different ways on either side of the Durand Line, Afghanistan and Pakistan comprise a single theater that requires comprehensive, whole of governments approaches that are closely coordinated.

To achieve that level of coordination, Ambassador Holbrooke and I will work closely with our ambassadors and our counterparts from other countries and the host nations.

This morning, I will briefly discuss the military aspects of the new strategy, noting, however, that while additional military forces clearly are necessary in Afghanistan, they will not, by themselves, be sufficient to achieve our objectives.

It is important that the civilian requirements for Afghanistan and Pakistan be fully met, as well.

To that end, it is essential that the respective departments, State and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) foremost among them, be provided the resources necessary to implement this strategy.

Achieving our objectives in Afghanistan requires a comprehensive counterinsurgency approach, and that is what General David McKiernan and ISAF are endeavoring to execute with the additional resources being committed.

The additional forces will provide an increased capability to secure and serve the people, to pursue the extremists, to support the development of host nation security forces, to reduce the illegal narcotics industry, and to help develop the Afghan capabilities needed to increase the legitimacy of national and local Afghan governance.

These forces will also, together with the additional NATO elements committed for the election security force, work with Afghan elements to help secure the national elections in late August and to help ensure that those elections are seen as free, fair and legitimate in the eyes of the Afghan people.

As was the case in Iraq, the additional forces will only be of value if they are employed properly. It is vital that they be seen as good guests and partners, not as would-be conquerors or superiors, and as formidable warriors who also do all possible to avoid civilian casualties in the course of combat operations.

As additional elements deploy, it will also be essential that our commanders and elements strive for unity of effort at all levels and integrate our security efforts into the broader plans to promote Afghan political and economic development.

We recognize the sacrifices of the Afghan people over the past three decades and we will continue working with our Afghan partners to earn the trust of the people and with security to provide them with new opportunities.

These concepts and others are captured in the counterinsurgency guidance recently issued by General McKiernan. I commend this guidance to you and have provided a copy for you with my opening statement.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 113.]

The situation in Pakistan is, of course, closely linked to that in Afghanistan. Although there has been progress in some areas, as Pakistan's newly reestablished democracy has evolved, significant security challenges have also emerged.

The extremists that have established sanctuaries in the rugged border areas not only contribute to the deterioration of security in eastern and southern Afghanistan, they also pose an ever more serious threat to Pakistan's very existence.

It is these elements that have carried out terrorist attacks in India and Afghanistan and in various other countries outside the region, including the United Kingdom, and that have continued efforts to carry out attacks in our homeland.

Suicide bombings and other attacks have, as you know, increased in Pakistan over the past three years, killing thousands of Pakistani civilians, security personnel and government officials, including, of course, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, and damaging Pakistan's infrastructure and economy.

To be sure, the extremists have also sustained losses and in response to the increased concern over extremist activity, the Pakistani military has stepped up operations against militants in parts of the tribal areas.

However, considerable further work is required. It is in Pakistan that Al Qaeda senior leadership and other transnational extremist elements are located.

Thus, operations there are imperative and we need to provide the support and assistance to the Pakistani military that can enable them to confront the extremists who pose a truly existential threat to their own country.

Given our relationship with Pakistan and its military over the years, it is important that the United States be seen as a reliable ally.

The Pakistani military has been fighting a tough battle against extremists for more than seven years. They have sacrificed much in this campaign and they need our continued support.

The U.S. military thus will focus on two main areas. First, we will expand our partnership with the Pakistani military and help it build its counterinsurgency capabilities by providing training, equipment and assistance.

We will also expand our exchange programs to build stronger relationships with Pakistani leaders at all levels.

Second, we will help promote closer cooperation across the Afghan-Pakistan border by providing training, equipment, facilities and intelligence capabilities and by bringing together Afghan and Pakistani military officers to enable coordination between the forces on either side of the border.

These efforts will support timely sharing of intelligence information and help to coordinate the operations of the two forces.

Within the counterinsurgency construct we have laid out for Afghanistan and Pakistan, we will, of course, continue to support the targeting, disruption and pursuit of the leadership, bases and support networks of Al Qaeda and other transnational extremist groups operating in the region.

We will also work with our partners to challenge the legitimacy of the terrorist methods, practices and ideologies, helping our part-

ners address legitimate grievances to win over reconcilable elements of the population and supporting promotion of the broad-based economic and governmental development that is a necessary part of such an effort.

As we increase our focus on and efforts in Afghanistan and Pakistan, we must not lose sight of other important missions in the CENTCOM AOR.

There has, for example, been substantial progress in Iraq, but numerous challenges still confront its leaders and its people.

Although Al Qaeda and other extremist elements in Iraq have been reduced significantly, they pose a continued threat to security and stability.

Beyond that, lingering ethnic and sectarian mistrust, tensions between political parties, the return of displaced persons, large detainee releases, new budget challenges, the integration of the Sons of Iraq, and other issues indicate that the progress there is still fragile and reversible, though less so than when I left Iraq last fall, especially given the successful conduct of provincial elections in late January.

Despite the many challenges, the progress in Iraq, especially the steady development of the Iraqi security forces, has enabled the continued transition of security responsibilities to Iraqi elements, further reductions of coalition forces, and steady withdrawal of our units from urban areas.

We are, thus, on track in implementing the security agreement with the government of Iraq and in executing the strategy laid out by the President at Camp Lejeune.

A vital element in our effort in Iraq has been congressional support for a variety of equipment and resource needs, and I want to take this opportunity to thank you for that.

In particular, your support for the rapid fielding of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles and various types of unmanned aerial vehicles, as well as for important individual equipment and the Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP), has been of enormous importance to our troopers.

With respect to CERP, we have taken a number of steps to ensure proper expenditure and oversight of the funds allocated through the program, including procedural guides, instruction of leaders, and an audit by the Army audit agency, at my request, when I was the Multi-National Force—Iraq (MNFI) commander in 2008.

Iran remains a major concern in the CENTCOM AOR. It continues to carry out destabilizing activities in the region, including the training, funding and arming of militant proxies active in Lebanon, Gaza and Iraq.

It also continues its development of nuclear capabilities and missile systems that many assess are connected to the pursuit of nuclear weapons and delivery means.

In response, we are working with partner states in the region to build their capabilities and to strengthen cooperative security arrangements, especially in the areas of shared early warning, air and missile defense, and the establishment of a common operational picture.

Iran's actions and rhetoric have, in fact, prompted our partners in the Gulf to seek closer relationships with us than we have had with some of them in decades.

We are also helping to bolster the capabilities of the security forces in Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen, the Gulf states, and the central Asian states, to help them deal with threats to their security, which range from Al Qaeda and other extremist groups to robust militia and organized criminal elements.

In addition, we are working with partner nations to counter piracy, combat illegal narcotics production and trafficking, and interdict arms smuggling, activities that threaten stability and the rule of law and often provide funding for extremists.

Much of this work is performed through an expanding network of bilateral and multilateral cooperative arrangements established to address common challenges and pursue shared objectives.

As we strengthen this network, we strive to provide our partners responsive security assistance, technical expertise, and resources for training, educating and equipping their forces and improving security facilities and infrastructure.

We believe significant gains result from these activities and we appreciate your support for them, too.

Finally, in all these endeavors, we seek to foster comprehensive approaches by ensuring that military efforts are fully integrated with broader diplomatic, economic and developmental activities.

We are working closely with former Senator Mitchell and Ambassador Ross as they undertake important responsibilities as special envoys, in the same way that we are working with Ambassador Holbrooke and the United States ambassadors in our region.

In conclusion, there will be nothing easy about the way ahead in Afghanistan or Pakistan or in many of the other tasks in the Central Command area. Much hard work lies before us.

But it is clear that achieving the objectives of these missions is vital and it is equally clear that these endeavors will require sustained, substantial commitment and unity of effort among all involved.

There are currently over 215,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen serving in the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

Together with our many civilian partners, they have been the central element in the progress we have made in Iraq and in several other areas, and they will be the key to achieving progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan and in other locations where serious work is being done.

These wonderful Americans and their fellow troopers around the world constitute the most capable military in the history of our nation. They have soldiered magnificently against tough enemies during challenging operations in punishing terrain and extreme weather, and they and their families have made great sacrifices since 9/11, as you know.

Nothing means more to these great Americans than the sense that those back home appreciate their service and sacrifice.

And so this morning, I want to conclude by thanking the American people for their extraordinary support of our military men and women and their families, and by thanking the members of this

committee for your unflagging support and abiding concern for our troopers and their families, as well.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of General Petraeus can be found in the Appendix on page 59.]

The CHAIRMAN. General, thank you, sir.

Admiral Olson.

Admiral, I might, before I introduce you, announce to the members that we will have a total of five successive votes, two of which, as I understand, are 15-minute votes.

So we ask, ladies and gentlemen, for your patience and we shall return, to paraphrase General MacArthur.

Admiral Olson.

STATEMENT OF ADM. ERIC OLSON, USN, COMMANDER, U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Admiral OLSON. Good morning. Chairman Skelton, Congressman McHugh, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the invitation to appear before this committee to represent the United States Special Operations Command.

I will focus on the roles of our headquarters and joint special operations forces in addressing the current and potential threats posed by extremists and their allies and networks in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

I am pleased to join Secretary Flournoy——

The CHAIRMAN. Excuse me. Could you get the microphone just a hair closer?

Admiral OLSON. I am pleased to join Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, who commands most of our deployed special operations forces, this morning.

The situation in this region is increasingly dire. Al Qaeda's surviving leaders have proven adept at hiding, communicating, and inspiring. And operating in and from remote sites in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, Al Qaeda remains a draw for local and foreign fighters who subscribe to its extremist ideology and criminality.

The Taliban, although not militarily strong, is pervasive and brutal, operating in the guise of both nationalists and keepers of the faith, but behaving in the manner of street gangs, drug lords, and mafias.

They have forced and intimidated a mostly benign populous to bend to their will. Their methods run the relatively narrow range from malicious to evil.

The President's strategy announced last week is one we fully support. We have contributed to the reviews of the past several months and are pleased to see that the strategy includes a clear focus on Al Qaeda as the enemy and that both a regional approach and a whole of government approach are directed.

We know well that progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan will be neither quick nor easy. We, as a nation and an international community, must be prepared for an extended campaign and one that must go well beyond traditional military activities.

Increasing the presence and capacity of civilian agencies and international organizations, to include sufficient funding and training, is essential.

Also essential is robust support to the military, law enforcement, border security, and intelligence organizations of Afghanistan and Pakistan themselves, as it is ultimately they who must succeed in their lands.

The United States Special Operations Command has a major role as a force provider and the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps forces it trains, equips, deploys and supports have key roles and missions within this campaign.

With a long history of counterterror, counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare operations in many of earth's crisis and tension spots, the capabilities, culture, and ethos of special operations forces are well suited to many of the more demanding aspects of our mission in Afghanistan and to our increasing interaction with Pakistan's military and Frontier Corps forces.

Right now, in Afghanistan, as for the last seven years, special operations activities range from high tech man hunting to providing veterinary services for tribal livestock.

The direct action missions provide the time and space needed for the more indirect counterinsurgency operations to have their decisive effects.

In Pakistan, we continue to work with the security forces at the scale and pace set by them, and we are prepared to do more. While we share much with them, our forces are, in turn, learning much about our common adversaries and the social complexities of the region from them.

We stand ready to continue to work with Pakistani forces and to stand by them for the long term and, in this regard, it is important that we do not undervalue the contributions and sacrifices that they have already made.

While certain units of the special operations force are leading high end efforts to find and capture or kill the top terrorist and extremist targets in Afghanistan, fundamental to most of the deployed special operations force is our enduring partnership with our Afghan counterparts.

Under a program that began over three years ago, United States special forces, at the 12-man team level, have trained Afghan commandos in the classrooms and on the firing ranges and then moved with them to their assigned regions across the country, living remotely with them on small camps, continuing the training and mentoring, and integrating with them on day and night combat operations.

This had great effect, and supporting their local development and assistance efforts has had perhaps even a more powerful impact.

The Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps component commands of the United States Special Operations Command use authorities and a budget granted by legislation to organize, equip, train, and provide their forces to support operational commanders globally.

When outside the United States, all special operations forces are under the operational control of the appropriate geographic combatant commander.

United States Special Operations Command's budget is intended to fund materials, services, equipment, research, training and operations that are peculiar to special operations forces.

It primarily enables the modification of service common equipment and procurement of specialized items for the conduct of missions that are specifically and appropriately special operations forces' missions to perform.

The SOCOM budget has been robust enough to provide for rapid response to a broad set of crises, but we rely, importantly, on each of the services to provide for our long-term sustainment in wartime environments and to develop and sustain the enabling capabilities, and we rely on operational commanders to assign these capabilities to their special operations task forces.

We can serve in both supporting and supported roles at the operational level, and special operations effect can be the core elements around which key parts of the strategy are based.

More than 10,000 members of our special operations force are now under the command of General Petraeus in the Central Command Area of Responsibility, and around 100 more are working in Afghanistan under NATO's ISAF command structure.

About 2,000 others are in about 65 countries around the world on an average day.

Their activities cover the broad spectrum of traditional military activities, well beyond the stereotypical one-dimensional gunslinger, to encompass the three-dimensional warrior, adept at defense, development and diplomacy.

Special operations brings soft power with a hard edge.

The employment of special operations forces will actually not change much as a result of a revised overall strategy. Our units have been conducting both counterterrorism and counterinsurgency for several years. We will continue to provide our broad capabilities to our fullest capacity.

Our strategy in Afghanistan must secure the primary urban areas and main routes so that life and legitimate business can begin and return to normalcy.

But Afghanistan is not Iraq and most of the population is not urban. Security must be felt in the hinterland, provided by Afghan forces, supported by small teams of U.S. and NATO troops, and enhanced by civilian agencies in a manner that improves local life by local standards.

I am encouraged by the prioritization of this approach in the new strategy.

And inherent to our success and to the defeat of our enemies is the realization that this is a real fight, as long as Al Qaeda, the Taliban and associated extremists want it to be.

Civilian casualties are mostly a result of their tactics, not ours. The operational commanders I hear from are doing all they can to minimize the number of noncombatant deaths, because they both abhor the reality of civilian casualties and they understand the negative strategic impacts of such deaths.

They know that as long as our enemies force noncombatant women, children and others to support their operations or to remain on targeted facilities after warnings have been issued, some will die.

They also know that the conditions, numbers and severity of the casualties will be highly exaggerated and quickly communicated.

We must acknowledge the seriousness of this challenge and find ways to mitigate its effects, especially as we increase our troop presence in the coming months.

And I will conclude with a simple statement of pride in a special operations force that I am honored to command. Created by a proactive Congress and nurtured by your strong support over the last 22 years, United States Special Operations Command headquarters has brought together units from all four services to develop and sustain a truly magnificent joint capability.

Special operations forces are contributing globally, well beyond what its percentage of the total force would indicate, and, in Afghanistan and Pakistan, they are well known for their effectiveness.

Thank you. I stand ready for your questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Olson can be found in the Appendix on page 106.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

In just a moment, we will adjourn for the votes.

But, Admiral Olson, I have to make mention, you spoke of pride about the special operations and it was this committee, Congressman Dan Daniels from the state of Virginia, that was the father of the legislation that created what you do, and his memory is still a very strong one here.

We will adjourn and return at the end of the votes.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. We will proceed.

I thank the witnesses for their patience. These are unavoidable moments where we have to go vote, and we did, and people will be coming back in as soon as they leave the floor. But I will proceed with my questions.

Our new strategy is reliant on success in Pakistan, no question about that. Our efforts with the Pakistanis thus far have involved a significant amount of taxpayers' dollars. We also have inconsistent progress in fighting the insurgency.

We need some more specifics on how we will change the dynamic and achieve accountability while we maintain a long-term partnership. And I understand and realize it may be walking a tightrope in the process of that, but the people of our country are entitled to accountability.

As Congress begins to draft law regarding this, how would you recommend we think about ensuring the progress in Pakistan and accountability therefore?

Ms. Flournoy.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Let me start by underscoring your point that we have to recognize the importance of Pakistan as a critical partner in achieving our core goal.

We have to work closely with them to be able to disrupt and dismantle and defeat Al Qaeda and their extremist allies and the safe haven that is in Pakistan.

I think the President's strategy is very much designed to start with a commitment to Pakistan that is reassuring to them, that recognizes our common interests, and that gives them incentives to work closely with us.

But in addition to us stepping up and making that commitment to Pakistan, we also do need to follow up to ensure that their performance is meeting our common objectives, as well.

I think for this committee, the most important point is to provide General Petraeus, Admiral Olson, our military commanders on the ground with the tools that they need to work effectively with the Pakistani military on counterterrorism and counterinsurgency, to be able to set common objectives, to establish performance measures together, and then to work closely together to achieve those.

So I think giving our commanders those authorities, those tools, the necessary resources is really critical to this effort.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

General Petraeus.

General PETRAEUS. Mr. Chairman, to follow on that, those tools, if you will, come in several packages. And I don't want to get ahead of the budget process, but since this is our opportunity with you, without talking numbers, what they will be comprised of are the familiar coalition support funds that you have——

The CHAIRMAN. No, we are not talking about numbers. We are just talking about accountability.

General PETRAEUS. What we are after, of course, is to build a relationship with them that can, in a sense, reassure them, after years, as you know, of ups and downs with the Pakistanis.

And as I mentioned in my statement, that is something that will take a sustained substantial commitment on our part, in return for which, obviously, we can expect a sustained substantial commitment on their part.

The tools that are essential to us in showing this commitment are the Pakistani counterinsurgency capabilities fund, coalition support fund, and then the other types of funds wrapped up in the 1206, 1207 and 1208, and I suspect that Admiral Olson may want to talk about a couple of those, as well.

The CHAIRMAN. Admiral.

Admiral OLSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Without being overly restrictive, because the Pakistani commanders will need some flexibility, as well, I think it is important to tie in some way the programs to specific equipment, training, facilities, maintenance, operations with the accountability processes in place so that we can be assured that the support is being utilized in the way that we intended it and at the right levels.

General Petraeus did mention the 1208 authority, which is a very important authority. It is not an appropriation. It is just an authority for Special Operations Command to use some of its funds in a direct support role to counterparts and surrogates.

And because it is a very specific authority, with controls in place, I find it very effective. I think that, in some ways, that could be scaled up and serve as a model for a larger expenditure of funds in that regard, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Can one of you give us a better description of the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Fund? Who can do that?

General.

General PETRAEUS. Mr. Chairman, that is a request that will be coming forward and it is specifically designed to provide resources that we can use, that Central Command can use, through the office

of the defense rep in Pakistan, to help the Pakistanis build the kind of capability and capacity they need to truly address the extremist threats in the federally administered tribal areas.

That requires more than just counterterrorist operations. It requires a comprehensive counterinsurgency effort. And these funds are designed to specifically help them develop those capabilities.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it replacing a fund? As I understand, this is in addition to the 1206, et cetera. Lots of dollars. Am I correct?

General PETRAEUS. It is separate from those authorizations. It is a specific fund designed, again, to help the Pakistani forces develop specific capabilities, counterinsurgency capabilities.

The CHAIRMAN. Was there anything comparable to this in Iraq?

General PETRAEUS. In truth, the Multi-National Security Transition Command (MNSTC–I) funding, that you remember well, the train and equip funding, arguably, was very comparable to that and in substantial amounts, as you will recall.

But we don't have a comparable organization. We do have the Office of the Defense Representative in Pakistan (ODRP), led by an admiral, with a Special Forces brigadier general as his deputy, and they oversee the activities, together with the ambassador, of the military personnel who are providing assistance and training to the Pakistani military forces.

But we don't have the kind of very robust train and equip program that we had in Iraq or in Afghanistan.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks so much.

Mr. McHugh.

Mr. MCHUGH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, yesterday, you and I had a chance to talk very briefly about your appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC). I am particularly glad to see you all survived in such good form.

You recommended I go to the transcript to get a gist of what you were talking about. In 17 years, I have learned that when a combatant commander suggests you do something, you should.

And I did review that and I just want to refer to it. Senator Levin said, "First, on this 10,000 troop request, is there a pending request that is unfilled at this point for those 10,000 additional troops," the request that General McKiernan had laid out.

Your response was, "This is a request"—excuse me—"There is a request for forces for those elements, Senator, and it did move through me. My understanding is it has not been sent beyond the Pentagon at this time," to which Senator Levin then said, "Has that been sent? I should look to you, then, Secretary Flournoy. Has that been sent by Secretary Gates? Has that request been made by Secretary Gates?"

Ma'am, your response was, "The request was laid out along with all of the others on a timeline and the President was told that the request is out there, but that he doesn't have to make it."

I am curious. Who told the President he doesn't have to make the decision at that time and what was the rationale for that?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Senator—sorry. Sir——

Mr. MCHUGH. Let's not get insulting now. [Laughter.]

Secretary FLOURNOY. What we did is we looked at the full range of requests that General McKiernan had put on the table and the

two outstanding requests are for forces that would not arrive until 2010, one in the first part and the other in like October of 2010.

And what was clear is when the President asked, "Well, when do these decisions need to be made, to be able to alert units, give them the deployment orders, send them," he was told, "Sir, you don't have to make those decisions until the fall."

And so what he focused on was all of the decisions that the commander had put on the table to respond in the current timeframe and he said, "Given that we are changing strategy, we are substantially changing the resourcing of the mission, conditions on the ground will change between now and the fall, I am committing to a process of reevaluation, of establishing metrics and benchmarks, and of continuing to look at what is working, what is not, and adjusting."

And we fully anticipate that the General's request may even change or evolve over time, in 6 months' time. So the commitment was we will look at those decisions when we need to make them to actually affect the force flows.

Mr. MCHUGH. Again, if I may, who made that request to the President? Was that Secretary Gates' recommendation?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, this was in an interagency discussion, where several—the consensus recommendation to the President was to look at those decisions at that time.

Mr. MCHUGH. Let me ask again. Was that Secretary Gates' recommendation?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I believe that, yes, he said, basically—he and the chairman both explained that these requests are out there, but they do not need to be—that his decisions do not need to be made at this time, they can be made later and still meet the commanders' needs on the ground.

Mr. MCHUGH. So Secretary Gates recommended the President need not make that decision.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, you are putting words in his month and——

Mr. MCHUGH. No, I am not, ma'am. With all due respect——

Secretary FLOURNOY. That is not the way the discussion went. The discussion was he was at—the President asked to understand the timelines involved in these decisions.

Those timelines were presented to him and they were fully explored and discussed and the decision was made that those decisions don't need to be made at this time, and that would not adversely affect force flows meeting the commanders' needs.

Mr. MCHUGH. I want to be very clear. I have no desire to put words in your mouth, and that is why we are going through this, because I think it is very important to have clear on the record how this decision was reached.

I think you have explained that. But I think it is equally important to understand where each person in the process stands.

We have General McKiernan's stated need. I assume General Petraeus passed that through, as he said he did. It is consistent with the counterinsurgency strategy numbers that certainly our very successful manual proved in Iraq.

Let me ask the question this way. Did Secretary Gates make a recommendation directly the President not make this or he just said, "It is up to you, Mr. President?"

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I am not privy to their private conversations, but I did not hear him make a recommendation either way. I heard him lay out the timeline and the options and the consequences.

Mr. MCHUGH. Thank you.

Here is my concern. During my opening statement, I said that I worry about the President's plan, that I fully support, that I feel he very articulately set forward, has committed us to a full counterinsurgency strategy.

The concern I have is that by not supporting now the deployment and the assignment of troops that, admittedly, won't be, in all likelihood, made until 2010, is sending a message we may not deploy those troops. They may not be committed, contrary to the commanders' request on the ground.

And therefore, this minimalist approach that takes us away from a counterinsurgency plan that the President has fully committed himself to and that I support becomes, in the mind of Congress, a very important player in this role, as we saw in 2007–2006 with respect to the Iraq surge, begins to take over and influence executive policy.

That is my concern and I am hard pressed to get my mind around the benefit of not making this full commitment pursuant to the commanders' request. That is my view.

Secretary FLOURNOY. If I could just respond, sir.

I don't think there is any way that you can characterize the additional troops that are being sent, when you add in enablers and the additional brigade that the President just approved, nearly 25,000 above what we have had, which has been a minimalist approach in the past, I do not think you can characterize that as minimalist or incremental in any way.

I think what the President feels is important is that we set very clear metrics to measure our progress, that we hold ourselves accountable to those metrics, and that we consider commanders' requests at the time when those decisions need to be made.

And he will consider not only—he will consider whatever requests that are on the table at the appropriate time to ensure that our forces and our civilians on the ground have the resources they need to execute the strategy that has been outlined.

Mr. MCHUGH. Now, with all due respect, because someone may read this transcript, as I have read the Senate, I want to make it clear, you are now putting words in my mouth.

I never said the President had a minimalist approach. I said, in 2006 and 2007, the Congress began to take a minimalist approach.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Okay, I appreciate that. Thank you.

Mr. MCHUGH. And I am worried about the lack of clarity that this recommendation to the President, in whatever form it came, and I am still not certain we understand that, feeds into the congressional pocket that may still have that as an objective that I view as a very clear formula for the President's plan, again, that I support and I want to see succeed, has dedicated itself to.

So I would make the argument I am actually trying to support the President here and I am trying to point out where I think there may be a problem that, frankly, I think we ought to overcome, pursuant to the commanders' requests on the ground.

Let's move in a similar area to the Afghan National Security Forces.

We have a current timeline by the end of 2011 to expand that force at an accelerated level, a decision that was made last December, to 134,000.

General Wardak and others in Afghanistan, and most analysts that I have heard believe, and I tend to agree with them, that we have to have a substantial expansion beyond that to truly allow the Afghans to take the lead. That is the objective here and I think it is the right path.

Why would we not at least announce—and I understand the limitations of the trainer availability, that can only evolve in time, but why don't we say, particularly to our allies who are asking now to step forward and to help provide support troops and help provide trainers and such, that this is going to be a minimal target?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, we had extensive discussion about the growth of the ANSF and I think the sense around the table is that it will need to ultimately be larger than the current targets.

In the near term, we thought the most important, realistic, concrete goal we could set would be to accelerate the targeted growth that we have already put out on the table, and that is to bring forward the completion date for when we reach the current goals.

So we have done that, bringing that forward to 2011, and that is a very important target.

That said, what we have also done is tasked Combined Security Transition Command—Afghanistan (CSTC–A) on the ground to do a detailed analysis of the needs for a larger force and what it would take to actually grow that force, because we did not have that in hand during the strategy review and we felt that if we picked a number, we would get it exactly wrong.

We needed the time to follow up with the analysis of what is possible, what are the limitations that need to be overcome, what do we need to make this a sustainable force over time, and so forth.

So that is ongoing work that we will continue to look at and we are open to revising those target goals upward.

Mr. MCHUGH. Well, I support that and I think it is important, as you have now done, to make clear to those who are paying attention to this, and there are many, that the objective is likely to grow.

Just as a point of clarification, I do believe you said "we have accelerated." We are on the same accelerated timeline as CSTC–A and the secretary approved, in December of last year, 134,000 in the end of 2011. Is that not correct?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Yes. What is different is that we have resourced the trainer request to actually be able to meet that goal.

Mr. MCHUGH. Which is a very critical component of that, and I would agree.

Thank you.

General PETRAEUS. Congressman, if I could just——

Mr. MCHUGH. Yes, General?

General PETRAEUS. As late as this morning, actually, there was an article in the "Early Bird," an interview with Secretary Gates, in which he indicated every inclination, in fact, to support an increased number for the Afghan national army.

He said he just needs the detail to sort that out, and, obviously, of course, there are some sustainment concerns that I think are very realistic, as well, and have to be dealt with.

Mr. MCHUGH. I fully agree and the fact that you have clarified that is why, in part, I came here this morning, other than to hear all the other testimony, and I deeply appreciate that.

And I will yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Madam Secretary, please restate, in 25 words or less, the prospect for additional forces.

Secretary FLOURNOY. As part of this strategy, the President has committed to an ongoing process of reevaluation, to a process that will develop metrics and benchmarks for our progress, and he will consider requests for additional resources on both the civilian and military side in the future as those requests are needed or are made.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Let me remind the members that the witnesses have a drop-dead time at 2 o'clock and we are under the 5-minute rule, and let's do our very, very best to stay within that.

Mr. Ortiz.

Mr. ORTIZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Flournoy, good to see you again.

In your testimony, you stated that the Department of Defense seeks a more strategic partnership with Pakistan that will encourage and enable it to shift its strategic focus from conventional war to counterinsurgency and counterterrorism so that they can better address the internal threat facing the country.

My question would be how will the department oversee this strategic shift and what additional military resources are required?

And I know that we talked about maybe sending an additional 17,000 troops. And one of the problems that we have had there is that the insurgency has destroyed some of the equipment going to Afghanistan.

Not too long ago, they destroyed heavy equipment going to the NATO troops.

So are you very well prepared staff-wise to see that shift and the necessary personnel to carry it out?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Well, sir, I think helping to reassure Pakistan and enable a shift in the thinking of some of its key leaders, many of whom I believe are already there, have made that shift, I think it is going to take a regional approach that engages the full range of Pakistan's security concerns with others in the region.

I think it is going to take a whole of government approach that includes not only military assistance, but economic assistance and intensive political engagement.

And I do think there is a military and security assistance component of this that involves, again, as I said, giving our commanders the tools in terms of authorities and resources to train, equip, advise, assist, work increasingly closely with the Pakistani military on counterinsurgency and counterterrorism.

So I think it has to be part of a whole of government approach.

Mr. ORTIZ. Do you know or do you have any estimate of how long this will take to really prepare to, to get things going?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think it is going to take some time, but if our experience already—and maybe General Petraeus and Admiral Olson could speak to this.

When we have been able to get the access to work closely with them, things come along at a good pace. So I would defer to them and their direct experience.

Mr. ORTIZ. Sure.

General Petraeus.

General PETRAEUS. Well, there has been progress, in fact, with great trainers, largely special forces from SOCOM, working really as trainers and nothing more than that, actually, but with the Frontier Corps, in particular, which has carried out operations in several of the areas of the FATA, Bajaur, Mohmand, among others.

And, indeed, they have had some very tough fighting and they have achieved reasonably good results in those areas.

That effort is gradually expanding. It is that effort that, in fact, the Pakistani Counterinsurgency Capability Fund would enable, in many respects, and that is the vehicle that we see for taking this forward.

I will let you talk a bit about your——

Admiral OLSON. Sir, the effort that is underway now is a relatively small scale effort, but at the unit level, where the partnership has occurred, it has been with some enthusiasm on both sides and the Pakistani soldiers in both the military and the Frontier Corps have proven to be eager and capable students.

So we will have to scale up at the pace that the Pakistanis permit it to, but I am encouraged by the progress that we have seen so far, sir.

Mr. ORTIZ. I know that there are other members, so my time is about up. I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Wilson, please.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to thank all of our witnesses for being here today, Admiral Olson, General Petraeus, Secretary Flournoy.

Admiral, General, I just greatly appreciate your leadership of our service members, who I believe are protecting American families by defeating the terrorists overseas in the global war on terrorism, and your leadership has just been extraordinary.

And, in particular, General Petraeus, as a veteran myself of 31 years with the Army National Guard and Reserves, I appreciate so much your leadership, your leadership of my former unit, my colleagues of the 218th Brigade that served for a year in Afghanistan.

I know their respect for you, led by Brigadier General Bob Livingston. Our state of South Carolina, it was the largest deployment, 1,600 troops, since World War II, and the people of South Carolina appreciate their service. They are very grateful for their service, training Afghan police and army units.

Additionally, as a parent, I want to thank you for your service. I have had two sons serve in Iraq. I have had a third son serve in Egypt. I know my wife and I were reassured knowing the level

of commitment of the military leaders that serve our country, and it made us feel good about their service.

General, as we proceed forward, and this has been generally discussed, but it is about the manpower levels for the Afghan national army and the national police, 134,000 for the army, 84,000 for the police.

A concern that I have had in the past is the low level of pay for these people serving, the lack of proper equipment. Is this being addressed?

General PETRAEUS. First of all, if I could just say, you should, indeed, be very proud of the 218th Brigade and the great job that they have done down range.

Having trained years ago with them, when I was assigned at Fort Stewart, it was gratifying to see them get their chance to deploy and to do such a great job.

With respect to the pay, there have been incremental pay increases. There have been efforts to, also, equalize pay so that one service doesn't get more than the other.

And, again, you have a dual-edged sword here, though, and that is the concern over the sustainability of these forces, because the bulk of their resources, obviously, come from donor countries, the United States and other members of the contributing nations.

So that has, indeed, increased. One indicator is that there is certainly no shortage of volunteers for the Afghan national security forces.

But what we have to do is ensure that, over time, the retention and other actions, the reduced absent without leave (AWOL) rates and so forth, some of this similar to what we went through in Iraq, frankly, with one big difference, and that is that they do not have the kind of oil revenues that Iraq had.

So we have got to do this carefully. It has and is being addressed and so are the equipment and training challenges.

If I could, I think it is important to know what the biggest challenge is in expanding the Afghan national security forces, and that is leaders. And this is, again, very similar to what we went through in Iraq.

I remember telling this body, for example, we can train battalions, that is not a problem, we can train basic recruits, we can even—over time, we were producing lieutenants in substantial numbers.

What you can't produce overnight or with a 6-month or even a few-year course are those individuals who will command at the company, the battalion and the brigade level and serve on their staffs, and that just flat takes time and that is the long pole in this particular tent.

Human capital is at a premium in Afghanistan. You have had over 30 years of war that has robbed the nation of a lot of that human talent over time and this is an area that we really have to help them to build, not just to rebuild.

And I think it is very important, also, to observe that difference between Iraq and Afghanistan, that in Afghanistan, we are building, constructing, not typically reconstructing or rebuilding, as we were in Iraq.

Thank you.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you.

And a final question. This has been identified, Afghanistan, as a test for NATO. We know that a country like Romania has been very courageous to provide more troops.

Are there any other countries that we should identify as really stepping forward?

General PETRAEUS. Well, there are a number of countries that actually are stepping forward and I think we need to see what happens at the NATO summit.

There certainly is hope and some expectation that the full election security force will be filled, for example, and that there are others.

There are some other nations that we are exploring and I just don't want to get out ahead of the process, though, in announcing what those might be.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Taylor.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank our guests for being with us.

General Petraeus, the representatives from Maersk have one of the two contracts to resupply our troops in Afghanistan. It is my understanding that they have lost about 135 contract drivers that have been killed just transiting Pakistan. American President Lines has lost about another 15 or so.

That is resupplying the present force. We have had entire convoys hijacked in Pakistan. We have had entire convoys destroyed transiting Pakistan.

What is your degree of confidence that, given the additional 25,000 people and their additional needs, we can continue to count on Pakistan as our major resupply route?

I have seen the alternatives, the 8,000 miles through China, 50-something days if you use Turkey as your port of debarkation. It doesn't look like we have many good alternatives other than Pakistan.

So my question is what is your degree of confidence that 12 months from now, that the routes will be opened to resupply the force we have now, plus the additional 25,000 Americans?

General PETRAEUS. The degree of confidence is reasonable, Congressman. Let me give you an example——

Mr. TAYLOR. General, for a rookie like myself, reasonable would translate to what as a percentage?

General PETRAEUS. Sir, I am not going to put numbers on this thing. But let me just explain, if I could, that between 15 February and 15 March, for example, there were about 3,600, roughly, equivalent containers that went through the Khyber pass.

About 1 percent of all of that was damaged or destroyed in transit, and that included a couple of these sensational attacks.

The Pakistani drivers, truckers unions, transport companies, shipping companies and government all realize that this is an enormously important boost to their economy. It is hugely significant to them.

I have discussed this with the army chief, General Kiyani, on a number of occasions. They have, in fact, recently launched new operations, as well.

Now, beyond that, we do have decent alternatives for goods and services that are nonlethal and there are three Northern Distribution Network (NDN) routes that actually come ultimately through Uzbekistan and into Afghanistan from the north.

In fact, we are now getting about 80 percent of our fuel, for example, through the north vice through the Khyber pass.

Again, the Pakistanis are aware of this. There is competition for those routes. Some of these are not as easy as the route that goes through Khyber, although none of this is easy in terms of the distribution.

But we do have those and we are even exploring more of those, because we do want to have as many alternatives as possible, and the U.S. Transportation Command has done a terrific job, together with our logisticians.

We can also fly in and it is expensive, but we also do fly in very important items and we have, for example, flown in hundreds of MRAP vehicles.

Mr. TAYLOR. What jumps out at me is that the route—the present route we are taking tends to be the more traditional route where there seems to be a city every 10 to 15 miles, the highly populated parts of Pakistan, which, in my mind's eye, makes it more difficult because it only takes a few people out of the many to make that route very hard to transit.

On the flipside, there appears to be a southern route through a much less populated part of Pakistan, using a port other than the port of Karachi.

And I am just wondering to what extent we are talking to the Pakistanis, to what extent are they willing to listen.

General PETRAEUS. Sir, we are all over this, let me assure you. This is about job one for the U.S. Transportation Command commander.

If you brought Duncan McNabb in here, you would find out that he is on top of this. He has personally, actually, visited the countries. I personally went and saw them.

Tomorrow, there is a signing agreement in one of those countries, as well, in the central Asian states, for example, on an agreement.

We have looked at the routes actually that go through what is called the Chaman gate, which goes up past Quetta in southern Pakistan, and there is use of that and there is addition to the infrastructure that supports that going on.

That is used pretty heavily by the British forces already and we will make some use of that over time.

Quetta, as you know, though, has some potential for disruption, as well.

Beyond that, there is another port, indeed. That port doesn't yet have the infrastructure to support the kinds of transportation that we need, but we are looking at that one. And there is even a route that goes to the west that is an interesting route, as well, as you might know, through another country.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman.

Mr. Kline.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The new strategy for Afghanistan addresses very much the notion that this is—we need a regional approach and, often, when we

talk about Afghanistan and Pakistan, I have heard many people say you can't really address improvements in Afghanistan, the security situation or anything else, without also addressing Pakistan, and some have used a hyphenated Afghanistan-Pakistan when talking about the strategy in Afghanistan.

At the end of the day here, we are dealing with two sovereign nations, Pakistan and Afghanistan. And I was surprised and, frankly, a little bit shocked to see quoted in the newspapers this week a senior official talking about AFPAK, A-F-P-A-K.

That does not seem, to me, to be a good idea for us to be putting forward the notion that they are somehow one newly created thing that suits our vision of how we might want to go forward in this conflict.

And so I am offering the notion that we should not, senior officials should not, and the administration or in uniform, invent AFPAK as we go forward.

If anybody disagrees with that, any of the three of you, this would be a time to speak up, if you disagree.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I don't disagree. I think it is a classic case of unfortunate Washington shorthand.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you.

Now, I have another question—well, actually, that wasn't a question so much as an opinion, but I think it is very important. I really do want to stress that.

We cannot, because we think that we cannot address Afghanistan without considering Pakistan and we think of it in a regional sense, I would argue that the region might include more than Afghanistan and Pakistan, but we cannot denigrate those sovereign nations with a notion of AFPAK.

Now, General Petraeus, we are shifting forces from Iraq to Afghanistan in your command and I have some concerns about that, because the two are not the same, and nobody knows that better than you, but I want to get this point.

When you take soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines that are literally in country in Iraq, they have trained and prepared to serve in Iraq, with a somewhat different enemy, some would say an extremely different enemy, and certainly different terrain.

And if you literally move those soldiers, let's say, you are a Blackhawk pilot, and you move that unit literally from Iraq to Afghanistan, you are moving them into something that they really haven't trained for or prepared for.

They haven't trained to fly in that terrain, to fight that enemy. And I don't know to what extent, as we are looking at the shifting of forces, you and your subordinate commanders are looking at that problem.

Can you address that for just a minute, please?

General PETRAEUS. Well, in fact, we are looking at it very hard, Congressman.

First of all, it is a relatively small number of forces that literally go directly from a mission in Iraq to a mission in Afghanistan, and it is probably on the order of several thousand.

And these have been tough decisions, because these are forces that were in Iraq for a reason. They were performing important tasks. And we then have to do a risk assessment and determine,

particularly for what we call high demand-low density assets, where they are most needed, where is the risk highest if those forces are not there.

And it tends to be elements like construction engineers, a lot of the elements that we are using to build up the infrastructure now in southern Afghanistan for the influx of new forces, those types, as well.

So you have that number of those. The bulk of these, though, are what we call off-ramping. In other words, these are forces that were originally intended to go to Iraq, such as the Stryker Brigade that is going to Afghanistan instead.

And the decision is made with sufficient time that they can shift their training and preparation focus from one of the area in Iraq to which they were headed to the area in Afghanistan, to which they will actually deploy.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you. I appreciate that.

I just would suggest, and I know you know this, General, but I think it is important, that we really are bearing down on this issue.

You need more than a week or two or three or four weeks, because you really are fighting, performing in a very, very different situation if you are working out of Bagram——

General PETRAEUS. No question about it.

Mr. KLINE [continuing]. Than if you are working out of Al Anbar. So I appreciate it.

General PETRAEUS. In fact, if I could, this is the kind of timeline and concern that drove these decisions. It is why actually some decisions were made even before the Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy review was complete and those decisions were made as required.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you.

I am sorry, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Dr. Snyder, please.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I was struck when Joe Wilson was talking about his four sons in uniform, how life takes you down different paths. I have four sons in diapers, although one of them is making great progress.

Mr. WILSON. You are much younger.

Dr. SNYDER. Secretary Flournoy, I wanted to ask you, you testified, in your other life, in January of last year, before our subcommittee, and your paper talked about, "achieving unity of effort and interagency operations."

And this is what you said at that time, "Unlike the U.S. military, which has doctrine and a standard approach to planning its operations, the U.S. government, as a whole, lacks established procedures for planning and conducting interagency operations.

Each new administration tends to reinvent this wheel, either issuing new presidential guidance, which too often overlooks the lessons learned and best practices of its predecessors, or ignoring the issue entirely until it faces an actual crisis. This ad hoc approach has kept the United States from learning from its mistakes and improving its performance in complex contingencies over time.

It is no wonder that U.S. personnel who have served in multiple operations over the last 10 to 15 years lament feeling a bit like Sisyphus.

In addition, the U.S. government lacks the mechanisms necessary to coordinate and integrate the actions of its various agencies at all levels in Washington, within regions, and in the field."

That is the end of your very thoughtful comment a little over a year ago.

My question is: has this new administration reinvented the wheel? If it has, why has it and how has it? If not, what has it done differently with regard to the interagency issues or what General Petraeus refers to as a whole of government approach?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, it is a very important question and I did have a legislative adviser who says, "If they start quoting your words back to you, you know you are in trouble."

But I would actually stand by that.

Dr. SNYDER. Your words were very important words. So you go back and hit that person for me.

Secretary FLOURNOY. What I can say is I think one of the themes that came out in the strategy review is the importance of a whole of government approach and the need to get a much more tightly coordinated civil-military effort in Afghanistan, not only within the U.S. government piece, but with our international partners and particularly the U.N. presence there, as well.

What we have done to try to operationalize that is we have asked that this kind of integrated planning to start at multiple levels.

At General Petraeus' level, he and——

Dr. SNYDER. Who has asked? You are the Department of Defense. Who asked?

Secretary FLOURNOY. No, no, no. I am sorry. The principals, the interagency process, so the direction coming out of the principals meeting. And in this case, I think the President had specifically made some requests at the operational sort of campaign level for—I am sorry—the theater level for Ambassador Holbrooke and for General Petraeus to start working together at their level to try to coordinate this.

I know the new ambassador to Afghanistan, Karl Eikenberry, has been tasked to work very closely with General McKiernan to start working a joint civil-military campaign plan together in country, and they have also been tasked to marry their efforts up with United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)'s effort, the U.N. effort, which is now being beefed up.

And so we are trying to take this key insight from past experience and operationalize it at the theater level and at the country level, as well, and I expect that to be an ongoing work in progress, taking it down to various levels within Afghanistan, as well.

Dr. SNYDER. Do you think the National Security Council's (NSC)'s role is any different now than in the previous administration?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Well, I think this NSC has paid very close—I can't speak to the last one, because I wasn't there, but I can tell you that this NSC is playing very close attention to this issue.

We believe that this strategy cannot succeed unless, A, you get the necessary military and civilian resources on the ground and, B, we do a much better job of synchronizing and coordinating those efforts.

Dr. SNYDER. General Petraeus, do you have any comment?

General PETRAEUS. Well, as Secretary Flournoy said, it is very important that the ambassador and the ISAF/U.S. Forces Afghanistan commander partner, if I could offer, as close as Ambassador Crocker and I were able to partner over time to develop the kind of joint campaign plan that is necessary, noting that, of course, he is a NATO commander and that the U.N. presence is a good bit more significant in Kabul, at least now, than it was back when we were doing this in Iraq.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Wittman.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to thank the members of the panel for joining us today and thank you so much for your service to our nation.

General Petraeus, we know, in looking at the situation there in Afghanistan, that the narcotics trade is clearly fueling the Taliban's operations and their influence in the region.

Are U.S. forces prepared to take on the drug interdiction mission as a primary mission? If so, would additional resources be necessary? And if not, what other options might be available to divert or disrupt the drug flow there as it relates to the monetary resources that come to the Taliban from that drug trade?

General PETRAEUS. Well, first of all, the U.S. forces and, indeed, NATO forces, as well, depending on which country, but both NATO and U.S. forces have the authorities they need—they got these literally in the last several months—to conduct operations against the illegal narcotics industry elements that are linked to the Taliban, to the insurgency, and that is a pretty strong link, in most cases. It is not a hard one to establish at all.

The money from this is, indeed, one of the primary sources of funding for the insurgents. There are others, but this is a significant one. We talk about it being the oxygen in the movement, in many cases.

There are some resources that we do need to get in there and we actually are in the process of getting those. Some of these are interagency resources.

In Iraq, we created what was called the Iraq threat finance cell. It focused specifically and like a laser, in fact, on one particular node in northern Iraq from which the extremists were able to siphon a great deal of money through a variety of illicit, as well as some licit activities, as well as extortion and a variety of other criminal actions.

And we have taken steps to establish a similar cell in Afghanistan. It is still building. These do actually—these really take time, because you are looking for financial forensics analysts and that type of expertise.

But that is an important component to this. Otherwise, I think that we have, in terms of the conventional forces, adequate forces to do the kind of mission in the course of our overall effort that is necessary to go after these individuals.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, General.

I understand, too, a lot of the demand in this illicit drug trade exists in Russia and my question would be if that is, indeed, the

case, are there efforts to cooperate with Russia or to ask them to become a partner with us in interdicting that drug trade to Russia and trying to find ways to make sure we cut off the demand, as well as the supply.

General PETRAEUS. There are, indeed. In fact, several individuals have suggested that, in fact, Russia has such significant interest in ensuring that extremists don't take over again Afghanistan and that the illegal narcotics industry doesn't keep pumping drugs into Russia and other neighboring countries.

Iran has an enormous problem in this regard, as well. But given that common interest, that instead of continuing the new great game, as it is called in the central Asian states, there should be a broad partnership against extremism and against the illegal narcotics flow.

Some certainly seem to embrace that idea in Russia. Others seem a bit more conflicted.

We are working—we, coincidentally, just hosted here in Washington the central Asian and south Asian chiefs of defense staff. In fact, Secretary Flournoy spoke to them, as well.

And so if we can, again, build these kinds of partnerships, we think it is in their interest to do this, as well, this would be a big advance.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back.

Mr. Smith, please.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I want to compliment all three of you for your efforts in putting together this plan and implementing it. I think it is critical to our national security and the work the administration did on this, very impressive; a lot of work ahead, but we are headed in the right direction. I appreciate that a great deal and the leadership of all three of you.

Two areas I want to ask about. One is in the tribal areas and our counterinsurgency efforts there. This is a very important area, as you know, because of the Taliban and Al Qaeda influence and going back and forth across the border, destabilizing both Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In the overall counterinsurgency effort that worked so well, and both, Admiral Olson and General Petraeus, you both had a great deal to do with making happen in Iraq and are now trying to implement in Afghanistan, sort of runs into a bit of a problem in the tribal areas, and that is we don't have any people there.

We have to find the community leaders that we want to work with, the tribal leaders who can begin to turn that around.

And how do we do that if, A, we don't have as much intelligence, knowing who is there, who can we work with, how do we build those relationships, and, B, we can't actually physically be in there, I guess, to build those relationships?

I am curious, when you look at that particular piece of the puzzle, and, obviously, we are trying to train the Pakistanis, but what is the plan for dealing with that challenge and trying to get a handle on the difficulties in the tribal areas?

General PETRAEUS. Simply put, the plan is to do that completely through the Pakistanis, through the Pakistani military partners that we have, through the Pakistani civilian authorities, northwest frontier province and then the actual local elements and the tribal agencies, but not doing that directly ourselves.

The key is, again, giving the Pakistani military elements, the Frontier Corps, in particular, additional assistance so that they have the capability to carry out these operations and then supporting, on the civilian side, a whole of government approach that definitely needs increased resourcing and emphasis so that the military operations are followed up with the kind of civilian support that avoids alienation of the population because of displaced persons not being looked after, schools not being rebuilt, basic services not being restored in the wake of what are sometimes quite hard military operations.

Mr. SMITH. And are you satisfied at this point that you know enough about the tribal areas, the interactions between the various tribes there, community leaders, that you have a picture of who you can work with, who the major challenges are, that the intel coming out gives you a clear enough picture?

General PETRAEUS. I think, actually, with respect to all of the countries in this effort, actually, Afghanistan, as well as Pakistan, and especially, frankly, the tribal areas, that we have a great deal to learn.

We, as you know very well from your visits and so forth in Iraq, over time, devoted enormous resources, particularly in the intelligence arena, with analysts and human terrain experts, if you will, and so forth, to where we really had the kind of nuanced understanding that we could carry out these local reconciliations or support local reconciliation.

So when it comes to Afghanistan, this is hugely important, as well. But having not had the density of forces on the ground there, having had a relatively small number of individuals in Pakistan, again, we have some serious work to do in this area and I think that Admiral Blair, the DNI, commented on this the other day, as well.

Mr. SMITH. I am really concerned about that piece of it, and serve on the Intelligence Committee, as well, and focused on that issue. I want to make sure that we ramp up our capabilities there.

The only other question is for Secretary Flournoy. And as you mentioned, as the general mentioned in response to that question, the importance of the comprehensive strategy, the development piece.

I am very concerned that development, the overall organization of that effort has been massively messed up to this point. A lot of people doing a lot of stuff. It is not well coordinated, not working as well as it should, at least, in part, because, as near as I can tell, nobody is really in charge of that piece of it.

Now, the President has emphasized that. What do you think we need to do to get the right people in charge, to get the right level of coordination, so the dollars we spend are well spent, both in Pakistan and in Afghanistan?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Well, I should start by saying I am not a development expert. However, the thing I have observed, particu-

larly, learning from past operations and especially Iraq, is what really, really helps is flexibility on the ground to be responsive to needs at the local level, to empower effective governance when it is starting to happen and so forth.

And so I think the more we can look at flexible CERP-like authorities on the development side through organizations in USAID, like OTI, Office of Transition Initiatives and so forth, the better off we will be.

The more flexibility in counterinsurgency kind of situations, the better.

Now, obviously, you have to demand accountability for that, but the flexibility is key.

Mr. SMITH. And I know that is not your area. Just the people whose area it is, I think that is an area we really need to ramp up.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Hunter.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, ma'am, good to see you today.

And like Congressman Wilson, I have had the opportunity to serve. I have been blessed to be able to go to Iraq twice and Afghanistan once. In fact, I was there with his oldest son in 2004. We, kind of driving back on one of those main supply routes (MSRs), probably passed each other a few times.

But, first, thank you, General Petraeus, for your leadership and for your successful implementation of the surge and this victory, though reversible, in Iraq that we have now, thank you for that.

My first question is on this Afghan surge, if you want to call it that, the troop levels going up in Afghanistan.

Have you or General McNeill or General McKiernan, at any point, ever asked for more troops than the 17,000, not counting the 4,000 trainers?

General PETRAEUS. Well, let me just be very clear that what is flowing to Afghanistan is more than doubling what was on the ground. If you look at, say, December or January of this year, I think we were at 31,000 or 33,000.

By the end of this fall, we should be at 68,000. And the only forces that have been requested during that time that have not been approved are those ones that are out in the 2010 timeframe, which will be addressed when those decisions are required.

That is not to say there aren't requests for forces that are not filled at times, and this happened in Iraq, as well, even during the surge. There are some specific capabilities or capacities that are not resident in sufficient numbers.

By the way, intelligence analysts were among those and we are gradually building the capabilities. And one of the big Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) topics that has been raised by the combatant commanders in particular is what we call enablers.

It is not just the combat forces, as you know. It is all of the other enablers that we have, in an ad hoc way, in some cases, developed initially, exploitation experts, the additional counter-IED (Improvised Explosive Device) elements, biometric teams, it goes on and on, and a lot of those in the intelligence arena.

And so we are always looking to build that particular capacity. But the specific answer, has there ever been something we have asked for that hasn't been approved, the answer is, no, not for this year and, again, there are other decisions that lie ahead.

Mr. HUNTER. Touching on those enablers, are you satisfied that the battlefield is prepped for our movement, for this many surge of troops, doubling them down going into August? Are you satisfied that the ground is ready to have them there?

Because let's look back to February, you were in Munich and this was—talking about enablers, ISAF also needs more so-called enablers to support the effort in Afghanistan, more intel, surveillance, reconnaissance platforms, and the connectivity to exploit the capabilities that they bring, more military, police, engineers with logistics, more lift-and-attack helicopters, fixed-wing aircraft, additional air medical evacuations (MEDEVAC) assets, or increases in information, operations capabilities, and so on.

Those are a lot of things to need a few months away from sending a whole lot of people into harm's way. And I am just wondering, if we didn't have elections in Afghanistan in August, would we be on the same timeline with the same number of troops that we are right now or are we rushing to react to what is going on in Afghanistan right now, and are we going to put our people unnecessarily in harm's way because we are reactive right now?

General PETRAEUS. No. There are a number of drivers here and the most important one is actually the fighting season, if you will, although that distinction has been less this past winter, both because it was a milder winter in many parts of the country, because we think the Taliban specifically did not want to let up, and, frankly, because we did not let up.

We have continued to conduct offensive operations to expand the security envelope, particularly in certain areas in Regional Command South and Regional Command East.

With respect to your question, are we set right now, no, of course, we are not. I mean, we are literally moving forces right now. We are moving assets to establish that infrastructure, to build the communications pipes, the bases, the logistical nodes and all of the rest of that, and there is an enormous amount of work that is ongoing.

We think that we have it lined up. It is synchronized, if you will. No logistic plan survives in the contact, but I am convinced that the logisticians, that the Transportation Command, the services and everyone very much has—they all have their shoulders to the wheel and are pushing this as hard as is possible.

Mr. HUNTER. In the interest of time, would you be on this same track if we didn't have elections in August?

General PETRAEUS. I would want to be on the same track if we didn't. Again, the elections matter, as well. This is hugely important for the future of Afghanistan that these be seen to be free, fair and, in the eyes of the Afghan people, legitimate.

Just as in Iraq, as you well know, when elections approached, you have to—you often will launch operations in advance of those to ensure security for them.

It is why the NATO forces have asked—the NATO Command has asked for the election security force, as well. So certainly there is

a request for forces to specifically help with security for that election, as well.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, General.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mrs. Davis, the gentlelady from California.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, General Petraeus and Admiral Olson, for your strong and very capable leadership.

And welcome, as well, Secretary Flournoy. It is good to have you in that role and I know you will have many continuing contributions.

I know that you are aware of critics and just discussions, and a lot of it is very constructive, about whether we are engaged in an effort that speaks to our national security interests or is something good to do, but doesn't necessarily make the grade in terms of our own national security interests.

Do you make that distinction? In what way do you—I know that you see that relationship and the whole of government approach and you probably know from many of my questions before, though, I support that.

But can you help us with that distinction and where in your thinking one begins to perhaps hurt the other?

For example, the footprint, the military footprint, at what point does that become countervailing to the democracy-building attempts? How do you make those distinctions in the relationships?

General PETRAEUS. If I could just start out by saying, first of all, that we very firmly believe that we have vital national interests in Afghanistan and, indeed, in Pakistan.

This is where the 9/11 attacks came from, as you well know, and were the Taliban to take over, there is every reason to anticipate that there would be sanctuaries reestablished there by transnational extremists over time.

Now, with respect to the additional forces, it is imperative that we ensure that the additional forces are employed properly, and that is really what comes to the heart of your question, I think.

And this is the counterinsurgency guidance that General McKiernan has recently issued and which we provided a copy of to you with my opening statement.

It captures the right approach for this very complex environment. It highlights the importance of avoiding civilian casualties in the conduct of combat operations, if at all possible, and so forth, about being a good neighbor, securing and serving the people and so forth.

It is very, very important that our soldiers are seen by the Afghan people, indeed, to be partners and good guests, not as would-be conquerors.

And so it is of equal measures important that you have more forces and that they be employed properly.

Mrs. DAVIS. Are there instances where you would recommend that dollars that are used in a military fashion would be better used in democracy-building, whatever you want to call it? I know we are talking about building and not reconstruction here.

General PETRAEUS. Well, this is the value of the CERP program, frankly, because it provides the kind of flexibility and resources that enable us to do just that.

You can use them for whatever particular emergency need is most important to reinforcing the efforts of the security forces.

The fact is, though, that without security, nothing else is possible. We saw in Iraq, despite our best efforts at various times, you are working hard to build or rebuild something and if security is not present, over time, it comes to naught.

But, again, the CERP program does provide that kind of flexibility to our battlefield commanders.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Congresswoman, if I could just jump in. I know this is a little beyond the focus of this committee, but I think as we think about deploying additional civilians to Afghanistan and as the security situation allows for their integration down at the provincial and local level in terms of what we are doing, it is really important that they also have flexible CERP-like authorities to do small-scale, bottom-up, micro development, help mentor local institutions, local leaders, et cetera.

CERP is key for the military's effectiveness on the ground. We don't have anything quite like that on the civilian side and it really needs to be developed.

Mrs. DAVIS. I think we all recognize that and I am, again, trying to get through those distinctions.

Many of those programs are wonderful to see and to encourage and to motivate certainly the Afghan people to see that this is really their effort, not ours not even an international one, in some ways, but theirs and I am just interested in how we shift that, and I know you have tried to address that.

My other questions just have to do with the undermining of all of these efforts by the Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and whether you think that is a critical problem.

The CHAIRMAN. Please answer the question.

General PETRAEUS. There clearly are concerns about the ISI, recalling, of course, that they are the organization that, with our money and equipment, raised and trained and equipped the Taliban in the first place to help get roots in the fight against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

They have been seen as an ally of the ISI over the years at various times. And so it is very important that we determine for ourselves, frankly, where there are cases of the ISI acting contrary to the interests of Pakistan and the coalition effort.

There have been some cases of that in the past. Not all are as unambiguous as perhaps is sometimes reported, but there have been some that have been unambiguous, as well.

We have had very direct conversations with Lieutenant General Pasha, the new head of the ISI, and, also, with the military leadership and the head of the country about it, and they understand the concerns.

Our intelligence community comrades have had the same conversations and I think now we have to see what the future is going to hold in that regard.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Kaufman, please.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all for your service.

General Petraeus, in Iraq, the policy was—the surge was successful because it wasn't simply an increase in the number of troops on the ground, but it was how those troops were deployed and the fact that they were deployed, previously deployed, where they would do patrols outside of our secure base camps located outside of the villages and neighborhoods, to being deployed in forward operating bases inside those neighborhoods, inside the communities, and that really created a level of security and stability that allowed the political process to move forward.

You are having a much smaller footprint in terms of the number of troops on the ground in Afghanistan, as well as the planned expansion, even if we look at the aggregate numbers in terms of the expansion of Afghan security forces.

What are the plans in Afghanistan in terms of pushing those forces into the rural areas, the villages? And this is much tougher, given where the population is in Afghanistan, where the Taliban have infiltrated those villages, those communities, and threatened the population, intimidated the population.

What are the plans for doing that?

General PETRAEUS. Well, again, the general principle of providing persistent security obtains and the challenge is to determine what is essentially a culturally acceptable way to perform that task in Afghanistan, an area with much less urban terrain, much less in the way of neighborhoods in which we could, as we did in Iraq, establish combat outposts or patrol bases together with our Iraqi partners.

So here, what we need to do is literally talk to the locals, the mullahs, the tribal elders and so forth, typically locating on the edge of a village.

Again, unlike Iraq, there is not extra infrastructure, there are not old Saddam era palaces and military bases and so forth that were unoccupied initially and could be used for these purposes.

So we are typically constructing small outposts or patrol bases on the edge of villages and, ideally, where they are located, as well, to interdict the routes of infiltration in many of the areas that come in from the rugged areas of Pakistan.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Thank you, General.

To any member that wants to comment on this, we are giving, I believe, $1.5 billion a year to the government of Pakistan to try to entice them to engage in counterinsurgency operations in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), where they are a conventional military force who sees their primary difficulty as being India over Kashmir.

And so it would seem to me that that is a very difficult turn for them to take when their natural enemies are not the Taliban.

Could anybody comment on that, please?

General PETRAEUS. Well, it is imperative, frankly, that all of the Pakistani leaders, including the elected civilian leaders, recognize that the existential threat to their country, the most important and threatening and serious existential threat is that posed by the internal extremists, even more so now at this point than India.

And one of the many tragedies of Mumbai was that it ended up with an intellectual shift back to a focus on India for a period of

time after a period in which the Pakistani military had, indeed, with a considerable degree of seriousness, begun to look at this extremist threat internal to the country, realizing the magnitude of it.

Mr. KAUFMAN. And if I could just—I don't believe that there will be a shift that will occur from conventional to counterinsurgency operations in the FATA until the administration takes initiative, launches initiatives over Kashmir and try to somehow reconcile that issue so that the Pakistanis will, in fact, focus on the FATA.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I think that one of the reasons we talked about a regional approach in the strategy is that to affect Pakistan's calculus, you really do have to take into account the full range of their security concerns.

So we do need to see a reduction of tensions on the borders. We do need to—and this is something we can do. The U.S. needs to provide real reassurance and confidence that give them confidence that we are going to stick with them, that we are going to be an enduring partner, and they can afford to make the shift and not to use these groups that they have worked with in the past as a hedge against other threats.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Larsen, please.

Mr. LARSEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

A few years back, we had testimony from folks over at the Joint Chiefs about the Afghan National Army and, at the time, it was testified to us that we were going to build a 70,000-person army and I think, at the time, it was either going to be 10,000 per year for 7 years or 7,000 per year for 10 years, fairly firm number, fairly competent number.

And, obviously, in Afghanistan, just as much as in Iraq, we have learned that it is tougher to put exact numbers on exactly how many you need, when they are going to be there, and how soon we can make that happen.

But I did hear, Madam Secretary, that it is your sense—did I hear that it was your sense, when Mr. McHugh had asked the question, it is your sense that we will need to have a larger Afghan National Army than we currently envision at the 134,000 number, something larger than 134,000?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think that that is the general consensus, that we are going to need to grow beyond current levels.

Mr. LARSEN. So right now, we are anticipating, by 2011 instead of the—when I was in Afghanistan in November, they said by 2012, but we have managed to accelerate that by at least a year.

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think the original target date—it has been a moving target, but I think it was originally 2013, and now we are aiming to get there by 2011.

Mr. LARSEN. And so that is about 46,000, 47,000 more than we have now, to get from about 87,500 to 134,000, it is about 46,000, if my number is right, and that is over 2 years.

I don't know if you can answer this or General Petraeus can answer this.

Is the CSTC–A underneath you or is that under ISAF?

General PETRAEUS. It is all under the U.S. Forces Afghanistan commander, CSTC–A is.

Mr. LARSEN. Right.

General PETRAEUS. Which is under Central Command. So I would be happy to answer the question.

Mr. LARSEN. Great, great. So either one can answer it.

Do we anticipate learning better then how to train so that it is not every two years, we get an additional 46,500, or do we think that is going to be our—is that our capacity to train in Afghanistan for the military?

General PETRAEUS. Candidly, we are learning all the time. And as I mentioned, the biggest challenge that we have is not actually infrastructure, it is not equipment, it is not really even trainers over time. It is leaders who can then take these units and lead them in what are very challenging combat operations and very complex counterinsurgency operations, and that is the challenge.

They have actually now a full array of different schools and centers. There is a West Point of Afghanistan, there is an officer candidate school or Sandhurst of Afghanistan, there are staff colleges, there are war colleges.

All of these are building, but this is something that, again, is just flat going to take time. I think we are pushing the envelope about as hard as we can, although we are certainly willing to push it harder wherever we see an opportunity to do so.

We, obviously, want to expand this as rapidly as is possible so that they can shoulder the burdens rather than our troopers having to continue to do so.

Mr. LARSEN. So what attrition rate are we anticipating within the ANA? I heard we have to train to 115 percent to get something in the high 80s.

General PETRAEUS. Well, this is actually not the attrition rate. It is really the present for duty.

Mr. LARSEN. Present for duty, yes.

General PETRAEUS. Again, we experienced this in Iraq, as well. You may recall, when we began the surge, there was enormous concern about the very low levels of present for duty in Baghdad.

Not the least of the problem was the sheer magnitude of the violence there. We, eventually, in Iraq, authorized as high as 130,000 for units to make sure that they had approaching 100,000—or 130 percent to make sure they came close to the full manning after you took out leave.

You have the constant challenge in all of these different cultures of the leave, where you just can't hop on the bus and drive home in Afghanistan and be back a week later.

Mr. LARSEN. My yellow light is on. I have got to get to the police question so you can answer that.

So right now, though, our goal is 82,000 by 2011, the police, or 82,000 or so, and we are at 8,000. I am sorry. It is 82,000 and we are at 80,000 for police.

General PETRAEUS. That is about right.

Mr. LARSEN. Our problem is not going to be training 2,000 more over the next two years. Our problem for the police is about the quality.

General PETRAEUS. That is exactly right.

Mr. LARSEN. I will speak broadly about quality on the police force.

What specific steps can you tell us you are taking to enhance the quality of the police force?

General PETRAEUS. Well, the most important is the so-called Focused District Development program, where the Afghan National Civil Order Police, which are units, go in, they take over a district. That allows to remove all of the local police from that district and they go retrain, re-equip, and then are reinserted.

That has worked reasonably well. We have done that in some very important areas that are under threat and the police have, again, held up reasonably well.

But I would want to point out that we need to have measured expectations of police in violent counterinsurgency operations, because, again, as we experienced in Iraq, where they melted away in areas because they are so vulnerable if other security forces are not there to back them up.

They are the first line of defense, but that also means they are the first line to be attacked by the insurgents. Their families are vulnerable. They live in the neighborhood, and there are big challenges with that.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Rooney.

Mr. ROONEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Distinguished members of the panel, I am a former Army captain, along with my wife. We were dual military for four years. I just want to say thank you for your leadership and your service to this country.

And moving forward, I know that regardless of what you think of what is going on around the world, I honestly believe that we are in the best possible hands. So thank you for that.

My question has to do with Afghanistan and as we move through this SOFA agreement in Iraq and move into Afghanistan.

Over the years and certainly over the last couple of years, we have heard a lot of issues with regard to the laws of war and the rules of engagement. You touched on the laws of war in your opening statement.

What challenges do you see moving into Afghanistan with regard to the rules of engagement? Specifically, also, when it comes to kind of cohabitating with the Afghan Army and what challenges do you see there?

And specifically why I ask this question is there was a lot of kind of second guessing, especially over the beginning part of the war in Iraq, with regard to what was the clear focus.

As somebody who taught laws of war at West Point, I would be especially interested personally to know what challenges you all think you are going to face in Afghanistan in the future.

General PETRAEUS. Well, I think the biggest challenge is not the rules of engagement. Of course, it is applying the rules of engagement, particularly when it comes to the minimization of civilian casualties in the course of combat operations, and that requires real thoughtful, considered leadership in the blink of an eye, in a violent situation, in many cases, where individuals are under fire.

And those circumstances feature in our preparation and our situational training exercises before forces go down range. But at the

end of the day, it takes confident, capable leaders to implement those, as you well know.

And I think I would say that that would be the biggest challenge that we face there.

Admiral OLSON. Sir, I think an important aspect of the strategy is the statement that there will be formalized assigned partnerships between Afghan units and U.S. units and the continuing coaching and mentoring that goes well beyond just existing on the same compound with the force, then leads to continuous dialogue about law of war, about what is right.

And when you go beyond just putting an Afghan face on the operation, it becomes their operation. It is typically a very well run operation and the right kinds of things occur.

So I think that highlighting the importance of the formalized partnerships is going to be very useful.

Mr. ROONEY. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Marshall, the gentleman from Georgia.

I might say, before you start, Mr. Marshall, hopefully, we can get everybody today before two o'clock, but in the event we can't, in consultation with Mr. McHugh, we will begin the questions on the bottom rows and work backward at the next hearing.

Mr. Marshall.

Mr. MARSHALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, thank you all for your service.

Ms. Flournoy, in your statement, you make reference to what, in essence, is the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) concept as a way to address the "root causes of the insurgency and give people tangible reasons to support their government."

The first PRT I visited was in December 2003 with General Schoomaker, after, actually, visiting with General Petraeus when he was up in Mosul, and the PRT, that whole concept hasn't changed much. They look kind of the same.

General Petraeus just made reference to the fact that at least on the military side, we have now got a West Point type operation, we have got staff colleges, et cetera, trying to train up the Afghan security forces.

On the civilian side, though, it seems to me had we had a little bit more foresight, maybe we could have done the same thing and had a provincial development—they should not be called redevelopment. It should just be provincial development teams, and we could have a university that is cranking out Afghans.

My last trip there, I had dinner with some officers who mentioned that they had working for them as clerks Afghan doctors in Kabul and the reason these doctors were working for us as clerks—and they said they were great clerks, by the way—was because they could make more money working for us as a clerk than they would working as an Afghan doctor.

Surely, we could double their pay and send them out to the PRTs, and there are lots of examples like that. It seems to me that it is more effective, safer, far more efficient to put an Afghan face on this as quickly as possible.

We have had five years to do that. We haven't transitioned at all. So in executing your strategy, it seems to me, let's try and head in that direction. That is just an observation.

General Petraeus, I found, on page 16 of your testimony, a very nice summary of a wise shift of strategy from one that focused on balancing regional blocks of power and solely on combating terrorism to one which, as you describe it, "will be characterized by a focus on common interests, inclusivity and capacity-building.

This network of cooperation is both effective and sustainable, because it creates synergies and, as it grows, strengthens relationships. Each cooperative endeavor is a link connecting countries in the region and each adds to the collective strength of the network.

Progress made in generating cooperation in a set of circumstances can serve as an opening for engagement on other issues, thereby promoting greater interdependence.

The foundation of this network consists of a focus on common interests, an atmosphere of inclusivity, and efforts to build security capacity and infrastructure."

I thought it was a great summary of an appropriate shift in strategy.

To each of you, what do you think the challenges are going to be? What are the principal obstacles to actually executing a strategy like that and what can we expect?

That is a very nice vision and if it can be pulled off, it should be successful, because there are clearly common interests.

And one of the common interests here is getting rid of these nut cases that are trying to defeat organized society throughout the region, in essence, or create an organized society that is wholly different from the one that these people would prefer.

So what are we going to run into in trying to actually execute what is a very appropriate strategy? What is going to be the challenge here?

General PETRAEUS. Well, I don't want to sound simplistic about it, but it is actually divergent interests. It is the fact that, of course, with all of these countries, we have a number of common interests and, ironically, what Iran is doing in the region is actually——

Mr. MARSHALL. Bringing people together.

General PETRAEUS [continuing]. Bringing people together more than they have been for decades.

Certain aspects of air and missile defense are much more active now than they have been at any time probably since the Gulf War or, at the very least, 2003, and that has brought countries together.

It has actually led to a strengthening of relationships between the Gulf states, in particular, and the United States, and then that allows us to help turn bilateral arrangements into somewhat more multilateral arrangements.

And now if you look all the way down the Gulf states, you see a very, very substantial network, layers of networks, if you will, in the different areas of training, operations, air and missile space defense, shared early warning, air interdiction capacity, and on and on, and all of that supported by a growing network of training arrangements, as well.

Mr. MARSHALL. So you would just describe the chief threat as being diverging interests.

General PETRAEUS. Well, there is still—certainly, understandably, folks don't want to seem to be fighting our wars. There are occasionally different—certainly, more than occasionally, different perspectives on different problems.

So I think the challenge has always, and more of a diplomatic one than perhaps a military one, but, of course, is to build on the common interests to the point that they can be seen as more important than the diverging interests.

Mr. MARSHALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Rogers.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, thank all of you for your service and for being here.

I understand that while I was out of the room, you were asked about General McKiernan, and this is for you, General Petraeus, McKiernan's request for 34,000 troops.

And it may have been another person that gave this answer, but you didn't have to deal with the additional troops, the 11,000 or 12,000 that he still is not going to be getting after the 4,000 we are sending now, but that wasn't a decision that had to be made until this fall.

My question is why did he not already have the full complement of 34,000 troops that he said he needed in Afghanistan?

General PETRAEUS. Well, again, it literally takes time to build these up. There was a series of requests that were made, some all the way back to last year, in fact, and, as always, there has to be a process of sourcing forces, determining, in some cases, to take more risk in another area than in, say, in Afghanistan, and then, through the sourcing process, the approval of those requests for forces and then the sourcing and then, of course, preparation and deployment of those forces.

But the fact is, I think, that it was Admiral Mullen who has said on a number of occasions that in Afghanistan, we do what we can; in Iraq, we do what we must.

What was the phrase that he—in other words, implying that the focus until fairly recently of resources was on Iraq and, clearly, the focus is now shifting, enabled, in substantial part, by the progress that has been made in Iraq and has allowed us to draw down our forces there over time, with more of those to be expected in accordance with the plan that was announced by the President at Camp Lejeune.

Mr. ROGERS. Thinking about now the greater shift of attention on Afghanistan, when do you expect that you will have for this committee the set of milestones, goals and objectives that you are measuring against for prospective success or failure in that theater?

General PETRAEUS. Well, first of all, there already are a number of different metrics and measures. There are measures for the Afghan forces for security incidents, literally all the ones that we had in Iraq, although I think still being refined in the way that we did over time in Iraq, where eventually, as you know, we also had benchmarks and a variety of other measurement tools.

And with that, I will hand off to the undersecretary, who can talk about that effort.

Secretary FLOURNOY. I would just say in addition to the sort of field level metrics that are already in place, I would say we are in the process of developing sort of strategic level metrics and benchmarks on an interagency basis, looking not only at the military effort, but across the civilian effort, as well, and looking both at Afghanistan and Pakistan.

That is something that we are working on. We hope to actually consult with many of you as we further develop those and to be able to bring those forward to you in the not too distant future.

Mr. ROGERS. Not too distant future. As a lawyer myself, that is a good lawyerly way of putting it.

Secretary FLOURNOY. No. We are actually having a meeting early next week to set the schedule and I just can't tell you what it is going to be quite yet.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you.

That is all I have, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. A matter of clarification. The troops sent to Afghanistan, was that number decided by the last administration, before the present 17,000 and 4,000 announced?

General PETRAEUS. There were some that were sent by the previous administration in response to the series of requests for forces that General McKiernan has sent in, and then, obviously, the subsequent ones are being sent by the current administration.

The CHAIRMAN. When was that request made?

General PETRAEUS. Sir, there have been a series of these requests for forces. They date back certainly to last year, late last year.

The CHAIRMAN. Did the previous administration honor all of the requests of the general for forces in Afghanistan?

General PETRAEUS. Again, there has been a series of those.

The CHAIRMAN. No, no, no. Answer my——

General PETRAEUS. Some of those that were submitted before the inauguration were dealt with by the previous administration. Others were not dealt with by the previous administration, I think with a view that they wanted to allow the next administration to make those decisions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

Ms. Tsongas.

General PETRAEUS. The one beauty, if I could add, Mr. Chairman, is we have had the same Secretary of Defense during the whole time and there has been a degree of continuity there, frankly, that has been very helpful to combatant commanders, among others.

Ms. TSONGAS. Well, thank you so much for your testimony and appreciate your hanging in there with us today.

I have a question. As we have talked about a more holistic approach, one of the issues has been building up the civilian capacity.

I am just curious what kind of numbers we are looking at.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Well, I think there is an initial request from the embassy on the order of 400 to 500, but I think there is a further needs analysis that is ongoing that we expect to yield a requirement of several thousand.

Obviously, not all of those can be met immediately with American governmental personnel, but we are going to be looking beyond government resources to private sector, as well, and we are also very much placing an emphasis on this as we go to talk to our allies, asking not only for military contributions, but contributions of civilian expertise.

Ms. TSONGAS. And so we would be looking to the nongovernmental organization (NGO) community that is in place already or not?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Absolutely.

Ms. TSONGAS. And I have a question related to that. At present, these agencies are not associated with our military and, as a result, they have some freedom of movement sort of outside the parameters of military operations, and this principle was outlined in the guidelines for the interaction and coordination of humanitarian actors and military actors in Afghanistan.

Part of these organizations' security is based on the general view that they are separate from military operations and, therefore, not a military target. However, this line is often blurred and, as you can imagine, some of those people in Afghanistan who seek to do harm really will not pay attention.

But what concerns me is that as we implement a policy with strong emphasis on civilian activities, that we may further blur the civil-military lines and jeopardize the safety of the NGOs, as well as many others engaged in development activities.

In fact, in conversations with some of those NGOs who have had longstanding operations in Afghanistan, there is growing concern about their physical safety, to the point where, in some instances, they are considering withdrawing from the country.

How do we coordinate all of these entities towards a common purpose, while keeping separate our military strategy from efforts to reconstruct and develop Afghanistan?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I am sure General Petraeus will have a comment on this, too, given his experience. But I think part of what we are trying to do is create, with the influx of military troops, is to create a secure environment that will enable all kinds of actors to be more effective on the development side, NGOs, Afghans, our own government people.

I think there are some NGOs who are quite comfortable working with the U.S. military and there are others who, as you say, safeguard their—hold dear their independence and try to remain separate.

I think one of the things we need to do is work very closely with the U.N. Most of the NGOs who do not work directly with the U.S. military are working in consultation with either other civilian entities or with the U.N.

And so I think strengthening our coordination mechanisms via the U.N. is one of the most effective things we can and should be doing in Afghanistan, and that is certainly part of the plan.

But I think so often this comes down to very specific situations on the ground, that you really have to have the NGO personnel and the local U.S. government or international organization or military folks kind of negotiate rules of the road that work on the ground in a specific area.

Ms. TSONGAS. General Petraeus.

General PETRAEUS. First of all, I think we really very much understand the importance of NGOs and the U.N. As you may recall, we lost literally the vast majority of the nongovernmental organizations and even the United Nations element in Iraq for a period because of the deterioration of the security situation.

So the first order of business is, again, to, as the Secretary said, try to expand the security environment and the security bubble in which the operate.

Beyond that, there are coordination mechanisms at all of the different levels, but nationally and then locally, as well, typically, with the different groups that are out there. Some of them may not want to even come into a compound of ours, but they still may be able to communicate if they need a quick reaction force, for example.

And so depending on what the communications infrastructure in the area is, they can either use cell phones, if necessary, satellite phones or what have you if they get in trouble.

But, again, as the Secretary said, in many cases, what you end up with is a general concept that then local commanders and unit leaders implement with the NGOs in that area.

Ms. TSONGAS. Thank you.

It just seems to me, given the——

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Ms. TSONGAS [continuing]. Whole picture, we need to really think about this.

General PETRAEUS. I agree.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Loebsack.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to all of you who are here today for your service and for being here today for your service and for being here and participating.

Actually, the comment that I was going to make actually flows, in some ways, from what Congresswoman Tsongas just said.

First, a comment. Madam Secretary, the purview of the committee may, sort of strictly speaking, be military-oriented and making sure that we provide what our folks in uniform and those supporting them need.

But at the same time, my own view of this is that for me to make an informed and intelligent decision with respect to that issue or others before this committee, especially when it comes to the commitment of significant numbers of forces abroad, I think I have to look at the big picture, and I think that is how I look at it, at any rate.

So I am not myself as narrowly focused in on that sense. I am sure that is not what you are implying, that we should all necessarily just look at it from that perspective. But I think that is important to keep in mind.

I have nothing but respect, obviously, for all of you here and I have gotten to know General Petraeus the last two years since I have been in office. This is my third year. And last time I saw him was on the tarmac in Abu Dhabi, in an airplane, and that was a really great meeting.

I was on my way to Thanksgiving dinner with some of our troops at a forward operating base (FOB) in Afghanistan.

The second comment. I want to echo what Mr. Marshall said about PRT, and I think PRT should be called PDTs, because especially in Afghanistan, as you acknowledged early in your testimony, these are not comparable situations.

Before I became a member of Congress, I was a college teacher and I took students overseas a number of times, traveled overseas, especially to so-called third world countries, and there are a lot of differences between Afghanistan and Iraq, which I think everybody on this committee is aware of, especially those who have traveled those countries.

But we are really talking about provincial development teams more than we are reconstruction, and I think everyone would acknowledge that.

But let me go back to the basics, because I am not sure that people really get right now, with all the other things that are going on that are occupying our attention with respect to the economy.

What is the basic goal, first and foremost, of the United States in Afghanistan?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I think one of the things—we asked ourselves that question in the review and we went back to first principles and core interests, and the goal is to disrupt, dismantle and defeat Al Qaeda and its extremist allies in Afghanistan and in Pakistan, and everything else is derived from that core goal.

Mr. LOEBSACK. We don't then have a goal to construct a democracy in Afghanistan. Is that correct? I hope you will say yes, but that is my own view.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Again, I think that we are certainly supportive of all good governance efforts and so on, and I don't want to deprive the Afghan people of that aspiration.

But our core goal is about denying safe haven to Al Qaeda in this region at this time.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Is it fair to say then that we are—with respect to Afghanistan, at least at the moment and probably likely into the future, that we are not engaged in nation-building, per se, in Afghanistan at the moment? Is that correct?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think that the counterinsurgency strategy we are pursuing involves a lot of capacity-building to be successful.

I don't know what your definition of nation-building is, but there is certainly a big emphasis on building the capacity of the security forces and of basic Afghan institutions to be able to take the lead in protecting their own population and their territory.

Mr. LOEBSACK. General.

General PETRAEUS. Well, Congressman, to ensure, in the case of Afghanistan, for example, that there are not transnational extremist sanctuaries reestablished, you have to take certain actions beyond even just the strictly security arena to ensure that the governance is seen as legitimate by the people, that there is a degree of basic services and opportunity for them, education and expansion of health care and so forth, because at the end of the day, everything depends on the people supporting this new Afghan government and rejecting the alternative that is provided by the Taliban.

Mr. LOEBSACK. And just very quickly, you addressed the interagency question, the whole of government approach, whatever terms you prefer, but when we SIGAR and SIGIR here recently, of course, there is a lot of discussion about lack of interagency coordination in Iraq over the years.

And I guess I will just leave it at this, if I might just finish my thought, Mr. Chair.

I won't ask you the question, but just leave you with this. I think it is really critical that we be thinking about sort of how we are going about this.

I wasn't entirely satisfied with your answer, Madam Secretary, especially the role of the NSC, because I am not recommending that the NSC play a major role in all this, but I would like to talk to you more in the future, and some of you, about how we are doing this in Washington, D.C., in particular.

I understand how we are doing it in the theater and in the region, but, in particular, here in Washington, D.C., how the agencies are dealing with one another, because I think we have to do that to have success in Afghanistan, obviously.

Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Since the witnesses turn to pumpkins at 2 o'clock and by a previous promise from the chair, we will ask Ms. Shea-Porter to be the cleanup batter here, and, as I had previously announced, in consultation with Mr. McHugh, we will start the next hearing from the bottom row and work backward.

But for the votes that we had on the floor, we would have been able to get through everyone quite easily.

But Ms. Shea-Porter, and that is it.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Thank you. And I will speak Yankee fast.

The first thing I wanted to just comment on, I am not expecting an answer on this, but I just wanted to put it out there, that we have had a lot of concerns about contractors in Iraq for a long time and, certainly, we saw KBR receive a contract recently, in spite of the electrocutions of our soldiers, and I hope that you are addressing those issues. I am trying to myself, as are others.

But I have a deep concern. When we send our troops to a battlefield, they should not die in a swimming pool or in a shower. So I wanted to put that out there.

General PETRAEUS. Task Force Safe, Congresswoman—I will try to speak Yankee, as a fellow New Hampshirite. Task Force Safe was created in Iraq in response to that.

It has gone through tens of thousands, unfortunately, there are still tens of thousands of structures, but it is working very hard and we have shared those lessons with Afghanistan and other places in Central Command where we have similar types of infrastructure that have been built up by contractors.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. And I am grateful for the work they are doing, but I am still concerned that KBR received another contract to do electrical work.

If you don't mind switching gears, I would like to talk about the Sons of Iraq. It seemed like it was doing pretty well and then recently I read that the Sunnis had not been integrated into the po-

lice force as we originally hoped and that there was some trouble again.

Could you please address that, General Petraeus.

General PETRAEUS. Well, Sunnis have been integrated into the police force. Again, the local police are generally reflective of local populations.

The national police are a generally national force that reflects the general national structure, as is the case with the overall Iraqi army and other security forces.

The issue really is the Sons of Iraq not getting long-term jobs and there has been, literally, over the years now, a commitment that the Iraqi government would do everything humanly possible to find them either jobs in the security forces, and, again, over the years, have been probably 20,000 or more of them that have been able to do that.

But there are still somewhere around 90,000 to 100,000 that don't have longer-term employment options beyond the Sons of Iraq.

Now, it is important to recognize the government of Iraq has been paying and they have literally, month-by-month, been taking over more and more each province over time.

I think they are somewhere around the 90 percent range now in taking over the salaries of them as Sons of Iraq, and they will take over the remaining provinces in the month of April.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Thank you. I am going to interrupt, because we are on the clock, and say that I thought that was a very good program and I hope that we continue to pay attention.

And the last question I wanted to ask you was I can remember several months ago reading an article about Iraqi widows who had to iron sheets for pennies a day and it made me think about what we are doing with the money when we bring it into Iraq.

And are we targeting women and children enough? Are we putting enough money in their hands so they can do a micro business or change their future? Because if you want stability, you need stability in the family and the community.

General PETRAEUS. There are programs for women that specifically do target women, both programs that we have and, also, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in the government of Iraq.

The tragedy is that there are vast numbers of these women that date all the way back to the terrible losses sustained by Iraqi men, primarily soldiers, in the Iran-Iraq war. And so this is a continued problem and then there are more in recent years, obviously, during the sectarian violence.

So I don't have any doubt that there needs to be more done in that area or, frankly, in a number of other areas, as the new Iraq redevelops its social and economic institutions.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. I would be grateful if you could send information to me.

And, again, thank you all for your service.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

The witching hour has arrived and we will end the hearing. But let me thank you each again for your service, for your testimony. You are the best we have.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
The CHAIRMAN. And we will see you soon.
[Whereupon, at 2:02 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

April 2, 2009

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 2, 2009

Statement for the Record
The Administration's Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan
Michèle A. Flournoy
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Mr. Chairman, Congressman McHugh, thank you for asking me and General Petraeus to testify today on the Obama Administration's recently completed policy review on Afghanistan and Pakistan.

As the President stated last Friday, our strategic goal is very clear: to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda and its extremist allies. To do so, we must eliminate their safe haven in Pakistan and prevent their re-emergence in Afghanistan. All of the elements of national power we employ – political, diplomatic, military, and economic – must be oriented on achieving this goal.

This review started by going back to first principles: Why are we investing American blood and treasure in this region? What are our key interests and objectives? Why are we not meeting those objectives, and how can we turn the tide on the ground?

Preventing future terrorist attacks on the American people and our allies is vital. We have learned – at too high a price – the danger of allowing al Qaeda and its extremist supporters to have safe havens and the resources to plan their attacks. This is why we have troops in Afghanistan. They are vital to protecting our homeland and our allies from future attack. We must succeed there while also intensifying our efforts to assist Pakistan.

To achieve our goals, we need a smarter and more comprehensive strategy. And we need to devote the resources necessary to implement it.

A critical aspect of this new strategy is the recognition that Afghanistan and Pakistan are two countries that comprise a single theater for our diplomacy. The futures of the two countries are inextricably linked. Al Qaeda and its extremist allies have moved across the border to Pakistan where they plan terrorist attacks and support operations that undermine the stability of both countries.

Special Representative Holbrooke will lead bi-lateral and tri-lateral engagements with the aim of developing greater security and economic cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan and within the region. And from the Defense side, we will work to build the counterterrorism and counterinsurgency capabilities of both countries so they can combat terrorists and insurgents more effectively.

Pakistan's ability to dismantle the safe havens on its territory and defeat the terror and insurgent networks within its borders is critical to its own security and stability. Pakistan faces a severe socio-economic crisis that enables these extremist groups to flourish and pose a great threat to this nuclear armed state.

It is in America's long term interest to support Pakistan's restored democracy by investing in its people and their economic well-being. We seek a more strategic partnership with Pakistan that will encourage and enable it to shift its strategic focus from conventional war to counter-insurgency and counterterrorism so they can better address this burgeoning internal threat. We urge Congress to support the forthcoming Kerry-Lugar legislation, which would authorize civilian and economic assistance and the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Fund to develop a more effective military that can defeat terrorist and insurgent networks.

Let me emphasize that these initiatives should be pursued in the context of a long-term strategic partnership with Pakistan. Only a serious and sustained engagement by the United States and the international community can help Pakistan make the required changes. However, this military and economic support will be limited if we do not see improvements in Pakistani performance.

We must also develop a lasting partnership with Afghanistan.

For years, our commanders, diplomats, and aid workers on the ground in Afghanistan have not been given all the resources they need to defeat the insurgency. They have not been given the tools needed to address the conditions that enable it to fester. We must do better for our men and women in harm's way and for the people of Afghanistan.

Like Pakistan, Afghanistan suffers from a severe socio-economic crisis. These problems are exacerbated by the political disintegration that has occurred after decades of war and the devastation wrought by the Taliban. These are the root causes of the insurgency that al Qaeda and the Taliban seek to exploit for their own purposes. Building Afghan capacity to address these causes, while simultaneously taking the fight to the enemy, are important components of our efforts.

The US, along with our Afghan partners and international allies, is committed to fully resourcing an integrated counterinsurgency strategy. This strategy aims to reverse Taliban gains and secure the population in the troubled South and East of the country. Improved security should provide the time and space to grow the capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces and to develop governance and legitimate economic capacity.

Building the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces, both the Army and the Police, is a critical element of this strategy. We aim to accelerate the growth and capability of the ANSF to targeted levels by 2011, and will assess whether future expansion is necessary and sustainable at that time. Building up the ANSF should enable us, over time, to transition from ISAF-led to ANSF-led counterinsurgency operations.

To do so, we must meet the requirements set by commanders on the ground for trainers. The deployment of an additional 4,000 US troops announced by the President will, for the first time, address this critical need. Furthermore, we will ensure that US units deploying to Afghanistan are given the mission of not only protecting the population but also partnering with local Afghan units to build their capacity whenever and wherever possible. The Afghans want to take charge of security in their own country. It is time we committed the resources to give them that chance.

Beyond a strengthened military mission, we will intensify our civilian assistance and better integrate it with our military efforts. We aim to significantly increase civilian expertise and resources – both US and international – in Afghanistan to promote governance and development programs, and build Afghan capacity.

Working with the UN and our allies, we will seek to improve the coordination and coherence of these efforts in support of Afghan priorities. Ensuring free, fair and secure elections will be the most immediate and consequential task.

We will also complement capacity-building at the national level with more bottom-up initiatives to build capacity at the district and provincial levels. These efforts will be designed to have a direct impact on the daily lives of the Afghan people. They are the best way to address the root causes of insurgency and give people tangible reasons to support their government.

Combating corruption will complement efforts to strengthen Afghan institutions at all levels of government. Greater integration of local leadership, combined with hands-on mentoring and oversight by civilian experts, is the most promising way to build greater accountability and legitimacy in the eyes of the people.

Defeating the Taliban-led insurgency and fighting corruption will also require breaking its links with the narcotics industry. We will work to develop more effective counternarcotics efforts to deny the insurgency and corrupt officials lucrative sources of funding. This critical objective requires building Afghan law enforcement capacity, developing alternative livelihoods for farmers and reforming the agricultural sector on which the vast majority of the population depends.

As we regain the initiative in Afghanistan, we will support an Afghan-led reconciliation process to bring insurgent foot soldiers and mid-level leaders to the side of the government. If this process is successful, senior leaders should become more isolated and easier to target.

Our men and women in uniform and our allies have fought bravely in Afghanistan for more than seven years. Nearly 700 of our Soldiers and Marines have made the ultimate sacrifice. Nearly 3,000 have been wounded. The sacrifices have been tremendous. We can honor them by improving our strategy and by giving their comrades, military and civilian alike, the resources they need to bring this war to a successful conclusion. I urge Congress to provide its full support.

This strategy seeks to help the Afghan people build a bridge to self-reliance. But even when our forces eventually transition responsibility to their Afghan partners and depart, we should continue—through economic and security assistance—to help Afghans secure and build their nation. Our vital interests demand no less.

I want to once again stress the civilian and military resources required for success. I want to urge you and your colleagues to fund civilian capabilities that can deploy to Afghanistan and economic and security assistance to both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Every day, men and women in our armed forces tell me that they need their civilian counterparts with them in the field to succeed. I urge you to work with your colleagues on the relevant appropriations committees to get the funding we need for the civilian resources necessary to protect and advance our vital interests in this critical region.

Finally, this is not just America's war. Defeating al Qaeda and its extremist allies is a goal – and a responsibility – that the international community must share.

This strategy requires mobilizing not only domestic support, but also greater international political support for our efforts. Working in full partnership with the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan, our NATO allies and ISAF, the UN, and regional stakeholders will be critical for success. This will be part of the President's agenda this week in Europe, and it will be Ambassador Holbrooke's and General Petraeus' work for months to come.

Keeping the American homeland and American people safe requires us to step up to this challenge.

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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF

GENERAL DAVID H. PETRAEUS, U.S. ARMY

COMMANDER

U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

ON THE AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN STRATEGIC REVIEW

AND

THE POSTURE OF U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

02 APR 2009

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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairman Skelton, Congressman McHugh, and members of the committee, the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) is now in its eighth consecutive year of combat operations in an area of the world critical to the interests of the United States, its allies, and its partners. CENTCOM seeks to promote cooperation, to respond to crises, to deter aggression, and, when necessary, to defeat our adversaries in order to promote security, stability, and prosperity in the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR). Typically, achieving US national goals and objectives in the CENTCOM AOR involves more than just the traditional application of military power. In many cases, a whole of government approach is required, one that integrates all tools available international and interagency partners to secure host-nation populations, to conduct comprehensive counterinsurgency and security operations, to help reform, and in some cases build, governmental and institutional capacity, and to promote economic development.

These are challenging missions, and the conditions and dynamics shaping the region's security environment are constantly evolving. Major changes in just this past year include: increased violence in Afghanistan and Pakistan; transition of authority to elected civilian leadership in Pakistan; progress against extremists in Iraq; expiration of UN Security Council Resolution 1790; damage to still resilient Al Qaeda and other extremist elements; continued Iranian intransigence over its nuclear program and continued support to proxy extremist elements; increased piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia; and the global financial crisis and accompanying decline in oil prices. These developments, as well as recent events on the borders of our AOR, particularly in Gaza, India, and Somalia, demonstrate that the dynamics shaping regional

security will continue to evolve, presenting both challenges and opportunities as we seek to address insecurity and extremism in the AOR.

Following conversations with our coalition partners and a recent comprehensive review of our AOR by members of CENTCOM, interagency partners, and academic experts, we have identified the following priority tasks for the coming year:

- Helping to reverse the downward cycles of violence in Afghanistan and Pakistan;
- Countering transnational terrorist and extremist organizations that threaten the security of the United States and our allies;
- Helping our Iraqi partners build on the progress in their country while reducing US forces there but sustaining hard-won security gains;
- Countering malign Iranian activities and policies;
- Bolstering the capabilities of partner security forces in the region;
- Working with our partners to counter piracy, illegal narcotics trafficking, arms smuggling, and proliferation of the components of weapons of mass destruction;
- Working with the US military services to reduce the strain on our forces and the cost of our operations; and
- Supporting new policy initiatives, such as the establishment of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan and efforts to reinvigorate the Middle East Peace Process.

The intent of the remainder of this Posture Statement is to address these priorities and the broader, long-term solutions they support by providing a more detailed overview of the AOR, assessments of the situation in each of its major sub-regions, brief descriptions of the approaches and techniques for improving security and preserving our national interests, and comments on the programs and systems needed to implement and to support these approaches.

II. Overview of the CENTCOM AOR

A. Nature of the AOR

The lands and waters of the CENTCOM AOR span several critical and distinct regions. Stretching across more than 4.6 million square miles and 20 countries, the AOR contains vital transportation and trade routes, including the Red Sea, the Northern Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Gulf, as well as strategic maritime choke points at the Suez Canal, the Bab el Mandeb, and the Strait of Hormuz. (With the establishment of the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) and the realignment of the Unified Command Plan, on 1 October 2008, AFRICOM assumed responsibility for US operations in the six countries of the Horn of Africa and the Seychelles, countries previously in the CENTCOM AOR.) The CENTCOM AOR encompasses the world's most energy-rich region, with the Arabian Gulf region and Central Asia together accounting for at least 64 percent of the world's

petroleum reserves, 34 percent of its crude oil production, and 46 percent of its natural gas reserves.

Social, political, and economic conditions vary greatly throughout the region. The region is home to some of the world's wealthiest and poorest states, with per capita incomes ranging from $800 to over $100,000. Despite scattered pockets of affluence, many of the more than 530 million people living in the AOR suffer from inadequate governance, underdeveloped civil institutions, unsettling corruption, and high unemployment.

As a result of this diversity, many people in the AOR struggle to balance modern influences with traditional social and cultural authorities and to manage change at a pace that reinforces stability rather than erodes it. For the past century, the sub-regions of the AOR have been torn by conflict as new states and old societies have struggled to erect a new order in the wake of the collapse of traditional empires. These conflicts have intensified in the past three decades with the emergence of extremist movements, nuclear weapons, and enormous wealth derived from oil. And today we see stability in the AOR threatened by inter-state tensions, proliferation of ballistic missile and nuclear weapons expertise, ethno-sectarian violence, and insurgencies and sub-state militias, as well as horrific acts of terrorism and extremist violence.

B. Most Significant Threats to US Interests

The most serious threats to the United States, its allies, and its interests in the CENTCOM AOR lie at the nexus of transnational extremists, hostile states, and weapons of mass destruction. Across the AOR, Al Qaeda and its extremist allies are fueling insurgency to reduce US influence and to destabilize the existing political, social, and economic order. Meanwhile, some countries in the AOR play a dangerous game of allowing or accepting extremist networks and terrorist facilitators to operate from or through their territory, believing that their own people and governments will be immune from the threat. Efforts designed to develop or acquire WMD and delivery systems magnify the potential dangers of the marriage between some states and their extremist proxies. Indeed, the acquisition of WMD by hostile states or terrorist organizations would constitute a grave threat to the United States, our allies, and the countries of the region, and it likely would spark a destabilizing arms race. In the near term, the greatest potential for such a threat to arise is found in the instability in South Asia and the activities and policies of the Iranian regime.

- Instability in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan and Afghanistan pose the most urgent problem set in the CENTCOM AOR. Destabilization of the nuclear-armed Pakistani state would present an enormous challenge to the United States, its allies, and our interests. Pakistani state failure would provide transnational terrorist groups and other extremist organizations an opportunity to acquire nuclear weapons and a safe haven from which to plan and launch attacks. The Pakistani state faces a rising – indeed, an

existential – threat from Islamist extremists such as Al Qaeda and other transnational terrorists organizations, which have developed in safe havens and support bases in ungoverned spaces in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border regions. Nevertheless, many Pakistani leaders remain focused on India as Pakistan's principal threat, and some may even continue to regard Islamist extremist groups as a potential strategic asset against India. Meanwhile, Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other insurgent groups operating from the border region are engaged in an increasingly violent campaign against Afghan and Coalition Forces and the developing Afghan state.

- Iranian Activities and Policies. Iranian activities and policies constitute the major state-based threat to regional stability. Despite UN Security Council resolutions, international sanctions, and diplomatic efforts through the P5+1, Iran is assessed by many to be continuing its pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability, which would destabilize the region and likely spur a regional arms race. Iran employs surrogates and violent proxies to weaken competitor states, perpetuate conflict with Israel, gain regional influence, and obstruct the Middle East Peace Process. Iran also uses some of these groups to train and equip militants in direct conflict with US forces. Syria, Iran's key ally, facilitates the Iranian regime's reach into the Levant and the Arab world by serving as the key link in an Iran-Syria-Hizballah-Hamas alliance and allows extremists (albeit in smaller numbers than in the past) to operate in Damascus and to facilitate travel into Iraq.

The situation in Iraq, lingering Arab-Israeli tensions, and arms smuggling and piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the Somali coast also pose significant challenges to the interests of the United States, its allies, and partners.

- Iraq. The situation in Iraq has improved significantly since the peak of violence in mid-2007, but the gains there remain fragile and reversible, though less so than last fall. In Iraq, a number of factors continue to pose serious risks to US interests and have the potential to undermine regional stability, international access to strategic resources, and efforts to deny terrorist safe havens and support bases. Internally, fundamental issues such as the distribution of political power and resources remain to be settled. The Iraqi state is still developing, and various issues pose serious impediments to development. Integration of the Sons of Iraq and the return of refugees and internally displaced Iraqis will strain governmental capacity. Externally, Iraq's position with its neighbors is still in flux, with some playing a negative role in Iraq. Ethnic and sectarian tensions persist, and if large-scale communal conflict were to return to Iraq, violence could "spill over" into other states. Such violence could also enable terrorist and insurgent groups to reestablish control over portions of the country, which would destabilize Iraq and the surrounding region. To further complicate matters, the decline in oil prices and the resulting cut in the Iraqi budget are likely to delay Iraqi Security Force modernization and security initiatives, programs for the revitalization of the oil and electricity sectors, and improvements in the provision of government services.

- The Arab-Israeli conflict. The enduring Arab-Israeli conflict presents distinct challenges to our ability to advance our interests in the AOR. Israeli-Palestinian tensions often flare into violence and large-scale armed confrontations. The conflict has created a deep reservoir of anti-American sentiment, based on the perception of US favoritism for Israel. Arab anger over the Palestinian question limits the strength and depth of US partnerships with governments and peoples in the AOR and threatens the continued viability of moderate regimes in the Arab world. Extremist groups exploit that anger to mobilize support. The conflict also gives Iran influence in the Arab world through its clients, Lebanese Hizballah and Hamas. The attention to this issue in recent months and the appointment of Senator Mitchell have generated positive reactions.

C. Other Challenges to Security and Stability

While this statement will describe in greater detail the dynamics and challenges in the sub-regions of the AOR, there are a number of cross-cutting issues that serve as major drivers of instability, inter-state tensions, and conflicts. These factors can serve as root causes of instability or as obstacles to security.

- Extremist ideological movements and militant groups. The CENTCOM AOR is home, of course, to important transnational terrorist networks and violent extremist organizations that exploit local conflicts and foster instability through the use of terrorism and indiscriminate violence. The most significant of these is Al Qaeda, which, along

with its associated extremist groups, seeks to undermine regional governments, challenge US and western influence in the region, foster instability, and impose extremist, oppressive practices on the people through indiscriminate violence and intimidation.

- Proliferation of WMD. The AOR contains states and terrorists organizations which actively seek WMD capabilities and have previously proliferated WMD technology outside established international monitoring regimes.

- Ungoverned, poorly governed, and alternatively governed spaces. Weak civil and security institutions and the inability of certain governments in the region to exert full control over their territories are conditions extremists exploit to create physical safe havens in which they can plan, train for, and launch terrorist operations or pursue narco-criminal activities. Increasingly we are seeing the development of what might be termed sub-states, particularly in Lebanon, Pakistan, and the Palestinian territories, which are part of an extremist strategy to "hold" territory and challenge the legitimacy and authority of the central government.

- Significant source of terrorist financing and facilitation. The AOR, particularly the Arabian Peninsula, remains a prime source of funding and facilitation for global terrorist organizations. This terrorist financing is transmitted through a variety of formal and informal networks throughout the region.

- Piracy. The state collapse of Somalia has enabled the emergence of piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia. Since the August 2008 spike in piracy acts, we have worked in close cooperation with the international community to counter this trend by focusing on increasing international naval presence, assisting the shipping industry with improving defensive measures, and establishing a sound international legal framework for resolving piracy cases. With UNSC resolution authorities, over twenty countries have since deployed naval ships to conduct counter piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. In January 2009, we stood up a Combined Task Force (CTF–151) for the specific purpose of conducting and coordinating counter piracy operations.

- Ethnic, tribal, and sectarian rivalries. Within certain countries, the politicization of ethnicity, tribal affiliation, and religious sect serves to disrupt the development of national civil institutions and social cohesion, at times to the point of violence. Between countries in the region, such rivalries can heighten political tension and serve as catalysts for conflict and insurgency.

- Disputed borders and access to vital resources. Unresolved issues of border demarcation and disagreements over the sharing of vital resources, such as water, serve as sources of tension and conflict between and within states in the region.

- Weapons and narcotics trafficking. The trafficking and smuggling of weapons and narcotics and associated criminal activities undermine state security, spur corruption, and inhibit legitimate economic activity and good governance throughout the AOR.

- Uneven economic development and lack of employment opportunities. Despite substantial economic growth rates throughout much of the region over the past few years, significant segments of the population in the region remain economically disenfranchised, uneducated, and without sufficient opportunity. The recent economic downturn has heightened these problems. Without sustained, broad-based economic development, increased employment opportunities are unlikely given the growing proportions of young people relative to overall populations.

- Lack of regional and global economic integration. The AOR is characterized by low levels of trade and commerce between and among countries, which diminish prospects for long term economic growth, as well as opportunities to deepen interdependence through private sector, social, and political ties between countries.

III. Major Operating Concepts

A. Implementing Comprehensive Approaches and Strengthening Unity of Effort

Addressing the challenges and threats in the AOR requires a comprehensive, whole of government approach that fully integrates our military and non-military efforts and those of our allies and partners. This approach puts a premium on unity of effort at

all levels and with all participants. At the combatant command level, this means working with our interagency and international partners to develop joint action or campaign plans that establish appropriate missions and objectives for our subordinate elements, from major commands such as Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF-I) to country-based offices of military cooperation. To effectively carry out these plans, the military elements must be coordinated carefully with the corresponding State Department envoy or ambassador.

CENTCOM also strives to help subordinate command efforts and to address areas and functions not assigned to subordinate units or that are cross-cutting, such as combating the flow of foreign fighters.

B. Nesting Counter-Terrorism within a Counter-Insurgency Approach

Success against the extremist networks in the CENTCOM AOR - whether in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Lebanon, or elsewhere - requires all forces and means at our disposal employed in a strategic approach grounded in the principles of counterinsurgency. Our counter-terror efforts, which seek to dismantle the extremist networks and their leadership, often through the use of military force, are critical. However, it is also important to eliminate these networks' sources of support. Often this support comes from sympathetic populations who provide financial support and physical safe haven or who simply turn a blind eye to extremist activities. At other times, support comes from populations directly subjected to extremist intimidation and extortion.

Eroding this support, eliminating these safe havens, and ultimately preventing networks from reconstituting themselves requires protecting populations, delegitimizing the terrorists' methods and ideologies, addressing legitimate grievances to win over reconcilable elements of the population, and promoting broad-based economic and governmental development. Defeating extremist groups thus requires the application of basic counter-insurgency concepts. We cannot be just "hard" or just "soft"—we must be both.

This does not imply, however, that US forces must conduct counter-insurgency operations everywhere in the AOR where there are extremist groups. Rather, this demands an approach in which the US primarily provides support to our partners in their own counter-terror and counter-insurgency efforts. We should help nations develop their own capacity to secure their people and to govern fairly and effectively, and we should build effective partnerships and engage with the people, leaders, and security forces in the AOR. Whichever forces are involved, ours or our partners', their actions and operations must adhere to basic counter-insurgency principles, with the specifics of the operations tailored to the circumstances on the ground.

C. Strengthening and Expanding the Regional Security Network

A new architecture for cooperative security is emerging in the region from what in the past has been a relatively loose collection of security relationships and bi-lateral

programs. Conflicts in recent decades have demonstrated that previous security paradigms and architectures for the region, those which focused on balancing regional blocs of power or solely on combating terrorism, have been insufficient to ensure regional stability and security in the globalized, post-Cold War environment.

From these unsatisfactory paradigms, we are now seeing that a model characterized by a focus on common interests, inclusivity, and capacity-building can best advance security and stability in the region. This network of cooperation is both effective and sustainable because it creates synergies and, as it grows, strengthens relationships. Each cooperative endeavor is a link connecting countries in the region, and each adds to the collective strength of the network. The mechanisms put in place to coordinate efforts in one area, such as piracy, smuggling, or littoral security, can often be leveraged to generate action in other areas, such as a rapid response to a major oil spill in the Gulf or in the aftermath of a typhoon or earthquake. Moreover, progress made in generating cooperation in a set of issues can serve as an opening for engagement on other issues, thereby promoting greater interdependence. As a result, a growing network not only works to improve interoperability and overall effectiveness in providing security; it also builds trust and confidence among neighbors and partners.

The foundation of this network consists of a focus on common interests, an atmosphere of inclusivity, and efforts to build security capacity and infrastructure.

- Common interests. The security challenges we face together can be a unifying force for focusing regional attention and increasing cooperation. We all have an interest in preventing terrorism, reducing illegal drug production and trafficking, responding to environmental disasters, halting the proliferation of WMD and related technology, countering piracy, and deterring aggression. However, no nation can protect itself from these threats without cooperation from others. Collective action and comprehensive approaches are required to address these issues. Therefore, nations must work to build the trust and confidence required to pursue these common interests. .

- Inclusivity. An atmosphere of broad inclusivity expands the pool of resources for security issues and allows partnerships to leverage each country's comparative advantages, from expertise and facilities to information or even geography. The network is not an alliance or bloc, and countries link into this network to address issues as they desire. This suggests that there may be room for cooperation between countries inside and outside the region and even some who may have been seen as competitors. Security initiatives start out as bilateral partnerships and then expand to multilateral ones as cooperation improves. Ultimately, broad participation in the network is an important means to promote security and stability in the region.

- Capacity building. Improving the overall effectiveness of our security efforts requires strengthening each country's ability to maintain security inside its own borders and to participate in joint endeavors. This capacity building includes collective and individual training programs, educational exchanges, and the development of security-

related facilities and infrastructure, as well as equipment modernization efforts. These programs benefit from the talents and resources each partner brings to the network, and they can be tailored to the nature of each country's participation. In addition to military programs, this also will require increasing the civilian capacity in the Department of State and the US Agency for International Development.

Already, there is great breadth and depth to the cooperative activity that is underway, and there is more design and coherence to this network than is commonly understood. In addition to our ongoing partnerships with the Iraqi Security Forces and the Afghan National Security Forces, numerous multilateral counter-terrorism, maritime, and coastal security initiatives are ongoing in the region. Additionally, many countries participate in an extensive array of combined ground, maritime, aviation, and special operations exercises, each designed to respond to different types of threats. There are partnerships in the region for improving coordination and information sharing through, for example, air and missile defense initiatives with several Gulf countries and border cooperation programs with Afghanistan and Pakistan. Lastly, many countries are working together to fund or provide military equipment to underdeveloped security forces, with our own Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and Foreign Military Funding (FMF) programs playing a large role in these efforts.

IV. Critical Sub-regions in the CENTCOM AOR

The complexity and uniqueness of local conditions in the CENTCOM AOR defy attempts to formulate an aggregated estimate of the situation that can address, with complete satisfaction, all of the pertinent issues. The boundaries of the AOR are a US organizational construct that does not encompass a cohesive social, cultural, political, and economic region. Thus, the best way to approach the challenges in the AOR is through a disaggregation of the problem sets into six sub-regions, described as follows:

- Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India (though India is not within the boundaries of the CENTCOM AOR)
- Iran
- Iraq
- The Arabian Peninsula, comprised of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE, Oman, and Yemen
- Egypt and the Levant, comprised of Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan (as well as Israel and the Palestinian territories which are not within the CENTCOM AOR)
- Central Asia, comprised of Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan

A. Afghanistan and Pakistan

The United States has a vital national security interest in the stability of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Afghanistan and Pakistan pose the most urgent problem set in the CENTCOM area of responsibility. The Taliban and other insurgent groups are growing in strength and waging an increasingly violent campaign against Coalition Forces and the Afghan state.

Pakistan, too, faces an existential threat from Islamist extremist groups such as Al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, which enjoy the benefit of safe havens and support bases in Pakistan, particularly in the rugged region along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Additionally, the possibility, however remote, of serious instability in a nuclear-armed Pakistan would pose a serious danger to the United States, its allies, and its interests.

Reversing the cycle of violence, defeating the extremist insurgencies in these countries, and eliminating safe havens for Al Qaeda and other trans-national extremist organizations require a sustained, substantial commitment. Afghanistan and Pakistan have unique internal dynamics and problems, but the two are linked by tribal affiliations and a porous border that permits terrorists and insurgents to move relatively freely to and from their safe havens. Although our presence, activities, and rules of engagement differ on each side of the Durand Line, Afghanistan and Pakistan represent a single theater of operations that requires complementary and integrated civil-military, whole of government, approaches.

In accordance with the Administration's new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, we are substantially increasing our forces in Afghanistan. However it is important to note that military forces are necessary but, by themselves, are not sufficient to achieve our objectives. We will foster comprehensive approaches by ensuring our military efforts reinforce US policy goals and are fully integrated with broader diplomatic and development efforts. In fact, it is critical that the complementary efforts of other departments and agencies receive the necessary support, manning, and other resources. The United States must have robust and substantial civilian capacity to effectively complement our military efforts.

Afghanistan

In parts of Afghanistan, the situation is deteriorating. The Afghan insurgency has expanded its strength and influence – particularly in the south and east – and the 2009 levels of violence are significantly higher than those of last year. The Taliban have been resilient, and their activities are fueled by revenues from narcotics-trafficking, the freedom of moment they enjoy in the border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the ineffective governance and services in parts of the country, as well as by contributions from groups outside the Afghanistan/Pakistan area. Indeed, insurgent successes correlate directly to the Afghan people's growing disenchantment with their government due to its incapacity to serve the population and due to their doubts regarding the competence and honesty of public officials.

In order to address the situation in Afghanistan, we will implement a comprehensive counter-insurgency approach that works to defeat existing insurgent groups, develops the institutions required to address the root causes of the conflict, maintains relentless pressure on terrorist organizations affiliated with the insurgency, dismantles illegal drug networks, and prevents the emergence of safe havens for those transnational extremist groups.

This campaign has several components, but first and foremost is a commitment to protecting and serving the people. We and our Afghan partners must focus on securing the Afghan people and building their trust. As part of this focus, we will take a residential approach and, in a culturally acceptable way, live among the people, understand their neighborhoods, and invest in relationships. The recent commitment of additional forces by the President will allow us to implement this strategy more effectively, because we will be able to expand the security presence further into the provinces and villages. With these additional forces we will be better able to hold areas cleared of insurgent groups and to build a new level of Afghan governmental control. We recognize the sacrifices of the Afghan people over the past decades, and we will continue working to build the trust of the people and, with security, to provide them with new opportunities.

As a part of this approach, we will also invigorate efforts to develop the capabilities of the Afghanistan National Security Force, including the Afghan National Army, the Afghan Police, the Afghan National Civil Order Police, the Afghan Border

Forces, specialized counter narcotics units, and other security forces. We recognize the fact that international forces must eventually transfer security responsibility to Afghan security forces. To do this we must significantly expand the size and capacity of the Afghan forces so they are more able to meet their country's security needs. A properly sized, trained, and equipped Afghanistan National Security Force is a prerequisite for any eventual drawdown of international forces from Afghanistan.

In addition, we will bolster the capabilities and the legitimacy of the other elements of the Afghan government – an effort in which, in much of Afghanistan, we will be building not rebuilding. We will do this through our support to the Provincial Reconstruction Teams and through civil-military and ministerial capacity building efforts, empowering Afghans to solve Afghan problems and promoting local reconciliation where possible. Moreover, we will support the Afghan government and help provide security for the Presidential elections later this year to ensure those elections are free, fair, and legitimate in the eyes of the Afghan people.

Another major component of our strategy is to disrupt narcotics trafficking, which has provided significant funding to the Taliban insurgency. This drug money has been the "oxygen in the air" that allows these groups to operate. With the recent extension of authority granted to US forces to conduct counter-narcotics operations, we are better able to work with the Afghan government more closely to eradicate illicit crops, shut down drug labs, and disrupt trafficking networks. To complement these efforts, we will also

promote viable agricultural alternatives, build Afghan law enforcement capacity, and develop the infrastructure to help Afghan farmers get their products to market.

Executing this strategy will require clear unity of effort at all levels and with all participants. Our senior commanders in Afghanistan will be closely linked with Ambassador Holbrooke, the US Ambassador to Afghanistan, and the Afghan leadership. Our security efforts will be integrated into the broader plan to promote political and economic development, with our security activities supporting these other efforts. Additionally, we will continue to work with our coalition partners and allies to achieve progress, in part by refining our command and control structures to coordinate more effectively the actions of US forces working for NATO ISAF and with Afghan forces. These cooperative relationships have proven extremely helpful, and we have benefitted from the Central Asian States' recognition of the importance of international success in Afghanistan and their granting us overflight and transit rights to support our operations there.

Pakistan

Pakistan is facing its own insurgency from militants and extremists operating from the country's tribal areas. As in Afghanistan, violent incidents in Pakistan, particularly bombings and suicide attacks, have increased over the past three years. Most of these have targeted security personnel and government officials, but some have intended a more public impact, as we saw with the tragic assassination of Prime Minister

Benazir Bhutto and the more recent attacks in Mumbai. In response to this extremist activity, the Pakistani military has stepped up operations against militants in parts of the tribal areas, expanding a campaign that the Pakistani military has been prosecuting against extremists for more than seven years. The Pakistani military has sacrificed much during this campaign, and we will support their efforts in two ways.

First, we will expand our partnership with the Pakistani military and Frontier Corps. We will provide increased US military assistance for helicopters to provide air mobility, night vision equipment, and training and equipment - specifically for Pakistani Special Operations Forces and their Frontier Corps to make them a more effective counter-insurgency force. We will also expand our outreach and exchange programs to build stronger relationships with the Pakistani leadership.

Second, we will help promote cooperation across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border by providing training, equipment, facilities, and intelligence. These efforts will promote sharing of timely intelligence information, help to deconflict and coordinate security operations on both sides of the border, and limit the flow of extremists between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Within the counter-insurgency construct we have laid out for Afghanistan and Pakistan, we will of course continue to target, disrupt, and pursue the leadership, bases, and support networks of Al Qaeda and other transnational extremist groups operating in the region. We will do this aggressively and relentlessly. We will also help our partners

work to prevent networks from reconstituting themselves, assisting them with delegitimizing the terrorists' methods and their ideology, addressing legitimate grievances to win over reconcilable elements of the population, and promoting broad-based economic and governmental development.

B. Iran

The Iranian regime pursues its foreign policies in ways that contribute to insecurity and frustrate US goals in the CENTCOM AOR. It continues to insert itself into the Israeli-Palestinian situation by provide material, financial, and political support to Hamas and Hizballah; it remains in violation of three UN Security Council Resolutions regarding its nuclear program; and it still provides arms and training to militias and insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Iran continues to use Hizballah as a proxy to assert its influence in the region and to undermine the prospects for peace in the Levant. Despite Hizballah's participation in the government, the group continues to undermine the Lebanese state's authority and remains a threat to Israel. Hizballah's military support from Iran moves mainly through Syria, and thus is dependent on a continuation of the Syria-Iran alliance.

Iran's nuclear program is widely believed to be a part of the regime's broader effort to expand its influence in the region. Although the regime has stated that the purpose of its nuclear program is for peaceful, civilian use, Iranian officials have consistently failed to provide the assurances and transparency necessary for international acceptance and for the verification required by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to which Iran is a signatory. The regime's obstinacy and obfuscation have forced Iran's neighbors and the international community to conclude the worst about the regime's intentions. As a result, other regional powers have announced their intentions to develop nuclear programs. This poses a clear challenge to international non-proliferation interests, in particular due to the potential threat of such technologies being transferred to extremist groups. Moreover, the Israeli government may ultimately see itself so threatened by the prospect of an Iranian nuclear weapon that it would take preemptive military action to derail or delay it.

The Iranian regime has also attempted to thwart US and international efforts to bring stability to Iraq and Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, Iran appears to have hedged its longstanding public support for the Karzai government by providing opportunistic support to the Taliban. In Iraq, however, the Iranian regime has experienced a recent setback. Iraqi and Coalition forces have succeeded in degrading Iranian proxies operating in southern Iraq, and, during January's provincial elections, the Iraqi people voiced a broad rejection of Iranian influence in Iraqi politics.

Pursuing our longstanding regional goals and improving key relationships within and outside the AOR help to limit the negative impact of Iran's policies. A credible US effort on Arab-Israeli issues that provides regional governments and populations a way to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the disputes would undercut the idea of militant "resistance," which the Iranian regime and extremists organizations have been free to exploit. Additionally, progress on the Syrian track of the peace process could disrupt Iran's lines of support to Hamas and Hizballah. Moreover, our cooperative efforts with the Arab Gulf states, which include hardening and protecting their critical infrastructure and developing a regional network of air and missile defense systems, can help dissuade aggressive Iranian behavior. In all of these initiatives, our military activities will support our broader diplomatic efforts.

C. Iraq

The situation in Iraq has improved dramatically in the past year. Where security incidents once averaged well over 1,500 per week in the early summer of 2007 when sectarian violence raged at its peak, there have been less than 150 incidents per week for the past five months, including criminal violence. These improvements in security and the increasing capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces have allowed for a drawdown to fourteen Brigade Combat Teams, with two more to be reduced this year along with thousands of "enabler" forces. And we remain on track to end our combat mission in Iraq by the end of August 2010.

After almost six years of war, the fundamental causes of instability and violence have diminished, and they are now kept largely in check by a number of factors. The security effort in Iraq has put an end to large-scale violence, while increasingly capable and trusted Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) have taken on an expanded role. The Iraqi government's moves toward reconciliation have helped lessen some of the tensions in Iraq's communal struggle for power and resources, as formerly warring groups have turned increasingly to political participation rather than violence as a means of achieving their goals. Moreover, the results of the January 2009 provincial elections indicate a rejection of the Islamist parties seen as the most under the influence of Iran.

Though the trends in Iraq have been largely positive, progress has been uneven, and the situation still remains fragile and reversible. A return to violence remains an option for those who have set aside their arms. Enemy organizations, especially Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and Iranian-backed Shi'a extremist groups, remain committed to narrow sectarian agendas and the expulsion of US influence from Iraq. These enemy organizations will undoubtedly attempt to disrupt or derail several key events during the next year, including the national elections scheduled for December. However, the most difficult and potentially violent problem may be the Arab-Kurd-Turkmen competition in disputed Iraqi territories. Beginning this spring, Iraqis will take up the long-deferred, contentious question of Iraq's internal boundaries, which has fundamental implications for the role of the Kurds in the future Iraqi state and for the likelihood of Sunni Arab and Turkmen insurgent groups returning to large-scale violence.

The central questions for the United States as these events develop are how to help the Iraqis preserve hard-won security gains as US forces withdraw and how to further develop US-Iraq relations that best enable regional stability. The fact that the 2009 Provincial elections were conducted successfully showed that the checks and balances of the Iraqi constitution and professionalism of the ISF act as a brake upon any party's ambitions to control the Iraqi state. However, the Iraqi government has much work to do to develop the essential services the Iraqi people expect and to perform the functions necessary to achieve full support over time. The Iraqi government in 2009-2010 will be under great popular pressure as the Iraqi electorate's expectations will be high after electing new provincial and national governments.

US forces and Provincial Reconstruction Teams are still an element that helps hold the security, governance, and development effort together. In some areas, US military and civilian officials are still important mediators in local conflicts or disputes and key interlocutors between local communities and higher levels of the Iraqi government. Prior to disengaging from those roles, US forces and civilian officials must ensure certain conditions prevail, including:

- A security force capable of coping with current and intensified enemy action
- An Iraqi government capable of meeting basic needs and expectations and delivering services on a nonsectarian, non-ethnic basis
- Adequate rule of law and sufficiently stable civil institutions

D. The Arabian Peninsula

The Arabian Peninsula commands significant US attention and focus because of its importance to our interests and the potential for insecurity. These Arab states on the Peninsula are the nations of the AOR most politically and commercially connected to the US and Europe. They are more developed economically and collectively wield defense forces far larger than any of their neighbors, and they are major providers of the world's energy resources. However, many Gulf Arabs suffer from degrees of disenfranchisement and economic inequity, and some areas of the Peninsula contain extremist sentiment and proselytizing. As a result, the Peninsula has been a significant source of funding and manpower for extremist groups and foreign fighters. These internal troubles are often aggravated and intensified by external factors, such as the Iranian regime's destabilizing behavior, instability in the Palestinian territories and southern Lebanon, the conflict in Iraq, and weapons proliferation.

Because of the Peninsula's importance and its numerous common security challenges, the countries of the Arabian Peninsula are key partners in the developing regional security network described above. CENTCOM ground, air, maritime, and special operations forces participate in numerous operations and training events, bilateral and multilateral, with our partners from the Peninsula. We help develop indigenous capabilities for counter terrorism; border, maritime, and critical infrastructure security;

and deterring Iranian aggression. As a part of all this, our FMS and FMF programs are helping to improve the capabilities and interoperability of our partners' forces. We are also working toward an integrated air and missile defense network for the Gulf. All of these cooperative efforts are facilitated by the critical base and port facilities that Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, and others provide for US forces.

Yemen stands out from its neighbors on the Peninsula. The inability of the Yemeni government to secure and exercise control over all of its territory offers terrorist and insurgent groups in the region, particularly Al Qaeda, a safe haven in which to plan, organize, and support terrorist operations. It is important that this problem be addressed, and CENTCOM is working to do that. Were extremist cells in Yemen to grow, Yemen's strategic location would facilitate terrorist freedom of movement in the region and allow terrorist organizations to threaten Yemen's neighbors, especially Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf States. In view of this, we are expanding our security cooperation efforts with Yemen to help build the nation's security, counter-insurgency, and counter-terror capabilities.

E. Egypt and the Levant

The Levant and Egypt sub-region is the traditional political, social, and intellectual heart of the Arab world and has historically been the primary battleground

between rival ideologies. The dynamics of this sub-region, particularly with regard to Israel and extremist organizations, have a significant impact on the internal and external politics of states outside the region as well. In addition, US policy and actions in the Levant affect the strength of our relationships with partners in the AOR. As such, progress toward resolving the political disputes in the Levant, not to mention the prevention of conflict, is a major concern for CENTCOM.

Egypt remains a leading Arab state, a stabilizing influence in the Middle East, and a key actor in the Middle East Peace Process. In recent years, however, the Egyptian government has had to deal with serious economic challenges and an internal extremist threat; as such, US foreign aid has been a critical reinforcement to the Egyptian government. At the same time, Egypt has played a pivotal role in the international effort to address worsening instability in Gaza. CENTCOM continues to work closely with the Egyptian security forces to interdict illicit arms shipments to extremists in Gaza and to prevent the spread of Gaza's instability into Egypt and beyond.

In Lebanon, Lebanese Hizballah continues to undermine security throughout the Levant by undermining the authority of the Lebanese government, threatening Israel, and providing training and support to extremist groups outside Lebanon. Syria and Iran continue to violate UN Security Council resolutions and provide support to Hizballah - support which allowed Hizballah to instigate and wage a war against Israel in 2006 and reconstitute its armaments afterward. Stabilizing Lebanon requires ending Syria and Iran's illegal support to Hizballah, building the capabilities of the Lebanese Armed

Forces, and assisting the Lebanese government in developing a comprehensive national defense strategy through which the government can exercise its sovereignty, free of interventions from Hizballah, Syria, and Iran.

The al-Asad regime in Syria continues to play the dangerous game of allowing or accepting extremist networks and terrorist facilitators to operate from and through Syrian territory, believing incorrectly that their people and government will be immune from the threat. Whether hosting Hamas leadership, supporting the shipment of armaments to Hizballah, or cooperating with AQI operatives, the al-Asad regime has used its support for its neighbors' opposition movements as strategic leverage. However, unlike Iran, Syria's motives probably stem from short-sighted calculations rather than ideology. It is possible that over time Syria could emerge as a partner in promoting security in the Levant and in the region.

Jordan continues to be a key partner and to play a positive role in the region. Jordan participates in many regional security initiatives and has placed itself at the forefront of police and military training for regional security forces. In addition to its regular participation in multi-lateral training exercises, Jordan promotes regional cooperation and builds partner security capacity through its King Abdullah Special Operations Training Center, Peace Operations Training Center, International Police Training Center, and Cooperative Management Center. These efforts will likely prove critical in the continued development of legitimate security forces in Lebanon and the

Palestinian territories and, as a consequence, in the long-term viability of the peace process.

Through capacity building programs, joint and combined training exercises, information sharing, and other engagement opportunities, we will work with our partners in Egypt and the Levant to build the capabilities of legitimate security forces, defeat extremist networks and sub-state militant groups, and disrupt illegal arms smuggling. In addition, we will work to develop the mechanisms of security and confidence building to support the Middle East Peace Process.

F. Central Asia

Though Central Asia has received relatively less attention than other sub-regions in the AOR, the US maintains a strong interest in establishing long-term, cooperative relationships with the Central Asian countries and other major regional powers to create a positive security environment. Central Asia constitutes a pivotal location on the Eurasian continent between Russia, China, and South Asia; it thus serves as a major transit route for regional and international commerce and for supplies supporting Coalition efforts in Afghanistan. Ensuring stability in Central Asia requires abandoning the outdated, zero-sum paradigms of international politics associated with the so-called "Great Game," as well as adoption cooperative approaches to combat the common enemies of extremism and illegal narcotics trafficking. The United States, Russia, and China need not court or

coerce the Central Asian governments at the expense of one another. Instead, there are numerous opportunities for cooperation to advance the interests of the all parties involved.

However, public and civic institutions in Central Asia are still developing after decades of Soviet rule, and they present challenges to efforts to promote security, development, and cooperation. Although there is interdependence across a broad range of social, economic, and security matters, these nations have not yet established a productive regional modus vivendi. Overcoming these challenges requires gradual, incremental approaches that focus on the alleviation of near-term needs, better governance, the integration of markets for energy and other commercial activity, and grass-roots economic development.

As a part of a broader US effort to promote development and build partnerships in Central Asia, CENTCOM works to build the capabilities of indigenous security forces as well as the mechanisms for regional cooperation. Besides providing training, equipment, and facilities for various Army, National Guard, and border security forces through our Building Partnership Capacity programs, we also work with the national level organizations to facilitate dialogue on security and emergency response issues. For example, in February 2008 and again this past March, CENTCOM hosted Conferences for the Chiefs of Defense from the Central Asian States to discuss regional security issues. CENTCOM also co-hosts the annual Regional Cooperation Exercise, which is designed to improve regional coordination on issues such as counter-terrorism and security and humanitarian crisis response.

CENTCOM is also working to ensure continued access to Afghanistan through Central Asia. With great support from the US Transportation Command, we have established a Northern Distribution Network through several Central Asian States to help reduce costs of transporting non-military supplies to support NATO, US, and Afghan security operations, while decreasing our exposure to risks associated with our supply lines running through Pakistan. On a related note, we are also pursuing alternatives to the use of Manas Air Base in Kyrgyzstan. A decision by the Krygyz government to restrict US and Allied access to the base would be disappointing but would not constitute a serious impediment to Coalition operations in Afghanistan.

V. Critical Mission Enablers

Success in our ongoing missions and maintaining a credible, responsive contingency capacity in the AOR require the support of several key mission enablers. The impacts of these capabilities range from the tactical to the strategic, and CENTCOM fully supports their continuation, expansion, and improvement.

A. Building Partnership Capacity (BPC)

Our security cooperation and security assistance efforts are critical to improving security and stability in the region. They help strengthen our relationships and build the security capabilities of our partners in the AOR. Increases to global train and equip resources, coalition support funds, and the State Department's foreign military sales (FMS) and counternarcotics security assistance and reimbursements programs are essential in generating comprehensive and cooperative solutions to defeat insurgent and extremist groups. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and FMS remain our mainstay security assistance tools and are reasonably successful in meeting needs in a peacetime environment. The International Military Education and Training program is also an important contributor to developing partner nation capabilities and enduring ties. However, in the face of enduring, persistent irregular warfare, we look to expanded special authorities and multi-year appropriations to quickly meet the emerging needs of counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and Foreign Internal Defense operations. Multi-year programs of record that provide training, equipment, and infrastructure for our partner security forces enabled our successes in Iraq and are of prime importance if we are to achieve comparable progress in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Yemen.

B. Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP)

CERP continues to be a vital counter-insurgency tool for our commanders in Afghanistan and Iraq. Small CERP projects can be the most efficient and effective

means to address a local community's needs, and where security is lacking, it is often the only immediate means for addressing those needs. CERP spending is not intended to replace USAID-sponsored projects but rather to complement and potentially serve as a catalyst for these projects. For this reason, CENTCOM fully supports expanded CERP authorities for its use in other parts of the CENTCOM AOR. CENTCOM has established control mechanisms that exceed those mandated by Congress, to include having the Army Audit Agency review programs in Iraq and a command review to ensure CERP funds projects that advance US goals and are of the most benefit to the targeted populations in Iraq and Afghanistan. We will continue to seek innovative mechanisms and authorities to create similar counter-insurgency tools for use by coalition and host nation partners. These tools should allow for a variety of funding sources, to include contributions from Non-Governmental Organizations, International Government Organizations, and partner governments.

C. Adaptable Command, Control, and Communications Systems

Continued operations across a dispersed AOR call for a robust, interoperable, high-volume Theater Command, Control, Communications, and Computers Infrastructure. CENTCOM currently utilizes available bandwidth to capacity, and theater fiber networks are vulnerable to single points of failure in the global information grid. Military Satellite Communications capabilities are critical to theater operations, and the acceleration of

transformational upgrades to these systems would reduce our reliance on commercial providers.

We aggressively pursue means to extend Joint Theater Expeditionary Command, Control, and Communications support and services to disadvantaged users throughout the AOR. Some of these include Radio over Internet Protocol Routed Network, which provides critical radio retransmission services to remote users on the move; the Joint Airborne Communications System, which provides a flexible aerial platform-based radio retransmission solution that can be shifted to extend services to disadvantaged users; and the Distributed Tactical Communications System, which leverages new technologies to deliver reliable, critical communications capabilities to the most remote users. Overall, we require a fully integrated space and terrestrial communications network and infrastructure that support all Joint and potential partner nation users.

D. Intelligence and ISR

We continue to refine our techniques, procedures, and systems to optimize our Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) efforts and to improve our battle space awareness, seeking greater specificity, detail, and timeliness of intelligence whenever possible.

We aggressively seek out ways to execute the entire Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, Analyze, and Disseminate intelligence cycle. However, this requires improved imagery

intelligence, wide area coverage, sensor integration, signals intelligence, moving target indicators, layered ISR architecture and management tools, biometrics, counterintelligence, and human collectors. In particular, the acceleration of ISR Unmanned Aerial Systems procurement is crucial to our success. There is also a requirement for greater sea-based ISR. CENTCOM also supports DoD's planned growth in intelligence specialists, interrogators, counterintelligence, and human intelligence personnel capabilities. Moreover, we have learned the critical importance of a host of other specialized capabilities that have been developed outside traditional military specialties, such as terrorist threat finance analysts, human terrain teams, and document exploitation specialists.

E. Joint and Multinational Logistics

The primary focus of our logistics efforts is the timely deployment, equipping, and sustainment of units engaged in combat operations. Working with our multinational partners, we have instituted an efficient and effective logistics architecture that supports our forces and operations, while constantly reducing costs. Our logistics posture consists of pre-positioned inventories, strategic air and sealift capabilities, and access to bases with critical infrastructure, all of which are key logistics components that support operational flexibility. Our logistics processes center on the Global Combat Support System–Joint portal, which provides a theater level logistics common operational picture and supports theater-wide logistics unity of effort.

A significant asset recently added to CENTCOM's logistics capabilities has been the Joint Contracting Command for Iraq and Afghanistan, which supports CENTCOM, MNF-I, and USFOR-A by providing responsive contracting of supplies, services, and construction, and which also supports capacity building efforts within Iraqi and Afghan Ministries. The Joint Contracting Command recently established the infrastructure to transition from a manual to an automated contract writing system and to a Standard Procurement System across Iraq and Afghanistan. As a result, in FY2008, the Joint Contracting Command-Iraq/Afghanistan was able to execute over 41,000 contract actions and obligate a total of $7.5B, and over 45% of this funding went to Iraqi and Afghan firms. The Joint Contracting Command also teams with Task Force Business Stability Operations (TFBSO) and provides contracting support executing Congressional resources to revitalize Iraqi State Owned Enterprises. We estimate that TFBSO's $100M total in FY07 and FY08 revitalization efforts generated employment for 24,500 Iraqis.

Our logisticians are also focusing on other key initiatives supporting our forces and operations, while minimizing costs. We are now moving an increasing amount of non-military supplies into Afghanistan via a Northern Distribution Network across the Central Asian States, with the cooperation of Russia and other European participants. As mentioned above. these new lines of communication (LOCs) will help reduce costs while decreasing our exposure to risks associated with our supply lines running through Pakistan. Reliance on these LOCs will be further reduced by our Afghan First initiative,

which increases our use of Afghan producers and vendors for products such as bottled water.

F. Force Protection and Countering Improvised Explosive Device (IEDs)

Initiatives focused on countering the threat of IEDs are of paramount importance to our operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. IEDs continue to be the number-one threat to ground forces, and efforts to expedite the fielding of personal protective equipment, IED jammers, route clearance vehicles and equipment, and most recently, the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle (MRAP) have saved countless lives. Because of the MRAP's importance, we have more than tripled our MRAP fielding capacity and more than doubled the number of MRAPs in Afghanistan over the past eight months. Because we expect IEDs to remain a key weapon in the arsenals of terrorists and insurgents for years to come, CENTCOM urges continued support for the Joint IED Defeat Organization; the Services' baseline sustainment for MRAPs, base defense initiatives, and C-IED efforts; and Research, Development, Test, and Experimentation funding and procurement to counter IED tactics and networks..

G. Overseas Basing and Theater Posture

CENTCOM's overseas basing strategy and its associated overseas military construction projects at OSD-approved Forward Operating Sites and Cooperative Security Locations are developing the infrastructure necessary for global access, projection, sustainment, and protection of our combined forces in the AOR. Fully functional sites are essential to our ability to conduct the full spectrum of military operations, engage with and enable partner nations, and act promptly and decisively. Pre-positioned stocks and reset equipment provide critical support to this strategy but require reconstitution and modernization after having been partially expended to support operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Even with Global War on Terror budgets, military construction timelines are too long to respond to changes in a combat environment. Major events such as the approval of the Strategic Partnership Agreement with Iraq and the recent decision to send additional forces to Afghanistan show how rapidly basing requirements can change. Expanded Contingency Construction Authorities made available across the entire CENTCOM AOR can serve as partial, interim solutions because they push construction decision-making authority to our engaged commanders in the field. Increasing the Operations and Maintenance construction threshold for minor construction in support of combat operations across the AOR would also increase the ability of our commanders to quickly meet mission requirements and fully support and protect our deployed forces.

H. Adaptive Requirements, Acquisition, and Technology Processes

The Joint Rapid Acquisition Cell (JRAC) has proven important to addressing non-counter-IED rapid acquisition needs for our operations, and we will continue to use the Joint Urgent Operational Needs (JUON) process to support our warfighters. However, because the JUON process requires execution year reprogramming by the Services, we found in the past that the Rapid Acquisition Fund (RAF) was a useful JRAC tool for supporting immediate needs. When the authority existed, the JRAC used the RAF to field capabilities such as radio systems used for Afghanistan-Pakistan cross-border communications, which were procured in less than four months from the initial identification of the need. The JRAC has also used RAF funding to initiate the fielding of critical biometrics equipment until the JUON process could further source the program, significantly reducing the time required to deploying the technology. Reinstating RAF funding and using it as a complement to the JUON process would allow CENTCOM to more quickly resolve warfighter needs. In addition to the JUON process, CENTCOM leverages Department of Defense programs like Joint Capability Technology Demonstrations (JCTD) to rapidly field capability for the warfighter. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, intelligence collection and analysis tools, and limited collateral damage weapons are examples of recent JCTD successes.

Additionally, DoD currently has authority to spend up to $500,000 in Operations and Maintenance funds for procurement investment line items to meet the operational requirements of a Combatant Command engaged in contingency operations overseas. Our immediate mission requirements frequently call for equipment which exceeds this

cost threshold, such as water filtration equipment, generators, information technology/fusion systems, and heavy lift equipment. An increase of this threshold and a delegation of authority down to at least the theater level would allow commanders to address critical equipment shortfalls using commercially available systems, which in many cases are essential for mission accomplishment.

I. Personnel

Having sufficient and appropriate personnel for our commands and Joint Task Forces (JTFs) is critical to accomplishing our assigned missions and achieving our theater objectives. This is true at both the operational and strategic levels. Our headquarters require permanent, rather than augmentation, manpower for our enduring missions, as well as mechanisms for quickly generating temporary manpower for contingency operations. At the unit level, there continue to be shortfalls in many skill categories and enabling force structures that are low density and high demand. Intelligence specialists, counterintelligence and human intelligence collectors, interrogators, document exploitation specialists, detainee operations specialists, engineers, and military police are just a few of the enablers needed in greater number for current and future operations. As operations continue in Afghanistan, we also see critical need for Public Affairs and Information Operations personnel to improve our Strategic Communications capabilities. Similarly, as we draw down combat forces from Iraq, we will need enablers beyond the typical high-density/low-demand organizations, including such elements as leaders to

augment advisory assistance brigades, counter-terrorist threat finance cells, and critical logistics units. At the same time, I would also request that Congress recognize the vital importance of increasing civilian capacity, particularly in the Department of State and the US Agency for International Development.

Quality of life, family support, and retention programs remain vital to our operations in the AOR. The Rest and Recuperation program continues to be a success, having served more than 135,000 troopers in 2008 and over 710,000 since its inception in September 2003. We also depend heavily on entitlement programs such as Combat Zone Tax Relief, Imminent Danger Pay, and Special Leave Accrual for deployed service members.

VI. Conclusion

There are currently over 215,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen serving in the CENTCOM region. Together with our many civilian partners, they have been the central element in the progress we have made in Iraq and several other areas, and they will be the key to achieving progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan and the other locations where serious work is being done. These wonderful Americans and their fellow troopers around the world constitute the most capable military in the history of our Nation. They have soldiered magnificently against tough enemies during challenging

operations in punishing terrain and extreme weather. And they and their families have made great sacrifices since 9/11.

Nothing means more to these great Americans than the sense that those back home appreciate their service and sacrifice.

In view of that, I want to conclude by thanking the American people for their extraordinary support of our military men and women and their families–and by thanking the members of this committee for your unflagging support and abiding concern for our troopers and their families as well.

STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL ERIC T. OLSON

TO

THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

REGARDING THE AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN STRATEGIC REVIEW

2 April 2009

Good morning. Chairman Skelton, Congressman McHugh, distinguished members of the Committee...

Thank you for the invitation to appear before this committee to represent the United States Special Operations Command. I will focus on the roles of our headquarters and joint special operations forces in addressing the current and potential threats posed by extremists and their allies and networks in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The situation in this region is increasingly dire. Al Qa'eda's surviving leaders have proven adept at hiding, communicating and inspiring. Operating in and from remote sites in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, Al Qa'eda remains a draw for local and foreign fighters who subscribe to its extremist ideology and criminality.

The Taliban, although not militarily strong, is pervasive and brutal. Operating in the guise of both nationalists and keepers of the faith, but behaving in the manner of street gangs and mafias, they have forced and intimidated a mostly benign populace to bend to their will. Their methods run the relatively narrow range from malicious to evil.

The President's strategy announced last week is one we fully support. We have contributed to the review of the past several months and are pleased to see that the strategy includes a clear focus on Al Qa'eda as the enemy and that a whole-of-government approach is directed.

We know well that progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan will be neither quick nor easy. We, as a Nation and international community, must be prepared for an extended campaign – a campaign that must go well beyond traditional military activities. Increasing the presence and capacity of civilian agencies and international organizations, to include sufficient funding and training, are essential to help develop and implement the basic functions of credible government in Afghanistan, and to assist Pakistan's efforts to dismantle safe havens and displace extremists in its border provinces. Also essential is robust support to the military, law enforcement, border security and intelligence organizations of Afghanistan and Pakistan themselves – as it is ultimately they who must succeed in their lands.

United States Special Operations Command and the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps forces it trains, equips, deploys and supports have key roles and missions within this campaign. With a long history of counter terror, counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare operations in many of earth's crisis and tension spots, the culture and ethos of special operations forces are well suited to many of the more demanding aspects of our mission in Afghanistan and to our increasing interaction with Pakistan's military and Frontier Corps forces.

Right now in Afghanistan, as for the last seven years, Special Operations activities range from high-tech man-hunting to providing veterinary services for tribal livestock. The direct action missions are urgent and necessary, as they provide the time and space needed for the more indirect counterinsurgency operations to have their decisive effect. Undertaken in proper balance, these actions address immediate security threats while also engaging the underlying instability in the region.

In Pakistan, we continue to work with security forces at the scale and pace set by them, and we are prepared to do more. With our Pakistani partners, Special Operations Forces are currently helping train Pakistani trainers in the North-West Frontier Province in order to enhance their counter-insurgency operations. While we share much with them, our forces are in turn

learning much about our common adversaries and the social complexities of the region. We stand ready to continue to work with Pakistani forces, and to stand by them for the long term.

While certain units of the special operations force are leading high-tech, high-end efforts to find and capture or kill the top terrorist and extremist targets in Afghanistan, fundamental to most of the deployed special operations force is our enduring partnership with our Afghan counterparts. Under a program that began over three years ago, US Special Forces, at the 12-man team level, have trained Afghan Commandos in the classrooms and on the firing ranges, and then moved with them to their assigned regions across the country. Living remotely with them on small camps, continuing the training and mentoring, and integrating with them on day and night combat operations has had great effect. Supporting their local development and assistance efforts has had perhaps even a more powerful impact. This program was recently expanded to formally partner US Special Forces with non-Commando Afghan battalions – a program that will consume most of the additional special operations force that will be deployed as part of the 17,000 troop increase.

The Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps component commands of United States Special Operations Command use authorities and a budget granted by legislation to me as the USSOCOM commander to organize, equip, train and provide their forces to support operational commanders globally. When outside the United States, all special operations forces are under the operational control of the appropriate Geographic Combatant Commander.

USSOCOM's budget, which is historically slightly under two percent of the total Defense budget, is intended to fund materials, services, equipment, research, training and operations that are peculiar to special operations forces. It primarily enables modification of Service-common equipment and procurement of specialized items for the conduct of missions that are specifically and appropriately special operations forces' missions to perform.

In general, the SOCOM budget has been robust enough to provide for rapid response to a broad set of crises. We rely on each of the Services to provide for our long-term sustainment in wartime environments and to develop and sustain the enabling capabilities, and on operational commanders to assign it to their special operations task forces. We can serve in both supporting and supported roles at the operational level. Special operations' effects are actually core elements around which key parts of a strategy can be based.

While more than 10,000 members of our special operation forces are now under the command of General Petraeus in the Central Command area of responsibility and around one hundred more are working in Afghanistan under NATO's ISAF command structure; about 2,000 others are in about 65 countries on an average day. Their activities, fully approved and coordinated, cover the broad spectrum of traditional military activities – well beyond the stereotypical one-dimensional gunslinger to encompass the Three-Dimensional warrior, equally adept at defense, development and diplomacy. Special operations bring soft power with a hard edge.
The employment of special operations forces will actually not change much as a result of a revised overall strategy – our units have been conducting both counter terrorism and counter insurgency for several years. We will continue to provide our broad capabilities to our fullest capacity in order to meet the needs of our elected and appointed civilian leaders and our military operational commanders.

Our strategy in Afghanistan must secure the primary urban areas and main routes so that life and legitimate business can begin a return to normalcy. But Afghanistan is not Iraq, and most of the population is not urban. Security must be felt in the hinterland, provided by Afghan forces supported by small teams of US and NATO troops and enhanced by civilian agencies in a manner that improves local life by local standards. I am encouraged by the prioritization of this approach in the new strategy.

Inherent to our success, and to the defeat of our enemies, is the realization that this is a real fight as long as Al Qa'eda, the Taliban and associated extremists want it to be. Civilian

casualties are mostly a result of their tactics, not ours. The operational commanders I hear from are doing all they can to minimize the number of non-combatant deaths because they both abhor the reality of civilian casualties and they understand the negative strategic impact of such deaths. They also know that, as long as our enemies force non-combatant women, children and others to support their operations or remain on targeted facilities after warnings have been issued, some will die. They also know the conditions, numbers and severity of the casualties will be highly exaggerated and quickly communicated. We must acknowledge the seriousness of this challenge and find ways to mitigate its effects, especially as we increase our troop presence in the coming months.

I will conclude with a simple statement of pride in the special operations force that I am honored to command. Created by a proactive Congress and nurtured by your strong support over the last 22 years, United States Special Operations Command headquarters has brought together units from all four Services to develop and sustain a truly magnificent joint capability. Special Operations Forces are contributing globally well beyond what its percentage of the total force would indicate, and in Afghanistan and Pakistan they are well known for their effectiveness.

I stand ready for your questions.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 2, 2009

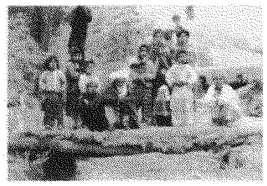
COMMANDER
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE

COUNTERINSURGENCY GUIDANCE

"There is no purely military solution to the situation in Afghanistan. Ultimately, the solution must be a political one which is Afghan led. In the meantime, the military must protect the people and provide the security space necessary for good governance, development and a successful political outcome." COMISAF

Our operational imperative is to protect the population while extending the legitimacy and effectiveness of GIRoA and decreasing the effectiveness of insurgent elements. Political power is the central issue in insurgencies and counterinsurgencies (COIN); each side aims to influence the people to accept its governance or authority as legitimate[1]. We (ISAF, GIRoA, the Afghan people, and our international partners) will prevail in this conflict and succeed in securing and building a better Afghanistan. The principles below apply in all phases of the Shape, Clear, Hold, and Build overarching framework and to all levels of the ISAF chain of command. To succeed in this campaign, we must:

Be Population-Focused. Demonstrate that our presence in Afghanistan is in support of the Afghan people. Defend and engage the population: be viewed as supporters of all the people. Population-centric operations to influence the people should be the main effort with enemy-centric targeting operations in support. Increase interaction between security forces and the population. Move out of FOBs and spend more time with our partners in the ANP, ANA, and District and Provincial governments and be more visible in the communities they serve. In doing so, we legitimize ANSF by linking the provision of security services to GIRoA; assure the population by removing insurgent intimidation; marginalize insurgents by making their attacks on security and governance infrastructure an attack on the population, thus forcing the enemy to undermine its own support base.



Follow an Integrated Approach to Achieve Comprehensive Effects. Focus on governance, development, and security concurrently. Success in Afghanistan will not come from the sole pursuit of a security line of operation by military forces. Claims that ISAF only does security have no place in this campaign. These lines of operation are interdependent and are intended to be complementary and comprehensive; failure in one means mission failure on all. Work with all partners to form one team in support of the Integrated Approach[2]. Drive this methodology at your level for planning, coordination, execution, assessment, and reporting. Maneuver units need to work with the Afghan government and community leaders, ANSF, the PRTs, PMTs, ETTs, OMLTs and civilian agencies to make the sum greater than its parts. Support capacity building and integration amongst our security partners to improve operations and accelerate development of ANSF. Provide direction to partnering and mentoring units to integrate ANA and ANP operations and, where practical, encourage the ANA to assist in the development of the ANP.

Seize and Maintain the Initiative. Adapt tactics and seize the initiative before the enemy does the same. Continuously incorporate lessons learned into operations in order to be more effective than the enemy. Proactively identify and plan for changes in the operational environment and anticipate change, instead of reacting to it. Force the enemy to respond to us and seize windows of opportunity to influence the population effectively. Plan all our operations in an Action (our tasks/intent), Reaction (enemy's), and Counteraction (what we do to adapt to the enemy) mindset.

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[1] *Counterinsurgency*, FM 3-24, para 1-3 and *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide*, page 6.
[2] Working with and aiming to achieve unity of effort with key partners (UNAMA, GIRoA, International Community representatives, etc) to ensure efforts are fully integrated form the outset. To achieve this we have to be proactive, identifying and seeking out the key stakeholders and developing the necessary relationships with them.

Gain Situational Understanding. Gain a nuanced understanding of the situation and dynamics at the local, district, and provincial levels. Share information, best practices, and intelligence across and between levels to gain a comprehensive understanding of the environment. Collaborate and share information with CF and ANSF partners to further increase their understanding of the human terrain. Identify the specific root causes of insecurity, criminality or support to the insurgency in your area of operations, gain understanding of what exactly "governance" means to local Afghans, and discern the influence of informal structures of power. Staffs should gather and display 'information and intelligence' about the human terrain for use by operators at the local level to make lethal and non-lethal targeting and information operations more effective.

Be Present in Key Population Areas. Carry out smaller patrols, support smaller detachments and encourage ANSF counterparts to do the same. These actions free up larger numbers of similar ANSF units to achieve a disproportionately greater effect. In those areas where GIRoA officials and international aid donors find it difficult to generate the personnel and resources required to penetrate into the countryside, step into this vacuum and, at a minimum, set the conditions for their presence.

Be Persistent and Hold. Support GIRoA/ANSF efforts to be seen as more enduring than the insurgency, which offers no hope to the population. Do not clear an area unless GIRoA and the ANSF are able to hold it. Establish an environment in which the population feels they can resist insurgents, without fear of consequence or retribution. This will only happen if the population believes GIRoA will outlast the insurgents and, in the longer term, offer the population greater prospects for security and prosperity. We will stay as long as we are invited and needed...until the job is done.

Maintain the Trust and Respect of Afghans. Live our values and act above reproach. Insurgent groups take advantage of our failures and, because they are not constrained by the truth, sometimes our successes, too. Be first with the truth. Demonstrate respect and consideration for the Afghan people, their culture, customs, and religion. Avoid insults, inappropriate gestures, unnecessary brandishing of weapons, and aggressive driving that Afghans may perceive as offensive, threatening, or reckless. Whenever possible allow and encourage ANSF or NDS to search houses or fellow Afghans when it is required. While we will make mistakes, remember that your integrity is critical to this fight.

Pursue Relentlessly, but Protect Civilian Lives. Do not hesitate to pursue the enemy and act decisively against him; however, always employ good tactical judgment and proportionality in the application of firepower, consistent with the inherent right of self defense and our Rules of Engagement. We are fighting an enemy that often hides among the civilian population or uses innocent civilians as a shield, both before and immediately after an attack, so the battle is often waged among civilians and their property; thus it is imperative that we always demonstrate proportionality, requisite restraint and the utmost discrimination during every action and engagement. Leadership at all levels and training, pre-deployment and reinforced in-theater, are the keys to minimizing the potential for civilian casualties.

Reinforce Afghan Accountability and Legitimacy. Encourage GIRoA to act in a transparent and accountable manner. Do this by setting an example. When GIRoA (and ISAF) is accountable to the populace, its legitimacy is strengthened. Facilitate solutions at the district and provincial level that reinforce the rule of law and GIRoA's legitimacy; take care not to strengthen local powerbrokers working outside governance structures. On the other hand, always support the community's shura, whenever it truly represents the population.

Enable Afghan Solutions and Afghan Capacity. Foster Afghan (not western) solutions and help generate and retain human capacity. Develop and sustain an environment that enables individual mentoring/monitoring teams to perform their tasks in support of increasing GIRoA's capacity, effectiveness and legitimacy. Maneuver units, PRTs, and mentors must work together to ensure those with appropriate skills contribute to the identification and development of the right types of systemic investment and improvement in GIRoA infrastructure, processes, and staff performance.

Partner as Equals and Promote Afghan Credibility. Build institutional and personal relationships with your Afghan counterparts and work with them as a team. Working alongside GIRoA counterparts (from national to local level) presents us with opportunities to coach, teach and mentor. Treat your partners as equals and work with the mentors who are teaching and coaching your partners. Promote the success and competence of your Afghan partners. Give them credit for joint efforts. Partnering and mentoring (see footnote[3] for definitions) enhances protection of the population and reinforces GIRoA legitimacy by providing the people of Afghanistan with a more proficient and effective government at the national, regional, provincial and district levels. Be creative and diverse in your partnering efforts. The ANA may be the most effective security apparatus in Afghanistan but its reach is limited across the country. By contrast, despite significant challenges, the ANP's reach extends across Afghanistan and is often the only link to GIRoA for a majority of the population.

Win the Battle of Perceptions. Work with GIRoA, ANSF and local community leaders to inform and shape the perceptions, attitudes, understanding and behavior of key population groups. Consistently find ways to win the battle of perception. Every insurgent action is designed to either influence the attitudes and perceptions of these population groups or to take advantage of local disenchantment to meet their own ends. In the competition for influence, we must be more agile and effective than the enemy. Encourage moderate Afghan Islamic groups, mullahs, and citizens to challenge the legitimacy of the ideas and actions of extremist insurgent elements.

Enable the Tactical Fight. Appropriately authorize, resource, and integrate tactical efforts within the ISAF command structure. Actors at the local level are the key to achieving tactical effects which collectively will help shape the operational and strategic environments. Cumulative success at the tactical level will provide time and space – literally and figuratively – for the key stakeholders at the operational and strategic level to make the necessary institutional changes required to ensure long term stability. That time and space will also allow the governance and development lines of operation to take effect. Provide direction but avoid putting unnecessary burden on those in the field.

Pass on Your Experience. Pass on your story, especially to those coming in behind you, to maintain continuity of mission. The insurgents have been here longer and the population will always be here; they will remember well after our rotations and the passage of time cause us to forget.

These principles apply in all phases of the Shape, Clear, Hold, and Build overarching framework and to all levels of the ISAF chain of command.

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[3] **Partnering**: a habitual relationship between ANSF and ISAF units that must pervade all aspects of the life of an ANSF unit through mutual cooperation and responsibility for planning, preparation, execution, and post operational assessments towards the achievement of joint operational effects.
Mentor: coach and teach (ANSF) units, provide the conduit for command and control, and when required, support the operational planning and employment of the (ANSF) unit to which they are aligned in order to support the development of a self sufficient, competent and professional (ANSF).

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

April 2, 2009

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. LANGEVIN

Mr. LANGEVIN. I believe that looking at Pakistan and Afghanistan as one area of operation is a very wise decision that will help focus our strategic planning on the fact that what happens in one country has a direct effect on its neighbor. However, so much of Pakistan's strategic planning is based on their relationship with India. Indeed much of Pakistan's military is still focused on countering India, not on fighting the insurgency that currently rages within its borders. Even Ambassador Hoibrooke's authority as Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan falls short of including India and the issue of Kashmir. What is being done to coordinate our Afghan/Pakistan strategy with India?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Both India and Pakistan are key international partners with which the United States continues to develop long-term strategic partnerships. National Security Advisor General James Jones said while recently visiting Islamabad that that India and Pakistan were at a "very, very important moment" in their relationship, which was progressing in the "right direction." The Department of Defense in particular has expressed a deep commitment to building stronger ties with both countries. However, the Administration respects India's position that it does not view Kashmir as within the scope of our strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Administration will continue to consult with all our international partners as to how to best address the very real and very serious challenges facing the South and Central Asian region today.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MRS. MCMORRIS RODGERS

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. President Obama has called his request for more troops in Afghanistan a troop surge. In the height of Iraq, we were up to 22 combat brigades, at the end of this year, we should have about 7 combat brigades in Afghanistan. How long do you see us maintaining this level of troops in Afghanistan? Do we need more?

General PETRAEUS, Secretary FLOURNOY, and Admiral OLSON. Rather than a temporary surge in the numbers of U.S. troops in Afghanistan, the situation will require a sustained, substantial commitment of resources over a period of several years. It will take time and tough fighting to reverse the downward spiral in some parts of the country, to begin to make progress, and to build in a poor country torn by over thirty years of war and conflict.

This fall, we anticipate that we will have some 68,000 U.S. troops deployed to Afghanistan. This troop level, however, is not fixed and could change depending upon the requirements on the ground of our strategy. The President's announcement on February 17, 2009, of troop increases was for forces that were required in 2009. That announcement was based on a request for forces by the Commander, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan, at the time GEN David McKiernan, which included forces required during 2009 and forces he anticipated would be needed in 2010. Because any decision for the deployment of these additional forces did not have to be made until late 2009, it made sense to defer the decision on the forces requested for 2010, assess the security environment in Afghanistan, and gauge the effect that our additional forces have had before sending more.

GEN McChrystal is now conducting an assessment of the strategy for Afghanistan and a "resource-to-task" analysis to execute the strategy. His assessment will be provided to me, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Secretary of Defense in August.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Although President Obama has called, for more combat troops, he is also deploying a surge of civilian advisors. Would you say that our country is getting into nation-building more so than really focusing on combating the terrorists? If you want to achieve the minimalist goal of preventing a safe-haven for terrorists, do we have to do the maximum by nation-building?

General PETRAEUS, Secretary FLOURNOY, and Admiral OLSON. The goal of the administration in Afghanistan is to dismantle terrorist and extremist networks and prevent Afghanistan from ever again being a safe-haven from which terrorists can launch attacks on the United States and its allies. This goal requires an effective

Afghan government that can provide for the security of its own country and prevent terrorist safe-havens in its territory. The goal also requires a relatively prosperous economy that will give the Afghan people alternatives to extremism and criminality. The fulfillment of these conditions cannot be achieved by military means alone and requires a significant amount of civilian expertise. It is only through the integration of our military efforts, our training and mentoring of the Afghan National Army and Police, and the civilian work of building governance and economic infrastructure that we will be able to achieve success.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. We have the best military in the world. Our country could not be more proud of the men and women serving in uniform. The troops in Afghanistan have been working hard to clear areas to make safe for the people of Afghanistan. However, shortly after our troops leave the area, the terrorist invade again. I have heard that the troops call this "mowing the lawn." With the troop surge President Obama is calling for, what is your plan to help prevent our troops from having to "mow the lawn" and move forward to expanding more safe zones?

General PETRAEUS, Secretary FLOURNOY, and Admiral OLSON. What the troops are referring to is the process, not uncommon in Afghanistan up until recently, of clearing an area of insurgents and then leaving, allowing those insurgents to return. The increase in U.S., Coalition, and Afghan forces will allow units to retain areas they clear, to hold on to their hard fought security gains, and then to build on them. Our new strategy is committed to protecting and serving the Afghan people. As part of the comprehensive counterinsurgency focus, we will take a residential approach and, in a culturally acceptable way, live among (or near) the people to provide a persistent security presence, understand their neighborhoods, and invest in relationships. The increase in U.S. forces will allow us to implement this strategy more effectively, because we will be able to expand the security presence further into the provinces and villages and not depart, ensuring the people in those areas are not susceptible to insurgent intimidation once again. The additional U.S. forces will also enable us to expand and improve our mentorship to develop the Afghan National Security Forces. In particular, the new forces will add significant capacity to under-resourced Afghan police reform programs, expediting critical police development and allowing U.S. military advisors to mentor more Afghan National Army units. It is important to note that military forces are necessary but, by themselves, are not sufficient to achieve our objectives in Afghanistan. The U.S. must have robust and substantial civilian capacity to effectively complement and build upon progress in the security line of operation by helping develop Afghan governance and improve basic services provided to the people.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. GIFFORDS

Ms. GIFFORDS. The Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) will be increased under these plans but in many places they will be working in areas that remain unsecured. Given the need for a low-key appearance which often includes no body armor and non-military vehicles, how will we protect more of these teams on the ground?

Secretary FLOURNOY. All U.S. forces and civilian personnel, when deployed or stationed in a potentially hostile environment, will have the appropriate equipment and transportation to ensure the necessary level of security. General McChrystal has stated that all civilians sent to Afghanistan, including those deployed as members of PRTs, will be provided with appropriate security.

Ms. GIFFORDS. I understand that the people of Pakistan have a very low opinion of the United States. I've heard polling data from the Pentagon that suggests it's between 4 and 6 percent. Given our current approach to issues in the border region and in Pakistan and the continuance of ongoing operations, what is the breaking point for popular support in Pakistan and when will they decide that the current government's support of the U.S. is too high to bear?

Secretary FLOURNOY. The U.S. approach to Pakistan is broad and long-term. A serious, long-term commitment by the U.S. will demonstrate to the Pakistani people that the U.S. is a committed partner countering the past history of ups and downs that characterized the relationship. This is particularly true in the military to military relationship where the U.S. continues to suffer from a "lost generation" of Pakistani military officers who were unable to forge ties with U.S. military counterparts during an 11-year period when military relations languished under our unilateral sanctions. The Department of Defense is moving forward with training, IMET, and other exchanges to rebuild a foundation for trust. However, Pakistani counterparts continue to cite a "trust deficit" as a key impediment to a successful relationship.

The Administration's whole-of-government initiative is designed to support the democratic government of Pakistan as it addresses the needs of the population through a variety of means, including education, economic assistance, enhanced governance and political party development, law enforcement training, and as provided for in the President's strategy, a fully-resourced counterinsurgency strategy. The Department of Defense is only one agency involved in this effort. The Departments of State and Treasury, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and other U.S. agencies and departments are also fully engaged in this effort. The Department of Defense is working with the Department of State to develop a comprehensive strategic communications plan for Pakistan. While there is an urgent need to support Pakistan as it seeks to improve its capacity to conduct counterinsurgency operations to defeat Al Qaeda, the U.S. must also work to improve the capacity of the Government of Pakistan with a focus on education, agriculture, job creation, and training. The U.S. plans to foster long-term economic stability through direct budget support, infrastructure investment, development assistance, and technical advice on making sound economic policy. DoD is committed to building ties that will be the basis for a relationship that gains greater support from the Pakistani people.

Ms. GIFFORDS. At Davis-Monthan AFB, our airmen train and deploy to provide precision Close Air Support to troops in contact. Unfortunately the demand for their services continues to rise. What increase in operational tempo can they anticipate as we surge in Afghanistan, and how are we planning to provide additional funding support for the aging A-10 aircraft they fly every day?

Secretary FLOURNOY. The Office of the Secretary of Defense works closely with the Joint Staff and the Military Departments to determine our regional policy for Afghanistan. I recommend that you direct your question to the Secretary of the Air Force to ensure as accurate and informative an answer as possible.

Ms. GIFFORDS. At Fort Huachuca we have increased our intelligence training by more than 500% since 9/11. We are prepared down there to continue to grow but there isn't enough detail in this plan for us to judge one way or the other. How much additional need do you anticipate for intelligence assets on the ground? What increase in intelligence needs do you anticipate?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Our Combatant Commanders determine the requirements for operational intelligence in their respective theaters. The U.S. Army Intelligence Center (USAIC) is prepared to expand, as necessary, to meet Army and Combatant Commander emerging requirements by continuing to provide demanding, relevant, and realistic intelligence training to ensure a full-spectrum capability. Although the growth at Fort Huachuca since 9/11 has been a key enabler for our forces, there remain areas where future growth could prove to be beneficial. Below are areas where we see the greatest potential payoffs in terms of improving our tactical intelligence capabilities.

a. An integrated Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) training facility to train airborne ISR platform crews and their associated Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination (PED) to operate efficiently and effectively in any environment

b. An increase in advanced Human Intelligence (HUMINT) training capacity to sustain the tremendous growth of the HUMINT Training Joint Center of Excellence (HT–JCOE) since its inception and accommodate even more unfunded growth that is currently in the requirements determination process

c. Expanded capabilities in the Computer Network Operations (CNO) domain that would provide focused intelligence training in CNO operations to mitigate emerging threats

d. Continued funding of the Army Cultural Center at Fort Huachuca, which has trained more than 70,000 personnel since its inception in 2006, is required to sustain this critical enabler for the Army in the hybrid warfare environment we face now and will face in the years to come

e. Increased funding to develop high-fidelity models and simulations to enable the Intelligence Center to evolve intelligence support and force design into irregular/asymmetric warfare, which will result in increased efficiencies as new capabilities are fielded

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. HEINRICH

Mr. HEINRICH. Secretary Flournoy, you and General Petraeus mentioned in your testimonies the importance of the CERP Program (Commanders Emergency Response Program). I am a strong supporter of mechanisms that utilize smart power and complement our existing military missions abroad. What accountability measures have been implemented regarding CERP and how do you rate their success?

How prevalent is the CERP program in Afghanistan and do our allies and the International Security Assistance Force actively engage in a similar program?

General PETRAEUS. USCENTCOM continues to work with the Army, the Department's designated Executive Agent (EA) for the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP), to strengthen accountability over CERP, in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and to implement recommendations from General Accountability Office (GAO) CERP-related audits. Before relinquishing command of MNF–I, General Petraeus requested the Army Audit Agency (AAA) perform a management audit of CERP policies and procedures in Iraq. The resulting recommendations and lessons learned from that review are being applied to both theaters. The Commander, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR–A) has recently requested a review by AAA of CERP policies in Afghanistan and the program's effectiveness there. The USFOR–A Commander has specified accountability, training, and growth as the main priorities for CERP improvement in Afghanistan.

USCENTCOM is drafting a fragmentary order (FRAGO) directing its components and other subordinate commands to take "cash off the battlefield" to the greatest extent feasible. Besides requiring fewer assets to protect and manage cash reserves, reducing the use of U.S. currency in the USCENTCOM Area of Responsibility will improve accountability for payments made under a variety of programs including CERP and minimize the potential for graft. To address the need for improved training, USCENTCOM is working with the Army (as CERP EA) to provide pre-deployment training at home station (through Mobile Training Teams) as well as CERP training at the National Training Centers. In both theaters, we intend to enhance training for Project Purchasing Officers, Paying Agents, and Project Officers supporting CERP. USFOR–A is also reviewing the feasibility of a central database to de-conflict CERP projects with functions and activities of other U.S. Government agencies, non-government organizations, and foreign governments.

CERP is widely used in Afghanistan; the austere conditions magnify the need for, and the benefits of this vital COIN program. CERP enables DoD to address urgent humanitarian requirements, particularly in areas where the security environment prevents U.S. civilian agencies from routinely operating, and its use well supports the objectives of our counterinsurgency strategy.

The NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Post-Operations Humanitarian Relief Fund (POHRF) provides quick humanitarian assistance following significant ISAF military operations. Established under the auspices of the ISAF Commander, POHRF receives donations from ISAF troop-contributing nations.

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