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AFGHANISTAN: THE RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC REVIEW, PART II

HEARING

BEFORE THE

FULL COMMITTEE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD
DECEMBER 8, 2009

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AFGHANISTAN: THE RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC REVIEW, PART II

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Tuesday, December 8, 2009.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 9:30 a.m., in room HVC–210, Capitol Visitor Center, 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. The committee will come to order. I ask the gentlemen of the press to be as inconspicuous as possible and not interfere with the witnesses today.

The hearing will come to order. I want to first say that no demonstration will be tolerated. Anyone disturbing by signs or any other disturbance will be removed forthwith.

So today I welcome on behalf of the Armed Services Committee, our second hearing on Afghanistan, "The Results of Strategic Review." The witnesses today, General Stanley McChrystal, Commander, International Security Assistant Force (ISAF) in the United States Forces Afghanistan, and the Honorable Karl Eikenberry, the United States Ambassador to Afghanistan. We welcome you and we thank you for being with us, as we have been long anticipating your testimony today.

Two months ago I wrote a lengthy letter to the President, some six pages, that he listen to his commanders in the field. Let me begin by commending the President for demonstrating his commitment to achieving success in Afghanistan by adding 30,000 American troops to the war. In that letter and in private conversations, I urged the President to listen to our military leaders and give them what they needed, and he did just that.

I have noted that the war in Iraq caused the previous Administration to lose focus on Afghanistan. Shortly after deposing the Taliban regime and forcing Al Qaeda out of Afghanistan, the preoccupation with Iraq caused the war in Afghanistan to be underresourced with essentially no strategy.

Unsurprisingly, the Taliban and their Al Qaeda allies were able to come back and once again threaten the stability of Afghanistan and the region and, ultimately, our country.

The President in his speech last week conveyed his commitment to addressing the threat. Opposed by Al Qaeda and their Taliban allies in January 2009, there were about 33,000 United States

troops in Afghanistan. Now, in about seven months, there will be three times that.

Yesterday in my office Ambassador Eikenberry informed me that we will soon also have triple the number of civilian experts assigned to the mission, and we welcome that.

Many of the press have compared the increase in force in Afghanistan to the surge in Iraq. I don't think such comparisons are wise or fair. As a percentage of the forces on the ground, the increase ordered by President Obama is much larger than the increase in Iraq. And the fight in Afghanistan will be different in many ways.

Media articles citing General Petraeus yesterday suggest that he does not believe that progress in Afghanistan will not come as quickly as it did in Iraq. In the article he suggested that we must be measured in our expectations. To me this article highlights the need for a commitment to accomplishing this mission, not just from the President, but from the Congress and the American people. I hope that this hearing can help build that sense of support and that sense of commitment.

Yesterday you, General McChrystal, and you, Ambassador Eikenberry, sat in my office and told me that you believe you can successfully complete the mission in Afghanistan. I believe that you are right: that the President's new strategy, coupled with the increase in troops and civilian experts, and the sense of urgency provided by the July 2011 target for transition, presents our best chance for success.

Every member of this committee will have questions about the strategy and how it can be accomplished. From our part, I have numerous questions: What does success in Afghanistan look like? What do you believe must be accomplished in the next 18 months? What risks are we accepting in the next 18 months and how can we mitigate them? How will we convince the Pakistanis that their interests lie with us? How will we measure progress over time, and how will we help the Afghan people build the sort of legitimate government that can end the insurgency.

While I do have questions about implementation, I do not have any doubt that we must succeed in Afghanistan; that the President is right to order the deployment of an additional 30,000 troops on top of the troops already approved; and that the new strategy provides a good path for success.

I hope our witnesses today can help us fill in the details of how the difficult but achievable goals of this strategy can be accomplished. Ultimately we are working to protect the American people and end the threat from Al Qaeda.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Now I turn to my good friend Buck McKeon, the Ranking Member, the gentleman from California, for comments he may have.

Let me, Buck, one administrative note before our witnesses begin their statements. Members are reminded that there is a classified briefing with Admiral LeFever, the Commander, Office of the Defense Representative to Pakistan (CODR) HVC–301 at 3:00 p.m.

today. Given the importance of Pakistan, I hope members will schedule themselves to attend there.

And with that, Buck McKeon.

STATEMENT OF HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" MCKEON, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA, RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General McChrystal, Ambassador Eikenberry, welcome and thank you for being here this morning. This committee, this Congress, and the American people have been awaiting your testimony.

Before I go into the substance of my remarks, I want to state at the outset that all of us support your mission in Afghanistan and the men and women serving under your command. For over three months, Washington has been mired in a substantial war debate. Pundits and academics alike have been weighing in on whether the conflict in Afghanistan is in our national interest and if this is a fight we can win.

In the absence of a clear, authoritative voice during these months of the White House review, the course of the debate has followed a flood of leaks from the always popular, yet never accountable, "anonymous" source. To put it mildly, this was not helpful. During this time the public support for the war waned, and I worry our mission suffered too.

With the President's speech last week and your testimony here today, I believe we have finally turned a corner in this war. We must now move from the assessment stage to the execution stage of this strategy. Instead of asking if we can achieve success, we must now give the time, space, and resources that you need to succeed.

Rather than questioning if the United States has a will to win, you, General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry, and the thousands of U.S. military and civilians in Afghanistan will demonstrate the will of this mission to defeat Al Qaeda, rout the Taliban and bring stability to Afghanistan.

It is time that we conclude this chapter on the war debate in Washington and write the next chapter on national consensus and mission success. You gentlemen will have the pen; you shall be the authors of success. Today you will write the first page of this next chapter.

After these hearings, Washington must step aside and let Kabul once again become Ground Zero in this conflict. General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry, the task before you is enormous. I know that I speak for the entire committee when I say that you are the best people to take on this challenge. This country is blessed to have leaders like you in its service.

In September your written word when we received your assessment—we read your written word when we received your assessment. Today we need to hear you speak about the unwritten words between the lines of the assessment. This is your opportunity to speak to the citizens of this country and interested parties across the world. I think when they hear from you, they will be convinced of the soundness of our strategy and optimistic about the chances for our success.

Fortunately, much of your assessment seems to have been internalized in Washington and by members of this committee. On Tuesday night the President agreed to provide you with additional troops to execute a counterinsurgency strategy. The Commander-in-Chief responded to the urgency of the situation when he committed to deploy those forces as fast as possible.

Last week Secretary Gates testified that our aim is to reverse the Taliban's momentum, which is precisely what your assessment described as essential to preventing mission failure in Afghanistan. Yet the President's speech and subsequent testimony last week left me concerned that the Administration did not adopt some of the fundamentals of your assessment. Nowhere in your assessment did I see discussion of a date certain to begin withdrawal. In fact, you wrote that the long-term fight will require patience and commitment. I believe your concern was that the Afghan people are waiting on the sidelines to see how committed we are. Did we demonstrate that commitment last week?

On Thursday, Secretary Gates testified that he was persuaded by you and General Petraeus that beginning a period of transition on a date certain will in fact incentivize the Afghans. I look forward to your persuading us of the same today.

Moreover, I cannot find mention in your assessment of the need to put pressure on the Afghans to take on responsibility. Before last week's speech I assumed, like many, that the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) were doing everything they could to get into the fight. While corruption in the realm of governance and development undermined our security efforts, I believe that the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior were part of the solution and not part of the problem. In fact, the variable holding back the growth of the Afghan National Security Forces were things outside the control of Kabul, namely funds to pay for a larger force and more capacity on the part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to train the Afghans.

So where did this new narrative of putting pressure on the Afghans come from? What I did not hear last week was a commitment to follow the recommendation of your assessment and build an Afghan National Security Force of 400,000. Instead, Admiral Mullen spoke of taking it year by year. Again, I don't recall your assessment recommending incrementalism. I am interested to hear how your headquarters will interpret last week's guidance from Washington.

Finally, there is the critical question of resources. First, are 30,000 additional forces enough to win decisively? As you wrote in the assessment, resources will not win this war but underresourcing could lose it. Given the many leaks that you requested—at a minimum, 40,000 additional forces—please explain why the President is not underresourcing his own strategy. Will you have to cut the scope of the mission because you did not receive 60,000 to 80,000 more forces? If next year you determine that additional forces are required, do you have the flexibility to ask for more?

While we have heard about top-line numbers, we have not heard discussion about the composition of these forces. How many combat brigades will deploy? How many will be trainers? Will each combat

brigade receive all its enablers? Will the cap of 30,000 forces make you choose between adding combat forces or enablers?

General, Ambassador, this is your opportunity to answer the critics and bolster the supporters of this strategy. No one is more qualified to do this than you.

Again, thank you for being here, good luck and Godspeed in your mission. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman from California.

And on the floor, General McChrystal please.

STATEMENT OF GEN. STANLEY A. MCCHRYSTAL, USA, COMMANDER, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE (ISAF), AND COMMMANDER, U.S. FORCES–AFGHANISTAN (USFOR–A)

General MCCHRYSTAL. Mr. Chairman, Congressman McKeon, distinguished members of this committee, thank you for the chance to appear before you today. I welcome this opportunity to testify on our way ahead in Afghanistan, and I am pleased to do so with Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, an old friend.

Let me begin by saluting the bravery of the men and women of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. They are anchored by over 68,000 courageous Americans, our close partners in the NATO alliance, and a 43-nation coalition.

We honor the sacrifices of the fallen, the veterans and their families. We also recognize the toll paid every day by our counterparts in the Afghan Security Forces and by Afghan civilians who ultimately suffer the most from this insurgency. It is for them and for all of us that we seek a stable Afghanistan, a defunct Al Qaeda, and a secure future in that vital region of the world.

I first deployed to Afghanistan in 2002 and have commanded forces there every year since. Despite that experience, there is much in Afghanistan that I have yet to fully understand. For all of us, Afghanistan is a challenge that is best approached with a balance of determination and humility.

While U.S. forces have been at war in Afghanistan for 8 years, the Afghans have been at it for more than 30. They are frustrated with international efforts that have failed to meet their expectations, confronting us with a crisis of confidence among Afghans who view the international effort as insufficient and their government as corrupt or, at the very least, inconsequential.

We also face a complex and resilient insurgency. The Quetta Shura Taliban, or Afghan Taliban, is a prominent threat to the Government of Afghanistan as they aspire to once again become the Government of Afghanistan. The Haqqani and Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin insurgent groups have more limited geographic region objectives, but they are no less lethal. All three groups are supported to some degree by external elements in Iran and Pakistan, have ties with Al Qaeda, and coexist within narcotics and criminal networks, both fueling and feeding off instability and insecurity in the region.

The mission in Afghanistan is undeniably difficult and success will require steadfast commitment and incur significant costs. I participated fully in the President's assessment and decision-making process and was afforded multiple opportunities to provide my

recommendations and best military advice, which I did. Combined with insights and policy considerations from across our government, I believe the decisions that came from that process reflect a realistic and effective approach.

To pursue our core goal of defeating Al Qaeda and preventing their return to Afghanistan, we must disrupt and degrade the Taliban's capacity, deny their access to the Afghan population, and strengthen the Afghan Security Forces. This means we must reverse the Taliban's current momentum and create time and space to develop Afghan security and governance capacity.

The President's decision rapidly resources our strategy, recognizing that the next 18 months will likely be decisive, and ultimately enable success. I fully support the President's decision. The President also reiterated how this decision supports our national interests. Rolling back the Taliban is a prerequisite to the ultimate defeat of Al Qaeda. The mission is not only important, it is also achievable. We can and will accomplish this mission.

Let me briefly explain why I believe so. My confidence derives, first, from the Afghans' resolve, since it is their actions that will ultimately matter most in ending this conflict with their interest, and, by extension, our own secured. Second, we do not confront an unpopular insurgency. The Taliban has no widespread constituency, have a history of failure in power, and lack an appealing vision. Third, where our strategy is applied, we have begun to show that we can help the Afghans establish more security and more credible governance. Finally, Afghans do not regard us as occupiers. They do not wish for us to remain forever, yet they see our support as a necessary bridge to future security and stability.

I have been back in Afghanistan for six months now. I believe that with the President's decision and ongoing reforms I outlined in our initial assessment, our efforts are now empowered with a greater sense of clarity, capability, commitment and confidence.

Let me start with clarity. The President's recently completed review of our strategy, to include its deep and pointed questioning of all assumptions and recommendations, has produced greater clarity of our mission and objectives. We also have greater clarity on the way forward. Additional forces will begin to deploy shortly, and by this time next year, new security gains will be illuminated by specific indicators and it will be clear to us that the insurgency has lost momentum. And by the summer of 2011, it will be clear to the Afghan people that the insurgency will not win, giving them the chance to side with their government.

From that point forward, while we plan to have fewer combat forces in harm's way——

The CHAIRMAN. Will the gentleman suspend—the lady with the sign will remove herself immediately. Sergeant at Arms, make sure she leaves through the door.

General, please resume.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

From that point forward, while we plan to have fewer forces in harm's way, we will remain partnered with the Afghan Security Forces in a supporting role to consolidate and solidify their gains. Results may come more quickly and we may demonstrate progress towards measurable objectives, but the sober fact is that there are

no silver bullets. Ultimate success will be the cumulative effect of sustained pressure across multiple lines of operation.

Increasing our capability has been about much more than just troop increases. For the past six months, we have been implementing organizational and operational changes that are already reflecting improvements in our effectiveness, but the additional forces announced by President Obama are significant. Forces to increase our capacity to train the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and forces to partner with Afghan army and police in expanding security zones in key areas will provide us the ability to reverse insurgent momentum and deny the Taliban the access to the population they require to survive.

The additional capability we are building translates into credibility in the minds of Afghans who demand proof not only that we want to protect them, but that we can. In a war of perceptions, where the battlefield is the mind of an Afghan elder, the hope of an Afghan mother, the aspirations of an Afghan child, this can be decisive.

Our commitment is watched intently and constantly judged by our allies and by our enemies. The commitment of 30,000 additional U.S. forces along with additional coalition forces and growing Afghan National Security Forces will be a significant step toward expanding security in critical areas and in demonstrating resolve. The commitment of all coalition nations will be buttressed by a clear understanding of how we will mitigate risks.

I will briefly mention three. The first is the Afghan Government's credibility deficit, which must be recognized by all, to include Afghan officials, as a critical area of focus and change.

Equally important is our ability to accelerate development of the Afghan Security Forces. Measures such as increased pay and initiatives, literacy training, leader development, and expanded partnering are necessary to position the Afghan National Security Force to assume responsibility for long-term security.

Third, the hazard posed by extremists that operate on both sides of the border with Pakistan, with freedom of movement across that border, must be mitigated by enhanced cross-border coordination and enhanced Pakistani engagement.

Looking ahead, I am confident we have both the right strategy and right resources. Every trip around Afghanistan reinforces my confidence in the coalition and Afghan forces we stand alongside in this effort. But I also find confidence in those we are trying to help. That confidence is found when an Afghan farmer chooses to harvest wheat rather than poppy; or when a young adult casts his or her vote, or joins the police; or where a group of villagers resolves to reject the local insurgency.

We face many challenges in Afghanistan, but our efforts are sustained by one unassailable reality. Neither the Afghan people nor the international community want Afghanistan to remain a sanctuary for terror and violence. And if we are to be confident of our mission and our prospects, we must also be accurate in our assessment of progress. We owe ourselves, our leaders, and the American people transparency and candor because the price to be paid is high and the stakes are even higher.

In closing, my team and I would like to thank you and your colleagues for your support to the American men and women currently serving in Afghanistan and to tell you a bit about them. We risk letting numbers like 30k roll off our tongues without remembering that those are fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters, serving far from home, selfless in their sacrifices for each of us.

The other day I asked a young but combat-experienced sergeant where he was on 9/11, and his answer, "Getting my braces removed," reminds me that it has been more than 8 years since 9/11, and many of our service members and families have experienced and sacrificed much. But as I see them in action at remote bases, on patrol, partnering with Afghan forces, recovering in combat hospitals, they don't talk about all they have given up. They talk about all they are accomplishing and their determination in this endeavor.

This is not a force of rookies or dilettantes. The brigade commander in Khost is completing its fourth combat tour in Afghanistan and its experience and expertise is reflective of the force that represents you. All have felt fear and loneliness, most have lost comrades, none have lost heart. In their eyes, I see maturity beyond their years. In their actions, I see a commitment to succeed and a commitment to each other. I am confident that I share your pride in what these great Americans are doing for our country in Afghanistan, and it will be my privilege to accept your questions on their behalf.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. General, thank you.

[The prepared statement of General McChrystal can be found in the Appendix on page 61.]

The CHAIRMAN. After the next witness testifies, I will ask that the members of the press, the photographers, move from the immediate front to the sides. It would be of great help to us. Ambassador, I can barely thank you for being with us, you are now recognized, thank you.

STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR KARL W. EIKENBERRY, U.S. AMBASSADOR TO AFGHANISTAN

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Chairman Skelton, Ranking Member McKeon, and distinguished members of this committee, thank you for the opportunity to present my views on Afghanistan today. I would ask that my full statement be submitted for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection. Make sure you get real close to the microphone there.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. How is that?

The CHAIRMAN. Much better. Thanks.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Last week in his speech at West Point, President Obama presented the Administration's strategy for Afghanistan and for Pakistan. His decision came after an intensive, deliberative, and a far-reaching review. I am honored to have been part of that. I believe the course that the President outlined does offer the best path to stabilize Afghanistan and ensure Al Qaeda cannot regain a foothold to plan new attacks against us. I can say without equivocation that I fully support this approach.

I consider myself privileged to serve as United States Ambassador and to represent an amazing team of diplomats, development specialists, and civilian experts who form the most capable and dedicated United States Embassy anywhere in the world. I am extraordinarily proud of them.

I am also honored to testify alongside General Stan McChrystal, my professional colleague and friend of many years. I want to say from the outset that General McChrystal and I are united in a joint effort where civilian and military personnel work together every day, side by side with our Afghan partners and our allies. We could not accomplish our objectives without this kind of cooperation.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, the United States is at a critical juncture in our involvement in Afghanistan. On December 1, the President ordered 30,000 additional troops to deploy to Afghanistan on an accelerated timetable, with a goal of breaking the insurgency's momentum, hastening and improving the training of the Afghan National Security Forces, and establishing security in key parts of Afghanistan.

On the civilian side, we aim to increase employment and provide essential services in areas of greatest insecurity and to improve critical ministries in the economy at the national level. These steps together will, I believe, help us to remove insurgents from the battlefield and build support for the Afghan Government. As the President said, we will be clear about what we expect from those who receive our assistance. After a difficult election, the Afghan Government does show signs of recognizing the need to deliver better governance and security. We await urgent, concrete steps in a number of areas.

I would like to briefly discuss the three main pillars of our efforts in Afghanistan: security, governance, and development. General McChrystal has already addressed our plans for improving security and building the Afghan National Security Forces.

Since assuming my post, I have made a special point of getting outside of Kabul to see conditions firsthand. I fully concur with General McChrystal's assessment that the security situation remains serious. Sending additional U.S. and NATO–ISAF forces to Afghanistan is absolutely critical to regain the initiative. And I am confident that as these troops arrive, the situation will stabilize and turn in our favor. Additional troops will permit us to expand our work with the Afghan army and police so that they can take on a larger role in providing for their own security. As President Obama said, the transition to Afghan responsibility will begin in the summer of 2011 when we expect Afghan Security Forces to begin assuming lead responsibility for defending their country.

Moving on from security, the second pillar of our comprehensive strategy focuses on governance at the national and subnational levels. Our overarching goal is to encourage, improve governance, so Afghans can see the benefits of supporting the legitimate government, and insurgency loses its support.

As General McChrystal points out, one of the major impediments to our strategy face is the Afghan Government's lack of credibility with its own people. To strengthen its legitimacy, our approach at the national level is improving key ministries by increasing the

number of civilian technical advisers and providing more development assistance directly through these ministries' budgets.

By focusing on ministries that deliver essential services and security, we can accelerate the building of the Afghan Government to one that is sufficiently visible, effective, and accountable.

At the provincial and the district levels we are working jointly with our military through our provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs), our district development working groups, and our district support teams which help build Afghan capacity, particularly in the areas of greatest insecurity in southern and in eastern Afghanistan.

Underpinning all of these efforts is the need to combat corruption and promote the rule of law. With our assistance, the Afghan Government is steadily building law enforcement institutions to fight corruption, organized crime, and drug trafficking.

In his inaugural address, President Karzai stated his intention to make merit-based appointments in his new Cabinet and to implement an anticorruption strategy. We are very encouraged by these statements.

The cultivation of poppy and trafficking in opium also continues to have a debilitating effect on Afghan society. Our strategy is multi-pronged here, involving demand reduction, efforts by law enforcement agencies and the military to detain traffickers and interdict drug shipments, and support for licit agricultural development. The narcotics problem will, of course, never have a solution without economic development.

This leads to the third pillar of our effort, which is development. In recent months we have adjusted our approach to focus on building key aspects or key elements of Afghanistan's private sector economy: increasing our emphasis on agriculture; enhancing government revenue collection; and improving the coordination of assistance within the United States Government and the international community. These steps were taken to produce improvements in the lives of ordinary Afghans and to contribute to more effective government and lessen support for the insurgency.

Rebuilding the farm sector in particular is essential for the Afghan Government to reduce the pool of unemployed men who form the recruiting base for extremist groups. We estimate that some 80 percent of the Afghan population derives their income either directly or indirectly from agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, I want to emphasize that we are concentrating on what is essential and what is attainable. The President's strategy is based upon a pragmatic assessment of the security interest of the United States of America and our belief that a sustainable representative government and a sustainable economy in Afghanistan are essential to our success. We need a viable Afghan Government so our forces can draw down and the investment of U.S. taxpayer dollars can be reduced.

Now in closing, I would like to mention two important risks that we face in carrying out this strategy and which I share with General McChrystal. The first is, in spite of everything we do, Afghanistan may struggle to take over the essential task of governance and security on a timely basis.

Second, our partnership with Pakistan. The effort we are undertaking in Afghanistan is likely to fall short of our strategic goals unless there is more progress at eliminating sanctuaries used by the Afghan Taliban and their associates inside of Pakistan.

If the main elements of the President's plan are executed and if our Afghan partners and our allies do their part, I am confident we can achieve our strategic objectives. I say this with conviction because for the first time during my three tours in Afghanistan, all of the elements of our national power are being employed, with full support of the President and, increasingly, with our allies.

Achieving our goals inside of Afghanistan will not be easy, but I am optimistic that we can succeed with the support of Congress. Our mission was underresourced for years, but it is now one of our government's highest priorities, with substantial development funds and hundreds of more civilian personnel. We will soon have increased our civilian presence in Kabul threefold, and, in the field, sixfold just over the past year. We will, of course, need more.

United States foreign assistance is also a comparatively small but essential fraction of the total amount spent in Afghanistan over the last eight years. Additional resources will be necessary, and we look forward to sharing more details of our anticipated needs with Congress in the coming days and weeks.

Mr. Chairman, Afghanistan is a daunting challenge. Success is not guaranteed, but it is possible. With additional troops and other resources provided by the President, and with the help of the United States Congress, we will work tirelessly to ensure that Al Qaeda never again finds refuge inside of Afghanistan and threatens our country and our homeland.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much for being with us.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Eikenberry can be found in the Appendix on page 68.]

The CHAIRMAN. If there are any photographers in the immediate front of the witnesses, please move to the side. I believe some already have, if not all. Thank you for that.

General McChrystal, tell us what your mission is.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Mr. Chairman, I believe that our mission is to do two things. First, Al Qaeda is a threat to the United States and/or our allies worldwide. Our ability to prevent Al Qaeda from reestablishing safe havens inside Afghanistan is key. As most people know, many of the 9/11 hijackers were in fact trained on Afghan soil in Al Qaeda-run training camps. And it is critical we prevent their ability to return to spaces inside Afghanistan and repeat that kind of activity.

Wider than that, our mission is to help the Government of Afghanistan have the ability to defend itself, to conduct its own nation-building, to provide it time and space for it to labor or effectively fend off existential threats to its sovereignty.

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen, do you agree with the President's decision to strategize and increase the number of troops?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I agree with the President's decision, and I believe that it provides me the resources that we need to execute strategy to accomplish the mission as outlined for us.

The CHAIRMAN. General, will you be successful in your mission?

General McCHRYSTAL. I believe we will absolutely be successful.

The CHAIRMAN. What do you need from us, General, the Armed Services Committee?

General McCHRYSTAL. I believe the resources have been provided by the President's decision. I believe what we need from the Armed Services Committee and from the American people is continued commitment and support for our force in this mission.

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador Eikenberry, the November 12 *Washington Post* discussed two leaked cables sent by you. Let me read: "U.S. Ambassador to Kabul sent two classified cables to Washington in the past week, expressing deep concerns about sending more U.S. troops to Afghanistan until President Hamid Karzai's government demonstrates that it is willing to tackle the corruption and mismanagement that has fueled the Taliban's rise, senior U.S. officials said." Would you explain those two leaked telegrams?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Thank you, Chairman. If I can make three points: First, throughout the very vigorous review of our strategy that went on for a three-month period of time, all the participants——

The CHAIRMAN. Get a little closer to the microphone, please.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. How is that?

The CHAIRMAN. Very good.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Chairman, thank you. Let me make three points. First of all, in the process of the strategy review that went on for three months, all the participants in this very vigorous review process were encouraged to state their assessments and their recommendations. All of the participants did that in a variety of ways, through video teleconferences, through direct conversations, through written communications.

My second point is I would like to clarify that at no point during this review process, Mr. Chairman, was I ever opposed to additional troops being sent to Afghanistan. As I said during my opening statement, I fully agree with General McChrystal's review of the strategic assessment he had done, and I shared his views about the security situation which was dire in certain places of the country. I completely shared his view about the need for the accelerated growth of the Afghan National Security Forces. That requires additional U.S. troops and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) troops to accomplish that.

So it was not a question of additional troops, it was the question, as we all had, about the number of troops, what would be the timelines for those troops, what would be the context that those troops would operate in.

And then the third point I wanted to make as a result of this very extensive review: the mission was refined, the ways forward were clarified, and the resources now have been committed to allow us to achieve the refined mission.

With that at this point in time, as I said in my opening statement, Mr. Chairman, I am unequivocally in support of this mission and I am exactly aligned with General McChrystal here to my right in moving forward now to vigorously implement the assigned mission.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the Ambassador.

The gentleman from California, my good friend, Ranking Member Mr. McKeon.

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General McChrystal, the Washington rumor mill has been thriving over the last three months, as the last question we just had there. You know, I have heard that your request of the President was anywhere from 10,000 to 80,000 additional troops. We have not been given your request; all we have had to go on is what we have heard. With each option I know that you requested, you tied it to a risk factor.

Now, when I was in Afghanistan, in August, and we met, I mentioned that I knew you had been given certain direction from the Secretary and from others, and I asked you directly if that was going to influence the request that you made of the Commander-in-Chief. You told me no. You said you had a moral obligation to ask for what you needed to be successful in the mission. As I mentioned, Congress has not had the opportunity to review your troop request. We were able to read the original assessment that you sent. But I have the highest level of confidence that you adhered to your word and asked for what you thought you needed, given your best military judgment, to be successful.

General, can you tell this committee and the American people, what were the different force options you requested and the degree of risk that was tied to those requests?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, that is still a classified document, so I am unable to go into detail. But I can certainly go into the process, and I would like to do that.

When we completed the initial assessment, we went into a resource analysis, which we called it, which is the classified document. And in that, as I outlined to you during your visit, we identified different force packages with associated risk based upon our assessments of that. And then I said that I would also make a recommendation—technically not a request at that point—but a very direct recommendation of my chain of command and what the appropriate force level was. And I did that.

Through this process, then, when that went into the President's assessment and decision-making process, what I was very pleased about is, beginning with my initial assessment, I was not only encouraged to be candid and straightforward, I was demanded to be candid and straightforward. So as we went forward with what was then in the resource analysis, and that became part of what was considered in the President's assessment throughout that process, which was exchange of different documents and then a series of secure video teleconferencing (VTCs), in every case I was able to make my recommendations or my analysis, and they would come back for more detailed rationale so that I could explain that.

I thought it was a very healthy exchange, as Karl laid out—I am sorry, Ambassador Eikenberry laid out, getting everything on the table and getting everybody very clear on where we were. What I think came out of that was as we focused on the mission, the understanding of the mission, I believe the President's decision reflects resourcing—resources that do, that are congruent with what I recommend we needed. So I am very comfortable with the outcome, resource-wise, of what was made in the process.

Mr. MCKEON. General, would you be willing to, in a classified session with the committee, give us what you asked for?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Absolutely, sir.

Mr. MCKEON. Let me frame the question in a little different way in public. Did you ask for 30,000 troops in 2010?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I asked for forces to be deployed as quickly as they could be deployed. And as the flow worked out, that was going to be about that in 2010. But I didn't ask it in that way, sir.

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you, General. Did you recommend that the troops begin withdrawal by July 2011?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I did not recommend anything to do with—I made no recommendations at all on that.

Mr. MCKEON. In your judgment, does the deployment of 30,000 troops to the eastern and southern parts of the country and the 18-month timeline provide the least risk and most opportunity for success compared to the other options you gave to the Commander-in-Chief?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe that nothing in this is without risk—as you have said, with least risk—so I think it is appropriate risk.

What I would like to do is give the wider context of this. As we look at our partnership with Afghanistan from now through the strategic partnership that the President and Secretary of Defense have discussed in the long term, what in fact we have done is provided the Afghans the assurance that we are going to be strategic partners with them.

Now, that likely will not involve combat forces; it will involve different things over time. But it is a very important part of the long-term commitment to them. And if you are in the insurgency, that is also a very difficult fact to deal with because it essentially makes the insurgent long-term approach not viable.

If you come to near term, the President has just announced 30,000 additional U.S. forces, and we expect to get some range of additional coalition forces. So starting very quickly, beginning this month actually with deployment, we will have a significantly increased force on the ground that will allow us to turn the momentum, both actual momentum on the ground and momentum in the eyes of the Afghan people, over about the next 18 months. I believe the next 18 months are the critical period in this war because I believe they are critical in the minds of the Afghans and in the minds of the insurgency.

So I believe that the resources we have been provided, along with the strategy which we have already started implementing and the resolve reflected by the support of the American people and our other coalition allies, I believe for this 18 months we are going to make tremendous progress against this, while we simultaneously grow Afghanistan's capacity to provide for its own security. That then bridges to the long term.

So I am very comfortable where we are now as we go out toward the strategic partnership, and I don't believe the July 2011 time frame militarily is a major factor in my strategy.

I do want to say up front, there are people who will grab onto that, I think inappropriately. And they will try to use it in information operations and describe it as something that it is not, in terms

of a lack of commitment on the part of the U.S. and the coalition, because we have committed to a long-term partnership. But I think we can deal with that.

On the positive, it is a bit of a forcing function. By being very clear to all the players involved that we are going to be looking hard at things, it provides a forcing function and impetus for moving forward for the Afghans and others to continue to make progress towards their own capacity.

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you. Finally, General, I know we moved the additional forces in earlier this year. I believe they began arriving in April, May, June, and we began an offensive July 1st. You have had time now to assess that. It is almost what we are projecting for next year. We will have forces arriving, some this month and some early next year, and then we are looking to another review next December.

So, based on how you assess the effort this year and then the increased effort next year, will you feel good about being able to assess for another review next December of how we are doing to date?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I will. And of course we will do constant assessments, as we do, to see where we are. I actually think the progress already being made by the forces approved in March and the other steps we have taken and how we operate are cumulative with the additional forces that will start flowing in. We are actually going to start earlier this year than those that were approved in March. And we are going to try to flow these initial forces and employ them as quickly as we can. So I actually think that by December we will have had more time to mature our thinking and show real progress, and I am confident that we will.

Mr. MCKEON. And finally, General, do you feel that you will have the flexibility a year from now, December of 2010, to ask for additional forces if your assessment at that point points to those additional forces needed for success?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe I will have the responsibility to give my best military advice, whichever the direction the situation is going. I do not anticipate the requirement to ask for additional forces, but I would always provide my candid best military advice.

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you very much, General. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. General, how good are the American troops on your command?

General MCCHRYSTAL. They are even better than we think they are. They are—they are amazing. I have been in 33 years. Karl and I served together most of that. And when I compare it to when I came in in the seventies, it is completely different. We are fighting an extended war with a very professional force, augmented by civilian, or citizen, soldiers who do an extraordinary job.

I was up at Walter Reed yesterday, as many of you do, seeing our wounded. And as I met with soldiers and sailors who had been wounded, their sense of commitment to get back into their units, back with their forces, was extraordinary and their sense of focus on the mission.

And then when I go down—on Thanksgiving I flew around to as many combat outposts as I could, and I went to—I don't know how

many, but it was a lot—on one of them it was a young second lieutenant platoon leader along with an Afghan National Police element. And the organization was out there in the middle of nowhere and they did not have hot chow because their generator wasn't working, and there wasn't a complaint at all.

One of the young sergeants came up to me and talked about partnering with the Afghan Police because you know they are the much-maligned Afghan National Police. He said, "Sir, you have to understand this is working great. This is extraordinary, the progress we are making. We should have started this months ago." That unit is on the 11th month of the 12-month deployment.

So when I see that every time I get out, I am extraordinarily convinced how good they are and how well they are doing in what we have asked them to do.

The CHAIRMAN. You mentioned the citizen soldiers, all of us have National Guard troops that have been deployed. How good are the National Guard troops?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Well, they are extraordinary. But one of the things I would say, sometimes someone will fall in and say they are just as good as Active Duty or Active Army Regular troops. That is not the case. In many cases they bring unique skills—like the Agricultural Development Teams (ADTs) that are around the country—bring things that active components—skills and maturity active components don't have. They are not exactly the same, but together they are much better.

And we are losing—we are paying a price with our citizen soldiers in casualties and in lost time away from home, just like we are with our entire force. So I just could not—I cannot say enough about their performance.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Chairman, may I say one word?

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador, the question is put to you: How good are our troops?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Chairman, our troops are——

The CHAIRMAN. Get closer, please.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Our troops are every bit as good as General McChrystal said they are. I wish when we were lieutenants together, they were as good as they are now.

If I could say a word about the civilians that are in Afghanistan as well. Chairman, with your permission, our civilian force that we have got in Afghanistan representing the full interagency of our government, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Department of Agriculture (USDA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), our State Department—I could go on—Treasury. They are also, we would say, a world-class force.

If I could give you one example. On the 13th of October at a U.S. Army, a unit of Stryker Brigade operating down in Spin Boldak in southern Kandahar, a convoy was hit by improvised explosive devices (IEDs). As the Ambassador, whenever I learn that we have got civilians that are in harm's way, I will give them a call that night to see how they are doing. In this particular case, there was a Mr. Jim Green from the Department of Agriculture, 55 years old from Oklahoma, and there was Mr. Travis Gardner, USAID, 38 years old from Nebraska. They were in the same convoy out there,

doing their job as agricultural specialists with the U.S. Army. I talked to them both on the phone that night, asked them how they were doing. They said they were doing fine, they were just out there doing their job with the U.S. Army.

We should be enormously proud of the U.S. civilians who are serving alongside our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. I am informed the witnesses have a hard stop at 12:30. With that, we are under the five-minute rule. Mr. Reyes.

Mr. REYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and General and Ambassador, thank you for being here with us this morning.

The President commented in his speech at West Point that we are being assisted by 43 countries. As we go around the world trying to convince other countries to join in the fight, because truly this fight against Al Qaeda, somehow we have to convince the rest of the world that it is in everyone's best interest to assist, there are two issues that are brought up. The first one is that somehow the belief is that we are going to leave there, and leave prematurely. Secondly, that something has to be done about the corruption within the Karzai government.

In particular, those two issues are very important to the traditionally Muslim countries where I think we need to focus to get their assistance into this very critical region of the world.

Can you comment, first of all, on how we can convince others to join in this effort? Secondly, on the issue of corruption and the things we can do to change that? Both of you, please.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Great. Congressman, I thought I would start on how we can convince others to stay focused on this. We do have 43 nations. In fact, that is about to go up fairly soon as well. And that is extraordinarily important to the effort for a couple of reasons.

One, they all bring capacity. But it is also very important because we are a coalition there, we have additional credibility with the Afghan people. They know a coalition will never be occupiers. So there is no way to paint us as the Soviet Union. So that is very important. I think it is important to all our coalition partners to stress our long-term strategic commitment with Afghanistan. Many of our coalition partners are there because they believe it is important. Others are there because they believe that either the NATO alliance or the relationship with the U.S. is another factor. And I think that is very important. But stressing the consistency of our commitment I think is the most key point.

Mr. REYES. And General, you don't think that the deadline, 18-month deadline, affects the commitment in other nations' eyes?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe that if we put the perception of that, because in fact I don't—I don't view July 2011 as a deadline. I view that as a point at which time the President has directed we will begin to reduce combat forces, but we will decide the pace and scope of that based upon conditions at that time. So I don't believe that is a deadline at all. I think it is just a natural part of the evolution of what we are doing.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, if I could address your question about corruption. General McChrystal and I both in our opening statements, we emphasized the importance of efforts to

help strengthen the legitimacy of the Government of Afghanistan. We are working right now in many areas. Let me just highlight three.

First of all are combined efforts, partnered efforts with the Government of Afghanistan to improve their law enforcement capabilities. We have many programs. One, for instance, the development of a major crimes task force, the equivalent of an Afghan FBI, is led by our FBI in training efforts, and our allies.

Secondly, we are working to help improve the transparency and the accountability of key Afghan ministries through certification programs. More of our money, of our development money is going directly into Afghan ministries that are certified in a transparent way. And this requires partnership as well. Right now, about 80 percent of the developmental dollars being put in by the international community into Afghanistan are outside of the Afghan budget. So they need help in this area as well.

And then third, we are working hard, again with the combined international effort, to help improve the civil service of Afghanistan. These are long-term efforts. There is not going to be any kind of silver bullet. But I am optimistic we can make progress. But this all has to be underpinned by Afghan leadership.

Encouragingly, President Karzai in his inauguration address, he did talk about efforts to go after corruption. But this is something we have to make progress on over the next 12 months and the next 24 months. We are going to need more Afghan leadership and more commitment, but also we are going to have to do this in partnership with the Government of Afghanistan.

Mr. REYES. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman.

Mr. Bartlett.

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you.

I read an article this morning, I think it was from the *Washington Post,* that was talking about an Afghan with one eye and a beard to his chest, and he had aligned himself with the national government and with our presence there. And he acknowledged that if the Taliban came back to power, they were going to cut his head off. If that is the general perception of Afghans, isn't it going to be kind of difficult to get them to align themselves with the federal government and with us?

Let's imagine, for a moment, that I am one of the bad guys. I am evil, but I am not an idiot. I have long-range plans, and above all, I am very patient. The President has signaled that we are going to begin a drawdown in July of 2011. And if conditions on the ground are okay, that drawdown is going to continue apace. I am going to make sure conditions on the ground are okay, because I am a very patient guy. And two years or so is not very long to wait. I am just going to cool it for those two years or so, and then these guys are going to be gone, and I can have at it.

Isn't it going to be frightfully difficult to recruit Afghans if they know that if we are not successful, and success is not insured, we are not successful, they are going to have their head cut off or something like that? And why isn't it true that the bad guys, who have far more patience than we have—that part of the world sees

the future very differently than we do. I led a Congressional Delegation (CODEL) to China to talk about energy. They began their discussion of energy by talking about post-oil. That is a long way off, sir. Why won't they just wait us out? Why isn't this a really nonproductive approach and solution to that problem?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Two great points that I would like to bring out on this. First is that you are right about the insurgency and their use of coercion. They will and they do threaten people. And it is very powerful, because the threat of being harmed stops you from making decisions you might otherwise make. And so it is important that we be able to protect the Afghan people. We can try to win their hearts and minds in the near time, but you must be able to protect them from coercion.

The second point, however, is that the insurgency has an essential weakness in this, and the challenge that doesn't allow them to simply wait. First, they are not popular. They are not a national liberation front that people inside are just waiting for their success. They succeed largely on their coercion. But if they go to ground or if they go to areas and simply wait, what happens is, during that period, as we protect the Afghan people along with our Afghan partners and build up a way of life and convince the Afghan people that they have a stake in this better way of life, then the society becomes more durable, it becomes more difficult to coerce because the people have something to protect, and they have got something to lose which they don't want to lose.

Additionally, at this same time, the Afghan Government, particularly the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), are building their own capacity up. And so, as the people are starting to buy into a new life and their government has increased capability to defend them, then suddenly the insurgents, who may have waited patiently, are faced with a much less vulnerable target or much less vulnerable Afghan populace. So they really can't afford to wait. And this is the key to us trying to establish security and a future in the minds of the Afghan people as we go forward.

Mr. BARTLETT. One of the major problems, sir, is the central government, which is inept, ineffective, and enormously corrupt. Do you see that changing? I read about one Afghan who was really happy in 2001 when we got the Taliban out of there, but he now would welcome them back because at least they are predictable, at least they administer justice, at least they are not corrupt. What kind of confidence do you have that the Afghan Government can in fact become a central government? They have never had a central government in 300 years. It has been tribal rule. Why do you think that is going to change?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I think it will change. They have had a central government, at least in my view, but it has never been a central government that has the same kind of control over local levels that we might in different models.

Mr. BARTLETT. It has been a pretend central government, hasn't it, sir?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I think it has been a legitimate central government. But again, it does not run things quite the way in most nations that we are familiar with. But I believe that this is the hard part; this is probably the most difficult task we have is

to create credible governance at the local level that reaches to the national level.

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Snyder.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here.

Ambassador Eikenberry, I've got my colleague Todd Akin here. About a year and a half ago we did a report from the Armed Services Committee, actually we stumbled onto this looking at the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), "Deploying Federal Civilians to the Battlefield: Incentives, Benefits, and Medical Care." I think I will do this as a question-for-the-record (QFR). But what we found 18 months ago was there is quite a bit of discrepancy in civilian incentives, support for family, wounded. I mean literally having a military person and a civilian U.S. Government person killed in action, and yet they were treated differently.

And I would encourage you as a question-for-the-record to report back to us, are you satisfied that as we augment the number of civilians going into harm's way that they will be treated fairly and their families will get the kind of support and they will get the kind of support that we would expect?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. That is a very important question, Representative, and we will get you an answer back for the record.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you.

General McChrystal, I don't want to do too careful a reading here, but the written comment or your statement that was given to us says final statement, and then but you did make one change here on page three, talking about the summer of 2011. Your written statement says, from that point forward, while we begin to reduce U.S. combat force levels, we will remain partnered with the Afghan security forces in a supporting role.

You changed that in your oral statement here today: From point forward, while we have fewer forces in harm's way. I assume that is just an acknowledgement that if you reduce forces, you are not—there is nothing the President said that said you couldn't pull out support troops. I don't want to do too careful a reading of that, but that an acknowledgment that, in your written statement, you said reduce U.S. combat force levels——

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, that is more a case of last-minute editing, which I probably didn't catch as I went through this. The bottom line is we will start to reduce troops——

Dr. SNYDER. In some capacity.

General MCCHRYSTAL. And I expect it will start with combat forces, but it would have to be balanced.

Dr. SNYDER. I think that is fair. I don't want to make too much of that. In neither your written statements nor your oral statements did I hear a lot of discussion about possible incentives for getting people who are currently connected with the Taliban to come over to a different side. And I don't need any detail on this. I assume that is in the discussions and part of the mix. Is that correct?

General MCCHRYSTAL. It is. That must be a Government of Afghanistan-run and managed program. But we have stood up a particular cell to support them in that. We have resources available

to do that. We think it is critical to offer fighters, maybe not the most senior leaders of the Taliban, but fighters the ability to leave the battlefield.

Dr. SNYDER. And you have everything from Congress that you need to pursue those different objectives?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We do.

Dr. SNYDER. General McChrystal, I had some communication, I think it was the day after the President's speech, and you mentioned information ops and how people would respond overseas to the discussion about middle of 2011, which is a fair discussion. And this major that is currently in the military is currently training captains for deployment overseas.

Put me in the position of being the village elder who has got a brother who has been killed by the Taliban, and you are the captain, the young captain just assigned to Afghanistan. What are you going to tell me about what does that mid-2011 mean if I and my family and clan in my geographic area that I control align myself with the international forces? What are you going to tell me about what that date means?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I start with the fact that we have committed to a strategic partnership. And that is what I try to explain to the village elder. We are going to stay partnered with the Government of Afghanistan and the people of Afghanistan for their future, whatever that has to look like. Then I walk him back and say, in the near term, we are going to do a significant effort to grow your Afghan National Security Forces so Afghanistan can be secured by Afghans. And we are going to use additional coalition forces to provide time and space, breathing space to do that.

I would then come back to him, and I would say this is a shared responsibility. Afghanistan belongs to Afghans. Afghanistan must be built and secured by Afghans. And I would say that they have got to make the decision to do the kinds of things that help that process along. It is difficult. It does put people in hard decisions. I go back to our revolution, where our leadership put an awful lot on the line. And an awful lot of people in Afghanistan are in the position of doing the same thing.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you.

Finally, General McChrystal, there has been some acknowledgment I think through the years that the women in the military, your women troops have performed very, very well, and that this is a different kind of war than some of the legislative restrictions we have had on the assignment of women. Do you see any reason that the Congress shouldn't consider, as time goes by, giving more flexibility to the military for the assignment of women so you don't feel like you have your hands tied when you are assigning units or posting women? Is there anything out there you see that would restrict that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, to be honest, I haven't given it a lot of thought. I will tell you, on the battlefield, I don't give it a lot of thought now because our female forces perform amazingly well. And I haven't run into many situations where, at least at my level, I found that to be a consideration.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you.

Thank you for your service.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman.

Mr. Thornberry.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General, I want to express appreciation for your service, especially over the last eight years. The success you have had in a variety of jobs, and the way you have achieved that success gives me and I think others with some insight into your role a much greater confidence that our strategy will be assessed and implemented appropriately to make the mission in Afghanistan a success. Let me start, we have heard a lot in the last week about how the mission has been narrowed. And I would appreciate some specifics from you about what was in your mission at the end of August that is no longer your mission in December?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I think that the best—the way I look at it is the mission has been effectively and appropriately refined. As we went into the process from the President, as we took the information that was in the President's strategy decision in March and then in subsequent documents, and we informed ourselves with those in our initial assessment and our campaign design, we designed a campaign that would focus on those areas we thought that needed to be secured. Not every part of Afghanistan is either under threat or needs to be secured at the same level.

We focused on those to determine what level of force we would need, both Afghan security forces and coalition forces, to be able to do that. As we went in and made our recommendations through the chain of command on that, in fact that turned out to be a great point around which we discussed to refine everybody's understanding of the mission.

In fact, we had the word defeat, which we had received in the initial guidance, but that gave us a great opportunity to discuss that in a tremendous amount of detail because in military terms, defeat actually means render an enemy incapable of accomplishing his mission. It does not mean that you eradicate that enemy down to the last individual. It could be similar to politics, where you defeat the other party in an election, but you don't wipe them out.

So as we look at the strategy, this really helps govern how many forces you need and where you need to go. So it turned out to be a very, very helpful process as we did this, as we were forced to explain just how much terrain, how much of the population we had to protect, the lines of communication that were important for that, and then the forces we thought that were appropriate for that. That was the essential refining that I think was very valuable.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Okay. In your assessment at the end of August, you talk a lot about the need to fully implement a counterinsurgency strategy, different culture, different organizations, great differences beyond the number of troops. And yet I really haven't heard very much about that in the last week. Were the recommendations you made about different strategy, organizational changes, and other things fully agreed to by the White House?

General MCCHRYSTAL. To my knowledge, they were. In fact, they have also been extraordinarily supported across NATO with our NATO–ISAF partners. This is a long-term process because you are asking a force that was designed and raised culturally, most of our forces, to do different things, to operate a counterinsurgency.

But starting when I arrived in June, we have been pushing in that direction. We haven't been stopped in any of those areas. We have reorganized our command; we have stood up several new commands inside it, an intermediate joint command. We have stood up an element to run detention operations. We have stood up a counterinsurgency advise and assisting. So we have done these things.

Culturally, we continue to work inside our force, and we make progress. Most of our forces do very well. But there is a mind-set to do counterinsurgency that really takes a lot of learning and maturity over time. So it will probably be unfinished business forever.

Mr. THORNBERRY. In your August assessment, you say that failure to gain the initiative and reverse the insurgent momentum in the near term, parentheses, the next 12 months, risks an outcome where defeating the insurgency is no longer possible. If that was true in August, does that mean we have nine months to turn this thing around?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I think it is important that we turn it around quickly. I might say a little bit longer now. But we used the last six months at full throttle. So we didn't waste a minute of the last six months.

As we start to deploy the forces which were just approved, we have got a foundation to put on to those. What I tell inside my command now is, by next summer, I expect there to be significant progress that is evident to us inside our force. By next December, when I report back to you in detail, I expect that we will be able to lay real progress out that will be clear to everyone. And by the following summer of July 2011, I think the progress will be unequivocally clear to the Afghan people. And when it is unequivocally clear to them, that will be a critical, decisive point.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman.

The gentlelady from California, Ms. Sanchez.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both, gentlemen, for being before us today.

General McChrystal, on March 27th of this year, President Obama announced a new strategy for Afghanistan, which included a deployment of 20,000 additional troops. The President stressed that there were four goals to that strategy: Number one, to disrupt terrorist networks in Afghanistan and Pakistan; two, promote capable, accountable, and effective Afghan Government—I would assume that means not corrupt; number three, develop self-reliant Afghan security forces that could lead the counterinsurgency; and four, involve the international community to actively assist in addressing those objectives.

So it has been eight months later, and we are hearing the same objectives for this new strategy being presented to us. Only this time, it is going to cost us an additional 30,000 troops.

So, General, let me read this question because it is a little detailed. President Obama stated that the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan will begin in July of 2011. And that promise, of course, has been reinforced, but somewhat ambiguously, by the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the State, and the National Security Adviser. I watched them all on Sunday shows. All of those officials cautioned that the pace and the completion of the with-

drawal will be conditioned on concrete progress towards our strategic objectives on the ground in Afghanistan. And that promise to begin the withdrawal at a certain date, and the stipulation that the pace of withdrawal will be conditional, struck many of us as fundamentally inconsistent for two reasons.

If conditions on the ground are paramount, then it is not really possible to predict a date when withdrawal will make sense. And two, conditions on the ground are dependent on a wide array of variables, many of which are beyond our control, including the strength of the enemy force and the readiness of the Afghan forces to assume responsibility.

So, if you could answer yes or no, please, if U.S. troop withdrawal is truly dependent on the conditions on the ground, as Administration officials have stated, will you oppose a reduction of U.S. forces beginning in July 2011 if such reductions would jeopardize the mission or the security of the force?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I can't really answer that yes or no, Congresswoman, but I can give you a wider answer.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Was that a yes or a no, General?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I cannot answer that yes or no. What I will do is tell you that, although I will always give my best military advice, I think trying to speculate to that particular condition would be inappropriate for me at this particular time.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Okay.

Let's set aside the projected withdrawal of July 2011. If security conditions on the ground continue to deteriorate after the troop augmentation is completed next year, is it possible that you will request additional troops? Or put it another way, if your professional military judgment leads you to the conclusion that additional troops are needed to successfully accomplish the mission, will you ask the President for additional forces?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I will always provide my best military advice as candidly as possible and when I think it is appropriate.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Was that a yes or a no?

General MCCHRYSTAL. That is, I will always provide my best military advice, Congresswoman. If the conditions warrant my assessment to make advice in that way, of course.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Okay.

Then for the ambassador, Ambassador, I have been very reluctant to endorse President Obama's request for 30,000 new troops. I noted that, in Vietnam, one of the biggest problems we had were governments that were corrupt and not well aligned with what the people needed in Vietnam.

So my question to you is, have you seen anything in the last 18 months that would tell us that the Karzai government is doing something about corruption? Have you seen him, I don't know, arrest his brother, put people in jail, bring people to trial, stand up a court system that is actually going to take care of some of this corruption, ask him for the numbers to Swiss bank accounts? What have you seen the Karzai government? Because he has been there for five years. He has just gotten another five years. And we know that it has been completely and totally corrupt.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congresswoman, as I had said during my opening statement, I have said——

The CHAIRMAN. Please get closer.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. As I said in my previous answer to a previous question, what you are asking about right now, the need to improve the accountability of the Afghan Government, it is central to our success. But against that, we have to be clear, over the last seven years, starting from a very, very extraordinarily low baseline, there has been progress in Afghanistan.

If you look at the Government of Afghanistan and the central ministries right now, there is some success there. The Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior. Now your question about the need to improve in efforts against corruption, there are points of excellence right now in the Afghan Government. We have got progress that has been made in the counternarcotics sector with a very effective Justice task force that has been established. I mentioned the major crimes task force, the nascent Afghan FBI.

So this is going to be a very uphill fight that the Government of Afghanistan has to wage. I will make the point that President Karzai, in his inauguration speech, he did take this on. But actions are going to be required, Congresswoman.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would just request, I will put it into a request for a question-for-the-record, but I would like a proof positive and definitive answer to that.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentlelady.

Before I call on Mr. Jones, General, let me ask this. In previous conflicts, commanders have had limitations placed on them by civilian leaders. In Korea, for example, the President placed a limit of advanced American forces at the 38th parallel. In Vietnam, there were similar politically determined limits. Do you have any such limits in your efforts?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I am not aware of any limits. I certainly don't have any that I feel.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Jones.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

I want to thank you, gentlemen, for being here today, for your leadership to our Nation. And I represent the district where Camp Lejeune Marine base is located, and am very proud of all of our men and women in uniform, our Marines, too.

Mr. Ambassador, I want to ask you a question. Several of my colleagues, both Ms. Sanchez and Mr. Bartlett, and in your comments, you talked about the Karzai government and knowing that there have been numerous articles written about the brother being a drug dealer, on the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) payroll. What I want to know from a professional like yourself, how difficult is it to say to the Afghan people, trust your government? I mean, if they see us as propping up this corrupt government, try to help me understand just how difficult that is, or if it is not difficult, to say trust your government.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, it is an extraordinary challenge. What is clear is that the Afghan people right now, that they have much greater expectations of their government, their ability to deliver basic services, the ability of their government to

be accountable, the ability of their government to deliver predictable justice to them. And that is perhaps more acute in the areas of eastern and southern Afghanistan right now, where insecurity exists. And that is part of the cause for the reasons of insecurity.

So it is absolutely central that the Government of Afghanistan address this. But it is an extraordinary challenge. We are talking about a country that had three decades of conflict; a country, because of those three decades of conflict, has literacy rates of 25 percent. We are talking about the complete collapse of institutions.

But I will tell you I have served in Afghanistan since 2002, and there has been progress that has been made. We don't want to overlook substantial progress that has been made. But what is going to be essential now over the next two years is that President Karzai's administration, in partnership with us, with the support of the international community, that they start to take stronger measures to become a more accountable government and that they do address seriously the problems of corruption that plague the society.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Ambassador, thank you for that answer. You are a successful professional, and that is what gives the American people much concern, is that it is going to take a long time for this country to ever have a central government or to be a nation.

We have a recession, a deep recession in this country, and this is a debate that I hope we will have on the floor of the House soon about the policy as it relates to Afghanistan.

General McChrystal, what do you anticipate, once the 30,000 Americans are on the ground in Afghanistan, as far as the insurgency? Do you anticipate this will fuel the insurgency, embolden them to come back out and really challenge to show their strength? I mean, I imagine that is probably a given, but I would like to hear you comment on that.

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe they will try to do that. But I think that they are going to be challenged to do that. When they mass now in any significant numbers, they are defeated fairly quickly, with significant losses. So what I think they will do, and what we see them talking about doing is trying to maintain pressure, show a brave front against this, and continue to show the momentum that they believe that they have.

I think, however, that they will end up using an increasing number of asymmetric tactics, suicide bombers, improvised explosive devices, and coercion of the population at night and things other than large-scale operations.

Mr. JONES. General, let me ask you this, and this will be my last question, time is running out. If you needed to pursue the enemy, like during Vietnam they had a sanctuary, Laos, do you have the green light to go across the border in hot pursuit?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, we have the ability to protect our forces with fire across the border, artillery and air fire, and we do that in coordination with our Pakistani partners. So we can pursue them to target them, and do that fairly routinely. But again, we coordinate that and have a series of procedures and process in place that allow us to do that.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask that in the future, from time to time, if possible, that we would have classified briefings with men like General McChrystal and the ambassador.

The CHAIRMAN. We, of course, have done that in the past. We will do our best in the future. Thank you.

Mr. JONES. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

Mr. Andrews.

Mr. ANDREWS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, General.

Good morning, Ambassador. Thank you for your service.

General, Ambassador, do you agree with the statement that there is not a robust Al Qaeda presence in Afghanistan today?

General MCCHRYSTAL. In terms of numbers, there is not a robust Al Qaeda presence. In terms of the ability, linkages to people like the Haqqani network and to the Quetta Shura Taliban through surrogates, in fact they do have significant linkage and influence.

Mr. ANDREWS. In your written testimony, on page two, General, you say that our core goal of defeating Al Qaeda and preventing their return to Afghanistan. Return from where?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, there are many locations. Their primary location in that area is Pakistan.

Mr. ANDREWS. I thought you would say that. And what is the plan with respect then to Al Qaeda sanctuaries in Pakistan? Let me just play a devil's advocate question for a moment. It is not my view, but I hear it.

There is a robust Al Qaeda presence, both quantitatively and qualitatively in Pakistan. So we are sending 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan. What are we doing to be aggressive in wiping out the Al Qaeda sanctuaries in Pakistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, in my current position, I don't have direct responsibility for operations inside Pakistan, although I maintain close liaison.

Based upon my background, I would tell you that the most effective long-term tactic against terrorism is governance. Where you establish effective governance with rule of law in an area, it is very difficult for terrorist groups to operate. So our strategic partnership with Pakistan and the Government of Pakistan I believe is the critical long-term way to help reduce Al Qaeda. And that is true in other locations.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Ambassador, what evidence is there that the Pakistanis are executing their part of the strategic partnership by aggressively going after Al Qaeda in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, that is not my domain as the U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan. We do have a very close, collaborative relationship with our United States embassy in Pakistan. The issues of security that we are talking about here today are inextricably linked, Afghanistan and Pakistan, but it wouldn't be for me to characterize the specifics of Pakistan's actions.

Mr. ANDREWS. I appreciate that. And I think that Secretary Gates and Secretary Lew were pretty good on this. But I would just—some unsolicited advice here. The American people are not going to support the deployment of 30,000 people on a bank shot,

on an indirect strategy to try to deal with a very direct problem. And I understand that the prevention of a reemergence of a sanctuary in Afghanistan has real value. But it is pretty clear to me that one of the central focal points of this mission is to help the Pakistani Government survive and help it gain its footing and its credibility. I do think we need to articulate that. I think that that is a very legitimate rationale. I think it is in our national interest to do so. But I think that if we omit that from our discussion, we are omitting an awfully important point here.

And just one follow-up to Mr. Jones's question. General, you said that your orders permitted you to fire across the border, as I understand it. Would the force protection rules of engagement (ROE) permit you to pursue across the border if, in your judgment, force protection required that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I would like to take that for the record so I can consult the specific rules of engagement.

Mr. ANDREWS. I understand. If you were writing those rules of engagement, what would your recommendation be?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I would never take away, from American forces particularly, their ability to protect themselves. However, I would be very cautious in how I framed it and how I executed it because the sovereignty of Pakistan is as sacred as the sovereignty of any other country.

Mr. ANDREWS. I appreciate that. I know even the question is provocative. And I do not mean to be provocative.

Look, my hope is that the Taliban are degraded to the point where they are not a virulent force within Pakistan, that government can stabilize, they can execute their mission in the FATA, and we can get both sides of the border dealt with. I just would emphasize this is a bi-national problem. As a matter of fact, the Taliban would see it as their own sovereign nation in that area.

Thank you, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. I also thank the gentleman for raising the issue of Pakistan. We are reminded that there is a classified briefing at three o'clock this afternoon, HVC–301. Admiral LeFever, top military officer in Pakistan, will be giving that briefing.

Mr. Akin, the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And General, I immediately agreed with your comments about the quality of the forces in Afghanistan. My son is over there at Camp Leatherneck. So I want an immediate support there. I would say that what I would like you to do, if you could do this fairly concisely, would be, what would you say your biggest three challenges are? I am looking more for titles than I am a long paragraph on each one.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir. I think the number one is going to be the growth of the Afghan National Security Forces, both in size and quality. I think the second is going to be partnering with Ambassador Eikenberry and the Government of Afghanistan's team for governance. Because where we create security, it is not durable without governance. And then I think the last of course is probably just getting at the psychological aspects of the Afghan people as

they are coerced by the insurgency. It plays into everything else, but convincing them is a critical task at hand.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you for making that concise. Your first point was the security forces, and that was going to be a question I wanted to ask more about. And that is, what would you say is the condition of the security forces in Afghanistan? We were on a committee with Chairman Snyder here, and we looked at the same thing in Iraq. And you have to build up and build. What is the status of the forces in general, if you can do it fairly quickly?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir. Together, the Afghan National Security Forces are just about 190,000 people assigned or on the rolls right now. The Afghan National Army (ANA) is significantly ahead in terms of professionalization, capacity, than the Afghan National Police (ANP) because we started earlier. We started in 2002. At the battalion and company level, they fight pretty well. Organizationally, there is much development to do.

The Afghan National Police have much further to go. The percentage of policemen who have actually received formal training is fairly low. We are increasing our partnership and our focus on them, but we are starting at a much lower level.

The last point is the police, of course, have a tremendous challenge because they operate so dispersed. It is harder to have leadership and influence over that. But they also die in larger numbers than any other force on the battlefield fighting. So while we can be very critical, I think we also need to balance the fact that they are dying for their country pretty courageously.

Mr. AKIN. And the additional troops allow you to protect them better and to partner with them better.

General MCCHRYSTAL. That is actually the heart of the strategy, sir. Create more security, but do it shoulder to shoulder, partnering with the police and the army.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you very much, General.

And Ambassador, a couple of questions. Thinking back a little bit from lessons from Afghanistan, do they have a constitution in Afghanistan—I mean from Iraq—do they have a constitution in Afghanistan now?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Sir, they do. They have had a constitution——

Mr. AKIN. Could you pull your mike up a little higher again, please? Thank you.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I am a slow learner here. They have had a constitution since 2004.

Mr. AKIN. And did we make the same mistake in that one to put sharia law into the constitution or not?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Sharia law is recognized in the constitution, but it is not the dominant judicial system.

Mr. AKIN. That sounds like double-talk to me. If it is in the constitution——

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. No, respect for Islamic law is in the constitution, Congressman. But it is locally interpreted.

Mr. AKIN. Locally understood. Okay.

Corruption is something that a lot of people have been hitting on, that theme. Is corruption inevitable as long as we have the massive

poppy crops that are—I have to say that carefully—over in Afghanistan?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. There is no question that the high level of poppy production and opium trade contributes to corruption.

Mr. AKIN. Is it possible for us to deal with the corruption problem as long as there is that major dependence on that supply of income?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. It will be difficult, but there is progress that is being made against narcotrafficking. Congressman, last year, there was about a 20 percent reduction that occurred countrywide in poppy production. And last year, the number of poppy-free provinces of Afghanistan went from 18 to 20 out of 34 provinces of Afghanistan. There could be reverses from that promising development last year, but there is a comprehensive effort that is being waged by the Government of Afghanistan, supported both by our civilian side, especially in the area of law enforcement, with agricultural programs and the military.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you.

Last thing is, have you been paying attention to governance from the bottom up? Sometimes I think we start it too much from the top down.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, that is a very serious problem. And I would agree with you. I would characterize our first several years in Afghanistan as focusing at the national level. Our new strategy does call for emphasis at the subnational level in very direct support and in close coordination with our military and their efforts out in the field.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman.

The gentlelady from California, Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to both of you. General, Ambassador, thank you so much for your service.

I appreciate, General, your mentioning the men and women who are serving and I think particularly their families. I continue to think that we are still a military at war, not a nation at war. And quite frankly, I am not sure that we are trying to address that problem. We talked about the credibility of the Afghan Government to their own people. And we mentioned, you know, many times about the corruption.

And I want to just focus on our role for a second. Mr. Ambassador, are we supporting leaders who in fact are fuelling the insurgency in many ways? We give a great deal of resources to the ministries. You mentioned certifying the industries. But I want to know whether the Congress has a role in trying to condition some of that support further and the extent to which we could be playing a more significant role.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Well, as you know, Congressman, you do play one very significant role in that you have the responsibility for the Special Investigation for Afghanistan Reconstruction, the group called SIGAR, which is a very robust auditing and investigation arm that reports directly to the United States Congress. Indeed, in Afghanistan today, at our United States embassy mission,

we have over 30 from SIGAR that are assigned. And they are very busy, working in close partnership with us, to rigorously audit and investigate the spending of our money. So, yes, you are playing a very vital role.

And as we move forward in Afghanistan, we have many very progressive, good Afghan ministers right now that like to condition developmental aid in ways that help them to work with their own parliament, with very stringent standards being set.

Mrs. DAVIS. I think I am looking for ways that this really translates to the Afghan people, though, the extent to which they see that we are actually doing something about that and that some of these leaders are not really acting in their best interests. How are we communicating that then? It is critical that they begin to see that change.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Well, again, I think that President Karzai, as he laid out in his inauguration speech, he has a program for reform. He is emphasizing accountability. And I am cautiously optimistic at this point about our ability over the next year, over the next two years, to increasingly work in partnership with the Afghan Government to achieve the goals and objectives that you have articulated.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you.

I know this is progressive and it doesn't happen on a dime, but I also believe that there may be a time at which we see that the metrics of the work that SIGAR is doing would indicate to us that things are not progressing in the way that they should. And I look to you and I look to the General as well to be able to say that, you know, we see some real problems here, and if this continues on a trajectory like it has been, we can't get to where we want to go. I mean, it is a bridge too far.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. No, the challenges are daunting for government accountability right now. We have an array of programs in the area of law enforcement and civil administration to work with the Afghans in partnership. But it is going to be, as General McChrystal had said, it is perhaps our most difficult task given what our starting point was back in 2001.

Mrs. DAVIS. General, as you work with the troops and certainly to develop the Afghan police in a different way than we have been working on for the last number of years, we know that we are very dependent on tribal leaders to encourage their men to join with the forces, and yet we also know that the attrition rates are very high, that there are multiple, multiple problems in doing that. So what are going to be your indicators that in fact you are moving in a progressive way? Where would you like to be in three months and six months? Because this has got to happen soon.

General MCCHRYSTAL. It will happen at different rates in different areas. But if we pick an area like the Helmand River Valley, where we are very focused, what we would like to do is increase the number or percentage of trainees that have had training at all. Then, once we put them through that training, we partner with them. So we have elements that are with them literally all the time, 24–7.

That gives us two things. One, it gives us an ability to help build their professionalism, but it also gives us a constant window into

their level of professionalism. And it is somewhat a deterrent as well against things like corruption and misbehavior because they are partnered with us. What I want to get to is where the Afghan villagers, the people in the local area, assign credibility in their mind to the Afghan police. That is the most important metric, more so than their ability to go after crime. They will provide security. But it is do the people view them as the credible——

Mrs. DAVIS. And if the answer to that question is no, this is not happening, then what?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We just keep working through that. At the end of the day, the Afghan National Police must be viewed with credibility by the local people. It will never be perfect, but we have to get to that.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentlelady.

Before calling on Mr. Forbes, very quickly, General, given the mission the President has assigned to you, are you convinced that the forces provided to you are adequate?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Mr. Chairman, I am convinced.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Forbes.

Mr. FORBES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And General, thank you for your patience in answering our questions. I am going to try to bring to my questions the three attributes that we should have: transparency, determination, and humility. And you responded to the ranking member earlier that you thought it was your responsibility to provide your best military advice. And I assume that means to us as well, to the Armed Services Committee.

Here is the core of what every member of this committee needs to know and the American people need to know: In your experience, in your best military advice, should we send 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan or a number greater than 30,000? Not what you requested, not what were in documents, not what the President ordered, in your best military advice.

General MCCHRYSTAL. In my best military advice, this is the right decision. The additional coalition forces that I expect will be helpful as well. But I believe that this is the right——

Mr. FORBES. So you believe 30,000 would be the right number?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Of U.S. forces, yes, sir.

Mr. FORBES. How many total troops? More than 30,000?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I think we are going to end up with about 37,000, although it is absolutely unclear—or it is a little bit unclear at this point.

Mr. FORBES. On Thursday of last week, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff sat where you sat, and he indicated that you had received everything that you requested. According to military doctrine, normally that formal request for troops, as I understand it, would go from you to the combatant commander, which would have been General Petraeus, to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and then to the President. Is that a fair representation?

General MCCHRYSTAL. That is correct.

Mr. FORBES. And was the chairman correct that you received everything you requested?

General MCCHRYSTAL. That is correct.

Mr. FORBES. During the period of time that you have served in Afghanistan, from 2002 on, has there ever been a time under that chain of command, with that request going through like that, that you have not received what you requested?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I have never been in the position where I requested before. So it would be misleading for me. The force that I had was completely resourced.

Mr. FORBES. So you had never made a request that you hadn't gotten. So if I had said, during the entire time you have been in Afghanistan, you received everything you requested, that would technically be correct?

General MCCHRYSTAL. That would be correct.

Mr. FORBES. And earlier today, the chairman asked you a question. He said, will you be successful in your mission? And you answered, yes, you would. From 2002 on, for every command that you had in Afghanistan, if I had ever asked you if you would be successful in your mission, was there ever a time that you would have publicly said, no, you would not have been successful in that mission?

General MCCHRYSTAL. No, there is not. But I was in a fairly narrow part of the world. We were successful.

Mr. FORBES. You would never have said, no, we are not going to be successful.

General MCCHRYSTAL. No, I would not.

Mr. FORBES. The final question I would like to ask you is you believe that the Afghanistan war is a war of necessity, do you not?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I do, sir.

Mr. FORBES. If it is a war of necessity, then I would like to follow up on a point that was raised a little bit earlier. If it is a war of necessity, then I would think by definition we have to win it. Is that a fair assessment?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe it is important that we be successful, yes, sir.

Mr. FORBES. Then if it is crucial that we have to win it because it is a war of necessity, how can we say that, in 18 months, if we need more troops, we are not going to require more troops; we are going to automatically begin to draw down our numbers if in fact we need more troops to win this war of necessity?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, let me give you a context on this. First, I don't believe that we are going to need more forces in 18 months. But I would provide my best military advice on the conditions at any point, either at the 18 months or not, no matter how painful it might be.

Mr. FORBES. And General, I have complete confidence in your integrity. I know you would do that. My point is not with you. My point is, as a Nation, how can we say, if this is a war of necessity, that we will guarantee we are going to begin withdrawing troops in 18 months if we have to win it and if in 17 months we determine that we have got to have more troops to win this war?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I believe the key point here is really the long-term strategic partnership with Afghanistan which the President has outlined. So I think that underpins everything.

Mr. FORBES. And General, just one last shot at this for my determination part of the three attributes that you asked us to have, wouldn't it be fair to say that, as a Nation, if we have determined that this is a war of necessity and if in 17 months or 13 months or whenever that period of time comes, we determine as a Nation that we have got to have more troops to win this war, that we have got to put more troops in there to win this war of necessity?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, what I can guarantee you is I will give my best military advice. And I would think that the Nation has to make decisions then based upon a much wider context.

Mr. FORBES. Thank you, General.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman.

The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Marshall.

Mr. MARSHALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for your service. I think we have got a great team there, and for all the service of all those you lead.

I am going to continue my lobbying campaign, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, changing the name to Provincial Development Centers, something like that. Have an Afghan face on this as quickly as possible. We should have done that already. Shame on us for having not figured this out five or six or seven years ago. Have an Afghan PDC university.

And it is interesting when I talk with you, General McChrystal, you agree.

When I talk with you, Ambassador Eikenberry, you agree on this point.

If the two of you could just get together and make it happen, that would be I think helpful to the entire cause. I don't envy your balancing act with sophisticated characters, the ones that this may—you know, the 2011 date might have a forcing function with. Presumably, they will be listening to our counter-information operation focused on the unsophisticated characters that we need to persuade, hey, look, you need to jump on our side of the fence here, or at least get off the fence and help us out during the next year-and-a-half.

Clearly, the Taliban are going to be emphasizing 2011, July 2011. And you know, we have talked enough about that. But that is really—you have got quite a challenge here when you think about the different characters that you are trying to persuade with regard to two different objectives.

In Vietnam, as far as I can determine, about the only really successful thing that we had going for us was the village pacification program. Just about everything else we tried didn't work very well. And then we screwed that up by moving the folks who were very effective at guarding their own villages, having help from Special Forces teams, we tried to move them into more conventional forces and move them to different parts of the country, and then they just didn't want to fight there.

We have really struggled with the Afghan National Army. It is really very visible. It is pretty easy for the Taliban to avoid them, just like it is easy for the Taliban to avoid us. What we really need are people who kind of look—well, we need the one-eyed bearded guy that Roscoe Bartlett was referring to looking out for us and our interests in the rural areas. And it seems to me that the people

who would come to him and say, "Look, you better not be helping the Americans because when they leave, we are going to cut your head off," he would like to be in a position to say, "Oh, really?" Well, here is the way it is going to work. Before they leave, I am going to cut your head off. So I won't have to worry about you showing up after they leave. And that is the kind of almost vigilante justice that occurs in rural areas of Afghanistan, and it has for centuries.

Now, General McChrystal, the central aspect of your new campaign is to empower local defense groups and local communities, and strengthening those local communities. And yet you have this national concept at the same time. So there is a clash here. And then, as far as the local folks are concerned, a lot of them are going to want to treat the enemy exactly as I just described. You help the Taliban, I am going to kill you. No questions asked. I am just going to do that. There is not going to be a trial. If there is, it is the Law West of the Pecos; son, first, we are going to give you a fair trial, and then we are going to hang you.

How do you, how do we, how does America fit in there when you have got the national government, the local folks, and the local folks not interested in abiding by our concepts about how to go about doing this?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir. I will start on that. What we have got to get to is Afghan responsibility for their security. And when I say responsibility, it has got many facets to it. They absolutely have a tradition of local security, denying their area to outsiders of any kind. And I think that we need to reinforce that, and we need to support that where we can.

We need to balance that with great caution against a tradition that is much newer but much hated in Afghanistan, of warlords and militias. And so on the one hand, you have a local security tradition. On the other hand, for about the last 20 years, groups have come up under warlords that have been predatory, and are much hated by the people, and took part in the civil war. So we have got to make sure that we don't either let reality or perception of those two work against each other. So as I say, with caution as we go forward.

And we are working programs that you are familiar with, Congressman, to try to build at local levels. And we are having some success there with our Afghan partners, government, and local elements. There are other parts of shared responsibility that are wider than just security forces that might carry weapons. It is also elders not allowing the young men to join the Taliban. Also people turning in information on improvised explosive device locations, or just telling Taliban, you can do IEDs, but you can't do them in our neighborhood.

As that grows out, that is the kind of confidence. The locals would like do that, but they lack the confidence right now. It is like a neighborhood that has been intimidated. So we have got to do a balance of a very credible national force, and there must be an Afghan National Army and police with a strong neighborhood fabric that is part local security and part just governance, neighborhood watch and trust for each other.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman.

The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Miller.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General McChrystal, welcome, sir. And in your opening statement, you made a comment about defeating Al Qaeda. And then in the same line you said you must disrupt and degrade the Taliban's capacity. Could you explain for us the difference between defeating Al Qaeda and degrading the Taliban?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Certainly. I believe that it is U.S. policy, and I believe it is an important objective that Al Qaeda be defeated. And that means, over time, wherever they are around the world, they must be prevented from being a threat against either the United States or our allies. I think that will take many years, and it won't be just an American effort; it will be all of our partners. But where they are, I believe Al Qaeda both as an organization and as an ideology needs to be defeated. And that will require a lot of Muslim nation partners as well.

In terms of Taliban, what I think we need to do there, sir, is—and we had an extensive discussion about that term defeat—I think what we are doing is preventing the Taliban, I am sorry, preventing the Taliban from being an existential threat to the Government of Afghanistan and thus to the Afghan people. So rather than wipe out every Taliban member, what we need to do is lower their capacity to the point where, within their own means, Afghanistan can hold them from being a major threat to either their way of life or their government. And I think over time that will cause the Taliban to go away, to become irrelevant, and cease to exist.

Mr. MILLER. So we do intend to defeat the Taliban?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, the military term, in fact without parsing that too tightly, we intend to prevent them from doing what they want to do.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, sir.

And also following up, you described in your assessment as an initial assessment, and that you would write a second assessment. Do you intend to provide Congress a copy of that second assessment?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I have not been tasked to write a written assessment in that same form, but I understand from my secretary, I will provide an assessment next December. So I don't know the form yet of that, format of that, but it will be clearly an exhaustive—a complete assessment.

Mr. MILLER. Ambassador Eikenberry, do you think we have enough civilians working now? It seems like an awful small number when you are talking about 100,000 troops, and we have less than a thousand civilians out there right now. And there were press reports earlier that said State Department employers were in fact refusing to go. And I know we can't compel, but that they were refusing to deploy to Afghanistan. It is happening awful slow. And we have been hearing this now for eight years that we need to bring people in to augment, if you will the troops with civilians.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Well, Congressman, as you know, we are not trying to match military numbers right now. It is not about how many; it is what effects do they get. When you talk about—on the other hand, when you talk about the growth of our civilian presence in Afghanistan, I have to tell you it has been extraor-

dinary. The military organizes with units like companies and battalions and brigades and they deploy large units. When we are talking about individuals, when we are talking about civilians, we are talking about an individual agricultural specialist. We are talking about an individual from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

So, against that, now, if we do look at the build up of civilians that have occurred over the past 12 months or soon by the end of January of next year, over a 12-month period, we will have a threefold increase of civilians on the ground in Afghanistan. By military standards, a threefold increase is extraordinary, and it is even more extraordinary for civilians.

Do we have enough on the ground right now for the present mission that we have by the end of January? We will have what is needed. We will have to grow further now with the decision that the President has made for the strategy of where we have 30,000 more troops coming in. That will mean that we will have additional requirements out in the field and we meet those.

But if I could give one example.

Mr. MILLER. I wish I could, sir, I am running out of time. I think it is important in context, sir, you talk about a threefold increase, that is only to 970-plus. It is not that large of an increase. If we need civilians to get in there, we need civilians to get in there.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman if I could, let me give you an example of civilian effects that we are achieving. Right now, in Helmand Province, where General McChrystal's forces are operating, in one district in Helmand Province, we have one agricultural expert that is operating there. He is leveraging then an organization of several hundred Afghans who are implementing, and they are providing then for the voucher program of agricultural assistance for some 14,000 Afghan farmers. I want to emphasize that one well-placed civilian in Afghanistan gets tremendous effects. We are not talking about the need for tens of thousands civilians.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Loebsack.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to ask both of you, or in particular, the Ambassador, about agriculture. A fact sheet released by the White House last Tuesday states, "Our top reconstruction priority is implementing a civilian military agriculture redevelopment strategy to restore Afghanistan's once vibrant agriculture sector."

Now having visited one of the National Guard's agriculture development teams in July when I was last there and saw you, and thank you very much for hosting our delegation, I believe that redefining and growing an Afghan economy will be key to stabilizing the country and eventually allowing our troops to come home. Does the President's strategy entail an expansion of the number and the location of these ADTs, these agricultural development teams?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, I would like to get back with you on that. I am not sure what the projected growth of the agricultural development teams are.

I will say, on the Department of Agriculture front, though, there is a very substantial increase that is going on. We started with very few on the ground this year, and over the course of the next several months, we will have about 65 Department of Agriculture

experts: five working in the ministry of agriculture, and all the rest deployed out in the field in line with General McChrystal's forces.

Mr. LOEBSACK. It is about 65 then because the number I had was 60? As far as you know, there is no projection to go beyond that 65 any time soon or even into the next year?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. We will reassess that, Congressman. That is a very impressive delivery from the Department of Agriculture (USDA). They will get great effects. I know traveling around, when I am out with the military, if you ask commanders throughout Afghanistan and ask them what they can use more of, sometimes they will say they can use agricultural expertise before they can use more military forces.

Mr. LOEBSACK. I was there, as you know, with Congressman Ellsworth from Indiana, and Joe Donnelly from Indiana; the Indiana National Guard, we are doing a fantastic job out in the east when we were visiting at that time. I am hopeful that the Iowa National Guard may be able to stand up something like this as well. Obviously with Secretary Vilsack at the helm at USDA, I have a lot of confidence in his ability. I know you have spoken with him about this; is that correct?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Sir, I just spoke with him yesterday, and he is extraordinarily supportive of these efforts, and we are hoping that he will be making a trip out to Afghanistan here in January. With 80 percent of the Afghan economy tied to agriculture, if we are going to make a dent in possible insurgent recruits, if we are going to get after this narcotrafficking problem, if Afghanistan is going to have long-term economic sustainability, agriculture is key. And that is really our focus.

Mr. LOEBSACK. I agree, thank you.

General McChrystal, obviously, there is a security component to this as well. Obviously these ADTs and other civilian projects will be linked closely to military action, so as security is gained, the ADT, and PRTs, which I think also is a misnomer, by the way—I would agree with my colleague from Georgia—and other development stabilization projects follow close behind to help this whole build and transfer strategy that we are talking about. Can you elaborate a little bit on that, the intersection of security and agriculture development?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Absolutely. In fact, they follow in time very closely behind security, but they actually increase security. Once you increase agriculture in most cases, but also any kind of employment, what you do is you take fighters off the battlefield or you take potential fighters off because unemployment is the biggest recruiter for the Taliban right now. So the ability to get back the fabric of life, when people have something to lose, they are much less interested in having insecurity in their area, so it is what makes security durable.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Thanks to both of you.

In my remaining time, I guess I just want to make a comment about the Pakistan connection here because obviously I am still a little bit confused as to what our strategy entails with respect to Pakistan. I understand there is only so much that can be said in open session, and I look forward to the hearing, and I thank the Chair for that this afternoon at three o'clock. But I have a lot of

the same concerns about Pakistan, I should say, that my colleagues do on both sides of the aisle. And specifically, how it is the case that in the near term and going forward, our strategy is going to deal with the problems of Pakistan?

I understand entirely the sovereignty issue. Obviously, Pakistan is a sovereign state, just like the United States is. We have to be careful about our cross-border operations, but at the same time, if we are really looking for a long-term solution, Pakistan is going to be absolutely critical. Thank you for your time.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you General, Ambassador, for being here today. I also want to thank you for your hospitality and briefings as I was with you in August. I am very grateful to be the co-chair of the Afghan Caucus, and so I have a particular appreciation of your commitment.

I am also very grateful, my former National Guard Unit, 218th Brigade, served 2007–2008, for a year. General Bob Livingston training the Afghan police and army units; it was the largest deployment from our State, 1,600 troops, since World War II.

And, General, I agree with you that the persons who served there are very grateful and proud of their service, and they developed a great bond with the people of Afghanistan and identified them as Afghan brothers.

I also have another identification with the two of you. I began my military career in the 1970s, and I believe, just as both of you have stated, that we have the best troops ever. I know this firsthand visiting Fort Jackson. I represent Parris Island Marine Corps station, Beaufort Naval Hospital. And then I am also grateful I have four sons currently serving in the military. And so these truly are the best troops ever, and we want to back you up in every way we can with equipment and support. And I am honored to serve with Susan Davis on Military Personnel to back up families.

General, the President has said July 2011 is when the U.S. troops will begin to redeploy out of Afghanistan. Is this a conditions-based target? Will it be adjusted if the Afghan security forces or Afghan government is not ready? Is the process conditions-based? And what are those conditions?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I view it is a solid decision the President has made, and I operate under the assumption that we will begin to decrease our forces beginning in July 2011. But I do that in the context that the President has also provided the people of Afghanistan a long-term strategic partnership, a guarantee that we are going to be partners with them over the long haul and help them continue to protect their security and their sovereignty.

I think that, while everything is conditions-based, I think it will be informed by conditions. We are about to put 30,000 more Americans and additional coalition forces and go hard at this insurgency over the next 18 months between now and June 2011. My expectation is the insurgency will be less robust in the summer of 2011, significantly so. And it is also my expectation that the Afghan National Security Forces will be more robust. They will still be imper-

fect, but they will be more robust, along with some improvements in governance and development and whatnot.

So I think I see confidently in the summer of 2011, that beginning the reduction of forces will be appropriate. The pace and scope of which I think needs to be conditions-based, and I think it goes back to how strong is the insurgency at that point? What is the pace we have seen in the growth of Afghanistan's ability to provide for their own support? And then I think the last one is the minds of the Afghan people. At that point I hope to have convinced the Afghan people, not myself, but this effort, I hope will have convinced the Afghan people that their government is going to be successful here, and they will then make the decisions that increase their support.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much.

And Ambassador, you have identified and with your background in the military and also now serving as ambassador, you say that there is progress in Afghanistan. Can you tell us about roads, schools, medical access, and cell phone usage?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Yeah, in many of those areas you have pointed to, and we can go beyond, Congressman, indeed, there has been extraordinary progress. Take education, in the dark years of 2001, there was only a million children in Afghanistan going to school, and they were all boys. And they had a certain type of education that they were being delivered. Now there is about 6.5 million children going to school, and about 35 percent of those are women.

We have gone from very little access in 2001 to health care, and that has been extended now, basic health care, to about 80 percent of the country. We could go on.

These are areas of great socioeconomic progress. It should give us confidence that if we get the proper strategy, that we have things to build upon, and I do believe that we have got the proper strategy right now.

Mr. WILSON. It has been reported there are no roads in Afghanistan. Of course, I have seen the paved roads. Can you tell us the level of success there?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Yeah, there has been great progress that has been made. There are several thousand kilometers of paved roads. One of the areas we are emphasizing in our—the agricultural program is putting a lot of effort into farm-to-market roads. And so, yes, there has been great progress in developing the transportation infrastructure of Afghanistan over the last several years.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Before calling the gentleman from Pennsylvania, General McChrystal, very briefly, can you identify the officers seated behind you.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, these are members of my staff. Of course you have got Bill Rafferty from the United Kingdom (UK). To his right, I have got our communications officer, Rear Admiral Greg Smith. I have got one of my two aides, a German officer, and then my executive officer, Colonel Charlie Flynn.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Sestak.

Mr. SESTAK. General McChrystal, when you answered some questions from Representative McKeon, you talked about your force planning and assessment of criteria and continually doing so. When General—when President Obama, as Commander-in-Chief, stated in March that our real goal here was Al Qaeda in Pakistan, and then one of his three objectives was our partnership with Pakistan; as you came up with your forces, was that part of the benchmarks for determining the proper number of troops?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Most of our assessment was, for forces, was what we recommended for inside Afghanistan to create conditions that would be complimentary to progress inside Pakistan. So I think I am answering your question here. We did not shape our forces for anything inside Pakistan.

Mr. SESTAK. So the 35,000 Taliban that are in Pakistan were not part of your assessment of how many troops you might need to take care of those key population centers, even though the border is not recognized?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Not for operations inside Pakistan. The forces we need inside Afghanistan were, however, informed by conditions as we assessed them inside Pakistan.

Mr. SESTAK. In a sense, then, your benchmarks are ones that, as you assess what troops you need, then what the military prowess is of the Pakistani counterinsurgency effort and whether the adversary flows back and forth are part of your benchmarks for determining as we go forward success or an alternative approach or less or more troops?

General MCCHRYSTAL. They are absolutely considerations, factors that we will take in terms of the relative strength of the enemy and what we need do.

Mr. SESTAK. And were they part of your assessment?

General MCCHRYSTAL. They were, sir.

Mr. SESTAK. Are those benchmarks available? The President had promised in March that we would have benchmarks. We got a draft that was considered inadequate in a number of people's minds in September. So you do have these benchmarks by which you determined for that objective, which he said is our overall objective, the Al Qaeda, and to leave Afghanistan inhospitable, that they might not come back there. So you have those available, I gather, in a classified form?

General MCCHRYSTAL. No, I want to make sure I use the terms correctly here because when I talk about the factors, the relative strength, those are considerations in our planning. Benchmarks is the term, would be metrics that we take to measure the situation. They are not dissimilar, but——

Mr. SESTAK. You have benchmarks by which you are going to measure your progress with the 30,000 additional troops that take into consideration his overall objective, which is Al Qaeda, and however those considerations are, getting the Taliban on the other side, flowing back and forth, do you have the metrics for that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We have a lot of metrics. We are still refining them into what I would call mature benchmarks.

Mr. SESTAK. But they were good enough to come up with the amount of troops you had?

General MCCHRYSTAL. They were.

Mr. SESTAK. Mr. Ambassador, when you were here back in 2007, you testified that Iran worked towards similar objectives as we do in Afghanistan. They didn't want the Sunni Taliban there—Al Qaeda there. They wanted stability. They put money in roads. What is your assessment today, three years later?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. On specific intelligence, I would defer to General McChrystal. But let me say, at a broader strategic level, yes, Iran I would characterize in general its policies with Afghanistan as one where they are certainly not trying to cause instability throughout the country, indeed a return of the Sunni Salafist regime to Afghanistan they would look at it and obviously it is against their security interest and they probably have shared interest as well in trying to deal with the massive narcotrafficking problem that afflicts their own society.

Mr. SESTAK. When you both joined up there in Vietnam, we had 5,000 USAID personnel and 7,500 including contractors and others in Vietnam, and you have about 300 or 400 today. My question is that the Department of Defense in the past, since 2007, has cut its Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) funding from 16 percent of overall ODA to about 9 percent. Has that money moved into the Defense procurement or have you seen any of it flow over to you in order to do this civilian surge and the monies attendant to making it happen? It is about $1.5 billion. Have you seen that?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, I am not aware of, in terms of accounts from Department of Defense to Department of State. What I would tell you now is that I am very satisfied with the development budget that we have. I have put in a request for additional development funds, and that is being looked at right now, but I am comfortable with the level of development assistance that we are providing to Afghanistan and I am very comfortable with the build up of civilians that we have on the ground.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. LoBiondo.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry, thank you for being here. Thank you for your service and helping us better understand what is happening.

I want to go back to the idea that we have talked about a little bit; the Afghan population, General, you said a few minutes ago in response to one of my colleagues, that it was your hope that within a relatively short period of time, you would be able to convince them that this was the right move on their behalf and that they would be with us.

But aren't there big question marks when we have got a timeline in place with how the Afghan people are going to react when there is such a threat of violence from Al Qaeda and Taliban that are coming into these small villages, you know, taking names? How are we going to convince them that we are this long-term commitment that you mentioned—it seems to me there is some ambiguity here, and there needs to be clarity for the people of Afghanistan to understand our commitment and translate that into their support for us. Can you comment on that?

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, most importantly, they are going to judge us by our actions. And as we go down into areas where we have recently secured, the question back to us is always, are you going to stay this time? And when we respond, the Marines are asked this all the time, we would say yes, we are. Sometimes they will come back and say to us, but you didn't last time. And so what they are really judging is not our rhetoric but our performance in staying. We do have a deficit of trust from that standpoint to make up because they know that the Taliban can be trusted to at least make an effort to come back and coerce.

What I think we need—this is a serious challenge, sir, but I think what we need to stress is, one, the effects that we will have with the increase in forces that we have, but more importantly the long-term partnership. That is really what they want. Even down at the lowest level and villages, they are looking for long-term predictability in their lives and a long-term partnership with people who will help them and us to help their government. So I think we should not be—I think we should contest enemy propaganda about timelines, but we should stress really the timeline that we are on is helping them in the long-term partnership.

Mr. LoBIONDO. Well, I appreciate that. I still think there are some gaps in connecting the dots between what the Afghan people are hearing and understanding, and considering their apprehension about our leaving and now hearing these things about 2011 that why shouldn't the enemy sit on their hands and then after the deadline ratchet up?

And I wish you all the success in the world, and we hope that that comes together. But in the next couple of months do you expect you are going to be able to have an ability to better explain this to the Afghan people so that they are more on your side because it seems like they don't depend on their own government?

General McCHRYSTAL. This is a challenge, but working with their government, I think we can do a number of things. One of which is, they don't—they want a partnership. They want assurance from us, but they don't want us to stay forever. They don't want foreigners in their country. So, in many ways, the guarantee that we the coalition will support them but not stay too long is actually a positive as well.

So what we have got to convince them is, we are going to help their government and their forces create conditions of security that will be reassuring and stable enough for them, and we will have a long-term partnership with them that will make them feel comfortable and move in that direction. But I do go back; we have to prove that with our actions, not with just our words.

Mr. LoBIONDO. Lastly, back to Pakistan for a minute, I think it has been widely acknowledged that no matter how good we are doing, that if the Pakistanis don't step up to the plate, we have a real problem on our hands. I am assuming there is a renewed intensive effort to convince them to do more than they have done before, because we have only gotten rhetoric out of them in many cases.

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, I think their recent actions over the last year or two against their own internal insurgency are really

a good indicator of just how serious they are about conducting counterinsurgency operations and reducing instability on their side.

I think that also Pakistani leadership shares with us an understanding that instability on either side of Durand line threatens the other. So I don't believe either Afghanistan or Pakistan can you fully table or secure over the long haul if the other isn't. I think that gives them shared strategic objectives.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. If I can add.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady from Maine, Ms. Pingree.

Ms. PINGREE. Thank you very much for your testimony.

The CHAIRMAN. Turn your microphone on, please.

Ms. PINGREE. Thank you both for your testimony today. I certainly appreciate all you have had to say.

I am probably one of the members of the committee who has deep reservations about the President's suggestion and proposal, and so let me take that perspective.

I do want to thank you for your comments about our troops. I think that our troops are excellent. They are skilled, and they are highly dedicated. From the State of Maine, we have deployed about half of our National Guard, so we are very well aware of their skills, the capabilities that they bring. As you say, the citizen soldiers being added to the mix, they add a lot, and they also have made tremendous sacrifices and their families have as well. In our State, it has had a huge impact on the number that have been deployed.

I do also want to say that while I understand the importance of you advocating for your mission before Congress, I as a Member of Congress, respecting the concerns of my own State, also worry overall about the long-term costs and lives and particular the costs financially to this country, the increase in the deficit, and the great need during this recession to provide some of very assistance we are providing across the globe here at home. So I balance these concerns overall, not just in the mission before us.

I do want to say, I look over the troop levels for last four years, I see two things: I see a steady increase over time in the number of American troops on the ground, and second, I think we can all agree that part of the reason we are here today is because, during the same time period, we have seen a resurgence of the Taliban, and many have asked about that today. We have also seen a great increase in the number of lives lost, projected increases even further in the future, continued increase in the amount of resources spent on this conflict, and no net improvement in the security situation.

So, in my opinion, we have reached a security plateau where no matter how many troops we commit, how many dollars we spend, or how many AID workers we send, or elections that we have or re-have in Afghanistan, we cannot significantly improve the security situation. With all due respect, it seems to me sometimes like we are trying to kill bees with a bigger baseball bat. And as it gets bigger, it doesn't seem to work; it is only a bigger bat.

So when I hear more proposals about adding troops in Afghanistan, my immediate question is, what historic successes do we have? I know you have answered many questions today about the strategy, but I have to emphasize that I don't see over history how

this will work, how it will continue to work. I have deep hope, since I think this may well proceed with or without my approval, that you are able to succeed. But if you are not, in 12 months, will we just be back here saying, well, there was a little miscalculation, we should have done this, we could have done that? What will you do if it doesn't succeed? Historically how do you convince me this could work and is worth the cost?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Insurgencies are very difficult to deal with, and if you go back and study counterinsurgency, you will find a tremendous number of unsuccessful efforts to defeat an insurgency.

The reason I believe we can defeat this insurgency and the reason I believe there is great reason for optimism is, one, the nature of the insurgency. This insurgency was a group that was in power, the most prominent part of the Taliban, and they were not credible in power. And they are not credible as a political entity now. So they are not the national liberation front of Afghanistan coming back to free the country.

In polling data, in my own anecdotal discussions almost every day with Afghans both in cities and forward, they don't want the Taliban back. The only time they accept the Taliban is with reluctance as a reality, not as a desire. So what they would like is help.

I think the other thing about counterinsurgency is, as we study it and we have learned more about it, when you lag in insurgency, when an insurgency grows, it is like a fire in a house. If the fire starts and you can put it out immediately or in your kitchen with a small fire extinguisher, that is what it takes. If you ignore or don't do that quickly enough and it is into several rooms, then suddenly the requirement to put the fire out has gotten larger. In many ways, that happens in many insurgencies.

And in Afghanistan, because the insurgency grew as they recovered after 2001, but sort of slowly. Until 2005, it wasn't as evident. That grew. Their shadow governance, their presence among the people was not met by increases in Afghanistan national security, force strength levels, or in coalition forces. So what I am saying is we lagged behind that. We have a saying as we have studied this that counterinsurgency is not a game in which you can play catch-up ball. I think we can get ahead of this this time, Ma'am.

Ms. PINGREE. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentlelady.

Mr. Kline.

Mr. KLINE. I thank Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here.

General McChrystal, I just want to be perfectly clear and get this on the record. I believe you responded to the ranking member, Mr. McKeon, or one of my colleagues, when asked about the July 2011 date if that was a date that you had proposed or recommended?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I did not recommend that date, but I did identify to my leadership that I felt that 18—in about 18 months, about the summer of 2011, that we thought we could make significant progress against this insurgency.

Mr. KLINE. I understand. Excuse me, but you didn't recommend that such a date be put out there and announced? I just want to be clear about that.

General MCCHRYSTAL. No, Congressman, I did not.

Mr. KLINE. Okay and thank you.

And I noticed that in discussing this date that you felt that there were those who opposed us, the enemy, presumably would seize upon this for information warfare, and, quote, "we can deal with it."

Let me just say, I hope and pray that we can deal with it because I think it is a problem for you. And I do think it has put ambiguity out there which we have heard from both sides of the aisle today. And we are hearing from our constituents and the American people; they don't know what that date means. And I have listened very carefully to you and Admiral Mullen and to Secretary Gates, and I understand that it is a start of a transition, but I think we put ourselves in a very tough position by having this date out there which you and others must constantly explain to the Afghans and our allies and to the American people. I hope and pray that you can indeed deal with it because I worry about the ambiguity.

Moving to another subject which is I find interesting and somewhat amazing, and that has do with what our hope for outcome is. You said, General McChrystal, "I am confident we have the right strategy and the right resources." And I was delighted to hear that, and I do have great confidence in you and have had since I guess we probably met the first time in some remote corner in Baghdad or somewhere where you were doing a fantastic job. But what is it that we have the right strategy and the right resources to do? Is that to win?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe it is to let the Afghan people win.

Mr. KLINE. Okay. Is there an important difference there? I mean, we are asking our sons and daughters, literally, in some cases, to go over there and fight, 30,000 more of them. Are we going asking them to go over and win?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We are asking them to go over there and be on the winning team. And the reason I parse this is because the Afghans are the ultimate winners here.

Mr. KLINE. I understand that. I think the parsing is interesting because it seems to be consistent. Whether it is Admiral Mullen, who I asked whenever we had the last hearing a few days ago if we were seeking victory, and he said, no, it is success. Well, I don't understand why we are parsing the words success and victory and win, but it seems to be consistently coming from that stable.

Now Secretary Gates reportedly said this weekend, "we are in this thing to win" when talking to our men and women in Afghanistan. And I certainly think that is right, and I hope that is the message that we are portraying to the men and women we are sending over there, that they are going over there to win. And I guess my question to you is, is there some guidance from somewhere to all of you that says we can't use the words win or victory?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Not—not that I have received.

Mr. KLINE. Outstanding, I am very pleased to hear that because I am just amazed that we got into this parsing business. I would have been perfectly happy to access as synonyms success and victory and win until I started discussions with people who preceded you in the panel and you, and those words, win and victory, just

don't come out. You used it in saying at least we are helping the Afghans win. But I really hope there is no direction or command or guidance that says we can't use those words, because I think it is important for our men and women in that uniform to know that they are going to win.

Finally, because my time is running out, very, very rapidly, I want to pick up on the point that Mr. Andrews and some others made, and that is about Pakistan and the importance of Pakistan and the importance of our winning, succeeding, having victory in Afghanistan, of not letting the Taliban take control in Afghanistan, the importance of that to Pakistan. Is it your judgment that, should we fail in Afghanistan, should the Taliban reemerge, that Pakistan and its nuclear weapons and its democracy would be in grave danger?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe it would be a significant threat to Pakistan were the Taliban to succeed in Afghanistan.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you very much.

My time has expired. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Kissell.

Mr. KISSELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I thank the gentlemen for being here today.

General McChrystal, I want to go back, you had said the three biggest challenges you felt we had was the growing of the Afghan army, the governance, and then the Afghan people themselves. I would like to get both of your comments on this, and I asked the same question about Afghanistan back in early November. The sense of Afghan nationalism versus all the other influences of tribal history, sectionalism, religion, is there a strong enough sense of nationalism that the Afghans will come together as a nation and pull this thing off with us providing the security?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I do believe that is the case. When I first went to Afghanistan in 2002, Congressman, I knew very little about the country. One of the big surprises that I got back in 2002 was to get a better sense of Afghan nationalism. Of course, they have tribal identities. Of course, they have community identities, but to the extent I find extraordinary, Afghans, when asked who are you, they are an Afghan, and they are very proud of their Afghan identity. There is much to build upon there.

General MCCHRYSTAL. That is absolutely the case, and we deal with Afghans. And you say, well, what are you? And they say, "I am an Afghan." So much of the ethnic divides that we hear so much about now really came at the end of the fight against the Soviets with the rise of warlords in the civil war, and most Afghans want to repair that and get it behind them.

Mr. KISSELL. Second question in this same line of thinking in the governance, one of the things that was mentioned a lot when we were visiting last time was a new developing classification, new people, and the ministers. And what we have concerns about President Karzai, that there was a lot of optimism about the ministers, and Mr. Ambassador if you could address that very briefly for me, please.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. As I had said earlier, Congressman, there really is a very impressive group of ministers right now in

the Afghan cabinet, and indeed they are President Karzai's ministers. President Karzai does get the credit for the naming of those ministers; finance, commerce, health, I could go on. And he has also committed very publicly in his inauguration speech to improve upon the quality of those important ministries. We are waiting for his announcements to be made, and we expect the first round will be within the next several days. We have a degree of confidence there will be improvements in the central government.

Mr. KISSELL. Thank you, sir.

And, General, in building the Afghan security forces, this is getting into a detailed level, but I think it is important; one of the areas we hear of the difficulties is that only like ten percent I believe of the Afghan military force is literate. And so to have them learning skills, reading maps, just doing the basic day to day, how are you coping with that in terms of building this force?

General MCCHRYSTAL. That is an important point. One is literacy training. Not only is that important to help make the force better, but it is also very popular, and it helps get people in the service, and it helps keep them in the service. And it makes them a stronger service, so we are running literacy programs.

The other thing about it, though, when people say illiterate people can't fight, I remind people that the Taliban is illiterate. And so we can use literacy and we will improve people, but it is not automatically a defining ability to be a good soldier.

Mr. KISSELL. I thank you all for being here. And I would like to finish with a comment. I have spent some times with General Fields, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), and I think that is so important that we do monitor our commitments in the civilian areas, what we build, what we do to make sure that we are giving the people what they need, what they want and are getting the input from the Afghan leaders. It is just so important. Thank you so much.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Good morning, afternoon now I guess.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, the numbers of Afghan security forces both police and military between 300,000 and 400,000 has been thrown around, the 300,000 being key to next summer. Do we have the billets in place to be able to training 300,000 or the differential between where we are right now, assuming some part of them are properly trained, to get to that number? And on a long-term basis, President Karzai said today it will be 15 years before he can afford to maintain that force on his own.

So, Ambassador, if you could talk to us a little bit about how we will pay for the force of 300,000 to 400,000, and who will pay for it? And can we get there by next summer?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, we are between 180,000 and 190,000 assigned between the Afghan army and police right now. And we will continue to grow up on an azimuth that they can meet, how fast can they recruit, and how fast can we train. We are going to take a significant force out of what the President just approved and put that into what we call initial entry training or the training

base. That will help our capacity to grow immediately. Along with our coalition partners, they also put people into that command, which is NATO training mission in Afghanistan.

And then, over the long haul, the rest of the development of the force, in fact most of the development occurs when they are in units, and that is by partnering with our force, which is against a central tenet of the strategy as we go forward.

Mr. CONAWAY. So we can talk about 300,000 next summer in place?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We won't be there by next summer. We will be, by next fall of 2010, we expect to be about 134,000 in the police—I am sorry, in the army and a little over 100,000 in the police. It would take another year, summer of 2011, before we would talk about a combined 300,000.

Mr. CONAWAY. Ambassador, how does the Afghan government pay for this increased force?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Three points, if I could, I saw President Karzai's comment this morning as a result of his meetings he had with Secretary Gates. The first point is, clearly, the United States of America and, very important, our allies, we are going to need to have a long-term security assistance relationship with Afghanistan. We are going to need to provide support, training support, budgetary support we know in the years ahead. We don't know exactly at this point in time what that level would be.

The second would be very importantly, in our programs in Afghanistan, we are working hard right now to help Afghanistan's economy move forward so they can have more autonomy. Our agricultural program, we are helping them develop revenue collection systems. So we are cognizant of needing to have the Afghan economy and government move in directions they are going to be able to pay for more.

Third point and very important point here is I don't know exactly what the ratio of cost is for an Afghan soldier to an American Marine or Army soldier deployed in Afghanistan, maybe 1 to 25, maybe 1 to 50. It is at a ratio right now where, obviously, it just makes good sense if you are only looking at the finances of this to invest more in the Afghan National Army and have the Afghan police and army defending their own country.

Mr. CONAWAY. Ambassador, of the 970 plus, almost 1,000, how many of those sleep at night in Kabul versus sleep in the countryside.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Right now, Congressman, I think we have got—let me get back it the exact figures—I think we have got about 350 right now out in the field.

Mr. CONAWAY. That is a lot more than I thought it would be.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. It has been a very impressive gain.

Mr. CONAWAY. General, one final, and you have been beat to death about the head and shoulders about these numbers, but let me ask it one other different way. You have got to get 30,000. Your focus is on population centers. If you had 40,000, what is that differential in terms of population centers that won't get the attention they would have gotten with 40—are those communities going to be left to the Taliban until we can get to them later? What is the cut on that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, the key thing is I am going to get at least 37,000 with coalition forces. And what I recommended did not say U.S.; it said forces. So I am really just about what I——

Mr. CONAWAY. Are you confident those additional 7,000 will come with the minimum amount of caveats that allow you to put them where they need to go?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I think we will be in good shape, yes, sir.

Mr. CONAWAY. So the impact on population centers that would have gotten troops had you gone to 40 will be in a very few communities, or how do we understand that matrix?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I think it would be very small because as we laid out this, we focused on the south and east, but we also are going to put small parts of the forces elsewhere. So I think between the 37,000 and the fact that they are flowing very quickly that we are going to be able to cover the areas that we need to.

Mr. CONAWAY. General, thank you very much, I trust you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

We have four votes have been called, and the gentlemen, our witnesses, have to leave at 12:30.

We have enough time for Mr. Nye and for Mr. Hunter to ask one quick question.

Mr. Nye, you are on for five minutes, quickly.

Mr. NYE. I will try to be quick.

Thank you both for being here today and thank you for your service to our country.

Before swearing into Congress this year, I spent some time on the ground as a civilian in both Afghanistan and Iraq. I am left with two clear impressions during this process from my experience in the field, and that is, one, I am absolutely confident in the capabilities of both our military forces and our civilian forces to successfully run a counterinsurgency program in Afghanistan.

But my other impression is I am left with a very serious concern about the fact that our success here is largely dependent on what happens on the other side of the border in Pakistan where our civilian and, to a larger extent, our military forces are not really present. Recognizing that you are not responsible, either of you, specifically for issues that concern areas outside of Afghanistan, General, I wonder if you could just comment please on the additional forces sent, what kind of capability did they give us to control the ability of all our enemies to cross that border and harm our mission in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We will put some of the force along the border, some partnering with the Afghan border police and some operating in regular military locations, but the bulk of our forces will be protecting the population. What it will really do is, if elements come from across the border, what they won't be able to do is get at their objective, which is the people in the key population centers. So I think it is a denial that really upsets their entire ability to operate their strategy, which is to undercut population security.

Mr. NYE. Thank you, I appreciate that.

I am also concerned with their ability to get at our forces who are there protecting the Afghan population. Are you confident that

we will be more successful with that mission given the additional forces?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I am.

Mr. NYE. Thank you very much.

Ambassador, you have mentioned today the importance of not just focusing on the national level Afghan government but focusing down at the local level, can you give us an idea of your confidence, the ability of the Afghans to work together to develop those capabilities so that we will be able to hand off?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, we are innovating right now, and we are working closely with our military partners to try to figure out the right combination of local governance reinforced by the central government of Afghanistan. What is the right mix of basic services that need to get delivered? What are the right kind of combinations of justice programs?

What I would tell you that, in some areas, I have had confidence we are seeing the outlines of what success could look like, but against that, if you were to ask me, what is our number one challenge on the civilian side right now, it is at the local level, trying to figure out as we go through the mantra now, the approach of clear, hold, build, but ultimately to transfer, this is probably our biggest challenge right now as we go into rural areas of Afghanistan or population centers in the south, in the eastern Afghanistan, our military forces move in, how do we get to that point that we can actually transfer governance responsibility to deliver services to the Afghan people? This is one of our greatest challenges.

Mr. NYE. Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Hunter.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to squeeze in a question here.

I thank you gentlemen for being here. We all talk about critical enablers and how short we are on those enablers. We mention it over and over again we are short on rotary wing aircraft right now, short on counter IED stuff right now, short on trainers, short on intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), short on civilians, short on infrastructure like hangars, things like that. So you add 30,000 troops; then what? How do you identify who is going to be the enabler and who is not going to be in this July 2011 timeline compared to your troop cap of 30,000 or 33,000 or 40,000 or whatever it is going to be? That will be a hard and fast troop cap. You will have to say, General Grunt, you go home because I want a new imagery analyst out here. You will be under a hard and fast cap. So how are you going to make that distinction? And what is going to make you decide when it comes to enablers or actual combat troops?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Actually, it is a great position to be in the standpoint of I get to shape the force, what we need more of and what we don't need. Of the 30,000 right now, my anticipation is a tremendous percentage of that would be enablers, rotary wing, intelligence, combat engineers, and whatnot. It is my intent to move significant combat forces, which will provide security.

But because everything is a team at this point, the distinction starts to blur between whether rotary wing aviation is an enabler or whether it is actually a combat force. So I am very comfortable that within that force, I will be able to shape it. And what I would expect to do is, over time, to continue to shape it. I expect, and General Petraeus and I talk a lot about this, over time to be shaping our brigades into advise-and-assist brigades (AABs), which are a slightly different structure, and it is what we have gone to in Iraq. It allows you to have a more robust ability to partner with host nation forces than you do in just a straight normal structure.

Mr. HUNTER. In the interest of time here, we don't have the assets now for counter IED; 80 percent of your casualties are IED casualties. You don't have the enablers now. So you flood in 30,000 people, young Americans; we can't do it now. Why are you optimistic that you will have the enablers to do it when you start flooding theater with more people?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The counter to IEDs is security. There is no ISR. There is no engineer asset. There is no technical jammer that defeats IEDs completely. So what you have to do is secure an area. That is when IEDs go away, and when you start to get security and the locals start turning in IED locations or preventing them, that is what it does. You do all those things at the same time. And I was visiting engineers who were grievously wounded in Afghanistan yesterday at Walter Reed, and they make unbelievable contributions to this, but they need to be part of a team that produces security in an entire area. So that is what I think that the shaping of this force will allow us to do.

Mr. HUNTER. Lastly, then, when you look at this, for instance, a Marine Corps regimental combat team, you have to tell them you might have to leave some people back because you don't fall under this specific troop cap. Because they have an actual number that they have. You say, no, you only get 5,322, not 5,327 people. How are you going to micromanage that, and should you really be doing that? Why not let the Marine Corps bring its whole regimental combat team? You are not going to be able to do that now under this hard and fast troop cap?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yeah, we always do that, though. I grew up as a paratrooper, and who you put on the airplane, you have got a certain number of seats, and you take people based upon what the mission is on the ground and decide it. It is the same thing true at large levels. The Marines, the regimental combat teams, and the Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEBs) are all carefully crafted for the mission at hand, and they do an extraordinarily good job at doing that. That is why they are so effective on the ground. So I am pretty comfortable I am not going to have to micromanage. I am going to be able to work with all the players and say, here is the mission we are doing, but here are some constraints you have to live within and do the best you can there.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman very much.

We appreciate your being with us, your testimony. The young men, young women in uniform today are the finest American troops ever, I am convinced. I am also convinced that the leadership that we have, provided by General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry, are the finest that we in America can provide. I hope

that you will stay in touch. Tell us in this committee what you need. Tell us what your recommendations are, and we wish you the very, very best, and Godspeed. Thank you.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:28 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

December 8, 2009

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

DECEMBER 8, 2009

House Armed Services Committee

Chairman Ike Skelton

Opening Statement

Afghanistan: The Results of the Strategic Review, Part II

December 8, 2009

"Today, the House Armed Services Committee holds our second hearing on Afghanistan: Results of the Strategic Review. Our witnesses today are: General Stanley McChrystal, Commander, International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces Afghanistan; and the Honorable Karl Eikenberry, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan. Welcome, and thank you for joining us.

"Two months ago, I wrote a lengthy letter to the President urging that he listen to his commanders in the field. Let me begin by commending the President for demonstrating his commitment to achieving success in Afghanistan by adding 30,000 U.S. troops to our war there. In that letter and in private conversations, I urged the President to listen to our military leaders and give them what they needed, and he did.

"I have noted that the war in Iraq caused the previous Administration to lose focus on Afghanistan. Shortly after deposing the Taliban regime and forcing al Qa'ida out of Afghanistan, the preoccupation with Iraq caused the war in Afghanistan to be under–resourced, with essentially no strategy. Unsurprisingly, the Taliban and their al Qa'ida allies were able to come back and once again threaten the stability of Afghanistan, the region, and ultimately, the United States.

"The President, in his speech last week, conveyed his commitment to addressing the threat posed by al Qa'ida and their Taliban allies--in January 2009, there were about 33,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan. In about 7 months, there will be three times that. Yesterday, in my office, Ambassador Eikenberry informed me that we will soon have also tripled the number of civilian experts assigned to the mission.

"Many in the press have compared the increase in forces in Afghanistan to the Surge in Iraq. I do not think such comparisons are wise or fair. As a percentage of the forces on the ground, the increase ordered by President Obama is much larger than the increase in Iraq. And the fight in Afghanistan will be different in many important ways. Media articles citing General Petraeus yesterday suggested that he does not believe that progress in Afghanistan will not come as quickly as it did in Iraq. In the article, he suggested that we must be measured in our expectations. To me, this article highlights the need for commitment to accomplishing this mission, not just from the President, but from Congress and the American people. I hope that this hearing can help build that sense of support and commitment.

"Yesterday, you, General McChrystal, and you, Ambassador Eikenberry, sat in my office and told me that you believe you can successfully complete the mission in Afghanistan. I believe that you are right—that the President's new strategy, coupled with the increase in troops and civilian experts, and the sense of urgency provided by the July 2011 target for transition presents our best chance for success.

"Every member of this committee will have questions about the strategy and how it can be accomplished. For my part, I have numerous questions. What does success in Afghanistan look like? What do we believe must be accomplished in the next 18 months? What risks are we accepting in the next 18 months and how can we mitigate them? How will we convince the Pakistanis that their interests lie with us? How will we measure progress over time? And, How will we help the Afghan people build the sort of legitimate government that can end the insurgency?

"But while I do have questions about implementation, I do not have any doubt that we must succeed in Afghanistan, that the President is right to order the deployment of an additional 30,000 troops on top of the troops he already approved, and that the new strategy provides a good path for success. I hope our witnesses today can help us fill in the details of how the difficult, but achievable, goals of this strategy can be accomplished. Ultimately, we are working to protect the American people and to end the threat from al Qa'ida.

"I now turn to my good friend Buck McKeon, the Ranking Member, for any comments he might care to make.

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Statement of
General Stanley A. McChrystal, USA
Commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force
House Armed Services Committee
December 8, 2009

Mr. Chairman, Congressman McKeon, distinguished members of this committee, thank you for the chance to appear before you today.

I welcome this opportunity to testify on our way ahead in Afghanistan, and I am pleased to do so with Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, an old friend.

Let me begin by saluting the bravery of the men and women of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. They are anchored by over 68,000 courageous Americans, our close partners in the NATO alliance, and a 43-nation coalition. We honor the sacrifices of the fallen, the veterans, and their families.

We also recognize the toll paid every day by our counterparts in the Afghan Security Forces and by Afghan civilians, who ultimately suffer the most from this insurgency. It is for them -- and for all of us -- that we seek a stable Afghanistan, a defunct al-Qaeda, and a secure future in that vital region of the world.

I first deployed to Afghanistan in 2002 and have commanded forces there every year since.

Despite that experience, there is much in Afghanistan that I have yet to fully understand. For all of us, Afghanistan is a challenge that is best approached with a balance of determination and humility.

While U.S. forces have been at war in Afghanistan for eight years, the Afghans have been at it for more than 30. They are frustrated with international efforts that have failed to meet their expectations, confronting us with a crisis of confidence among Afghans who view the international effort as insufficient and their government as corrupt or, at the very least, inconsequential.

We also face a complex and resilient insurgency. The Quetta Shura Taliban, or Afghan Taliban, is the prominent threat to the Government of Afghanistan, as they aspire to once again *become*

the government of Afghanistan. The Haqqani and Hezb-e Islami Gulbuddin insurgent groups have more limited geographical reach and objectives, but they are no less lethal.

All three groups are supported to some degree by external elements in Iran and Pakistan, have ties with al-Qaeda, and co-exist within narcotics and criminal networks, both fueling and feeding off instability and insecurity in the region.

The mission in Afghanistan is undeniably difficult, and success will require steadfast commitment and incur significant costs.

I participated fully in the President's Assessment and decision-making process and was afforded multiple opportunities to provide my recommendations and best military advice – which I did.

Combined with insights and policy considerations from across our Government, I believe the decisions that came from that process reflect a realistic and effective approach.

To pursue our core goal of defeating al-Qaeda and preventing their return to Afghanistan, we must disrupt and degrade the Taliban's capacity, deny their access to the Afghan population, and strengthen the Afghan Security Forces.

This means we must reverse the Taliban's current momentum and create the time and space to develop Afghan security and governance capacity.

The President's decision rapidly resources our strategy, recognizes that the next 18 months will likely be decisive, and ultimately, enables success. I fully support the President's decision.

The President has also reiterated how this decision supports our national interests. Rolling back the Taliban is a pre-requisite to the ultimate defeat of al-Qaeda.

The mission is not only important; it is also achievable.

We can and will accomplish this mission.

Let me briefly explain why I believe so.

My confidence derives first from the Afghan's resolve, since it is their actions that will ultimately matter most in ending this conflict, with their interests – and by extension our own -- secured.

Second, we do not confront a popular insurgency. The Taliban have no wide-spread constituency, have a history of failure in power, and lack an appealing vision.

Third, where our strategy is applied we've begun to show that we can help the Afghans establish more effective security and more credible governance.

Finally, Afghans do not regard us as occupiers. They do not wish for us to remain forever, yet they see our support as a necessary bridge to future security and stability.

I've been back in Afghanistan for six months now. I believe that with the President's decision and ongoing reforms I outlined in our Initial Assessment, our efforts are now empowered with a greater sense of clarity, capability, commitment, and confidence.

Let me start with clarity.

The President's recently completed review of our strategy – to include its deep and pointed questioning of all assumptions and recommendations – has produced greater clarity of our mission and objectives.

We also have greater clarity on the way forward.

Additional forces will begin to deploy shortly, and by this time next year, new security gains will be illuminated by specific indicators, and it will be clear to *us* that the insurgency has lost the momentum.

And by the summer of 2011, it will be clear to the *Afghan people* that the insurgency will not win, giving them the chance to side with their government.

From that point forward, while we begin to reduce U.S. combat force levels, we will remain partnered with the Afghan security forces in a supporting role to consolidate and solidify their gains.

Results may come more quickly, and we must demonstrate progress toward measurable objectives, but the sober fact is that there are no silver bullets. Ultimate success will be the cumulative effect of sustained pressure across multiple lines of operation.

Increasing our capability has been about much more than just troop increases. For the past six months we have been implementing organizational and operational changes that are already reflecting improvements in our effectiveness.

But the additional forces announced by President Obama are significant. Forces to increase our capacity to train ANSF, and forces to partner with Afghan Army and Police in expanding security zones in key areas, will provide us the ability to reverse insurgent momentum and deny the Taliban the access to the population they require to survive.

Our commitment is watched intently – and constantly judged – by our allies and by our enemies.

The commitment of 30,000 additional US forces, along with additional coalition forces and growing ANSF numbers, will be a significant step toward expanding security in critical areas – and in demonstrating resolve.

The commitment of all coalition nations will be buttressed by a clear understanding of how we will mitigate risks. I'll briefly mention three.

The first is the Afghan government's credibility deficit, which must be recognized by all, to include Afghan officials, as a critical area of focus and change.

Equally important is our ability to accelerate development of the Afghan security forces. Measures such as increased pay and incentives, literacy training, leader development, and expanded partnering are necessary to position the ANSF to assume responsibility for long-term security.

Third, the hazard posed by extremists that operate on both sides of the border with Pakistan, with freedom of movement across that border, must be mitigated by enhanced cross-border coordination and enhanced Pakistani engagement.

Looking ahead, I am confident that we have both the right strategy and the right resources.

Every trip around Afghanistan reinforces my confidence in the Coalition and Afghan forces we stand alongside in this effort.

But I also find confidence in those we are trying to help.

That confidence is found where an Afghan farmer chooses to harvest wheat rather than poppy . . . or where a young adult casts his or her vote or joins the police . . . or where a group of villagers resolves to reject the local insurgency.

We face many challenges in Afghanistan, but our efforts are sustained by one unassailable reality: neither the Afghan people nor the international community want Afghanistan to remain a sanctuary for terror and violence.

And if we are to be confident of our mission and our prospects, we must also be accurate in our assessment of progress. We owe ourselves, our leaders, and the American people transparency and candor, because the price to be paid is high, and the stakes are even higher.

In closing, my team and I would like to thank you and your colleagues for your support to the American men and women currently serving in Afghanistan – and to tell you a bit about them.

We risk letting numbers like 30K roll off our tongues without remembering that those are fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters – serving far from home – selfless in their sacrifices for each of us.

The other day I asked a young, but combat experienced Sergeant where he was on 9/11 and his answer -- "getting my braces removed" -- reminded me that it has been more than 8 years since 9/11.

And many of our service members and families have experienced and sacrificed much.

But as I see them in action - at remote bases; on patrol; partnering with Afghan forces; recovering in combat hospitals – they don't talk about all they've given up. They talk about all they are accomplishing – and their determination in this endeavor.

This is not a force of rookies or dilettantes. The Brigade Commander in Khowst is completing his 4th combat tour in Afghanistan – and his experience and expertise is reflective of the force that represents you. All have felt fear and loneliness – most have lost comrades. None have lost heart.

In their eyes I see maturity beyond their years. In their actions I see a commitment to succeed – and commitment to each other.

I am confident that I share your pride in what these great Americans are doing for our country in Afghanistan.

And it will be my privilege to accept your questions on their behalf.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Commander ISAF

General Stanley A. McChrystal

SOURCE OF COMMISSIONED SERVICE USMA

EDUCATIONAL DEGREES

- United States Military Academy – BS – No Major
- United States Naval War College – MA – National Security and Strategic Studies
- Salve Regina University – MS – International Relations

MILITARY SCHOOLS ATTENDED

- Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses
- United States Naval Command and Staff College
- Senior Service College Fellowship Harvard University

FOREIGN LANGUAGES Spanish

PROMOTIONS

Promotion	Date
2LT	2 Jun 76
1LT	2 Jun 78
CPT	1 Aug 80
MAJ	1 Jul 87
LTC	1 Sep 92
COL	1 Sep 96
BG	1 Jan 01
MG	1 May 04
LTG	16 Feb 06
GEN	11 Jun 09

STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR KARL EIKENBERRY
BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 8, 2009

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Skelton, Ranking Member McKeon, and distinguished members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views on Afghanistan today. Last week, in his speech at West Point, President Obama presented the Administration's strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. His decision came after an intensive, deliberate and far-reaching review of conditions, risks and options available. The course he outlined offers the best path to stabilize Afghanistan and to ensure al Qaeda and other terrorist groups cannot regain a foothold to plan new attacks against our country or our allies. I fully support this approach. It has been welcomed by the Afghan government, which said it will spare no effort to achieve the strategy's key objectives. I hope it will be welcomed here in Congress.

I consider myself privileged to serve in Kabul and to represent an extraordinary team of diplomats, development specialists and civilian experts from many fields and multiple agencies who form the most capable and dedicated U.S. Mission anywhere. Our civilian presence will have tripled by early 2010 and, with the support of the Congress, we anticipate it will expand further next year. More important than the numbers of people are the skills that these men and women possess, and their willingness to work tirelessly under the most difficult conditions. Many of them are out in the field with our military at the forefront of our nation's effort to stabilize Afghanistan and the region. I am extraordinarily proud of them.

I am honored to testify alongside General Stan McChrystal, my professional colleague and friend of many years, to describe how we will carry out the President's strategy for Afghanistan. My testimony will focus on the civilian role in that strategy, but I want to underscore at the outset that General McChrystal and I are united in a joint effort in which civilian and military personnel work together every day, often literally side-by-side with our Afghan partners and allies. We could not accomplish our objectives without such a combined effort, and I am proud that we have forged a close working relationship at the top and throughout our organizations, one that will deepen in coming months as additional troops and civilians arrive.

Our nation is at a critical juncture in our involvement in Afghanistan, and my testimony today represents my assessment of the situation and prospects for achieving our goals.

A mission that in past years was poorly defined and under-resourced is now clear and, thanks to the Congress, better resourced. As you know, the President on December 1st authorized 30,000 additional troops to deploy to Afghanistan on an accelerated timetable, with the goal of breaking the insurgency's momentum, hastening and improving the training of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and restoring security in key areas of the country. I joined Secretary Clinton and General McChrystal in Brussels last week to present the Administration's decisions to the allies, and we anticipate our troops will be joined by a substantial increase of other NATO-ISAF forces. Our military effort and civilian assistance will be closely coordinated. On the civilian side, we aim to increase employment and provide essential services in areas of greatest insecurity, and to improve critical ministries and the economy at the national level. These steps will, I believe, help to remove insurgents from the battlefield and build support for the Afghan government.

As the President said, "we will be clear about what we expect from those who receive our assistance." We expect the Afghan government to take specific actions in the key areas of security, governance and economic development on an urgent basis. In the eighth year of our involvement, Afghans must progressively take greater responsibility for their own affairs. As we reduce our combat role, we will be transforming our diplomatic, security and economic relations to reflect a more fully sovereign Afghanistan.

I firmly believe these adjustments to our course provide the best possible chance of achieving success on a reasonable timetable, but I will also give you my honest appraisal of the challenges as I see them.

No way forward is without risk. Eight years after the terrorist attacks of September 11th and the removal of the Taliban from power, Afghanistan remains a disconnected society, divided by factionalism, plagued by corruption and illegal narcotics, and challenged by insecurity. These problems are in large measure the product of nearly three decades of war, which broke down the fabric of Afghanistan's centuries-old society and contributed to deep poverty, illiteracy, drug addiction, and unemployment. This has been compounded in recent years by a growing disillusionment among Afghans, both with their own government and with the uneven results of the assistance delivered by the international community. The United States must approach the daunting complexities of Afghanistan with an awareness of our limitations. Our forces and our civilians are trying to help a society that simultaneously wants and rejects outside intervention. Afghans yearn for the peace and stability that has been denied them for too long. We will not fully heal their society's deep-seated problems, but we can help them along a path to normalcy and stability that is key to protecting our own vital interests. We are, simply put, helping

Afghanistan build security forces and other basic institutions of government to prevent a return to the conditions that it endured before September 11th, 2001.

Let me mention two challenges we face. The first is that, in spite of everything we do, Afghanistan may struggle to take over the essential tasks of governance; the second is our partnership with Pakistan, which the President has stated is inextricably linked to our success in Afghanistan. Though these risks cannot be discounted, if the main elements of the President's plan are executed, and if our Afghan partners and our allies do their part, I am confident we can achieve our strategic objectives.

I say this with conviction, because for the first time in my three tours in Afghanistan -- two while in uniform and now as ambassador -- all the elements of our national power are employed with the full support of the President and, increasingly, of our allies. We have made great strides over the last six months in improving interagency coordination and civil-military collaboration. Our military and civilian teams on the ground are the best ever fielded. More important, after a difficult election, the Afghan government shows signs of recognizing the need to deliver better governance and security, though we await concrete steps in many areas.

Achieving our objectives on an accelerated timetable will almost certainly take additional resources -- more troops, but also more development aid and additional civilian personnel to assist the Afghan government and people, so they can assume control of their own affairs. The Administration will be working with Congress in coming days and weeks to define our request.

I would like to now discuss the three main pillars of our effort in Afghanistan -- security, governance, and development -- and then say a few words about the organization of our Mission and about the wider region.

SECURITY

General McChrystal has already addressed our plans for improving security and building the Afghan National Security Forces. The civilian role in this effort at the local level is to partner with the military and with the Afghan government in restoring basic services and economic opportunity in cleared areas. I will return to this partnership and our role in it shortly. First, though, let me give you my perspective as ambassador on the security situation.

Since assuming my post in May, I have made a special point of getting outside Kabul as frequently as possible to see conditions around the country first-hand and to consult with Afghans, allies and our own civilian and military personnel. I fully concur with General McChrystal's assessment that the security situation, which worsened dramatically this past year, remains serious. The Taliban and other extremists groups exercise increasing influence in many areas of the south and east, and attacks and instability are rising in parts of the north and west as well, which long have been relatively stable. The insurgents are loosely organized, yet resilient and effective in many areas.

Augmenting U.S. and NATO-ISAF forces is critical to regain the initiative. I am confident that, as the additional U.S. troops arrive in coming months, the situation will stabilize and turn in our favor. Most Afghans have little interest in a future under the Taliban's brutal and arbitrary rule, and the troops now deploying will reassure them that they have the opportunity for a secure and better future. Our troops will serve as a bridge, improving security in key areas, just as the Marine and Army units sent earlier this year are doing with great skill in Helmand and Kandahar provinces.

Additional troops will also permit us to expand our partnering with and training of the Afghan army and police, so they can take on a progressively larger role in providing security.

We all recognize the extraordinary challenges of building competent security forces. Afghanistan has not had a national army recruited from all ethnic groups and regions for many years, and low literacy, high attrition, and the lack of resources and expertise pose continuing problems. However, our forces are highly skilled at this training and partnering mission, which they have performed ably under the most difficult circumstances in Iraq as well as in Afghanistan. I am confident that deployment of additional U.S. troops will yield improvements in the ANSF.

On the civilian side, we are supporting our military's efforts. Our Drug Enforcement Administration provides specialized training to the Afghan Counternarcotics Police. Our Federal Bureau of Investigation assists the Afghan Ministry of Interior in improving law enforcement capabilities. And, lastly, our Border Management Task Force, which includes U.S. Central Command, the Department of Homeland Security, and its Customs and Border Protection Agency, assists both the Afghan Border Police and the Customs Department.

As part of assuming the sovereign responsibility of protecting its people, the Afghan government must build the ministerial capacity to recruit, train and sustain the army and police, so that when our support begins to diminish Afghan forces are capable of protecting the country on their own. Simply put, the Afghan army and police need the full commitment of their political leadership. As President Obama said, the transition to Afghan responsibility will begin in the summer of 2011, when we expect Afghan security forces and the entire Afghan government can begin assuming lead responsibility for defending their country.

We should recognize that one reason Afghanistan has been slow to assume a larger role in providing for its own security is the widespread concern among the populace that it will be abandoned by the international community, as happened after the withdrawal of the Soviet Union

in 1989. For more than a decade afterward, Afghanistan endured brutal civil war, anarchy and later, the repressive Taliban regime that harbored and enabled al Qaeda. The fear of once again having to fend for itself again is deeply felt in the country, which lies in a volatile region where many of its neighbors have competed to control events inside Afghan borders.

While the United States does not intend to continue our high level of deployed forces indefinitely, we are fully committed to assisting Afghanistan. To give Afghans confidence that they will not be abandoned again, the United States is committed to engaging in a strategic dialogue to define our long-term relationship on the basis of shared interests and values, just as we do with other nations. We will continue to assist and advise the ANSF to ensure they succeed over the long term. Though our relations are today dominated by questions about security, we have no territorial ambitions and do not seek permanent military bases. Afghans should be confident the United States is a trustworthy friend on whom they can rely after our combat forces begin to go home. Afghanistan's place in Central and South Asia must be secure.

GOVERNANCE

The second pillar of our comprehensive strategy focuses on improving Afghan governance. I would like to describe the civilian role in this effort, first at the national level and then in the provinces and districts. At both levels, our overarching goal is to encourage good governance, free from corruption, so Afghans see the benefits of supporting the legitimate government, and the insurgency loses support.

As General McChrystal points out, one of the major impediments our strategy faces is the Afghan government's lack of credibility with its own people. To build its legitimacy, our approach at the national level is on improving key ministries, both by increasing the number of

civilian technical advisers and by providing more development assistance directly through these ministries' budgets. By focusing on key ministries that deliver essential services and security, we can accelerate the building of an Afghan government that is visible, effective and accountable.

We must support the government's ability to deliver for the Afghan people. Afghan ministers say that too much of the development assistance provided is spent outside their national budget, often on programs that are not their priorities. We agree, and as part of the President's new emphasis we are committed to providing more direct assistance. We are reviewing the financial management systems of these key ministries and, if their financial system can be certified as accountable and transparent, we provide direct funding to be used for basic services, such as health, education and agriculture. Similarly, to extend the government's reach around the country, Afghanistan needs educated, trained and honest civil servants. To accomplish this, the United States and international partners will train current government employees in public administration and help build a pool of administrators and technical managers.

Cutting across this entire effort to improve Afghans' confidence in their government is the need to combat corruption and promote the rule of law. Without institutions that serve the needs of ordinary Afghans and government officials who are accountable and honest, Afghanistan will always be in danger of returning to the conditions that made it a haven for violent extremists.

With our assistance and that of our allies, the Afghan government is steadily building law enforcement institutions to fight corruption, organized crime, and drug trafficking. With the support of the FBI, the DEA, and our military, the Ministries of Interior and Counter Narcotics, and the Afghan National Directorate of Security recently created the Major Crimes Task Force,

which is responsible for investigating major corruption, kidnapping, and organized crimes cases. Similarly, Afghanistan's Attorney General recently established a special Anti-Corruption Unit, aimed at prosecuting misconduct by mid- and high-level government officials. In addition, a specialized Anti-Corruption Tribunal is being created to handle significant corruption cases, including prosecutions involving provincial officials. Our Mission's Department of Justice team is also providing support.

In his inaugural address, President Karzai stated his intention to make merit-based appointments in his new cabinet and to implement an anti-corruption strategy, including by expanding the powers of the existing High Office of Oversight. We are encouraged by his statements, but we need to work together to aggressively implement this goal and produce results. In addition to his cabinet, it is important that qualified appointments are made at the vice minister, provincial and district levels, which would give the Afghan government greater credibility with its people and permit more rapid reforms. Secretary Clinton last month discussed with President Karzai the necessity of moving swiftly to develop concrete plans to implement this agenda to improve government accountability and performance.

Beyond the national level, I would like to address our efforts to promote governance at the provincial and district levels. We are working jointly with the military through our Provincial Reconstruction Teams, District Development Working Groups, and District Support Teams, which help build Afghan capacity in key areas, particularly in areas of greatest insecurity in southern and eastern Afghanistan. We are improving governance beyond Kabul through rule-of-law programs and other mechanisms that have proven effective in giving Afghans a greater stake in their government, including through the National Solidarity Program. We have expanded our support for the Afghan Social Outreach Program to create provincial and district

councils and build citizen involvement. We are working with the Afghan government to provide incentives for sub-national leaders to improve performance. I would like to emphasize that we are concentrating on what is essential and attainable. In all of these efforts, we must not wait too long to create an Afghan autonomous capability, or we risk building a dependency that will be that much harder to break.

Some might argue that we are reaching too high -- that Afghanistan has rarely in its history had a central government capable of carrying out these tasks and that to expect a coherent state to emerge now is unrealistic and a waste of resources. I disagree with that argument on several levels. First, while the Afghan state has never been particularly strong, Afghanistan has had functioning governments in Kabul that were widely viewed as legitimate. Second, the government structure we are helping to develop is one with the minimum set of capabilities that any state must possess to serve its people.

Our goal is not nation building, nor are we attempting to impose a Western model of governance. Afghanistan is a poor country that will remain dependent on international aid for years to come. This strategy for improving governance is based on a pragmatic assessment of the national security interests of the United States, and our belief that sustainable representative government is essential to success. Afghanistan needs a viable government so our forces can draw down and the investment of U.S. taxpayer dollars can be reduced. Achieving those goals will prevent the need for the United States and its allies to intervene to protect ourselves from extremists who, unless we succeed, might once again find refuge in Afghanistan.

The cultivation of poppy and the trafficking in opium without a doubt has the most debilitating effect on Afghan society, feeding corruption and undermining the legal economy, while generating funds for the insurgency. Our strategy for combating the pervasive impact of

illegal narcotics is multi-pronged, involving demand reduction, efforts by law enforcement and the military to detain major traffickers and interdict drug shipments, and support for licit agricultural development. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration works closely with Afghan partners to investigate and prosecute major traffickers. With our support, the Counter-Narcotics Justice Task Force has become the most effective judicial organization in Afghanistan today, with successful investigations, prosecutions, and convictions of hundreds of drug traffickers. But the narcotics problem will never have a satisfactory solution without economic development in this still desperately poor country.

DEVELOPMENT

Along with security and governance, the third pillar of our effort is development assistance. In recent months, we have adjusted our approach to focus on building key elements of Afghanistan's private-sector economy, increasing our emphasis on agriculture, enhancing government revenue collection, and improving the coordination of assistance delivery within the U.S. government and across the international community. These refinements are designed to produce measurable improvements in the lives of ordinary Afghans -- and thus to contribute directly to more effective government and to lessened support for the insurgency.

We are targeting much of our assistance where violence is worst and shifting to more flexible and faster contract and grant mechanisms, to ensure our dollars are effectively supporting our efforts in the provinces. Development specialists at USAID, joined by experts from multiple departments and agencies of our government, are focusing on key sectors, such as agriculture. Rebuilding the farm sector is essential for the Afghan government to reduce the pool of unemployed men who form the recruiting base for extremist groups. We estimate that at least

80 percent of the Afghan population derives their income, either directly or indirectly, from agriculture. Our agriculture efforts also seek to reinforce our governance strategy, so that the Agriculture Ministry will be increasingly be -- and be seen as -- a tangible example of a more effective government.

At the same time, we are encouraging long-term investment, specifically by funding water management and electrification projects that deliver power and large-scale irrigation, and we promote mining and light industry that leverage Afghanistan's agricultural products and natural resources.

We are also helping Afghanistan's government increase revenue collection. Without improvements in its ability to collect taxes and customs receipts, Afghanistan will always remain overly dependent on the international community and will struggle to meet the needs of its people. The Afghan government has made progress in recent years in increasing domestic revenue collection, which has risen from 3.3 percent of gross domestic product to 7.7 percent. That is still too low. Most low-income countries collect 11 to 12 percent of their GDP on average, and we and our other partners are working with the Ministry of Finance on reforms that will further increase revenue. The biggest problem remains corruption, however. The current rough estimate is that only half of the revenue collected actually makes it into the treasury. Low domestic revenue undermines the Afghan government's ability to provide services, while graft and bribery diminishes confidence in and support for the government. Representatives from the U.S. Treasury Department are working with the Afghan Finance Ministry and other essential ministries to build fiduciary systems that will permit us to provide them more direct funding.

Additionally, our Department of State and Commerce experts are assisting the Afghans to promote regional trade to help their economy. We expect that Afghanistan and Pakistan will

shortly conclude a Transit Trade Agreement that will open new opportunities for commerce between the two countries. Finally, we also seek Congressional support to soon pass Reconstruction Opportunity Zone (ROZ) legislation to create long term and sustainable employment opportunities. Improving official commercial and trade relations will also contribute to an improved Afghanistan-Pakistan security relationship.

OUR CIVILIAN EFFORT

Achieving our goals for Afghanistan will not be easy, but I am optimistic that we can succeed with the support of the Congress. Under-resourced for years, our Mission is now one of our government's highest priorities, with substantial additional development funds and hundreds of additional personnel. By early 2010, we will have almost 1,000 civilians from numerous government departments and agencies on the ground in Afghanistan, tripling the total from the beginning of 2009. Of these, nearly 400 will serve out in the field with the military at Provincial Reconstruction Teams or at the brigade-level and on forward operating bases. By comparison, one year ago there were only 67 U.S. civilians serving outside Kabul. The hundreds of dedicated Americans who have taken on this assignment voluntarily accept hardship and risk and deserve our recognition and appreciation for the exemplary work they are performing under very difficult conditions. They are an extraordinarily skilled group, chosen because they have the proper skills and experience to achieve the results we seek. .

In coming months, as our troops conduct operations to stabilize new areas, they will be joined by additional civilian personnel to work with our Afghan partners to strengthen governance and provide basic services as rapidly as possible. The integration of civilian and military effort has greatly improved over the last year, a process that will deepen as additional

troops arrive and our civilian effort expands. We have designated Senior Civilian Representatives (SCRs) as counterparts to NATO-ISAF commanders in each of the Regional Commands. These SCRs are senior professionals, experienced in conflict environments. They direct the work of U.S. government civilians within their regions, subject to my overall guidance. This organizational structure has two important features: First, it ensures that our civilian efforts are fully integrated with the military's in the field. Second, it is decentralized, enabling quick response to local needs, which is essential to deal with the varying conditions in Afghanistan. To maximize our impact in priority areas, we have created District Support Teams, which allow civilians in the field to collaborate with the military to build Afghan capacity in assigned districts.

U.S. foreign assistance is a comparatively small but essential fraction of the total dollars spent in Afghanistan over the last eight years. Our increased civilian presence has enabled us to more effectively and more rapidly invest our assistance in the areas of agriculture, job creation, education, health care, and infrastructure projects. Additional resources will be necessary for our effort to keep pace with the military's expansion, to carry out the President's strategy on a rapid timetable. We look forward to sharing additional details on our anticipated needs with Congress in the coming days and weeks.

We have also improved our contracting to enhance performance and increase the effectiveness of our development aid programs. In a conflict zone, a degree of program risk is unavoidable, but U.S. government agencies in the Mission remain accountable to Congress for every dollar they spend. Given the great amount of resources and emphasis devoted to Afghanistan, our programs receive extraordinary oversight, including by a Kabul-based Special

Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction, multiple audits of USAID and International Narcotics and Law Enforcement programs, and a hotline to report fraud, waste and abuse.

PAKISTAN

Finally, let me say a few words about Pakistan and the critical impact that developments in that country will have on our efforts over the next year. The expanded military and civilian effort we are undertaking in Afghanistan is likely to produce measurable improvements in security and in Afghanistan's governance capacity, but we will likely fall short of our strategic goals unless there is more progress at eliminating the sanctuaries used by Afghan Taliban and their allied militant extremists in Pakistan. The vast majority of enemy fighters our troops face on the battlefield are local Afghans, fighting in their home provinces or regions. But the Afghan Taliban and other insurgents receive significant aid and direction from senior leaders operating outside Afghanistan's borders. The Afghan Taliban's leadership may employ those sanctuaries, as they have in the past, to simply wait us out and renew their attacks once our troops begin to go home. Recognizing this, the Administration has emphasized the need for a regional approach that deals with the interrelated problems of Afghanistan and Pakistan and seeks to improve relations between the two governments.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, Afghanistan is a daunting challenge. I have tried to describe how our Mission, as part of an integrated civil-military team, will pursue the President's goals and our country's interests. I have also given you my best assessment of the risks we face. Let me, in closing, once again thank the men and women of the U.S. Mission in Afghanistan and our armed

forces. Together with the members of other NATO-ISAF armed forces, the international community and our Afghan allies, they do exemplary work on a daily basis that helps to protect the American people. They are prepared to work even harder to help the Afghan government to stand on its own and handle the threats it faces. They believe firmly that our mission is necessary and achievable, and so do I. Success is not guaranteed, but it is possible. With the additional troops and other resources provided by the President -- and with the help of Congress -- we can ensure al Qaeda never again finds refuge in Afghanistan and threatens our country.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

DECEMBER 8, 2009

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. LANGEVIN

Mr. LANGEVIN. At the hearing on December 3rd before the House Armed Services Committee, I had the chance to speak with Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen about some of my concerns regarding our efforts in Afghanistan. I am troubled by the possibility that our continued presence in Afghanistan makes us appear more and more like occupiers, creating further resentment among the Afghan people and thus strengthening support for the Taliban. Both Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen assured me that this was not the case and that our image was driven by our actions, including our ability to reduce civilian casualties and partner with Afghan security forces. General, they also expressed that you had more direct insight into the situation on the ground regarding reactions to increased U.S. presence. How do the Afghan people view our military efforts? What can we achieve strategically by following a counterinsurgency approach rather than a more counterterrorism-focused strategy?

General MCCHRYSTAL. According to the last ABC news poll, 68% of Afghans support the presence of the U.S. in Afghanistan and 61% favor the coming increase in forces.

By protecting the population with a counterinsurgency approach, we create time and space to grow the Afghan National Security Forces and allow the Afghan government to mature. With a counterterrorism-focused strategy, I believe we would not gain the trust of the Afghan people, and not have the military intelligence or the information to combat Al Qaeda.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MRS. MCMORRIS RODGERS

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. The plan proposed by the Administration pressures the Afghanistan government to improve governance so that President Karzai can take control as soon as 2011. What steps does the Administration expect the Afghan government to take in improving governance, delivering services to its people, and growing their security forces within an 18-month timeframe?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Afghanistan governance is already under the control of the Afghan Government, headed by President Hamid Karzai. It is not under U.S., coalition or international community control or lead. While Afghans are in the lead, improvements in Afghan governance are necessary. Areas for progress include anti-corruption efforts, provision of basic services to the population, flow of funding/resources from Kabul ministries to the sub-national level, and improvement in access to justice at the local level. The Government of Afghanistan, U.S. Embassy, ISAF, and other key partners have developed a District Delivery Program designed to ensure key Afghan ministries provide critical leadership and services to Afghans at the local level once security has been established in critical districts.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. General McChrystal, you have sought to double the size of the army and police to a force of about 400,000. Yet, the President seemed to stray away from this in his speech last week. How can we expect to see success if we are not putting appropriate emphasis on training in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We have made Afghan Nation Security Forces (ANSF) growth and development our #1 priority. We will continue to assist in the growth and development of the ANSF. The process of training the ANSF is a long-term commitment by U.S. forces that includes three main efforts.

The first is institutional, where soldiers and police receive basic training through schools and other formalized programs. American forces provide instructors and advisors to the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) training institutions, with the intention that Afghans take on increasing responsibility for their own training.

The second training effort for U.S. forces are Embedded Training Teams (ETTs) and Police Mentor Teams (PMTs), which are provided to fielded ANA units from the battalion to Corps level and to ANP units from the district to police region level. There are currently two U.S. BCTs providing ETTs and PMTs: the 48th IBCT and 4/82 IBCT. ETTS and PMTs will remain with an ANSF unit until that particular unit has achieved the capability to operate independently.

The third training effort is U.S. partnership with ANSF units. This partnering is a key tenet of our strategy, and is designed to help the ANSF build capacity and assume lead security responsibility as quickly and as successfully as possible. Once units graduate from their respective institutional training programs, they continue to develop through their partnership with U.S. and coalition forces.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. The mission in Afghanistan must be successful. By sending Marine Combat Brigades and then support by NATO, I am optimistic that we could have a winning combat operation. We must then follow that up by training the Afghan people to have their own Army, Paramilitary, and local police. What isn't clear to me is how will the Administration define success in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The definition of success in Afghanistan will involve progress measured throughout the whole of government. The U.S. goals and objectives for the military in Afghanistan are to set the conditions for security, degrade of the Taliban to a level within GIRoA's capacity, and to deny Al Qaeda a sanctuary within the borders.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. There is no doubt that economic development plays a critical role in determining the outcome of the civilian transition, part two of the war strategy announced by the President last week, and ultimately the long-term security and stability of Afghanistan.

I would like to focus my question today on women and their role in the President's civilian transition strategy. As you probably know almost half the Afghan population is comprised of women. But, yet less than 39 percent are economically active and, more disturbing, less than 15 percent of women are even literate. I believe that changing the perception and treatment of women in Afghan society is critical to the stability and security of the nation. What I would like to know is whether the civilian strategy contemplates a plan for supporting women and young girls both in terms of education and their integration into the marketplace?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Civilian partnerships, in combination with military efforts, are crucial to success in Afghanistan. We know that those who fight with the insurgency do not do so out of conviction, but rather due to money and coercion. I hear there are plans to have about 1,000 civilian experts and advisors helping provide developmental assistance to include bolstering Afghanistan's agricultural sector. What exactly will our civilian force be doing in Afghanistan? And who will make up this civilian corps? What is the timeframe for their arrival?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Secretary Clinton has said that the United States will not face these challenges, military or civilian, alone. What should we expect from our NATO Allies in terms of civilian partnerships?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. In March, President Obama said, "For the Afghan people, a return to Taliban rule would condemn their country to brutal governance, international isolation, a paralyzed economy, and the denial of basic human rights to the Afghan people—especially women and girls." When we went into Afghanistan, there were virtually no girls attending school; today girls comprise over 40% of the student population. What is the Administration doing to continue to ensure we are educating the people of Afghanistan about human rights and ensuring young women are getting an education?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. HEINRICH

Mr. HEINRICH. General McChrystal, what equipment will you need to accompany the additional 30,000 troops? As IEDs are now the leading cause of casualties in Afghanistan, will there be a need for additional MRAPs and helicopters?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Currently the U.S. government has the authority to purchase up to 10,000 MRAP–All Terrain Vehicles (M–ATVs), but has only contracted 6,644 vehicles. It is imperative that the remaining 3,356 be placed on contract in order to bring that crucial capability to more soldiers.

U.S. forces in Afghanistan require more heavy lift helicopter assets and C–130-sized cargo aircraft to allow freedom of movement, as well as to assist in distributing supplies to units in areas that are inaccessible by traditional supply vehicles.

Mr. HEINRICH. General McChrystal, Admiral Mullen has said that Afghanistan and Pakistan are "inextricably linked in a common insurgency." How closely do you work with your Pakistani counterparts and what specifically will the new plan add to bolster military operations along the border?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We cooperate extensively with Pakistan on border issues through a multitude of formally established means. These mechanisms range from the Tri-Partite Commission (TPC) meetings between myself and my ANA and PAKMIL counterparts, down to meetings with Battalion Commanders from units employed across the border from each other. These numerous linkages help us share intelligence and de-conflict operations on the border and have been steadily improving. However, these mechanisms are limited in that they are mandated by NATO to only coordinate border issues.

Pakistan and ISAF have recently initiated a series of Combined Campaign Planning Conferences with the goal of coordinating complementary operations on each side of the border. This series of conferences is under the leadership of LTG Rodriguez and the IJC, and took place on 8 January 2010.

Mr. HEINRICH. Ambassador Eikenberry, how active are we in the role of promoting education and school development in Afghanistan?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. HEINRICH. Ambassador Eikenberry, in terms of developmental and civilian assistance, what has changed from the President's strategy announced in March 2009, and are we getting sufficient civilian experts with the skills we need? How will we encourage alternative agricultural products other than opium poppy?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

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