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**DEVELOPMENTS IN SECURITY AND
STABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN**

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ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
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DEVELOPMENTS IN SECURITY AND STABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, May 5, 2010.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:09 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ike Skelton (chairman of the committee) presiding.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning. Our committee meets today to receive testimony on developments in security and stability in the country of Afghanistan. Witnesses, old friends, and thank you for coming back: The Honorable Michèle Flournoy, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; Lieutenant General John Paxton, the Director for Operations on the Joint Staff. And we appreciate your coming back so soon with us.

Six months ago our President announced the results of a comprehensive review of our policy in Afghanistan, which for many years had essentially been nonexistent. During this announcement he endorsed a new counterinsurgency [COIN] strategy centered on increasing U.S. forces by 30,000 troops, adding U.S. civilian experts, and focusing on protecting the population of Afghanistan from the Taliban and their terrorist allies. I endorsed this strategy then, and I do so now. As I have said many times, while this new strategy cannot guarantee success in Afghanistan, it is most likely to end with an Afghanistan that can prevent the return of the Taliban and their Al Qaeda terrorist allies.

Six months into the new policy, it is appropriate for Congress to consider how things are going. About 21,000 of the 30,000 troops have arrived in that country, and many have been involved in the recent successful military operation around Marja. Others will soon begin restoring security in Kandahar, an operation that is likely to be crucial to our overall success in that country.

We have seen other clear signs of success in our fight against terrorists. The President's new strategy helped lead to the capture of the Taliban's second in command, the former Taliban finance minister, and two so-called shadow governors of Afghan provinces, the most significant captures of Afghan Taliban leaders since the start of the war in Afghanistan.

Now, while I am pleased with the recent successes in Afghanistan, I anticipate others, many concerns remain. Although we successfully cleared Marja, the Taliban still appears to be able to infil-

trate the town and threaten and kill those who cooperate with American and Afghan security forces. This may not be unanticipated. It takes time to build the confidence of a local population. But I worry that some of this may point to the weakness of the local government which cannot easily deliver the services and cannot deliver the governance needed to help convince the residents of Marja to join the right side.

Now, while we have increased forces in Afghanistan, our allies have also begun to send additional troops. To date, they have added about 50 percent of the 9,000 new troops they pledged after President Obama's December speech. But serious concerns remain about our ability to train the Afghan security forces, who will have to assume the burden of providing security and combating terrorism in Afghanistan without more international trainers. I am pleased that Secretary Gates has decided to send additional U.S. military personnel to fill this gap, but this is a short-term solution and is not a long-term fix.

This concern relates to another. In a recent meeting, NATO [the North Atlantic Treaty Organization] endorsed a process to transition the lead force security to, in some districts, from U.S. and allied troops to Afghan National Security Forces [ANSF]. I think all of us would like to know more about this process as well as its implications.

What progress do we have to see in a district before we can transition to Afghan lead? And what does this mean for international troops in that district? Are we talking about progress among the Afghan security forces, or must the district also need a competent and honest government?

Finally, a quick word of congratulations and one of caution. The Department of Defense [DOD] recently delivered a very good and on-time report on progress toward security and stability in Afghanistan. Thank you for that. Unfortunately, a similar, somewhat higher-level metrics report filed by the National Security Council [NSC] was very disappointing. It is my hope that future reports more closely resemble the 1230 report and provide real information. Congress cannot judge progress from glorified press releases.

Again, thank you for coming before us today. I suspect this will not be the last hearing on Afghanistan this committee will hold this year. I appreciate you working with us to ensure that Congress can conduct its constitutional and appropriate oversight activities. We are very pleased with your work and very pleased with your appearance.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Skelton can be found in the Appendix on page 47.]

The CHAIRMAN. And now for my good friend, the ranking member, the gentleman from California, 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. Thank you for holding this very important hearing on Afghanistan.

I would also like to welcome back Under Secretary of Defense Michèle Flournoy and Lieutenant General John Paxton. I look forward to your testimonies.

We are a nation at war. The attempted terrorist attack in New York City's Times Square serves as the most recent reminder that we face dangerous enemies who threaten the safety and security of our country. The extraordinary men and women of our military and their families need no reminding of this threat. They know all too well the sacrifices and dedication it takes to keep this fight off our shores.

A lot has happened since the President stood before the American people and made the case for his Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy. Over half of the 30,000 forces authorized by the President have arrived in country and are conducting operations in southern Afghanistan. They are operating with some constraints, both political and operational, and this is where I would like to focus the remainder of my comments and questions.

In my view, this body, no matter on which side of the aisle you reside, and this committee in particular, has the moral responsibility to ensure that this war is not fought with a minimalist mindset or with an eye toward the Washington political clock.

Nearly 18 months ago, Admiral Mike Mullen told this committee, and I quote, "In Afghanistan, we do what we can. In Iraq, we do what we must."

When it comes to resourcing our efforts in Afghanistan, I remain concerned that we are not doing everything that we must in order to ensure that General McChrystal and his commanders on the battlefield have the time, space, and resources they need to succeed.

Let me be clear. I have the utmost confidence that General McChrystal and his troops will get the job done. My concern is that the minimalist approach being advocated from some in Washington raises the risk and increases casualties. The 30,000 troop cap put in place by this Administration is sending the wrong signal to our commanders and forcing military planners to make difficult trade-off decisions between combat troops and key enablers. I am particularly concerned that we are underresourcing force protection capabilities.

It is my understanding that there continues to be a serious indirect fire threat to U.S. and coalition forward-operating bases [FOBs] in Afghanistan, yet the current force protection systems that protect FOBs in Iraq are not deployed to protect FOBs in Afghanistan. This is disconcerting, especially given the fact that we have evidence that such capabilities have saved hundreds of lives in Iraq.

Today I would like our witnesses to explain what modifications have been made to the original Joint Urgent Operational Need [JUON] for sense, warn, and response capability in Operation Enduring Freedom [OEF] and why these changes were made. Why are we addressing this particular force protection shortfall differently in Afghanistan than in Iraq? Specifically, why are we deploying contractors instead of military personnel? It is my understanding that if we had used military personnel like we did in Iraq, this capability would already be over in Afghanistan protecting lives.

While I have focused on the impact of the troop cap on the fielding of certain key enablers, this cap becomes more problematic when you consider that some of our NATO allies are not meeting their commitments, and others will be withdrawing their forces from southern Afghanistan.

Further, as Admiral Mullen's comments suggest, there was a time when many thought of the two wars as a struggle for resources resulting in the haves and have-nots. Iraq was the haves, and Afghanistan was the have-nots. My suspicion is that the mentality of the have-nots may be impacting how commanders are employing the resources that they do have in Afghanistan. For example, in Iraq, there was a capability called Task Force ODIN—Observe, Detect, Identify and Neutralize. This task force was responsible for killing or capturing over 3,000 insurgents as they were trying to put in IEDs, basically turning the IED emplacer into a suicide mission.

In Afghanistan, they are standing up a similar Task Force ODIN capability; however, it is my understanding that this capability is being used differently than it was in Iraq. Instead of being used to specifically go after IED emplacers, it is being incorporated into the big picture ISR requirement. I am unclear if this is a tactical decision or the result of the signaling from Washington to operate under the ceilings you have been given.

Lastly, I have raised concerns that the emphasis in our strategy appears to be on ending the conflict rather than winning. I wish the President would use words like "victory" rather than "transition" and "redeployment."

This morning I hope to get a better understanding on what transition actually means. How do you explain the transition to the Afghans, to the enemy, and to our forces on the ground?

Mr. Chairman, I ask that my entire statement be included for the record where I address other concerns and questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Certainly. I thank the gentleman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McKeon can be found in the Appendix on page 49.]

The CHAIRMAN. Secretary Flournoy, please.

STATEMENTS OF MICHÈLE P. FLOURNOY, UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Secretary FLOURNOY. Chairman Skelton, Congressman McKeon, distinguished members of the committee, it is good to see you all again. Thank you for inviting us here to testify on our ongoing efforts in Afghanistan.

As you know, the Administration's core goal in the region is to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat Al Qaeda and ensure the elimination of Al Qaeda safe havens. A critical component of our strategy is a stable Afghanistan with the governance and capacity to ensure that Afghanistan can no longer be a safe haven for Al Qaeda and insurgents.

The U.S. and Afghanistan also have shared interests that extend far beyond combating violent extremism, and we are working to develop an enduring partnership that will serve both our nations for many years to come.

When I last testified before you on Afghanistan, we faced a pretty bleak situation. Early coalition gains had eroded, the Taliban was reascendant, and Afghan confidence in the coalition was in decline. President Obama ordered an immediate strategy review when he came into office and added 38,000 troops in the spring of 2009. After General McChrystal's assessment last summer and further review, the President decided to deploy an additional 30,000 troops in December of last year. Today over half of these forces have already deployed, and almost all of them will be in place by the end of August. More than 9,000 international troops have also been pledged. ISAF [International Security Assistance Force] is now focused on protecting the Afghan population and partnering with the Afghan National Security Forces [ANSF] to build their capacity to conduct and lead security operations.

The civilian surge is also moving forward. We now have three times as many U.S. Government civilians in Kabul as we had a year ago and over four times as many civilians outside of Kabul.

The evidence suggests that our shift in approach is beginning to produce results. The insurgency is losing momentum. And though real challenges and risks remain, we see a number of positive trends. Let me highlight a few.

As you know, we are executing our strategy in close cooperation with the Afghan Government, with our coalition allies and other partners in the region, particularly Pakistan. Our consultations with partners have led to a much greater sense of unity of effort and a common strategy. Also, changes in coalition tactics have substantially reduced the percentage of Afghan civilian casualties caused by coalition actions to about 20 percent. This has, in turn, produced significant positive shifts in Afghan attitudes towards both ISAF and Afghan forces.

Building the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces remains a significant challenge, but there are signs of progress. Currently the Afghan National Army [ANA] strength is well above our April target, and the Afghan National Police [ANP] are well on their way to achieving their growth goals for this fiscal year.

That said, we continue to face challenges associated with recruiting, training, retention, and attrition in the ANSF, particularly the police. ISAF has intensified its partnering with the ANSF at all levels, from the ministry down to local units, but shortages of trainers and mentors persist. The Afghan Government has undertaken a number of initiatives to address these issues, including raising the salaries of ANSF, equalizing pay disparities between the army and police, improving the quality of life and training for police, and beginning to address corruption. There is, however, much more work to be done to develop commensurate rule-of-law structures.

More broadly, our emphasis on using development assistance to support sustainable governance similarly appears to be paying off. In cleared areas such as the Arghandab Valley in Regional Command South [RC-South], the conditions for implementing governance and development programs at the district level are being created, and we are seeing international and Afghan military and civilian, working together to effectively empower and legitimize the Afghan Government at the local level.

Despite challenges like corruption, polls suggest that a majority of Afghans, about 59 percent, believe their government is headed in the right direction. We have also seen some positive steps taken by the Karzai government at the national level. For instance, President Karzai recently issued interim guidance for the execution of reintegration programs. He will issue final guidance after the Consultative Peace Jirga later this month, and we expect to be able to support the Afghan Reintegration Program Authority by releasing funds authorized by this committee and the Congress in the fiscal year 2010 NDAA [National Defense Authorization Act].

President Karzai and members of his cabinet, as you know, will be visiting Washington next week and will highlight the continuing support among Afghans for our involvement there and the Afghan appreciation for the sacrifices being made by U.S. troops and civilians. During President Karzai's visit we also expect to discuss the nature of our long-term strategic partnership between the U.S. and Afghanistan, including longer-term economic development, security cooperation, and cooperation in areas such as law enforcement, judicial reform, and educational programs.

As you know, our military operations in Helmand continue, and we are also engaged in planning and shaping efforts for future efforts in Kandahar. I will leave the specifics of that to Lieutenant General Paxton, but I do want to emphasize that for ISAF and for our Afghan partners, the Helmand operation was our first large-scale effort to fundamentally change how we are doing business together. In Helmand, protecting the population has been our top priority along with ensuring that our military operations pave the way for Afghan-led governance and development activities.

Preparation for the Helmand operation included extraordinary levels of civil-military planning and engagement with Afghan partners at every level, and we feel that the collaborative operational planning process was critical to giving Afghans a sense of ownership and investment in the success of our joint efforts.

I don't want to suggest that achieving success in Afghanistan will be simple or easy. Far from it. Kandahar, for example, will present challenges that are fundamentally different from those that we have recently encountered in Helmand. Inevitably we will face challenges, possibly setbacks, even as we achieve successes. We need to recognize that things may even get harder before they get better. We are challenging our adversaries in new ways, and the insurgents are intelligent and adaptable. They will find new ways to respond. And to maintain our momentum, we will need to continuously refine and adapt our own tactics. But at this point I am cautiously optimistic. I believe that we are developing the conditions that are necessary, though not yet sufficient, for success.

We finally—and I would argue for the first time—we finally have the right mission, the right strategy, the right leadership team in place, and we have marshaled both the international and Afghan resources, civilian and military, to support this mission. Afghanistan is our number one priority. General McChrystal knows that he can ask for what he needs. The President has given the Secretary of Defense the flexibility to provide for additional forces, particularly for force protection as needed.

As we move forward, we will continue to refine our approach, and I believe we will continue to make progress.

I want to thank this committee for the support you have provided to our troops and to this mission thus far. I would urge you to continue that support in considering our current budget requests that are before you. And I know that General Paxton will address operational matters in greater detail, and we look forward to your questions and comments. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

[The joint prepared statement of Secretary Flournoy and General Paxton can be found in the Appendix on page 52.]

The CHAIRMAN. General Paxton.

**STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN M. PAXTON, JR.,
USMC, DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS, J-3, JOINT CHIEFS OF
STAFF**

General PAXTON. Good morning, Chairman Skelton, Ranking Member McKeon and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you again for your time today.

This morning I would like to briefly provide an overview of military ops [operations] in Afghanistan. As Secretary Flournoy pointed out, we are starting to see conditions that we believe are necessary for success in Afghanistan. Among the most important of these conditions is having the right leadership and strategy in place.

In 2009, after assuming command of ISAF, General McChrystal conducted an assessment of the situation in Afghanistan. He developed a campaign plan that was designed to provide a secure environment that would enable an improved governance and development within Afghanistan. At the heart of that campaign plan are four requirements: to protect the Afghan people, to enable Afghan security forces, to neutralize malign influences, and to support the extension of governance. General McChrystal has gone to great lengths to ensure that all of our operations in Afghanistan are directly tied to achieving these aims.

The central tenet of our campaign strategy is to protect the populace. We are fulfilling this tenet by prioritizing our efforts to provide security and to extend governance in high-density population areas where the insurgent groups currently operate, and by reducing civilian casualties. The reduction of civilian casualties is another key component of our efforts to protect the people in Afghanistan. General McChrystal has repeatedly emphasized this point at every opportunity. In fact, our own force protection is closely related to gaining the respect and support of the Afghan people.

IEDs [Improvised Explosive Devices] remain our number one killer in Afghanistan, accounting for 60 percent of our total casualties. In some areas over 80 percent of our IED discoveries have been a direct result of tips from local nationals. We are convinced these tips are a result of the relationships that we are building on a daily basis with the local population and the protection that we are providing. Clearly, the support of the people of Afghanistan is essential and relates directly to our own safety.

Regional Command-South is currently where the main effort of operations is in Afghanistan. We are expanding security zones, en-

hancing freedom of movement, and increasing the confidence of our Afghan National Security Forces and partners by the growth of our embedded partnering concept.

The real prize in the south is the key city of Kandahar and its environs. Kandahar City is of huge importance nationally and is the capital of the south. It has the rich culture and history, and is the key economic and trading hub, and is of great importance to the Taliban movement, which originated right in Kandahar. The insurgents have a degree of freedom, as recent suicide bombings have demonstrated, and the local police lack sufficient forces to prevent insurgent activity, while government also lacks the capacity, credibility, and resources to operate effectively. The people of Kandahar are caught in the middle of this confrontation, and they demand better security, economic development, and a government that is in touch with and responsive to their needs.

Our operation in Kandahar is named Hamkari, which in Dari means cooperation. It has been planned and will be conducted with our Afghan partners in the lead for operations. The focus of Hamkari is on providing Kandahar with credible and effective governance that gives the population hope for the future. More effective government will deliver security, basic services, development, and employment. If these ends are achieved, the people of Kandahar will reject the insurgency and support the government.

The plans for Hamkari were approved by the President of Afghanistan on 4 April when he visited the city. In time it will deliver the security that the people of Kandahar desire and will drive the insurgents from the city and the outlying districts by steadily restricting their freedom to operate. A more capable, representative and responsive government will be able to bring the economic development and rule of law that the area so badly needs.

Hamkari is not about highly kinetic military operations. It is about applying the combined resources of the Afghan National Army, the Afghan National Police, and ISAF in support of the governor to improve security both in the city and in the populated environs. Hamkari will bring the government and the people closer together to make for a better future for Kandahar.

Our recent clearing operations by the Afghan National Security Forces, the Marines, and the British in Marja and Nad Ali, Operation Moshtarak, were, in fact, shaping operations for this upcoming event and the operations in and around Kandahar.

There are several significant differences between Hamkari and the Operation Moshtarak in Marja. For a start, the physical size and the size of the population are much greater in Kandahar than they were in Marja. In Marja and Nad Ali, ISAF forces relied heavily on kinetic operations to clear the insurgents from the populated area. In Kandahar, as General McChrystal has recently indicated, and I quote, there won't be a D-Day that is climactic. Instead there will be a rising tide of security for the local population.

Our current assessment is the positive trends in a number of areas such as ANSF growth and improved security, governance, and development in central Helmand are a result of recent operations and indicate that our campaign is on track and moving in the right direction. Previously declining security trends in some areas of the country have been arrested, while trends elsewhere

have been starting to advance in a positive direction. Current trends remain tenuous until more permanent and effective governance is established in the areas being secured. Enduring stability is dependent on Government of Afghanistan's ability to deliver credible local governance and essential services and to expand economic opportunities for its people.

Real progress will be confirmed only when the Afghan people believe that lasting security and stability has been established in their areas, and this will take time. People's perceptions typically change more slowly and lag behind many of the actions that are actually improving the conditions on the ground.

As I conclude my remarks, I would, as did Secretary Flournoy, caution everyone that in spite of recent successes in central Helmand, we shouldn't underestimate the challenges that lie before us or that underplay the need for resolve in the days ahead because we continue to fight an intelligent and adaptable enemy.

I thank you for your time this morning, and, more importantly, I thank you for your continued support of our troops, their families and our mission. I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

[The joint prepared statement of General Paxton and Secretary Flournoy can be found in the Appendix on page 52.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much and again we appreciate your being with us and your excellent assessment.

Both of you, come with me in your mind's eye, my hometown of Lexington, and early in the morning go to a local coffee shop, and there are seven or eight of my gentlemen friends sitting around drinking coffee and talking about football games and the baseball games that are coming up, and I introduce you. Most of them are veterans of Vietnam or Korea. And one of them turns to you and says, are we achieving success in Afghanistan? Another one turns to you and says, when do we declare victory in Afghanistan? And I step back, and I let you answer the questions.

Madam Secretary, two questions.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Chairman Skelton, I believe we are achieving success. We are on the right road for the first time in a long time in Afghanistan. So that is the assessment of General McChrystal that we hear weekly in our conversations with him. It is the assessment of our U.S. Government team on the ground.

Are we done yet? Absolutely not. Are there more challenges to be dealt with? Yes. But we are on the right path, and things are starting to move in the right direction.

In terms of how we define victory, I think that victory is a—

The CHAIRMAN. I didn't say define it. The question was—

Secretary FLOURNOY. I am sorry, when is victory.

The CHAIRMAN. My friend didn't ask you to define it. He asked are we achieving it?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think when is victory is based on achieving certain conditions, and that, to me, is making sure that Afghanistan, the Government of Afghanistan, has the capacity to exert its sovereignty over its territory, to deny Al Qaeda and its associates safe haven in the country, and to maintain stability so that it can continue to develop on the way forward. That is the core—that relates to our core goal that we have defined for ourselves in this mission.

The CHAIRMAN. General, two questions.

General PAXTON. Sir, in terms of success, I, too, believe that we are achieving success on the ground. The definition of success—well, rather than the definition, the indicators of success, it is true that the levels of violence are up right now in some areas, both the attacks have been up and the IEDs in particular are up. But as I noted earlier, what we are seeing is in some cases up to 80 percent of the local population letting us know where the IEDs [improvised explosive devices] are, and that contributed to a reduction in the number of casualties and increased operational efficiency in Moshtarak, in Nad Ali and in Marja. And it is our expectation that as we have better partnering, more partnering, more Afghans in the lead in the planning and the execution, that we will see those trends continue as we move into Kandahar.

In terms of victory, I believe that the indicators for victory are—there is a lag between the execution and the indication, and it is indeed very dependent on the demonstration of both capacity and credibility of the Afghan people, the security forces and the governance to actually lead and provide security and provide opportunities for the people. But the more that the polls indicate, as they currently do, that they believe in the Afghan National Security Forces, and they believe in ISAF, and that they believe our current operations are generating the potential for a better life for them, then we are on the right road, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

Mr. McKeon.

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In my opening comments I stated that Admiral Mullen told this committee, in Afghanistan we do what we can, in Iraq we do what we must, 18 months ago. Actually that statement was made December of 2007, so I want to correct that for the record.

As I stated earlier, I am concerned that the 30,000 troop cap for Afghanistan forcing difficult decisions to be made when it comes to finding certain key enablers, including force protection measures for our forward-operating bases. Do we have a troop cap in Afghanistan?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I would tell you we do not have a troop cap; 30,000 is the number of forces the President has approved. It is not a cap per se.

General PAXTON. Yes, sir. That is based on the assessment on the ground, and the assessment is always subject to review both by General McChrystal and back here in Washington. And the 30K that people commonly refer to is just one component, sir, because we have an additional 9- to 10,000 of NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] forces, and then we have what is now en route to 134 Afghan National Army [ANA] and up to 170-some Afghan National Police [ANP]. So you have to look at the composite mix of all of those security forces, and we are trying to strike the right balance between U.S., coalition force and local/national, sir.

Mr. MCKEON. So you feel there is no cap, and General McChrystal can call on all the resources he felt he needed?

General PAXTON. Indeed he has, sir. He has come back to ask for more and ask for different, and it is a constant series of assessments that I personally get involved with on a weekly basis to take

a look at the flow of forces and what should go next and what should go in addition to.

Mr. MCKEON. Let me talk a little bit about the enablers in Iraq versus Afghanistan. Can you answer the following: Are we addressing force protection on our FOBs [forward operating bases] differently in Afghanistan than Iraq? And if yes, why are we deploying contractors instead of military personnel?

General PAXTON. Sir, our analysis and assessment of force protection is no different regardless of the theater. And you strike the balance between the threat of direct fire, indirect fire, aviation missile, and you take a look about the appropriate indications and warnings you would need to identify where that threat would come from.

I would tell you that as we look to increase our footprint and our boots-on-the-ground presence in Afghanistan, we also look to bring in all what we commonly call the enablers that you need to have to provide that force protection. So additional military police, additional combat engineers, additional route clearance, and part and parcel of that package thanks to the good efforts of this committee and the funding has been our elevated line of sight, which is our persistent ground surveillance, some of it on camera and on elevating telescopic poles from the vehicles, some of it tethered balloons, some of it manned, some of it unmanned. So all of our ISR [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance] Task Force capabilities indeed provide us the eyes and ears that we need to sense the environs there.

And if you look at the source of the fires and the casualties, the indirect fire in Afghanistan is not what it was in Iraq. It is the IEDs that is the largest component first, and then the small-arms fire and things like rocket-propelled grenades second. So it is not the indirect fire. But the assessment process in Iraq and Afghanistan are identical, sir.

Mr. MCKEON. General, why are we not employing Task Force ODIN [Observe, Detect, Identify, Neutralize] in Afghanistan the same way we did in Iraq? Or are you saying we did? When I look at the breakdown of ISR for Army direct support assets alone, specifically Hunter, Shadow and the ERMP [Extended Range Multi-Purpose UAVs] in Iraq, they have approximately 80 UAVs [unmanned aerial vehicles] in Iraq; they have about 50 in Afghanistan.

General PAXTON. Again, sir, I think the capabilities that we bring and the way that we employ the capabilities are the same in Afghanistan as they are in Iraq. We have our ISR Task Force here, which is pushing all those assets forward, again manned and unmanned. We have our Task Force Paladin, which is like Task Force Troy, which is our IED over there, and we are looking to get both full-motion video and then manned and unmanned aerial vehicles up there so that we can detect movement of the enemy and movement of perhaps sympathetic local nationals that may be either scouting for them or putting in IEDs. So I think our capability is there.

And as I mentioned a minute ago, some of this is just the lag. As we increase our footprint on the ground, then we are surging with them and bringing behind extra eyes and ears that will do the exact same things in Afghanistan that ODIN did in Iraq.

Mr. MCKEON. Do we have more of these UAVs currently in Iraq than in Afghanistan?

General PAXTON. If I could take that for the record and get back with you, sir, because we are drawing down, obviously, in Iraq. We are trying to keep a sufficient amount there to cover what will become our six Advise and Assist Brigades that stay behind. And there is a difference in the geometry of the battlefield.

Some folks would believe that as you draw down the boots on the ground, you can draw down all the extra enablers, and that may not be the case. I think, as General Odierno and General Petraeus have articulated, that you still need extra eyes and ears out there because you don't have the physical presence on the ground. So we are trying to strike the balance between how quickly we can draw down in Iraq and how much we have built up in Afghanistan. Some of it is transitional forces from one theater to the other. In other cases, we need them in both. So we are procuring more, as I said, thanks to the efforts of the committee here, to go out and buy more full-motion video and Electro Optical and IR [Infrared] [EO/IR] and different things like that, sir.

Mr. MCKEON. It just seems to me in Iraq, where we have pulled the troops out of the cities, and there are more in reserve positions—right now we are in Afghanistan, we are on the offense. It seemed like to me, now—I am not a military expert such as General Petraeus, General McChrystal, yourself, but I would like to see those numbers because it seems to me that more of those enablers, in my humble opinion, should be where we are on the offense and where we have more troops actually in the line of fire right now.

General PAXTON. Yes, sir. And I take that for the record, certainly get you the numbers, sir, and then the actual discussion of how many and where they go we could certainly do in closed session if you would like to do that, sir.

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

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Ortiz.

Mr. ORTIZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Secretary Flournoy and General Paxton. Thank you so much for being here and providing your thoughts on security and stability of Afghanistan.

A few days ago it was announced that the United States would be sending an additional 850 soldiers and marines to train the local security forces in Afghanistan for approximately 90 to 120 days. These trainers are seen as a stopgap, yet there is still a shortage of trainers conducting this critical mission.

If the way ahead in Afghanistan is to have capable local security forces, what is needed to fill this critical shortage of trainers? I think this is one of the big problems that we have. And how are our allies contributing to fill these critical shortages? And how will this shortage of trainers affect the handover to local forces? Maybe you can enlighten us a little bit on that.

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think the institutional trainers for the Afghan National Security Forces, and then having mentoring teams, what we call OMLTs [Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams], for

the ANA and POMLTs [Police Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams] for the ANP out in the field to continue that training and leadership development as they actually operate, that really is the sort of long pole in the tent of our future success. This is absolutely critical to building capacity.

We have—as we seek to grow the ANSF [Afghan National Security Forces] and improve its quality, the requirements for those training, that training capacity has gone up. We have been pushing our allies to step up with us to meet those new requirements, and many of them are doing so. It remains a work in progress. We have not—we have made progress towards that goal. General Paxton may have some of the specific numbers. But we are not all the way there yet.

The deployment of U.S. forces as a bridge is simply to try to meet some of the near-term requirements as we continue to recruit our NATO allies to step up with additional trainers, but we don't want to lose time, so we wanted to go ahead and plug the near-term gap, get General Caldwell, who is the head of NTM-A [NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan] and CSTC-A [Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan], some additional resources to continue the momentum in these very important efforts.

I don't know if you want to add any comments, General.

General PAXTON. Thank you, ma'am.

Yes, sir. Obviously the training of the police and the Afghan National Army are critical functions—not just critical enablers, but critical functions—that we have to accomplish. So General Caldwell is over there with a NATO training mission, formerly CSTC-A, and we have sent additional U.S. forces over to assist him, almost two brigade combat teams' worth, to do training for the army and the police.

NATO has contributions. They have had almost 3- to 4,000 more since the President's announcement in December. But we would like to get additional NATO contributions there, and if some of the NATO members perhaps relook at their combat footprint, we are looking to see if they can change those into trainers and enablers.

So what we have done and what your comment reflects, sir, is the fact that in the short term we still have a pressing need for trainers, and we are waiting for long term solutions. So we have sent an Army battalion and three increments of Marines over there to fill that gap in the short term, sir.

Mr. ORTIZ. I know that sometime back we had a high ratio of AWOLs [Absent Without Leave]. Has that gone down some? Are we still having those same problems we had before where they just wouldn't come in?

General PAXTON. Sir, there has been a marked change since December in terms of both their absenteeism, which has gone down, and then their reenlistment and retention rate, which has gone up. So it is not only in the short term in terms of showing up for duty, but it is in the long term in terms of their commitment. Some of this is due to success on the ground; some of it is due to change in their pay structure. But we believe these are both good news stories, sir.

Mr. ORTIZ. It is encouraging to see that we are beginning to get tips from the local citizens as to where to locate some of the IEDs

and stuff. What about the training camps? Do we have any knowledge? Are we getting any tips on the training camps? Because we see that, just like the other day, a naturalized citizen from the United States goes down there to train. Is that hard to detect the training camp where they are conducting some of this training, the enemy?

General PAXTON. I don't have some of the tactical specifics at my fingertips, sir, but obviously it is—I mean, these are safe havens and sanctuaries, and sometimes they are indeed difficult to find. The more that you build confidence in the local populace, and the more that they tell you routes that you have freedom of movement on or areas where you should not go, or they help you detect IEDs, eventually you get to the point where you can say, well, who lives in this neighborhood? And they will take you to other areas, sir. So we watch it very closely, sir.

Mr. ORTIZ. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

The gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Bartlett, please.

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you very much.

I want to return for a moment to the chairman's coffee shop and to other coffee shops across the country where two other questions are being asked. The first is why is not this Afghanistan war the ultimate exercise in futility? Because even if we do what no one else has ever done, from Alexander the Great, the British Empire, the Soviet Empire, even if we could accomplish what none of them have ever accomplished, it won't make any difference, they say, because the bad guys will simply go into Pakistan. And then if we spend I don't know how many more billions of dollars and how many more dead kids and wounded kids to drive them out of there, they will go to Somalia and Yemen.

They say it is quite clear that we cannot deny them sanctuary. So why is this not the ultimate exercise in futility?

It is noted that frequently the citizens there choose the harsh rule of the Taliban compared to the corrupt rule of the Karzai government, and our very presence there recruits the enemy. There were essentially no Al Qaeda in Iraq [AQI] before we went there. Then there were a lot of Al Qaeda there after we were there. I asked the State Department, were they imported? Were they de novo? They said that most of them were, in fact, de novo. So our presence there creates the enemy.

The second question is why are we following Osama bin Laden's playbook? This is a hugely asymmetric war, Mohammed with a rusty artillery shell and a few dollars' worth of electronics. And just one of our responses to that has cost us \$40 billion. That is MRAPs [Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles]. That is just one platform in response to that. Osama Bin Laden is on the record as saying that they will continue this guerrilla kind of war until they bleed us dry.

So these two questions, please. Why is this not the ultimate exercise in futility? And why are we following Osama bin Laden's playbook?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Congressman, in response to the first question, I would draw a very sharp distinction between the historical

experience of many in Afghanistan who were there to conquer versus our mission in Afghanistan, which is to enable the development of Afghan capacity to exert sovereignty over their own territory.

I think your point about Pakistan has informed the fact that we have taken a regional strategy. We need to pressure Al Qaeda and its associates and deny them safe haven on both sides of the border, and that is exactly what our strategy is designed to do.

Support for the Taliban in Afghanistan is quite weak, very little popular support, and that creates great opportunity for us to help develop Afghan institutions and capacity that are a viable alternative for the population.

And in terms of Osama bin Laden, again, I would just say that we don't have the option of allowing Al Qaeda to have freedom of movement and sanctuary given the threat that they pose to our homeland and to our vital interests abroad. And I think that if you look at the totality of our campaign on both sides of the Afghan-Pakistan border and globally, we are having tremendous success in putting pressure on this network, and disrupting their operations, and denying their ability to launch spectacular attacks.

So I think that we have to take a global perspective, and I think the strategy is actually bearing a great deal of fruit at this point.

Mr. BARTLETT. The questioner notes that in Iraq we actually increased the number of the enemy. Our very presence there did that, admitted to by the State Department. And assuming success in Afghanistan and Pakistan, they will simply go to Somalia and Yemen. It is clear that we cannot deny them sanctuary.

So the question still remains why is this not the ultimate exercise in futility, assuming success?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Again, sir, I think the facts suggest that we are debilitating the network. We are putting pressure on the network on a global basis, and that denying them sanctuary is critical to preventing their ability to attack our homeland and attack our interests and our forces and our allies abroad.

Mr. BARTLETT. The second question, why are we following Osama bin Laden's playbook in this hugely asymmetric war?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I would differ with you. I don't believe we are following his playbook. Actually his playbook isn't working so well in terms of advancing Al Qaeda's aims right now.

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

The gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Taylor.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to yield my time to Mr. Murphy and claim his later.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Murphy is recognized.

Mr. MURPHY OF NEW YORK. Thank you.

I wanted to look a little bit for direction of where this is all headed. So I was over in Kandahar two months ago on the ground talking to some of the people that were there, very impressed with our efforts and what we are trying to do to stabilize the area and to provide security there. But one of the things that really jumped out at me is where does it go from there?

I have no doubt that our soldiers can provide security, they can get out on the streets, and they can drive Taliban away, but where

is the next step? And one that really stuck out to me, some of the locals said to me, we don't have any reliable electricity, we don't have an economy, we can't run our businesses. I can have you meet with 20 local businessmen who can't run their factories because there is no electricity. And dug a little deeper, what they told me is there are two megawatts of power for the whole city of Kandahar. Our base needs 10 to 15 megawatts of power and has it to run every day. So we are trying to provide security, and we are also at night kind of lighting up this boardwalk of Broadway lights, and the people are saying, "We can't get any power, but you guys have it over there."

Where is the next step? So we provide the security, but then what happens to let people start to function in that environment to allow us to get away and to go next? And specifically do we have a plan for electricity and for the local economy there?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I would like to come back for the record with a more detailed answer on the specifics of electrical power generation for Kandahar.

My understanding, though, is that is part of the larger plan for that area. I think the real shift we have seen coming out of the strategy review and putting additional civilian resources on the ground alongside our soldiers is that we have had much more integrated civil-military planning where we, in designing our counter-insurgency [COIN] campaign for an area, we are actually harnessing the development piece to support the establishment of more credible and capable Afghan Government governance at the local and provincial level.

My understanding is there is—that this is a recognized need, that it is part of the longer-term plan for that area, but I would like to get back to you on the specific details, if I may.

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

General PAXTON. And, sir, I will join with the Secretary and get back with you on specifics.

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

General PAXTON. What there is, as some of you know, Kajaki dam, which is in southern Afghanistan.

Mr. MURPHY OF NEW YORK. It will be three years before the power from that is going to impact this is what I was told.

General PAXTON. I understand, sir, but that is part of the long-term plan. As you get the security in the area better and the governance up, then we can develop areas like Kajaki.

Mr. MURPHY OF NEW YORK. So is it three years before we think the governance is coming? I mean, before there is electricity to have an economy, it is hard to imagine that the people are going to start saying, "Well, this government is really working for us." So does it mean it is our responsibility for that long?

General PAXTON. We have already moved some generator capacity into the area, but it is a slow process of actual development, and this is what I owe you, the specifics of the time line between when we get the generators in, when the infrastructure is place, and when the power starts to deliver.

Mr. MURPHY OF NEW YORK. I use this more as a specific to illustrate where I wanted to get to, a bigger point, which was what I also heard from all the Afghan ministers was that we have a catch-22. They can't get the credibility to build popular support behind their government until they can deliver for people. We aren't comfortable letting them deliver any of the development work until they stop having the corruption problems they have because we say, "We will not give you the money to do development because we think you will steal it;" and they say to us, "That is great, but if you guys are here with your military providing security and your development folks doing the development, why would anyone turn to us?" And what I heard on the ground is that the order of operations to where you turn for help in Kandahar was: one, to NATO; two, to your local warlords; three, to the Taliban; and, four, to the Afghan Government.

So what I wanted to understand is how are we going to make that transition? How are we going to get to the point where the Afghan Government is one on that list and at least two, if not three or four?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Two points I would make, sir. They are very important issues you are raising. One is to make sure that the PRTs' [Provincial Reconstruction Teams'] priorities in an area are more tightly integrated into the overall civil-military campaign plan for that area. And I think in Kandahar that integration process is starting to happen more than it has in the past. So I think you are going to see a realignment of some of our development efforts to more closely support the security in governance objectives.

Mr. MURPHY OF NEW YORK. Are we starting to give more of the development money to the Afghan Government in the Kandahar region?

Secretary FLOURNOY. That is the second point. The second point is that we are working ministry by ministry to develop internal capacity so that they can receive, account for, track, and be accountable for flowing money through the ministry. So we have set ourselves a series of progressive goals to flow more and more assistance through the key Afghan ministries, but that requires certifying them to be able to handle that in an accountable way. And we are in the process of doing that. I think we have done two or three, and we will do another two or three in the coming months.

Mr. MURPHY OF NEW YORK. My time has expired. But if we could get the metrics for how that certification, slash, the progress works, I am really interested in that because it gets to the corruption, and it gets to how we get ourselves out of being the ones doing the nation-building and letting the Afghans build their own nation.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Jones.

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

And, Madam Secretary and General Paxton, thank you for being here today.

And I would like to start my points and also my questions by reading an e-mail I got recently from a retired general that I have tremendous respect for:

The only real shot we have at any sort of success is to spend years strengthening the Afghan Army and Police; work out with

Pakistan a way to attack on both sides of the border—in parentheses, “Very tough to do”; get rid of corruption in the government—again parentheses, “Good luck on that front”; do something about an economy based on poppy growing—“Not going to happen in the Congressman’s lifetime”; and do all in our power not to drive the Taliban into the arms of local population.

It was a fairly long e-mail that I am not at liberty to say his name, but I e-mailed him because I am very concerned about rules of engagement [ROE].

And I had had a conversation with the father of this marine who was killed, John Bernard. And “Caution Killed My Son: Marine Families Blast Suicidal Tactics in Afghanistan.” And then I go back to another article in *Marine Times*: “Left to Die, They Called for Help. Negligent Army leadership refused and abandoned them on the battlefield.”

I realize that you are trying to win the confidence and the support of the Afghan people, but I go back to Mr. Bartlett’s points and really to the coffee shop that the chairman talked about. I hear this frequently back home in the Third District of North Carolina, the home of Camp Lejeune Marine Base, the home of Seymour Johnson Air Force Base. And people are wondering truthfully if you don’t have an end point, this is beginning to sound like the previous Administration and Iraq.

You brief the Congress—and I am not being critical of you. I want you to fully understand that. You brief the Congress, and, well, you know, we are cautiously optimistic, we are going down this road and that road, and, you know, it seems like we are making progress. I am sure we are making some progress; I don’t doubt that. But I will tell you that reading this article in *Newsweek*, “Scandal in Afghanistan: The Exclusive Story of How We Have Wasted \$6 Billion”—\$6 billion—“on a Corrupt and Abusive Police Force that May Cost Us the War.”

I really want to try to figure out whoever is sitting in these chairs a year, two years, three years, four years, and we still are spending billions and trillions in a 14th-century country with corruption that we cannot control, and we have got—some of our people in Congress get indicted over here, so I don’t know how we are going to do it in a country where we can’t even speak their language hardly.

So the point is at what point will you say to this Congress, do you believe you can say, “We are at the point that we have won the end point of what we are trying to achieve”? Because, Madam Secretary, I feel for this Administration as well. I made that point. This is something they inherited, and we have to fight terrorism around the world. But sticking 100,000 of our troops over in Afghanistan and telling them, if they fire at you from the left, you shoot back; if they fire at you from the right, you don’t shoot, that is not fair to these kids, it is not fair to their parents and their wives and their husbands.

I guess that is a question.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I am going to let General Paxton address the particulars of the rules of engagement because I think he is more qualified to do that.

But let me first take on your concern, which I think is understandable and real, about the challenges of capacity-building and also corruption.

Afghanistan is a country that has been in and out of war for 30 years. In that kind of environment, corruption tends to take root in the society at large. It is a problem for other countries in the region as well. I think we are seeing renewed commitment to dealing with this problem on the Afghan side. They have recently established a major crimes task force and indicted key officials, the mayor of Kabul, a minister, a police general, trying to signal no one is going to be above the rule of law. We are at the beginning of a process, but, again, we are moving in the right direction.

We are trying to change the incentive structures that have motivated corruption in the past. You are right. It used to be that police did not make a living wage. So police would make their living wage by fleecing the local population. We have changed the pay and benefits, working with the Afghan Government, so they don't have to be corrupt in order to make a living wage. Things like that are very, very important.

We are working with the Afghan ministries on long-term economic development, things like—they are very rich in strategic minerals and resources, very rich in agriculture—helping them to develop sustainable, long-term sources of income for the nation. Those are the longer-term parts of the project. But on the specific question of ROEs, I would like to defer to General Paxton if the chairman would indulge us with time.

The CHAIRMAN. Please proceed. We have to move along, but go ahead.

General PAXTON. Thank you, sir.

Congressman Jones, there is absolutely nothing in the tactical directive that prohibits or limits any servicemember, marine, soldier, from appropriate self-defense. What is in the directive is the conscientious application of close air support and indirect fire to make sure that if it is not a fleeting target or something that poses imminent self-defense, that you have done due diligence in terms of assessing collateral damage, whether it is for infrastructure, for children, for noncombatants. But there is nothing in there that prohibits either the commander or the individual soldier from doing what he needs to do on the ground, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Snyder, please.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for being here once again. You are regulars here in the last few days.

I want to talk about resources. Secretary Flournoy, you had talked about that earlier. I remember sometime in the last year or so, General Jack Keane testified, now retired, that when he was Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, at the end of 2002, resources began being moved out of Afghanistan in anticipation of the March 2003 invasion of Iraq. His recollection, it was that early.

Then we began hearing almost privately, I remember the Commandant—I am a former marine—at the Marine Corps breakfast made the comment that we have a policy of clear, hold, and build, but we only have enough troops to clear. We don't have enough troops to hold and build. Secretary Gates during the Bush Adminis-

tration made some comments at private meetings that he was concerned about the troop strength.

Mr. McKeon has already referred to the December 2007 statement by Admiral Mullen. My concern is that the continued discussion as if we are still in that mindset. The ranking member's opening statement refers to a have-nots mentality. Is there a have-nots mentality that would be permeating our military commanders' thinking that they don't have adequate resources?

Secretary FLOURNOY. That is certainly not my impression. I think General McChrystal's assessment was to tell us what he thought he needed to be the priority mission and to get the mission right. And I think when you look at the U.S. forces that have been put in, the NATO forces that are being committed, the Afghan forces that are being grown, he believes he has what he needs to do the mission.

And I think one of the things that my boss Secretary Gates has always said is we have to make sure that we balance our approach here, that on the one hand you want to make sure you have enough forces in Afghanistan to ensure that you don't fail in the mission. On the other hand, you don't want to go overboard and come to be seen as a force of occupation.

Secretary FLOURNOY. So we have listened to General McChrystal very carefully, and what he told Congress in December and what he continues to say is that he believes he is getting the resources to carry out his mission at this point.

I don't know if you have anything to add.

General PAXTON. And again, part of the assessment there trying to figure out what you need both by people and resources, when you need it, and then where you need it, and the constant risk assessment.

I think most members in uniform, if you ask them, "how much do you need," the answer would always be "more," because the more you have, the less risk you have to assume. But we try to constantly assess how many people we have and what types of capability we have, and then does that sufficiently mitigate the risk, and is it a most likely or a most dangerous course of action that you are going to mitigate against.

And then secondly, sir, as we look to increase the capability and the capacity of the Afghan forces to make sure that, as they shoulder more of the burden, then we can requisite, stand down, and do perhaps less. We teach them, we show them, we lead them, and then we turn over to them.

Dr. SNYDER. And I appreciate your sentiment today. The nature of war is such that I hope if that were to change 6 months, a year, 18 months, 2 years from now, that you thought that you did not have the resources you needed, I hope that you would express the same level of candor.

I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Turner, please.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank both of you for being here today. I have two questions, one concerning the troop cap and one concerning drug trafficking.

The first question, General Paxton, is directed at you, and it is building on Mr. McKeon's statement and other questions that other

Members have had during this hearing. People are very concerned about our ability to be successful as we are looking at the constraints that you are operating under. So my question is, what enablers are the NATO allies and the Afghan Security Forces relying on for the United States to provide? And how has the troop cap of 30,000 impacted our ability to support the U.S.-allied forces and the Afghans? As ISAF [International Security Assistance Force] coalition adds I believe what is 4,500 out of perhaps 9,000 troops pledged in conjunction with the U.S. surge, and as Afghan Security Forces grow, how are we ensuring our troops, the allies, and the Afghans all have access to the enablers that they need?

General PAXTON. Thank you, sir.

We have looked very closely at the enablers. No surprise that when the U.S. comes, not only do we bring the preponderance of the forces, but we bring the preponderance of the enablers. So we have more aviation, be it for lift or for Medevac [medical evacuation]. We have more engineers for route clearance. So you look, when you go to our NATO allies and the coalition forces, for them to bring a requisite share of those capabilities if they are able.

Secretary Gates just spoke in Istanbul several weeks ago and offered that we would take a look at our obligations, which this committee rightfully told us to take a look at in Iraq several years ago, to make sure that by resourcing allied and coalition partners, we don't necessarily jeopardize U.S. forces first.

But we are at the point now with the production of MRAPs and our equipping on the ground that we can take a look at those capabilities that we could either share with partners, or we could offer to sell to them, or we could put in the FMS [Foreign Military Sales] program.

There is an increased capacity and willingness on the part of allies to fund for themselves, to source for themselves, and then we also have the capability of sharing with them in areas where we are partnered together, sir.

Mr. TURNER. Everyone continues to be concerned about how those resources come out of the total resources that are applied, and whether or not we have sufficient response to meet our needs.

Turning to the drug trade. In a December 21, 2006, remark to the Atlantic Council, General Jones stated that "the Achilles heel of Afghanistan is the narcotics problem." General Jones suggested that the solution has to be broad. It is not one thing. There is no recipe for this. It is not just eradication, not crop substitution. It is a lot of things that can be combined to begin to wean the economy.

More specifically, he called for: one, a judicial system that is functional; two, police reform; three, involvement of the Afghan Government; four, extending the reach of the Afghan Government to Pakistan.

I know that when we look at the issue of the drug trade, we have to be concerned about how do we address the issue of the money, the cash that flows through the drug trade, the transportation routes for drugs themselves, the labs that are producing the drugs, the fields themselves where we need to look for an economic shift. Part of the problem has been a lack of an assessment of a complete to-do list, and then execution of that to-do list.

According to recent report by the National Security Council [NSC], a new U.S. Government counternarcotics strategy for Afghanistan has been approved. It is my understanding that the Hill has not yet been briefed on this new strategy, and that we don't have that here for our staff. I am very concerned about this. What can you tell us about this new strategy?

And I would like to hold up this chart. This is a CRS [Congressional Research Service] report chart that shows the Afghan drug trade. As you can see, the last four years—and if you fold it in half, you can see what the normal production of narcotics have been in Afghanistan. The last four years have been their own surge, their narcotics surge. And that is really, I believe, the root of what we have been facing in Afghanistan. As we try to address the issues of Afghanistan but don't address this drug trade, we are going to continue to fund and fuel our adversaries.

What can you add to that discussion, please?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, we did refine our counternarcotics strategy as part of the review we conducted late last year, and I am happy to invite our interagency partners to come up and brief this committee if you have not been adequately briefed.

Narcotics is a key funding stream for the insurgency. We have established a threat finance cell that looks at the nexus of narcotics and the insurgency to go after that. We have also helped train Afghan forces that are specifically focused on drug interdiction. We have crop-substitution programs under way to try to transition farmers to licit crops. We are focusing infrastructure development to make sure that once farmers grow licit crops, they can actually get them to market and so forth.

I think in areas where this has come to together, in RC [Regional Command] East, for example, you have seen a drop in poppy production. RC South is the new area of focus where we will be putting all of those elements in place to seek to make the same kind of progress there. But we would be happy to come back up and brief you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

The gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. Courtney.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Flournoy, you, in answering Mr. Skelton's question, had a definition of victory as the point in which Afghanistan has the capacity to exert sovereignty and deny Taliban safe haven, which really seems to, in my mind, prioritize the need to get functioning security forces.

The New York Times yesterday quoted a Pentagon report which said that the most significant challenge to fielding qualified Afghan Security Forces is the shortage of institutional trainers. I know Mr. Ortiz touched on this earlier, but, again, the story listed the fact that NATO and the U.S. agreed to 5,200 trainers last January. There is 2,700 there today. All but 300 are U.S. And obviously Secretary Gates, I know, has been working hard to try and extract the bodies that were committed. But at the same time, we are flowing 30,000 new forces. And clearly, this is so important to have the trainers there. I mean, at some point it seems that we should just do it and stop sort of waiting for that commitment to materialize. And I just—well, why don't you comment?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Well, the decision to deploy the additional U.S. forces as a bridge mechanism is to plug the immediate gap of what is needed now. We want to continue to incentivize our partners to step up with additional training contributions, but we—this is a priority, and we will plug those gaps.

The other thing that really makes a difference here is the shift in General McChrystal's strategy to put an emphasis on partnering, so that every ANA unit, every Afghan Police unit has an ISAF or U.S. partner that is training—continuing the training in the field, mentoring, doing the leadership development. And so there is the institutional training piece, which is critical with this partnering, is where you are really going to further develop your force and its competency to really take leadership over time. So that is an area of focus, and we are putting about as much energy as can possibly be put on this, on closing this gap, sir.

General PAXTON. And the training is holistic, too. So we are looking to train the ministries as well as the police and the armed forces. And within the police, we are looking at local police, the end cop. So it is across the board.

We recognize that, in addition to the training in general and the training across the board in specific, there is a unique requirement to train leadership. So one of the things we want to do as we get both U.S. forces and allied and NATO and coalition forces trainers there is to concentrate on NCO [noncommissioned officer] training and officer training, too, sir.

Mr. COURTNEY. Do you question or challenge the *Times* numbers in terms of, again, the commitment that was made and where we are today?

General PAXTON. I don't have those specific numbers. As I answered for Congressman Reyes, though, we know that there is a gap there, sir, between what was pledged and what has shown up. And that is why the bridging solution is in there. The 850 that was alluded to in either the *Post* or the *Times* article on Monday is indeed part of an Army battalion and then an increment of marines that are going over there that the Chief of Staff of the Army and the Commandant of the Marine Corps have said these are available and ready, and these can help as a bridging solution. And some of those already have a backfill mechanism, so that if by the end of their normal tenure, be it three months, four months, six months, if we don't have sufficient allied contributions, we can backfill again. We don't want to do that. We would like to get solutions from the NATO allies, but we can do that, sir.

Mr. COURTNEY. And I guess I understand your point that we want to extract those commitments that are made, that a deal is a deal. But on the other hand, I mean, the President's goal of 2011 as sort of a turnaround point, and somebody who was over last week visiting Connecticut National Guardsmen who were hit by an IED Easter Sunday morning, you know, waiting for our NATO allies is just—time is the enemy. And I guess if the training piece is so critical to getting to that point that you defined as sort of success, it just seems that we should just do it. We should just move.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, we will come back to you with a more full explanation, but we are—the gaps of what General Caldwell needs now, we are moving to address those now, and the rest will

follow over time. But we agree, this is the priority, and we are working in ways to address it in ways as quickly as possible.

The CHAIRMAN. Before I call on Mr. Kline, let me address the potential Achilles heel that we have to overcome before we can use the word “success” or the word “victory.” And each of these is a serious potential Achilles heel. Pick out, if you would, the one or two of the list I give you that are the most serious.

First, the corruption within the Afghanistan Government. Next, bad governance of the Afghan Government. Next, bad military strategy in fighting. Next, the Afghanistan Security Forces collapsing. Next, Pakistan refusing to help fight the Al Qaeda and the Taliban. Next, the lack of resources to the fighters. Next, the lack of resolve with our military and our allies. Next, logistics routes being shut down. And, last, the regional countries acting to undermine the Afghan Government and support the Taliban.

Which of those concerns you the most? Which could lead to defeat in allowing us to use the word either “success” or “victory”?

Madam Secretary.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, when I look at that long list, I think that actually we have the right military strategy in place; that the development of the ANSF is challenging, but is moving in the right direction; that we are seeing Pakistan step up to the fight; that we are putting the right level of resourcing against the problem and so forth. So I think the ones that really will be the greatest challenges longer term are the involvement of regional—other regional stakeholders and ensuring that they do not interfere in or undermine Afghanistan’s progress towards security and stability. And I think overcoming decades of war to establish strong and good governance at all levels in Afghanistan, not just at the national level, but at the local level where most Afghans actually experience their government.

The CHAIRMAN. General.

General PAXTON. Mr. Chairman, I wrote down the nine of them, and I highlighted the same two that Secretary Flournoy did. They are all critical, they are all important, they all sometimes can appear tenuous. But we have both the capability and capacity ourselves, the United States, certainly with our NATO and allied partners, and then growing in capacity and capability with the Afghan—both GIRA, the Government of Afghanistan, and the Afghan Security Forces. I think we are well on our way to tackling five or six of those.

So my biggest concern would be those that we have the, for lack of a better term, the longest flash to bang, the longest lead time before we see measures of success. So how they demonstrate good governance within the Government of Afghanistan, and then how we get cooperation and support from regional actors and neighboring nations are the two that concern me the most, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

Mr. Kline.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for joining us again so quickly after your last visit.

I must say that I was surprised and pleased to hear from both of you in response to Mr. McKeon’s questions about a cap, a troop

cap, that there is no troop cap. So I take it to mean from that that if General McChrystal, General Petraeus need another 5,000 or 10,000 U.S. forces, that that is fine. That is something you would take up. There is no cap. If they need them, they get them. So I am very pleased to hear that. And that relates to a couple of other questions that I have.

One, if—for the record, General, I think this comes from your shop. We understand that there are three force packages that are deploying to Afghanistan, and they contain combat forces and enablers. And if you could get for us a breakdown in those packages of combat forces and enablers. And, sir, I hate to do this to you, but we are going to mark up the NDAA [National Defense Authorization Act] next week. So if you could get that for us this week, for the record—I assume you have them already—we would like to see that.

And then, in light of the troop requirement, do we already have a plan—either one of you—a plan in place to backfill the Dutch and Canadian forces that are leaving in 2010 and 2011? And if you have a ready answer for that, I will take it now. If not, I will be happy to take it for the record.

Because I want to get to another issue, again related, I believe, to the requirement for forces. It was raised by, I think, the ranking member and perhaps some others, and that is the Joint Urgent Operational Need [JUON] that came from CENTCOM [United States Central Command] originally back in 2009 for sense, warn, and response capability. And I want to focus on that and not force protection in the large.

There was this urgent need that was identified back in July of 2009, and we worked our way up until March of this year when General Petraeus told this committee that they were exploring the use of contractors to meet some of the requirements contained in this JUON.

And so my question is, has that JUON been modified? And, if so, why? And is it true that we are looking at contractors because we either don't have U.S. forces, or a decision has been made not to use them?

And I will tell you why I am really concerned about this is that if we were to use the model that we had in Iraq, we would already have soldiers with a lot of that capability in place in our FOBs. We have got U.S. forces over there in these FOBs. And I have a personal familiarity with that. My son happens to be not only in one of those FOBs, but commanding one of them. We ought to be providing them with the security that they deserve.

So the question is, are we looking at contractors? And, if so, do we have a contract in place? And if not, why not? Because we are possibly not providing the force protection that we ought to be doing.

General PAXTON. Yes, sir. I will start with the JUON, sir, and then I will see if we have time, if it permits, to go back to your other questions on the Dutch and the Canadians.

The JUONs is a process. It is obviously requirements-based, and General Petraeus did submit it, and it is under review right now.

Mr. KLINE. General, this is an urgent need. That is the acronym; it is an urgent need. And I would think that that would—force pro-

tection would indeed qualify as an urgent need. So I am a little bit concerned that this is a process that is dragging out. And, according to our understanding, that is what I am getting at, are we still—I hate to use the word “dithering,” but are we still wringing our hands over whether or not we are going to use contractors or U.S. forces? And are we not getting the contract in place?

General PAXTON. And with that then, sir, I will take it for the record to find out exactly the status of the requirement and in the thought process behind who is best equipped, whether it is military or civilian, to actually work with the sense and the shoot system, sir.

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

Mr. KLINE. Thank you. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Kissell, please.

Mr. KISSELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Madam Secretary and General, for being here today.

Following up a little bit on some of the questions we had before, and I want to go back a little bit in time. Over a year ago General Fields, Commander SIGAR, Special Inspection General for Afghan Reconstruction, was here and talked to us basically about that we are making a lot of the same mistakes in Afghanistan that we made in Iraq in terms of not working with local people and not building what the people needed, projects that were not being properly supervised, so forth and so on. And I invited the general to come to my office for an update, and he reiterated a lot of the same problems. I invited the general back later on, and he said we had made some progress. And the general’s quarterly report came out last week.

I am wondering if you all had looked at that. And where do we stand in terms of where the Special Inspector General says we now are interacting with the Afghan population?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I would say that one of the things we found coming into office was that development efforts in Afghanistan were not fully harnessed to an overall strategy. There was a lot of good effort going in, but a lot of different countries contributing in a lot of different ways based on their own national goals for Afghanistan. But it wasn’t all pulled together in a strategy.

I think one of the real changes that we have seen under General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry and with the civilian surge is an integration to try to ensure that all of our development efforts of the international community are actually fully synchronized with and in support of the governance and security objectives of the counterinsurgency campaign.

And so that is something that has been happening over the last several months. And I think that there are areas where—particularly in the south and the east—where that is coming together in a much more integrated fashion. But given where we started, that is still a work in progress. But we are very much trying to respond to some of the insights and lessons learned that were in the SIGAR report.

Mr. KISSELL. Well, I think that the comment you made earlier that most Afghans interact with local government—and this is

where the report just seemed to show that we weren't paying attention; that we were building roads that could not be maintained, that we had energy projects that they either neither had the diesel fuel for, could not afford it, or could not maintain it. And there were several—I think it was like 19 out of the 36 governors who were saying that we were not asking them their opinion before we did things. So we do need to watch that because that is, in my mind, a great measure how we will have success with the Afghan people as we go. And I will be contacting the inspector general and asking him his opinion.

And I would like to follow up with what Mr. Himes said in terms of if we need to be providing more security for our FOBs, then that should not be something we are discussing, it should be something we are doing.

With that I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Coffman.

Mr. COFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Now, first of all, Secretary Flournoy and General Paxton, thank you so much for your service to our country.

General Paxton, would you agree or argue that the center of gravity for the Taliban is its ability to control the civilian population overtly, or covertly through a shadow government, and exact revenues from them?

General PAXTON. I would agree with that, sir.

Mr. COFFMAN. Then in looking at the operation that we are going to do next in Kandahar, which is the basis of the Taliban in terms of that is where they originated from, if we were able to deny them that, the ability to exercise governance over the Taliban people either through a shadow government or covertly, what does that do in terms of—I mean, from an overall perspective in terms of this war in Afghanistan and bringing it to a close?

General PAXTON. The first step, obviously, it denies them—just so you have a physical freedom of movement. It denies them the emotional, the intellectual, the governance freedom of movement. So if they have a populace that they can't reach, or a populace who does not believe their message, or a populace who is unwilling to follow them, then the fertile ground that they seek to either control physically or to institute some terror, either high-profile attacks, murder and intimidation, unquestioning sharia law, so that they have lost that opportunity there. So what that does is give both us in the short-term and, more importantly, the Government of Afghanistan in the long-term operating room and breathing space so they can build loyalty, fidelity; they can get schools going, health clinics; they can give them the evidence of social services and infrastructure that the people of Afghanistan need.

Mr. COFFMAN. I was in Afghanistan in November and met with General McChrystal at that time, and asked him prior to the President making his announcement as to a timetable that we would, in fact, begin to be able to draw down our forces in 2011 was the objective of the President, and that I asked General McChrystal if he got the troops that he requested, when could we expect to draw down our forces? And he said 2013. Keep in mind that—and I asked him, he was referencing the 40,000 at that point. Now, he got 30,000 and, I understand, 9,000 from our coalition partners.

First of all, could you respond as to what the net is in terms of coalition partners since some are withdrawing? And, number two, to what extent do those coalition partners that will exist going forward have caveats that keep them from participating in certainly kinetic operations?

General PAXTON. At this time, Mr. Coffman, we have 46 troop-contributing nations in Afghanistan, including the United States. It is almost a 50/50 split. I think it is 22, 23, and 1, the number that are caveat-free, that can do anything. And some of them, while certainly restrictive, are not preemptive. That doesn't preclude them from what they can do. So I know the commanders on the ground take a very close look about how they assign battle space and how they assign missions to get the maximum use of each of the troop-contributing nations when they get there.

I would have to take a look at the master plan to see, in the aftermath of Kandahar, as we stay there in the days ahead, where the laydown of forces may be. And I can get that to you, if you need that, sir.

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

Mr. COFFMAN. Thank you, General Paxton. I appreciate that.

Secretary Flournoy, I was listening to your statement in defining the mission as it exists now under this Administration. And I think at one point in time you said it is about keeping Al Qaeda out of Afghanistan. And then you qualified that further in terms of Al Qaeda and their associates.

What is the end-state? Is the end-state potentially—since you did mention the Taliban, is it a coalition government that would incorporate the Taliban or elements of the Taliban?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think that the key, from our interests' perspective, is to deny any safe haven for Al Qaeda and its associates. I think that, in any situation, a COIN strategy, the military dimension takes you so far, and at some point there is a political set of outcomes that are reached. We saw this in Iraq.

I think we are, the Afghanistan—we are working with the Afghan Government to try to get a better understanding of the process that they will ultimately lead on both reintegration and reconciliation. I think it is very important to set a set of criteria for who will get reintegrated back into Afghan society and how, and whether it is disavowing Al Qaeda, laying down their arms, abiding by the Constitution, those are the kinds of criteria that the Afghan Government will need to articulate as they get to the point of defining what an acceptable political end-state looks like. And we will certainly be in deep conversation with them about that.

Mr. COFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Heinrich.

Mr. HEINRICH. Thank you, Chairman.

Secretary Flournoy, I hate to beat a dead horse, but since several of my colleagues have repeatedly referenced a supposed 30,000 troop cap, can you give us a one-word answer: Has the Administration imposed a troop cap in Afghanistan?

Secretary FLOURNOY. No, we have not imposed a troop cap. What President Obama did in December was to approve 30,000 troops, additional troops, for Afghanistan and a degree of flexibility for the

Secretary of Defense to authorize further troops in support of force protection.

Mr. HEINRICH. And has General McChrystal requested additional troops?

Secretary FLOURNOY. There have been a couple of cases, such as the—

General PAXTON. In general, he has not, sir, because we are in the process of flowing all three of those force packages. And the obligation would be that he would take a look at how they met the mission on the ground before he came back. Within that, we have made some adjustments both in terms of combat forces and trainers on the ground. So we have made some modest adjustments in the number.

Mr. HEINRICH. And do you think that General McChrystal would continue to feel free to request those kinds of adjustments if he feels necessary?

General PAXTON. Absolutely.

Mr. HEINRICH. Do you think the Secretary of Defense, the President, or anyone else has ever ordered General McChrystal not to make those kinds of requests?

General PAXTON. No, sir.

Mr. HEINRICH. Thank you.

I want to shift real quickly to one more thing before I yield back the rest of my time. On the training issue, with the stopgap measures that were mentioned in the *New York Times* article, how do you mitigate the loss of lessons learned in the handover between the stopgap folks who are plugging the hole now and the long-term training force to make sure that we continue to ramp up and build that progress in a way so that we don't lose those important lessons?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Part of it is they are all teaching to the same curriculum. Part of it is ensuring overlaps so that there is actually a handoff from one group to the next. But it is really the establishment of NTM-A and CSTC-A and with General Caldwell as sort of the keeper of the knowledge, if you will, for the training efforts. I think there is going to be a lot of continuity on his staff and on the people who are training the trainers, if you will.

Mr. HEINRICH. Thank you. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank both of you for your service, Madam Secretary, and, General, thank you.

And, General, I had the great honor last August to visit with the Marines at Camp Leatherneck, Camp Bastion, and it was really inspiring since I represent Parris Island Marine Corps Station, to see the dedication of our marines. I particularly appreciate what both of you are doing, because I am the co-chair of the Afghan Caucus. I have visited the country nine times. I have great respect for President Karzai, for the Defense Minister Abdul Wardak. I have faith in Ambassador Eikenberry and certainly General McChrystal and General Petraeus. I feel like we have got an extraordinary team of people there.

Firsthand, my former National Guard unit, the 218th Mechanized Infantry Brigade of the South Carolina National Guard,

served for a year in Afghanistan, led by General Bob Livingston. And I visited with the troops from South Carolina every three months, and I found out that there was an extraordinary relationship between the American forces and the people of Afghanistan to the point where they identified each other as brothers, American and Afghan brothers. So I am hopeful. Perfect, no, but very hopeful.

With that, the ever-changing situation, what is the status of cross-border collaboration between Afghanistan and Pakistan? And have there been significant changes in the past year?

General PAXTON. Thank you, Mr. Wilson.

We were here with the committee last week to talk a little bit about Pakistan, sir. And there have been positive engagements and positive changes on both sides of the border within the last year, and this includes a master laydown for some border coordination centers (BCCs), some BCCs and JCCs [Joint Coordination Centers]. And we have been able to work with both the PAKMIL [Pakistan Military] on their side of the border as well as with the Afghan National Security Forces in terms of manning and equipping those stations. Two of them are fully operational/capable at this time, and we are looking at the location and the manning of the others. So all of that demonstrates a degree of trust, a degree of transparency, and a degree of equal procedures, if you will, so that it mitigates and lessens the tension on the border. So that is a good indication and a very positive one within the last year, sir.

Mr. WILSON. And I am really hopeful. In my visits to Islamabad and other parts of Pakistan, to me it is so clear that it is mutually beneficial, the security of both countries.

It has already been expressed, concern, but in regard to training security forces, Secretary Gates last week or recently announced 850 additional trainers as a stopgap measure to fill vacancies. A problem has been our NATO allies fulfilling their obligations. And I was very happy working with Congressman Solomon Ortiz, who is the co-chair of the Romania Caucus, to find out last week from the Ambassador of Romania that they are now increasing their participation from 1,200 troops to 1,800 troops. So there are some positive stories that really should be told. And I know on a visit to Bulgaria, the people of Bulgaria are very proud of their participation and recognition.

But what is being done to increase participation from our NATO allies?

Secretary FLOURNOY. The Secretary has raised this at his ministerial, Secretary Clinton at hers. We have had numerous visits, calls, et cetera. And the truth is the majority of our NATO allies are stepping up. Since the strategy review was concluded in December, they are offering above and beyond what they had already offered. They are offering more trainers.

The challenge is that the gap is still there, and so we are all asking one another to step up even further. So we will continue that process. But I think credit you are right to give. A number of countries have stepped up substantially with institutional trainers, with OMLTs and with POMLTs since we have asked.

Mr. WILSON. And it was encouraging. Last week I had the opportunity to meet with the Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, and they are

so proud of the American bases that are now in their country. And they did point out, General, that they would be very happy at such training bases such as Novo Selo to provide for advanced training for personnel prior to being deployed. And they have got the capability, they have got the bases, and they have got citizen support within the community.

But again, thank you again both of you for your service and what you are doing by defeating the terrorists overseas. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

The gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Taylor.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Ms. Flournoy and General, for being with us.

For what it is worth, I have also met Mr. Karzai. And for what it is worth, my reaction was just the opposite. And if I had been present when he threatened to go over to the Taliban, my response would have been, "Don't let the screen door hit you in the rear end," for what it is worth.

Having said that, Ms. Flournoy, I am reading a book by a Russian infantry officer called *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*. It is mostly about tactics, but what is disturbing about it, it seems to be the same ambushes in the same places going over about a 10- or 12-year period. And they talk about training up an Afghan Army, they talk about training up an Afghan National Police. And we know that four years after they left, the puppet government they set up was gone.

Now, I appreciate the general. I mean, he got to be a general by being a can-do guy: I am going to make the best of my situation. I am going to make it work. And I appreciate you going to work in the Department of Defense. But what realistically makes you think the outcome is going to be any different this time?

Secretary FLOURNOY. What makes me think the outcome will be different is the fundamental objective of the mission and focus of the mission is different. Institutions built under hostile occupation don't tend to have longevity and credibility with the population. Institutions that are built with the support of the population—

Mr. TAYLOR. Ma'am.

Secretary FLOURNOY [continuing]. Have a lot more chance of succeeding over time, and that is what we are trying to do with this ANSF.

Mr. TAYLOR. And I appreciate you saying that. I have not lived in Afghanistan. Rory Stewart did, and he told me after living there for years and walking across Afghanistan that the Afghans mockingly refer to Karzai as the "America Bull" because once you get outside the city, he has absolutely no influence. So how would you respond to that? And that is coming from someone who has lived in Afghanistan.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Again, I think that, at most, Afghans experience governance at the local level, and building up the credibility and capacity of the local institutions, the district level and so forth, is where—is going to influence the judgment of the Afghan people. And I think that the progress we have seen at that level and, frankly, in an increasingly competent national government in terms of the cabinet that President Karzai has put together, that is changing attitudes. I mean, this poll that says 59 percent believe

that the government is actually heading in the right direction. I don't think you have ever had a poll in Afghanistan say that before. And that is in response to changes that they are experiencing on the ground.

Are we there yet? Absolutely not. Are we at least starting to go in the right direction? Yes.

Mr. TAYLOR. And how would you respond to an equal perception by a majority of the Afghans who think that Karzai's brother is the biggest narcotics dealer in Afghanistan?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I don't want to focus on individuals.

Mr. TAYLOR. That is the President's brother. That is why I think we should focus on an individual.

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think it is very important to look at the governance at all levels and the progress that is being made across all—

Mr. TAYLOR. Well, that is the President's family, ma'am. If the President of a country can't tell his brother to get out of the narcotics trade, if someone the United States military is renting property from, if we can't turn around and as a condition of our lease on that property say, and, by the way, you are going to get out of the narcotics trade, where does it begin?

Secretary FLOURNOY. You know, sir, I don't feel like I am—it is appropriate for me or, quite frankly, I am not the person qualified to evaluate specific individuals or cases. But what I can say—

Mr. TAYLOR. Ma'am, if you are not, who is?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Well, let me tell you what I have seen. When I just came back from the Arghandab, I have seen a place that had no Afghan governance whatsoever for years. And in the last six months, after some very difficult fighting on the part of international and Afghan forces, we have enabled a district governor who is clean to be put in place, who is working with local tribal leaders, who is working with the international community to funnel aid to projects that are getting—for benefiting the population, getting their buy-in, and for the first time creating a district governor center that is the go-to place for the Afghan population. That is the model we are trying to replicate. The fact that it is possible in the Arghandab, which has been called the "heart of darkness" by many authors writing about Afghanistan—the fact that it is possible there means that it is possible elsewhere in that country. And that is what we are trying to achieve.

Mr. TAYLOR. Madam, how long do you think President Karzai would live without the American military protecting him?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I am not in a position to speculate on that.

Mr. TAYLOR. Well, don't you think that puts us in a position to at least dictate some terms of our engagement, like narcotics, like honesty in government?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I am sorry.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. CONAWAY.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And in the interest of maintaining this enjoyment and fun that you are having, I will go ahead and ask a question.

Walking across the street the day that the health care vote was going on, somebody stopped me and said, aren't you offended that the President, during this momentous occasion, is watching the basketball game? And I said, no, I am not offended by whatever the President is doing this afternoon. What I am offended, though, more is the fact that we have had a fight going on in Afghanistan for six months that the Marines have been in hammer and tong, and not one word about the wonderful success that those men and women have been doing coming out of the White House. Now, a lot of talk from Gates and others, but nothing out of the White House.

That offends me, because I couldn't care less what he spends his Sunday afternoon doing, but it does offend me that the White House has failed to recognize the hard work that you have just referenced, Ms. Flournoy. So hopefully, on the go-forward basis we will get a little more attention to the successes that are coming out of there.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I just want to say for the record I don't believe that is accurate. It may not have gotten adequate press coverage, but the President has certainly not been silent.

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, I look forward to him making sure he gets out what he wants to get out, Ms. Flournoy. We can have that tussle, if you would like. That wasn't my intent.

And I am blanking on the general's name. Back in January, we got a report from a general that said that the focus on intelligence in Afghanistan was overbalanced toward finding bad guys and dealing with bad guys, and that it needed to be more of a balanced approach so that our company and squad and commanders on the ground knew who the players were and who the good guys were, who the bad guys were, what the crops were, all the kinds of stuff that you would normally need in order for us to do the full-spectrum job that the fight in Afghanistan involves. Killing bad guys is front of the list, absolutely.

General Paxton, your assessment as to rebalancing. Was that the case? Or we added new resources to the system so that those company commanders do know what is going on them around them with respect to the economy, with respect to everything else that it is nonkinetic in reflection of that report from January?

General PAXTON. Yes, sir. A COIN fight, when you are doing the shape, clear, hold build, it has to be enemy-focused. It is population-focused in terms of the strategy, but the tactics have to be focused on who you think the bad guys are, where you think the bad guys are, what you know about them. So it is a constant drive for more intelligence. And we have tried to strike that balance between intelligence assets, whether it is ISR that is overhead or whether it is elevated line of sight, between what is available at the strategic level, what is available at the operational level, and what is available at the tactical level. And I have a good feeling that the flow of forces and the flow of capability is adequately meeting the needs or is projected to meet what we think will be current gaps in the needs.

One of the additional responsibilities I have for the Secretary is to sit on the Senior Integration Group, what used to be called the Counter-IED Task Force. So Dr. Carter and I are taking a look about the equipping side and to make sure that we have adequate

technologies, capabilities, requisite training so that we can identify IED materials, as well as safe havens or border-crossing sites where they may come from. So we are paying attention to that, sir.

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, I guess the focus wasn't so much as on the—and, again, the kinetic side is what they are there for. But by the same token, if you are trying to understand what will make sure that the local folks see us as more of a solution as opposed to just the policemen, making sure that those ground-level commanders have as much information as they need. And I blanked on the general's name, and I apologize for that, but it did seem to be a little broader than just who the IED guys were and focused on the bad guys as opposed to information that the commanders need to know, that digging a well over there would be really important versus paving a road, or that these are the folks within the community who are the opinion leaders and working with them makes sense versus others. I mean, that kind of intelligence that is broader than just there are three bad guys over there, they have been there for an hour and a half, they have done all the stuff, go shoot them. But the issue, if it is in counterinsurgency, you have got—I think it is broader than just killing bad guys.

General PAXTON. Yes, sir. But I think the development of our human intelligence and the way we train our small-unit leaders, we are spending adequate time on that at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, at Mojave Viper in Twentynine Palms, at home station training at Fort Campbell and Camp Lejeune.

Mr. CONAWAY. But downrange, they have got the tools they need then to exploit that training?

General PAXTON. Yes, sir. I am convinced that they do, sir.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Kratovil, please.

Mr. KRATOVIL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As typical, I have just received note I have got votes in just a minute.

But, Madam Secretary, General, thank you for being here and for your service.

I want to go—a lot of the questions you have been receiving have been very specific. I want to go to a couple broader questions. Would you agree that our primary goal in Afghanistan is defeating Al Qaeda? Start with that.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Defeating Al Qaeda and its associates. Yes.

Mr. KRATOVIL. And how does the strategy that we are doing in Afghanistan that we are doing right now facilitate our goal of not just defeating Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but worldwide?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Afghanistan and Pakistan, that border region, has been the sort of locus of—sort of heartland, if you will, of Al Qaeda for many years. And so I think denying them sanctuary and safe haven there, disrupting them there has a powerful impact on the global network. We are also trying to make sure that the Afghans and the Pakistanis have their own capability to do that denial in the future.

Mr. KRATOVIL. Would they not simply—assuming that happens, and we create stability there, would they not simply seek another safe haven, Yemen, other places? What prevents that?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think some of them may. But I think the truth is the combination of ethnic, tribal, other ties to this particular region makes it their preferred home, if you will. And other places will not be as hospitable to as many or to as robust a network.

Mr. KRATOVIL. If they did seek safe haven elsewhere, would you believe that the strategy that we are taking in Afghanistan would be an appropriate one in that location as well? In other words, is that a sustainable approach?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I don't think that—I think that each environment has to be dealt with in its own terms. And to the extent we are dealing with the network in other places, we will tailor that effort to the local conditions that are allowing a group to gain a foothold.

Mr. KRATOVIL. There have been a number of questions on the allies. Obviously, the President's request for troops assumed a certain level of commitment from our allies. Where are we in terms of achieving that number? And what impact does our failure to achieve that number or limitations placed on the allies in terms of what they can do affect our ability to succeed?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think our allies have stepped up tremendously, and I think that with allied support we are very—we are meeting General McChrystal's requirements. I think that going into the future we will need to work with them to sustain the mix of capabilities that we need as the operation continues to unfold.

Mr. KRATOVIL. Did the request for the 30,000 troops assume that the 10,000 additional troops from allies, that the use of those troops would be limited?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Limiting in what sense?

Mr. KRATOVIL. In terms of where they go, in terms of what they do, in terms of whether they are in safe areas of the country or not.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Again, I think that ISAF has made use of allied forces extremely well. I think our focus and concentration has been on the south and the east. Many of our allies have focused on the west and the north, with a couple of them also coming south with us and east.

But I think that General McChrystal has been able to take into account the various strengths and caveats of some forces to be able to handle that. I don't know if you—

General PAXTON. Sir, any time you do your assessment, you try and minimize the assumptions because you realize that an assumption that you don't have ground tooth on, if it unravels, then your plan could go. So when General McChrystal submitted the assessment last August, and when the assessment was reviewed and analyzed here in the Washington area for several months there, it was based on the facts on the ground, which was the troop-contributing nations, who they were, where they were, what their capabilities were, what their caveats were, and then what a reasonable expectation was, whether they are going to bring in a replacement force, or whether at that time—whether they looked to scale up or scale down. So that is why the assessment itself is open-ended, because those dynamics could always change with the contributing nations.

Mr. KRATOVIL. Where are we in terms of numbers of allied troops in relation to the 10,000 that we assumed?

General PAXTON. I believe, as I said earlier, we have 9,000 that have been pledged since December and a little over—I know pledged a little over 4,000 actually on the ground right now, sir.

Mr. KRATOVIL. Does that take into consideration the troops that are likely to withdraw, the allied troops that are likely to withdraw?

General PAXTON. And I will have to take that for the record because we know which ones we anticipate will withdraw. They will come back and tell us whether they are to going to replace—

Mr. KRATOVIL. Let me rephrase my question. There are 10,000 troops that were assumed. Of that we have 4,000 on the ground; is that right?

General PAXTON. That is correct, sir.

Mr. KRATOVIL. And we don't know whether or not that assumes the troops that are about to withdraw.

General PAXTON. No. It did as of December when we made the plan, that is correct, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman Mrs. Davis, please.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you to both of you for being here once again.

And I wanted to just go back to a concept that I think we have all been working hard on, and I really want to commend the Administration on what we see as a much greater interagency collaboration in this effort. We suffered through a number of years when we really felt that we weren't able to bring that together, and that is happening, and I appreciate that greatly. However, I think that there has also been a number of reports that would suggest that we are not doing nearly as good a job as we could on capitalizing on popular grievances against the Taliban, and for that to occur, we need to have enough resources really devoted to the political and economic conditions, and I know that you all have certainly recognized that. We look at the report of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan [SIGAR], and that would suggest that we are falling short in that area.

And so I am wondering, and in light of last week's discussion as well, until the military and nonmilitary resources that are being utilized here—you said probably a good balance in Pakistan, 50 percent perhaps—what guarantees can we have that we actually, I would think, need to go beyond that in terms of nonmilitary in Afghanistan now in order to be able to capitalize on those popular grievances? Where are we as you look at that issue and the way that you described it last week?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I do think that their civilian surge has certainly brought more interagency capacity to Afghanistan, and I think the embassy had requested additional growth going into next year to fill out and push down that capacity from the provincial level to the district levels, particularly in the critical districts where we think that will have the greatest impact. So I think that those requirements continue to be refined, and they are going up. And we are going to resource—I believe our State Department colleagues and others will be seeking support from Congress to resource those additional requirements.

Mrs. DAVIS. Can you be more specific in terms of where you think those resources should actually go?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think a lot of them will be going to district support teams to—again, to empower governance at that district level, which is the sort of critical interface with a lot of the local tribal structures in villages, to harness development assistance in support of that, particularly funding for things like OTI [Office of Transition Initiatives] coming out of AID [United States Agency for International Development], Agriculture [United States Department of Agriculture]. Rule of law is an area where there has been a vacuum, and the Taliban has stepped in. Rule-of-law programs at the local level are very important to competing with them and displacing them.

Mrs. DAVIS. In those efforts is it fair to acknowledge that those efforts are not necessarily the kind of bottom-up efforts that people are asking for that would suggest that we had a pretty good understanding of the people of Afghanistan today?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think what we are doing in each district, each critical district, is really starting with a needs assessment. What do the people need and want? What do they view as important? What do they prioritize? What do they expect? And what will be most meaningful to them? And that is the foundation for a lot of the realignment of our assistance.

Mrs. DAVIS. Some of the articles that are coming out now that are suggesting that after eight years we are really not even beginning to do that yet, would you challenge that and feel that, in fact, we are, and are there some examples that you could give?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I would, and particularly in the critical districts that we have identified as key population centers, key to production, key to lines of communication and so forth, in those areas we really are pursuing a much more needs-based, integrated approach. It may be something that hasn't happened in the past, but that is definitely where we have been heading in the last year.

General PAXTON. And I would just echo what the Secretary said, that a lot of the, whether it is the DSTs [District Support Team], the OMLTs, the PRTs, although they may be a shell in a nucleus, they are tailored, and they are tailored to a needs-based or requirements-driven solution.

Mrs. DAVIS. I have just a few seconds.

General, when the chairman mentioned the Achilles heels, and you cited two examples that would be—really that are the most difficult, demonstration of good government and the cooperation regionally, could you take a stab at a timeline for when some of those things you think might—there might be real evidence that that was occurring?

General PAXTON. In terms of projecting a timeline, I couldn't, ma'am, but I will say we have had positive indications in the last year, for example, in Pakistan that there is an increased degree of cooperation both with the U.S. and with the nations in the area. So I think it is constantly evolving, and we have had some good-news stories.

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Before I call on Mr. McKeon, speaking about a good-news story, the—and, Madam Secretary, you mentioned agriculture a few moments ago. Part of the good-news story is the National Guard troops that are assisting in teaching better agri-

culture processes to the Afghan farmers. Of course, there is a little parochialism in my comment because a good number of them have been Missouri National Guard troops who are farmers, and that is what they do. I think it has been highly successful.

My question is what are we doing right in Afghanistan that we did not do right in Iraq?

Madam Secretary?

Secretary FLOURNOY. That is a really hard question because a lot of what we are doing right in Afghanistan, I think, was informed by both mistakes and what we eventually did right in Iraq, as different as the two countries are.

I think in Afghanistan, given the nature of the society, we are doing a lot more bottom up, a lot more building at the local district and moving up to provincial level and appreciating the importance of incorporating traditional societal structures, the tribes, ethnic groups and so forth, and seeking inclusivity, seeking balance that will ultimately determine the sustainability of the gains that we make. So I think that bottom-up focus, the appreciation for the demographics, the cultural landscape is a really key emphasis in Afghanistan going forward.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

General.

General PAXTON. Mr. Chairman, I think the other thing that we are doing correctly is that we have captured the lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan, and we are doing better at what we call “left seat, right seat” in terms of turnover on stations, so that you get a chance to have key leader engagements with those individuals that will be significant to coming up with immediate and practical solutions in the area. And I think we have modified our training continuum at our bases and stations here to reflect the situation on the ground as well as the recent success stories.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the witnesses.

Mr. McKeon.

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Early on in my statement and then in my questions, I asked about the 30,000 cap, and you have both assured me that there is no cap. The reason I talked about it and asked questions about it is that is the way it has been reported in the press, that—and the way Secretary Gates has talked about it, that the President did approve 30,000, and that the Secretary had flexibility of about 10 percent that he could work with on that.

I would like to go back over a little history, as I remember it, in the last couple of years. The President became President in January of 2009, and he approved in I believe it was March an additional 20,000 troops, and came out with his strategy and replaced the commanding general, put in General McChrystal and gave him time to come up with an implementation of that strategy. He presented that in August. It went up through the chain of command. We first saw about it—saw it in *The Washington Post*, and we have been given that. We never did see the numbers that were attached to it that he came out with later. There has been lots of talk about it, that he had requested from 40,000 up to—I saw reports up to 100,000.

The President, after the 90 days, approved the 30,000 surge that would be sent to Afghanistan as soon as they could be sent, and then they would return—they would begin the drawdown in July of 2011, I believe, and be pulled out by December of 2011. Was that—there was no—in December of 2010, there would be a review, and that drawdown of those 30,000 troops would begin in July of 2011.

Am I correct in those statements?

Secretary FLOURNOY. What I would say a little bit differently is July 2011 is the end of the 30,000 surge, if you will, an inflection point where we will begin a conditions-based process of looking to transition provinces that are ready to Afghan lead, with the associated implications in terms of the potential changes of mission, potential changes in force allocation and some drawdown associated with that.

I think the responsible drawdown model that you have seen in Iraq is going to very much inform the approach that you are likely to see in Afghanistan. The President has not put a timetable on that except to say that by July 2011, we will begin the process, and that date was informed by our judgment of conditions across the numerous provinces that some would be ready by then.

Mr. MCKEON. Let me also comment on as one of the things I remember about that is when I met with General McChrystal, he said that he felt 30,000 would be sufficient, even though, this is my words now, he had requested more based on all the reports we had seen. He said 30,000 would be sufficient, but that the mission had been changed, I think, was downsized.

Now, this 1230 report suggests that there are a total of 121 districts of interest, but the Joint Command, ISAF Joint Command, feels that their only resource is to conduct operations in 48 of those districts.

Can you discuss this, and what resources are we short?

Secretary FLOURNOY. First of all, sir, we did—I think General McChrystal had the view that you can't focus everywhere all the time. You have to have priorities. You have to focus in key areas with your campaign.

Mr. MCKEON. When he did his assessment in August, I think he was basing that on the strategy that the President had given him in March.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Right.

Mr. MCKEON. And then that is when—I think when he was given the number 30,000, he had to downsize that.

Secretary FLOURNOY. I don't think that is quite right. I think there has always been an intention to determine where to focus in the country that will have the greatest impact on the country as a whole, and I think—

Mr. MCKEON. If he had received 40- or 50,000 troops, he could have probably focused on more of the country.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Do you want to jump in on this?

General PAXTON. Sir, if I may, when the strategy was developed and the assessment was under way, there were main efforts, supporting efforts, and economy-of-force efforts, as there are in any campaign. And your ability to prosecute more than one main effort or to do a shift from a main effort to a supporting effort and do

it faster is all driven by the boots on the ground and the amount of forces that you have.

So we have not deviated from General McChrystal's assessment in terms of where he saw the main effort, and then, as he moved from what was the supporting effort and brought it into the main effort, how he thought the campaign would unfold. So it was focused on the freedom of movement of the Taliban in the south to start with.

Mr. MCKEON. Do we have agreement on one thing? If he had been given 60,000 additional troops, he could have done more faster?

General PAXTON. It is a reasonable assessment. Any time you get more—it is not a given, it is not a linear equation, but when you get more, you can do more.

Secretary FLOURNOY. The one thing I will say that certainly influenced the President's decision on this was the force flow. When he was presented with some of numbers at the higher end of the range that General McChrystal put on the table, the force flow meant that all of those forces would not be in place at one time. And one of the things the President said is, what approach will get me the greatest number of forces fastest? And that was very much informed—informed the ultimate decision.

The other thing I would say about the 48 districts, just to be clear, is that is based on the forces available, U.S. forces, our coalition forces, and Afghan forces, who are able to partner. The idea is to focus on 48 this year and then grow that number next year and so forth. So that again it is trying to ensure that you have enough both military, Afghan, and civilian resources to really fully deliver in those districts over time.

Mr. MCKEON. It is the first time I have heard the comment that you made that all of those 30,000 troops would be there by July of 2011. I had always assumed—

Secretary FLOURNOY. Oh, the 30,000 will be by the end of August, this August. I am sorry, the flow of forces you are talking about.

Mr. MCKEON. By 2010?

Secretary FLOURNOY. All of the 30,000 that the President ordered in December, except for one headquarters that McChrystal doesn't need until the fall, will be there by the end of August.

Mr. MCKEON. This year.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Yes. This year. That influenced the President's decision.

General PAXTON. Originally it had been a slower arrival, sir, and that was accelerated given the sequence of Ramadan and the Afghan elections, and it was to get maximum value there. And as the Secretary said, there were two significant caveats when we looked at the assessment. One was the absorption rate and what you could actually put on the ground in terms of infrastructure, basing. And the second one, as is always the case, is the enablers. You can get the troops there to do the mission, but they may not have the ground mobility or the engineering support.

Mr. MCKEON. I appreciate that. I misunderstood what you said earlier that they would all be in place by July. I was thinking you were talking about July 2011.

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think now a year-long tour takes you to July.

Mr. MCKEON. That is the way I always understood it. I appreciate that. I just misunderstood.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

If there are no further questions, let me ask, what do you need from Congress that you are not receiving now?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Well, as I said in my opening statement, sir, we appreciate the support of Congress in general, but in this committee in particular I think the things that we have before you now, which are both our fiscal year 2011 request and our supplemental request, your support for those two things would give us the resources we need to fully implement General McChrystal's plan and resource the mission as envisioned.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you have anything to add, General?

General PAXTON. Sir, I thank the committee and Congress for their support of the soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines, the training before they go, the equipping and enabling while they are there, and for those who bear the brunt of the battle and are injured and wounded when they come back. And as we mentioned last week in the Pakistan hearing, sir, I thank you also for the latitude with multiyear money, which gives us more flexibility. So thank you for that, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. We appreciate your appearance and your testimony.

If there is no further discussion, we are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:20 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MAY 5, 2010

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

MAY 5, 2010

Statement of Chairman Ike Skelton
Developments in Security and Stability in Afghanistan

May 5, 2010

Today, the committee meets to receive testimony on developments in security and stability in Afghanistan. Our witnesses, both old friends of the committee, are: the Honorable Michèle Flournoy, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and Lieutenant General John Paxton, the Director for Operations on the Joint Staff. Welcome, both of you.

Six months ago, President Obama announced the results of a comprehensive review of our policy in Afghanistan, which for many years had essentially been non-existent. During this announcement, he endorsed a new counterinsurgency strategy centered on increasing U.S. forces by 30,000 troops, adding U.S. civilian experts, and focusing on protecting the population of Afghanistan from the Taliban and their terrorist allies.

I endorsed this strategy then, and I do so now. As I have said many times, while this new strategy cannot guarantee success in Afghanistan, it is the most likely to end with an Afghanistan that can prevent the return of the Taliban and their Al Qaeda allies.

Six months into the new policy, it is appropriate for Congress to consider how things are going. About 21,000 of the 30,000 troops have arrived in country, and many have been involved in the recent successful military operation in Marja. Others will soon begin restoring security in Kandahar, an operation that is likely to be crucial to our overall success in Afghanistan.

We have seen other clear signs of success in our fight against terrorists. The President's new strategy helped lead to the capture of the Taliban's second-in-command, a former Taliban finance minister, and two "shadow governors" of Afghan provinces, the most significant captures of Afghan Taliban leaders since the start of the war in Afghanistan.

While I am pleased with the recent successes in Afghanistan, and I anticipate others, many concerns remain. Although we successfully cleared Marja, the Taliban still appears to be able to infiltrate the town and threaten and kill those who cooperate with U.S. and Afghan security forces. This may not be unanticipated. It takes time to build the confidence of a local population. But I worry that some of this may point to the weakness of the local government, which cannot easily deliver the services and governance needed to help convince the residents of Marja to join the right side.

While we have increased forces in Afghanistan, our allies have also begun to send additional troops. To date, they have added about 50 percent of the 9000 new troops they pledged after President Obama's December speech. But serious concerns remain about

our ability to train the Afghan security forces who will have to assume the burden of providing security and combating terrorism in Afghanistan without more international trainers. I am pleased that Secretary Gates has decided to send additional U.S. military personnel to fill this gap, but this is a short-term solution and not a long-term fix.

This concern relates to another. In a recent meeting, NATO endorsed a process to transition the lead for security in some districts from U.S. and allied troops to Afghan National Security Forces. I think all of us would like to know more about this process and its implications—what progress do we have to see in a district before it can transition to Afghan lead, and what does this mean for the international troops in that district? Are we talking about progress among the Afghan security forces or must the district also need a competent and honest government?

Finally, a quick word of congratulations and one of caution. The Department of Defense recently delivered a very good, and for once on-time, “Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan.” Thank you for that. Unfortunately, a similar, somewhat higher level metrics report filed by the National Security Council was very disappointing. It is my hope that future reports will more closely resemble the 1230 report and provide real information. Congress cannot judge progress from glorified press releases.

Again, thank you for coming before us today. I suspect this will not be the last hearing on Afghanistan this committee holds this year, and I appreciate you working with us to ensure that Congress can conduct its Constitutional and appropriate oversight activities.

**Statement of Ranking Member Howard P. “Buck” McKeon
Developments in Security and Stability in Afghanistan**

May 5, 2010

We are a nation at war. The attempted terrorist attack in New York City’s Times Square serves as the most recent reminder that we face dangerous enemies who threaten the safety and security of our country. The extraordinary men and women of our military, and their families, need no reminding of this threat. They know all too well the sacrifices and dedication it takes to keep this fight off our shores. Our troops understand why they are in Afghanistan: Al Qaeda, operating from safe havens provided by the repressive Taliban, planned and launched attacks on our homeland.

A lot has happened since the President stood before the American people and made the case for his Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy. Over half of the 30,000 forces authorized by the President have arrived in country. Our marines and soldiers are working side-by-side with their Afghan and coalition partners—facing snipers, improvised explosive devices, and a skeptical Afghan population—to defeat the Taliban insurgency. They are operating with some constraints—both political and operational. This is where I would like to focus the remainder of my comments and questions.

In my view, this body—no matter on which side of the aisle you reside—and this committee in particular—has the moral responsibility to ensure that this war is not fought with a minimalist mindset, or with an eye toward the Washington political clock. I continue to support the President’s decision to surge in Afghanistan. As we are seeing in Helmand, the additional forces are having an impact and demonstrating that we can win this conflict.

In 2007, Admiral Mike Mullen told this committee that “In Afghanistan, we do what we can, in Iraq, we do what we must.” When it comes to resourcing our efforts in Afghanistan, I remain concerned that we are not doing everything we must in order to ensure that General McChrystal and his commanders on the battlefield have the time, space and resources they need to succeed.

Let me be clear, I have the utmost confidence that General McChrystal and his troops will get the mission done. My concern is that the minimalist approach being advocated from some in Washington raises the risk and increases casualties.

The “30,000 troop cap” put in place by this Administration was a decision based on political considerations—not mission calculus. The unfortunate result is that it is sending the wrong signal to our commanders and forcing military planners to make difficult trade-off decisions between combat troops and key enablers. I am particularly concerned that we are underresourcing force protection capabilities. These lifesaving combat enablers—and others—were already underresourced prior to the President’s troop surge.

It is my understanding that there continues to be a serious indirect fire threat to U.S. and coalition Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) in Afghanistan, yet the current force protection systems that protect FOBs in Iraq are not deployed to protect FOBs in Afghanistan. This is disconcerting, especially given the fact that we have evidence that such capabilities have saved hundreds of lives

in Iraq. In March, I raised similar concerns to General Petraeus during the CENTCOM posture hearing.

As I understand it, the timeline looks something like this:

- In July 2009—CENTCOM validated Joint Urgent Operational Need (JUON) for Sense, Warn, and Response capability for Operation Enduring Freedom;
- In August 2009—the Office of the Secretary of Defense directed the Army to act on the JUON;
- In October 2009—Congress approved reprogramming action in direct support of the JUON; and
- In March 2010—General Petraeus told this committee that they were exploring the use of contractors to meet some of the requirements included in the JUON.

Today, I'd like our witnesses to explain what modifications have been made to the original JUON and why these changes were made. Why are we addressing this particular force protection shortfall differently in Afghanistan than in Iraq? Specifically, why are we deploying contractors instead of military personnel? It has been almost a year since the JUON was validated? Is there even a contract in place yet to field this capability? It is my understanding that if we would have used military personnel like we did in Iraq, this capability would already be over in Afghanistan protecting lives.

While I have focused on the impact of the “troop cap” on the fielding of certain key enablers, this “cap” becomes more problematic when you consider that some of our NATO allies are not meeting their commitments and others will be withdrawing their forces from southern Afghanistan. I would like our witnesses to address the statement made in the 1230 report that the redeployment of Dutch and Canadian forces in 2010 and 2011 will create demands for additional forces in the near future. How will we mitigate this 4,700 gap in southern Afghanistan if there is a “cap”? Yesterday, it was announced that the U.S. will be deploying 850 more soldiers as a stopgap measure to fill vacancies for training security forces. What other gaps exist?

Further, as Admiral Mullen's comments suggest, there was a time when many thought of the two wars as a struggle for resources, resulting in the “haves” and “have nots”—Iraq was the “haves” and Afghanistan was the “have nots.” My suspicion is that the mentality of the “have nots” may be impacting how commanders are employing the resources that they do have in Afghanistan. For example, in Iraq, there was a capability called Task Force ODIN (Observe, Detect, Identify, Neutralize). This task force was responsible for killing or capturing over 3,000 insurgents as they were trying to put in IEDs. Basically, turning the job of emplacing of IEDs into a suicide mission.

In Afghanistan, they are standing up a similar Task Force ODIN capability. However, it is my understanding that this capability is being used differently than it was in Iraq. Instead of being used specifically to go after IED emplacers, it is being incorporated into the “big picture” ISR requirement. I would like to hear from our witnesses why we are not adopting the lessons we learned and employing Task Force ODIN in Afghanistan in the same way that we used it in Iraq. As we know, IED attacks are a significant threat

to our forces in Afghanistan, causing the most civilian and military casualties in Afghanistan. Is the approach in Afghanistan a result of the tactical decisions being made by the commanders or is it the result of the issue of the “have nots” mentality and signaling from Washington to operate under the ceilings you’ve been given.

Lastly, I have raised concerns that the emphasis in our strategy appears to be on ending the conflict—rather than winning. With all of the President’s major domestic policy announcements, speeches and events, he has a pretty straightforward formula he uses to win over public support. When it comes to Afghanistan, I wish he would do the same and would use words like “victory” and “winning” more rather than “transition” and “redeployment.” With that said, it is not clear to me that this Administration has defined the conditions or criteria for transition. I hope to get a better understanding today on what “transition” exactly means. How do you explain the transition to the Afghans, to the enemy, and to our forces on the ground? What conditions have to exist and what criteria will be used to conclude that a district is ready for it to transition to the Afghans for security responsibility?

“Developments in Security and Stability in Afghanistan”

Prepared Statement of

**The Honorable Michele P. Flournoy
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
and
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Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee

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Chairman Skelton, Ranking Member McKeon, and members of the committee; we're pleased to have this opportunity to give you an update on our ongoing efforts in Afghanistan. You all understand the importance of this mission, the magnitude of the challenges we face there, and the depth of our commitment to meeting those challenges.

When President Obama took office, we confronted a bleak situation. Early gains had eroded, the Taliban was reascendant in many parts of the country, and Afghan confidence in the Coalition was in decline. President Obama ordered an immediate strategy review, and in the course of that preliminary review we made a number of key changes. The U.S. Government (USG) added 38,000 troops last spring, and NATO appointed General McChrystal as commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). General McChrystal has emphasized the importance of a counter-insurgency strategy that prioritizes protecting the Afghan people over killing the enemy.

In his December speech at West Point, the President announced a number of key refinements to our Afghanistan strategy, including the deployment of additional U.S. Forces. As of April 23, over 15,000 of the additional 30,000 U.S. troops have deployed to the country. The remainder will be in place where they are needed by the end of summer 2010, supplemented by over 9000 additional NATO and non-NATO troops, over 2000 more than had been pledged in January, 2010. Over 60% of these international troops are in place.

Partnering and improvements in Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF) training are accelerating ANSF growth and improving the quality of the force, with an emphasis on creating a force that is both effective and sustainable.

Meanwhile, the civilian surge is moving forward. There are three times the USG civilians in Kabul than a year ago, and over four times more outside Kabul.

As we stated in our April, 2010 report on "Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan," submitted in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181), the evidence suggests that our shift in approach has begun to bear fruit, even as significant challenges remain. Surging civilian assistance to develop both national and sub-national governance capacity is showing results, as is using economic development to bolster government legitimacy. The insurgency is losing momentum. Closer coordination with the Afghan Government, coalition allies and those in the region, particularly Pakistan, is paying off as we see more and more of a common effort.

Due to our change in approach, the percentage of Afghan civilian casualties caused by Coalition actions has dropped substantially. This improvement has produced significant shifts in Afghan attitudes towards ISAF and Afghan forces. Compared to a year ago, Afghans today report that they are far more optimistic about the future and have far more confidence in our ability to prevail over the Taliban and other violent extremist forces.

We've seen other positive indicators in the last year, as well. Of the 121 key terrain districts identified by ISAF in December 2009, 60 were assessed as sympathetic or neutral to the Afghan Government. By March, 2010, that number had climbed to 73 districts. Although Afghanistan's August elections were marred by allegations of electoral fraud, these allegations were addressed through constitutional means. Ultimately, a new government was formed. Despite the serious issues that remain to be addressed, a national survey completed in March 2010 indicates that 59% of Afghans believe their government is headed in the right direction, an increase of 0.5% over December 2009 and 8% over September 2009.

At the January 28 London Conference, following up on pledges he made in his November inaugural speech, President Karzai reaffirmed his government's commitment to peace, reconciliation and reintegration, developing security force capability, good governance, fighting corruption, economic development and regional cooperation. These commitments have received strong international support as the international community partners with the Afghan Government in a long-term strategy to stabilize Afghanistan.

The London conference also produced a renewed international commitment to strengthen civilian-military coordination in Afghanistan. This commitment was reflected in part by the announcement of a new NATO Senior Civilian

Representative who is now serving as GEN McChrystal's civilian counterpart, as well as the appointment of Staffan de Mistura, an experienced United Nations (UN) diplomat, as the new Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). An international conference will be conducted in Kabul in July to follow-up on the promises and commitments made in London.

The Afghan government has the lead for reconciliation and reintegration efforts. President Karzai has issued interim guidance for the execution of reintegration programs, with final guidance expected after completion of the Consultative Peace Jirga later this month. Karzai's guidance assigns responsibility to the Provincial governors to implement programs that will allow reintegration into civil society of those mid- to low-level insurgents who are ready to lay down their arms. We expect to release funding from the Afghan Reintegration Program Authority, authorized under the FY10 National Defense Authorization Act. The ARPA will fund DoD reintegration activities in support of the Afghan program.

President Karzai and members of his cabinet will visit Washington next week for a Strategic Dialogue. These meetings with President Obama and U.S. cabinet officials will reinforce the long-term and vital partnership between our two countries in areas ranging from security to governance and economic development. The visit will also highlight the continuing support among Afghans for U.S. Government involvement in Afghanistan, particularly appreciation for the sacrifice being made by U.S. soldiers and civilians. We will meet with a cadre of capable Afghan officials who are implementing programs to meet our shared objectives. The visit will underscore the international cooperation and support for the mission in Afghanistan.

During the visit, we expect to discuss the nature of the long-term strategic partnership between the US and Afghanistan including security cooperation, economic development, cooperation in law enforcement, judicial, and cultural-education programs as well as political and diplomatic issues.

None of these steps will guarantee success. But we are seeing conditions that we believe are necessary for success to begin to emerge. We have the right mission, the right strategy, and the right leadership team in place. U.S., international and Afghan civilian and military resources have been marshaled to effectively support the mission. The majority of international forces in Afghanistan are now under Commander, ISAF's (COMISAF's) command, ensuring greater unity of command.

Our efforts to build the capacity of the Afghanistan National Security Forces are showing progress, though significant challenges remain. Currently, the Afghan

National Army (ANA) strength is at 119,338, well above the April target of 116,500, compared to an authorized strength of 134,000 for FY2010. The Afghan National Police (ANP), as of March 20, has reached 102,138, with an authorized strength of 109,000 for FY2010. In FY11, our goal is to build the ANA to 171,600, and the ANP to 134,000. We think these goals are achievable.

Nevertheless, risks to the growth and quality of both Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Ministry of Interior (MoI) forces remain. The newly formed NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A), led by LTG William Caldwell, is working closely with the MoD and MoI to improve recruiting, training, retention and attrition. For example, salary and benefit initiatives have raised salaries for the ANSF and addressed pay disparities between ANA and ANP forces. The MoI has created institutions like the MoI Recruiting and Training Commands to institutionalize best practices. The MoI is also implementing a revised ANP development model that will ensure all recruits receive adequate training before they are deployed in the field. The Focused District Development program has provided follow-on training for Afghan Uniformed Police in 83 districts. The Focused Border Development program is accomplishing the same for the Afghan Border Police. The MoI has, in coordination with NTM-A, initiated planning to address leadership and professional development and to identify ways to counter corruption. NTM-A/Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) is working with the MoI to institute a competitive officer selection and promotion process that is transparent and merit based. COMISAF has directed that the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) partnering program be expanded to provide direct mentoring. A rotation program has been implemented for ANCOP to ensure the units have an opportunity to refit and refresh after extended counter-insurgency (COIN) operations. All of these initiatives demonstrate the considerable attention being given to improve the quality of the ANSF force.

We are also beginning to see signs of progress resulting from using development to support sustainable governance. In February, I visited the Arghandab Valley in Regional Command South. Less than a year ago, Arghandab was an insurgent safe haven. After some tough fighting last summer and fall, the conditions for establishing security and implementing governance and development programs began to emerge. During my visit, I saw the U.S. Army's 2nd Battalion of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment and U.S. Special Forces working alongside a Canadian Civil-Military Cell, a Canadian Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT), and civilians from State, USAID and the Department of Agriculture. All those international actors are partnering with the Afghan district governor, local tribal leadership, an ANA Kandak and local Afghan Police to develop the programs that are building a foundation for governance and economic development. The district governor has become an energetic ally, working

overtime to resolve disputes and jumpstart projects. He was excited about the work that had been done and his expectations for the future.

But let me be clear: I don't want to suggest that achieving success in Afghanistan will be easy, far from it; we face many challenges as we move forward. As I mentioned, we continue to struggle to improve retention and decrease attrition in the ANSF, and we also need to continue to improve the quality of the force. In the face of continued shortfalls, we are engaging in aggressive diplomatic efforts to encourage our international partners to provide institutional trainers and mentoring teams for the ANSF. A series of NATO meetings over the last five months, including the April Foreign Ministerial, focused heavily on addressing these shortfalls.

Inevitably, we will face setbacks even as we achieve successes. We also need to prepare for the possibility that things will get worse before they get better. As additional U.S. and international forces flow into theater and move into geographic areas where ISAF forces have not previously gone, we have seen increases in violence and in attacks on our troops. Our adversaries are intelligent and adaptable, and we will need to continuously refine our own tactics in response.

As you all know, operations in Helmand are ongoing, along with planning and shaping efforts for future operations in Kandahar. Lt Gen Paxton can address the specifics, but I do want to emphasize that for ISAF and our Afghan partners, Helmand operations have been the first large-scale effort to fundamentally change how we do business. In Helmand, protecting the population is our top priority, along with ensuring that our military operations to "clear" Marjah pave the way for truly Afghan-led governance and economic development activities in the "hold" and "build" phases. Preparation for the operation included extraordinary levels of civil-military planning and engagement with the Afghans—from ANSF partners, to Afghan ministries, to local tribes and populations with the operation ultimately approved and ordered by President Karzai. Kandahar involves some fundamentally different challenges that will require different approaches. In the end, however, the success of both of these efforts will be largely dependent on tackling the whole-of-government challenge of building and sustaining governance and security institutions.

Let me conclude by underscoring our assessment that the insurgency is losing momentum and we are heading in the right direction. That said, the outcome is far from determined. While over 50% of additional forces are in place, those still to come are critical to achieving success. None of what we are doing in Afghanistan involves quick fixes. These are long-term problems, and their solutions will require both patience and flexibility. At this point, though, I am cautiously

optimistic. As I said earlier, I believe we finally have the right mission, the right strategy, the right leadership, and the right resources. As we move forward, we will continue to adjust—and I believe that we will continue to make progress.

As you know, the Congress is considering DoD's FY11 budget request, including \$110.3 billion for Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) within Overseas Contingency Operations, as well as an FY10 Supplemental Request for \$28.8 billion for OEF. These funds are critical to supporting the solution set for our mission in Afghanistan, and I ask for your support. Thank you. Lieutenant General Paxton will address operations in greater detail, and I look forward to your questions and comments.