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TRAINING AND EQUIPPING AFGHAN SECURITY FORCES: UNACCOUNTED WEAPONS AND STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

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TRAINING AND EQUIPPING AFGHAN SECURITY FORCES: UNACCOUNTED WEAPONS AND STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2009

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m., in room 2157, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. John F. Tierney (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Tierney, Maloney, Murphy, Welch, Foster, Driehaus, Lynch, Cuellar, Kucinich; Flake, Duncan, and Jordan.

Also present: Representative Towns.

Staff present: Dave Turk, staff director; Andy Wright, counsel; Alexandra McKnight, Pearson Foreign Affairs fellow; Margaret Costa, intern; Thomas Alexander, senior counsel; Dr. Christopher Bright, senior professional staff member; Adam Fromm, minority chief clerk and Member liaison; and Glenn Sanders, contractor, Department of Defense;

Mr. TIERNEY. Good morning, everybody. A quorum being present, the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs hearing entitled, "Training and Equipping Afghan Security Forces: Unaccounted Weapons and Strategic Challenges," will come to order.

I want to acknowledge our new ranking member, Jeff Flake from Arizona and congratulate him. We continue to look forward to working with you. We appreciate also his cooperation and the staff's cooperation in putting together the oversight plan for the 111th Congress, which was accepted on Tuesday.

It has also been our experience in the past that all of these are good witnesses today and their organizations have been very helpful to Congress as we try to do our oversight function. GAO and the IG's office have always done a tremendous job in helping us perform our duties, and also independent non-governmental agencies like Mr. Schneider's have been very effective, and we have worked with them on many occasions. So we want to thank each of our witnesses and their staffs for their related reports today as well.

Before we begin today, I want to say that we intend to have a very robust oversight hearing schedule with respect to Afghanistan, and I think that we will all find that there are a lot of other things

we want to put on the plate as well, but this is one subject—given particularly the opportunity that we have to look at a new strategic view of what is going on in that region, it will be an opportunity for us to work on this.

As you can tell by the fact that we scheduled our first hearing here today, we are all going to be working on an expedited basis. I ask unanimous consent that only the chairman and the ranking member of the subcommittee be allowed to make opening statements. Without objection, so ordered.

And I ask unanimous consent that the hearing record be kept open for 5 days so that all members of the subcommittee be allowed to submit a written statement for the record. So ordered.

And I understand that we have been graced with the presence of our chairman of the full committee, Mr. Towns, and I want to recognize you, with Mr. Flake's assent on that, and thank you for joining us in this particular hearing. Would you like to make a statement, Mr. Towns?

Mr. TOWNS. Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to be here for the first hearing of the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs.

Oversight of Defense and National Security issues is a priority for the committee this year, and we are fortunate to have two experienced and thoughtful Members in Mr. Tierney and Mr. Flake leading this important subcommittee. We are pleased with that.

Last month the GAO issued a high-risk list which included more than a dozen DOD- and Defense-related programs. I joined with Mr. Issa in a letter to Secretary Gates notifying him and DOD's high-risk areas of a top priority for the committee and asking Secretary Gates to meet with us on his plans for fixing these problem areas.

Today's hearing finding inadequate control of weapons issued to Afghanistan, of course, and to Afghan Security Forces, is a good example of the types of issues we will address. We need to make sure that DOD has systems and policies in place that reduce risk to our national security and our troops. There is no question that our men and women in uniform are America's greatest asset, but too often DOD's management practices have been inadequate to meet the challenges that our troops and our Nation face.

I hope today's hearing is the first of many that identify and fix the deficiencies in our national security operations. I look forward to working together with all of you as we move forward.

And I yield back to Chairman Tierney, and of course I commend Chairman Tierney and ranking member Flake and their staff for this hearing, and of course I look forward to working with you as we fix some of the problems that we know exist. Thank you so much and I yield back.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

During the last Congress, this subcommittee sent three congressional delegations to Afghanistan and Pakistan, and we held seven related oversight hearings. This Congress certainly intends to continue our rigorous oversight. In fact, I led another congressional delegation to Afghanistan and Pakistan that returned just last week, and joining me were subcommittee Members Chris Van

Hollen, Peter Welch, and Chris Murphy, as well as Representatives George Miller and Ron Kind.

The overriding takeaway from that fact-finding trip, whether it was meeting with President Karzai or President Zardari or U.S. Ambassadors or General McKiernan or with the NGO's and other experts, is that we are in a unique moment in time to ask fundamental questions about the U.S.' efforts in both of those countries.

What are we trying to accomplish, what are we willing to do to get to that point, whether we as a government have the capacity and the resources and the will to achieve, and most important, as a public servant, what will Members say when they look into the eyes of the parents who sacrificed their son or daughter to this effort?

I am encouraged that President Obama's new administration is conducting a top to bottom review of the U.S. policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan, and it is my hope that the congressional committees will also be actively involved. I can assure that this subcommittee will be. We will be asking tough questions and examining, among other issues, aide accountability and efficacy, including use of private contractors, U.S. targeting procedures, the capacity of various U.S. Government agencies and departments to carry on needed activities, and the development of the rule of law and justice sectors in these respective countries.

In July 2007, the Government Accountability Office reported about the shortcomings of the U.S. military's efforts to account for weapons involved in the Iraq train and equip program. The Inspector General's Office also filed a report. In January 2008, Congress passed a law requiring that no defense articles be provided to Iraq until the president certifies that a registration and monitoring system has been established and that law then listed what the systems would include.

It was our hope that lessons learned in that conflict would inform policies in other conflicts. To assure that this happened, the subcommittee, together with the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, requested the Government Accountability Office review the accountability for weapons that the Defense Department obtained, transported, stored, and distributed to the Afghan National Security Forces. As it happens, the Department of Defense had also asked the Inspector General to file a similar report, and Mr. Schneider's International Crisis Group was working on the same area.

We asked the Government Accountability Office to investigate whether the Defense Department could account for the weapons intended for the Afghan army and police. We also asked to what extent has the U.S. military ensured that the Afghan National Security Forces could properly safeguard and account for weapons and other sensitive equipment issued to them.

The Government Accountability Office report released today answers those questions, and what they uncovered is disturbing. The International Crisis Group recently put the importance of the Afghan police this way. They said: "Policing goes to the very heart of state-building. A trusted law enforcement institution would assist nearly everything that needs to be achieved in Afghanistan."

A Rand Corp. study commissioned by the Secretary of Defense on counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan even placed the importance of the police ahead of the army. Building the police in a counterinsurgency should be a higher priority than the creation of the army because police are the primary arm of the government in towns and villages across the country, they have close contact with local populations in cities and villages, and will inevitably have a good intelligence picture of insurgent activity.

The issue we address in detail today, weapons accountability, serves as an important and tangible harbinger of how we have been doing so far with United States and international efforts to train and equip the Afghan police.

The GAO concludes, "That accountability lapses occurred throughout the supply chain, including by the U.S. military, who didn't maintain complete records for about 87,000, or 36 percent, of the 242,000 U.S.-procured weapons shipped to Afghanistan. By not being able," "to provide serial numbers for about 46,000 of those weapons and by not maintaining reliable records for about 135,000 weapons that the U.S. military obtained for the Afghan National Security Forces from 21 other countries."

We will hear from the leader of that investigation, Mr. Johnson. We will also hear about the Defense Department's Inspector General's parallel investigation that found similar accountability lapses in training and equipping Afghan National Security Forces. The Department of Defense Inspector General's report concluded that, "the accountability control and physical security of arms, ammunition, and explosives could be compromised and vulnerable to displacement, loss, or theft."

In August 2008, the Undersecretary for Defense for Intelligence put it this way for what is at stake. "The security for conventional arms, ammunition, and explosives is paramount, as the theft or misuse of this material will gravely jeopardize the safety and security of personnel and installations worldwide."

If we go back to the families of the U.S. soldiers who pay the ultimate price for our security, what if we had to tell those families not only why they were in Afghanistan, but why their son or daughter died at the hands of an insurgent using a weapon purchased by the U.S. taxpayers? But that is what we risk if we were to have tens of thousands of weapons that we provided washing around Afghanistan off the books.

The Defense Department has acknowledged these serious shortcomings, it has concurred with all three of the Government Accountability Office's recommendations, and it appears to be taking concrete steps to bring together greater accountability in transfers of arms to the Afghan army and police.

General Formica, the commander of the Combined Security Transition Command, Afghanistan [CSTC–A], put it this way. When we met with him in Kabul last week, he said, "we have to get better because of the Government Accountability Office report." But there is a huge amount of remaining work to be done, something General Formica also admits.

And it is not just weapons and ammunition that we are talking about. Specifying sensitive defense items such as night vision devices poses special danger to the public and the U.S. forces if they

fall into the wrong hands. Yet CSTC-A began issuing 2,410 such devices to Afghan National Army units in July 2007 without establishing controls or conducting enhanced end-use monitoring. It was some 15 months before an end-use plan was developed, and some 10 devices remain unaccounted for to this day.

This subcommittee will be watching intently. The stakes are simply too high to get this wrong. But even beyond keeping track of the weapons we give to the Afghan army and police, there are more fundamental problems, especially with the efforts to ramp up the Afghan police. For instance, the training of the Afghan police continues to lag significantly behind that of the army.

In order to examine these broader challenges in training and equipping the Afghan police, we will hear today about a recently released International Crisis Group report entitled, "Policing in Afghanistan: Still Searching for a Strategy." This report found that too much emphasis has continued to be placed on using the police to fight the insurgency rather than crime.

In addition, the deteriorating security situation and political pressure for quick results has continued to obscure longer term strategic planning, and there needs to be much more coherence of approach in streamlining of programs.

Last year the State Department Inspector General's office warned, "confidence that the government can provide a fair and effective justice system is an important element to convincing war-battered Afghans to build their future in a democratic system rather than reverting to one dominated by terrorist warlords or narcotic traffickers." After 30 years of conflict and 7 years of U.S. participation, the patience of the Afghan people is being sorely tested.

A recent poll by the Asia Foundation found that 38 percent of Afghans think the country is headed in the right direction—that is down from 64 percent in 2004—while 32 percent feel that it is moving in the wrong direction, compared to 11 percent in 2004. These findings are reinforced by the ABC News poll released on Monday showing that 40 percent of Afghans think their country is headed in the right direction compared to 77 percent in 2005, while 38 percent believe the country is headed in the wrong direction compared to 6 percent in 2005.

As we contemplate a new strategic overview about to be adopted by the new administration, the condition of the Afghan National Security Forces will be of paramount concern. Included in that concern is the ability of those forces to operate, to secure territory gained and weapons afforded to them, and how this all relates to the broader U.S. efforts and plans in Afghanistan.

Let us be perfectly blunt to the American people about the difficulty of the challenges ahead. The reports highlighted at this hearing as well as the subcommittee's recent meeting with General Formica in Afghanistan indicate serious impediments, poor security for stored weapons, illiteracy hampering efficient operations, corruption, high desertion rates, and unclear guidance.

The Defense Department has particularly noted significant shortfalls in the number of field and embedded trainers and mentors, which currently serves as a primary impediment to advancing the capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces. CSTC-A officials reported in December of last year that they only had 64 per-

cent of the 6,675 personnel required to perform its mission overall and only about half of the 4,159 mentors that they require.

As we listen to today's testimony, I trust it will help inform whether Congress needs to legislate procedures to safeguard weapons in Afghanistan, as we did in Iraq, or to take other action in this field. The challenges are immense, but this is just too important not to get right.

As I said at our hearing last year on efforts to train and equip the Afghan police, 7 years after the invasion of Afghanistan, the stakes here remain enormous. Put simply, effective and honest Afghan police and a well-functioning justice system are critical to the future of Afghanistan and to the security of all Americans. We simply must do better and time is of the essence.

I now would like to yield to Mr. Flake for his opening remarks.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the chairman and want him to know how excited I am to be on this subcommittee, and I look forward to the hearings that will be held.

I am pleased that we are starting with this hearing. Obviously these are troubling reports about what is going on in Afghanistan. I just returned from Afghanistan in December of last year, and this was not on our radar screen when I went there, but it will be henceforth.

I would like unanimous consent to issue my statement for the record.

Mr. TIERNEY. No objection.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Jeff Flake follows:]

EDOLPHUS TOWNS, NEW YORK
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DARRELL E. ISSA, CALIFORNIA
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

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COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515–6143

Majority (202) 225–5051
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Opening Statement

The Honorable Jeff Flake, Ranking Member

Hearing on
"Training and Equipping Afghan Security Forces:
Unaccounted Weapons and Strategic Challenges"

National Security and Foreign Affairs Subcommittee
February 12, 2009

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The Oversight and Government Reform Committee has a unique mandate. Unlike authorizing committees with narrow jurisdiction, the Committee has broad authority to oversee nearly all federal programs, policies, and procedures. It does this with an eye toward weeding out waste, fraud, and abuse, and to ensure proper management and administration.

But we are not simply an oversight committee.

In our "reform" capacity, this Committee must articulate constructive solutions. We must ensure that when we examine a program or initiative, we also identify more efficient and appropriate mechanisms to achieve the same ends. In so doing, it is essential that the individuals responsible for developing and implementing policy are present at every hearing to explain their actions.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to using this approach in overseeing the national security and foreign affairs arena.

The United States faces many national security challenges. At the forefront is terrorism. Since 9/11, we have been combating terrorism in two theaters; one in Afghanistan and one in Iraq. In both cases, this Administration continues significant policies outlined by the Bush Administration.

We must also ensure that the programs supporting this effort are fiscally responsible and effective.

Today's hearing is an excellent place to begin our oversight and reform efforts.

Afghanistan is at the forefront of our anti-terrorism efforts. Since 2001, we have spent billions to build a democracy secure from the Taliban and resistant to corruption. Afghanistan has made progress in many areas.

With our help, Afghan men and women democratically elected a government. Since that time, that government has worked with coalition partners to create an Army and Police force. These forces are essential to ensuring a stable government and society and will benefit the Afghan people. At the same time, ridding Afghanistan of dangers posed to the United States helps us as well.

There has been measured success, but it has been difficult.

Today, we will hear testimony concerning studies which show that procedural shortcomings mean the U.S. military cannot account for one-third of the weapons supplied to Afghan forces. We also have witnesses here to comment on the progress of other efforts to train and equip Afghan forces.

I look forward to their sober assessments.

An iron-clad system to inventory and track arms is essential. The loss or theft of weapons could significantly damage our efforts. If our military cannot account for arms, then civilians could be at risk, American lives may be jeopardized, and our limited resources are wasted.

By that same token, if our efforts to train the Afghan Army and Police forces are in vain, then we need to find a better use for that money.

With a trillion-dollar stimulus bill on our desks, a Defense supplemental on the horizon, and press reports about forthcoming reductions to the Defense budget, we must ensure that our policy directives are clear, and that proper directives exist for handling weapons destined for our allies.

Noticeably absent today, however, is a Defense Department or State Department representative to speak about prospective Administration policy in these areas.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to a follow-up hearing when we can hear from the Obama Administration on how it has reacted to the three studies we will hear about today.

Mr. Chairman, I am delighted to join you on this panel. I look forward to working with you in this Congress, and I look forward to this first of many important hearings.

Thank you.

Mr. FLAKE. But let me just say this is a committee on oversight and reform. I am pleased that recommendations have been made. It would be nice to have members of the administration and Department of Defense and perhaps State to let us know what plans are being made to implement these recommendations and how long they think that will take, and I assume that we will followup in this subcommittee to make sure that these recommendations are being implemented.

That said, it is extremely troubling to find that the Department of Defense cannot account for up to one third of the weapons that have been issued to Afghan forces. That is reason enough right there to hold a hearing and to hold people to account for what has gone on, so I look forward to the testimony and thank all the witnesses who have come, and appreciate the subcommittee taking up this important issue.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you, Mr. Flake.

Just in relation to one of the comments that you made, I agree with you it would be nice to have the Department of Defense here. They have a policy, however, that they don't choose to sit on panels where there are non-governmental officials there and we are only having one panel at this hearing. So they were given the opportunity to come and state their policy.

At some point we will take that up with the chairman. Maybe we ought to start just subpoenaing witnesses, and then we will decide our own panels the way we want and have the Congress run congressional hearings and the Department of Defense will have an opportunity to participate.

We did meet with General Formica and all of his staff over there who are running CSTC-A, and we got that while we were in there, and at the back of the reports, you will see the response from the Department of Defense as well. But the comments are well taken, thank you.

At this point in time, we will hear from our witnesses, and we will go in order of the way that they are seated on that.

Let me just introduce, if I could, Mr. Charles Michael Johnson, Jr. Mr. Johnson is the director of the International Affairs and Trade Division at the U.S. Government Accountability Office. He has had an extremely distinguished 27 year career with the Government Accountability Office, having won numerous awards, including a special commendation award for outstanding performance, leadership, management, and high congressional client satisfaction.

I should also add that this subcommittee has kept Mr. Johnson and his team very busy over the past 2 years. As I noted earlier, we greatly appreciate the extensive efforts by you and all of your team.

Mr. Thomas Gimble is the Principle Deputy Inspector General of the Department of Defense. Before his current position, he was the Deputy Inspector General for Intelligence. He is a Vietnam veteran and a recipient of the bronze star and purple heart. He has also received the Secretary of Defense medal for exceptional civilian service. We thank you for your continued service to the country, Mr. Gimble, and for testifying today.

Mr. Mark Schneider is the Senior Vice President of the International Crisis Group. He has also had a long career as a public servant. Before coming to the ICG, Mr. Schneider was the Director of the U.S. Peace Corps. He was also Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean for USAID. He has also been a vital resource for the subcommittee during my tenure as chairman and others as well, and I want to thank him for testifying today.

It is the policy of the subcommittee to swear all of you in before you testify, so I ask you to please stand and raise your right hands, and if there is any person who will be assisting you in your testimony, I ask that they also stand and raise their right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. TIERNEY. Your full written statements will be put on the hearing record, I think as experienced with people testifying, you know this to be the case. So we ask that you testify within a 5-minute period if you can. We will try to be lenient with that to the extent that we can, but I know that members of the panel here are anxious to ask questions. They have probably all read your reports thoroughly, were impressed by them, and they probably instigated a number of thoughtful questions, and we want to get to that when we can.

So Mr. Johnson, if you could be kind enough to give us your remarks.

STATEMENT OF CHARLES MICHAEL JOHNSON, JR., DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRADE, U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee.

I am pleased to be here to discuss the report GAO released today on accountability for small arms and light weapons that the United States has obtained for Afghan National Security Forces, that is the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police. This hearing is particularly timely given the unstable security situation in Afghanistan which increases the potential risk of death and loss of weapons.

My testimony today will focus on three issues: the types and quantity of weapons that the Department of Defense has obtained for the Afghan National Security Forces, whether Defense can account for these weapons, and the extent to which the Afghan Security Forces can account and safeguard these weapons.

With respect to the first issue, from fiscal year 2002 to 2008, the United States has spent over $16.5 billion to train and equip the Afghan National Police and Army. As part of this effort, Defense, through the U.S. Army and Navy, purchased over 242 small arms and light weapons at a cost of about $120 million. As the figure shows, a variety of small arms and light weight weapons were purchased: rifles, pistols, machine guns, mortars, and grenade launchers.

In addition, Defense has reported that 21 other countries, as the chairman has noted, provided about 135,000 weapons through the Department of Defense. These weapons were obtained between June 2002 and June 2008, and the international community valued these weapons at about $103 million. This brings the total number

of weapons that Defense obtained for the Afghan Security Forces to over 375,000.

Before I address accountability, I would like to note that the CSTC-A, the Combined Security Transition Command, Afghanistan, which is located in Kabul, is primarily responsible for training and equipping the Afghan Security Forces. CSTC-A is also responsible for receiving, storing, and distributing weapons to the Afghan Security Forces and for monitoring the use of the U.S.-procured weapons and other sensitive equipment.

As for weapons accountability, we found that lapses in accountability occurred at all phases of the supply chain, including when the weapons were obtained, transported to Afghanistan, and stored at two central storage depots in Kabul. While we found that Defense has accountability procedures for its own weapons—our own U.S. weapons, including serial number registration and reporting of routine physical inventories of weapons stored in depots, Defense did not provide clear guidance to U.S. personnel in Afghanistan, CSTC-A in particular, regarding what procedures apply when handling weapons obtained for Afghanistan Security Forces.

As such, the U.S. Army and CSTC-A did not complete records for over one-third of the 242 weapons the U.S. procured and shipped to Afghanistan. Specifically, for about 46,000 weapons, the Army and CSTC-A did not record and maintain serial numbers to uniquely enable us or anyone else to identify those weapons. For about 41,000 weapons with the serial numbers recorded, CSTC-A did not have any records of their location or disposition.

Furthermore, CSTC-A did not maintain reliable records, especially serial numbers, for any of the 135,000 weapons that were obtained through the international donors.

Overall, there was a lack of systematic accountability for over half of the weapons that CSTC-A and that the U.S. Government had obtained for Afghan Security Forces, about 200,000 weapons.

During transport to Afghanistan accountability was also compromised. For example, Defense and contractors sometimes shipped weapons to Afghanistan without corresponding shipping manifests that CSTC-A needed to verify receipt of weapons. At the central storage depot facilities in Afghanistan, CSTC-A did not maintain complete and accurate inventory records for weapons and allowed poor security to persist.

In addition, CSTC-A did not begin tracking all weapons stored at the depot by serial numbers and did not conduct routine physical inventories until July 2008. The inventories revealed a theft of 47 pistols.

On a related matter, since July 2007, Defense has issued over 2,400 sensitive night vision devices to Afghan National Army. For these extremely sensitive devices, Defense guidance calls for enhanced monitoring of their end use. We found, however, that CSTC-A did not begin monitoring these specific devices until October 2008, about 15 months after they issued them. CSTC-A has reported in December 2008 that all but 10 of the sensitive devices have been accounted for.

And with respect to the Afghan Security Forces capability, despite U.S. training efforts, Afghan units cannot fully safeguard and account for weapons, placing these weapons at particular risk of

theft and loss. In February 2008, CSTC-A acknowledged that it had issued weapons to Afghan Security Forces without proper training and accountability procedures being in place.

Recognizing a need for improved accountability, CSTC-A and the State Department deployed hundreds of U.S. mentors and trainers to, among other things, help Afghan Army and Police Forces be able to improve their accountability over weapons.

The statement I am submitting for the record details a variety of factors that have reportedly contributed to deficiencies in Afghan Security Forces' ability to account for weapons. Among them, lack of functioning property book operations, unclear guidance, illiteracy, and poor security. It also provides additional details on shortfalls and the number of U.S. personnel needed to train and mentor Afghan Security Forces and to advance the capability to safeguard and account for weapons.

In summary, we have serious concerns about the accountability of weapons that Defense obtained for Afghan Security Forces and have made several recommendations to help improve accountability.

In particular, we have recommended that the Secretary of Defense establish clear accountability procedures for weapons while they are in the control and custody of the United States, including tracking all weapons by serial numbers and conducting routine physical inventories. Second, we have recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct CSTC-A to specifically assess and verify each Afghan Security Force's capacity to safeguard and account for weapons unless a special waiver is granted. Finally, we have also recommended that sufficient and adequate resources be devoted to CSTC-A's effort to train and equip Afghan Security Forces.

Defense has concurred with our recommendations and has taken some steps to implement them. Those specific steps are detailed in the statement which I will submit for the record.

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, this concludes my opening and prepared statement. I would be happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Johnson follows:]

United States Government Accountability Office

GAO

Testimony

Before the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives

For Release on Delivery
Expected at 10:00 a.m. EST
Thursday, February 12, 2009

AFGHANISTAN SECURITY

Corrective Actions Are Needed to Address Serious Accountability Concerns about Weapons Provided to Afghan National Security Forces

Statement of Charles M. Johnson, Jr., Director
International Affairs and Trade

GAO-09-366T

February 12, 2009

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here to discuss the report GAO is releasing publicly today on accountability for small arms and light weapons that the United States has obtained and provided or intends to provide to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)—the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police.[1] Given the unstable security conditions in Afghanistan, the risk of loss and theft of these weapons is significant, which makes this hearing particularly timely.

My testimony today focuses on (1) the types and quantities of weapons the Department of Defense (Defense) has obtained for ANSF, (2) whether Defense can account for the weapons it obtained for ANSF, and (3) the extent to which ANSF can properly safeguard and account for its weapons and other sensitive equipment.

Defense Has Obtained Weapons for ANSF through U.S. Procurement and International Donations

During fiscal years 2002 through 2008, the United States spent approximately $16.5 billion to train and equip the Afghan army and police forces in order to transfer responsibility for the security of Afghanistan from the international community to the Afghan government. As part of this effort, Defense—through the U.S. Army and Navy—purchased over 242,000 small arms and light weapons, at a cost of about $120 million. As illustrated in figure 1, these weapons include rifles, pistols, shotguns, machine guns, mortars, and launchers for grenades, rockets, and missiles.

[1]GAO, *Afghanistan Security: Lack of Systematic Tracking Raises Significant Accountability Concerns about Weapons Provided to Afghan National Security Forces*, GAO-09-267 (Washington, D.C.: Jan 30, 2009).

Figure 1: Types and Quantities of U.S.-Procured Weapons Shipped to Afghanistan for ANSF (December 2004–June 2008)a

Weapon category		Quantity shipped
	Rifles	117,163
	Pistols	62,055
	Machine guns	35,778
	Grenade launchers	18,656
	Shotguns	6,704
	Rocket-propelled grenade launchers	1,620
	Mortars and other weapons[a]	227
Total		**242,203**

Source: GAO analysis of Defense data.

[a]Defense began shipping weapons it procured to Afghanistan for ANSF in December 2004.

In addition, CSTC-A has reported that 21 other countries provided about 135,000 weapons for ANSF between June 2002 and June 2008, which they

have valued at about $103 million.[2] This brings the total number of weapons Defense reported obtaining for ANSF to over 375,000.

The Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) in Kabul, which is a joint service, coalition organization under the command and control of Defense's U.S. Central Command is primarily responsible for training and equipping ANSF.[3] As part of that responsibility, CSTC-A receives and stores weapons provided by the United States and other international donors and distributes them to ANSF units. In addition, CSTC-A is responsible for monitoring the use of U.S.-procured weapons and other sensitive equipment.

Defense Could Not Fully Account for Weapons

Lapses in weapons accountability occurred throughout the supply chain, including when weapons were obtained, transported to Afghanistan, and stored at two central depots in Kabul. Defense has accountability procedures for its own weapons, including (1) serial number registration and reporting[4] and (2) 100 percent physical inventories of weapons stored in depots at least annually. However, Defense failed to provide clear guidance to U.S. personnel regarding what accountability procedures applied when handling weapons obtained for the ANSF.

We found that the U.S. Army and CSTC-A did not maintain complete records for an estimated 87,000—or about 36 percent—of the 242,000 weapons Defense procured and shipped to Afghanistan for ANSF. Specifically:

- For about 46,000 weapons, the Army could not provide us serial numbers to uniquely identify each weapon provided, which made it impossible for us to determine their location or disposition.

[2]We were unable to independently verify the weapons quantities that the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) reported to us. Furthermore, CSTC-A officials told us they had not evaluated the reliability of the values assigned by donors for these weapons.

[3]This effort is undertaken with support from the Department of State (State).

[4]The objective of serial number registration and reporting procedures, according to Defense guidance, is to establish continuous visibility over weapons throughout the various stages of the supply process, including "from the contractor to depot; [and] in storage." See DoD 4000.25-M, Vol. 2, Chap 18, C18.3.1.

- For about 41,000 weapons with serial numbers recorded, CSTC-A did not have any records of their location or disposition.[5]

Furthermore, CSTC-A did not maintain reliable records, including serial numbers, for any of the 135,000 weapons it reported obtaining from international donors from June 2002 through June 2008.

Although weapons were in Defense's control and custody until they were issued to ANSF units, accountability was compromised during transportation and storage. Organizations involved in the transport of U.S.-procured weapons into Kabul by air did not communicate adequately to ensure that accountability was maintained over weapons during transport. In addition, CSTC-A did not maintain complete and accurate inventory records for weapons at the central storage depots and allowed poor security to persist. Until July 2008, CSTC-A did not track all weapons at the depots by serial number and conduct routine physical inventories. Without such regular inventories, it is difficult for CSTC-A to maintain accountability for weapons at the depots and detect weapons losses. Moreover, CSTC-A could not identify and respond to incidents of actual or potential compromise, including suspected pilferage, due to poor security and unreliable data systems. Illustrating the importance of physical inventories, less than 1 month after completing its first full weapons inventory, CSTC-A officials identified the theft of 47 pistols intended for ANSF.

During our review, Defense indicated that it would begin recording serial numbers for all weapons it obtains for ANSF, and CSTC-A established procedures to track weapons by serial number in Afghanistan. It also began conducting physical inventories of the weapons stored at the central depots. However, CSTC-A officials stated that their continued implementation of these new accountability procedures was not guaranteed, considering staffing constraints and other factors.

[5]This estimated amount reflects the results of our testing of a generalizable sample selected randomly from 195,671 U.S.-procured weapons for which Defense could provide serial numbers; the estimate has a margin of error of +/- 10,000 weapons at the 95 percent confidence level.

ANSF Cannot Fully Safeguard and Account for Weapons

Despite CSTC-A training efforts, ANSF units cannot fully safeguard and account for weapons, placing weapons CSTC-A has provided to ANSF at serious risk of theft or loss. In February 2008, CSTC-A acknowledged that it was issuing equipment to Afghan National Police units before providing training on accountability practices and ensuring that effective controls were in place. Recognizing the need for weapons accountability in ANSF units, Defense and State deployed hundreds of U.S. trainers and mentors to, among other things, help the Afghan army and police establish equipment accountability practices. In June 2008, Defense reported to Congress that it was CSTC-A's policy not to issue equipment to ANSF without verifying that appropriate supply and accountability procedures are in place.[6] While CSTC-A has established a system for assessing the logistics capacity of ANSF units, it has not consistently assessed or verified ANSF's ability to properly account for weapons and other equipment.

Contractors serving as mentors have reported major ANSF accountability weaknesses. Although these reports did not address accountability capacities in a consistent manner that would allow a systematic or comprehensive assessment of all units, they highlighted the following common problems relating to weapons accountability.

- *Lack of functioning property book operations.* Many Afghan army and police units did not properly maintain property books, which are fundamental tools used to establish equipment accountability and are required by Afghan ministerial decrees.
- *Illiteracy.* Widespread illiteracy among Afghan army and police personnel substantially impaired equipment accountability. For example, a mentor noted that illiteracy in one Afghan National Army corps was directly interfering with the ability of supply section personnel to implement property accountability processes and procedures, despite repeated training efforts.
- *Poor security.* Some Afghan National Police units did not have facilities adequate to ensure the physical security of weapons and protect them against theft in a high-risk environment. In a northern province, for example, a contractor reported that the arms room of one police district

[6]See Department of Defense, Report to Congress in Accordance with 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (Section 1231, P.L. 110-181), *United States Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces* (Washington, D.C.: June 2008), 13.

office was behind a wooden door that had only a miniature padlock, and that this represented the same austere conditions as in the other districts.

- *Unclear guidance.* Afghan government logistics policies were not always clear to Afghan army and police property managers. Approved Ministry of Interior policies outlining material accountability procedures were not widely disseminated, and many police logistics officers did not recognize any of the logistical policies as rule. Additionally, a mentor to the Afghan National Army told us that despite new Ministry of Defense decrees on accountability, logistics officers often carried out property accountability functions using Soviet-style accounting methods and that the Ministry was still auditing army accounts against those defunct standards.

- *Corruption.* Reports of alleged theft and unauthorized resale of weapons are common, including one case in which an Afghan police battalion commander in one province was allegedly selling weapons to enemy forces.

- *Desertion.* Desertion in the Afghan National Police has also resulted in the loss of weapons. For example, contractors reported that Afghan Border Police officers at one province checkpoint deserted to ally themselves with enemy forces and took all their weapons and two vehicles with them.

In July 2007, Defense began issuing night vision devices to the Afghan National Army. These devices are considered dangerous to the public and U.S. forces in the wrong hands, and Defense guidance calls for intensive monitoring of their use, including tracking by serial number. However, we found that CSTC-A did not begin monitoring the use of these sensitive devices until October 2008—about 15 months after issuing them. Defense and CSTC-A attributed the limited monitoring of these devices to a number of factors, including a shortage of security assistance staff and expertise at CSTC-A, exacerbated by frequent CSTC-A staff rotations. After we brought this to CSTC-A's attention, it conducted an inventory and reported in December 2008 that all but 10 of the 2,410 night vision devices issued had been accounted for.

We previously reported that Defense cited significant shortfalls in the number of trainers and mentors as the primary impediment to advancing

the capabilities of ANSF.[7] According to CSTC-A officials, as of December 2008, CSTC-A had only 64 percent of the nearly 6,700 personnel it required to perform its overall mission, including only about half of the over 4,000 personnel needed to mentor ANSF units.

In summary, we have serious concerns about the accountability for weapons that Defense obtained for ANSF through U.S. procurements and international donations. First, we estimate that Defense did not systematically track over half of the weapons intended for ANSF. This was primarily due to staffing shortages and Defense's failure to establish clear accountability procedures for these weapons while they were still in U.S. custody and control. Second, ANSF units could not fully safeguard and account for weapons Defense has issued to them, despite accountability training provided by both Defense and State. Poor security and corruption in Afghanistan, unclear guidance from Afghan ministries, and a shortage of trainers and mentors to help ensure that appropriate accountability procedures are implemented have reportedly contributed to this situation.

In the report we are releasing today we make several recommendations to help improve accountability for weapons and other sensitive equipment that the United States provided to ANSF. In particular, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense (1) establish clear accountability procedures for weapons while they are in the control and custody of the United States, including tracking all weapons by serial number and conducting routine physical inventories; (2) direct CSTC-A to specifically assess and verify each ANSF unit's capacity to safeguard and account for weapons and other sensitive equipment before providing such equipment, unless a specific waiver or exception is granted; and (3) devote adequate resources to CSTC-A's effort to train, mentor, and assess ANSF in equipment accountability matters.

In commenting on a draft of our report, Defense concurred with our recommendations and has begun to take corrective action.

- In January 2009, Defense directed the Defense Security Cooperation Agency to lead an effort to establish a weapons registration and monitoring system in Afghanistan, consistent with controls mandated by Congress for weapons provided to Iraq. If Defense follows through on this

[7]GAO, *Afghanistan Security: Further Congressional Action May Be Needed to Ensure Completion of a Detailed Plan to Develop and Sustain Capable Afghan National Security Forces*, GAO-08-661 (Washington, D.C.: June 18, 2008).

plan and, in addition, clearly requires routine inventories of weapons in U.S. custody and control, our concern about the lack of clear accountability procedures will be largely addressed.

- According to Defense, trainers and mentors are assessing the ability of ANSF units to safeguard and account for weapons. For the Afghan National Army, mentors are providing oversight at all levels of command of those units receiving weapons. For the Afghan National Police, most weapons are issued to units that have received instruction on equipment accountability as part of newly implemented training programs.[8] We note that at the time of our review, ANSF unit assessments did not systematically address each unit's capacity to safeguard and account for weapons in its possession. We also note that Defense has cited significant shortfalls in the number of personnel required to train and mentor ANSF units. Unless these matters are addressed, we are not confident the shortcomings we reported will be adequately addressed.
- Defense also indicated that it is looking into ways of addressing the staffing shortfalls that hamper CSTC-A's efforts to train, mentor, and assess ANSF in equipment accountability matters. However, Defense did not state how or when additional staffing would be provided.

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, this concludes my prepared statement. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Scope and Methodology

To address our objectives, we reviewed documentation and interviewed officials from Defense, U.S. Central Command, CSTC-A, and the U.S. Army and Navy. On the basis of records provided to us, we compiled detailed information on weapons reported as shipped to CSTC-A in Afghanistan by the United States and other countries from June 2002 through June 2008. We traveled to Afghanistan in August 2008 to examine records and meet with officials at CSTC-A headquarters, visit the two central depots where the weapons provided for ANSF are stored, and meet with staff at an Afghan National Army unit that had received weapons. While in Afghanistan, we attempted to determine the location or disposition of a sample of weapons. Our sample was drawn randomly from a population of

[8]These programs include Focused District Development and Focused Border Development. We are currently reviewing the Focused District Development program, and plan to report our results in March 2009.

195,671 U.S.-procured weapons shipped to Afghanistan for which Defense was able to provide serial numbers. We used the results of our sampling to reach general conclusions about CSTC-A's ability to account for weapons purchased by the United States for ANSF. We also discussed equipment accountability with cognizant officials from the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior, the U.S. Embassy, and contractors involved in building ANSF's capacity to account for and manage its weapons inventory.

We performed our work from November 2007 through January 2009 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Contacts and Staff Acknowledgments

For questions regarding this testimony, please contact Charles Michael Johnson, Jr. at (202) 512-7331 or johnsoncm@gao.gov.

Albert H. Huntington III, Assistant Director; James Michels; Emily Rachman; Mattias Fenton; and Mary Moutsos made key contributions in preparing this statement.

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Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you, Mr. Johnson.
Mr. Gimble.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS GIMBLE, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. GIMBLE. Chairman Tierney, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you this morning and discuss our report on the assessments of arms, ammunition, explosives, and controlled accountability, also security assistance, and the sustainment of the Afghan National Security Forces.

Early in 2008, the Inspector General assembled a team to return to Iraq and Afghanistan to determine the status of the corrective actions resulting from our report on munitions accountability and control. We also made a decision to focus on Afghanistan because our military there is facing similar challenges with respect to providing effective accountability and control for equipment being supplied to the Afghanistan Security Forces.

While in Afghanistan we also assessed security assistance program processes, Afghanistan Security Forces logistics sustainability, and the development of an Afghanistan military healthcare system.

As our team redeployed out of Afghanistan, we outbriefed the field commanders, enabling the command to initiate some immediate corrective actions. While CSTC-A was making progress on accountability, we recommended that the CSTC-A issue policy guidance specifically for accountability control and physical security of munitions at the——

Mr. LYNCH. Could the gentleman pull the mic a little bit closer to him?

Mr. GIMBLE. Further, we recommend that CSTC-A——

Mr. LYNCH. Is your mic on?

Mr. GIMBLE. It is.

Mr. LYNCH. OK.

Mr. GIMBLE. Further, we recommend that CSTC-A develop a formal strategy with detail implementing guidance for mentoring Afghanistan Ministries of Defense and Interior on accountability and control, physical security of U.S.-supplied munitions. CSTC-A also needed to ensure that the weapons' serial numbers had been recorded accurately and then reported to the DOD Small Arms/Light Weapons Serialization Program.

The U.S. Foreign Military Sales Program has historically functioned as a peacetime security assistance program. However, in Afghanistan, the United States is using FMS as the principle means to equip, expand, and modernize the Afghan Security Forces during wartime conditions. Commanders have noted that progress had been made in improving the responsiveness of the FMS process in support of Afghanistan.

However, we recommended that a wartime FMS process and ties will be established. In addition, we recommend that the number of personnel assigned to the CSTC-A security assistance office and the rank of the leadership be increased to be commensurate with the mission, size, and scope of the FMS effort in Afghanistan.

The ability of the Afghan Security Forces to operate independently partially relies on developing adequate logistical support for fielded military and police units. To accomplish this, we recommend a single integrated logistics sustainment plan be developed in coordination with the Afghanistan Ministries of Defense and Interior that links tasks, milestones, and metrics to those offices responsible for each action. Further, a formal mentoring strategy for achieving Afghanistan Security Forces logistics sustainability also needs to be developed.

Independent Afghanistan Security Force operations also depend on the healthcare system that provides field-level combat casualty care, evacuation of casualties, rehabilitation support, and long-term care for disabled personnel. To help accomplish this, we are recommending the development of a comprehensive, integrated, multiyear plan to coordinate U.S. efforts to build a sustainable Afghanistan Security Forces healthcare system. Also, the medical mentoring teams needed to be fully resourced, adequately trained, and supported with the interagency reach back capability.

In response to our assessment, the U.S. Central Command and CSTC-A did initiate a number of corrective actions. A few examples would be the Central Command issued formal guidance enhancing munitions accountability and control within its area of responsibility. CSTC-A updated its standard operating procedures on munitions accountability and control.

It also initiated formal procedures to ensure that serial numbers of weapons provided to Afghan Security Forces are recorded in the DOD Small Arms/Light Weapons Serialization Program. Central Command has initiated action to increase the number of personnel within the security assistance office.

Finally, CSTC-A has developed a strategy to improve the logistics, mentoring, communication, and coordination by linking the support of the Afghan Security Forces at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels. CSTC-A and the Central Command also agreed to support improved training for medical mentors that are going to be deployed to Afghanistan.

We are trying to send the assessment team back to Afghanistan in March to review the status of the corrective actions undertaken as a result of our report. We also plan to assess the efforts to train, equip, and mentor the expanding Afghan Security Forces.

Finally, I would note that General Petraeus requested that we continue assessing the area of weapons accountability in a letter to us in January this year.

I thank the committee for the opportunity to discuss our ongoing efforts and be prepared to answer any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gimble follows:]

February 12, 2009

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Thomas F. Gimble

Principal Deputy Inspector General
Department of Defense

before the

House Oversight and Government Reform Committee
Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs

on

"DoD IG Assessment of Arms, Ammunition, and Explosives Control and Accountability; Security Assistance; and Sustainment for the Afghan National Security Forces"

Chairman Tierney and distinguished members of this committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you this morning to discuss our report on the "Assessment of Arms, Ammunition, and Explosives Control and Accountability; Security Assistance; and Sustainment for the Afghan National Security Forces." In addition to detailing our report, I will also briefly discuss lessons learned in Iraq that can be applied to Afghanistan.

As this committee knows, the DoD Office of the Inspector General (DoD IG) has the primary responsibility within the Department of Defense for providing oversight of defense programs and funds appropriated to the Department at home and around the world, to include Southwest Asia. In this role, the DoD IG oversees, integrates, and attempts to ensure there are no gaps in the stewardship of DoD resources. We spearhead the DoD oversight community in auditing, investigating, and inspecting accountability processes and internal controls, in areas such as acquisition, contracting, logistics, and financial management. We also work in close partnership, through the Southwest Asia Joint Planning Group and the International Contract Corruption Task Force (ICCTF), with other oversight organizations, such as the Government Accountability Office, the Special Inspectors General for Iraq and Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGIR and SIGAR), the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, the Department of State Office of Inspector General, and the U.S. Agency for International Development Office of Inspector General.

Adequate management controls and oversight to verify that proper safeguards are in place and working as intended are essential to reduce or eliminate waste, fraud and abuse. Severely lacking controls or minimal proper oversight creates opportunities for corruption, fraud, waste, and abuse. Additionally, individuals must be held accountable for violating laws and regulations and for mismanagement of DoD resources.

Assessment of Arms, Ammunition, and Explosives Control and Accountability; Security Assistance; and Sustainment for the Afghan National Security Forces.

Background

At the request of the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the DoD IG performed an assessment in Iraq, during September and October 2007, concerning the accountability and control of the Arms, Ammunition, and Explosives (AA&E) the U.S. was supplying the Iraq Security Forces. In addition, the assessment team reviewed the effectiveness of the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program in supporting U.S. strategic objectives in Iraq and assessed the effectiveness of U.S. support to the Iraq Security Forces in helping them build their logistics sustainment base. The results of that assessment and recommendations for corrective actions were published in DoD IG Report No. SPO-2008-001, "Assessment of the Accountability of Arms and Ammunition Provided to the Security Forces of Iraq," July 3, 2008.

In preparation for the Iraq munitions assessment, the team visited Afghanistan for a week to review the accountability and controls of munitions the U.S. was supplying the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

Initiation of the 2008 Afghanistan Assessment. The Inspector General assembled a second assessment team in February 2008 to return to Iraq to determine the status of corrective actions being implemented as a result of the recommendations in our July 3, 2008 munitions assessment report. A decision was made to include Afghanistan in this second assessment to build on the work accomplished during our September/October 2007 visit. The assessment team deployed to Afghanistan in April 2008 and then to Iraq.

The overall objective of the Afghanistan assessment, announced on April 4, 2008, was to determine whether the controls over the distribution of conventional military arms, ammunition, and explosives provided to the ANSF were adequate. The additional objectives of the Afghanistan assessment were to:

- Determine whether security assistance processes were responsive to ANSF equipment requirements. Specifically, we examined the organizational structure and processes used to execute security assistance programs during wartime operations using pseudo FMS cases for Afghanistan.

- Assess whether the ANSF logistics sustainment base was being effectively developed. Specifically, we examined the status and effectiveness of planning to develop a sustainable Afghan logistics base.

- Assess the development of the Afghan military health care system and its sustainment base.

Results

As the assessment team redeployed from Afghanistan, the Principal Deputy Inspector General out-briefed the field commanders on the preliminary observations and recommendations, enabling the Command to initiate immediate corrective action. The results and recommendations for corrective actions were published in DoD IG Report No. SPO-2009-001, "Assessment of Arms, Ammunition, and Explosives Control and Accountability; Security Assistance; and Sustainment for the Afghanistan National Security Forces," October 24, 2008. The report contained 23 observations and 71 recommendations with 6 observations and 15 recommendations specifically addressing the accountability and control of AA&E.

The report's results are separated into four parts: AA&E, FMS, Logistics Sustainability, and Medical Sustainability.

Arms, Ammunition, and Explosives. The mission of the AA&E logistics supply chain is to provide an effective end-to-end system that delivers AA&E materiel to the warfighter, while maintaining the security and safety of the materiel and the public. Inherent in this mission is the requirement to implement mechanisms throughout the supply chain that ensure accountability and control of AA&E while enabling mission execution.

The assessment team found that the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) had not issued implementing instructions or procedures governing the accountability, control, and physical security of AA&E the U.S. was supplying to ANSF. Further, CSTC-A had not clearly defined the missions, roles, and responsibilities of U.S. training teams and senior mentors involved in advising ANSF and the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior on the accountability, control, and physical security of U.S.-supplied AA&E. Moreover, the CSTC-A had not accurately recorded the serial numbers of weapons that were to be issued to ANSF and did not report these serial numbers to the DoD Small Arms/Light Weapons Serialization Program.

The CSTC-A needed to issue command policy guidance and implementing instructions or procedures for the accountability, control, and physical security of AA&E the U.S. was supplying to ANSF. Further, it was necessary that CSTC-A develop a formal mentoring strategy with detailed implementing guidance for mentoring ANSF and the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior on the accountability, control, and physical security of U.S.-supplied AA&E. In addition, CSTC-A needed to ensure that serial numbers and associated information in its data systems used to track weapons were accurate and, in addition, report the

weapons serial number information to the DoD Small Arms/Light Weapons Serialization Program.

Foreign Military Sales. The U.S. and Afghan governments have used equipment supplied through U.S. FMS "pseudo" cases as the primary means to equip and train ANSF. The pseudo-FMS cases used U.S. Title 10 U.S.C. funds (rather than recipient country funds) appropriated to the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund to purchase equipment, although the cases operate administratively under standard security assistance rules and procedures.

The U.S. FMS efforts have historically functioned primarily as a peacetime security assistance program. However, the U.S. is using FMS pseudo-case processes as the principal means to equip, expand, and modernize ANSF during wartime conditions. This security assistance approach to Afghanistan needs to be fully supportive of the wartime equipping requirements of CSTC-A and ANSF to be successful in executing this strategic decision. Responsive support beyond the norm is essential for rapid ANSF force generation, replacement of combat losses, and force modernization.

Commanders noted that progress had been made in improving the FMS process responsiveness. However, FMS case processing time standards were developed in peacetime and were still inadequate for meeting the wartime train and equip requirements of CSTC-A and ANSF. Further, the CSTC-A security assistance office was not adequately staffed with sufficient numbers of personnel and those personnel that were assigned did not possess the requisite rank, security assistance skills, and experience required to successfully execute the mission. As a result, the ability of the FMS process and the CSTC-A security assistance office to responsively and effectively accomplish the mission may have been impaired.

The team recommended that a wartime standard for FMS case processing times be established to support U.S. strategic objectives in Afghanistan. In addition, the number of personnel in the CSTC-A security assistance office and the rank level of its leadership had to be increased to be commensurate with the mission, size, and scope of the FMS efforts in Afghanistan.

Logistics Sustainability. The ability of ANSF to operate independently relies on developing adequate logistical support for fielded military and police units. This support includes standardized logistics policies and processes; a logistics organization that is able to procure, receive, store, distribute, maintain, and re-supply its forces; maintenance of a sufficient logistical infrastructure; and support of professional logistics training and mentoring activities. The CSTC-A has responsibility for helping ANSF build these capabilities and develop logistics sustainability.

However, the various U.S. plans for development of ANSF logistics sustainment were not clearly linked in a single integrated plan; did not provide a time-phased, conditions-based approach for accomplishing end state objectives; and generally did not identify a specific person or office responsible for the execution of specific tasks. Moreover, it was not clear the extent to which the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior and ANSF were directly engaged in the process of planning the establishment of their own logistics sustainment base.

There were insufficient numbers of logistics mentors assigned to ANSF. And, CSTC-A had not prepared or issued a strategy with formal implementing guidance to its mentors regarding advising Ministry of Defense, Afghan National Army General Staff, and Ministry of Interior logistics organizations for achieving a sustainable logistics capability. Moreover, logistics mentors needed to receive the requisite training to successfully execute their mission.

A single, integrated CSTC-A logistics sustainment plan also needed to be developed in coordination with the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior and ANSF that linked tasks, milestones, and metrics and identified specific accountable staff offices of primary responsibility for each action.

Medical Sustainability. Independent, effective ANSF operations will depend on an ANSF health care delivery system that provides acceptable field-level combat casualty care, evacuation of casualties, restorative surgery and rehabilitation, and long-term care for disabled ANSF personnel. A sustainable ANSF health care system depends on achieving an integrated Afghan civil-military-police health care system, in which civilian clinical services, medical education, and medical logistics support ANSF needs. The complexity of medical stabilization and reconstruction challenges in Afghanistan calls for a robust U.S. interagency and international effort to assist deployed medical personnel in developing and implementing a detailed, multi-year strategy and reconstruction plan.

However, lack of coordinated long-term planning and engagement by the U.S. Central Command, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization-International Security Assistance Force (NATO-ISAF), CSTC-A, and the U.S. Mission-Afghanistan limited the development of key Afghan civilian health care system capabilities needed to support ANSF. Further, there was confusion among the ANSF medical leadership as to the policy and strategy on integration of Afghan military and police medical functions into a common ANSF medical corps or even whether this was a desirable goal.

Many U.S. and NATO-ISAF medical mentoring teams were not fully manned, particularly those assigned to work with the Afghan police, and the mentors' inadequate training seriously hampered the development of ANSF

medical personnel. Comprehensive pre-deployment training and in-country orientation programs would significantly boost the effectiveness of medical mentoring personnel.

Moreover, restrictive personnel practices for U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force medical personnel assigned to CSTC-A reduced its ability to relocate them to meet changing work requirements in Afghanistan. In addition, specific, prioritized medical objectives that had been synchronized with the appropriate levels of ANSF medical leadership had not been developed for providing mentoring support to ANSF.

An integrated Afghan civil-military-police health care system may not develop upon which a sustainable ANSF health care system must depend. The lack of an effective ANSF health care system would require prolonged combat casualty care assistance by the U.S. and other NATO-ISAF member countries to ANSF, as well as delay its ability to operate independently.

The U.S. Central Command, in coordination with U.S. Mission-Afghanistan, Afghan medical leadership, NATO-ISAF, and multiple interagency and international partners, needs to develop a comprehensive, integrated, multi-year plan to build a sustainable ANSF health care system. DoD and NATO-ISAF medical mentoring teams need to be fully resourced with adequately trained personnel and supported by an interagency reach back capability that coordinates all U.S. government health sector reconstruction activities in Afghanistan.

Command Corrective Actions

In response to the assessment, out-brief and final report, the U.S. Central Command and CSTC-A initiated a number of corrective actions, a few representative examples are detailed below:

- U.S. Central Command issued formal guidance enhancing munitions accountability and control within its area of responsibility. CSTC-A updated standard operating procedures on munitions accountability and control. CSTC-A is also coordinating with the Army Materiel Command Logistics Support Activity organization to develop formal procedures to ensure that serial numbers of weapons provided the ANSF are recorded in the DoD Small Arms/Light Weapons Serialization Program.

- U.S. Central Command initiated action to increase the number of personnel billets within the Security Assistance Office and the rank level of those billets to better align the capability of the office with the mission, size and scope of the security assistance program and level of FMS funding in Afghanistan.

- Further, CSTC-A developed a strategy to improve logistics mentoring communication and coordination by linking its mentors to the ANSF at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

- U.S. Central Command and CSTC-A also agreed to support improved pre-deployment training for medical mentors deploying to Afghanistan.

Recommendations

Prior to publication of the final report, management had concurred with 56 of the 71 recommendations. They have concurred with ten more since the issuance of the final report. The following five recommendations were either rejected or require additional follow-up action.

Recommendation S.2. We recommended that the Surgeon General of the Air Force change the Joint Force and ad-hoc medical personnel practices within the U.S. Air Force to ensure that the CSTC-A Command Surgeon has the maximum flexibility necessary to assign Air Force personnel where needed to accomplish the medical mentoring mission in Afghanistan.

Recommendation U. We recommended that the Commander, CSTC-A advise the Ministry of Defense and the Afghanistan National Army General Staff that Supply Class VIII medical logistics should remain under the control of the Afghanistan National Army Surgeon General.

Recommendation W.1.b. We recommended that the Commander, U.S. Central Command, establish a Command Surgeon position at the grade of O-7 on the staff of the Commander, US Forces-Afghanistan, to proactively coordinate all Defense Department health sector activities in Afghanistan, including:

Oversight of long-term joint planning, coordination, and development of the ANSF health care system with U.S. Mission-Afghanistan, across all NATO-ISAF components, with NATO-ISAF member nations, and with NATO Allied Command Operations;

Advocating for resources and authorities to properly develop sustainable civilian health sector capacity where needed to support the ANSF.

- Oversight of ANSF medical mentoring and training across all ISAF components, with NATO-ISAF member nations, and with NATO Allied Command Operations, as further described in Recommendation T.4.

Recommendation W.1.e. (This recommendation was originally directed to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs. After we evaluated the

management comments, we re-directed it to U.S. Central Command.) We recommended that the Commander, U.S. Central Command prepare, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, and the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management & Comptroller), an Afghanistan Security Forces Fund spending plan that includes a separate medical budget category and submit to the United States Congress to request appropriated funding for building and improving civilian Afghan health care systems that adequately complement and support the Afghanistan National Security Forces health care system.

Recommendation W.4. We recommended that the Deputy Secretary of Defense designate the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs as the lead to:

a. Develop policy for all Defense Department stability operations with a medical component, health-related security and health sector reconstruction activities, medical capacity building, and medical components of humanitarian assistance and disaster response actions;

b. Develop policy to form strategic partnerships and cooperative mechanisms with other U.S. Government agencies for stability operations with a medical component, health-related security and health sector reconstruction activities, medical capacity building, and medical components of humanitarian assistance and disaster response actions;

c. Develop, in cooperation with other U.S. Government agencies and non-governmental organizations, non-kinetic strategies for Combatant Commanders and U.S. Embassy country teams to use medical resources in stability operations with a medical component, health-related security and health sector reconstruction activities, medical capacity building, and

medical components of humanitarian assistance and disaster response actions.

d. Develop measures of performance and outcomes to meet end state goals;

e. Identify and program for resources required to support these tasks.

Way Forward

A Special Plans and Operations assessment team will return to Afghanistan in March 2009 to determine the status of corrective actions being implemented as a result of the recommendations in our report issued in October 2008 and to initiate new work.

The team will specifically evaluate:

- Strategic planning in Afghanistan by determining whether U.S. government, coalition, and Afghan Ministry of Defense goals, objectives, plans, and guidance to train, equip, and field the expanded Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police are appropriate and sufficiently resourced.

- Whether the current system of accountability and control over munitions U.S. forces are supplying the ANSF is adequate.

- Whether U.S. government, coalition, and Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior goals, objectives, plans, and guidance to develop a sustainable ANSF health care system are issued and operative; and previous DoD IG recommendations regarding developing and sustaining the ANSF health care system have been implemented.

In addition to this assessment team's work, we are also completing phase III of a series of audits of the Afghanistan National Security Forces. One of the current audits focuses on certain issues related to the accountability of weapons distributed to the Afghanistan National Army and was issued in a draft for management comment on February 11, 2009.

In order to complete assessments, audits, and investigations in Southwest Asia we have adopted a strategy involving permanent staff in-country supplemented by U.S. and Europe-based DoD IG personnel, and visiting teams of auditors, agents, and investigators who serve temporarily in the area as they focus on specific tasks and issues. This is an important part of the DoD IG mission as we attempt to stamp out instances of fraud, waste and abuse in an increasingly heated conflict. We adjust the number of deployed personnel according to the:

- Warfighter's ability to sustain the size of our presence;
- Priority of work being performed;
- Actual workload demands.

We plan our efforts giving full consideration to operational priorities. We are currently maintaining as small a footprint as possible in theater and will continue to coordinate efforts among audit and investigation agencies. We consider it of utmost importance that our teams are given full access and cooperation and be allowed to enter areas of concern in a timely manner independent of the influence of functional area commanders. During a recent review of ground fuels in Southwest Asia, we ran into problems gaining access to four fuel depots in Afghanistan. The review has been delayed and will contain serious scope limitations due to the lack of access to fuel facilities. Access issues such as this result in an inability for us to report independently or conclusively on

management controls. The difficulties we have experienced transporting audit personnel to logistic centers within Afghanistan is causing us to scale back our expeditionary teams and focus on increasing the number of auditors based in Afghanistan.

In this regard, on January 27, 2009, General Petraeus approved our plans to expand our permanent presence in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, and Qatar. Specifically, we are in the process of increasing our permanent presence in theater from 21 to 36 personnel. This will place 12 individuals in Afghanistan, 17 in Iraq, 5 in Qatar, and 2 in Kuwait. This increased ground presence will allow us to more efficiently and effectively conduct assessments, audits, and investigations in the Central Command Area of Responsibility. Our goal is to have the increased presence in place and functioning by the end of April 2009. We intend to re-evaluate our permanent staff levels periodically in light of a potential draw down in Iraq and an anticipated increased presence in Afghanistan. It will be important to take advantage of lessons learned in each country.

Common Challenges

On July 18, 2008, the DoD IG issued a summary report entitled, "Challenges Impacting Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom Reported by Major Oversight Organizations Beginning FY 2003 through FY 2007." The summary effort compiles 302 reports and testimonies given by the Defense Oversight Community and GAO. Our analysis identified that over the course of conducting Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, DoD experienced, at times, significant and recurring challenges in:

- Contract Management,
  - Contract Oversight,
  - Resource Limitations;
- Logistics,
  - Asset Accountability and Visibility,
  - Equipping of Forces;
- Financial Management,
  - Accuracy of Cost Reporting,
  - Accountability.

Further, there were challenges that were common in more than one of the functional areas. Specifically, shortfalls in DoD training as well as in policy and procedures were challenges in more than one functional area.

These areas have been reported as challenges within DoD since the early 1990s; so it is not surprising that DoD is experiencing these challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan. DoD has many initiatives underway that we believe address the challenges DoD is experiencing in its Iraq and Afghanistan operations. These DoD initiatives include issuing updates to the Federal Acquisition Regulation and DoD policies regarding the oversight of deployed contractors, increase in oversight of contractors performing logistical support work, deploying Defense Finance and Accounting Service personnel to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait to support the deployed personnel in financial operations, and assessing which

business operations can be removed from the dangerous areas in theater and be performed in safer locations.

Importance of Coordination. The DoD IG has the primary responsibility within the Department of Defense for providing oversight of defense programs and funds appropriated to the Department at home and around the world, to include Southwest Asia. In this role, the DoD IG office oversees, integrates, and attempts to ensure there are no gaps in the stewardship of DoD resources. We spearhead the DoD oversight community in auditing, investigating, and inspecting accountability processes and internal controls, in areas such as acquisition, contracting, logistics, and financial management.

Southwest Asia Joint Planning Group. The DoD IG jointly established and chairs the interagency Southwest Asia Joint Planning Group. The Joint Planning Group meets quarterly and provides oversight of fraud, waste, abuse, and criminal activities in the Southwest Asia region. The Joint Planning Group allows for coordination and cooperation among the organizations toward the common objective of providing oversight. This unity of effort includes the Military Inspectors General and Service Auditors General, Combatant Commands Inspectors General, the Defense Contract Audit Agency, the Defense Logistics Agency, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, the Defense Contract Management Agency, the Inspectors General of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development, the SIGIR, and the SIGAR. The mission of the Southwest Asia Joint Planning Group is to better coordinate and integrate oversight activities in the region to identify and recommend improved mission support to military units conducting operations. We used the Southwest Asia Joint Planning Group to facilitate the compilation and issuance of the Comprehensive Audit Plan for Southwest Asia in response to the FY 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 110-181), Section 842, "Investigation of Waste, Fraud,

and Abuse in Wartime Contracts and Contracting Processes in Iraq and Afghanistan," January 28, 2008. To enhance the oversight awareness of DoD initiatives that impact the contingency operations, the Joint Planning Group invites DoD functional components, such as the Defense Contract Management Agency and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, to brief their respective initiatives.

Investigative Challenges. As is the case in Iraq, conducting investigations in Afghanistan is exceptionally complicated. Challenges common to both theaters of operation include the complexity of the fraud or corruption schemes, the multi-national and multi-cultural aspect of investigations involving foreign contractors, and the necessity to work with foreign governments and foreign security forces. Also, criminal activity often crosses venues, with actions in furtherance of a criminal venture occurring in Southwest Asia, the United States, and frequently other countries, and concomitantly with evidence spread throughout. Other difficulties include complicated logistics, use of translators, evaluation of foreign evidence, and hefty costs associated with deploying civilian criminal investigators for extended periods of time. Added to these are the restrictions and dangers associated with operational tempo and persistent insurgent activity, the difficulties in locating witnesses who redeploy or leave military service, and precautious transportation restrictions imposed by the U.S. Forces. Despite these challenges, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), the investigative arm of the DoD IG, and its law enforcement partners have assertively pursued the important mission to investigate DoD-related criminal activity concerning fraud and public corruption and to devote substantial resources to projects and investigations designed to proactively identify potential fraud, waste, and abuse relating to Southwest Asia.

International Contract Corruption Task Force. Through conducting investigations in Iraq, investigators have learned it is imperative to utilize a team approach to counter fraud, waste, and abuse, and other crimes associated with contracting such as corruption, conflicts of interest, and major theft. DCIS is but one of several investigative agencies operating within Iraq. DCIS partners with agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command to collectively conduct investigations under the auspices of the ICCTF.

The ICCTF, an offshoot of the National Procurement Fraud Task Force, was formed in November 2006, to specifically target fraud and corruption involving Southwest Asia. The primary goal of the ICCTF is to combine the resources of multiple investigative agencies to effectively and efficiently investigate and prosecute cases of contract fraud and public corruption related to U.S. government spending in Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan. The ICCTF created a Joint Operations Center (JOC) in furtherance of achieving maximum interagency cooperation.

The JOC, which is located in Washington, D.C., serves as the nerve center for the collection and sharing of intelligence regarding corruption and fraud relating to funding for the Global War on Terrorism. The JOC coordinates intelligence-gathering, de-conflicts case work and deployments, disseminates intelligence, and provides analytic and logistical support for the ICCTF agencies to enhance criminal prosecutions and crime-prevention. The JOC is the vital link into the entire intelligence community and provides a repository from which to disseminate intelligence indicative of criminal activity. Case information and criminal intelligence are shared, and accomplishments are reported jointly. The agency heads meet regularly to collectively provide policy, direction, and oversight. The ICCTF is now engaged in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kuwait.

It is anticipated that the SIGAR will join the ICCTF ranks in the immediate future. The other IG partners of the ICCTF are SIGIR, State Department OIG, and USAID OIG.

Closing

We are committed to providing effective and meaningful oversight that assists DoD to address its challenges in conducting operations, safeguarding and deterring taxpayer monies from waste, fraud, and abuse, and most importantly, ensuring our brave military, civilian, coalition, contractors and the Iraqi and Afghanistan citizens supporting a free and sovereign democratic state are as safe as possible. We recognize there is a vast and important mission to support DoD's efforts and are proud to be part of this historic and important effort. This office is on firm footing to provide the necessary oversight. We thank the Committee for the opportunity to discuss our ongoing efforts and observations regarding Afghanistan and look forwarding to continuing our strong working relationship with all oversight organizations engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan.

APPENDIX

Other DoD Inspector General Efforts in Afghanistan

Investigations

The DCIS has completed 4 investigations related to Afghanistan. Two of the investigations were completed in Afghanistan (one regarding the theft of fuel and one regarding bribery), and the other two were completed in the continental U.S. (one regarding product substitution and one regarding conflict of interest issues).

DCIS has 31 ongoing investigations related to Afghanistan. The chart below provides some insight into the types on ongoing investigations.

6 being worked in Afghanistan

Bribery	2
Bid Rigging	1
Gratuities (contracting official)	1
Conflict of Interest	1
Contractor/Subcontractor Kickback	1

25 being worked from offices outside of Afghanistan

False Claims/False Statements	5
Product Substitution	4
Cost/Labor Mischarging	4
Bribery: Contracting Official	3
Illegal Technology Transfer	2
Attempted Bribery of a Government Official	1
Theft of Equipment (weapon)	1
Theft of Funds	1
Theft of Fuel	1
Contractor/Subcontractor Kickback	1
Antitrust Violation	1
Terrorism Related Act	1

Audit

We have completed 8 audits that directly relate to operations in Afghanistan and have 9 more audits in progress directly relating to Afghanistan. The following are a few examples of completed and ongoing audit work in Afghanistan.

Completed

- Implementation of the Commanders' Emergency Response Program in Afghanistan, February 2007
- Phase I of the audit of the Distribution of the Funds and Validity of Obligations for the Management of the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund, November 2007
- DoD Support to the NATO International Security Assistance Force, February 2008
- Contractor Support to the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization in Afghanistan, March 2008
- Contingency Construction Contracting Procedures Implemented by the Joint Contracting Command-Iraq/Afghanistan, September 2008
- Procurement and Use of Nontactical Vehicles at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, October 2008
- Air Force Real Property Accountability, December 2008

- Distribution of Funds and the Validity of Obligations for the Management of the Afghanistan Security Forces-Phase II, February 2009

Planned/Ongoing

- Accountability of Weapons Distributed to the Afghanistan National Army.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Real Property Accountability
- Accountability of Equipment Purchased for the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army.
- Class III Fuel Procurement in Southwest Asia
- Controls Over Contractor Common Access Cards in the U.S. Central Command
- Purchasing and Leasing of Vehicles in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom
- Funds Appropriated for Afghanistan and Iraq Processed Through the Foreign Military Sales Trust Fund
- Management and Accountability of Property Purchased at Regional Contracting Centers in Afghanistan
- Medical Equipment Used to Support Operations in Southwest Asia

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you Mr. Gimble.

Mr. Schneider, if we might hear from you, please.

STATEMENT OF MARK SCHNEIDER, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP

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

Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the International Crisis Group, but even more for your continuing focus on these key issues relating to Afghanistan and Pakistan, because they will determine whether or not we will succeed or fail in combating Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

If I might, I would like to begin, if I could, with just a brief comment about the final phrase in the title of today's hearings, strategic challenges, because the international community does face strategic challenges in building competent and effective security forces and in stemming the increasing ability of the Taliban and the Al Qaeda allies who threaten the lives of the Afghan people and the security of Afghan state institutions, as we tragically saw yesterday, and thus once more pose a direct danger to the United States and the West.

Strategic incoherence and inadequate coordination, here in Washington, in Kabul, within the U.S. military, between the military and civilian government agencies, and between the United States and its international partners in Kabul are fatal to success in confronting the Taliban insurgency. The results of that strategic chaos have played out across Afghanistan over the past 7 years.

Just this last month, actually, the Security Council returned for a trip to Afghanistan and it reiterated a report that some 7,000 security incidents had occurred in the first 10 months of 2008. That compared to 508 in 2003.

The U.N. also reported that in September, 13 districts were under the control of the Taliban. Another 90 were under extreme risk. Extreme risk means that neither the U.N. nor the Afghan government can undertake reconstruction activities in those districts at all. Now there are an additional 90 that are—additional number that are at high risk—I think there is a map.

This was the situation in 2003. All of the blue were low risk areas where you could carry out, independently, reconstruction activities. The yellow were medium risk and the salmon were high risk. And then if we can see, that—no, go back to that following map to show quickly the difference. The second map, please.

That one. That shows you the difference. All of the salmon colored districts are now dubbed extreme risk, meaning no reconstruction activities can be independently carried out there, and the light pink go back to the high risk. The U.N. had to divide high and extreme risk because of the increased inability to carry out activities. And the fact is that at this point, every international observer, every U.S. military commander from General Mullen to Secretary Gates has agreed that the situation is deteriorating.

In fact, General Petraeus said a few weeks ago that the situation has deteriorated markedly in the past 2 years, and the reason is worsening security, escalating corruption, and higher levels of opium trafficking. And that is why it is crucial—you said in your

beginning statement—that we begin to get a clear overall unifying strategy.

General Fields, the new Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, said that there is no overarching, unified strategy for Afghanistan. Unless we have that strategy that covers security, governance, reconstruction, with transparent benchmarks, there is no way that we are going to be successful in helping the Afghan government achieve the level of security and reconstruction necessary to essentially defeat a still very active, very well financed insurgency.

Now let me just note if I could, Mr. Chairman, that we do have information that there are, as you have heard, three reports under way to put together a strategy, and I gather that the president has asked the Security Council to coordinate a single report and set of recommendations from those three, and I think that is crucial. We think that is absolutely essential, to have a single overarching strategy with benchmarks and that the Afghan government buys into and that we all are held accountable for.

Now if I could, I will just turn quickly to the police report that you mentioned and that we wanted to focus on, and I will discuss our findings. You have heard some of them mentioned here today.

Our first report in August 2007 indicated total collapse of all the efforts to produce a functioning Afghan National Police. The GAO conducted an excellent study last year which noted that despite the appropriations of $6 billion, none of the 433 police units at that point were fully capable of stand alone performance.

The good news, I understand, is at the end of this year, that first column, which indicates the various units—that is the uniform police districts, the border police battalions, civil order police battalions, counter-narcotics units, a total of 433—at the time that the first study was done, none were fully capable. Now I understand that some 18 are. But even so, we are talking about 18 out of 433, and very few at the district level. That is mostly ANCOP, that is the civil order battalions.

Now let me just add here that while there have been positive developments, you have a new Interior Minister, a new Attorney General, a new European Union Police Commander, and you have the Focused District Development Program, which I think has some chance of succeeding if the resources necessary are brought to bear in order to carry out that program.

Just this last month, the U.S. Commander said that he lacks, with respect to the police, 2,300 trainers and mentors. That is at least more than a third of what he needs to carry out the task of training the police. And I think it is important, as you have heard from my two colleagues, if you don't have effective command and control over those police forces and you don't have systems in place, those weapons are simply not going to be able to be secured.

And let me just note one other point here. This is, again, in our last report. There are 80,000 police names on the roster that are being paid, mostly by the United States, but by the international police fund. On any given day, 20 percent of those supposed 80,000 police officers are absent from duty. Another 17 percent listed on the rolls are actually the names of dead or wounded police officers as a means of providing pensions and benefits to the family.

The question is, of those who are—let's say somewhere in the neighborhood of 20,000 to 30,000 police who are not there—the U.N. actually says there are about 55,000 police in the field—the question of where those weapons of those police went is a significant question. There is one other question. The reports that have been done refer to the Afghan Security Forces. What about the auxiliary police, the 11,000 that were started up 2 years ago, only 3,000 of whom currently are found, and I mean found. Were they given weapons? If so, where are they?

And finally, there is a proposal now to startup a new community guard program outside of the structure of the police in the Pashtun areas. Without going to the question of the rationale for doing that as opposed to devoting your resources to in fact staff up, train, and mentor and equip the Afghan National Police effectively, the question is are those weapons being given to those guards and those communities—are they being monitored and controlled? I should also note they are actually getting paid more than the local Afghan police. We have serious questions about that program.

So what do we say in terms of what needs to be done? First, the fundamental issue is focusing on police as police, not as war fighters. Their role is to uphold the law and fight crime, not to fight wars. Putting police in the front lines against the Taliban has resulted in three times more police than army troops killed last year. That not only hurts morale, but it obviously hurts recruitment. It makes it very difficult to maintain a successful police force.

The basic requirements for reversing these conditions begin with ensuring that police reform occurs within the larger state-building effort, that you clearly define and respect the roles and responsibility of the police, military, intelligence agencies, that you ensure that the international police and coordination board, which is shared by the Ministry of Interior with international involvement, including us, that it does—is permitted to coordinate policy and that there is parallel reforms in justice as well.

This is essential. If we don't build the police, we are not going to have a rule of law, we are not going to have an effective government, and we are not going to succeed in confronting the insurgency.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Schneider follows:]

Testimony by Mark L. Schneider, Senior Vice President, International Crisis Group to the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives "Training and Equipping Afghan Security Forces: Unaccounted Weapons and Strategic Challenges."

12 February 2009
Washington, DC

I want to thank the Chairman Congressman John Tierney and the Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to offer testimony today to the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs on the topic of "Training and Equipping Afghan Security Forces: Unaccounted Weapons and Strategic Challenges." On behalf of the International Crisis Group, I also want to express our appreciation for the Subcommittee's continued exploration of key issues that relate to success or failure in combating al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

If I might, Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin with the final phrase in the title of today's hearing: strategic challenges. The international community faces strategic challenges in building competent and effective security forces and in stemming the increased ability of the Taliban and their al Qaeda allies to threaten the lives of the Afghan people and the security of Afghan state institutions—as we tragically saw yesterday--and thus once more pose a direct danger to the U.S. and the West generally.

Strategic incoherence and inadequate coordination here in Washington and in Kabul within the U.S. military, between the military and civilian government agencies and between the U.S. and its international partners in Kabul are fatal to success in confronting the Taliban insurgency. The results of that strategic chaos have played out across Afghanistan over the past seven years.

The UN Security Council reported in November 2008, 6,792 security incidents through the first ten months last year, compared to 508 in 2003. The UN also reported last September that some 12 districts were under the control of the Taliban, about 50 considered high risk where humanitarian access is intermittent and another 90 at extreme risk—meaning that neither the government, the UN and the international donor community nor NGOs—has access for humanitarian or development projects. In fact, in December, the UN Security Council after traveling to Afghanistan reported that "Almost 40 per cent of Afghanistan is either permanently or temporarily inaccessible to governmental and non-governmental aid."

We also have heard nearly every military commander, from General McKiernan to General Mullen to Secretary Gates pessimistically point to the trend lines moving in the wrong direction unless there are fundamental changes in policy. According to

CENTCOM Commander General David Petraeus, Afghanistan "has deteriorated markedly in the past two years," a result of worsening security, escalating corruption and high levels of opium trafficking.

That is why we are hopeful about the White House announcement this week that Bruce Riedel will chair with co-chairs Amb. Richard Holbrooke at State and Under-Secretary Michele Flournoy at Defense a full strategy review for the President taking into account the three reports on Afghanistan/Pakistan being prepared by General Lute at the NSC, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and General Petraeus. The President needs a single set of recommendations that will constitute what General Fields' January 30, 2009 SIGAR report to the Congress describes as an "overarching, unified strategy" for Afghanistan. The strategy must be integrated and encompass security, governance and reconstruction in Afghanistan—with transparent benchmarks—and ultimately all parties, including the Afghan government must buy into it and be held accountable for its execution.

The International Crisis Group has been recognized as the pre-eminent non-partisan, non-governmental source of field-based analysis, policy advice and advocacy to governments, the United Nations, and other multilateral organizations on the prevention and resolution of deadly conflict. Crisis Group publishes annually around 90 reports and briefing papers, covering 60 countries as well as the monthly *CrisisWatch* bulletin. Our staff is located on the ground in twelve regional offices and seventeen other locations in or near crisis zones around the world, with four advocacy offices, in Brussels (the global headquarters), Washington, London and New York; and liaison presences in Moscow and Beijing. Our South Asia regional office is in Islamabad and we have had an office in Kabul since shortly after the Taliban was removed in 2001.

I have attached a one-page annex which describes briefly a series of Crisis Group reports over recent years on Afghanistan which we believe point to ways forward in many areas critical to reversing the current downward spiral of insecurity and violence.

Let me discuss our findings with respect to building a national police force able to uphold the rule of law. In our first report examining this issue in August 2007 we found almost total collapse of the national police, with a widespread culture of impunity, the police often a source of fear rather than security, and an absence of international agreement or coordination of multiple training programs. The GAO conducted an excellent study last year, which noted that despite the appropriations of $6.2 billion none of the 433 police units were fully capable of stand-alone performance. Using that same test, the Pentagon reported at the end of 2008 that still only 18, most of them the Afghanistan National Civil Order (ANCOP) police units, were deemed fully capable.

This past December 2008, we published our follow-on report. While we note a welcome increase in financial resource commitments of $3.8 b. for 2007 and 2008 (and another $1 b. for FY2009) a significant portion of that money has yet to be disbursed. Again the naming in late 2008 of a new interior minister and a new attorney general are also steps forward along with the arrival of a new respected EU police commander and increased

UN focus on the issue. The European Union Policing Mission still holds nominal lead in the area although its efforts continue to be dwarfed by those of the U.S.

Between our reports, the major change was the launching of the U.S.-led Focused District Development program designed to identify, train, mentor and equip law enforcement personnel district-by-district law. It is an essential first step at grassroots level to establish what police are deployed and to ensure that they have some basic skills along with needed equipment. However, progress has been slow. Given the resources expended, there has been too little progress in terms of police accountability or effectiveness:

- the previous U.S. commander said that he lacks an estimated 2300 trainers and mentors; (Even if he received those trainers, the estimate was the re-training process would take at least five years. After one year it has reached 50 of 350 districts, but only 33 have completed the re-training.) The new Pentagon report a few weeks ago acknowledged that mentoring teams can only reach 25% of all ANP organizations and units. It is hard to understand why--with 675,000 police officers in the U.S. and an estimated 10% in the military reserve or national guard--we cannot find a way to get the necessary police trainers into the field—perhaps by shifting their reserve specialties from infantrymen or cooks to police trainers.
- the training periods are extremely short –for comparison purposes consider that we require 28 weeks to train a Haitian policeman and just eight in Afghanistan;
- despite its nominal lead, the EU also has failed to provide needed personnel or resources; and
- the failure to root out corrupt interference in police appointments and in operations undermines morale. (On any give day, about 20% of the supposed 80,000 police officers were absent from duty—another 17% are listed on the rolls but are actually the names of dead or wounded police, but remain there so their families will receive a paycheck.)

Perhaps as disturbing as the lack of financial and human resources has been the lack of an understanding of the basic function of civilian police; police officers are not warfighters. Their role is to uphold the law and fight crime and not to fight wars. Putting police in the front lines against the Taliban has resulted in three times more police than army troops killed last year, hurting morale and depressing recruitment.

The basic requirements for reversing these conditions begin with:

- ensuring that police reform occurs within larger state-building efforts;
- clearly defining and respecting the roles and responsibilities of the police, military and intelligence agencies; law enforcement needs to be at the very core of police training and reform;
- coordinating U.S. efforts and ensuring policy agreement from the International Policing Coordination Board, chaired by the Minister of Interior and with UNAMA, ISAF, NATO, the U.S. Embassy, CSTC-A, EUSR and EC representatives;.

- parallel reform and links with prosecutors offices and the justice sector (I cannot emphasize how important it is to ensure at least some progress can be seen in the broader criminal justice system so that if the police force arrests drug traffickers, they are tried and, if found guilty, go to jail for a long, long time. This of course also goes to the much larger issue of the U.S. not having one single agency responsible for police and justice reform efforts internationally—either in post conflict situations or in fragile states to help prevent conflict);
- engaging civil society, particularly women's organizations, and promoting some linkages to civilian accountability mechanisms; and
- focus on the community policing requirements to build trust and credibility, perhaps by linking the returned, trained police forces to the teams.

Building competent and effective police forces should be of equal concern to the goal of building an Afghan National Army, and in terms of the daily lives of Afghan families, is even more important. I would hope that the end of the current review of U.S. strategy for Afghanistan will raise the priority attached to establishing an effective Afghan National Police force within a functioning rule of law.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you, Mr. Schneider, thank all of the witnesses for your testimony. We are going to proceed at this point in time to questions from the panel.

For all of you, it seems that—we certainly thought that the lessons of Iraq would be carried over to Afghanistan without much difficulty. It seemed to be common sense that you would want to make sure you knew where your weapons were going.

And I note that on the Government Accountability Office report, Mr. Johnson, you say that in January 2009, just earlier this year, Defense directed the Defense Security Cooperation Agency to lead an effort to establish a weapons registration and monitoring system in Afghanistan consistent with controls mandated by Congress for weapons provided to Iraq.

So if they follow through on that, you would think that at least that portion, of which the United States has direct control over the weapons, can be rectified and taken care of. Weapons flown into Kabul would then get the serial numbers at that point in time, monitor the transportation, which was not being done—monitor the transportation from the airport to the two storage facilities, one for the army and one for the police, maintain it securely, and keep an inventory and do regular inventory checks while they are there, and then when they are distributed, I think that becomes the problem. Would you agree?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes, I think if that was implemented, that goes a long way toward what we have called for. What is missing, though, from our interpretation of the NDA requirements is that there is no requirement for routine physical inventory. We think that is significant, that needs to be done to deal with the issue of port security and potential theft and loss of those weapons out of the storage depots.

Mr. TIERNEY. So taking inventory periodically during the time that they are stored in those depots? Makes sense.

Mr. JOHNSON. Correct, that is the one additional thing.

Mr. TIERNEY. And I think we should be able to do that. In conversations with General Formica and his staff, they seem to be on that and ready to implement, even though they do run into difficulties there in terms of staffing, and they weren't able to give us any assurances that they would continue to have adequate staff to do that.

And then we run into the problem of the Afghan forces. If they are going to supplement that, we run into illiteracy problems and numeracy problems on that, problems of people not showing up for work, people leaving after they have been trained, corruption. We noticed in I think Mr. Schneider's report as well as others that oftentimes it was the police chief that was mentioned of the logistics officer locally that was mentioned in corruption reports. So weapons may be going out the door for monetary compensation at that level.

As Mr. Schneider says, people are leaving after they have the weapons, just leaving the force and taking the weapon with them. We had incidents reported to us, a cultural thing I suspect, is that when people came in with their AK–47, throw it on a pile, go have lunch, come back out, take any AK–47. So it is a little tough to

check the serial numbers that were on that, because that is a way that they are done.

So knowing that we have all those difficulties and difficulties in securing the weapons once they are in the police's and army's hand, corruption, etc., what are your prospects? What do you think the prospects are for getting a handle on this to gain assurance that weapons can be accounted for all the way through, and what timeframe do you think is going to be involved in getting to that point in time?

Mr. JOHNSON. If I may—and I think my colleagues would agree, but they can weigh in—I think the key to success or some progress in this area is the fulfilling of the military personnel shortages. I think until that is addressed, I really don't think that CSTC-A, in terms of its ability to complete its objective or training or mentoring the Afghan Security Forces in getting this done could be accomplished.

Mr. TIERNEY. Well like so much else, I'm interrupting your question, Mr. Gimble, here on that. But like so much else, we had testimony last year that told us that they were 2,500 short, at least, on mentors, and much more when it came to trainers. They were all in Iraq, like so much else had been diverted instead of having a focus on Afghanistan. Do we see any signs of that changes, of those numbers increasing with any systematic approach to it?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well we do understand, and we do have some ongoing work underway looking at the efforts to reform the Afghan National Police in particular. And we know that currently the situation is that there are really no dedicated resources for the training of the police. They are taking resources from the efforts to train the army to actually undertake the efforts to train the police.

So obviously I think with the plans going forward, that is a policy decision in terms of where these additional resources that are slated to come to Afghanistan are going to be put. We do know that CSTC-A has made a request for specific forces to fill these particular positions.

Mr. TIERNEY. And CSTC-A envisions, from what they were telling us, some 14 to 16 mentors and people out in each team with each district police department as they go out to mentor and stay there for security purposes so they can do the policing work, and they were well short of that.

Mr. JOHNSON. That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TIERNEY. So Mr. Schneider, that leads me to the question. You mentioned in your testimony that we are not doing an effective job of looking through our National Guard troops for people who are police and do have some background in law and order and sort of integrating them or transferring them to these positions. Do you see any movement in that area?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Well I must admit, Mr. Chairman, that I have asked several people in the military about this. They all agree, obviously. There are some 675,000 civilian police around the United States in different places. A good 10 percent, at least, they estimate, if not more, are in the Reserves or in the National Guard.

But they are not formed in police training units. They have signed up for doing other things in their Reserve, whether it is driving trucks or being infantrymen. And the question is is wheth-

er or not they would have to change their contract. And I suggested that—the President of the United States said that if this is important for national security, that some way would be found for the contracts to be changed. But there is no way this is going to succeed if you don't get those trainers and mentors out there.

Mr. TIERNEY. Russia spent 10 years in Afghanistan trying to do the same thing we are trying to do, buildup the Afghan National Security Forces, and they failed. What are the prospects, on a zero to 100 scale, each of the witnesses, quickly, you think that we have to succeed in the next 3 to 5 years? Mr. Johnson.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Chairman, we were here last June and we reported on the limited numbers. One—I think it was two for the Afghan National Army being fully capable and none, as Mr. Schneider has mentioned, for the police. We are aware that there has been some progress made in both the areas. So under some of the revised training efforts like the Focused District Development Program, which you seem to be aware of when you mentioned the police mentor teams, they are making progress.

But again, I go back to the point that unless those military personnel are provided to success and continued success in terms of furthering—make progress in their area, it will be a challenge.

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Gimble.

Mr. GIMBLE. I would agree with Mr. Johnson. But I think the challenge will be is that there can be progress, there will be progress made. Now when you put it in absolute terms of 100 percent success, I am not prepared to have an opinion on that at this point. But I do think there is increased emphasis and I think that is good, and there are just going to be a lot of challenges ahead.

Mr. JOHNSON. If I may jump back in again, one other point. Again, going back to when we made this point in June when we did the work for your subcommittee then, we made a specific matter for congressional consideration, and that dealt with the fact that we felt like there needed to be a coordinated, detailed plan between the U.S. Department of Defense and State Department to make sure that we have sufficient milestones and benchmarks to measure progress, and we have not seen that. Again, I think that is still an integral part of going forward that needs to be addressed.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you. Mr. Schneider.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I'm afraid I'm going to be even more pessimistic. Unless there is a major change—because you are not going to be able to—even if you get the trainers, you are not going to be able to succeed in establishing an effective police force if the rest—if it's alone. It has to be part of an overall process of expanding the capacity of the government. If you just have the police and judges throw out everybody that they arrest and—it is not going to work. So it needs to be part of a rule of law.

Now do I think it is possible to increase that number on the board from, let's say, 18 to 100? Yes, I think it is. And I think that we need to find a way to have a benchmark, sort of a critical path that says "In 3 years we want to be here. What do we have to do to get there?" And if that means 3,000 police trainers and mentors on the ground 3 months from now, then we have to figure out how to do it.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you very much. Thank all of you. Mr. Flake, you are recognized.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the chairman and the witnesses.

Mr. Johnson, you mentioned the importance of inventory with the depot, saying we don't seem to have a problem with the munitions and the arms as they go from transport to the depot, and you recommend inventory that we haven't been doing. Does that inventory just apply to the arms there in the depot or in those warehouses, or an inventory of those that have gone out and that they can keep track of?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well a couple points in response to that.

One, there is actually a problem before it even gets to the source depot. The equipment is flown in to Kabul, and what we discovered—and the team that went there, what we discovered was that once it gets in Kabul, there is no shipping manifest of CSTC-A to actually do inventory to make certain that it received what it should have received. So even before it gets to the storage depot there is a weakness there.

In addition, the U.S. basically hands over custody, or the Afghan forces actually deliver the equipment to the storage depot. So we basically do not retain custody, even though I believe at that point—correct me if I'm wrong, counsel—we have title of the equipment. We give it over to the Afghan security force to actually transport it to the source depot, which we are managing the source depot even though it is intended for the Afghan Security Forces to benefit.

So there are a couple of things here where we see some gaps and weaknesses. Yes, there is a critical point, but we think it needs to be at least checked when it comes in country as well as full inventory done routinely at the storage depot.

Mr. FLAKE. But in terms of inventory once it goes out in the field, this inventory you are talking about doing, that would entail keeping track of those that are in the field through serial numbers, that at a certain point, a certain date, they have to account for those as well?

Mr. JOHNSON. At a minimum, what should be known as a record of the location and disposition of those items. If you deliver it to the Afghan Security Forces or somewhere else, then at least having a record of where it went to is important, and that did not exist.

In addition, when we talk about sensitive devices such as the night vision devices we mentioned earlier, there was no inventory of those. There is an enhanced end-use monitoring requirement for those specific devices because they have sensitive technology, and that was not done prior to us coming to Kabul.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Schneider mentioned the auxiliary forces, different units completely, and that there is no accounting for the weapons that were issued there. Do you have any idea?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well we did not specifically look at it by unit, by police unit. In particular, we do know, sort of—somewhat of an update, that there were plans—again, I mentioned that we have someone going to look at reform of the police. The auxiliary police forces are being folded within the rest of the Afghan National Police Forces through a vetting process that they are going through.

So specifically with respect to their specific equipment, we cannot look at it by unit, but as a whole.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Schneider, you mentioned that the attrition rate for the Afghan police was 21 percent or so, another 17 percent on the rolls that may or may not be active. What is the attrition rate for the Afghan army?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I don't have that——

Mr. FLAKE. I seem to recall when I was there that was a similar figure, in the 20 percent range.

Any, I would think, serious inventory would require a lot of coordination with the Afghan government, obviously, and cooperation. Do you see that imminent? You don't seem to be very optimistic that is coming.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I think that you have identified one of the fundamental issues here, which is that there has to be an absolute marriage between our efforts to stand up and to train and equip the Afghan National Security Forces, police and military, and the Afghan government in terms of their goals and their determination to have an independent, non-corrupt police force. And as the chairman mentioned, until we get the satisfaction that they are not naming police chiefs who are linked to drugs, as one example, this is not going to work.

And I should just add on that point, there is a body which was designed and agreed to by the Afghan government and the international community called the Senior Appointments Review Commission, I believe, and that was designed to, in a sense, have an opportunity to weed out these individuals before they are named. That body has been almost defunct. That is the kind of institutional mechanism that we need to say "If we are going to continue providing this support, that has to be there, and it has to be acting to prevent corrupt police chiefs from being named."

Mr. FLAKE. If you will indulge me, Mr. Gimble, what should the remedy be if we don't get that cooperation and we still find that we are unable to account for the weapons that are issued? What should the remedy be? What are our choices?

Mr. GIMBLE. Well my version of the accountability goes like this. There are a couple of levels.

The part that Mr. Johnson talked about is the chain of custody from receipt in the country to the depot, and I totally agree with his analysis of that. The breakdown is there, but I think the issue of the weapons that have already been issued out, what we have to do there is we have to train our mentors out there to have the Afghans determine their own system of accountability, and we need to have a record of where we turned the weapons over to an Afghan unit.

But we also have a responsibility to have the Afghans to have their own accountability system for trying to develop their capabilities, the army or the police, and that will be one of the parts of the plan. And we talked about the strategic plan, and I'm going to be a little bit more narrow focused than that.

But in the CSTC-A arena, we had been critical in our report of October that there was no central plan for logistics, sustainment, and what have you. There were seven draft plans out, and we rec-

ommended that they get a single integrated plan that would bring this together.

What part of that plan would be, as we have done in Iraq when we looked at weapons accountability there, we have actually gone back down and followup and go down to the units when there was handoff in inventory to the Iraqi storerooms to see what kind of accountability they had. We have a team going back into theater in March, and one of the tasks will be hopefully that we can get down to some Afghan units to see how well we are encouraging them to develop their own accountability systems.

Mr. FLAKE. Thank you.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you Mr. Flake. Mr. Driehaus, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DRIEHAUS. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

I got to tell you, as a new member of this committee, I am very disturbed by this report, and I think the average American would be very disturbed by this report. You would think that given the experience in Iraq, we would certainly have the systems in place to track these weapons.

I guess I have a couple of questions. First of all, give me the worst case. I'm sure we are all looking at this from the worst case scenario. Are these weapons falling into the hands of the Taliban or Al Qaeda, and is there any evidence to suggest that in fact has happened? Despite all the various concerns we have in terms of tracking and monitoring, do we have any evidence that in fact these weapons are getting into the hands of hostile forces?

Mr. JOHNSON. There are reports that we have looked at, some of the mentor reports, the contract mentor reports that are done when they actually do some of the assessments of the Afghan Security Force's capability to account for things. Some of those reports have had some allegations that reported the theft of weapons and potentially weapons being sold to enemies.

Mr. DRIEHAUS. I guess given that, when I look at this tracking system as it has been described, is there a better way to do this? Not just in accounting and putting the necessary personnel in place to make sure that we are monitoring and accounting for the weapons as they move forward given the serial numbers. But, you know, we all have cell phones here that can be tracked quite easily using sophisticated technology. Is there better technology that the military could be using in order to track their weapons rather than the serial numbers that they are currently using?

Mr. GIMBLE. I'm not aware of a better one. I think there has to be discipline in the system. And if you go back and compare the U.S. military and how they track the serial number and what have you, it works very well, there is accountability control.

What we have here in this—and part of the challenge here was that—and going back, when you talk about Iraq and Afghanistan, some of the reasons that we didn't learn the lessons and carry them over to Afghanistan, because they were happening at the same time. And the problems that you had in Iraq with weapons accountability, you had the same problems happening in Afghanistan at the same time.

So I think the other part of the challenge is a lot of these weapons that we are getting the serial control on, is there was never

agreement. There was a lack of understanding on the part of the folks in theater that the DOD accountability rules applied.

And you mentioned, Chairman, in your opening remarks about the Undersecretary of Defense's letter of August 2008. Well that actually was a result of our first report, and what that really says, in my view, is that he is telling the people in theater that the DOD policies and procedures that we go by apply to all the weapons that we buy with U.S. moneys. And that was kind of a point of misunderstanding up until then. As a result of that, now we have been able to start moving forward with the good policies.

There is a next challenge to that. Now you can have a great policy, but you got to have implementation. One of the challenges in Afghanistan, when I was over there, was that they did have what they called a core INS, a cell phone tracking system. The problem there was it wasn't being very well input and there was no quality assurance that you didn't have duplicate numbers.

There is another challenge. A large number of these weapons coming in are Eastern block weapons, AK–47s, and they don't have the serialized discipline that the U.S. arms manufacturers have. You have a lot of duplicate numbers, non-number characters that the systems won't pick up, so part of the challenge of getting control of this is determining how to best deal with those kinds of issues too.

So it is a real challenge to get back out and recreate this. But I think there is efforts on the way, and we are hoping to go back in March and see some progress in that area.

Mr. DRIEHAUS. I think, finally, Mr. Chairman, that we all understand the necessity to be arming the security forces and the police forces in Afghanistan, but there is, I think, a very real question as to whether or not we should continue given the problems that you have identified. It doesn't make sense that we would continue to deliver weapons into the country without having these systems in place, and should we stop delivery of weapons for a certain period of time until we are assured and the taxpayers are assured that in fact the systems are in place?

Mr. JOHNSON. I think the plan going forward is actually to do that. Defense has agreed to implement our recommendation, has already taken steps to do so. We are aware that in 2008 there was a recommendation that more needs to be done by the commanding general.

There was a policy implemented for the police in particular that no weapons could be issued to the police without assurance that they are able to properly account for and safeguard those weapons. We have not went back in to specifically test that, but that was their new policy.

And under their new Focused District Development Program, their training effort, that is a part of that whole effort, where they are training as a unit and then trying to ensure that they have sufficient controls in place to safeguard and account for weapons.

Mr. DRIEHAUS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TIERNEY. If I might just ask something.

Congress passed a law regarding Iraq, asking for a certification before the arms went out, as to the status on that. Has anybody

been back, either the Inspector General's Office or the GAO to see how that is going in Iraq?

Mr. GIMBLE. We had a number of those recommendations. You passed the legislation, I think, when we had come back from a—let me just give you kind of an update on what we saw last year. When we went in in 2007, we made recommendations to list the serial numbers of weapons on the outside of the cases, have the manifest that Mr. Johnson was talking about provided into the receiving area.

So last May we were able to—I actually led the team back over there. We went out an inventoried weapons at Abu Ghraib. We looked at the serial numbers on the outside of the case, opened some of the cases and counted them, had a pretty good accuracy rate.

We went down also—we back into the Iraqi areas like in Baghdad Police College and some of the police colleges up in Kurdistan and inventoried weapons on hand there both in the arms rooms and then also in the—in Baghdad Police College there is a central storage place for the police. And while they weren't perfect, there was a lot of progress being made, and there was some accountability being established. Now we intend to go back again to followup on those by going back into the things.

Our Afghanistan part of that trip was initially—well actually we went to Depot 1 and 22 Bunkers. We did not, on that trip, get to go down to any of the Afghan units. That is what part of this issue will be when we go back next month is we want to go down—go back out to 22 Bunkers, Depot 1, and then also go to some of the forward deployed units to see what kind of accountability——

One, do you have accountability when it is in U.S. possession as it is turned over to the Afghans, and then what kind of revisions are we making to have them establish some kind of accountability and control, recognizing there has to be—well a good way of doing business, but there should be some thought of accountability for the weapons and munitions that we provide.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you Mr. Gimble.

Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Duncan. You are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

According to the Congressional Research Service, we have spent $173 billion in Afghanistan since 2001, and as far as I'm concerned, it is pouring money down a rat hole. It is a complete waste. I think if there are any fiscal conservatives left in the Congress, they should be horrified by the waste that is going on over there.

General Petraeus said in an article in the Washington Post 3 days ago that the situation in Afghanistan, despite all this money, has deteriorated markedly in the past 2 years—those are his words. And he said this, he said Afghanistan has been known over the years as the graveyard of empires, and if we are not careful, it is going to help be the graveyard of our empire as well.

Professor Ian Lustick of the University of Pennsylvania wrote recently and said—he talked about the money feeding frenzy of the war on terror and he wrote this, "Nearly 7 years after September 11, 2001, what accounts for the vast discrepancy between the terrorist threat facing America and the scale of our response? Why,

absent any evidence of a serious terror threat is the war on terror so enormous, so all-encompassing, and still expanding?"

"The fundamental answer is that Al Qaeda's most important accomplishment was not to highjack our planes but to highjack our political system for a multitude of politicians, interest groups and professional associations, corporations, media organizations, universities, local and state governments, and Federal agency officials, the war on terror is now a major profit center, a funding bonanza, and a set of slogans and soundbites to be inserted into budget, project, grant, and contract proposals. For the country as a whole, however, it has become a maelstrom of waste."

And I just don't see where the national debt of $11,315,000,000, an incomprehensible figure—and now the GAO tells us over $55 trillion in unfunded future pension liabilities—it is just not going to be long at all before we are not going to be able to pay all of our Social Security and Medicare, veteran's pensions, and all the things we have promised our own people if we don't stop spending money in ridiculously wasteful ways. And of course, what does the Defense Department tell us, just as they always do, what they want is more money to spend over there and more troops.

Bruce Fine, who was a high ranking official of the Reagan administration wrote just a few days ago in the Washington Times that it is ridiculous that we have troops in 135 countries and approximately 1,400 military installations. And he said we should redeploy our troops to the United States. He said no country would dare attack our defenses and our retaliatory capability would be invincible. Esprit de corps would be at its zenith because soldiers would be fighting to protect American lives on American soil, not Afghan peasants. The redeployment within the U.S. casualties in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, it would end the foreign resentments our enemies created and intended killing of civilians and the insult to pride excited by foreign occupation.

At the end of this column, he is saying the American empire should be abandoned and the republic restored. The United States would be safer, freer, and wealthier. And I can tell you, I agree with him.

It is just like this stimulus that we are dealing with. There are a lot of good things in that stimulus package, but I can tell you this, we can't afford it. I wish every family in this country could have a million dollar mansion and drive a new Cadillac or Mercedes, but they can't afford it. And we are on this addiction to spending, and we go in for these short term fixes that will satisfy for a while, but they are going to cause us serious trouble later on. If a family is deeply head over heels into debt, they don't go out and just immediately double or triple their spending, or they get in even worse trouble.

And I hate to say it, because I'm not a pacifist and I consider myself to be very pro-military, but the Defense Department has turned into the department of foreign aide, and has become the most wasteful department probably in the entire Federal Government. And fiscal conservatives should be the ones most upset about that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you Mr. Duncan. You will be pleased to know that we intend to look into many of the matters that you mentioned this year. I don't think that there is widespread disagreement amongst members of this panel at least.

And we see it as part of our oversight responsibility, taking a look at those 150,000 bases and their mission and their impact on that as well as all the procurement issues that the Government Accountability Office reported on last year, $275 billion for potential waste in contracts over schedule and over budget. So we will be doing all of that and appreciate your cooperation with that.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you.

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Lynch, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the ranking member as well, and I appreciate the witnesses for helping us with our work.

Mr. Gimble, we had a similar problem a couple years ago, as you mentioned, in Iraq. I think we had 191,000 weapons go missing, most of them small arms. But in response to that problem, myself, Mr. Platts, a number of investigators from this subcommittee, actually, want in to Taji weapons depot in Iraq, and basically DOD had a good program in place.

As the Iraqi security forces were coming out of training, they had a building there at Taji, when they were assigned a weapon, the serial number was recorded—they had four laptop computers in the central facility there at Taji. The individual, whether it was a soldier or it was a security officer or police officer, they had their picture taken with their weapon and it did a pretty good job. A little late, but it did a good job.

Why don't we have this system in Afghanistan? It seemed to be very cost effective, and let's face it: Afghanistan is a lot poorer than Iraq. Most of these young men—that is basically what we are talking—and older men are getting assigned a weapon that is probably as valuable as anything that they own in their household, and we have some corruption issues, some big corruption issues there, as you well know. Not as much with the ANA as we do with the police, but you have all these issues here. It is almost a certainty we are going to have a problem here unless we put something in place to address it.

So I've got to ask you, why didn't we just take the good system that you have going on in Iraq and apply it to Afghanistan?

Mr. GIMBLE. As a matter fact, that is a good question. We hope to address some of those issues when we go back in March.

I would just add, though, on the Iraqi side, they also put in some provisions that if you lost a weapon such as a glock, they would actually fine the people about a year's salary.

Mr. LYNCH. Right.

Mr. GIMBLE. That was the Iraqi government doing that.

I think it has to be a joint effort between the Afghan government and the United States, and I think a lot of that comes back to those mentoring teams that we need to have out there. I agree that the process—we need to put that in, and we will look at that. But that Iraq process has been a huge step forward.

Mr. LYNCH. Yes. Well I will be back in Taji in a little bit and I will be in Afghanistan in a little while as well. I'm going to look for some type of accountability to be inserted.

Remember, one of the problems that—we got it right in Iraq eventually, and we got it right now. And you have to remember that CPA 3, that Coalition Provision Authority Rule 3 allows every Iraqi to have a weapon in their home for self defense, and the weapon of choice was an AK–47. So that is a pretty steep problem there, and they got that under control.

There is no reason from a cost or a technology view here that we shouldn't be able to put some type of very responsible and exact system in place that will track these weapons. And with the expectation that our troop levels are going to be increased substantially there, the risk is even greater.

Let me ask you, do we have a central weapons depot facility in Afghanistan that we are using or do we have multiple sites?

Mr. GIMBLE. We actually have two primary ones, 22 Bunkers and then Depot 1.

Mr. LYNCH. Where are they sir, I'm sorry.

Mr. GIMBLE. Kabul.

Mr. LYNCH. Kabul. Are all of them in Kabul?

Mr. GIMBLE. They are both in Kabul, yes sir.

Mr. LYNCH. OK, that simplifies things a little bit.

Mr. GIMBLE. Let me go back to Taji just for a moment. There is another part of the issue. When you were having the issuance of the weapons to the basic trainees coming out of their training facility, they also have a huge weapons storage over there and they have the captured weapons. There were some challenges with accountability on captured weapons. But we were able to go back in and inventory the supply side of the weapons over there last May and saw some pretty good accountability and some systems being developed and automating some of the what I call wholesale level weapons accountability, the warehouse operations.

But the truth of it is that the Afghanistan process is much more primitive, in my personal opinion, than in Iraq.

Mr. LYNCH. OK. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, my time has expired. I yield back.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you. Mr. Foster you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOSTER. Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am also a new member of this committee, but this is a matter of some personal interest to me for actually two reasons.

In the mid-1970's, my parents spent a year in Afghanistan where my father was responsible for the first and for a long time the only advisor on Afghan legal proceedings. He spent a year riding circuit in a Land Rover trying to actually get an appreciation for the rule of law and the value of actually writing down court decisions, and came away with it sort of skeptical, thinking that we were generations away from actually having what is needed from a cultural point of view of having a real appreciation of the rule of law. And I would be interested in your reactions whether we have made progress in the last 30 years when the government there was wiped out first by the Russians and then the subsequent war.

And the second reason is that the largest National Guard deployment coming out of my district, actually out of Illinois, is responsible for the training and mentoring of the Afghan National Police, and I want to make sure that these kids are kept as safe as we can.

I would like to push a little bit. I guess this is for Mr. Schneider and Mr. Gimble, as to the question of whether there may be some technological fixes or improvements. On the sort of fundamental level you can easily imagine that if you are not sure that a policeman is out doing his rounds, that if he is carrying a cell phone, he can sit there and take a picture every 10 minutes, and it can be monitored by our wonderful European collaborators. And there is no reason why some simple thing like that can't make sure that we at least know who is doing their job as a policeman out on the beat.

And there are more advanced technological things that you can imagine, everything up to and including having smart guns where this technology recognizes the owner and the gun will not fire unless it has been programmed to the owner. That would make it really hard to steal a gun and abuse it. And just intermediate things such as GPS tracking devices, something that alerts by a radio signal when the gun is fired.

And I was wondering, is there, to your knowledge, even a research program that would get this technology field testable, and do you think it is promising?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I think Afghanistan remains, I think, 174 out of 177 poorest countries in the world. The access to basic technology is pretty limited outside major cities. At this stage, I'm not sure that you would be able to use cell phones at all. Now Kabul is another issue. There might be an ability in some of the major cities.

But I think your point is well taken. You need to look at all of these issues in relation to what is going to be possible to use to bring up the capacity of effectiveness of the Afghan National Police and the monitoring and oversight.

One of the points that I made is that we are currently—if we train the police as their plan, it is 2 months of training. Even in Haiti we have 7 months of training required.

The other is that you mentioned your father and the question about the rule of law. This is a civilian police force. It has to be seen as part of the rule of law. They are doing very little—I think still the government of Italy is responsible for the lead in the area of the judiciary and justice, and there is a lot more that needs to be done there. It all doesn't have to be Federal courts, but you need to have some mechanism like riding a circuit with Afghans who relate to those local districts.

There is a program underway that you are aware of, the National Solidarity Program, and there is a new effort at the local government effort that is focused on the economic side and community action, but that needs to be linked to the local district police and local judiciary as well, and that still has yet to be done.

Can I just make one other point, Mr. Chairman? And that is that in relation to this, that this is all being done—led by the military. The military is running civilian police in terms of the training. In an ideal world, it would not be the military responsible for civilian police training. It would be civilian police.

We don't have the capacity in the U.S. Government to deal with the rule of law internationally in post-conflict situations in any kind of comprehensive fashion that would deal with civilian police, justice, corrections. Cops, courts, corrections. We can't do it all together, and we can't do it from the civilian side where we have the expertise.

Mr. JOHNSON. If I may point out, I do want to note that the GAO is currently—probably in about 3 weeks we are going to issue a report on the efforts to reform the Afghan National Police, so we will be touching on some of the issues that you are addressing.

But I would like to note that there is an effort on the way to provide each police office with a biometric ID card that has a smart chip in it.

Mr. FOSTER. Is there any kind of cashless electronics funds transfer or economy in Afghanistan? I understand that, for example, in Africa, that is a significant part of the economy and it must be very powerful in reducing the corruption or at least identifying where it is happening. And I was wondering since we control a large fraction of the money that is going into the economy whether we could actually make progress along those lines.

Mr. JOHNSON. Some of those things you mentioned, use of cell phones, those are things that are being considered, but we will probably address that in more detail in the report that is tentatively due on March 9th.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. If I could add to that. There is an effort in the pay reform program to send money for the individual police officers to accounts that they would have access to rather than to their commander, who obviously traditionally skims off a substantial amount. So there is an effort along those lines.

Mr. TIERNEY. Except that there are now reports of a lot of commanders accompanying the individual police officers to the bank.

Mr. FOSTER. One last quick question. You mentioned, I think it was 17 percent of the salaries being drawn are actually for dead or wounded policeman. Is there a plan to actually make a pension program? This sounds like money that maybe is not being misspent, but it would be very nice just in terms of knowing what the actual force is. Is that going to be separated out into some sort of pension program?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. My understanding is that is an issue that has not yet been dealt with. They have discussed the need for that, but so far as I know, there is not a formal program.

Mr. FOSTER. OK, thank you. I yield back.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you. We are going to do another round if you want to stick around for that.

Mr. Schneider, the point was made several times here about "Why can't we just do in Afghanistan what we now think we are doing in Iraq on this?" I want to make two points and ask you to respond to that.

One is there seems to be a wholly different level of corruption in Afghanistan permeating the society like something we have never seen in Iraq or elsewhere. And secondarily, we have a much higher degree of illiteracy and innumeracy in Afghanistan than we have in Iraq, which is a fairly educated and capable population.

So without overcoming those obstacles, we are probably not ever going to be able to get the kind of inventory and security for weapons that we really want to have. Is that your read as well?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I mean that is clearly one major factor, but another one as well is the fact that you have a very thriving opium industry in Afghanistan that finances corruption right across the board. And until you do something more effective in dealing with the opium—particularly the trafficking side, that is the processing and the trafficking, where the real money is, it is going to be very difficult to eliminate the corruption that continues to exist.

I mentioned a positive meeting with the new Minister of Interior, and I just note that when he was appointed, which was just in October, I mean he basically said administrative corruption in the Ministry of Interior and the police leadership is irrefutable. Jobs are being bought and the poor people are paying the price. And part of the reason is because those are the places where the drug traffickers need assistance to move their product.

And I will say that we need to see within this overall strategy a much more coherent kind of a drug program than we have today, and it needs to be focused at the top of the pyramid, if you will, not at the poor farmer. It needs to be focused at interdiction of the convoys, the processing, the labs, as opposed to the Afghan farmer who is either forced to by poverty or forced to by the threat of being killed by the Taliban.

If you remember that map that showed—the last map—in fact it should be in the back of your testimony—my testimony. But it had big brown circles, and they were generally in the same area where that extreme risk existed. Those brown circles are where opium is grown and processed, and that is the linkage. There it is. That whole salmon area is extreme risk because the Taliban is either there on a permanent basis or can get there whenever it wants, and the brown circles are where the narcotics exist.

Mr. TIERNEY. When you say Taliban, I think you might use that a little loosely. We are not just talking Taliban, we are talking insurgents, warlords, and drug dealers, some of whom the Taliban hook up with because it is a way to get income and some whom don't.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Yes, exactly.

Mr. TIERNEY. And I think it does little to no good for the general populace, in terms of their morale and belief in their government when they drive down the street and see a mansion owned by a drug baron next to the slums where they are living. And when you buy a police chief's job for $100,000 to get paid $200 a month because you know you can make up the difference in graft and corruption.

And one other point is we have met with the Minister of Commerce, who indicated that if you take pomegranates from one area in the south and you try to drive it through the country and out the other side, it may cost you as much as $485 if you get stopped 27 times—27 times—by warlords, local villagers, police in the municipal area, on that basis. It is less costly to send a container of pomegranates from there to California. So the problems are huge, and I think we have to address how we are going to do that.

If I could just talk a second about the Focused District Development Plan, which is the latest in the Combined Security Transition Command, Afghanistan, CSTC-A's approach to that is to take a community, a district, take all the police out that the community is upset because they are corrupted, and bring them over to the academy for training, replacing them with the Afghan National Corps, which is already highly trained, more well trained that the regular police. And for an 8-week period that goes on and then you bring back the trained unit from the local area, ostensibly with some mentors and other people and that, but not always. If we do that on the pace they are at right now, it will probably take us 15 to 20 years to get all the districts in this country developed.

I think it is an interesting idea, but it is hard to see how that is going to solve the problem of that, particularly when we had reports of up to 40 percent attrition in some units. You get them all trained up and 40 percent of the people drop off somewhere on that.

I would just like to hear the comments that people might have about what they see as the future of that particular program, and am I right in my assessment it could take us forever to get to a point where you—they are already going back to retrain some of the six that they did.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I guess my view is at this point, that is the best we got. We don't have enough of them and we don't train them for a long enough period of time. In other words, I would much rather see those units going out and being trained for 4 to 7 months and coming back and keep the end ANCOP there, buildup more ANCOP to do that. But you are going to need more training centers. We now have I think six regional training centers. You are going to need more of those, you are going to need more trainers and mentors, a substantial number more.

The question is how serious do we believe this links up to the ability to confront the insurgency. And if we think it is crucial to have an effective police force to do that, then we have to commit the resources. I mean there is no other—this can't be done on the cheap. And the effort at the auxiliary police, 10 days training, here is a gun, that was a disaster.

And now the new idea of taking, in the Pashtun area, taking militias, providing them with weapons, giving them a substantial amount of authority, but not within the command structure of the Afghan——

Mr. TIERNEY. I want to explore that a little bit more with you, but I want to give Mr. Flake an opportunity to ask questions as well.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Johnson, for the record again, we know the controls aren't there, the recommendations have been made, there is some evidence that those are being implemented already and we will see. I believe you are going back in March, is it? It would be nice for our committee to made aware of any analysis that you have after that time.

But right now, we have no hard evidence that these weapons are ending up in the hands of the Taliban. We haven't had our forces go out and do a raid and find our own weapons being used by the Taliban, is that correct?

Mr. JOHNSON. We have no firsthand accounts on our own, and nor have we seen any Department of Defense-specific military forces reporting that. But, however, some of the contractors who are working on behalf of the U.S. Government have reported in some of their assessment reports that they have allegations of theft and reports of the enemy actually receiving some of the weapons.

Mr. FLAKE. But we haven't seen evidence yet that they have been used against our forces?

Mr. JOHNSON. No sir, we have not.

Mr. FLAKE. When I finished my first round, I asked what remedies there are. Obviously with our own controls that we have put in, we can enforce those and make sure that no additional weapons are given out unless there are proper controls there. But when you are dealing with partners that may not come through, but you have to rely on, there is no other choice.

What kind of remedies can we have to ensure that the Afghans maintain or cooperate and implement their side of the controls that they need to? What can we do to ensure that happens, realizing that we can't simply say we are just not going to deal with the Afghan forces anymore? They have to be equipped. They are certainly not useful if they are not. What can we do there?

Mr. JOHNSON. I think one control we can put in place is the routine monitoring of the weapons that are being provided. Routinely, as we go out to some of the units, checking, since we do have mentors who are embedded with the units to check on the weapons and to maybe to random inventory checks.

Mr. FLAKE. Those recommendations were made as well.

Mr. JOHNSON. That is, from what I believe, a part of what their plans in the future may be, to include some of that in there.

Mr. FLAKE. OK.

Mr. GIMBLE. We have actually made those recommendations.

Mr. FLAKE. I'm sorry?

Mr. GIMBLE. I said we have actually made those recommendations.

Mr. FLAKE. You have made those recommendations, alright.

Mr. Schneider, you mentioned that unless we get a hold of the poppy production and deal with that, do you see evidence with the recent kind of change in focus by NATO forces, allowing them to involve themselves more closely, do you see that as helping at this point yet or just the potential that it might be of help down the road?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I think that if it is implemented, it will clearly be of help. There is something that we called for—I went to Afghanistan in 2003 the first time and at that time, no one, neither NATO nor the U.S. forces, were willing to do anything about the opium poppy trafficking. If they found it on the road, they would let it go.

And I think that now this new order which permits them to go after the processing centers and the labs, at the request of the Afghan government, is quite positive. If you begin to place some additional risk there into the system and at the same time provide the farmers some alternatives in terms of credit for licit crop production and the access to services, you begin to have a chance at deal-

ing with the problem. And if you begin to deal with corrupt officials at the top level.

Mr. FLAKE. It is interesting. You mentioned that there didn't seem to be the focus early on in 2003. I visited Afghanistan for the first time, I think it was 2003, or just after Karzai was put in place.

And he mentioned—I went back to my notes when we met him this last time just 2 months ago—I went back to my first notes and he said "The biggest battle we have is on poppies." He called it the mother of all battles.

This time, I saw a decidedly less committed approach and denial it seemed that poppy production was actually aiding the enemy or financing terrorism. He in fact claimed that it wasn't. And there are people who say "Well, that is because he is unwilling to follow-up on corruption charges for family members and everything else," but you see it differently.

Do you see the Afghans themselves, or just more of a focus on our efforts? Are the Afghans following up in that regard or not?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. At this point, it is very hard to see—except for the naming of the new Minister of Interior and the new Attorney General. Those are positive steps because the Ministry of the Interior was—even though it was responsible for police, it in fact was a place where there was a significant amount of corruption and linkage to drug trafficking.

I'm hopeful that means that there is a willingness on the part of the Afghan government to take serious action. Without that, you can throw money at the problem, and it is not going to work. You have to demonstrate there is political will at the top to go after drug traffickers.

Mr. FLAKE. Thank you.

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Schneider, let me just ask a couple final questions here. The European Union is supposed to be deeply involved in this training of police and the law and order justice situation on that, and have been missing in action largely on that. They have a new representative there as well. They are doubling the size of their commitment to the international aspect on that. Do you see any hope on that or is that all mirrors and smoke?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. No, I mean I think that—they together with NATO I think recognize now that the—creating a functioning, effective police force is part of—an essential part of the security problem in Afghanistan.

And so I'm hopeful that, as you note, those initial actions will be followed by substantial new contributions of trainers. They also—remember, as I said, I have the numbers of the United States, but we know in Europe there are substantial numbers of civilian police available. They put hundreds of police into the Balkans in the aftermath of the conflict there, so much more can be done, and I hope it will be.

Mr. TIERNEY. Last, let me just ask about—you mentioned briefly and I want to just explore that a little bit, this new concept that it seems that CSTC-A and the United States may at least be tacitly allowing it to go forward if not fully endorsing it. And that is to have a local council nominate young men from their village to be a security force of sorts, who would then get vetted, ostensibly, by

the Afghanis and by our forces to check and see the best they can if they have any record of involvement with insurgents, and then they would be involved with security while the police would be involved for policing within that.

Will you tell us about some of the inherent risk in that and your assessment of whether or not that is a good way to move forward?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. We see three risks. The first, obviously, is that if they are paying these individuals more than they are paying the police on the beat, it is going to create problems for the police. Second is whatever resources you are devoting to that are not resources you are devoting to creating an effective Afghan National Police Force. And finally, if they are not under the direct command of the local—of the Afghan National Police, you are creating the potential for a difficult situation there.

But finally, nationally, if you are only arming Pashtun tribal militias, whatever you want to call them, then you are exacerbating the North/South political divide in the country and you are going back and setting in motion the reverse trend of re-arming local militias. And it is very hard to think that the other ethnic groups, the Tajiks and others, who have been disarmed to some degree under programs that the United States and NATO have financed, it seems to me very hard to say "Sorry, your tribes and your local communities can't do the same thing." And they are probably going to get as much money from their warlords as we provide to them, the Pashtuns.

Mr. TIERNEY. I want to thank the ranking member, obviously, for his participation and the committee members, but I want to thank our witnesses most of all. You have been very helpful with your reports, and your staff, their work on that, and with your testimony here today.

This is a perplexing sub-part of a much larger perplexing problem that we have that has international implications and questions as to what our strategy going forward is, and it is going to have to encompass this aspect as well as some broader strategy aspects.

I personally think that we are going nowhere unless we start including other nations in these conversations, and that includes Iran and Russia and China and India and the Stans, all of whom, in some instances, have more risks than we have. A lot of these acts that have been going on with the poppy, of course, and the opium goes to mostly Europe, and they have a high interest there. There is concern that some of the insurgents spreading from the Taliban would in fact go through Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan and those places, and on up into Russia.

So I think that we have to start realizing that everybody has a stake in this and start looking strategically in a much broader way, and also, as we do that, come down and focus on these very real and particular issues and make sure that we are not arming the very insurgents that we are trying to suppress on that basis.

So thank you for all of your assistance. You know that we look forward in asking for your assistance again, and we appreciate all the help you have given us.

Meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:44 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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