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UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

DECEMBER 2 AND 8, 2009

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AFGHANISTAN

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2009

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:02 a.m. in room SD–106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, Ben Nelson, Bayh, Webb, McCaskill, Udall, Hagan, Begich, Burris, Kirk, McCain, Inhofe, Sessions, Chambliss, Graham, Thune, Wicker, LeMieux, Burr, Vitter, and Collins.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; Christine E. Cowart, chief clerk; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Jessica L. Kingston, research assistant; Gerald J. Leeling, counsel; William G.P. Monahan, counsel; Michael J. Noblet, professional staff member; Roy F. Phillips, professional staff member; and William K. Sutey, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Joseph W. Bowab, Republican staff director; Adam J. Barker, professional staff member; Christian D. Brose, professional staff member; Michael V. Kostiw, professional staff member; Lucian L. Niemeyer, professional staff member; Richard F. Walsh, minority counsel; and Dana W. White, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Kevin A. Cronin, Paul J. Hubbard, Jennifer R. Knowles, Hannah I. Lloyd, and Brian F. Sebold.

Committee members' assistants present: James Tuite, assistant to Senator Byrd; Vance Serchuk, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Carolyn A. Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Nick Ikeda, assistant to Senator Akaka; Christopher Caple, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Ann Premer, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Patrick Hayes, assistant to Senator Bayh; Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Stephen C. Hedger, assistant to Senator McCaskill; Jennifer Barrett, assistant to Senator Udall; Roger Pena, assistant to Senator Hagan; Lindsay Kavanaugh, assistant to Senator Begich; Roosevelt Barfield, assistant to Senator Burris; Bethany Bassett, assistant to Senator Kirk; Brandon Andrews, Anthony J. Lazarski, and Rob Soofer, assistants to Senator Inhofe; Robert La Branche and Sandra Luff, assistants to Senator Sessions; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Adam Brake, assistant to Senator Graham; Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune; Erskine W. Wells III, assistant to Senator Wicker; Brian Walsh, as-

sistant to Senator LeMieux; Charles Brittingham, assistant to Senator Vitter; and Rob Epplin and Chip Kennett, assistants to Senator Collins.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates, Admiral Mullen, welcome. Thank you all for your many contributions to our Nation.

Today, the committee receives testimony from the President's senior advisors on his strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which the President set out last evening. The United States has important security interests in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. Instability in Afghanistan or the return of the Taliban to power would not only provide fertile ground for al Qaeda and other extremists to regroup and renew plots against the United States and its allies, but it would also threaten the stability of neighboring Pakistan, a nuclear-armed country.

For the sake of our military men and women who are, or will be, deployed in harm's way, as well as the well-being of our Nation, we have to get the strategy right. Our purpose and our mission, what we are trying to accomplish, must be clear.

I agree with the President's emphasis on the training and rapid growth of the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF) and transitioning responsibility to the Afghan Government for Afghanistan's security. Indeed, I have long believed that the most urgent need in Afghanistan is to provide the training, from basic training to mentoring to side-by-side partnering on the battlefield, along with the equipment and the other support elements to rapidly build the capabilities of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP). An Afghan surge should be our goal, and any U.S. surge should be related to that goal.

The President has also called for increased contributions from our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies. We need not only to "Afghanize," but also to "NATOize" the Afghanistan mission.

I also agree with the President's emphasis on the importance of efforts to reintegrate local Taliban fighters into Afghan society. An adequately funded plan for reintegration is long overdue.

The President's strategy also makes clear that our commitment to the future of Afghanistan requires action from the Government of Afghanistan. That means recruiting of soldiers and police needed to quickly expand Afghan forces; it means serious anticorruption efforts; it means national reintegration and reconciliation policies, and retention and support for honest, competent ministry officials.

President Karzai has pledged to do these things, and President Obama rightly insists on holding him to that pledge. Setting the July 2011 date to begin the reduction of our forces is a reasonable way, under the circumstances, to produce the sense of urgency in the Afghan Government that has been lacking up to now and is essential to success.

I believe the principal mission of U.S. troop increases in Afghanistan should be to accelerate the transition to Afghan forces to take the lead for providing Afghan security. This is an important part of the approach outlined by the President. Where I have questions

is whether the rapid deployment of a large number of U.S. combat forces, without an adequate number of ANSF for our troops to partner with, serves that mission.

A critical component of transitioning to Afghan responsibility will be the on-the-job partnering of ANSF with U.S. and coalition forces. That partnering is vital to success in Afghanistan, for the Afghans and for us. But, the current shortfall, in terms of partnering, is not a shortage of American combat troops, it's a shortage of Afghan troops.

In the key province of Helmand, the ratio of U.S. troops to Afghan troops is about five U.S. troops to one Afghan soldier. We are now partnered with about 2,000 Afghans in Helmand. The desired ratio, according to Pentagon doctrine, is close to the opposite: three Afghans for one U.S. soldier or marine. So, we have enough troops in Helmand right now—about 10,000—to partner with more than 20,000 additional Afghan troops, more than are expected to be available to partner with us there next year, according to Prime Minister Gordon Brown of Great Britain. If so, doubling the number of U.S. troops in the south will only worsen a ratio under which our forces are already matched up with fewer Afghan troops than they can and should partner with.

General James Conway, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, said in September, "If I could change only one thing in the south of Afghanistan, it would be to have more Afghan troops." A few days ago, General Conway reiterated the point this way: "To have American marines standing on a corner in a key village isn't nearly as effective as having an Afghan policeman or an Afghan soldier."

It seems to me that the large influx of U.S. combat troops will put more U.S. marines on street corners in Afghan villages, with too few Afghan partners alongside them. Partnering with, equipping, and in other ways empowering Afghan forces to provide security for their country will demonstrate our resolve and commitment to a stable future for Afghanistan and the region. That should be the stated mission, and troop increases should be judged by whether they advance that mission.

Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me thank Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates, and Admiral Mullen for joining us today to discuss the vital issue of Afghanistan.

Let me first reiterate, as I said yesterday, that I think President Obama has made the right decision to embrace a counterinsurgency strategy for Afghanistan and to resource it properly. I would have much preferred that General McChrystal receive the entire force he had requested, but I've spoken with our military and civilian leaders, and I think the 30,000 additional U.S. troops that the President has called for, plus greater force commitments from our allies, will enable us to reverse the momentum of the insurgency and create the conditions for success in Afghanistan.

I support the President's decision, and I think it deserves the support of all Americans, both Republicans and Democrats.

What I don't support and what concerns me greatly is the President's decision to set an arbitrary date to begin withdrawing U.S. forces from Afghanistan. A date for withdrawal sends exactly the wrong message to both our friends and our enemies in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the entire region, all of whom currently doubt whether America is committed to winning this war. A withdrawal date only emboldens al Qaeda and the Taliban, while dispiriting our Afghan partners and making it less likely that they will risk their lives to take our side in this fight.

Yes, our commitment to Afghanistan is not open-ended. Yes, large numbers of U.S. combat troops will not remain there indefinitely; and yes, this war will one day end. But, it should end when we have achieved our goals. Success is the real exit strategy. When conditions on the ground have decisively begun to change for the better, that is when our troops should start to return home with honor. Not 1 minute longer, not 1 minute sooner, and certainly not on some arbitrary date in July 2011, which our enemies can exploit to weaken and intimidate our friends.

I am eager to hear from our distinguished witnesses how we can say, as the President did last night, that our withdrawal will begin in July 2011, no matter what, but that this arbitrary date will also take into account conditions on the ground. That seems logically incoherent to me, and I welcome some clarity on this matter.

Another concern that I have has to do with the civilian side of our counterinsurgency strategy. Greater military force is necessary to succeed in Afghanistan, but it's not sufficient. I am confident in our military strategy and leadership, and I believe our troops can do everything that General McChrystal laid out in his assessment of this summer. I believe we can "clear and hold," but I am concerned that we and our allies do not have a unified plan to "build," to work with and support our Afghan partners in Kabul and beyond as they build their own nation, their own economy, and their own free institutions.

I'm also concerned by reports of divisions in our Embassy and by major differences between our Commander and our Ambassador. We can only succeed in Afghanistan if we have a joint civil-military campaign plan unified at every level from top to bottom, much as Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus established in Iraq during the surge. I look forward to hearing what progress we're making on creating such a joint civil-military effort.

I've been critical of the President during the past several months, but that is now behind us. Our focus going forward must be on winning the war in Afghanistan. I emphasize "winning." This depends as much on the substance of our policy as the signals we send to actors in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the region.

The President was wrong to signal our intention to begin leaving Afghanistan on an arbitrary date, but the fact is we now have the right mission, we now have the right leadership, and we now have a request for sufficient resources to succeed, so our friends can know that we will support them, our enemies can know that we will defeat them, and all can know that we are committed to the long-term success of Afghanistan and Pakistan as stable states that can govern themselves, secure themselves, and sustain their own development. Though the nature of our commitment to Af-

ghanistan, Pakistan, and their region will change over time, our commitment to their success will endure.

We now have an opportunity to build a bipartisan consensus in support of a vital national security priority, defeating al Qaeda and its violent extremist allies in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and ensuring that these countries never again serve as bases for attacks against America and our allies.

Americans need to know why winning this war is essential to our country's security. They need to know that things in Afghanistan will get worse before they get better, that, unfortunately, casualties will likely rise in the year to come, but that, ultimately, we will succeed.

I look to the President and to our witnesses here today to lead an unfailing effort to build bipartisan support for the war in Afghanistan, both among the public and here in Congress. I will be an ally in this effort, and I pledge to do everything in my power to ensure that we win this war—not just end it, but win it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCain.

I understand that the order that our witnesses desire to be recognized is Secretary Gates first, then Secretary Clinton, and then Admiral Mullen.

Secretary Gates, welcome.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT M. GATES, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Secretary GATES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Actually, I think the Secretary of State's microphone is the only one working, so perhaps we should allow her to be the only witness today. [Laughter.]

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for inviting us to testify today.

Last night, President Obama announced a renewed commitment and more focused strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. I would like to provide an overview of the strategic thinking and context behind his decisions—in particular, the nexus among al Qaeda, the Taliban, Pakistan, and Afghanistan—our objectives, how the President's strategy aims to accomplish them, and the military forces required.

As the President first stated in March and reemphasized last night, the goal of the United States in Afghanistan and Pakistan is to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda and to prevent its return to both countries. The international military effort to stabilize Afghanistan is necessary to achieve this overarching goal. Defeating al Qaeda and enhancing Afghan security are mutually reinforcing missions. They cannot be untethered from one another, as much as we might wish that to be the case.

While al Qaeda is under great pressure now, and dependent on the Taliban and other extremist groups for sustainment, the success of the Taliban would vastly strengthen al Qaeda's message to the Muslim world that violent extremists are on the winning side of history. Put simply, the Taliban and al Qaeda have become symbiotic, each benefiting from the success and mythology of the other. Al Qaeda leaders have stated this explicitly and repeatedly. Taliban success in retaking and holding parts of Afghanistan

against the combined forces of multiple modern armies, the current direction of events, has dramatically strengthened the extremist mythology and popular perceptions of who is winning and who is losing.

The lesson of the Taliban's revival for al Qaeda is that time and will are on their side; that, with a Western defeat, they could regain their strength and achieve a major strategic victory as long as their senior leadership lives and can continue to inspire and attract followers and funding. Rolling back the Taliban is now necessary, even if not sufficient, to the ultimate defeat of al Qaeda.

At the same time, one cannot separate the security situation in Afghanistan from the stability of Pakistan, a nuclear-armed nation of 175 million people now also explicitly targeted by Islamic extremists. The two countries, bound by ties of tribe and faith, share a porous border of more than 1,500 miles. Giving extremists breathing room in Pakistan led to the resurgence of the Taliban and more coordinated, sophisticated attacks in Afghanistan. Providing a sanctuary for extremists in southern and eastern Afghanistan would put yet more pressure on a Pakistani Government already under attack from groups operating in the border region.

Indeed, the Pakistan Taliban, in just the last year or so, has become a real threat to Pakistan's own domestic peace and stability, carrying out, with al Qaeda's help, escalating bombing attacks throughout the country. It is these attacks and the Taliban's movement toward Islamabad 7 months ago that largely motivated the current operations by the Pakistani army. We know the Pakistan Taliban operate in collusion with both the Taliban in Afghanistan and al Qaeda.

I would like to make a related point with respect to Pakistan: Because of American withdrawal from the region in the early 1990s, followed by a severing of military-to-military relations, many Pakistanis are skeptical that the United States is a reliable, long-term strategic partner. We must change that perception.

Failure in Afghanistan would mean a Taliban takeover of much, if not most, of the country, and likely a renewed civil war. Taliban-ruled areas could, in short order become, once again, sanctuary for al Qaeda, as well as a staging area for resurgent militant groups on the offensive in Pakistan. Success in south and central Asia by Islamic extremists, as was the case 20 years ago, would beget success on other fronts. It would strengthen the al Qaeda narrative, providing renewed opportunities for recruitment, fundraising, and more sophisticated operations. Aided by the Internet, many more followers could join their ranks, both in the region and in susceptible populations across the globe.

It is true that al Qaeda and its followers can plot and execute attacks from a variety of locations, from Munich to London to Denver. But, what makes the border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan uniquely different from any other location, including Somalia, Yemen, and other possible hideouts, is that this part of the world represents the epicenter of extremist jihadism, the historic place where native and foreign Muslims defeated one superpower and, in their view, caused its collapse at home. For them to be seen to defeat the sole remaining superpower in the same place would have severe consequences for the United States and the world.

Some say this is similar to the domino theory that underpinned and, ultimately, muddied the thinking behind the U.S. military escalation in Vietnam. The difference, however, is that we have very real and very recent history that shows just what can happen in this part of the world when extremists have breathing space, safe havens, and governments complicit with, and in support of, their mission. Less than 5 years after the last Soviet tank crossed the Termez Bridge out of Afghanistan, in 1993, Islamic militants launched their first attack on the World Trade Center in New York. We cannot afford to make a similar mistake again.

A stable security situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan, one that is sustainable over the long term by their governments, is vital to our national security. By the same token, the current status quo in Afghanistan, the slow but steady deterioration of the security situation and growing influence of the Taliban, is unacceptable. So, too, is the status quo ante, a largely ungoverned region controlled by extremists, in which the United States had little influence or ability to gain actionable intelligence on the ground.

The President's new strategic concept aims to reverse the Taliban's momentum and reduce its strength while providing the time and space necessary for the Afghans to develop enough security and governance capacity to stabilize their own country. We will focus our resources where the population is most threatened, and align military and civilian efforts accordingly, with six primary objectives: reversing Taliban momentum through sustained military action by the United States, our allies, and the Afghans; denying the Taliban access to, and control of, key population and production centers and lines of communication; disrupting the Taliban outside secured areas and preventing al Qaeda from regaining sanctuary in Afghanistan; degrading the Taliban to levels manageable by ANSF; increasing the size and capability of the ANSF, and employing other local forces selectively, to begin transitioning security responsibility to the Afghan Government within 18 months; and finally, selectively building the capacity of Afghan Government, particularly in key ministries.

This approach is not open-ended nation-building. It is neither necessary nor feasible to create a modern, centralized, Western-style Afghan nation-state, the likes of which has never been seen in that country; nor does it entail pacifying every village and conducting textbook counterinsurgency from one end of Afghanistan to the other. It is, instead, a narrower focus tied more tightly to our core goal of disrupting, dismantling, and eventually defeating al Qaeda by building the capacity of the Afghans, capacity that will be measured by observable progress on clear objectives, and not simply by the passage of time.

The essence of our civil-military plan is to "clear, hold, build, and transfer." Beginning to transfer security responsibility to the Afghans in summer 2011 is critical, and, in my view, achievable. This transfer will occur, district by district, province by province, depending on conditions on the ground. The process will be similar to what we did in Iraq, where international security forces provided overwatch, first at the tactical level and then at the strategic level.

Even after we transfer security responsibility to the Afghans and draw down our combat forces, the United States will continue to

support their development as an important partner for the long haul. We will not repeat the mistakes of 1989, when we abandoned the country only to see it descend into chaos and into Taliban hands.

Making this transition possible requires accelerating the development of a significantly larger and more capable ANA and ANP through intensive partnering with International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF), especially in combat. It also means achieving a better balance between national and local forces, increasing Afghan unconventional warfare capabilities, engaging communities to enlist more local security forces to protect their own territory, and bolstering Afghan-led reintegration and reconciliation efforts.

At the strategic level, the President's plan will achieve a better balance between investments in the central government and subnational entities. At the national level, the focus will be primarily on reforming essential ministries and pressing for the appointment of competent and honest ministers and governors. At the local and regional level, there will be a shift to work through existing traditional structures rather than building new ones.

In all of these efforts, we must have a committed partner in the Afghan people and government. That is one reason why there will be very clear and definitive timeframes for reviewing our, and their, progress.

As the President announced, the United States will commit an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan for an extended surge of 18 to 24 months. These forces, the U.S. contribution to the fight, will be deployed and concentrated in the southern and eastern parts of the country. The first of these forces will begin to arrive in Afghanistan within 2 to 3 weeks.

In all, since taking office, President Obama has committed nearly 52,000 additional troops to Afghanistan, for a total U.S. force of approximately 100,000. We are looking to NATO and to our other partners to send a parallel international message of strong resolve. Our allies must take the lead and focus their resources in the north and west to prevent the insurgency from establishing new footholds. We will seek some 5,000 to 7,000 troops from NATO, and expect the allies to share more of the burden in training, equipping, and funding the ANA and ANP.

Let me offer a few closing thoughts. It is worth remembering that the security situation in Afghanistan, though serious, does not begin to approach the scale of violence that consumed Iraq and confronted our forces there when I was confirmed as Secretary of Defense 3 years ago this week. With all the resources already committed to this campaign, plus those the President has just announced, I believe the pieces are being put in place to make real and measurable progress in Afghanistan over the next 18 to 24 months.

The President believes, as do I, that, in the end, we cannot defeat al Qaeda and its toxic ideology without improving and stabilizing the security situation in Afghanistan. The President's decision offers the best possibility to decisively change the momentum in Afghanistan and fundamentally alter the strategic equation in Pakistan and central Asia, all necessary to protect the United States, our allies, and our vital interests.

So, I ask for your full support of this decision to provide both Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal the resources they need to be successful. This will take more patience, perseverance, and sacrifice by the United States and by our allies. As always, the heaviest burden will fall on the men and women who have volunteered and, in many cases, revolunteered, to serve their country in uniform. I know they will be uppermost in our minds and prayers as we take on this arduous but vitally necessary mission.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Gates follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY HON. ROBERT M. GATES

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

Thank you for inviting us to testify today. Last night, President Obama announced a renewed commitment and more focused strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. I would like to provide an overview of the strategic thinking and context behind his decisions, in particular:

- The nexus among al Qaeda, the Taliban, Pakistan, and Afghanistan;
- Our objectives and how the President's strategy aims to accomplish them; and
- The military forces required.

WHERE WE STAND

As the President first stated in March, and re-emphasized last night, the goal of the United States in Afghanistan and Pakistan is to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda and to prevent its return to both countries. The international military effort to stabilize Afghanistan is necessary to achieve this overarching goal. Defeating al Qaeda and enhancing Afghan security are mutually reinforcing missions. They cannot be untethered from one another, as much as we might wish that to be the case.

While al Qaeda is under great pressure now and dependent on the Taliban and other extremist groups for sustainment, the success of the Taliban would vastly strengthen al Qaeda's message to the Muslim world: that violent extremists are on the winning side of history. Put simply, the Taliban and al Qaeda have become symbiotic, each benefiting from the success and mythology of the other. Al Qaeda leaders have stated this explicitly and repeatedly.

Taliban success in retaking and holding parts of Afghanistan against the combined forces of multiple, modern armies—the current direction of events—has dramatically strengthened the extremist mythology and popular perceptions of who is winning and who is losing. The lesson of the Taliban's revival for al Qaeda is that time and will are on their side. That, with a Western defeat, they could regain their strength and achieve a major strategic victory—as long as their senior leadership lives and can continue to inspire and attract followers and funding. Rolling back the Taliban is now necessary, even if not sufficient, to the ultimate defeat of al Qaeda.

At the same time, one cannot separate the security situation in Afghanistan from the stability of Pakistan—a nuclear-armed nation of 175 million people now also explicitly targeted by Islamic extremists. The two countries, bound by ties of tribe and faith, share a porous border of more than 1,500 miles. Giving extremists breathing room in Pakistan led to the resurgence of the Taliban and more coordinated, sophisticated attacks in Afghanistan. Providing a sanctuary for extremists in southern and eastern Afghanistan would put yet more pressure on a Pakistani Government already under attack from groups operating in the border region. Indeed, the Pakistan Taliban, just in the last year or so, has become a real threat to Pakistan's own domestic peace and stability, carrying out—with al Qaeda's help—escalating bombing attacks throughout the country. It is these attacks, and the Taliban's movement toward Islamabad 7 months ago, that largely motivated the current operations by the Pakistani army. We know the Pakistan Taliban operate in collusion with both the Taliban in Afghanistan and al Qaeda.

A related point with regard to Pakistan: Because of American withdrawal from the region in the early 1990s, followed by a severing of military-to-military relations, many Pakistanis are skeptical that the United States is a reliable, long-term strategic partner.

CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE

Failure in Afghanistan would mean a Taliban takeover of much, if not most, of the country and likely a renewed civil war. Taliban-ruled areas could in short order become, once again, a sanctuary for al Qaeda as well as a staging area for resurgent militant groups on the offensive in Pakistan.

Success in South and Central Asia by Islamic extremists—as was the case 20 years ago—would beget success on other fronts. It would strengthen the al Qaeda narrative, providing renewed opportunities for recruitment, fund-raising, and more sophisticated operations. Aided by the Internet, many more followers could join their ranks, both in the region and in susceptible populations across the globe.

It is true that al Qaeda and its followers can plot and execute attacks from a variety of locations—from Munich to London to Denver. But what makes the border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan uniquely different from any other location—including Somalia, Yemen, and other possible redoubts—is that this part of the world represents the epicenter of extremist jihadism: the historic place where native and foreign Muslims defeated one superpower and, in their view, caused its collapse at home. For them to be seen to defeat the sole remaining superpower in the same place would have severe consequences for the United States and the world.

Some may say this is similar to the "domino theory" that underpinned and ultimately muddied the thinking behind the U.S. military escalation in Vietnam. The difference, however, is that we have very real—and very recent—history that shows just what can happen in this part of the world when extremists have breathing space, safe havens, and governments complicit with and supportive of their mission. Less than 5 years after the last Soviet tank crossed the Termez Bridge out of Afghanistan, Islamic militants launched their first attack on the World Trade Center in New York. We cannot afford to make a similar mistake again.

THE WAY AHEAD

A stable security situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan—one that is sustainable over the long term by their governments—is vital to our national security. By the same token, the current status quo in Afghanistan—the slow but steady deterioration of the security situation and growing influence of the Taliban—is unacceptable. So too is the status quo ante—a largely ungoverned region controlled by extremists in which the United States had little influence or ability to gain actionable intelligence on the ground.

The President's new strategic concept aims to reverse the Taliban's momentum and reduce its strength while providing the time and space necessary for the Afghans to develop enough security and governance capacity to stabilize their own country.

We will focus our resources where the population is most threatened, and align military and civilian efforts accordingly—with six primary objectives:

- Reversing Taliban momentum through sustained military action by the U.S., our allies, and the Afghans;
- Denying the Taliban access to and control of key population and production centers and lines of communications;
- Disrupting the Taliban outside secured areas and preventing al Qaeda from regaining sanctuary in Afghanistan;
- Degrading the Taliban to levels manageable by the Afghan National Security Forces;
- Increasing the size and capability of the ANSF and employing other local forces selectively to begin transitioning security responsibility to the Afghan Government within 18 months; and
- Selectively building the capacity of the Afghan Government, particularly in key ministries.

This approach is not open-ended "nation building." It is neither necessary nor feasible to create a modern, centralized, Western-style Afghan nation-state—the likes of which has never been seen in that country. Nor does it entail pacifying every village and conducting textbook counterinsurgency from one end of Afghanistan to the other.

It is, instead, a narrower focus tied more tightly to our core goal of disrupting, dismantling and eventually defeating al Qaeda by building the capacity of the Afghans—capacity that will be measured by observable progress on clear objectives, and not simply by the passage of time.

The essence of our civil-military plan is to clear, hold, build, and transfer. Beginning to transfer security responsibility to the Afghans in summer 2011 is critical—and, in my, view achievable. This transfer will occur district by district, province

by province, depending on local circumstances. The process will be similar to what we did in Iraq, where international security forces provided "overwatch"—first at the tactical level, then at the strategic level. Even after we transfer security responsibility to the Afghans and draw down our combat forces, the United States will continue to support their development as an important partner for the long haul. We will not repeat the mistakes of 1989, when we abandoned the country only to see it descend into civil war, and then into Taliban hands.

Making this transition possible requires accelerating the development of a significantly larger and more capable Afghan army and police through intensive partnering with ISAF, especially in combat. It also means achieving a better balance between national and local forces; increasing Afghan unconventional warfare capabilities; engaging communities to enlist more local security forces to protect their own territory; and bolstering Afghan-led reintegration and reconciliation efforts.

At the strategic level, the President's plan will achieve a better balance between investments in the central government and subnational entities. At the national level, the focus will be primarily on reforming essential ministries and pressing for the appointment of competent and honest ministers and governors. At the local and regional level, there will be a shift to work through existing, traditional structures rather than building new ones. In all of these efforts, we must have a committed partner in the Afghan people and government. That is one reason why there will be very clear and definitive timeframes for reviewing our—and their—progress.

ADDITIONAL U.S. FORCES

As the President announced, the United States will commit an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan for an extended surge of 18 to 24 months. These forces—the U.S. contribution to this fight—will be deployed and concentrated in the southern and eastern parts of the country. The first of these units will arrive in Afghanistan early in 2010.

In all, since taking office President Obama has committed nearly 52,000 additional troops to Afghanistan for a total U.S. force of approximately 100,000. We are looking to NATO and our other partners to send a parallel international message of strong resolve. Our allies must take the lead and focus their resources in the north and west to prevent the insurgency from establishing new footholds. We will seek some 5 to 7,000 troops from NATO and expect the Allies to share more of the burden in training, equipping, and funding the Afghan National Army and police.

CONCLUSION

Let me offer a few closing thoughts.

It is worth remembering that the security situation in Afghanistan—though serious—does not begin to approach the scale of violence that consumed Iraq and confronted our forces there when I was confirmed as secretary of defense 3 years ago this week. With all the resources already committed to this campaign—plus those the President has just announced—I believe the pieces are being put in place to make real and measurable progress in Afghanistan over the next 18 to 24 months.

The President believes, as do I, that, in the end, we cannot defeat al Qaeda and its toxic ideology without improving and stabilizing the security situation in Afghanistan. The President's decision offers the best possibility to decisively change the momentum in Afghanistan, and fundamentally alter the strategic equation in Pakistan and Central Asia—all necessary to protect the United States, our allies, and our vital interests. So, I ask for your full support of this decision to provide both Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal the resources they need to be successful.

This is will take more patience, perseverance, and sacrifice by the United States and our allies. As always, the heaviest burden will fall on the men and women who have volunteered—and in many cases revolunteered—to serve their country in uniform. I know they will be uppermost in our minds and prayers as we take on this arduous but vitally necessary mission.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Secretary Gates.

Secretary Clinton.

STATEMENT OF HON. HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, SECRETARY OF STATE

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you. Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, members of the committee, I am grateful for this oppor-

tunity to testify before so many former colleagues and friends. My experience on this committee helped form my views on many of the issues facing our Nation, and it's a privilege to be here before you now in this different role.

Yesterday, President Obama presented the administration's strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Today, Secretary Gates, Admiral Mullen, and I will all be providing you with additional details. But, let me speak briefly at a more personal level about why we are making this commitment.

Simply put, among a range of difficult choices, this is the best way to protect our Nation now and in the future. The extremists we are fighting in Afghanistan and Pakistan have attacked us and our allies before. If we allow them access to the very same safe havens they used before 2001, they will have a greater capacity to regroup and attack again. They could drag an entire region into chaos.

Our civilian and military leaders in Afghanistan have reported that the situation is serious and worsening, and we agree. In the aftermath of September 11, I grieved with sons, daughters, husbands, and wives whose loved ones were murdered. It was an attack on our country and an attack on the constituents I then represented. I witnessed the tragic consequences in the lives of thousands of innocent families and the damage done to our economy and our sense of security. So, I feel a personal responsibility to help protect our Nation from such violence.

The case for action against al Qaeda and its allies has always been clear, but the United States' course of action over the last 8 years has not. The fog of another war obscured our focus. While our attention was focused elsewhere, the Taliban gained momentum in Afghanistan and the extremist threat grew in Pakistan, a country with 175 million people, a nuclear arsenal, and more than its share of challenges.

It was against this backdrop that President Obama called for a careful, thorough review of the strategy. I was proud to be part of that process, which questioned every assumption and took nothing for granted. Our objectives are clear: We will work with the Afghan and Pakistani Governments to eliminate safe havens for those plotting to attack against us, our allies, and our interests. We will help to stabilize a region that we believe is fundamental to our national security, and we will develop a long-term, sustainable relationship with both Afghanistan and Pakistan so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past.

The duration of our military presence is not open-ended, but our civilian commitment must continue, even as our troops begin, eventually, to come home. Accomplishing this mission and ensuring the safety of the American people will not be easy. It will mean sending not only more troops, but more civilians and more assistance to Afghanistan, and significantly expanding our civilian efforts in Pakistan.

The men and women carrying out this military-civilian mission are not members of a list or items on a PowerPoint slide; they are our friends and neighbors, our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters. We will be asking them and the American people to make extraordinary sacrifices on behalf of our security.

I want to assure this committee, that I know takes its oversight responsibility so seriously, that we will do everything we can to make sure their sacrifices are honored and make our Nation safer.

The situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan is serious, but it is not, in my view, as negative as frequently portrayed in public, and the beginning of President Karzai's second term has opened a new window of opportunity. We have real concerns about the influence of corrupt officials in the Afghan Government, and we will continue to pursue them. But, in his inauguration speech last week that I was privileged to attend, I witnessed President Karzai's call for a new compact with his country. He pledged to combat corruption, improve governance, and deliver for the people of his country. His words were long in coming, but they were welcome. They must now be matched with action.

The Afghan people, the United States, and the international community must hold the Afghan Government accountable for making good on these commitments. We will help by working to strengthen institutions at every level of Afghan society so we don't leave chaos behind when our combat troops begin to depart.

The President has outlined a timeframe for transition to Afghan responsibility, something that President Karzai assumed would happen, and which we took as a very good sign of a renewed understanding of the necessity of Afghanization.

That transition will begin in the summer of 2011, when we expect ANSF and the Afghan Government will have the capacity to start assuming ownership for defending their own country. As the President has said, we will execute the transition responsibly, taking into account conditions on the ground.

But, we think a timeframe for such a transition will provide a sense of urgency in working with the Afghan Government. It should be clear to everyone that, unlike the past, the United States, our allies, and partners have an enduring commitment to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the region, so our resolve in this fight is reflected in the substantial commitment of troops and in the significant civilian commitment that will continue long after combat forces leave.

That civilian effort is already bearing fruit. Civilian experts and advisors are helping to craft policy inside government ministries, providing development assistance in the field, and working in scores of other roles. When our marines went into Nawa this July, we had civilians on the ground with them to coordinate assistance the next day. As operations progress, our civilian-military coordination is growing even stronger.

We are on track to triple the number of civilian positions in Afghanistan, to 974, by early next year. On average, each of these civilians leverages 10 partners, ranging from locally employed staff to experts with U.S.-funded nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). It's a cliché to say we have our best people in these jobs, but it happens to be true.

When I was in Kabul a few weeks ago, I met with an American colonel, who told me that, while he had thousands of outstanding soldiers under his command, none of them had the 40 years of agricultural experience of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civilian serving alongside his battalion or the rule-of-law and gov-

ernance expertise of their civilian experts from the Department of State (DOS). He told me, "I'm happy to supply whatever support these valuable civilians need, and we need more of them." The President's strategy will make that possible.

Not only do we have the right people to achieve our objectives, we also have a sound strategy. We will be delivering high-impact assistance and bolstering Afghanistan's agricultural sector, the traditional core of the Afghan economy. This will create jobs, reduce the funding that the Taliban receives from poppy cultivation, and draw insurgents off of the battlefield.

We will also support an Afghan-led effort to open the door to those Taliban who renounce al Qaeda, abandon violence, and want to reintegrate into Afghan society. We understand some of those who fight with the insurgency do not do so out of conviction, but due to coercion or money. So, all Afghans should have the choice to pursue a better future if they do so peacefully, respect the basic human rights of their fellow citizens, and reintegrate into their society.

Our regional diplomacy complements this approach by seeking to mitigate external interference in Afghanistan and working to shift the calculus of neighboring countries from competition for influence to cooperation and economic integration.

We also believe a strong, stable, democratic Pakistan must be a key partner in the fight against violent extremism, and people in Pakistan are increasingly coming to view that we do share a common enemy. I heard this repeatedly during my recent visit. So, our relationship needs to be anchored in common goals of civilian rule, robust economic development, and the defeat of those who threaten Pakistan, Afghanistan, the United States, and the rest of the world.

We'll significantly expand support intended for Pakistan to develop the potential of their people. We will do so by demonstrating a commitment to Pakistan that has been questioned by the Pakistanis in the past. We will make sure that the people of Pakistan know that we wish to be their partner for the long term, and that we intend to do all that we can to bolster their futures.

Now, we're not going to be facing these challenges alone. We share this responsibility with governments around the world. I will go to Brussels tomorrow to begin the process of securing additional alliance commitments of troops, trainers, and resources. We expect Secretary General Rasmussen to have an announcement today about the progress we're making in that effort. Ambassador Holbrooke, our Special Representative, is already there, consulting with our allies.

We're also asking the international community to expand its support to Pakistan. Our objectives are shared by people and governments across the world, and we are particularly reaching out to Muslims everywhere.

Let me conclude where I began. We face a range of difficult choices in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but the President's plan represents the best way we know to protect our Nation today and in the future. The task we face is as complex as any national security challenge in our lifetimes. We will not succeed if people view this

effort as a responsibility of a single party, a single agency within our government, or a single country.

We owe it to the troops and civilians, who will face these dangers, to come together as Americans, and come together with allies and international partners who are ready to step up and do more.

We have to accomplish this mission, and I look forward to working with you to help meet this challenge.

Thank you all very much.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Clinton follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY HON. HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, and members of the committee, I'm grateful for this opportunity to testify before so many good friends. My experience on the Armed Services Committee helped form my views on many of the issues facing our Nation. It's a privilege to be before you now in this different role.

Yesterday, President Obama presented the administration's strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Today, Secretary Gates, Admiral Mullen, and I will all be providing you with additional details. But let me speak briefly at a more personal level about why we are making this commitment.

Simply put, among a range of difficult choices, this is the best way to protect our Nation now and in the future.

The extremists we are fighting in Afghanistan and Pakistan have attacked us and our allies before. If we allow them access to the very same safe havens they used before 2001, they will have a greater capacity to regroup and attack again. They could drag an entire region into chaos. Our civilian and military leaders in Afghanistan have reported that the situation is serious and worsening. We agree.

In the aftermath of September 11th, I grieved with sons, daughters, husbands, and wives whose loved ones were murdered. It was an attack on our country, but it was also an attack on my constituents. I witnessed the tragic consequences in the lives of thousands of innocent families, and the damage done to our economy and our sense of security. So I feel a personal responsibility to help protect our Nation from such violence.

THE MISSION

The case for action against al Qaeda and its allies has always been clear, but the United States' course of action over the last 8 years has not. The fog of another war obscured our focus. While our attention was focused elsewhere, the Taliban gained momentum in Afghanistan. The extremist threat grew in Pakistan—a country with 175 million people, a nuclear arsenal, and more than its share of challenges.

It was against this backdrop that the President called for a careful, thorough review of our strategy. I was proud to be a part of that process. Our objectives are clear:

- We will work with the Afghan and Pakistani Governments to eliminate safe havens for those plotting attacks against us, our allies, and our interests;
- We will help to stabilize a region that is fundamental to our national security; and
- We will develop a long-term, sustainable relationship with Afghanistan and Pakistan so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past. The duration of our military presence will be limited, but our civilian commitment must continue even as our troops begin to come home.

Accomplishing this mission and ensuring the safety of the American people will not be easy. It will mean sending more civilians, troops, and assistance to Afghanistan, and significantly expanding our civilian efforts in Pakistan.

The men and women carrying out this mission are not numbers on a PowerPoint slide. They are our friends and neighbors, our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters. We will be asking them—and the American people who support them—to make extraordinary sacrifices on behalf of our security. I want to assure the Committee that we will do everything we can to make sure their sacrifices make our Nation safer.

THE METHODS

The situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan is serious, but it is not, in my view, as negative as frequently portrayed in public. The beginning of President Karzai's second term has opened a new window of opportunity. We have real concerns about

the influence of corrupt officials in the Afghan Government, and we will continue to pursue them. But in his inauguration speech last month, I witnessed President Karzai call for a new compact with his country. He pledged to combat corruption, improve governance, and deliver for the people of his country. His words were long in coming, but welcome. They must now be matched with action. The Afghan people, the United States, and the international community will hold the Afghan Government accountable for making good on these commitments.

We will help by working with our Afghan partners to strengthen institutions at every level of Afghan society so that we don't leave chaos behind when our combat troops begin to depart.

The President has outlined a timeframe for transition to Afghan responsibility. That transition will begin in the summer of 2011, when we expect Afghan security forces and the Afghan Government will have the capacity to start assuming ownership for defending their country. As the President said, we will execute the transition responsibly, taking into account conditions on the ground. A timeframe for transition will provide a sense of urgency in working with the Afghan Government. But it should be clear to everyone that—unlike the past—the United States and our allies and partners will have an enduring commitment to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the region. Our resolve in this fight is reflected in the substantial commitment of troops since the President took office and in the significant civilian commitment that will continue long after our combat forces leave.

That civilian effort is already bearing fruit. Civilian experts and advisors are helping to craft policy inside government ministries, providing development assistance in the field, and working in scores of other roles. When our marines went into Nawa this July, we had civilians on the ground with them to coordinate assistance the next day. As operations progress, our civ-mil coordination is growing even stronger.

We are on track to triple the number of civilian positions in Afghanistan to 974 by early next year. On average, each of these civilians leverages 10 partners, ranging from locally employed staff to experts with U.S.-funded nongovernmental organizations. It's cliché to say that we have our best people in these jobs, but it also happens to be true. When I was in Kabul a few weeks ago, I met with an American colonel who told me that while he had thousands of outstanding soldiers under his command, none of them had the 40 years of agricultural experience of the U.S. Department of Agriculture civilian serving alongside his battalion, or the rule of law and governance expertise of their civilian experts from the State Department. He told me: "I am happy to supply whatever support these valuable civilians need, and we need more of them." The President's strategy will make that possible.

Not only do we have the right people to achieve our objectives, we also have a sound strategy. We will be delivering high-impact economic assistance and bolstering Afghanistan's agricultural sector—the traditional core of the Afghan economy. This will create jobs, reduce the funding that the Taliban receives from poppy cultivation, and draw insurgents off of the battlefield.

We will also support an Afghan-led effort to open the door to those Taliban who abandon violence and want to reintegrate into Afghan society. We understand that some of those who fight with the insurgency do so not out of conviction, but due to coercion or money. All Afghans should have the choice to pursue a better future if they do so peacefully, respect the basic human rights of their fellow citizens, and renounce al Qaeda.

Our regional diplomacy complements this political approach, by seeking to mitigate external interference in Afghanistan and working to shift the calculus of neighboring countries from competition for influence to cooperation and economic integration.

We also believe that a strong, stable, democratic Pakistan must be a key partner for the United States, and an ally in the fight against violent extremism. People in Pakistan are increasingly coming to the view that we share a common enemy. I heard this repeatedly during my recent visit. Our relationship is anchored in our common goals of civilian rule; robust economic development; and the defeat of those who threaten Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the peace of the world.

We will significantly expand support intended to help develop the potential of Pakistan and its people. Our assistance will demonstrate the United States' commitment to addressing problems that affect the everyday lives of Pakistanis and bring our people closer together. But it will also bolster Pakistan against the threat of extremism. A village where girls have had the opportunity to get an education will be more resistant to al Qaeda and the Taliban. A young man with a bright future in a growing economy is less likely to waste his potential in a suicide bombing.

We will not be facing these challenges alone. We share this responsibility with governments around the world. Our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies have already made significant contributions of their own in Afghanistan, and

tomorrow I will go to Brussels to begin the process of securing additional Alliance commitments of troops, trainers, and resources. Ambassador Holbrooke, our Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, is already there consulting with our allies.

The international community is also expanding its support to Pakistan, and we are in close touch with partners to coordinate assistance. We are also looking beyond NATO to build the broadest possible global coalition to meet this challenge. Our objectives are shared by people and governments from Europe to Australia, from Russia to China to India, and across the Middle East. Beginning with the President's speech in Cairo, we are reaching out to Muslims everywhere to make it clear that the United States seeks to build a better future with them in a spirit of mutual respect and partnership.

THE MESSAGE

Let me conclude where I began. We face a range of difficult choices in Afghanistan and Pakistan. But the President's plan represents the best way we know to protect our Nation today and in the future. The task we face is as complex as any national security challenge in our lifetimes. We will not succeed if people view this effort as the responsibility of a single party, a single agency within our Government, or a single country. We owe it to the troops and civilians who will face these dangers to come together as Americans—and come together with our allies and international partners—to help them accomplish this mission. I look forward to working with you to meet this challenge. I thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Madam Secretary.

Admiral Mullen.

STATEMENT OF ADM MICHAEL G. MULLEN, USN, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

Admiral MULLEN. Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, distinguished members of this committee, thank you for your time today.

Let me state, right up front, that I support fully and without hesitation the President's decision, and I appreciated the opportunity to contribute to what I believe was a healthy and productive discussion. I've seen my share of internal debates about various national security issues, especially over the course of these last 2 years, and I can honestly say that I do not recall an issue so thoroughly or so thoughtfully considered as this one.

Every military leader in the chain of command, as well as those of the Joint Chiefs, was given voice throughout this process, and every one of us used it. We now have before us a strategy more appropriately matched to the situation on the ground in Afghanistan, and resources matched more appropriately to that strategy, particularly with regard to reversing the insurgency's momentum in 2010. Given the stakes in Afghanistan for our own national security, as well as that of our partners around the world, I believe the time we took was well worth it.

Secretaries Clinton and Gates have already walked you through the large policy issues in question. I will not repeat them.

From a purely military perspective, I believe our new approach does three critical things:

First, by providing more discrete objectives, it offers better guidance to commanders on the ground about how to employ their forces. They will still work to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda and prevent Afghanistan from becoming a safe haven. They will still strive to protect the Afghan people, who remain the center of gravity. They will still pursue major elements of the counterinsurgency campaign desired and designed by General McChrystal, which, as we all know, involves at least some measure of active

counterterrorism operations. But, now they will tailor this campaign and those operations by focusing on key population areas, by increasing pressure on al Qaeda's leadership, by more effectively working to degrade the Taliban's influence, and by streamlining and accelerating the growth of competent ANSF.

At its core, our strategy is about providing breathing space for the Afghans to secure their own people and to stabilize their own country. It's about partnering and mentoring just as much, if not more, than it is about fighting. Where once we believed that finishing the job meant, to a large degree, doing it ourselves, we now know that it cannot truly, or permanently, be done by anyone other than the Afghans themselves. Fully a third of the U.S. troops in theater are partnered with Afghan forces, and I expect that number to rise significantly throughout 2010.

Second, but not insignificantly, this new strategy gives commanders on the ground the resources and the support they need to reverse the momentum of the Taliban insurgency and to accomplish these more limited objectives. I've said it before, and I believe it still today, this region is the epicenter of global Islamic extremism. It is the place from which we were attacked on September 11. Should we be hit again, it's the place from which I am convinced the planning, training, and funding will emanate. Al Qaeda may, in fact, be the architect of such an attack, but the Taliban will be the bricklayers.

Though hardly a uniform body, Taliban groups have grown bolder and more sophisticated. We saw that just a few months ago in the Korengal Valley, where Taliban forces attacked coalition outposts using what I would call almost conventional small-unit tactics. Their fighters are better organized and better equipped than they were just 1 year ago. In fact, coalition forces experienced record-high violence this past summer, with insurgent attacks more than 60 percent above 2008 levels. Through brutal intimidation, the Taliban has established shadow governments across the country, coercing the reluctant support of many locals, and challenging the authority of elected leaders and state institutions. Indeed, we believe the insurgency has achieved a dominant influence in 11 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces. To say that there is no serious threat of Afghanistan falling once again into Taliban hands ignores the audacity of even the insurgency's most public statements. To argue that, should they have that power, the Taliban would not at least tolerate the presence of al Qaeda on Afghan soil, is to ignore both the recent past and the evidence we see every day of collusion between these factions on both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

The cost of failure is, then, grave. That is why the President's decision for an extended surge to Afghanistan of 30,000 additional forces is so important. It gets the most U.S. force into the fight as quickly as possible, giving General McChrystal everything he needs in 2010 to gain the initiative.

It validates our adherence to a counterinsurgency approach, and it offers our troops in Afghanistan the best possible chance to set the security conditions; for the Afghan people to see our commitment to their future; for the Karzai government to know our strong desire to see his promised reforms; for the Afghan Taliban to un-

derstand they will not, they cannot, take back Afghanistan; and for those beyond Afghanistan who support the Taliban, or would see the return of al Qaeda, to realize the futility of their pursuit.

I should add that these reinforcements come on top of the 21,000 troops the President ordered shortly after taking office, troops which have already made a huge difference in the southern Helmand Valley. But, as I have testified before, Mr. Chairman, no amount of troops in no amount of time will ever be enough to completely achieve success in such a fight. They simply must be accompanied by good governance and healthy public administration. This, not troop numbers, is the area of my greatest concern.

Like everyone else, I look forward to working with the Karzai government, but we must have the support of the interagency and international communities, as well.

That brings me to my final point. The President's new strategy still recognizes the criticality of a broadbased approach to regional problems. He does not view Afghanistan in isolation any more than he views the ties between al Qaeda and the Taliban as superficial. He has called for stronger and more productive cooperation with neighboring Pakistan, which is, likewise, under the threat from radical elements, and whose support remains vital to our ability to eliminate safe havens. He has pledged, and we in the military welcome, renewed emphasis on securing more civilian expertise to the effort—and that is happening—more contributions by other NATO nations, and a realistic plan to transition responsibilities to the Afghans. His is a more balanced, more flexible, and more achievable strategy than we've had in the past, one based on pragmatism and real possibilities. Speaking for the 2.2 million men and women who must execute it, and who, with their families, have borne the brunt of the stress and the strain of 8 years of constant combat, I support his decision and appreciate his leadership.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Mullen follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY ADM MICHAEL G. MULLEN, USN

Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the subject of the President's newly announced strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The President's Tuesday evening announcement at West Point of our strategy and increased military resources for Afghanistan culminates a process of deliberate strategic review that began with the arrival of General McChrystal's interim assessment in early September. I believe this national-level review has been sober and essential. The challenges we face in Afghanistan and Pakistan are great, and our interests there are significant. This administration needed to take the time to look at all the options and craft a balanced and sustainable approach. I believe that the review has met this aim.

I support fully, and without hesitation, the President's decision.

REFINING THE STRATEGY

The facts compel us to act. Our strategic review confirmed that the overarching policy goal remains the same: to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to prevent its capacity to threaten America and our allies from either country in the future.

South Asia is the epicenter of global Islamic extremism; the location of al Qaeda's core leadership and the terrain that dozens of Islamic terrorist groups call home. It is the location from which the September 11 attacks on America were planned and driven. If the United States should be hit again, I remain convinced that the planning, training and funding for such an attack will emanate there. It is a region

where a nuclear weapons state, Pakistan, is under direct threat from al Qaeda and affiliated Pakistani-Taliban groups that aspire to acquire and use nuclear weapons against the United States and our allies. Thus, it is a region with a unique—and deadly—combination of the most dangerous terrorists and the most dangerous technology in the world. Our actions in Pakistan and Afghanistan seek to prevent catastrophic outcomes from these toxic forces, and constitute a most critical national interest.

Our strategic review paid particular attention to Pakistan. The people of Pakistan are under as much, if not greater, threat from al Qaeda and Islamic terrorism than are we. We must encourage and aid the Pakistani military fight against these extremists in South Waziristan, in SWAT, and across Pakistan. We must also help Pakistan widen its aperture in seeking out and eliminating all forms of extremism and terrorism—those who threaten not only Pakistan, but also Afghanistan, the wider South Asia region, and the globe. We are deepening ties with the people of Pakistan as well as with their security forces. We see progress with our Pakistani allies as paramount to the way ahead.

In Afghanistan, we narrowed-in on a challenging, but attainable goal: to deny al Qaeda safe haven and the Afghan-Taliban the ability to overthrow the duly elected Afghan government. To achieve this refined strategic aim, we must continue to deny al Qaeda any Afghanistan toe-hold, reverse the momentum of the Taliban insurgency, and build sufficient Afghan Government and security capacity to eventually defeat the insurgent threat. Our review also narrowed and refined the military objectives for General McChrystal's North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)–International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)—focusing it on security of key population areas while Afghan forces grow in size and capability, prioritizing a robust NATO–ISAF program of training and mentoring Afghan military and police, and establishing the conditions necessary for Afghans to assume their own security. Each of these objectives will hasten the day when we can begin thinning the U.S./NATO–ISAF security forces presence, turning the internal security of Afghanistan over to the Afghans. This strategy provides the time and space for the Afghans themselves to build sufficient security and governance capacity to stabilize their country.

Our refined military objectives for Afghanistan complement those in the political and economic spheres. They also support diplomatic, political, and military programs that the President's strategy calls for us to undertake with neighboring countries—especially Pakistan—that increase pressure against al Qaeda's leadership; that expand counterinsurgency operations against Taliban insurgents who threaten Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the wider region; and that help set the conditions for improved regional security and stability.

MATCHING STRATEGY AND RESOURCES

Throughout this strategic review, I advised the Secretary of Defense and the President that our commitment of military resources must match our strategy.

I am pleased to inform this committee that the President's decision accommodates this advice. The strategy he approved commits 30,000 more U.S. forces, with some number of additional enablers, while calling for our NATO and non-NATO allies to generate additional forces. This rapid, coalition-wide build-up of force aligns with General McChrystal's recommendations, even more so in light of the narrowing of objectives for Afghanistan that the President announced Tuesday night.

The President's commitment is to rapidly send these additional forces forward—to get as much force into the fight as fast as General McChrystal can absorb it. This allows Generals McChrystal and Petraeus to plan for cohesive logistics and transportation support over the course of the coming year. While there are no guarantees in war, I expect that we will make significant headway in the next 18–24 months. I also believe we could begin to thin our combat forces in about the same timeframe. From a military standpoint, the President's commitment to an increase in military force, especially backed by an increase in civilian resources, is much better than one featuring periodic assessments that trigger incremental force escalation.

The President's decision also supports accelerated expansion of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)—a critical initiative. We simply must invest in the growth of an Afghan security force—through more radical and in-depth partnering. The additional U.S. and coalition forces heading to Afghanistan will focus a great amount of time and energy toward empowering a strong and capable ANSF.

General McChrystal intends to use these additional U.S. troops to conduct more focused counterinsurgency operations that enhance population security against the Taliban in south and east Afghanistan. As in Iraq, our troops will live among the population. Thus—and as General McChrystal has successfully emphasized since his arrival as Commander of ISAF last June—we will continue to make every effort to

eliminate civilian casualties, not just because this is the right thing to do, but because these casualties work against our goal of Afghan population security. Although we must expect higher alliance casualties in coming months as we dedicate more U.S. forces to protect the population and mentor the ANSF, our extended security presence must—and will—improve security for the Afghan people and limit both future civilian and military casualties

MOVING FORWARD—CONCLUSION

No commitment of additional force in the number we plan for Afghanistan is without risk. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and I assess the risks to our military forces and our military missions—at home and abroad—from this force deployment decision to be acceptable. We can continue to balance the additional force flow requirements for Afghanistan against those coming available from draw-down trajectory programmed for, and on track in, Iraq.

I believe that progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan will be gradual, and sometimes halting. Yet I believe we can succeed. The President's announced strategy and this force flow decision give us the best possible chance for success. We must exhibit vision, apply sufficient resources, and display endurance to realize our objectives for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Most challenges we now confront in the South Asia region are not military in nature. They require solutions from and led by national and local governments. Yet none of these solutions are possible in an environment of insecurity. Our role must be to fill the security gap for a short time, concurrently growing our partner government's capacity to self-secure. Pursued with resolve, our actions will send an unmistakable message that the U.S. remains committed to the common good, while steadily expanding the sets of partnerships available to address future challenges without a long-term need for large numbers of U.S. combat forces.

In providing advice to this President over the past 10 months, one important point I have made, consonant with other key presidential advisers, is that our military activities must support rather than lead our Nation's foreign policy. Our warfighting ability will never be in doubt. But we have learned from the past 8 years of war that we serve this Nation best when we are part of a comprehensive, integrated approach that employs all elements of national power to achieve the policy goals set by our civilian leaders. This approach remains crucial in Afghanistan, Pakistan and across South Central Asia.

On behalf of our service members, I would like to thank the members of this committee—and Congress as a whole—for the sustained investment in our brave young men and women in uniform, and for your unwavering support of them and their families as they continue to serve so magnificently and selflessly in this time of protracted war.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Admiral Mullen.

We're going to have 6-minute rounds, and I will ask members to strictly adhere to that 6 minutes, so we will all have an opportunity to ask questions.

There's been some confusion about whether the beginning date for U.S. troop reductions is set for July 2011, with the pace of those reductions being condition-based, or whether the July 2011 starting date itself is dependent on conditions on the ground. Secretary Gates, which is it?

Secretary GATES. Mr. Chairman, July 2011 is when we expect the transition process to begin.

Chairman LEVIN. But, is that date conditions-based, or not?

Secretary GATES. No, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. Next question. This question has to do with the partnering ratio. There are currently just over 10,000 U.S. troops in Helmand Province in southern Afghanistan, and they are partnered with only 1,500 or so Afghan soldiers. The partnering goal for the United States is almost the reverse, as measured in units: three Afghan companies to one U.S. company. Now, paraphrasing the National Security Council's Director for Afghanistan, the 3-Afghan-to-1-U.S. ratio helps prevent Afghan units from relying too much on the U.S. unit, to the detriment of the Afghan unit's

development. So, the current number of troops could and should, under our own doctrine, be partnering with 20,000 or so Afghan troops in Helmand. We don't need more troops to partner more Afghans; we have more than enough for that purpose. Nor do we expect 20,000 or more Afghan troops to be assigned to partner with us in Helmand next year. According to Prime Minister Brown of Great Britain, there will be 10,000 more Afghan troops deployed to Helmand in the coming year, to be divided approximately equally between U.S. and British forces for partnering.

So, first, Secretary Gates, are my numbers correct?

Secretary GATES. Let me defer to Admiral Mullen.

Admiral MULLEN. Mr. Chairman, I think your numbers, as far as those that are currently partnered, are correct, given the availability of Afghan forces in the south, in Helmand.

Chairman LEVIN. In terms of what we expect to be deployed by Afghanistan for their troops in the coming year?

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, sir, it sounds about right.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay.

Now, I thought I heard the President, at the meeting yesterday in the Old Executive Office Building, say that we would not have our troops clear an area unless they could turn the cleared area over to Afghans. Now, Secretary Gates, did I hear him correctly? If so, how is that possible, given the paucity of available Afghan forces?

Secretary GATES. Let me start and then invite Admiral Mullen to chime in.

First of all, clearly, as I've indicated, accelerating the growth of the ANA and ANP is vitally important, but we are also looking, as I suggested in my remarks, at local forces, as well, partnering with local security forces. There is more than just the ANP and the ANA in this mix. The plan clearly is that we will not transition security responsibility to the Afghans until the Afghans have the capacity in that district or that province to be able to manage the security situation on their own, with our allies and us initially in a tactical overwatch and then a strategic overwatch situation.

The reality is that the circumstances, very much as in Iraq, differ from district to district and province to province, so the ability of the Afghans to take this on will depend on the circumstances in each of these areas. In some areas, it will take fewer Afghans. But, clearly a big part of this is additional training, both basic training, but then partnering in combat as training, to put more and more Afghans into the fight and into a position where they can take responsibility for security, and particularly in the context of degraded Taliban capabilities. One of the purposes of the United States going in with additional forces is, not just to partner with the Afghans, and not just to train the Afghans, but to degrade the capabilities of the Taliban. So, you have the situation in which the capabilities of the ANSF are rising at a time when our combat forces are degrading the capabilities of the Taliban, and it's the point at which the Afghans are able to handle that degraded threat that we would make the transition.

Chairman LEVIN. Do I understand from your answer then, that there will be situations where our troops will be clearing an area

and not have Afghans available yet, at that point, to turn that cleared area over to? Is that fair?

Admiral MULLEN. Mr. Chairman, I think it is.

Chairman LEVIN. All right.

Admiral MULLEN. But, if I may, just briefly. When General McChrystal showed up, in June 2009, there were virtually no units partnered. There are some 280 units out of 351 right now who are partnered.

Chairman LEVIN. With some partners, not the 3-to-1 ratio.

Admiral MULLEN. No, sir, we're not there yet.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay.

Admiral MULLEN. But, this is companies by companies. This is in training and in fighting.

Chairman LEVIN. My final question, because I'm out of time, is: What will be the ANA's projected size by July 2011?

Secretary GATES. The goal, by December 2010, is 134,000.

Chairman LEVIN. No, my question is July 2011.

Admiral MULLEN. It'll be about 170,000.[1]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral Mullen, do you think it's important to tell the American people it's very likely that casualties will go up during the course of this troop increase that's envisioned?

Admiral MULLEN. Senator McCain, when we added the 21,000 marines, I was very clear about the potential that casualties would go up. I don't think there's any question that casualties are a part of the risk associated with these additional troops, and that they will go up.

Senator MCCAIN. I think the American people need to understand that.

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, sir, I agree with you.

Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Gates, in your answer to Chairman Levin's question, if I understand your answer—Chairman Levin asked if the withdrawal plan for July 2011 was condition-based, and you said, "No." Will we withdraw our forces based on conditions on the ground or based on an arbitrary date, regardless of conditions on the ground?

Secretary GATES. What we're talking about, Senator McCain, is the beginning of a process, not the end of that process. Approximately 60 percent of Afghanistan today is not controlled by the Taliban or have significant Taliban influence.

Senator MCCAIN. I'd say, with respect, Secretary Gates, my question is: Will the date of withdrawal, 2011, which the President set, be based on an arbitrary date of July 2011, regardless of conditions on the ground?

Secretary GATES. I think it's the judgment of all of us in the Department of Defense (DOD) involved in this process that we will be in a position, in particularly uncontested areas, where we will be able to begin that transition in July 2011.

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[1] Following the hearing, Admiral Mullen clarified for the committee that the Department of Defense currently expects 162,000 Afghan National Army in place by July 2011.

Senator MCCAIN. Let's suppose you're not. Let's suppose that conditions on the ground are poor so that our commanders believe that it would jeopardize the success of the mission if we start a withdrawal in July 2011. Will we do it anyway?

Secretary GATES. The President has indicated that we will have a thorough review of how we're doing in December 2010, and I think we will be in a position then to evaluate whether or not we can begin that transition in July.

Senator MCCAIN. I say with great respect, Secretary Gates, the President announced that we would begin withdrawing on a hard date of July 2011. I don't know why that date was particularly picked and that may be a question in another session, but he's announced that. At the same time, you said conditions on the ground would determine withdrawal. Now, those are two incompatible statements. You either have a winning strategy and do as we did in Iraq, and then, once it succeeds, we withdraw, or we, as the President said, have a date beginning withdrawal in July 2011. Which is it? It has to be one or the other. It has to be the appropriate conditions or it has to be an arbitrary date. You can't have both.

Secretary GATES. Where we begin the transition is, I think, the key factor here, Senator. As I suggested, we will have a thorough review in December 2010. If it appears that the strategy's not working and that we are not going to be able to transition in 2011, then we will take a hard look at the strategy itself.

Senator MCCAIN. I say, with respect, I think the American people need to know whether we will begin withdrawing in 2011 and conditions are ripe for that, or whether we will just be withdrawing, no matter what.

Secretary GATES. Our current plan is that we will begin the transition, in local areas, in July 2011. We will evaluate, in December 2010, whether we believe we will be able to meet that objective.

Senator MCCAIN. I think that has to be made very clear. Right now the expectation level of the American people, because of the President's speech, is that we will be withdrawing, as of July 2011, regardless of conditions on the ground. I think that's the wrong impression to give our friends, it's the wrong impression to give our enemies, and it's the wrong impression to give the men and women who want to go over there and win; we should not start withdrawing on an arbitrary date. Unfortunately, that has not been made clear at all.

By the way, Admiral Mullen, the Army Counterinsurgency Field Manual says, "counterinsurgents should prepare for a long-term commitment. The populace must have confidence in the staying power of both the counterinsurgents and the host-nation government." By announcing a date for withdrawal, don't you think that contradicts the counterinsurgency manual?

Admiral MULLEN. Sir, I believe, and the military leadership believes, by mid-2011, we'll know how this is going. The Secretary talked to the assessment. In fact, it's General McChrystal's view that these additional forces will allow him to reverse the momentum and head us in the right direction. We'll have very solid indicators at that point, and then, obviously, the July 2011 date is a day we start transitioning and transferring responsibility; it's not

a date that we're leaving. The President also said that this will be based on conditions on the ground.

Senator MCCAIN. Then it makes no sense for him to have announced the date. But I'm sure we'll continue this discussion.

Secretary Clinton, I appreciate your statement, but I would like a lot more specifics. We know that there are divisions within the Embassy in Kabul. We know that cables were leaked, and that the Ambassador there was against any increases in troops there. We know that relations within the Embassy have at least three factions. We also know that the ability of DOS personnel has been significantly limited, as it was prior to the surge in Iraq, because the environment is not safe for them to go out and operate.

I have great confidence in the military operational planning, and I'm confident it can succeed. But, as I said earlier, I don't see the "build" component yet, and I would like for you to submit to this committee a very specific plan, just as we are receiving a very specific military plan, on exactly how we're going to achieve the "build" part of it, which I think there is an adequate model for it, in the case of Iraq.

So, I appreciate your statements, and I agree with you about the quality of personnel. I have yet to see a comprehensive, cohesive, convincing plan to implement the essential civil side of any successful surge.

Secretary CLINTON. Senator McCain, first let me say, we are more than happy to submit a plan. We have obviously been working with our committee of jurisdiction and authorization on a very close ongoing basis, and we'll be happy to share a lot of the information with you, and we would welcome your response and your advice.

I have to say, however, that the process that we engaged in solicited opinions, and I thought it was a great tribute to the President and to National Security Advisor General Jones that the White House ran a process that actually sought out and made it clear that diversity of opinion was welcome. I thought it was useful to hear from a variety of sources. It wouldn't surprise you, as it didn't surprise me, that people had different opinions based on their perspective. But, as Admiral Mullen just eloquently said, the President's made a decision. There is no division. There is absolute unity and a commitment to carrying out the mission. We'll be happy to share the specifics of that with you.

[The information referred to follows:]

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you very much.

I thank all the witnesses. We appreciate, enormously, their contributions to our country.

Chairman LEVIN. We're going to take advantage of the presence of a quorum here now to take 1 minute to consider the 1,938 pending military nominations, as well as the civilian nominations of Dr. Clifford Stanley to be Under Secretary of Defense; Frank Kendall III to be Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense; Erin Conaton to be the Under Secretary of the Air Force; Terry Yonkers to be Assistant Secretary of the Air Force; and Lawrence Romo to be Director of the Selective Service.

Do I hear a motion to, en bloc, approve those nominations?

Senator LIEBERMAN. So moved.

Chairman LEVIN. Second?

VOICE. Second.

Chairman LEVIN. Second.

All in favor, say aye. [A chorus of ayes.]

Chairman LEVIN. Opposed, nay? [No response.]

The ayes have it.

Thank you very much.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary GATES. By the way, thank you, Mr. Chairman. [Laughter.]

Chairman LEVIN. I knew you would appreciate that intervention.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Oh, one more item of business.

Chairman LEVIN. I included the 1,938 pending military nominations.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks also to Secretary Gates, Secretary Clinton, and Admiral Mullen for your excellent opening statements and for all the hard and effective work that you did in support of the policy that the President announced last night.

I agree with what Senator McCain said, that the President has made the right decision in embracing a counterinsurgency strategy for Afghanistan and resourcing it properly. In making this decision, President Obama has respectfully disagreed with the majority of members of his own political party, according to every public opinion poll I've seen, and therefore, I think it's fair to say that the President has quite literally put our national security interests ahead of partisan political interests. I hope that fact will inspire and encourage a majority of members of both political parties to do the same and to, thereby, show that America's political leadership is still capable of suspending partisanship at the water's edge when our security and our troops are on the line.

As chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, I'm very grateful that President Obama argued so effectively last night that the war in Afghanistan is a war of necessity because its outcome is inseparable from our security here at home. That is why I believe there is no substitute for victory over the Islamist extremists and terrorists in Afghanistan. A war of necessity must not just be fought, it must, of necessity, be won. Last night, in the most controversial paragraph of his speech, President Obama said that we will "begin the transfer of our forces out of Afghanistan in July 2011." That troubled me when I heard it. But, then the President added words that reassured me, which were that "We will execute this transition responsibly, taking into account conditions on the ground."

Secretary Gates, this morning in your opening statement, you added more detail and Admiral Mullen, you did, too, I think, to the mode by which we will begin this transition in July 2011. I'm particularly struck that you refer to it as a "transfer of security responsibility," and you also say that it will be very much like what we did in Iraq, where international security forces provided overwatch, first at the tactical level, then at the strategic level.

So, Secretary Gates, I want to ask you, as I read your words today, am I correct in concluding that what will definitely begin in July 2011 is a transfer of security responsibility to the Afghans, but may not include, immediately, a withdrawal of our forces from Afghanistan?

Secretary GATES. No, and that is correct. I think as we turn over more districts and more provinces to Afghan security control, much as we did with the provincial Iraqi control, that there will be a thinning of our forces and a gradual drawdown. I would remind folks, here, since this is the second surge I've been up here defending, that the surge in Iraq lasted 14 months: January 2007 to March 2008. Frankly, it was pretty apparent to our adversaries in Iraq all along that the surge was a very tentative situation because we were up here defending it practically every day. So, the notion that our adversaries in Afghanistan are not aware of the debates in this country, and the debates in Europe and elsewhere, is, I think, unrealistic.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I agree.

Secretary GATES. They know these things. But, the reality is, this is going to be a process. I think it has much in common with the way that we began to draw down in Iraq.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Am I right, then, that we're likely to transfer security responsibilities to the Afghans in the areas that are most stable, that are most uncontested at the beginning? At the beginning, we probably will put our troops back a ways, just to see how that works, rather than taking them out of the country?

Secretary GATES. Yes, we're not just going to throw these guys into the swimming pool and walk away. The reality is, first of all, those transfers are going to take place in the most uncontested places in Afghanistan. So, just as in Iraq, you may have some districts and provinces being transferred to Afghan security responsibility, and, at the very same time, have extraordinarily heavy combat going on in other provinces around the country, which is exactly what we saw in Iraq.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Am I right that, in the policy that the President announced last night, which does begin a transfer of security responsibility of July 2011 to the Afghans, there is no deadline for the end of that transfer; it will be based on conditions on the ground?

Secretary GATES. It will be based on conditions on the ground. But, by the same token, we want to communicate to the Afghans this is not an open-ended commitment on the part of the American people and our allies around the world.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I agree with that.

Secretary GATES. We have to build a fire under them, frankly, to get them to do the kind of recruitment, retention, training, and so on, for their forces that allow us to make this transition.

Let me just draw one other analogy to Iraq. In Iraq, once it was clear the surge was working, it was pretty plain that the Iraqis wanted us out about as fast as possible. The security agreement and everything flowed from that. That's not entirely clear in Afghanistan. They live in a very rough neighborhood. So, we have the balancing act here. Frankly, the centerpiece of our debates for the last several months have been: How do you get the Afghans to

begin to step up to responsibility for their own future, their own security in a way that allows us to have confidence that they will not once again become the safe haven for al Qaeda? Figuring out that balance, in terms of how you incentivize and give a sense of urgency to the Afghans, and at the same time signal resolve to our adversaries, was the tough part of this for us.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate that answer. I think you strike exactly the right balance, and I appreciate what you said. We're not just going to throw the Afghans into the pool and run away, until we're sure that they can swim on their own. To me, that's the essence of moving down the road to victory in Afghanistan.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I was going to start up with the end status and state, but it's been pretty well covered right now. I would only say this, though. I am probably speaking on behalf of all of the members up here because all of us have been both to Afghanistan and Iraq. The troops themselves, they want to win, and they don't like to even talk about a withdrawal date and that type of thing.

Let me just ask you a quick question, Admiral Mullen. Most of the time, when commanders talk about different options and courses of action, they talk about the risk involved. The risk is usually low, medium, or high. What was the risk level associated with General McChrystal's 40,000 increase?

Admiral MULLEN. Notionally and broadly moderate, but the real critical path here is the development of the ANSF, which we all think is high risk, particularly on the ANP side. That's one of the reasons General McChrystal has shifted to partnering, and one of the reasons that we are devoting our best people, best leaders, and resources to accelerating that, so that we can do what Secretary Gates mentioned earlier.

Senator INHOFE. Okay. I'll pursue that in just a minute, here. So, I would assume that the number 30,000 would be a little higher risk than the moderate risk that comes with 40,000 troops?

Admiral MULLEN. Sir, what I said in my statement is, General McChrystal is going to get these forces this year in as fast as we can get them there. His biggest concern is to reverse the momentum. He thinks he can do that with these forces. He's going to get them on the same timeline he asked for and at about the same level.

Senator INHOFE. I understand. Now, I was privileged to be with now National Security Advisor General Jones the last week that he was on the job over there, and I know some of the differences between Afghanistan and Iraq, but I've been asked, many times—and I think we should get what we're looking at on the record. During the peak of the surge in Iraq, we had about 165,000 Americans, and then in Afghanistan, when you start with 68,000, add 30,000 to it, you're talking about 100,000 in a country that's about twice the size of Iraq. Why does it take fewer troops? What's the major reason it takes fewer of our troops, our participation, in Afghanistan, relative to the size, as it did in Iraq?

Admiral MULLEN. One of the great strengthens of the review was to focus the objectives specifically, and, in particular, focus the objectives on key population centers. So, the troops that General McChrystal has asked for, and that will add up to about 100,000, are in key areas, particularly, the Pashtun Belt, where he fundamentally believes, with these troops, he can turn this around. While the ratio is a guide, it is not sacrosanct, and he's able to focus where we need to focus to get at this insurgency. Actually, the same was true in Iraq; it's just that this need, with respect to these ratios and these numbers, is about right for Afghanistan.

Secretary GATES. Let me just add one sentence. That is one of the reasons why the added contributions from our allies and partners are so important, because, basically, we want them to take responsibility for the northern and western parts of Afghanistan so that we can concentrate and focus our efforts in the southern and eastern parts of the country.

Senator INHOFE. Secretary Gates, I think one thing that all of you have said in your opening statements is, we need greater participation by the Afghans, the ANA, and we also need greater participation by the non-American coalition. We all agree with that. I happened to be over there in 2003, when we were turning over the training of the ANA to the Afghans, and it happened to be Oklahoma's 45th Guard Unit that was in charge of that. Afghans contend that they're great warriors; and yet, you looked around—and I have ever since then—you see so many of these young, healthy Afghans, that are walking the streets, who ought to be in the military. What can we do differently than what we've done in the past to encourage a greater participation with the ANA?

Secretary GATES. Let me start, and then I'll ask Admiral Mullen to contribute.

One of the things that they are doing that actually, I think, makes a real difference is significantly increasing the pay, both for the ANP and the ANA. The reality is that, based on the information available to us, in many instances the Taliban actually pay more than the Afghan Government. So, one of the things that we can do, particularly in terms of retention, is to increase their pay. I think most people believe that pay increase will have a real impact.

Admiral MULLEN. The Secretary talked earlier about retention and recruiting; clearly, incentivizing that, from a pay standpoint, is critical.

The other fundamental difference from several years ago, or really since General McChrystal got there, is this partnership piece. What I think you saw, Senator, was mentoring and training teams, that kind of thing.

Senator INHOFE. That's correct.

Admiral MULLEN. This is partnering, and it's getting everybody off their bases and out with the community. Those two differences are significant.

Senator INHOFE. Okay, I appreciate it. I was going to ask a similar question. What can we do differently, in terms of encouraging more non-American coalition forces? I was pleased with the one statement that the President made when he talked about the fact that he had actually talked to some of the NATO allies before com-

ing out with this. I wish he had done the same thing on the third missile defense site in Poland. But, by doing that, do you think that's going to encourage them and make them feel they're more a part of this? Was that a good move?

Secretary GATES. Absolutely.

Senator INHOFE. What else can we do to encourage more of the non-American coalition?

Secretary GATES. Secretary Clinton has been talking to her counterparts, I've been talking to my counterparts, and we are both hearing: 1,000 here, 800 there, and so on. I think that we will make the 5,000 to 7,000 goal, and I think, as somebody who has been critical of the allies and was once derided by my British colleague for megaphone diplomacy because I was giving them such a hard time on this, we have to realize that the non-U.S. forces have increased in the last 2 years, from about 17,000 to 18,000 troops, to almost 44,000 troops. So, with this add, we will be at nearly 50,000 non-U.S. troops in Afghanistan, and I think that's a pretty significant commitment.

Senator INHOFE. Yes.

My time has expired, but, for the record, Madam Secretary, you made a statement about President Karzai and the speech that he recently made. I hope it's not just empty words. But, if you would, for the record, give us your indication, your feelings, about what he can do now to accomplish what you had suggested.

Secretary CLINTON. I certainly will, Senator.

[The information referred to follows:]

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary CLINTON. If I could just quickly add, one of the most important parts of President Kazai's speech was his assertion that ANSF would be taking responsibility for many important parts of the country within 3 years, and that they would be responsible for the entire country within 5 years. That is very much along the lines of the kind of partnering and transition that we think is realistic; we just have to keep the feet to the fire and keep pushing it forward.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, Mr. Secretary, and Mr. Chairman.

There's been much made about this withdrawal goal as an arbitrary one, but let me ask you, Admiral Mullen: This was based on the advice of General McChrystal, and your advice, about your expectation of what the situation on the ground would be in 2011, given these additional resources and additional change of policy, correct?

Admiral MULLEN. I have a very clear view, and, I think, so do General Petraeus and General McChrystal, that by mid-2011 we will know whether we are going to succeed here or not. That has been something that we've discussed and we agreed on. That's why getting these forces in so quickly is so important to try to reverse

this thing. Some of it is based on the fact that the Marines have been in Helmand this year, so, in fact, the Marines will be in one of the toughest places for three fighting seasons, if you will—2009, 2010, and 2011—and we think, with the additional forces, we will have very strong indicators about how this is going and our ability to transfer and transition at that point.

Senator REED. So you wouldn't describe the date as arbitrary?

Admiral MULLEN. No, sir. It wasn't arbitrary.

That said, what the President also said, the transition would be responsible and it would be based on conditions. All of us can look out and speculate what those conditions will be, but I think we have to be careful about that. Transition in July 2011 is the goal right now.

Secretary GATES. I would just clarify, if I could, Senator?

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary?

Secretary GATES. The July 2011 date was chosen because it will be 2 years after the Marines arrived in Helmand.

Senator REED. Giving them the fighting opportunities, for want of a better term, perhaps fighting obligations or fighting challenges, that have a deadline.

The issue of the deadline also raises the issue of our posture in Iraq. There is a deadline there, too, Mr. Secretary, and that is a legal deadline, which I understand can't be changed without the permission of the Iraqis, even if conditions deteriorated. Is that correct?

Secretary GATES. That's correct. All of our combat forces are to be out by the end of August 2010, and all forces out by the end of 2011. We do have some flexibility, in terms of the pacing of the withdrawals between now and the end of August, but even with the hiccups over the elections and the problems with respect to the election law, at this point General Odierno does not see any need to alter the pacing of the draw-downs in Iraq.

Senator REED. But, that was agreed to by the Bush administration as a hard deadline without conditions, is that correct?

Secretary GATES. That is correct.

Senator REED. One of the other aspects of this new plan was the process of deliberation that went into it. It took time. But, from your comments this morning, that time, I sense, was well spent. One aspect of this I think, Admiral Mullen, was that the original plan by General McChrystal with 40,000 troops would not have had the flow of forces as quickly as the final plan adopted by the President. Is that correct?

Admiral MULLEN. In particular, with respect to the NATO forces, they're not committed yet, but we're hopeful that they will be available more quickly and that we will do everything that we can to get as much capability and as quickly as possible.

Senator REED. But, that is only about NATO.

Admiral MULLEN. I don't want to overstate that.

Senator REED. Right.

Admiral MULLEN. It is accelerated, to some degree; I don't want to overstate that, but it really gets him the forces he needs this year to turn this thing around.

Secretary GATES. I would add that the final component of his original request, the final brigade combat team (BCT), would not

have arrived in Afghanistan until the summer of 2011. My own personal recommendation was, there's no need to commit to that since it's so far in the future, and so, to Admiral Mullen's point earlier, fundamentally General McChrystal is getting more troops faster than under the original plan.

Senator REED. All right, let me just rephrase that.

This process, as you've suggested, has produced, in your minds, a better proposal across the board than originally was submitted by the individual components: the Ambassador, General McChrystal, U.S. Central Command, et cetera. Is that your assessment?

Secretary GATES. I'm convinced everybody in the process feels that way. One of the things that was clearly an issue, and one of the concerns that I had, coming out of the March decisions, was that they were interpreted very broadly, in the press and elsewhere, as a commitment to full-scale nation-building and creating a strong central government in Kabul. There was understandable skepticism over such broad objectives, and it sounded very open-ended. So, one of the principal components of the dialogue over the last 3 months was: How do we refine and narrow the mission to make it achievable, and achieve the objectives, in terms of our own security?

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary, some of the criticism of even talking about a date—regardless of whether it's a hard unconditional withdrawal as in Iraq, or the proposal of the President for Afghanistan—is that it would embolden the enemy, on one hand, or, on the other hand, they would lie low and wait us out. It strikes me that the Taliban has been emboldened quite aggressively over the last several years without any type of deadline, and if they sit it out, what will you do if they simply gave up the operational space to us for 18 months or 2 years?

Secretary GATES. We certainly would welcome them not being active for the next 18 months because it would give us open-field running, with our allies and the Afghans, to build capacity. I think, as you make the point, we are already in a situation in which they are emboldened and in which they are being aggressive and where they have the momentum right now. It's not clear to me what more they could do than they're doing right now. The forces that we're sending in are intended, in the first instance, as the Admiral has said, to reverse that momentum and deny them the ability to control territory.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. I thank all of you for all your presentations this morning and for your service to the Country.

We only have one Commander in Chief, and I want to be supportive. I think this plan is within the framework of something I think can be effective. I intend to support you and examine it as we go forward to make sure that we're fulfilling our role here in Congress to provide oversight and our responsibility to our constituents. I want to thank you for your presentations.

Secretary Gates, we talked earlier this year about too-grandiose expectations for a country that has as many difficulties and is as

poor, such as with Iraq or Afghanistan, and you recognized that in your answer to our questions. I'd like to pursue that a little bit. That is, what can we realistically expect? How can we create stability and order in Afghanistan as soon as possible so that we can reduce our troops as soon as possible from that country?

Most of the talk I've been hearing, and in your statements, indicate a commitment to ANA, which I assume is commanded and directed from the central government in Kabul. But, you did indicate in your statement that you would want to engage communities to enlist more local security forces to protect their own territory. I heard former National Security Advisor Brzezinski this morning on television talk about the need for local militias. I saw former President Musharraf from Pakistan in his op-ed in the Wall Street Journal saying that Afghans, for centuries, have been governed loosely, through a social compact between all the ethnic groups under a sovereign king. So, again, how do you envision making progress to transitioning to local security forces? To what extent must those forces be directly accountable to Kabul, and to what extent can they be local?

Secretary GATES. There is a balance that we have to strike, and we do. I have felt, ever since I got this job, that we have been too focused on the central government in Kabul, and not enough on the provinces, the districts, and the tribes. The key here is community security organizations that are willing to work with the government in Kabul and that do not become the militias for warlords.

The balance we're trying to strike, and what General McChrystal cares about a lot, as does everybody else, is: How do we encourage these local policing functions? Some of the efforts I've seen at work in Wardak Province, where they recruit locals. The tribal elders are telling me the roads that have been closed by the Taliban for years have been reopened by these local groups, but they are within the framework of the provincial governor and the district leadership, so that they're not operating independently or working for warlords. Figuring out how to encourage that kind of activity and build on it, but keep it within the framework of people who are in governing positions and not just independent warlords, is the key to that effort.

But, that kind of subnational subprovincial effort, I think, ultimately will play an important role in all of this.

Senator SESSIONS. Of course, the National Guards are an example. Every State has a National Guard, and the Governors still appoint the commanders of those National Guards in America. I think there is a sense of loyalty and fierce commitment to local areas in nations like Afghanistan that we may not be fully respecting. I think you're on the right track with that thought.

One of the generals whom I met in the Pentagon recently had a picture of one of the local officials on his wall, and he was very impressed with him. A very strong leader who was doing good work. I'm not sure how well he would perform if he thought that everything had to be run through the national government.

Secretary GATES. I would just add, Senator, I think that one of the keys here is, in a country that is as rural and as tribal as Afghanistan, I think one of the challenges in recruiting people for the ANA and the ANP is getting them to leave their local area. That's

why I think these local security activities, if we can work with the Afghans to keep them within a governance model, have such promise because these guys are basically protecting their own turf.

Senator SESSIONS. I couldn't agree more, and they can be paid what, for them, would be a good wage, but far less than it would cost to have an American soldier there.

Mr. Secretary, I regret to have to raise the problem with the tanker competition. I notice the Northrop Grumman team has announced a concern so great that they are announcing they may pull out from the competition.

A number of serious changes were made in the Request for Proposal (RFP), each one of those tilted against a transformational aircraft, tilted against a larger aircraft, an aircraft that could provide more cargo capacity and other capabilities. The RFP was received with great concern by the Northrop team because it's quite different from the original RFP. There's no doubt about that. All the change is tilted in the way I've mentioned.

So, my question, briefly, to you is: Do you believe that competition is important in this aircraft for DOD and the warfighter? Will you consider discussing some of these matters and be open to changing an RFP if it's not fair and does not do the job that you need for DOD? Or has a final decision been made, given the entire process of discussion has produced no alteration to make absolutely no changes in the tentative RFP that's out there?

Secretary GATES. We promised a fair and highly transparent process. We believe that the RFP is evenhanded. We are in a comment period, and we have received a lot of comments, both from the competitors and from Congress, as well as others. The comment period is coming to a close. If we were totally locked into not changing anything, we wouldn't have gone through the comment period. We will look at the comments that have been made and make a judgment at that point. We believe that both of the principal competitors are highly qualified, and we would like to see competition continue in this process.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Bill Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, Mr. Secretary, Admiral, thank you for your public service and for your continued public service.

During the 1970s and the 1980s, I had the privilege of serving with Congressman Charlie Wilson in the House of Representatives. Mr. Secretary, I am so happy to see in your statement, and I quote you, "We will not repeat the mistakes of 1989, when we abandoned the country only to see it descend into civil war and then into Taliban hands."

It was Congressman Charlie Wilson at that time who singularly had been, in large part, responsible for us getting into Afghanistan in the first place and fought us getting out. So, thank you for stating the United States policy as strongly as you have.

Now, I'm going to ask you and Secretary Clinton a couple of questions that I think are for the long term. Other than the policy that was announced last night by the President with regard to the military activities, for the long term, we have to integrate the mili-

tary with the other agencies of government to help stabilize the country. For example, Congress has provided our commanders in the field with the Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) to quickly initiate reconstruction projects and provide immediate assistance to the Afghan communities after they've actually finished their combat. But, we don't seem to have done a great job in answering how we move from the post-conflict reconstruction projects, often overseen by the military, to the long-term development projects overseen by civilians? I wish you all would address how DOD and DOS are working together to make that transition for the long term in Afghanistan more seamless.

Secretary Clinton, DOS has undertaken a major review of U.S. assistance programs, including agricultural assistance, particularly with regard to malnutrition as well as alternate livelihoods to growing poppies in Afghanistan. The United States has tended to favor large development contracts using third-country nationals instead of investing in the Afghans themselves, the grassroots efforts that employ Afghans, and therefore providing them with the skills and assistance to get their crops to markets. So, if you would share with the committee about your review of agricultural assistance, and how we're going to work to make it more effective as you and DOD work together, please.

Secretary GATES. First I would say that this situation in Afghanistan has been, shall we say, personally of interest to me, having worked with Congressman Charlie Wilson back in the 1980s, which was always an interesting experience.

First of all, the specific answer to your question is, Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal are, as we speak, working on their joint civil-military campaign plan, which I think will establish the basis for the kind of transition that you're talking about. But, I would tell you, one of the obstacles, at least in my opinion from observing, is that DOS does not have the kind of flexibility in the way that it spends money, and the ability to do so quickly and make commitments quickly and have agility because of the number of restrictions and processes that they have to go through with respect to their funds. Frankly, I think one of the things that the CERP funds have taught us, both in Iraq and Afghanistan, is that that kind of flexibility and agility has been a huge asset for the United States in both places.

Secretary CLINTON. Senator Nelson, let me start by saying that it's been a real privilege working with Secretary Gates and DOD in trying to figure out how to have a more integrated civilian-military strategy. Secretary Gates has been one of the best advocates that DOS and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have for increasing our funding, our personnel, our flexibility and agility, so that we do have the resources and capacity to be quickly responsive.

What we have done in the last 10 months is, number one, to investigate very thoroughly what was on the ground in Afghanistan, and we didn't particularly come away impressed. As I said in my testimony, there were a little over 300 civilians. Many of them were on 6-month rotations. If you looked at their in-country time, a lot of them spent time out of the country. They did not have well-defined missions. Most of our civilian aid going into Afghanistan

had been contracted out without adequate oversight or accountability.

We stopped all contracts going into Afghanistan. We began doing a complete scrub of them. I'm not saying that we have yet perfected our oversight, but we have been working very hard to improve it dramatically.

We are strongly supporting the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR). We would like to actually learn from the mistakes that are being made and in a timely way, rather than waiting, as we did in Iraq, and then being told that we've wasted tens of billions of dollars, which is just unacceptable.

We also began to recruit civilians who were well suited for the jobs we needed. There was a tendency in the past, for both Iraq and Afghanistan, to basically tell Foreign Service Officers, Civil Service Officers, in both DOS and USAID, that if they went, spent their 6 months in one of those two places, they would have an advantage in getting the best assignment next. So, if you wanted to end up in Paris, you'd go to Baghdad for 6 months, whether your particular expertise and experience was needed or not.

So, we have painstakingly, under the leadership of Deputy Secretary Jack Lew, actually matched each individual to the job that was required. We will triple the numbers that we have on the ground by early January. We've also required all of our civilians to train at Camp Atterbury in Indiana, where our military Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) members train, so that we can, from the very beginning, start integrating our civilian-military forces.

I think that we're learning a lot of lessons as we go, but you put your finger on one of our biggest problems. The CERP funds that are accessible to our military forces, both in and immediately after combat operations, are a tremendous tool for doing projects and for winning allegiance. It's even being used, as it was in Iraq, for enticing people off the battlefield. There's nothing comparable on the civilian side. We have to requisition money, we have to wait. A young captain can access CERP funds in a matter of hours; an experienced agricultural specialist, a rule-of-law specialist, has to wait weeks, if not months, to get a project approved.

So, if we're going to be successful, and if we're going to, frankly, be the kind of partners that our military needs, we have to have more tools. We're getting more resources, but the budget situation is going to be very tight, as everybody knows, and whether our civilian personnel will have the resources they need to be the partners they are required to be is going to be challenging.

We will come with a very specific set of tasks, but your question really goes to the heart of what we are trying to achieve.

The final point I would make is that we have civilians in DOS and from USAID serving all over the world in very dangerous settings. They are in war and conflict areas, like Eastern Congo, without any security support. When we have our troops on the ground, as we do in Iraq or in Afghanistan, we try to take even additional measures to make sure that our people can get around. But, as Senator McCain said, it's very difficult because of the security situation.

What we are doing is partnering more by embedding our civilians with our troops. That carries a mixed message, as you might

guess, because we're trying to have a civilian face on it, but we have to have enough security to function.

This is a highly complex assignment. We send individuals on the civilian side; DOD sends units, battalions, brigades. We are trying to do something that's never been done before, and we need the advice, the help, and the resources that are required.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Since we have to be successful at the end of this trial time, we'll look forward to that appropriation request, Madam Secretary, and see if we can act expeditiously on it.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Chambliss.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, to all three of you, for your leadership at this very critical time in the history of the world, not just our country.

Secretary Gates, I thought the President did a good job last night of laying out the scenario as well as the way forward. However, having just heard your opening statement, I thought you were much stronger, even much more powerful, and I hope that you will carry the message you brought to this committee to our friends in Afghanistan as well as Pakistan because, as you said, the perception among the Pakistanis has to be that we're going to be there. The perception among the Afghans has to be that we're going to stay there for the long term. Otherwise, as one of the Taliban commented in the Afghan press when I was over there last week over Thanksgiving, that, "If the President comes out and says that, 'In 2013, the United States is out of here,' then we're going to sit back and just wait until 2013." We all know that's the case. So, you're exactly right, and I do truly hope that you will take that message to our folks in both Afghanistan and in Pakistan at the leadership level.

Admiral Mullen, you made a comment that I want to drill down on for just a second. You said we will know by mid-2011 if we're going to be successful. Now, let's assume that we are being successful, that General Carter is doing well down in Regional Command (RC)-South, that General Scaparotti is doing well in RC-East, moving against the Haqqani Network, and that the Pakistanis are stepping up in a greater fashion and helping us out.

What does this mean, with the President having said that we're going to start bringing our troops home in 18 months, but if we are successful, what does that mean with respect to bringing home the troops?

Admiral MULLEN. Senator Chambliss, I think you very accurately captured the overall situation. The Pakistanis have started to move; we have a new government with a newly-elected President in Afghanistan; we have great commanders on the ground in our leadership; we have an increased level of support, not just in terms of numbers, but, really, support from our NATO allies; and we have a very unpopular insurgency with respect to the Afghan people. I think there are great opportunities here over the next 18 to 24 months. One of the reasons it's so important, and to get these troops there is, as I've said before, to turn this insurgency around. General McChrystal believes, General Petraeus believes, and I be-

lieve we can do that over the course of the next 18 to 24 months. That will then provide an opportunity to start a kind of transition, as far as security responsibility and thinning of our forces, there. It's very difficult to know exactly what the conditions will be, but if we get this right, they'll be a lot better in the east and a lot better in the south, and provide us an opportunity to transition; which is why, on the other side, if we are unable to do that by then, I think we have to reassess our strategy.

Senator CHAMBLISS. So, what I'm hearing is that there is flexibility in that timeline, based upon success or lack thereof?

Admiral MULLEN. I think the timeline is clear. I think the flexibility is in where we transition and where we turn over responsibility. This is something we all understand, and we think we'll be able to do that. It's a little difficult to predict exactly where that's going to occur, right now.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Right.

Secretary GATES. Senator, if I might just add because I appreciated your comments about the longer term. Now, what I'm about to state is just my opinion, because, frankly, this wasn't a part of our dialogue over the past 2 or 3 months, or not a significant part of it. But, in my mind I think that—particularly if the Afghans want us to—we need to think in terms of a very long-term willingness to work with the Afghans, in terms of military training, in terms of equipping, the kind of long-term partnership we have with many countries around the world, where we have a certain military presence in that country, but—it's not a combat presence, it's a training-and-equipping and that kind of a role—one where we are clearly seen as their continuing partner. That would be my personal opinion of how I would see this unfolding long-term, after our combat forces are principally gone from Afghanistan.

Senator CHAMBLISS. I appreciate that. My worry is, though, that the headline in the Islamabad press today is that, "President Sending 30,000 Troops; They're Coming Out in 18 Months." That's why I think what you are saying is important. You carry your message—all of you—of exactly what we mean by that 18 months.

Secretary Clinton, I have not always been a fan of the work that USAID has done, but I've been in Afghanistan—not just last Thursday, but about 6 months ago also—and had the opportunity to visit with your folks. I have to say that they're doing an amazing job over there, with respect to educating children—we've gone from 900,000 to 6 million children in school—and we still have another 6 million to go. But, it's because, in my opinion, of what USAID has done, and with the security that's been given by the military, that we are seeing those children educated, which, for the long term, I think is the biggest issue that we have.

Now, we assumed the other day that we knew what the President might say, and he did call for a surge. When I told your folks that, while we're surging troops, there also needed to be a surge on the civilian side. You have indicated that you're plussing-up those folks; that is the same thing DOS told us the other day.

But, I worry about what's going to happen in 18 months. Because security in Afghanistan has to be the way forward, not just from the military standpoint; your folks on the ground, DOS civilians,

have to have security in order to be able to improve the lives of the Afghans.

I'd just like your comment on whether or not you think the levels you're talking about are enough. Are you going to ask for more resources, for more people? Where do you see the way forward?

Secretary CLINTON. Senator, thank you for those very kind words, which are so well-deserved by our people on the ground in Afghanistan and elsewhere. They are really responding to the mission and working extremely hard; but, of course, they have to do so within a secure environment.

Our civilians are out around the country. They are also, of course, in Kabul, working with government ministries. USAID is certifying ministries, so we can determine which ones are accountable and transparent enough to receive additional funds from us. They are truly working at all levels of the Afghan Government and in many sectors of society. But, security is a key element as to whether they can be effective. Now, a lot of our civilian workers are veterans of other very difficult security environments; they are willing to go places that a lot of folks are not, and I give them great credit for that. I think we just have to come to you with our best estimate as to what will be required to have the kind of civilian surge you just referred to, because, as we put additional troops in, we want to have more civilians embedded with them, we want to have them right there, on the ground when combat is over, to begin the building process and partnering with their civilian counterparts. We are tripling the number that we found when we got there, and we're changing their mission and requiring much more of them. But, the numbers are going to have to grow if we expect to deliver on what is required.

Senator CHAMBLISS. You have an amazing PRT down in Lashkar Gah; they're doing great work.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Chambliss.

Senator Ben Nelson.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me add my appreciation to the three of you for your continuing service, as well.

I've been a long-time advocate for benchmarks or measurements to develop in the conduct of our missions, so we can measure progress and continue to be objective while engaging the efforts in Afghanistan-Pakistan. I know this administration is committed—our allies—are committed to proffering these objective benchmarks.

Are we in the process of developing new benchmarks in connection with the new mission so that we can determine whether we're 25 percent towards achieving certain goals, 50 percent, or a lot more needs to be done? If we are in the process of doing that, will we be in a position to change the benchmarks as things develop on the ground?

I'll start with you, Secretary Gates.

Secretary GATES. The answer is yes. I mentioned earlier that the President has made it clear that there will be another thorough review in a year, in December 2010, but we have developed some clear benchmarks, in terms of not only the security arena, but in terms of ANSF recruitment, retention, fielding, partnering, and so

on. The President made it pretty clear and, I think, mentioned to the congressional leadership yesterday, that he's expecting to get monthly reports on how we're doing against these. We also have benchmarks on the civilian side, as well.

Secretary CLINTON. Senator Nelson, our civilian, military, and intelligence agencies have all developed a range of benchmarks, and they're in a constant process of being refined. As Secretary Gates said, we're going to be looking to report on those going forward.

The military has their own benchmarks, but, as Admiral Mullen referenced, we have taken a much closer look at districts, who controls what, what the capacity of governance is, whether there's a shadow government, how much of national sovereignty can be asserted. We're looking at those kinds of yardstick measurements on the military side.

On the civilian side, a lot of it depends upon our assessment of where we're starting. As Senator Chambliss said, when President Karzai took office, there were a little less than a million students in school, and they were virtually all boys; now there are 7 million, and about 40 percent are girls. But, there are 5 to 6 million yet to go. So, that's a very clear benchmark.

In the agricultural area, we've already rehabilitated irrigation canals and we've worked closely with the agricultural ministry. We helped them, as did other international donors with whom we coordinate, to provide heartier seeds so that they had a bumper wheat crop. They just had their first big shipment of apples and pomegranates to India. We are supporting their acquisition of better fertilizer and farm equipment. So, again, there are measurable benchmarks. How much is the agricultural economy improving? How many people are employed? What is the relationship between a lower poppy crop and a higher crop of licit goods?

We are working with governance and rule-of-law challenges, as well.

So, in each of these areas, we have realistic expectations, we are trying to have good measurements, and we will be carefully following that to see what kind of progress we're making.

Senator BEN NELSON. I appreciate that. I think that is critically important for not only determining how we're doing, but also, I think, in keeping the support of the American people, in seeing that progress is, in fact, being made, and where it isn't, that a plan is now in place to try to change the direction.

In that connection, do we have any specific ideas about how to assist President Karzai in rooting out—if we can be of assistance in that—the corruption within the government? It's one thing to tell them that stopping corruption is what needs to be done; it's another thing to expect it to be done. Can we be of assistance, which I think probably would assure us of some success?

Secretary CLINTON. Senator Nelson, we have made a number of requests of the Karzai Government. Obviously, who is put into the cabinet, who are named as governors, and those who hold other responsible positions are key to everything that happens going forward.

We have focused our efforts in four areas. First, to enhance law enforcement cooperation. When I talk about the civilian work that is being done, I don't want just to talk about DOS and USAID. We

have a lot of very experienced officials from the Drug Enforcement Agency, from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, from the Department of Justice, as well as places like USDA. We are enhancing intelligence-sharing and cooperation on corruption and major crime.

Second, we are certifying Afghan ministries, and there are some ministries that we believe are functioning well enough now that we can, with confidence, provide funding and hold their leadership accountable; others we're not going to touch until they're cleaned out. They're not getting any U.S. civilian assistance.

Third, we want to strengthen SIGAR. We are asking for additional resources on the ground with auditors because we want realtime reports.

Fourth, we are supporting the Major Crimes Task Force (MCTF) and other Afghan anticorruption efforts. The MCTF is a vetted Afghan unit supported by U.S. and British law enforcement officials. It's focusing on corruption as part of its mandate. It's recently charged several Afghan officials, and others are under investigation.

Ultimately, it's up to the Afghans to end corruption, and we have an expectation of that. We have no illusions that this is going to happen easily or quickly, but we know how important it is to be working to try to root it out.

Secretary GATES. I would just add, Senator, that I think we have to be honest with ourselves that the massive influx of money into Afghanistan that comes from ourselves and our international partners is a huge factor in this, or at least a significant factor. As Secretary Clinton has suggested, I think we need to go back and look at how we are dispensing money and how we are contracting and so on. The subject, I know, is near and dear to Senator McCaskill's heart. But, how can we leverage the areas where we're writing the checks into minimizing the opportunities for that money to be siphoned off on its way to the purpose we intend?

Secretary CLINTON. Senator Nelson, if I could just add, because Secretary Gates raised an issue that is connected with this, and that is our contracting processes, something that Senator McCaskill is focused on. Think about the long supply-chain lines that we have getting into Afghanistan. When our equipment, our food, everything that our troops use, our civilians depend on, largely comes from the outside; when a ship docks at Karachi, and the goods get loaded onto trucks, and then the trucks start that long trip through Pakistan, up into Afghanistan. It's a very difficult environment to operate in. There's a lot of evidence that, in addition to funding from the Persian Gulf and the illegal narcotics trade, that siphoning off contractual money from the international community—not just in terms of outright fraud and corruption, but also intimidation and extortion—is a major source of funding for the Taliban. We just have to be honest, here, about how complex and difficult this problem is, and how, frankly, it is not all an Afghan problem.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for coming. I know it's been a difficult process you've been involved in.

As you were debating what to do, did all of you realize this is the last best chance America has to get it right in Afghanistan?

Secretary CLINTON. Yes, sir.

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. Politically, militarily, and otherwise?

Secretary CLINTON. We also realized how sad it was that we were trying to make that decision 8 years later.

Senator GRAHAM. Yes, ma'am. It is sad. It would have been sad to have lost in Iraq. It would have been devastating.

Secretary CLINTON. We'll talk about that offline sometime.

Senator GRAHAM. There you go. [Laughter.]

We're talking about the future now. We're talking about winning, I hope.

Please rank the consequences of a failed state in Afghanistan to our national security interest, 1 being inconsequential, 10 being grave. Where would you put a failed state in Afghanistan, in terms of our national security interest?

Secretary Clinton?

Secretary CLINTON. Senator Graham, I would put it at a 10. I think a failed state that is totally lawless, that is a safe haven for terrorists, particularly the syndicate of terrorism headed by al Qaeda, poses a direct threat to the security of the United States of America.

Senator GRAHAM. I think that does it. Do both of you, Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, agree with that? [Both answered in the affirmative.] Okay. I think that is a good evaluation. As to those who criticized the President, I think all 3 of our witnesses are right; he did this because he realized it was a 10, too, I hope. I'm sure he did.

The July 2011 withdrawal statement—Secretary Gates, who is the audience for that statement?

Secretary GATES. I think that there are at least two principal audiences. One audience—and a very important one—is the Afghan Government, that they must accept responsibility, in terms of their own governance, in terms of their own security forces, in terms of accepting their responsibility and understanding that they must take ownership of this conflict on their own soil, that it's not just going to be fought by foreigners on their behalf.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay.

Secretary GATES. I think the other audience, frankly, is the American people, who are weary after 8 years of war, and to let them know this isn't going to go on for another 10 years.

Senator GRAHAM. But, there are other people listening, and I guess that's my problem. I can understand the frustration of the American people. We've been here 8 years, and it seems to be that it's not working out the way we would all hope. I can understand that. But, I can't understand letting Afghanistan go back into the abyss again. That's my dilemma.

In December 2010, you will begin to evaluate Afghanistan anew, is that correct? Check our progress?

Secretary GATES. We're going to have a continuing process, but there will be a full-scale reevaluation of where we stand in December, yes.

Senator GRAHAM. My question is, will the evaluation decision be how fast we withdraw or whether or not we should withdraw?

Secretary GATES. I think it'll be principally about whether the strategy that we've put in place is working.

Senator GRAHAM. Is it possible, in December 2010, to reach the conclusion, "It is not wise to withdraw anyone in July 2011?" Is that possible?

Secretary GATES. I think the President, as Commander in Chief, always has the option to adjust his decision.

Senator GRAHAM. So, it is not locked in that we're going to be withdrawing troops in July 2011; we're going to look, throughout the process, particularly in December 2010, and make a decision then as to whether we should withdraw at a certain pace or not withdraw at all. Is that correct?

Secretary GATES. I guess the way I would phrase it is that it is our plan to begin this transition process in July 2011. If circumstances dictate in December, I think, as I say, the President always has the freedom to adjust his decisions.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay.

Admiral Mullen, is it your understanding that it's possible, in December 2010, not to begin to withdraw in 2011?

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, I'd reiterate the President has choices, as the President.

Senator GRAHAM. So, his statement last night did not bind him to start withdrawing in 2011. That's the understanding of this panel?

Secretary GATES. I'd defer to Secretary Clinton, but I think it was a clear statement of his strong intent.

Senator GRAHAM. Right. I understand why he'd want to let the American people know that we're not going to be there forever, but this is a critically important event. I think that the success of this operation depends on will and resolve, and I just don't want the July 2011 statement to be seen by our enemy, which is not one of the audiences you mentioned, which I think are listening, that we have somehow locked ourselves into leaving.

The question is, have we locked ourselves into leaving, Secretary Clinton, in July 2011?

Secretary CLINTON. Senator Graham, I do not believe we have locked ourselves into leaving, but what we have done—and I think it was an appropriate position for the President to take—is to signal very clearly, to all audiences, that the United States is not interested in occupying Afghanistan.

Senator GRAHAM. Right.

Secretary CLINTON. We are not interested in running their country or building their nation. We are trying to give them the space and time to be able to build up sufficient forces to defend themselves. It is the best assessment of our military experts, as evidenced by Secretary Gates, Admiral Mullen, General Petraeus, General McChrystal, and others, that by July 2011, there can be the beginning of a responsible transition that will, of course, be based on conditions.

Here's what the President said, "Allow us to begin the transfer of our forces out of Afghanistan in July 2011. We will execute this transition responsibly, taking into account conditions on the ground." To me, that is exactly the appropriate approach for the President to take. As Secretary Gates has said, the President's authority and his responsibility as Commander in Chief require him to be constantly assessing the situation, which he will do.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you. My time is up, but I would just like to remind everyone there is another audience that wasn't mentioned by Secretary Gates. It's the enemy. They have a vote in this war. They are a participant in it.

Finally, the last question, if you could, Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, would you grade NATO in terms of their effectiveness as a fighting force over the last several years?

Secretary GATES. I think that it varies from country to country, Senator.

Admiral MULLEN. Senator, they have bled and died.

Senator GRAHAM. I know they have, but would you give them an A to an F? How is NATO as an effective fighting force, an A to an F? Not just part of it, all of it.

Secretary GATES. Senator, in all honesty, I don't think any good purpose is served by doing that. I would say that those who have been fighting with us in the south: the Australians, the British, the Dutch, the Danes, the Canadians, the Poles, I'd give them all an A.

Senator GRAHAM. Great.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Graham.

Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me begin by again communicating my respect for all three of you for the service that you have given our country, and for the good of our country, in a lot of different ways. I also respect the process that this administration has gone through, with you and others, such as National Security Advisor General Jones, in terms of trying to work out what you may call the "best possible formula," perhaps it's the most realistic, in your view. There's not a lot of good in the options that are available in that part of the world.

There's been a lot of time spent on the notion of the dates that were mentioned in the President's speech. I would prefer to focus, as I have in the past, on the conditions that might bring about an endpoint to our involvement. I would like to see an endpoint, and this is something that you can expect to hear more on, from our perspective, over the coming months. What exactly is going to bring about the conditions under which we can end our involvement?

There's also been a good bit of discussion about the nature of the Karzai Government and issues such as corruption. I would like to defer a dialogue on that until tomorrow; I'm on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I would like to address this tomorrow. I think perhaps we may reach a point where we might encourage the Afghanis to examine their constitution that was arrived at, at the Bonn Conference in 2001, to try to enable a greater devolution of this government, so you can get into issues such as local authority and corruption at a local level.

Where I really would like to spend my time today is how we are separating out who actually should be confronted as an enemy on the battlefield. As all of you know, a defining characteristic throughout the history of Afghanistan has been its resistance to foreign influence, particularly foreign occupation, and I would say, very successful resistance. When we talk about the Taliban, we're talking about terms that we use interchangeably, but which aren't particularly interchangeable. We had a pretty vicious Taliban Government, which we assisted in getting rid of. We have an ideologically charged group right now that operates principally in Pakistan, which is associated with the forces of international terrorism. Then, we have a third group which many believe is a group that is growing with the greatest speed and that from the perspective of many Afghanis, is ideological only in the sense that it resents our presence, and is not viewed as a terrorist organization, specifically, or even aligned with terrorist organizations. It's viewed by many in Afghanistan as a popular movement, who doesn't like a central government and whose size can actually be elevated, its recruitment process can be increased, by the wrong application of American force.

In that respect, rather than being an element that is aligned with international terrorism, it is viewed by many Afghanis as something of a regional militia that doesn't particularly want to threaten U.S. interests outside of Afghanistan. I would like to hear from you, and I'll start with Admiral Mullen, but I invite anyone who wants to contribute, how were these distinctions, in terms of history and in terms of participation, made as you developed the policy that was now announced?

Admiral MULLEN. The citizens of Afghanistan are a people very tired of war. They are very much waiting on the fence to see which way this is going to go. All the information I've gotten, both personally when I've been there as well as from the commanders on the ground, indicate not only are they tired, but they're not very supportive or not supportive at all of the Taliban. It's a very small percentage that is supportive. I'm talking about the last group, more specifically.

We believe there's a large percentage of that group, Taliban sympathizers, which can be reconciled and reintegrated with the right approach.

The other thing, in a larger sense, that I've watched over the last couple of years, which is of growing concern, is the collaboration of the Taliban. I understand that they can have somewhat ideologically different perspectives, but they have come together in ways that actually are hugely concerning to me, on both sides.

Senator WEBB. Since my time is running out, I want to seize on something you just said, because I think it's a very important clarification that you can make here. If those are people who can be brought over to our view, and if we're having trouble recruiting on the ANA, which we seem to be, while the size of this resistance element seems to be growing, how are you making the distinction, in terms of operational policy that would give them reason to change their affiliation?

Admiral MULLEN. If I understand your question correctly, it's really done through direct engagement at the local level. We've

seen, very recently, numbers of them say, "No, I don't want to do this anymore." But, as I think you understand as well as or better than anybody, we have to have a secure environment in which they can do this. We don't have that in many places.

So, General McChrystal and others are actually very optimistic with respect to doing this, but we can't do it without a level of security we just don't have in many of these places.

Senator WEBB. So, you do have an optimism that, over time, these are people who, and despite the characterization that we presently use, can be convinced to affiliate with the national government?

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, I do, I think they can.

In the end, I think the only way that we're not going to occupy them is to not occupy them. That is a challenge that we are, over time, committed to not doing that. The President spoke to that last night. But, that's a message, obviously, we have to deliver in fact, not just speaking to it, and to give them responsibility for their own security. There's a big part of the strategy that focuses locally—the Secretary talked about it earlier—to not turn it back into warlordism. That's a very delicate balance. But, the commanders on the ground that I've engaged with are comfortable that this is very possible.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Webb.

Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Clinton, welcome back to the committee. Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, thank you very much for your service.

I think there's already been some discussion about the ANP and ANSF, at least in terms of the numbers. I'm interested in knowing how analogous the situation there is with the training and equipping of the ANSF to Iraq, and just in terms of their capacity to take over battlespace, and how that fits in with the timeline that you have laid out. What made the Iraq surge, I think, so effective, along with the counterinsurgency strategy there, was that the Iraqi Security Forces eventually were able to step up and provide security for the population. Do you see parallels there? How quickly might we expect that capacity and capability to grow?

Admiral MULLEN. I think, Senator, it's very much tied to the momentum piece, which is going against us right now. Turning this momentum around in a positive way makes a lot of things possible, including improved retention, improved recruiting, reduced attrition, and a much better overall ANSF. That's why the security piece and the momentum piece are so critical.

There are many analogies, I think, that are comparable between both Iraq and Afghanistan. We're very concerned about creating midgrade leaders, junior leaders, as well as officer leaders, in both the ANA and ANP. That was a significant challenge in Iraq. It is more so on the ANP side than on the ANA side. Again, the same was true in Iraq. In fact, it was really late 2007 before the police in Iraq really started to step out and the leadership was there.

I think we have to be careful with comparisons. This is a force that's been around. Certainly on the ANA side, they've been in the

fight, they've been in the fight a long time, and they're good warriors. They have taken to this partnership approach that General McChrystal has put in place. So, I think there's a lot of potential there. There are similarities and there are differences, and we're trying to take advantage of those lessons to integrate those into an accelerated training and equipping plan right now for them.

Senator THUNE. Last night, the President said that we will support efforts by the Afghan Government to open the door to those Taliban who abandon violence. General Petraeus has previously indicated that we lacked the nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the Taliban to identify and distinguish between reconcilable and irreconcilable elements of the Taliban. My question is, how do we go about reliably identifying the reconcilable elements of the Taliban?

Secretary CLINTON. Senator, there are several efforts already underway to answer the questions that General Petraeus and others have posed. As you might know, General McChrystal has asked General Lamb, a retired British general who was instrumental in the work that was done in Iraq, to come to Afghanistan to advise him. The Afghans themselves, led by President Karzai, have a pretty good idea of who they think can, if persuaded, be reintegrated.

But, this is very much a case-by-case effort. There are certain aspects of it that we are very insistent on. One, that they have to renounce any ties to al Qaeda, they have to renounce violence, and they have to be willing to reintegrate into Afghan society in a peaceful way.

We know that some of the Taliban will not renounce al Qaeda; they are too closely interconnected. We know that others, who call themselves "Taliban," want to have a continuing means of acting in a military capacity, and we want them to have to give up their commitment to violence and, maybe join the ANA, if that's appropriate, or join one of the community defense initiatives. This is very painstaking work. We have very high expectations for who we would support reintegrating.

Secretary GATES. Let me just add to that. I think that, here again, there may be some parallels with Iraq.

First of all, I think that reintegration, particularly at the front end, is going to be retail, not wholesale. We will end up, as we did in Iraq, turning to local leaders that we have confidence in who will, in turn, then vouch for these people and who will essentially pledge their community to the reliability of these people that are willing to come away from the Taliban.

A second point, we think that there's a fair percentage of the foot soldiers in the Taliban that basically do this for pay. So, creating economic opportunities as an alternative in order to support their families is another vehicle for this.

Finally, to the Admiral's point, security is essential. There are too many examples of people who have tried to leave the Taliban themselves and all of their family have been killed. Until we can provide a secure environment, at the local level, that gives them some confidence they will not be retaliated against, it will be a problem.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. My time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator McCaskill.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to echo the comments of some of my colleagues, that I think the President is very fortunate to have the three of you, and our country is even more fortunate. I appreciate your service, and I appreciate how hard you have worked at coming up with the best answer among a list of very bad choices.

It won't surprise you that I want to talk a little bit about contracting. I will tell you that we've made progress. When I joined this committee in 2007, no one could tell us how many contractors were in Iraq. There wasn't even a number available. We have made progress.

Now I want to talk a little bit today, if I have time, about the Synchronized Predeployment and Operational Tracker, the database that we put in place to try to track contractors, and the problems that are arising about a lack of consistency between DOS, USAID, and DOD on how they're utilizing this database, and how much we can rely on the numbers. To the extent that we can rely on the numbers, we know we have, as of June, approximately 75,000 contractors in Afghanistan and 5,200 private security contractors in Afghanistan. One of the stark differences between the contracting force in Afghanistan and that in Iraq is the predominance of Afghans in our contracting force; 50,000-plus of the contractors are Afghans and 5,000 of the 5,200 private security contractors are Afghans. It's not clear to me whether this has been purposeful or situational. I would appreciate if any of you could briefly address whether or not this is purposeful or situational.

Secretary CLINTON. Senator, I share the experience you just described, because in February, when I asked to see a list of all the contracts in Afghanistan, at that time we couldn't produce such a list. We have been trying to not only get a handle on the contracts, but trying to persuade contractors to employ more Afghans. I think what you referred to is probably both. I think it is, to some extent, a message, but it's also just the reality of who is there and what the mission requires.

Clearly, what we're trying to do is review every single contract. We stopped every one until we had a better idea of what they were for and who they went to. We're trying to assert more DOS and USAID oversight, and that's why we asked Ambassador Tony Wayne to go to Afghanistan to run the civilian side. We have to do a better job coordinating with, not just our friends at DOD, but all the other government agencies. We really welcome your efforts, and we want to be as cooperative as we can.

Senator MCCASKILL. Let's talk a little bit about the U.S. Army's Logistics Civilian Augmentation Program IV (LOGCAP IV). Good news: We competed it. Good news: We ended up with three different companies that are eligible for contracts under LOGCAP IV. Not as good of news: I think I understand the reality of why this probably occurred; we now have, instead of one monopoly on logistical support for our troops, two monopolies, in that we have given the contracts on a regional basis as opposed to a task basis. Fluor has gotten the north and DynCorp has gotten the south. They are not task-competing; they have, in fact, been selected, it's

my understanding from the research we've done, to do everything in those regions.

I understand the efficiencies you get by doing that, but what it really brings up again is the incredible importance of monitoring and oversight, because when you have one company doing all the work, even though it's not the whole contingency operation, it is certainly within the north and the south. What I am worried about is that there was testimony this summer that we had 600 oversight positions vacant in Iraq and Afghanistan. It wasn't clear from the testimony that was given at the time how many of those positions were in Afghanistan. But, are we plussed-up to where we need to be with oversight and monitoring of these logistical contracts that cost us way more than they ever should have cost us in Iraq?

Secretary GATES. As is often the case with these things, you're probably better informed than we are. But, what I will tell you is, we do not have as many contract monitors in Afghanistan as we want. One of the things that I have mentioned, both at the White House and within DOD as we talk about 30,000 troops and so on, is, let's not forget about contract monitors, logistical experts, and so on, to make sure that we're doing this right. What I would like to do, Senator, is take your question for the record, and we'll get back to you on the number of vacancies we have for contract monitors in Afghanistan.

Senator MCCASKILL. That would be great.

[The information referred to follows:]

Contracting Officer Representatives (CORs) in Afghanistan: CORs are trained and appointed to provide day-to-day oversight of Department of Defense (DOD) contracts. DOD has a broad-based, focused effort to identify and train CORs prior to deployment as part of our overall effort to improve oversight of contracts in support of contingency operations. DOD tracks required and assigned CORs on contracts in Afghanistan, especially given the coming surge in requirements in support of the Afghan theater. For example, contracts delegated to Defense Contract Management Agency for administration in Afghanistan currently require 473 CORs and have 414 CORs assigned for an 88 percent fill rate as of January 2009. Achieving 88 percent this month represents a 38 percentage point surge since September 2009. This rapid increase highlights DOD's ongoing efforts to improve contract oversight through the timely training and assignment of CORs.

Admiral MULLEN. Senator, if I can only add one thing. This goes back to your first question. In particular, I've asked this question in RC-East, of General Scaparotti and his people a few months ago, with respect to who gets contracts. There's a very specific effort there to hire Afghans first. That, I think, is represented in the numbers that you're talking about, which, to me, makes all the sense in the world. You obviously have to have somebody qualified. But to be able to put that kind of income into that country is really critical.

Secretary CLINTON. Senator, could I just add one other consideration that I wish we could take into account?

There is an inherent tension between more monitoring, more auditing, more contract oversight, and the kind of flexibility and agility that we were talking about with Senator Bill Nelson's question. We have to figure out how to manage risk without being overly adverse to risk. We have to give our people in the field—and I'm talking just on the civilian side right now—enough discretion to be able to make smart decisions, and yes, maybe even make some mis-

takes, because they might have made an investment where it didn't pay off, but it was worth trying.

It's complicated. We want to account for every single penny, but we also want to be sure we have enough flexibility to be smart as we try to do the job we've been given.

I don't know what the answer to that is, but I'd ask for your consideration as we move forward so we strike the right balance.

Senator MCCASKILL. I understand that tension, and it is a real tension. I think, unfortunately, the lesson learned in Iraq was that there wasn't enough of that tension. It was all about, "We need it today. We need it tomorrow. We don't care what it costs. Get it here." Finding that balance is what we're talking about here. That's why the data being input correctly and why the oversight personnel are so important; if we don't have those, we never create that tension. That's my concern.

My time's up, and I don't have time to go into CERP. I do think we need to take a hard look at CERP and whether it has morphed into something other than what it was intended to be, whether we're doing too many big projects. Are we monitoring or are we just obligating? I know we've executed about $1.6 billion in CERP in Afghanistan since 2004. I think we need to continue to look at CERP.

I'll do some questions for the record on the CERP funds since I don't have time in my questioning today. I will look forward to continuing to work on these issues with you and your great folks that are trying hard.

Thank you again.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCaskill.

Senator LeMieux.

Senator LEMIEUX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates, and Admiral Mullen. I've not had the opportunity to talk to you about these issues because I'm a new Senator, but I appreciate that opportunity today.

Let me say, first, that I want to join my colleagues in commending the President for his recommendation for the additional troops. I think it's the right thing to do. I had the opportunity to go to Afghanistan in late October and meet with General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry and talk about these issues. I believe that the counterinsurgency strategy is the right tactic that we need for success.

There's been a lot of discussion this morning about the 18 months and what that really means. I appreciate the elaboration that was given.

Let me ask you this question. In every plan, you hope for a successful ending, and you must have in your minds what that successful ending looks like. If we are able to meet the President's commitment to remove troops in July 2011, how do you envision success looking like at that time? Secretary Gates?

Secretary GATES. Sure. First of all, let me just again underscore that what we were talking about in July 2011 is the beginning of what we expect will be a gradual process of thinning and reducing U.S. forces.

I think the end state in Afghanistan looks a lot like what we see in Iraq, and that is the gradual transfer of responsibility for security to the indigenous forces in government and a security situation that allows us to drawn down our forces. We have gone from 20 brigades to what will soon be 10 brigades in Iraq. We have the agreements that we talked about earlier, in terms of combat forces being out at the end of the August 2010.

What you will see, in my view, is a map, if you will, that changes colors in different places at different times, but increasingly in terms of the Afghan Government's control or control by local governments, district governments, and provincial governments that are associated with the national government and hostile to the Taliban and to al Qaeda. I think this gradual transfer of security responsibility, with a continuing role on our part as a partner for that country in the long-term, is what I would call success in Afghanistan.

Senator LEMIEUX. To follow up on the questions of Senator Ben Nelson, in terms of benchmarking, do you have specific benchmarks that you have put in place for this next period, this 18-month period, when the withdrawal of American troops would begin, that would say there would be only this many American casualties or this many Afghan troops trained as we talked about before? Are those benchmarks in place now as you work forward in the next 18 months?

Secretary GATES. We would not have U.S. casualties as a benchmark, but we have some very specific benchmarks for us, for the Afghans, and for our international partners, in terms of whether they are fulfilling the commitments that have been made.

Senator LEMIEUX. Just to touch quickly on the international partner issue, you mentioned bringing 5,000 to 7,000 more troops from international partners. In the past, you have been, as you stated, somewhat critical of those troops, and you wanted to make sure that those troops were caveat-free. Do you believe that these troops that are coming, hopefully the 5,000 to 7,000 troops will be, as you said before, caveat-free and be able to fully engage?

Secretary GATES. One of the positive developments I would say of the last year, but especially since the NATO summit last spring, has been a fairly steady reduction in the number of caveats that are being imposed by governments. I think they are realizing the need for this. You heard the German Defense Minister a couple of weeks ago for the first time in Germany refer to what is going on in Afghanistan as a "war" or "warlike." So, they are, I think, domestically, beginning to deal with the realities of Afghanistan, and I think that has contributed to a reduction in the caveats.

Senator LEMIEUX. Secretary Clinton, we haven't talked a lot today about Pakistan. Certainly, Pakistan is of huge importance to the success in this region. What commitments do you think we will get from Pakistan to continue in their efforts? I know they launched this offensive in Waziristan that's been somewhat successful and continues on. Where do you see their participation, in the next 18 months, to make sure that we're succeeding?

Secretary CLINTON. Senator, over the last year they have certainly demonstrated their commitment and willingness to take on the Pakistan Taliban, who directly threaten them. I spent 3 days

in Pakistan recently, and spoke at length with both the civilian and the military intelligence leadership, as well as many citizens, press, and others. I think the unity of support that the people of Pakistan are showing for this effort is profoundly significant. But, as we have said, it is not enough. It is difficult to parse out the different groups that are operating within Pakistan, all of whom we think are connected in one way or another with al Qaeda, and partition some off and go after the others.

It will be our continuing effort—and Admiral Mullen has been instrumental in working on this with his counterparts—to make the case that the Pakistanis have to do more against all of the insurgent terrorist groups that are threatening them, that are threatening us in Afghanistan, that are threatening the Afghan people, and are threatening other neighbors in the region. We hope that we'll be able to make that case successfully.

Senator LEMIEUX. Does Pakistan understand now that having a stable and secure Afghanistan is in their national interests?

Secretary CLINTON. I think that they certainly understand that having an unstable, destabilizing Afghanistan that offers launching grounds and training for those who threaten them is not in their interests.

Senator LEMIEUX. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the witnesses.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator LeMieux.

Senator LeMieux and others have talked about the benchmarks, and you've indicated that they exist in whatever the current form is. Would you submit those to us for the record? We saw an earlier version, but we'd like to see the current version of the benchmarks, for the record. If there's any classified benchmarks, we will, of course, honor that.

[The information referred to follows:]

The Department of Defense is currently in the process of reviewing our metrics for Afghanistan. We have scheduled a briefing for Members of Congress in March on the revised metrics.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Udall.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, to the three of you. The unanimity that you represent by being here together is powerful and inspirational. I want to thank you, along with the members of the committee, for your leadership and your service. I, too, hope and will do my part to assure that the politics in this important policy debate we're having end at the water's edge. Again, your presence here today makes that statement loud and clear.

Secretary Clinton, if I could just follow up on Pakistan, do you have any concerns that the July 2011 transition date sends a message to the Pakistanis that we're going to leave the region, that we're not committed in a long-term way?

Secretary CLINTON. Again, I think that the messages that are being heard by different audiences are consistent with their perspectives. As Senator LeMieux seemed to imply in his question, there is a lot of concern in Pakistan about what our commitment means, both in terms of whether we put more troops in or not, whether we leave them in or not. The Pakistanis, understandably, worry that our actions in Afghanistan increase cross-border efforts

that threaten them, which they are not, obviously, in favor of seeing increase.

We have worked very hard with our Pakistani counterparts to explain that we have a long-term commitment to Pakistan; we are not going to be in and out, the way we have in the past; we want to be partnering with the Pakistanis; we want to be supporting their democracy and their development—and that is independent from Afghanistan; but that we have unfinished business in Afghanistan, and that requires us to take the steps, which the President outlined, but that we also are asking for more help from the Pakistanis to go after al Qaeda and the leadership of the Afghan Taliban inside their own territory.

Senator UDALL. So, in an ideal world, we would get the job done militarily in the short-term; in the medium- and long-term, we would have a presence in the region, economically, diplomatically, and politically.

Secretary CLINTON. As we have with so many other countries, we have troops in a limited number of countries around the world; some have been there for 50 or 60 years, but we have long-term economic assistance and development programs in many others. We think that's a likely outcome in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, that we will be there with a long-term commitment.

Senator UDALL. Let me turn, if I could, to the civilian surge. I had a close friend who follows what's happening very closely, and he said, "Who's going to be in charge of the civilian surge?" I've heard some discussion of a civilian counterpart to an ISAF commander for the civilian efforts that we're going to put forth.

Secretary Clinton, could you speak to whether there would be an official who's in charge of the surge, and what sort of authority that person might have?

Secretary CLINTON. We are actually discussing that with our allies. It's one of the issues I will be talking to them about in Brussels. You know there's a United Nations presence in Afghanistan. There is also the NATO ISAF presence. Not everyone who contributes civilian aid is a member of NATO or ISAF, but they all are members of the United Nations. So, how we coordinate and better hold accountable our civilian aid is a matter of great concern to all of the contributing nations, whether they are troop-contributing, nontroop civilian, or non-NATO.

For example, Japan has just announced a significant civilian commitment of $5 billion. They're not a member of NATO. They don't have troops in NATO ISAF. So, we're looking at the United Nations, we're looking at NATO ISAF, but we're going to come up with a coordinating mechanism that can meet the needs of all the various parties who want to contribute to Afghanistan's future.

Senator UDALL. Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, I assume that General McChrystal understands the importance of that handoff and that coordination.

Secretary GATES. Nobody wants it more than he does. [Laughter.]

Senator UDALL. Let me turn to the Secretary and Admiral Mullen. Given that this increase in troops in Afghanistan will occur prior to the official drawdown in Iraq, what effect do you see this additional deployment having on dwell time and the length of de-

ployment cycles, reset, and then the Services' requirements to take care of our troops both here at home and in theater?

Admiral MULLEN. Senator, that is not just tied to this decision; it's something I think that we watch carefully and have for the last several years. What is happening in the Marine Corps—and the ground forces, obviously, absorb the brunt of these deployments—is actually moving out to a dwell time ratio of almost 2 to 1. They're at 1.5 to 1 right now. We want to get to a point where they're home twice as long, the "2," as they are deployed, and that, in this deployment cycle, General Conway thinks he'll be able to continue to progress out in that direction, with the exception of some of the smaller, more critical enabling kind of capabilities, over the next year or so.

On the Army side, we're actually making progress as well, moving away from 1 to 1 dwell time ratios, though not as rapidly; with this deployment decision, we expect it to probably take a couple more years to get to a point where he's out to a 2 to 1 dwell time ratio.

The Iraq drawdown is taken into consideration in all this. We're still able to gradually improve dwell times, although we are extremely concerned about the continued pressure, stress, and strain that our military, our ground forces in particular, and their families have gone through. We're paying a lot of attention to that.

General Casey sent a note yesterday to the J–1, the manpower and personnel staff section of the Joint Staff, reemphasizing what he had said before, that this can be managed; certainly there are challenges associated with that, but he's comfortable that he can lead his Army through this at this enormously important time.

Senator UDALL. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Udall.

Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Gates, I'm going to explore with you an issue that Senator Graham raised, and it's an issue that you touched on in your testimony. I think it is a fundamental question, and that is, why Afghanistan?

In your statement, you list six primary objectives of the strategy, one of which is preventing al Qaeda from regaining sanctuary in Afghanistan; yet, we know that al Qaeda has the presence in as many as 20 countries. In Yemen, for example, al Qaeda's strong enough that a cell there was able to launch a successful attack on our Embassy just a year ago.

The fundamental question to me is, how will it make us safer to invest more troops and more treasure in Afghanistan as long as al Qaeda still has the ability to establish safe havens in other countries? What is it about Afghanistan that makes it critical that we invest more troops, more civilian personnel, and put more people at risk in that country?

Secretary GATES. First of all, as the President indicated last night, this is the country where, when the Taliban governed it, the attack against us was launched in 2001. It is the only country from which we have been attacked successfully.

Al Qaeda and its leadership are still in the border area of Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is still the wellspring of inspiration for

extremist jihadism everywhere. Afghanistan is where these extremists, in many respects, consider that they defeated the Soviet Union and, in fact, give themselves credit for its ultimate collapse. Whether it's in the United States and the plots that we continue to see, or in Somalia or Yemen, the fact is that the inspiration, and oftentimes the guidance and strategic leadership, comes from the al Qaeda leadership that is there in that border area.

What we have seen develop in the last year is an unholy alliance, if you will, of al Qaeda, the Taliban in Pakistan, and the Taliban in Afghanistan. These people work off of each other's mythology, off of each other's narrative. Success of one contributes to the success of the other.

If anything, the situation, I think, is more serious today than it was a year ago, because of the attacks of the Taliban in Pakistan on Pakistan and the effort of al Qaeda, in collusion with the Taliban in Pakistan, to try and destabilize Pakistan itself. More safe havens on the Pakistani side create opportunities for success in Afghanistan. But, we know, from historical experience, that safe havens and Taliban control of space in Afghanistan not only gives them the opportunity to organize better attacks against the West and our allies and friends, but now creates an opportunity for them to further destabilize Pakistan.

This area—as the President said last night and as I said in my opening remarks—that we're talking about, Afghanistan in particular, is the epicenter of global extremist jihad. If that center were to disappear, if that leadership were to disappear, and al Qaeda were defeated in Afghanistan and Pakistan, I think you would face a very different and very significantly less important threat from these various regional movements that put enormous emphasis on their alliance with al Qaeda in Pakistan-Afghanistan. Whether it's al Qaeda in the Maghreb or whether it's al Qaeda in the Horn of Africa, they put enormous value on this connection back into the al Qaeda that have fled Afghanistan.

I think that Afghanistan has a unique place in the historical narrative of these extremists that makes it especially important to us and, as the President said last night, preventing the Taliban from returning and defeating al Qaeda is in our vital national interest.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates has given an excellent answer to the question of, "Why Afghanistan?" My question for you is, can we succeed, despite the brilliance of our leaders, the courage of our troops, and the efforts of the civilian component? Is this an impossible task? We have a corrupt and ineffective government as a partner. We've seen, in the last 2 years, even with the presence of NATO troops, the government lose control of much of the country. Can this work, despite everybody's best efforts?

Secretary CLINTON. Senator, we believe we can. I think it is important to underscore your question, because, along with the question about, "Who is the enemy?", this is the critical question as to the commitment that the President has made.

The reasons why we do believe success is possible is, number one, we think that the Afghan leadership and the people of Afghanistan are ready for an approach that makes them more accountable, responsible, and a true partner. I've been to Afghanistan in

the past. In the last trip, I was struck by what Defense Minister Wardak told me. He said it was the first time, with General McChrystal now in charge of NATO ISAF, that they, the Afghans, felt like they were full partners. They'd been invited into NATO ISAF headquarters, they were getting access to intelligence that they'd never been given before. His enthusiasm for the new leadership that we have on the military side was striking to me, because I've known him for all these years. He has been truly a good soldier, just trying the best he could under very difficult circumstances, but he didn't feel like he was fully supported or partnered until relatively recently.

Second, I think that the wake-up call about the deteriorating situation has not only been heard by the United States, but by our friends and allies. I think that there was an attitude, perhaps, that, "Okay, the Americans want us there. We'll show up. We'll do the best we can." As Secretary Gates said, some of our NATO ISAF troops were extraordinarily brave, courageous, and successful; others were kind of just there to fulfill a commitment. But, there seems to be a new awareness that this is not just America's fight, and I'm very encouraged by that.

Third, look, I've spent a lot of time with and around President Karzai, and I really believe that, if we work with him in a more effective manner, we will get a better outcome from him and from the team around him. He has some very good cabinet ministers who are doing really excellent work. There needs to be more of them. They need to be supported more. They need to be held accountable. But, my sense from the very long and candid conversations I had with him is that there's a window of opportunity here that we have to seize.

Finally, I think that the impetus that the President's decision is giving us will change the reality on the ground. The President's announcement last night, the resolve that he's showing, the fact that very obviously this is not an easy political call for him to make, it has significant budget implications for our country, I think will help to summon the very best of everybody and will give us the chance of success that I believe we can achieve.

So, I'm not naïve about how hard this will be, but I think it's the right decision. I think it can lead to success if we implement it the way we should.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Collins.

Senator Hagan.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, too, want to echo my sentiment about having you here and the service that you are providing, not only to our President, to our country, but I want to thank each and every one of you for the fact that you have spent 3 hours already answering questions.

Some of these questions you've already talked about a little bit, but let me just ask another specific question concerning NATO. Obviously, the President talked about the fact that we're going to look to NATO to help send additional troops. I think that we do know that some of them are constrained by some of the mandates that their countries have put on them. I think, Secretary Gates, you mentioned a little bit about that. But, I do know that some of the

countries have mentioned, in the past, about starting their own withdrawals. In particular, I believe Germany has suggested a transition by 2013, and they have 4,000 troops; Canada suggesting some pullout in 2011 in Kandahar, and they have 2,500 troops; the Italian leaders, with 2,800 troops, leaving Herat by December 2011; Dutch leaders suggesting they might want to pull out by 2010. I was just wondering if that is still a concern.

Secretary Gates, do you have some information on that?

Secretary GATES. It is a concern. The only two firm decisions that have been made that I'm aware of are that the Dutch will leave next year with their forces, and the Canadians will leave by the end of 2011. These are parliamentary decisions that have been made.

Frankly, our hope, just going back to Secretary Clinton's final remarks in response to Senator Collins' questions, our hope is that the President's speech last night, and his decisions, will help change the political dynamic among some of our allies. I must say, just the first reactions that I saw on the news this morning from the Europeans, I think, were very encouraging—President Sarkozy's comments, the comments of the NATO Secretary General, and so on.

I'm not aware of a German commitment or any kind of firm decision to leave at a particular time, but our hope is that what the President has decided will change the political dynamic.

The truth of the matter is, the governments—Admiral Mullen and I run into this all the time—of our allies are really very strongly supportive of the mission in Afghanistan. The military and defense leaders in these countries—and, I think probably also the foreign ministers—are very supportive. The problem is, some of these governments are in very delicate coalition governments, and so their domestic politics are a real concern for them, in terms of what they can do. The will is there; the political capacity to deliver has been a challenge for some of them. Our hope is that what the President has decided will help change that dynamic.

But, specifically, to your question, I'm only aware of the Canadians and the Dutch that have a specific deadline.

Senator HAGAN. I was also wondering about the budgets. I know that many countries are experiencing a decline in the economy right now and budgets are tight. Admiral Mullen, I was wondering how this is affecting NATO, and particularly some of the PRT projects. How do you foresee Admiral Stavridis addressing these issues?

Admiral MULLEN. Not unlike what you've heard from Secretary Clinton and Secretary Gates, he has been incredibly active in engaging the leadership—both civilian and military leadership—of these NATO countries.

What I have seen, certainly that they have concerns, just like we do, with respect to the budget, but they are less with time. The demarcation point was the NATO summit in April, where the support, enthusiasm, and actually hard work to figure out how we can do this better together has taken a marked turn for the positive. It is very unlike anything that I've seen for the previous 2 or 3 years.

There are concerns about budgets in each of these countries, and yet they continue to contribute; in many cases, now, they've added more troops and more capabilities. They're making contributions in very difficult economic times, though not as many as we would like, sometimes. But, again, the overall thrust and approach from NATO and other non-NATO contributing nations has been very, very positive, and I am encouraged by that.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you.

Secretary GATES. Could I just say that when I listed some of our NATO allies and the contribution and the sacrifices they've made, and giving them an A in response to Senator Graham's question, there is a non-NATO ally that has played a significant role with us in RC-South, and that's the Australians. I wouldn't want to omit the contribution and the sacrifice they've made.

Senator HAGAN. They're doing a great job.

Secretary CLINTON. I would just add that we don't want to get in trouble with any of our friends or allies. There are many smaller countries that have really punched way above their weight. We'll submit, for the record, a list of all of them. We are also seeing a number of them, the Poles, for example, that have been extremely responsive and very helpful. There are a lot of other countries that have done their part.

We also are seeing, in some ways, more of an international element to this. Again, when all of it's put together, we'll submit that for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

MAR - 4 2010

Dear Senator Hagan:

During Secretary Clinton's testimony before the Armed Services Committee on December 2, 2009, she offered to provide you a list of smaller countries that have been extremely responsive and helpful in Afghanistan, providing extraordinary contributions to our efforts to achieve security and stability.

We appreciate the continued commitment and contributions of all of our NATO Allies and other partners to the international mission in Afghanistan. Forty-three NATO and non-NATO countries provide over 40,000 troops to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) with thousands more arriving in 2010 as reinforcements. Over 600 Allied and partner military personnel have been killed serving in Afghanistan.

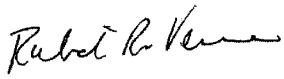
Attached please find a NATO release outlining the efforts of our NATO Allies and ISAF partners in Afghanistan. The contributions and sacrifices of each and every Ally is critical to our collective effort in Afghanistan, and as you noted during the Secretary's testimony some of the smaller NATO Allies make significant contributions relative to their size and resources. For example and without being exhaustive by any means, we would note Denmark and Estonia's combat troops serving in volatile Helmand province and fighting alongside U.S. and British troops. Additionally, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Lithuania each provide Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) – small but resource intensive contributions that are critical to the international effort in Afghanistan. Finally, our two newest NATO Allies, Croatia and Albania, have deployed hundreds of troops with an increasing focus on training and preparing Afghan National Security Forces, another key element of our strategy.

The Honorable
Kay Hagan,
Committee on Armed Services,
United States Senate.

While these are focused on security, our partners are also providing remarkable civilian assistance contributions. Under the leadership of the UN, the international community is coordinating its efforts to help the Government of Afghanistan provide for the needs of its people and create economic opportunities essential for future stability.

Please let us know if we can be of further assistance to you on this matter.

Sincerely,



Richard R. Verma
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

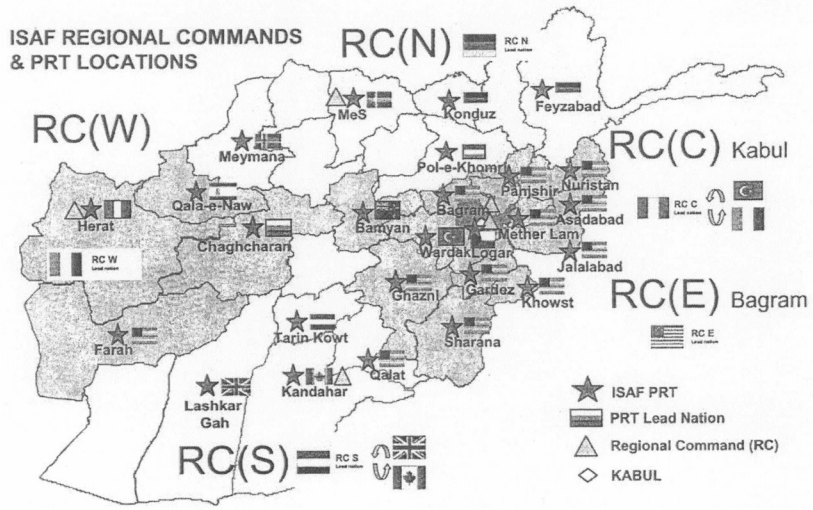
International Security Assistance Force
and Afghan National Army Strength & Laydown

I. International Security Assistance Force (ISAF): Facts and Figures

In accordance with all the relevant Security Council Resolutions, ISAF's main role is to assist the Afghan government in the establishment of a secure and stable environment. To this end, ISAF forces are conducting security and stability operations throughout the country together with the Afghan National Security Forces and are directly involved in the development of the Afghan National Army through mentoring, training and equipping.

Key Facts:
- Commander: General (USA) Stanley A. McChrystal
- 43 Troop Contributing Nations
- ISAF Total Strength: approx 71,030
- ISAF AOR (Afghanistan land mass) 650,000 km²
- 26 Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)

Note on numbers: Totals are approximations and actual numbers change daily. Number of troops will never be exact and should be taken as indicatives.



Regional Command Capital: (appx ISAF strength 6,130)

- HQ ISAF KABUL (COMPOSITE)
- HQ RC(C) KABUL (FRA)
- KAIA (ESP)

Regional Command South: (appx ISAF strength 36,500)

- HQ RC(S) in KANDAHAR (NLD) (rotates CAN, NLD, GBR)
- Forward Support Base KANDAHAR (multinational)
- PRT KANDAHAR (CAN)
- PRT LASHKAR-GAH (GBR, DNK, EST)
- PRT TARIN KOWT (NLD,AUS)
- PRT QALAT (USA,ROU)

Regional Command West: (appx ISAF strength 4,400)

- HQ RC(W) in HERAT (ITA)
- Forward Support Base HERAT (ESP)
- PRT HERAT (ITA)
- PRT FARAH (USA)
- PRT QALA-E-NOW (ESP)
- PRT CHAGHCHARAN (LTU)

Regional Command North: (appx ISAF strength 5,700)

- HQ RC(N) in MAZAR-E-SHARIF (DEU)
- Forward Support Base MAZAR-E-SHARIF (DEU)
- PRT MAZAR-E-SHARIF (SWE)
- PRT FEYZABAD (DEU)
- PRT KONDUZ (DEU)
- PRT POL-E KHOMRI (HUN)
- PRT MEYMANA (NOR)

Regional Command East: (appx ISAF strength 18,300)

- HQ RC(E) in BAGRAM
- Forward Support Base BAGRAM (USA)
- PRT LOGAR (CZE)
- PRT SHARANA (USA)
- PRT KHOST (USA)
- PRT METHER LAM (USA)
- PRT BAMYAN (NZL)
- PRT PANJSHIR (USA)
- PRT JALALABAD (USA)
- PRT GHAZNI (POL,USA)
- PRT ASADABAD (USA)
- PRT BAGRAM (USA)
- PRT NURISTAN (USA)
- PRT WARDAK (TUR)
- PRT GARDEZ (USA)

Current as of 22 October 2009

International Security Assistance Force and Afghan National Army strength & laydown

Troop Contributing Nations (TCN): The ISAF mission consists of the following 43 nations (the troop numbers are based on broad contribution and do not reflect the exact numbers on the ground at any one time).

	Albania	250		Georgia	1		Portugal	145
	Armenia	0		Germany	4365		Romania	990
	Australia	1350		Greece	145		Singapore	9
	Austria	4		Hungary	360		Slovakia	245
	Azerbaijan	90		Iceland	2		Slovenia	130
	Belgium	530		Ireland	7		Spain	1000
	Bosnia & Herzegovina	10		Italy	2795		Sweden	430
	Bulgaria	460		Jordan	7		The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*	165
	Canada	2830		Latvia	175		Turkey	720
	Croatia	290		Lithuania	250		Ukraine	10
	Czech Republic	480		Luxembourg	8		United Arab Emirates	25
	Denmark	690		Netherlands	2160		United Kingdom	9000
	Estonia	150		New Zealand	300		United States	34800
	Finland	165		Norway	480			
	France	3095		Poland	1910		Total	71030

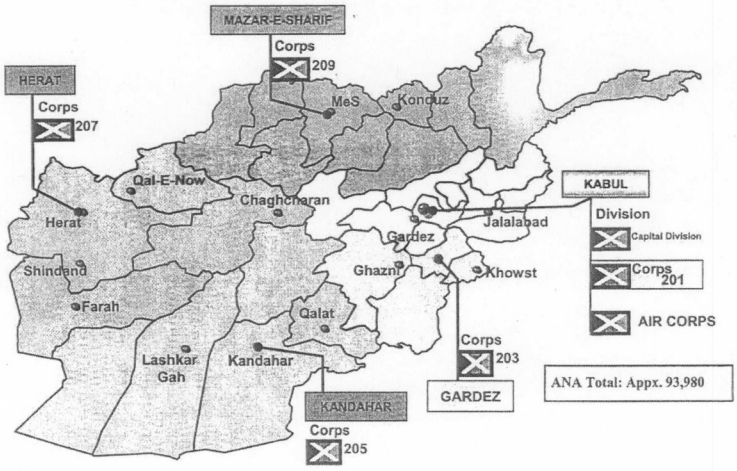
* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name

II. The Afghan National Army (ANA): Facts and Figures

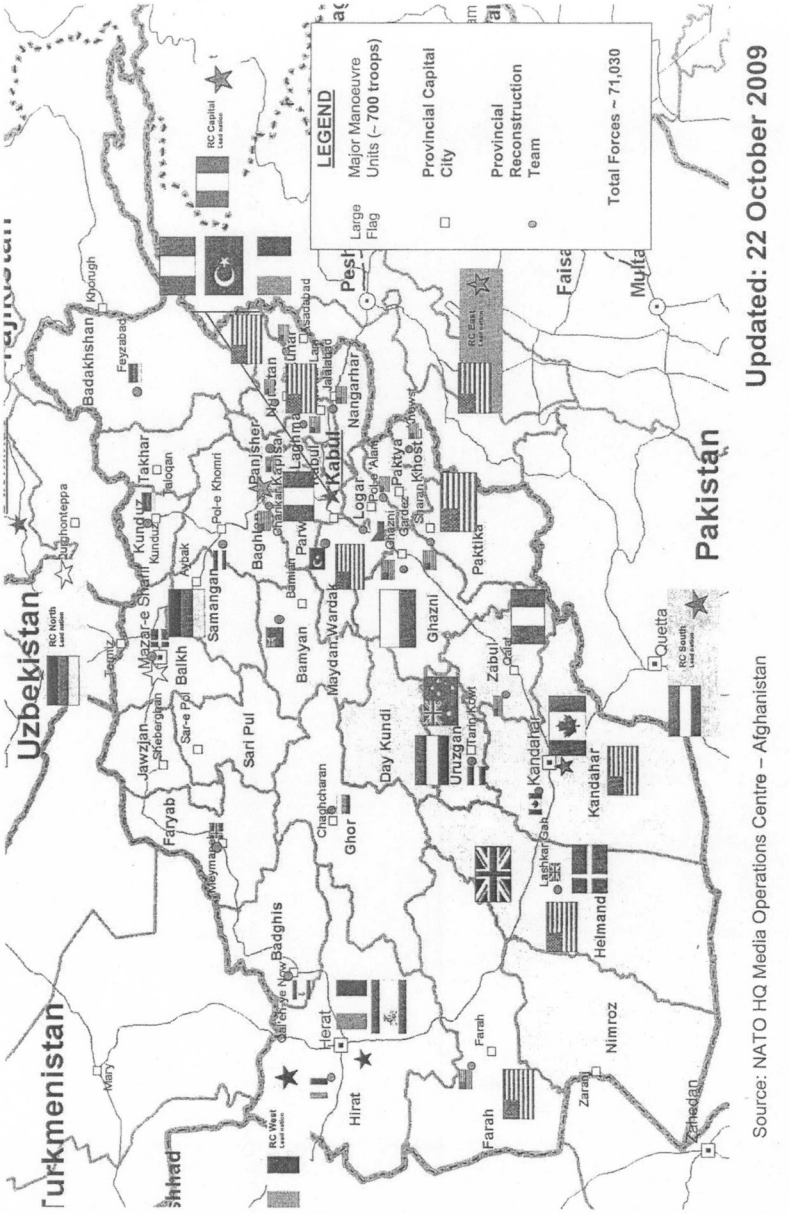
In September 2008, the Joint Commission and Monitoring Board, co-chaired by the Afghan government and the United Nations, agreed to increase the total strength of the ANA to 122,000 personnel with a 12,000 man training margin. As of mid September 2009, the ANA has an actual strength of approximately 93,980 personnel. This represents 70% of the 134,000 approved strength which is scheduled to be reached by October 2010.

Operationally, the ANA is currently fielding 5 Corps Headquarters, a Capital Division responsible for the security of the Kabul area, and an ANA Air Corps providing the essential air support to the ANA brigades deployed throughout Afghanistan.

Over 90% of ISAF operations are conducted in conjunction with the ANA and the ANA leads 62% of joint operations.



Current as of 22 October 2009



Senator HAGAN. I see that my time is up, but I did want to say that I know that the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade from Camp Lejeune is fighting the terrorists in Afghanistan, as well as Fort Bragg's 82nd Airborne, and I wanted to echo the support that I have from North Carolina on behalf of all the troops that are serving us in such a valiant way.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Hagan.

Senator Wicker.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, to all three members of our panel. It's been a long and good hearing, and all three of you have been wonderful.

I have to say, first, I want to thank Senator Sessions for bringing up the issue of the tanker.

Secretary Gates, I want to say that I agree with everything you said. There were minimal discrepancies last year that caused this award to Northrop Grumman to be tossed out, and one can only read the RFP this year as almost directing a lighter, smaller, and inferior product. I think Northrop Grumman is absolutely justified to take itself out of the competition at this point. I hope that can be rectified.

Admiral Mullen, how quickly can we deploy these additional 30,000 American troops and their equipment not just to the theater, but the ultimate destination? How difficult will that be?

I noticed in the press yesterday, a White House official said, "The President is saying this has to happen, so the military will make it happen." How difficult is that going to be?

Admiral MULLEN. There is a big difference between Iraq and Afghanistan; we don't have a Kuwait. So, what we deploy into Afghanistan, in great part, goes straight in. It's not as robust, from an infrastructure standpoint, et cetera. So, the logistics challenges are significant.

Senator WICKER. Significantly greater.

Admiral MULLEN. They're significantly greater than Iraq. But, we've been working this for months. As Secretary Gates said in his opening statement, actually the first troops will be there in a couple of weeks and are already under orders since the President made his announcement last night. Significant numbers of them will arrive in the spring—March-April timeframe—and roughly 20,000 to 25,000 by the July timeframe. That is getting them in, getting them prepared, and obviously getting them on mission.

Senator WICKER. When will we be at 30,000 additional troops sir?

Admiral MULLEN. Later in the summer is the estimate—summer/fall for precision there. One of the things that the President did in his decision was give the commander on the ground the flexibility to say what troops he wants and when. We're working our way through that, quite frankly, with General McChrystal, given that flexibility, and so it'll take us a while to be exact. But, the vast majority of them will go by the summertime, and certainly finish out by the fall.

Senator WICKER. Have we ever done it that quickly before?

Admiral MULLEN. Yes. In fact, in Iraq we actually did it more quickly because we had a better infrastructure.

Senator WICKER. Under less difficult circumstances.

Admiral MULLEN. I'd say less difficult circumstances.

Senator WICKER. All right, sir.

I'm batting cleanup on our side. I was to ask about the allied troops and our hope for 5,000 to 7,000 additional troops from those allies. By the way, let me say, I'm glad, Secretary Clinton, that you

hastened to add that the smaller deployments are also appreciated. Secretary Gates, you mentioned specifically several countries as getting an "A," and I'm afraid that those that weren't specifically named may be wondering what their grade is going to be.

But, it appears from what you say, the firm information we have actually takes us in the wrong direction, that the two firm numbers we have mean less allied help. So, our decision not to deploy 40,000 of our own troops, and rather deploy the 30,000, is based on a hope and not based on any assurances from these allies. I think that's the testimony today, but I just wanted to nail that down.

Secretary GATES. The situation that we have is that we have received private commitments from some countries, but, because they have not yet announced them at home, we're not in a position to make that announcement for them. I will just give you an example. I made two telephone calls the day before yesterday, and I received the assurances of between 1,800 and 2,000 troops.

Senator WICKER. Additional troops?

Secretary GATES. Yes. We've all been talking to different people. I think there's a fair degree of optimism in terms of the additional troops.

I would also make the point that I made earlier in the hearing with respect to the 40,000 U.S. troops. Early in this process, it seemed to me that, because the final BCT that General McChrystal had asked for could not deploy before July 2011, there was no need to make a commitment to that upfront. I would rather use a smaller number on the American side to leverage both the Afghans and our allies. But, General McChrystal, essentially, is going to get more troops, earlier than he would have with the original 40,000 U.S. troop request.

Senator WICKER. Thank you very much.

Admiral Mullen, you've been doing this a long time. You're a graduate of Annapolis with advanced degrees. When in history has a commander ever announced both a surge and a withdrawal at the same time? I think that's been very rare in history. If so, what gives us a comfort level that this sort of approach is going to work?

Admiral MULLEN. I have great comfort in the quickness with which we will deploy these forces to reverse the momentum, which is absolutely critical. I spoke earlier to my belief that we will know well by mid-2011 where we stand and which direction—whether we're succeeding or whether we're not. From my perspective, the President said we will start to transition and transfer responsibility, which is critical; it really is the way home, as it has been in Iraq, to transfer that security responsibility, and then start to transition, based on the conditions on the ground at the time.

I think that is doable. That, from my perspective, makes sense at this point, based on our overall understanding of the situation. From that standpoint, again, I'm very supportive of the decision.

The message that it sends to the Afghans and to our allies, the commitment and the resolve that this additional troop force shows, as well—all those are really positive messages. But, come mid-2011, we're going to know whether this is working or not.

Senator WICKER. I'm going to support this Commander in Chief because the alternative is unacceptable. Perhaps you would like to submit for the record, if you can think of ever an occasion in his-

tory when a commander has announced both a surge and a withdrawal at the same time.

[The information referred to follows:]

In 1972, the United States was in the process of withdrawing from Vietnam. The goal was to reach troop strength of 30,000 by 1 July 1972 and 15,000 by 1 December 1972. In the midst of this withdrawal, the North Vietnamese launched the Easter Offensive in April 1972. The United States surged Air Force, Navy, and Marine aircraft to halt this offensive. In 60 days, 18,000 sorties were flown. This surge of sorties, during the troop withdrawal, halted the North Vietnamese advance. President Nixon responding to a request from General Abrams slowed the withdrawal to 49,000 by 1 July.

In December 1972, the peace negotiations between the United States and North Vietnam stalled. The United States still in the process of withdrawing troops from South Vietnam again surged aviation assets to bring North Vietnam back to the peace table. From 18–30 December 1972, 700 B–52s conducted 4,000 sorties against Hanoi and Haiphong. The North Vietnamese got the message and returned to the peace talks.

Senator WICKER. You're in a very difficult position. You've had to parse words today and make sense out of a contradictory policy, a policy that, at first blush, on its face, is a paradox and a contradiction. I expect the left is going to rise up this afternoon, based on testimony, based on your answers to Senator Graham, and protest vehemently the statements that you've made about the flexibility and about the President always having the opportunity to change his mind and do what's right for the Country and right for national security.

I'm going to support this President. I put great stock, Admiral Mullen, in your statement that you enthusiastically and without hesitation, without qualification, support this policy. I wish you well. I want to be your teammate.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Senator Begich.

Senator BEGICH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, all three of you. Being one of the last Senators, most of my questions have been answered, but I do want to say, I don't think you're necessarily in a difficult position; I think you've done very well for the last 3 hours, answering questions very directly about the policy, the comments you've made, that this patience that we have to have as a Country of what more sacrifices we have to make, and giving us the sense of the civilian and, the military end. The President spending the time to review the policy and set it out and create flexibility, I think, has been the right move. So, I disagree with my counterpart on the other side, my Republican friend.

I would say that one thing I want to put to rest, and I want to make sure I'm clear on this because I think you've said it 100 times and I'm going to pound this 1 more time, is the whole issue of withdrawal. You've made it very clear, withdraw and transition are similar but different. I hope that I'm right on this, that in July 2011, withdraw will occur, in some form; it might be 100 troops, it might be 50,000 troops. That is undetermined. It may last 1 year, it may last 1 month, or it might last 3 years. But, the withdrawal process, which really is a transition process, is a goal that we're shooting for in 2011. Is that what I understand?

Secretary GATES. Yes.

Senator BEGICH. Okay. I've heard this, and we're going to continue to hear this, though I hate to say this because I think this committee is very bipartisan. We all are spending the time to look at this issue and there's agreement, all across the board here, supporting the President's mission, and I agree with it 100 percent. But, this whole issue of the withdrawal, everyone's trying to pull that apart. Really what you've done is set a target, giving the Afghan Government a target of what we're trying to shoot for, in the sense of when we think their commitment's going to be at the highest level possible to make this transition. Then, there will be decisions made, at the end of December, leading into July, of what level of transition that might be. It might be very small. It might be very large. That's undetermined yet, but that's the target. Am I correct in saying that?

Admiral MULLEN. That's fair.

Secretary GATES. December is more about: is the strategy working? Are we headed in the right direction? Are things moving the way we anticipated they would? The decisions with respect to transition would begin in July, as you've described it.

Senator BEGICH. Great. I'm just hoping, as we move forward on this discussion, we're not going to beat the withdrawal issue over the head so many times. It's not a hard deadline; it is a target—a target that may mean a few people, it may mean thousands of people, but that will be determined as the strategy plays out. I want to just echo that. Hopefully, we'll be done with that discussion, we'll support the Commander in Chief, you all, the efforts of our troops on the ground, and the effort we need to do in Afghanistan.

I want to ask you a little more in depth in regards to the Afghan troops and how you see them training up. I know you had some target amounts of 134,000 troops in December 2010, and moving that up to 170,000 troops, I think, by July. How confident, if you were to measure, on a percentage scale of 100 percent—obviously, 100 percent confident—that you can reach that successfully? What would be one or two challenges that may cause us to not get to that goal?

Admiral MULLEN. I think that area is the highest risk area for us. We all identified that throughout the review and believe that. That's where General McChrystal is. We've put great leadership in place to address that. It has to be led by security, or we can't get there, so that we can create an environment in which more Afghans participate. There is a fundamental shift with the partnership piece, which is a significant breakthrough on how to do this, and we have a lot more confidence in that regard. But, it's one of the reasons we really have annual targets, so that we can look at how we're doing and adjust accordingly. Secretary Gates talked earlier about retention, attrition, and all those challenges that we have, more so on the ANP-side than on the ANA-side. I think we're very clear-eyed on what the challenge is; we are going to assess ourselves rigorously throughout the process. Training is probably the biggest challenge that we have with respect to meeting the goals that we've set out for ourselves.

Senator BEGICH. Very good.

Secretary Clinton, I want to follow up with you. I'm actually very supportive of you getting as much flexibility with the use of your monies. I would even offer to suggest that, as we deal with the Defense Appropriation bill, why we don't figure out how to fix this now rather than waiting until next summer, because we'll lose 8 or 9 months, which every month, every day, seems critical. So, I would look to you and the administration to have a suggestion, seeing that we haven't done the defense components, so why not figure out how to make that happen.

I think you said you're going to triple up or get about 970 civilians on the ground, give or take a few there. But, you also indicated that you need more, in time. Have you figured out what that number is? I agree with you. I think, as we do the military plus-up, the civilian component is critical. I appreciate your review and change that you've done to really focus on this component and getting unified efforts with the military. I think that is critical.

Have you thought of a number? Or is that something you can give for the record at some point?

Secretary CLINTON. Senator, thank you. I'm hesitant to state a number now, but we will provide it for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

JAN 14 2010

Dear Senator Begich:

During Secretary Clinton's testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on December 2, 2009, you asked the Secretary about the number of civilians that will be surged into Afghanistan.

In March 2009, President Obama announced "a substantial increase in our civilians on the ground...to advance security, opportunity, and justice – not just in Kabul, but from the bottom up in the provinces." U.S. civilian experts from 10 different U.S. government departments and agencies contribute to the mission in the field, especially in the East and South where a majority of U.S. combat forces are operating and many of the additional 30,000 forces announced by President Obama will deploy. They partner with Afghans to enhance the capacity of national and sub-national government institutions, and to help rehabilitate Afghanistan's key economic sectors.

Our civilian footprint in Afghanistan will triple from roughly 300 personnel on the ground in January 2009 to nearly 1,000 on the ground by early 2010. We are coordinating closely with U.S. Embassy Kabul and anticipate further increasing our civilian staffing in 2010 by another 20 to 30 percent, concentrating experts in the field and at key ministries that deliver vital services to the Afghan people. This will be phased over time, in conjunction with our military efforts.

The Honorable
Mark P. Begich,
Committee on Armed Services,
United States Senate.

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Additionally, civilians act as force multipliers for military personnel, helping build relationships with local community leaders and coordinate military civil affairs projects with civilian programs. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance to you on this matter.

Sincerely,

Richard R. Verma
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Secretary CLINTON. But, there is a large idea that I think your question suggests. We should start looking at our budgets as national security budgets if we're really intent upon having an integrated civilian-military strategy. Again, I have to compliment Secretary Gates, who's been an advocate of this long before I ever thought I'd be sitting here at this table in this position. We have to be willing to look across the government at a whole-of-government approach to something as critical as our national security and the mission in Afghanistan. That's going to take some changes in how we do business and how we think about it.

So, I would, obviously, welcome the continuing support from this committee and others as we try to get it right. This will be, I'm sure, the subject of the Appropriations Committee, but where's the money going to come from? Is it going to be part of the budget? How's it going to be costed out? All of that has to be worked through between the administration and Congress. But, as we're doing that, I think we have to quit stovepiping our efforts and start thinking more holistically, which is really what our policy intends to present.

Senator BEGICH. My time is up, and, Secretary Clinton, I want to say I 100 percent agree with you; this hearing today—and I want to thank the chairman for doing this—has what I consider three critical pieces to the equation that are sitting in front of us today, and not just one component. So, I really do appreciate your comments. Anything I can do as an individual member, I'll be happy to do that. Thank you again for all your service. Thank you for bringing forward 3 hours of answers to many questions.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Begich.

Senator KIRK.

Senator KIRK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, let me add a word with my colleagues, to thank you for your patience this morning, but, far more importantly, for your patriotic service to the country and your service to our Commander in Chief.

I wanted to just follow up a little bit on Senator Collins' question. If I understand it, when General McChrystal advocated a strategy along these lines, it wasn't just the troops, he said, and I'm quoting

here, "A foreign army alone cannot beat an insurgency. The insurgency in Afghanistan requires an Afghan solution. This is their war." He went on to say, any success must come "by, with, and through the Afghan Government." In other words, without a legitimate, credible, reliable Afghan governmental partner, it sounds to me like the strategy would be flawed.

By all reports that we have, President Karzai had been installed, basically, as a result of a flawed election, if not a fraudulent election, by default, and that he presides over a culture of corruption and is dependent on, unfortunately, an opium economy.

What I'm concerned about is whether we are taking a leap of faith here with respect to our Afghan governmental partner and, not irrespective of that but related to that, if we're going to send 30,000 more troops and spend additional United States dollars, should we not be looking for more indices or evidence that he truly will be a partner that has the response from his own citizens, and support of them, so that we're not just in there without him and, maybe, unfortunately, being perceived as "occupiers"?

On the one hand, obviously, Secretary Clinton, you, as you have said, have been closer to him. You've heard the words. But, I think a lot of us are wondering whether this is for real, on their side.

Secretary CLINTON. Senator Kirk, first let me say, with respect to the strategy and the execution, I think it is fair to say that probably the two experts in the world right now on counterinsurgency and counterterrorism are, on counterinsurgency, General Petraeus; on counterterrorism, General McChrystal. They are very committed and confident that we will see success. Now, they could be wrong. We're all human and we can make a different assessment, or reality can turn out to be a lot more ugly and difficult than any of us imagined. But, on the side of the positive with respect to the strategy, I certainly put a lot of stock into what they say, and up the chain of command to Admiral Mullen and Secretary Gates.

It is absolutely the case that General McChrystal pointed out one of the salient features of the campaign that we are waging, and that is to have a good, solid partner in the Afghan Government.

I think it is unfair to paint with such a broad brush the President and Government of Afghanistan and to basically declare that they are incapable and unwilling to defend and protect their own country, and that they are fatally flawed. I do not believe that.

I believe it is a much more complex picture, as most human situations are. I believe that the way that our government interacted with President Karzai and his government over the last several years bred a lot of the confusion and the inadequacy that we are now having to contend with.

I am not making the case that this is a perfect partnership, but I think it has the elements of real progress, if we are smart enough, as to how to put them together into a winning strategy.

The people on the ground, the people who are responsible for implementing this strategy, including Ambassador Eikenberry, who wholeheartedly endorses the President's definition of our mission, believe it's hard, but doable. That is what I believe. As we say, the proof is in the pudding; we're going to find out because of the President's decision.

I think your caution has to be kept in mind. But, I also believe that we have to come at this with a sense of resolve, determination, and a cautious optimism that we can make this work. I think that there is a very strong argument that we can.

Secretary GATES. I would just like to pitch in and echo Secretary Clinton's comments about the dangers of painting the Afghan Government with too broad a brush. The reality is, as she indicated earlier, there are some number of ministers—and I would say, including two that we work the most closely with, in Defense and Interior—who are quite competent, quite capable, and have been good partners for us. Similarly, when we have had a good governor go into a province, we have seen a situation turn around, literally in months, when a competent, honest governor is put in place. There are more than a few of those in Afghanistan.

All the problems that you've described and that have been discussed here this morning are real, they exist, but there are enough examples of the kind of people we need to partner with, who are already in the Afghan Government or are governors, that I think is what contributes to, I won't say optimism, but a feeling of some confidence that this is going to work.

Senator KIRK. Thank you.

One other question. It goes back to the Pakistan situation. With the nuclear capabilities there, the place is rife with al Qaeda; whereas, less so, according to National Security Advisor General Jones, on the Afghanistan side. Could you just give us a little bit of flavor about the thinking of another option which might more directly or readily address the President's concerns and his mission: the option of trying to secure and seal the Afghanistan-Pakistan border while we're working to ensure the security and stability of nuclear weapons, and doing what we can to destroy the safe havens in Pakistan while we seal the border so the terrorists aren't fleeing back into Afghanistan, as one strategy, as opposed to the 30,000 troops in Afghanistan?

Admiral MULLEN. Senator, there are a lot of views on borders around the world. My experience and the experience of an awful lot of people who have been doing this for a long time is that borders are pretty tough to seal, and certainly this one is probably as tough as any in the world.

At least from my perspective, it doesn't mean we shouldn't have security up there, because we do. In fact, we're working very hard to establish centers that are manned by both Afghanistan and Pakistani military members—and we have one—to better secure that border. I think that getting to the point where you think you can secure that I just don't think that it can be done, first of all.

Second, the focus on Pakistan; it's been mentioned here, and I won't belabor it. Pakistan's own effort is absolutely vital here. It's a sovereign country. They've really done a lot. A lot of us, a year ago, would not have predicted that they would have undertaken the efforts that they have to go into South Waziristan, and Swat before that. We're working to support that and their interests. Our interests are very much mutual because of the threat that has been discussed before. It's going to take some time to do that.

Then, there's that long-term partnership, actually on both sides of the border, that is absolutely critical. When I go there, one of

the questions that comes very quickly from military and civilians in both those countries is, "Are you leaving? Are you going to abandon us again?" The importance of the President's message last night, and this decision, is a significant step in that direction, to reaffirm that's not the case. We can't afford to do that again.

Senator KIRK. Thank you very much. Thank you all very much again for your service and your patience.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Kirk.

Senator Bayh.

Senator BAYH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know whether this is a case of saving the best for last or simply the last for last. [Laughter.]

I have been very gratified to hear the testimony of these three distinguished Americans here today.

Admiral, I want to thank you for your lifetime commitment to our Armed Forces.

Secretary Gates, I want to thank you for your continued service. The President was wise to ask you to remain, and you were a true public servant to decide, in spite of the advantages of private life, to remain. I'm grateful to you for that.

Secretary Clinton, I remember with a great deal of fondness our service on this panel together, literally side by side, and the journey that we took together to Afghanistan several years ago. I can't help but think that if we had had the kind of nuanced and complex analysis at that point, perhaps we wouldn't be here today. But, we are. I am gratified that all of you, along with the President, took the time to think this through to maximize our chances of getting it right. So, it's good to see you again. On a somewhat lighter note, I haven't had a chance to see you since the news about your daughter's engagement was announced. Congratulations.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you very much.

Senator BAYH. The bottom line for me—and several of you have stated this—is there are no easy answers here; there are only difficult choices. There are no guarantees, but it does seem to me the strategy you've settled on maximizes the chances of success, maximizes the chances that we will be able to ultimately leave Afghanistan, not temporarily, but permanently, while securing the national security interests of the United States. That's what this ultimately has to be all about.

I think it's important to note that I'm sure none of you want to be here recommending that we spend more money in Afghanistan or that we send more troops to Afghanistan. But, we have to remind ourselves, and the American public, that we are there because we were attacked from that place and 3,000 innocent Americans lost their lives as a result of that. We owe it to the American public that we maximize the chances of that not happening again. I think your strategy does that.

Regrettably, we are likely to remain under threat from radical Islam and organizations like al Qaeda, no matter what we do. If we leave, we run the risk of it returning to a safe haven from which attacks can be launched on our Homeland. If we stay, regrettably our service men and women are placed in harm's way. But, I do think the strategy you've settled on maximizes the chances of

minimizing those combined risks on an ongoing basis. I thank you for that.

Although neither one of them is here, I want to thank Senator Lieberman for his comments. I think he was exactly right when he pointed out, "Look, you're receiving some tough questions from both the right and the left today." The President is not doing this because it is politically expedient; he's doing it because he believes it's in the national security interests of the United States. That's the kind of decisionmaking I want to see in a chief executive, and I think it's the kind of decisionmaking he has, with your help, exhibited here today.

I also want to associate myself with some of the comments of Senator McCain and several of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are going to support this President in his decisionmaking. For those who believe that the ability to forge bipartisan decision making is just impossible in Washington, their comments today are evidence that that is not necessarily so. I want to thank them for putting partisanship aside and choosing to support our Commander in Chief in a very difficult situation.

I do take issue with a couple of things that were raised by Senator McCain. I would associate myself with your comments. I think that the notion of—and I think, Secretary Gates, you mentioned this—demonstrating both resolve as well as a sense of urgency simultaneously is exactly the combination we need to exhibit here. So, we demonstrate resolve by maintaining our commitment, but, at the same time, we insist that the Afghans have the sense of urgency which is ultimately going to do more than we can do to make this a successful undertaking.

So, by having an exit strategy in place, I think we say to them, "We are with you, but only so long as you do your part." I think that's vitally important to the ultimate success of this undertaking. I personally don't find it incompatible to have a deadline that we aspire to meet, we do everything to meet, that we expect to meet, but, at the same time, of course take into account changes in facts on the ground that may occur over the next year and a half. As you pointed out, this is a longer period of time than it took for the surge in Iraq to prove to be successful. So, I think it's important to keep that in mind.

I do have two brief questions. You've been very patient and you've stayed a long time. But, these are two critiques that have been offered, and I want to give you an opportunity to address them. You have, in part, already.

But, you hear some people say, "The Taliban and al Qaeda are two different phenomena, and we can address combating al Qaeda without really having to combat the Taliban within Afghanistan." You've pointed out that the Taliban is not a homogeneous group; there are differences, and we're going to try and appeal to the reconcilable, to peel them away from the irreconcilables. But, there is still a hard core there. I think the words that you've used—one of you used the words that they "collude in some of their operations," that there's a "symbiotic relationship between the irreconcilable elements of Taliban and al Qaeda." So, I'd like to give you a chance, both Secretaries, to address this issue, which I understand your testimony already touched on with regard to that irreducible

hard core of the Taliban; it simply is not possible to defeat al Qaeda or minimize the risk from al Qaeda without also combating that irreconcilable element of the Taliban.

Secretary GATES. I would just say that we have to remember that it's the part of the Taliban that we think is irreconcilable that, in fact, provided the safe haven for al Qaeda. There is just a significant amount of intelligence of al Qaeda identifying themselves with the Taliban's aspirations in Afghanistan, and the Taliban talking about their relationship with al Qaeda and the message that al Qaeda has.

The Taliban are clever. We wouldn't be in the situation we're in if we did not face an adaptable and clever adversary. They recognize that the reason they're not in power right now is because they allowed al Qaeda to launch the attack against the United States. So, every now and then you'll see some report or another that the Taliban is saying, "Let's downplay the relationship with al Qaeda so we don't get hit again." But, the fact is, there is plenty of evidence of these two organizations and, as I put it in my opening statement, their symbiotic relationship.

What has made it more dangerous over the last year, as I said earlier, is that now we have the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, the Taliban in Pakistan, whose target is the Pakistani Government and who are working closely with al Qaeda, along with their compatriots in Afghanistan.

Senator BAYH. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary Clinton, anything you'd like to add?

Secretary CLINTON. Senator Bayh, in addition to the inspirational and aspirational role that al Qaeda plays, they provide very specific services; they help to provide funding and they help to provide targeting, training, and equipping. Very often they have their planners working closely with the elements of the Taliban, in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, in order to target both institutions of the respective governments, as well as international sites, embassies of other countries, and certainly our own presence and our troops.

I don't think there's any doubt any longer that there has been a developing syndicate of terror, and those tentacles reach far and wide. Yes, they do reach to Somalia, to Yemen, to the Maghreb, et cetera, but they are focused and grounded in the border area between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

It's our assessment that it might have been possible, if we had gone at it somewhat differently in the beginning of this war, to have captured and killed enough of the al Qaeda and the Taliban leadership to have made a difference. But, we are where we are right now, and we know that the training that is done and the communication that is done out of that area poses direct threats to us, our friends, and our allies.

Senator BAYH. Thank you.

If I could be permitted one final question.

Another point of view that's offered, voices that are raised, suggests, "We're focusing on the wrong place. Al Qaeda is now principally located in the tribal areas of Pakistan. We should focus on Pakistan. Why are we doing this in Afghanistan?" My understanding of your testimony here today is that, number one, were

we to adopt that strategy, the Taliban would, over time, reassert itself in Afghanistan, having safe havens there from which to launch attacks against America and our interests. That's number one. Number two, we can't go into Pakistan; we have to try and build up the Pakistanis' capability of dealing with the problem on the ground there. Number three, we are doing that. This is not an either/or choice. In fact, if you made it one, ignoring one would undermine the other, so we have to look at these two theaters in conjunction, doing both simultaneously, to ensure that we combat the threat.

So, if you'd care to address this notion that we could do one, but not the other, which seems to be out there in the minds of some.

Admiral MULLEN. They're inextricably linked, and there's no question that if the Taliban came back—their strategic goal is to take over the government again in Afghanistan—that they certainly have all the ability to provide that kind of safe haven because they are so linked across that border. I see the linkage between these two countries in my travels; nothing is more evident than that. That's why the President's strategy, even in March, drove this to a regional approach, not a single-country approach. You just can't do one without doing the other.

Secretary GATES. Let me just say, and this may be the last thing I say in this hearing, what is essential for our national security is that we have two long-term partners in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Quite frankly, I detest the phrase "exit strategy" because what we are looking at over time is a transition in our relationship with the Afghans, a relationship that now, where there is the preponderance of a military relationship as we try to secure the country and put it in a position where they can accept responsibility for their own security, and, frankly, to prevent al Qaeda from coming back. Over time, as we are successful in that, the civilian component and the development component of our relationship with Afghanistan will become predominant. We may have a small residual military training-and-equipping role with Afghanistan in the future.

This goes to the point I made in my testimony. We will not repeat the mistake—and we must not repeat the mistake—of 1989 and turn our backs on these folks and, when we have the security situation with them under control, then the civilian and the development part must be the preponderant part of our relationship far into the future.

Senator BAYH. That's one of the truly refreshing things. In past administrations from time to time, there had been friction between DOD and DOS, but here you're working hand in hand, and, in fact, understand that you both have to go forward together to truly get the job done on a permanent basis. I'm most gratified for your collaboration.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your patience.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Bayh.

Our witnesses, you've been excellent. You've been responsive. You've been more than patient. Because we promised you that you'd be out of here by 12:30 p.m., I believe, we owe you 10 minutes, and a lot more than that.

Thank you.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. AKAKA

AID TO AFGHANISTAN

1. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Clinton, some argue that progress in Afghanistan had stalled in recent years, in part, due to insufficient accountability. Metrics, proper oversight, and benchmarks will be critical to the success of the strategy outlined by President Obama. What are the administration's plans to maintain accountability to determine whether Afghan ministries and agencies are worthy of receiving direct U.S. aid?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

2. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Clinton, please describe the positive and negative possible outcomes of sending some aid directly to ministries and entities in Afghanistan.

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

3. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates, civilian casualties from air strikes draw a strong reaction from leaders in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. The smallest number of civilian deaths can become an invaluable propaganda tool for the insurgents. Earlier this year, General McChrystal issued guidance directing restraint in the use of close air support (CAS). However, air strikes remain a key part of our regional strategy. Do you think we have found the proper balance in the use of air strikes in the region?

Secretary GATES. I do believe we have struck the right balance between minimizing civilian casualties and retaining the benefits of air power. Air power can be essential for self defense and as an asymmetrical advantage. However, its use must be judicious. I believe the Tactical Directive has achieved that balance.

With regards to limiting civilian casualties, the Tactical Directive issued in July 2009 states:

> ". . . I expect leaders at all levels to scrutinize and limit the use of force like CAS against residential compounds and other locations likely to produce civilian casualties in accordance with this guidance. Commanders must weigh the gain of using CAS against the cost of civilian casualties, which in the long run make mission success more difficult and turn the Afghan people against us. . . The use of air-to-ground munitions and indirect fires against residential compounds is only authorized under very limited and prescribed conditions."

The above quotes deal directly with Rules of Engagement (ROE) and troops requiring CAS in self defense. The Tactical Directive does not prevent troops from protecting themselves as a matter of self defense, but makes them determine whether CAS is the only option available to them.

Deliberate air strikes are used against specific targets, but only after the request has gone through an intense targeting process, where intelligence is closely scrutinized to protect against civilian casualties. Air strikes are a valuable tool and I believe we have struck the right balance in conducting air strikes against necessary targets, protecting our troops, and limiting civilian casualties.

PAKISTAN

4. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates, there continues to be concern over Pakistan's role in the conflict. This will become more significant in light of the President's strategy if extremists continue to cross the border easily. Do you feel the current effort to improve security and governance in the Pakistan and Afghanistan border areas will support our new Afghanistan strategy?

Secretary GATES. Our support for Pakistan in their efforts to improve security and strengthen their government institutions is a vital part of the President's strategy. We fully recognize that our success in Afghanistan is inextricably linked to our partnership with Pakistan. That is why we need a strategy that works on both sides of the border. The Pakistani people are beginning to understand that they are the

ones most endangered by extremism as terrorist attacks on targets in cities and settled areas increase. The Pakistan army has gone on its largest offensive in years with the overwhelming support of the Pakistani people. The questions that have been raised in the past about Pakistan's capacity and resolve are being answered by the Pakistani people and the actions that the Pakistan military has taken in Swat and South Waziristan. They are an important first step.

However, much remains to be done. To assist Pakistan in these efforts, the United States has committed $1.2 billion to support counterinsurgency operations and $7.8 billion over the next 5 years to expand economic and social opportunities available to the Pakistani people. If we are going to successfully rid the region of violent extremism, we must confront all threats to stability and security of the Pakistani people.

MEDICAL EVACUATION CAPACITY

5. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates, you stated earlier this year that the goal in Iraq was to have a soldier in a medical facility within 1 hour of being wounded. In Afghanistan, the time was closer to 2 hours. I know you have been working diligently to reduce this timeframe. As we increase the number of troops in the region, what is your assessment of the medical evacuation capability in Afghanistan?

Secretary GATES. In November 2008, I directed a comprehensive bottom-to-top review on how to best synchronize efforts in theater and accomplish the goal of improving the Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) benchmark to a 1-hour execution standard in Afghanistan. Improving MEDEVAC response times requires a systematic approach and the synchronization of aircraft, medical capabilities, communication, infrastructure, and security to support these operations.

We must always remember that the single most important factor in the execution of the MEDEVAC mission is patient care. The effort to save human life warrants accepting additional risk when there is a reasonable expectation of success. So while we have changed the MEDEVAC standard to reflect a 60-minute total mission time, commanders and flight crews must not be so overly focused on meeting the 1-hour standard, as patient needs may dictate longer flight legs to appropriate medical care and surgical intervention.

Over the last 12 months, we have executed a number of force build-ups across Afghanistan. At the same time, the United States and our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners have increased the MEDEVAC and surgical platforms in theater to best support this increase of forces and the battlefield dispersion of personnel. Based on detailed analysis and coordination, we are now executing a course of action that will maintain and sustain the 60-minute or better average for MEDEVAC missions in Afghanistan that we are achieving to date. This analysis was used in determining the correct mix of MEDEVAC organizations associated with the force expansion.

NEW STRATEGY, FORCES, AND FORCE RESTRICTIONS

6. Senator AKAKA. Admiral Mullen, we have been fighting in Afghanistan for 8 years. Now, we are facing a more sophisticated and resilient insurgency than any time since 2001. What are the key elements in our new strategy that will allow us to reverse the momentum in Afghanistan?

Admiral MULLEN. Reversing the Taliban-led insurgency's momentum and denying their access to, and control of, key population and production centers are at the top of the list of focused objectives that we share with our Afghan partners. Reversing the momentum requires us to reverse the trend of expanding Taliban influence over the population, particularly in the south. This means we must increase the number of districts that are under government or local control and reduce the number of districts that are contested or under Taliban control. In addition, establishing security in these districts, focused efforts to build Afghan governance capacity, and to enable the Afghan people to hold their officials accountable are critical and will increase the people's trust and confidence.

This strategy is coupled with the expansion in the quantity and quality of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). Growing the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) and training them to a sufficient level will allow Afghans to take control of the security of their own country.

Population-centric counterinsurgency has proven effective at reversing negative trends in the areas where International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) forces have cleared and held and have enabled Afghan security and governance to develop. By July 2010, the bulk of the additional forces approved by the President will be

in Afghanistan and partnered with an expanded ANSF. These forces will expand and consolidate the security zones to connect key population and production centers, with our main efforts initially focused in the south—at the historic heart of the Afghan Taliban insurgency.

7. Senator AKAKA. Admiral Mullen, many of our allies have restrictions on how their troops can be used in Afghanistan. In some cases, this even restricts their troops from offensive combat. Do you foresee any of these restrictions being modified or removed as we execute the next phase of the war in Afghanistan?

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, in fact, some of the restrictions have already been modified or removed based on the last Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) ISAF Caveat report. Two nations removed all caveats: Estonia and Portugal. Three nations reduced caveats: Bulgaria, Italy, and Slovenia. Only one nation increased their caveat and that was the Netherlands.

8. Senator AKAKA. Admiral Mullen, since the release of General McChrystal's assessment, there has been a healthy debate over the number of troops being deployed to Afghanistan. However, we should not focus solely on the number of troops alone. Ignoring the total number of troops proposed by the administration, what is your assessment of the mix of U.S. forces by capability? Will we have the right equipment and personnel in place to achieve our goals in the region?

Admiral MULLEN. The mix of forces is based on capabilities requested by General McChrystal. As he has testified, he is getting the force structure he needs to be successful. The reality is, however, the requirement will continue to change, so we have to keep on it. We have made extraordinary improvements in things like intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance equipment, but this progress will need to continue. With the additional forces that have been approved, we are going to have to work through getting additional equipment to support our troops, including, for example, Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles and engineer equipment to help us find and dispose of improvised explosive devices. I think we are doing an extraordinary job across our government providing this equipment, but I think it is something we have to watch constantly.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CLAIRE MCCASKILL

CERP PROJECTS AND TRACKING

9. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, an October 2009 quarterly report to Congress by the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) indicates ongoing problems with the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP). Congress has provided $1.6 billion to the Department of Defense (DOD) for CERP in Afghanistan, and that CERP was created to fund primarily small-scale projects to meet urgent humanitarian and reconstruction needs at the community and provincial levels. However, SIGAR found that while DOD has established procedures to account for CERP funds, it has not established adequate mechanisms for monitoring and executing CERP projects. The report goes on to claim that program managers have limited visibility over the execution of CERP projects in part because U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR–A), which oversees CERP, has no central system for retaining the physical files in Afghanistan, and electronic records are either incomplete or nonexistent.

SIGAR also found that CERP funds increasingly are being obligated for large-scale projects that cost $500,000 or more. While these large-scale projects account for only 3 percent of all projects, they consume 67 percent of CERP funds. These projects pose increased risks for CERP because they are usually more complex than the small projects and require several years to complete. Most CERP managers have been trained to implement smaller-scale projects. Moreover, troop rotation schedules result in a lack of continuity in the management of large, long-term projects. SIGAR recommended that the Commander of USFOR–A develop and implement: (1) a process to systematically collect and track information on CERP projects; (2) a centralized system for maintaining records; and (3) a plan that addresses how to manage the heightened risks associated with projects costing $500,000 or more.

What has DOD specifically done to address the findings of this SIGAR report as it relates to its management of the CERP in Afghanistan?

Secretary GATES and Admiral MULLEN. By its nature, CERP involves decentralized implementation by local commanders in theater. Its hallmarks are responsiveness to urgent needs and flexibility. We have heard the concerns expressed by Members of Congress, studied the findings of recent audit reports, and examined lessons

learned from previous deployments. We have taken steps within DOD, the Army, and the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) theater to improve the oversight of the program—all without diminishing the key element of flexibility and responsiveness this program provides to the commander in the field.

DOD recognizes that additional improvements can be made in the management of CERP to maintain the flexibility and accountability essential to a field-driven program. The Deputy Secretary of Defense is leading a review of CERP to examine ways to make the program more efficient and effective. The review will examine the issues you raise as well as others that we view as important to implementation of this crucial program. Following this review a report will be made available in the spring to Congress.

10. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, what is the plan for implementing a central system for retaining physical files and electronic records of CERP handled by USFOR–A?

Secretary GATES and Admiral MULLEN. The Deputy Secretary of Defense is leading a review of the CERP to examine ways to make the program more efficient and effective. This report will be completed and made available to Congress in the spring. As part of the review, DOD is examining the current CERP data management system in theater with the goal of improving efficiency, transparency, and accuracy of data recordkeeping and reporting. DOD is also working with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to ensure compatible electronic recordkeeping to improve interagency coordination on CERP projects. We believe CERP managers are doing a commendable job implementing the program under difficult conditions, and believe the Deputy Secretary's comprehensive review of the program will ensure they have the proper tools required to execute this crucial program.

11. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, do you think there needs to be congressional reforms to preserve the integrity of the CERP while also ensuring proper oversight of these projects and funds available for use by field commanders? If so, what might you propose?

Secretary GATES and Admiral MULLEN. Current legislation provides sufficient oversight for the CERP. The Deputy Secretary of Defense is leading a review of CERP to examine ways to make the program more efficient and effective. Following this review, a report will be made available to Congress in the spring.

CERP is critical to supporting commanders in the field in executing counterinsurgency operations in support of the President's strategy. DOD continues to support congressional reforms to improve the flexibility of traditional foreign assistance programs and facilitate interagency cooperation.

12. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, what is DOD doing to better train CERP managers in the types and scale of projects that they will handle in Afghanistan?

Secretary GATES and Admiral MULLEN. As noted in the recent report (House Report 111–105) submitted to the 2009 Supplemental Appropriations Bill (H.R. 2346), which requested a description of the "training provided for members of the U.S. Armed Forces deploying to Afghanistan and Iraq on the use of funds under the CERP," training is vital to the success of CERP. Adequate training ensures the following: deployed commanders and their appointed representatives in theater use appropriate criteria when choosing and monitoring CERP projects; financial agents and managers for CERP place sufficient controls on, and accurately account for, the funds appropriated under CERP; and the program helps further the strategic goals of the CENTCOM Commander.

As the Executive Agent for the CERP, the Army currently conducts training in the continental United States (CONUS); for deploying individuals and units; and in theater, for individuals and units already deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. The Army has enhanced CERP training for four key positions: the project manager, the project purchasing officer, the paying agent, and the unit commander. The first three positions form a triad of expertise that every project must have. Unit commanders are vital to ensure the appropriate projects are identified. Integrated training and detailed procedures provide the checks and balances necessary in every project. In addition, there are numerous initiatives underway to enhance CERP training for individuals and units, both pre-deployment and in theater. The existing training, plus the Mobile Training Team and Distance Learning programs being developed, provides the necessary tools to ensure effective and efficient management of the CERP.

13. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, how are large-scale CERP projects vetted within the greater framework of reconstruction in Afghanistan to ensure their utility and prevent duplication or unneeded projects?

Secretary GATES and Admiral MULLEN. In Afghanistan, the U.S. Government Civil-Military Campaign Plan for Afghanistan provides the overarching framework for reconstruction in Afghanistan within which CERP projects are vetted and coordinated.

As part of the plan, DOD and the Department of State (DOS) established an executive working group with 14 subworking groups. One of these subgroups is the infrastructure working group (IWG) under USAID. The meetings are co-chaired by USAID, USFOR–A (through the Joint Project Integration Office (JPIO)) and the U.S. Embassy. The IWG, as a priority, is working to establish a number of infrastructure strategies. The first three are for water (completed), roads (working), and energy (scheduled for development in January 2010) sectors, and IWG provides overarching guidance for CERP projects as well.

USAID now participates as a voting member on the CERP review board at the command level. Their participation prevents duplication of effort and also helps identify any problems with sustainment of projects nominated for CERP. The increase of U.S. Government civilians in the field significantly improves the integration coordination and de-confliction of reconstruction projects across civilian and military funding streams.

14. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, what do you feel is an acceptable cost limit that should be in place on the type of CERP projects that field managers could implement?

Secretary GATES and Admiral MULLEN. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) provides guidance on the CERP approval authorities in theater. This guidance is supplemented by approval limits provided by CENTCOM, USFOR–A, and U.S. Forces-Iraq, and all procedures are continually reviewed to ensure they are responsive to changing operational requirements. Projects in Iraq are capped at $2 million and require a Secretary of Defense waiver to exceed that limit. Projects over $1 million in Iraq and Afghanistan require approval by the Commander, CENTCOM.

DOD strives to ensure commanders in the field have flexible resources to address local urgent reconstruction requirements as part of the counterinsurgency campaign. Therefore, DOD does not seek to institute cost limits but rather ensure the appropriate approval authorities are in place and adequate numbers of trained personnel are available to commanders to manage CERP projects. The Deputy Secretary of Defense is leading a review of CERP to examine ways to make the program more efficient and effective. Following this review, a report will be made available to Congress in the spring.

Finally, DOD is aware that the project requirements in Afghanistan are different than project requirements in Iraq, based on the unique conditions in each country, the nature of the conflict, other available foreign assistance, local government resources, and our own force presence. In Afghanistan, as we increase the forces available to implement the President's strategy, CERP will become an even more critical tool to respond to humanitarian needs, to help address grievances of local populations, and to enable economic opportunity through complementary larger-scale infrastructure projects.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROLAND W. BURRIS

TIMELINE IN AFGHANISTAN

15. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Gates, in August 2009, General McChrystal stated that if additional resources are not provided, we "risk an outcome where defeating the insurgency is no longer possible" and that we risk "mission failure." What are the current risks to mission success as these additional troops flow into theater over the timeline you presented?

Secretary GATES. The President's decision rapidly resources our strategy, recognizing that the next 18 months will likely be decisive and ultimately enable success. We have greater clarity on the way forward and additional forces will begin to deploy shortly. By this time next year, our intent is to demonstrate that the insurgency has lost the momentum. By the summer of 2011, we intend to make it clear to the Afghan people that the insurgency will not win, allowing them to side with their government. Increasing our capability and strategy will involve much more than just force increases, but the additional forces are significant.

The commitment of all coalition nations will be buttressed by a clear understanding of how we will mitigate risks. I'll briefly mention three. The first is the Afghan Government's credibility deficit, which must be recognized by all, including Afghan officials, as a critical area of focus and change. Equally important is our ability to accelerate development of the Afghan security forces. Third, the hazard posed by extremists that operate and easily pass through both sides of the border with Pakistan must be mitigated by enhanced cross-border coordination and enhanced Pakistani engagement.

Looking ahead, we are confident we have both the right strategy and the right resources to mitigate these risks.

16. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Gates, how will this increase affect the ongoing drawdown of troops in Iraq?

Secretary GATES. The responsible drawdown of troops in Iraq continues forward as planned. While the responsible drawdown in Iraq will be executed concurrently with the increase in forces in Afghanistan, the Iraq drawdown is not dependent upon the Afghanistan increase and the Afghanistan increase is not dependent on the Iraq drawdown. The transportation feasibility analysis at this time also indicates no significant impact to Iraq drawdown as we increase forces in Afghanistan.

The U.S. policy on Iraq has not changed; we are committed to fulfilling our responsibility as outlined in the security agreement between the United States and Iraq. Our drawdown following the national elections will be based on the Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF–I) Commander's assessment that security conditions remain stable and will follow our strategy to transform the force into an advisory and assistance role. As our requirements in Iraq continue to decrease, units that redeploy from or are no longer required to deploy to Iraq will return to the pool of forces available to deploy in support of our mission in Afghanistan or other global requirements.

We will continue to analyze and monitor this issue closely and if conditions change to impose emerging impacts on the Iraq drawdown as a consequence of the Afghanistan troop increase, then we will certainly keep you informed.

17. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Gates, is there sufficient air and sealift assets to meet timelines in Afghanistan and Iraq?

Secretary GATES. We have a large number of professionals who are balancing the demands of both operations. Their greatest challenge is overcoming the differences that exist between Iraq and Afghanistan. Iraq's infrastructure is more accommodating. Afghanistan does not have a neighbor like Kuwait that provides a major logistics hub. Additionally, Afghanistan does not have the number of runways, rail hubs, or road networks like those that exist in Iraq. I remain confident that our professionals will continue to adapt and execute the mission we have assigned them.

18. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Gates, the President stated that a responsible withdrawal of troops will begin in summer 2011. Are there any caveats to this timeline?

Secretary GATES. The President did not pick the summer 2011 date arbitrarily. During the strategy review, we looked closely at the current and projected capacity of the ANSF in some parts of the country. Based on that analysis, we reached the conclusion that July 2011 is a realistic date for us to plan to begin transferring responsibility for security to the ANSF in some parts of the country. At the same time, we will assess conditions as we move forward. Based on those assessments, the President will determine the scope and pace of a gradual and responsible draw down of U.S. combat forces.

This is an issue of balance. We need to show both our partners and our adversaries in the region that we mean business: we will deploy the forces and the civilian resources that we believe are necessary to accomplish our strategic goals, and retain the tactical flexibility to adapt if circumstances require. At the same time, we have to send a clear message to the Afghan Government that the U.S. military is not going to be there forever. We are not an occupation force. Afghans must take primary responsibility for defending their own country and prepare to do so with a sense of purpose and urgency.

PROJECTED NUMBERS OF AFGHAN SECURITY FORCES

19. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Gates, as we work to increase the capability of the ANSF, please clarify the security force goals. Are we aiming to meet the projected numbers established by March 2009 goals of 134,000 ANA and 82,000 ANP, or levels recommended by General McChrystal of 240,000 ANA and 160,000 ANP?

Secretary GATES. We plan to grow the ANSF to 134,000 ANA and 96,800 ANP forces by October 2010. As of early December of last year, ANP strength was already approaching 95,000, and we expect to reach the ANP target well ahead of October 2010. Looking beyond October 2010, we will continue to set annual goals to grow the ANA and ANP based on an ongoing evaluation of our capabilities and the requirement to develop additional ANSF.

20. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Gates, when will we reach our goal numbers for the ANA and ANP?

Secretary GATES. We are on track to meet our current goal of 134,000 ANA forces by October 2010. We expect to reach our goal of 96,800 ANP forces early in 2010, well ahead of schedule. We will continue to reevaluate our needs and capabilities in regards to growing the ANSF.

COSTS OF EACH NEW SOLDIER

21. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Gates, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimated that each additional soldier deployed to Afghanistan will cost $1 million. Is this estimate accurate?

Secretary GATES. That estimate is roughly accurate if all costs, to include new and expanded base camps and additional equipment, are included.

22. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Gates, does this OMB cost estimate include any contractor support?

Secretary GATES. Yes, the OMB estimate includes all costs and, therefore, incorporates functions performed by contractors.

REINTEGRATION OF FORMER INSURGENTS

23. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Gates, how effective has the effort been to reintegrate former Taliban, the Northern Alliance, and Mujahedeen fighters so that they are no longer fighting for the insurgency?

Secretary GATES. The insurgency in Afghanistan is composed of a complex network of alliance and allegiances among various groups. Reintegration efforts will help break down these connections, separating hard-core Taliban from those fighting for non-ideological reasons. Any reintegration effort will also need to ensure that those groups aligned against the insurgency (e.g., the Northern Alliance) and those "on the fence" (e.g., many former mujahideen who fought against the Soviets) do not feel that reintegration programs provide perverse incentives for members of the Taliban and other insurgent groups.

To implement the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process, the Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) was established in March 2003. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) implemented the ANPB on behalf of the Afghan Government, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, and Japan as the lead country on DDR issues. The ANBP disarmament and demobilization process lasted from October 2003 to November 2005. The Disbandment of Illegally Armed Groups project, established in 2005, was designed to follow the DDR program. This program focused on reintegrating Northern Alliance and associated groups following the fall of the Taliban. It still exists today and discussions are underway on how to coordinate this effort with programs to reintegrate former Taliban.

Previous reintegration efforts in Afghanistan did not achieve significant results. Reintegration of those insurgents and their leaders who want to renounce violence and join mainstream Afghan society is an important effort, which must be led by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) and be community-focused. Our civil-military team is actively working alongside GIRoA to develop their reintegration program. Part of the reintegration program includes utilizing local leaders to vouch for the reliability of those who are willing to leave the insurgency.

To assist the GIRoA in assimilating these insurgents, USFOR–A is working with ISAF to develop support to a GIRoA reintegration program in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010. Job training, education, and relocation assistance stand out as potential opportunities for support.

Finally, security is also essential. To attract insurgents to an Afghan-led reintegration program, ISAF will partner with ANSF and community leaders to provide sufficient security and prevent retribution.

POLICY GOALS IN AFGHANISTAN

24. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Clinton, what overall U.S. policy goals are being pursued in Afghanistan?

Secretary CLINTON. As President Obama reaffirmed in his December 1 remarks at West Point, our core goal in Afghanistan remains: to disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat al Qaeda and to prevent their return to Afghanistan. To do so, we and our allies will surge our forces, targeting elements of the insurgency and securing key population centers, training Afghan forces, and transferring responsibility to a capable Afghan partner.

Our governance efforts will help develop more responsive, visible, and accountable institutions in Kabul and at the provincial, district, and local level, where everyday Afghans encounter their government. We will increase the number of civilian technical advisers in key central government ministries, as well as in provincial capitals and district centers, to partner with Afghans in this capacity building effort. We will support the Afghan Government's reinvigorated plans to fight corruption, with concrete measures of progress toward greater accountability.

We believe job creation is critical to undermine extremists' appeal in the short-term and for sustainable economic growth in the long-term. Our top reconstruction priority is implementing a civilian-military agriculture redevelopment strategy to restore Afghanistan's once vibrant agriculture sector. This will help sap the insurgency of fighters and of income from poppy cultivation. Creating links to cross-border trade with Pakistan will support sustainable long-term economic growth and job creation. Simultaneously, we will sustain our successful efforts to build the Afghan Government's capacity to provide improved health services and educational opportunities to the Afghan people. Improving educational opportunities for all Afghans, regardless of gender, is a top priority for the Afghan people. It is also a necessary step for diminishing the influence of extremists, improving the pool of qualified individuals who can serve in Afghanistan's security forces, and improving Afghanistan's long-term economic potential.

This region is the heart of the global violent extremism pursued by al Qaeda, and the region from which we were attacked on September 11. New attacks are being planned there now, a fact borne out by a recent plot, uncovered and disrupted by American authorities. We will prevent the Taliban from turning Afghanistan back into a safe haven from which international terrorists can strike at us or our allies. This would pose a direct threat to the American Homeland, and that is a threat that we cannot tolerate.

25. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Clinton, what policy goals and benchmarks are tied to the withdrawal of forces in Afghanistan?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

STRATEGY TO REDUCE CORRUPTION AND THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS

26. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Clinton, I assume that we have as part of our new strategy a plan to better address governance and corruption. In his inauguration, President Hamid Karzai stated that he was going to fight corruption. What tangible steps has he outlined?

Secretary CLINTON. Yes. We are developing robust plans for addressing governance and corruption and are working more directly with the Afghan Government on these critical issues. The Afghan Government's most significant progress to date is the creation of the Major-Crimes Task Force (MCTF), a multi-ministry initiative responsible for investigating corruption, kidnapping, and organized crime cases and preparing them for prosecution and an anti-corruption prosecution unit within the Attorney General's Office. The Afghan Government also has agreed to establish an Anti-Corruption Tribunal of specially vetted judges to oversee high-profile cases. The MCTF receives financial and technical support from DOD and the Department of State's (DOS) Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, while Department of Justice provides technical support.

To improve transparency and accountability, the Afghan Government has been active in implementing hiring reforms and a vetting process for Afghan Government employees through the Civil Service Commission, and in improving the capacity of the High Office of Oversight (HOO) so that these entities can better serve as oversight mechanisms for corruption efforts nationwide. Embassy Kabul, the International Community, and the Afghan Government are in extended discussions about the future of the HOO and how to make the body as effective as possible. At a recent press conference, the HOO publicly named the Afghan ministers who had not

yet filed asset declaration forms and it is actively working to secure 100 percent compliance.

In December, the Government of Afghanistan hosted a high-level conference in Kabul to address corruption where President Karzai and others spoke frankly and openly about the challenges that corruption creates for Afghanistan. Karzai's recent cabinet appointments also suggest that he is taking corruption seriously and seeking to limit corruption at higher levels of government.

Unfortunately, this progress has yet to be complemented with tangible actions against any of the high-level government officials accused of corruption. We will watch the Afghan Government very closely over the next few months and expect to see some substantive changes in the near future.

27. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Clinton, what is President Karzai doing to increase transparency in the appointment of provincial and ministerial posts?

Secretary CLINTON. We remain concerned about the appointment process for ministerial and provincial posts in the Afghan Government. While the Government of Afghanistan has made steps in the right direction, significant challenges remain.

The Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Service Commission and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance are jointly responsible for the appointment of high-level Afghan Government officials, including provincial governors. With the assistance of the international community, these institutions have established a set of mechanisms to adequately identify, recruit, vet, and hire high-level government officials. Unfortunately, the Government of Afghanistan is not adequately utilizing these resources, particularly for politically influential positions and important governorships. In many cases, President Karzai continues to rely on political patronage networks in choosing leaders for key positions.

28. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Clinton, overall development of the Afghan economy appears to be at a standstill. The issue of poppy eradication continues to be a roadblock for agriculture development. What is being done to provide security for farmers who do not grow poppy, so that the Taliban do not intimidate the farmers? Is a comprehensive development strategy being developed?

Secretary CLINTON. I would not say that economic development in Afghanistan is at a standstill. There have been some important successes in this last year—including a deal with India involving exports from Wardak province in Afghanistan—that are encouraging.

Large-scale eradication targeted at individual farmers as part of our counternarcotics approach over the last few years proved problematic because it gave the Taliban a way to step in as protectors of farmers, driving a wedge between farmers and their government and us. In recognition of this, we revised our counternarcotics strategy during the summer so that we are putting greater focus now on interdiction of the nexus between narco-traffickers and the insurgents, and on the connection between the poppy trade and corruption; and on helping farmers to grow legal crops that will be profitable and able to supplant opium poppy in the long term. We are thus taking the counternarcotics fight to the people who are ultimately hurting farmers and undermining the Afghan Government and rule of law, and at the same time helping link farmers to their government through Afghan Government programs that supply farmers with agricultural inputs and help to develop agricultural value chains. Our revised counternarcotics strategy is integrated with our Agricultural Strategy, and in this way helps to create jobs and restore Afghanistan's once vibrant agricultural sector. Our counternarcotics strategy is thus part of a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach aimed at helping the Afghan Government wage a counterinsurgency and develop the country at the same time.

General McChrystal's counterinsurgency approach centers on protecting the population, and this includes farmers. We will expect the Afghan national security forces to be involved in this as well, further forging a positive connection between the people and their government.

DIPLOMATIC TEAM DYNAMICS AND ALLIED SUPPORT

29. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Clinton, an effective and continuous diplomatic effort is key to progress for the Afghan Government, and an effective ambassadorial team is critical to facilitating that progress. What is the working relationship between Ambassador Eikenberry, Ambassador Holbrooke, and Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

30. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Clinton, I understand that many of the troop-contributing nations for Afghanistan have placed very specific caveats on what missions and what type of support that they will provide. What, if any, are the caveats, and do these caveats pose an obstacle to meeting our stated objectives?

Secretary CLINTON. I appreciate the continued commitment of our NATO allies and other partners to the international mission in Afghanistan. Forty-three NATO and non-NATO countries provide over 40,000 troops with thousands more arriving in 2010 to reinforce the ISAF. Over 600 allied and partner military personnel have been killed serving in Afghanistan. U.S. allies and partners recognize that securing Afghanistan against the threat posed by extremists and terrorists and providing a better future for the Afghan people is in our common interest.

Caveats that limit the geographic and operational flexibility of ISAF forces remain a challenge in Afghanistan. Despite this challenge, the trend over the last year has been positive with several nations dropping specific caveats and a majority of ISAF troop contingents are now caveat free. We continue to impress upon our allies and partners the importance of providing the commanders on the ground the maximum possible flexibility in the employment of ISAF forces.

I defer to DOD for a detailed discussion of how caveats impact the operations of U.S. forces.

TIMELINE AND RESULTING CHANGES

31. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, how long do you expect it to take to build up capability to affect an increased level of security?

Admiral MULLEN. [Deleted.]

32. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, will there be an increase in contractor support based on this troop increase?

Admiral MULLEN. Yes. Contractors are a critical enabler in Afghanistan and will continue to provide a wide range of tasks essential for operations including maintenance, construction, transportation, security, and base support. The contractor footprint in Afghanistan increased substantially during the fourth quarter and now stands at 104,000. CENTCOM estimates the number of contractors will grow to 148,000 to 186,000 in support of the increase in forces. Approximately 75 percent of these will be Afghani nationals, providing a boost to the economy and promoting stability.

33. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, what additional costs will be necessary for contractor support of these additional troops in Afghanistan?

Admiral MULLEN. OSD Comptroller is working with the military departments and CENTCOM to determine the additional operational costs needed for the additional troops. The Secretary of Defense has stated that the total cost will be between $30 billion to $35 billion per year. The additional costs required for contractor support will be a subset of the operations and maintenance request. Contractors are a critical enabler in Afghanistan and will continue to provide a wide range of tasks essential for operations including maintenance, construction, transportation, security, and base support. The costs associated with contracted support are impossible to determine in advance of requirement development, however, these costs will not be over and above any funds requested by the Department in support of the troop increase.

34. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, how is the normal force rotation and dwell time affected by the troop increase?

Admiral MULLEN. The 30,000 troop increase will have no significant effect on normal force rotation or dwell for the Services.

The Army will be able to source the requested capabilities on the anticipated timelines without breaking 1:1 unit dwell.

While current Marine Corps deployment-to-dwell policy of 1:3 is not being met, the Active component goal of 1:2 is being met across many core units. The challenges associated with meeting these goals remain acceptable to the Marine Corps.

The Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard reported that the troop increase will have no significant overarching effect on force rotation and dwell time.

TROOP NUMBERS AND USE

35. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, when all of the troops are in place, how many of them will be solely dedicated to training the ANSF?

Admiral MULLEN. Currently, in NATO Training Mission Afghanistan (NTM–A)/Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC–A), there are approximately 830 U.S. forces whose sole task is to train ANSF forces in institutions, schools, and other formalized programs of instruction. These forces train ANSF trainers, coordinate resources exclusively in support of training, and advise and coach the ANSF on management of institutional training.

4/82 IBCT and 48th IBCT, consisting of approximately 6,000 soldiers, provide Embedded Training Teams (ETTs) and Police Mentor Teams (PMTs) to fielded ANA units from battalion to corps level and to ANP units from district to police region level.

When all of our forces are in place, these troops will be augmented by a infantry battalion from the 10th Mountain Division, which is approximately 600 soldiers.

However, our relationship with the ANSF extends far beyond these institutional training programs. A key tenet of General McChrystal's strategy is partnering with the Afghan security forces in order to help them build capacity so that they can assume responsibility for their nation's security as quickly and as successfully as possible. These partnered forces provide daily operational, doctrinal, and logistical advice, mentoring, and coaching.

All U.S. combat brigades deployed to Afghanistan will be partnered with Afghan forces across all echelons of command. Therefore, as additional U.S. forces deploy to Afghanistan and we accelerate the growth of ANSF units, the number of U.S. forces partnered with Afghan units will also rise.

36. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, how many U.S. forces are currently training ANSF?

Admiral MULLEN. Currently, in NTM–A/CSTC–A, there are approximately 830 U.S. forces whose sole task is to train ANSF forces in institutions, schools, and other formalized programs of instruction. These forces train ANSF trainers, coordinate resources exclusively in support of training, and advise and coach the ANSF on management of institutional training.

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37. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, how many ISAFs are currently conducting the mission in Afghanistan?

Admiral MULLEN. As of 9 December, coalition forces in Afghanistan total 109,370. The United States contribution of that is 67,640.

38. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, for those U.S. troops whose responsibility is to train the Afghan forces, what portion will be embedded with the Afghan forces?

Admiral MULLEN. A key tenet of General McChrystal's strategy is partnering with the Afghan security forces in order to help them build capacity and assume lead security responsibility as quickly and as successfully as possible. Today, 26 out of 40 U.S. battalions, or about 14,000 troops, are partnered with ANSF in this capacity and provide daily training to ANSF units. As additional U.S. forces deploy to Afghanistan and we accelerate the growth of ANSF units, the number of U.S. forces partnered with Afghan units will also rise.

TRAINING AFGHAN FORCES

39. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, how long does it take for U.S. troops to train Afghan forces?

Admiral MULLEN. There are three main efforts in training the ANSF. The first is institutional, where soldiers and police receive basic training through schools and other formalized programs. Basic training for the infantry soldier, who make up the majority of the ANA is 8 weeks long. Those soldiers who will become part of a newly

formed battalion receive an additional 5 weeks of unit collective training at the Consolidated Fielding Center (CFC). Soldiers selected to be NCOs during basic training receive another 3 weeks of training. Those soldiers who serve in specialty billets can receive 6 to 8 more weeks of specialty training after basic training. ANA officers receive between 20 weeks to 4 years of training depending on the program. Afghan Uniform Police (AUP) receive 8 weeks of basic training either as new recruits or with their district as part of Focused District Development (FDD) or Directed District Development (D3). Afghan Border Police (ABP) also attend 8 weeks of basic training, either as new recruits, or as serving police as part of Focused Border Development (FBD). Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) receive 16 weeks of training, consisting of 8 weeks of basic training and 8 weeks of specialized training. ANP officers receive between 6 months and 3 years of training, depending on the program.

However, the process of training the ANSF is a long-term commitment by U.S. forces that extends well beyond basic training programs. The second training effort for U.S. forces are ETTs and PMTs, which are provided to fielded ANA units from the battalion to corps level and to ANP units from the district to police region level. There are currently two U.S. BCTs providing ETTs and PMTs: the 48th IBCT and 4/82 IBCT.

The third training effort is U.S. partnership with ANSF units. This partnering is a key tenet of General McChrystal's strategy, and is designed to help ANSF build capacity and assume lead security responsibility as quickly and as successfully as possible. Once units graduate from their respective institutional training programs, they continue to receive advice, mentoring, and coaching through their partnership with U.S. and coalition forces. For instance, upon graduation, every ANA Kandak and higher level headquarters is partnered with a coalition unit and receives daily doctrinal, operational, administrative, and logistical training. Furthermore, when these ANA units are employed operationally, they routinely fight alongside a coalition operational unit.

As a result of force expansion, all ANA and ANP in critical districts will be partnered with IJC forces.

40. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, when will there be sufficient and fully trained Afghan forces prepared to protect their own country?

Admiral MULLEN. As the President articulated in his December 1 address, U.S. forces will begin transitioning responsibility to the ANSF in July 2011. This transition will occur province by province, and will be executed responsibly, taking into account conditions on the ground. While the conditions necessary to transition responsibility will be present in some provinces in the summer of 2011, others will likely require further U.S. training and assistance before this process can begin.

In part, decisions about the location and pace of U.S. transition and eventual withdrawal will be made based on the capability of the local ANSF. A key tenet of our strategy is to accelerate the growth and build the capacity of the ANSF so that they can assume responsibility for their nation's security as quickly as possible. Decisions about the targeted growth of the ANSF will be made on a year-by-year basis, based on current security conditions and past progress.

As President Karzai articulated in his November inaugural address, the Afghan Government's goal is to assume security responsibility for the entire country within the next 5 years. We will work with our Afghan partners to support this goal.

41. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, given the current proficiency of the ANP Force, will Afghan police officers who were trained locally in provinces outside of the new academy in Kabul be retrained with revised law enforcement standards?

Admiral MULLEN. Yes. AUP recruited and trained locally will complete the "Basic 8" 8-week training program. This program uses a curriculum reviewed by the DOS International Law Enforcement and Narcotics Division and approved by the Afghan Ministry of the Interior (MoI).

AUP patrolmen are being trained at a Regional Training Center either individually or a part of their district through the Focused District Development program or in their home district through the Directed District Development (D3) program. MoI and NTM–A/CSTC–A are coordinating to maximize the rate of untrained police completing this reform training.

42. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, which American contracting company is supporting the training of the ANP?

Admiral MULLEN. Currently, support for the training of ANP is provided under a DOS contract with Dyncorp International, LLC. However, we intend to transition the training effort to a DOD-managed contract to improve oversight and maximize

efficiencies. The new acquisition strategy will leverage an existing Counter-Narcoterrorism and Technology Program Office (CNTPO) multiple award Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity contract with the following companies: Lockheed Martin Integrated Systems; Northrup Grumman Information Technology; Blackwater Lodge and Training Center, LLC; Raytheon Technical Services; and ARINC Engineering Services, LLC. The contract with Dyncorp has been extended until 31 March 2010 to allow time for the transition and to minimize disruption and risk to performance of this critical mission.

43. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, how long have they been assigned this task, and how long will they stay should their contract be renewed?

Admiral MULLEN. The current DOS contractor (Dyncorp) has been in place since 2003. This contract has been extended until 31 March 2010 to allow time for transition to a DOD-managed contract.

RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS

44. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, I have not heard much about the successes in the reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. What is the overall plan and who leads the effort?

Admiral MULLEN. DOS and USAID are the leads for U.S. government reconstruction efforts, as part of a broader international effort in Afghanistan. DOD does provide reconstruction assistance through the CERP funds and some DOD organizations (like the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) provide assistance upon request on a reimbursable basis to USAID/DOS.

Under the CERP, the field commanders are using these funds to address a number of areas that help our counterinsurgency efforts in supporting the Afghan people and, as needed, do small-scale infrastructure projects that help improve people's lives and provide humanitarian assistance. Of the $1.2 billion appropriated for CERP in fiscal year 2009 for use by both Iraq and Afghanistan, about $550.7 million is being spent to support over 2,215 projects. DOD support to Afghan reconstruction efforts is most visible through the 12 U.S.-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) that operate at the provincial level. The DOD components of PRTs utilize CERP funds to support reconstruction priorities at the provincial/district levels based on Afghan-led prioritized plans. These Provincial Development Plans (PDPs) were developed by Afghans at the district/provincial level and were approved by the National Government of Afghanistan in alignment with the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS). The PRTs (and maneuver forces) and other donors and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) work with the provincial development committees to align CERP and other donor funds to prioritized requirements in the PDPs. As a result, CERP funds and other donor funds are used to build, for example, schools, roads, power systems, irrigation, medical clinics, and government buildings.

On August 10, 2009, General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry established an overarching civilian-military plan titled: "U.S. Government Integrated Civilian-Military Campaign Plan For Support to Afghanistan". This civilian-military plan is working to integrate all U.S. Government capabilities and resources in Afghanistan, and provides U.S. Government priorities and objectives for the 11 transformative effects areas broken out by regional commands for fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2012.

In summary, the DOS leads U.S. Government development efforts in Afghanistan, and like other donors, is guided by the ANDS. DOD supports these efforts and employs CERP for projects that enhance counterinsurgency operations, i.e., those that focus on the security of the Afghan population.

45. Senator BURRIS. Admiral Mullen, are relief and other reconstruction efforts aided or hampered by the presence of the PRT? Does this vary by region?

Admiral MULLEN. PRTs provide critical capabilities in that they generate immediate local relief efforts and support more expansive reconstruction efforts. Both effects are essential to execution of the President's strategy for Afghansitan and Pakistan. PRTs provide immediate local relief, using discretionary funds to accomplish short-term employment, self-help, and minor construction efforts that assist field commanders in the hold and early build phases of counterinsurgency operations. When synchronized properly, PRT efforts are complimentary with and greatly enhance reconstruction work executed by the GIRoA, the U.N., other U.S. Government agencies, and numerous NGOs—development efforts that anchor the build phase of counterinsurgency operations. The effectiveness of reconstruction efforts in general,

and the effectiveness of PRTs in support of reconstruction in particular, depends upon several factors unique to different regions of the country, including the security environment (permissive, semi-permissive, or non-permissive), human terrain factors, and governance capability, among others. I am unaware of any down-side to PRTs. One recent study highlights the manner in which PRTs made a positive impact on relief and reconstruction, reducing violence, increasing local political participation, and facilitating a linkage between tribes and the government.[1]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR PAUL G. KIRK

PRESIDENT KARZAI AND CORRUPTION

46. Senator KIRK. Secretary Clinton, you recently returned from Afghanistan. Having attended the inauguration of President Karzai after an election most are calling fraudulent and having sat face-to-face with him, I would like to hear your thoughts on President Karzai and whether demonstrable progress on his part is a realistic goal. Should not demonstrable progress be a pre-condition to further commitment of our troops?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

47. Senator KIRK. Secretary Clinton, news reports indicate that you warned President Karzai to reduce corruption or lose foreign assistance. How accurate is that statement?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

48. Senator KIRK. Secretary Clinton, how do we measure progress by the Karzai Government, and what is our timetable for his progress?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

49. Senator KIRK. Secretary Clinton, what will you or the President do if President Karzai cannot or will not meet our requirements for progress?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

50. Senator KIRK. Secretary Gates, you recently indicated that a way to hold the Afghan Government accountable would be to withhold funds for projects "where we can control the flow of dollars." Can you elaborate on that statement? What projects are you referring to?

Secretary GATES. The international presence in Afghanistan has significantly increased the influx of assistance dollars and, as a result, the number of contracts. Corruption—which may be associated with contracts awarded, work that we are having done, and development projects with others (including the Afghans)—is a major concern. Corruption can occur at any level. The very presence of large amounts of assistance in a society where rule of law is virtually absent and the institutions of government are weak opens up opportunities for corruption.

While the United States works vigilantly to ensure the contracts we enter into and the contractors we work with are not engaging in corruption, this is primarily an Afghan issue—effective anti-corruption measures require laws, regulations, and an effective enforcement infrastructure, none of which Afghanistan yet has. We welcome President Karzai's recent commitments to a more active effort to combat corruption.

As the Secretary of State noted in her testimony, USAID is working on a process to certify Afghan ministries to receive direct funding from the U.S. Government, based on their financial and human resources management capabilities and transparency. I refer you to USAID for further details regarding this process.

DOD and DOS are also reviewing our contracting processes to find ways to improve our ability to respond directly to the needs of the Afghan people, and to reduce avenues for potential corruption. These efforts include awarding smaller contracts, increasing local procurement, and deploying additional contracting officers to the field to oversee contracts and partner with Afghans.

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[1] Malkasian, Carter & Meyerle, Gerald. March 2009. "Provincial Reconstruction Teams: How Do We Know They Work?" Strategic Studies Institute. P. VIII.

COSTS OF ADDITIONAL TROOPS

51. Senator KIRK. Secretary Gates, as Secretary of Defense, how do you plan to pay for a continuing war in Afghanistan with 30,000 more U.S. troops? Do you anticipate a supplemental spending bill? Will there be bridge funding?

Secretary GATES. I will work with the OMB on how best to address the funding. I anticipate requesting a supplemental appropriation for fiscal year 2010. Our fiscal year 2011 Overseas Contingency Operations budget request will cover all approved operations.

52. Senator KIRK. Secretary Gates, with this many more troops going in, what will the budget for fiscal year 2011 look like?

Secretary GATES. We are in the final stages of developing the fiscal year 2011 budget request. Once the President approves the request, I will be able to discuss the details.

53. Senator KIRK. Secretary Gates, how much more do we plan to spend in Afghanistan going forward until the Afghan Government is ready to assume responsibility for its security and development?

Secretary GATES. The amount we plan to spend will depend on how much longer we need to be in Afghanistan, the number of forces required to accomplish the mission, and how much training and equipment the ANSF requires to assume the lead for security responsibility. All considerations are subject to conditions on the ground and how quickly we progress towards our goals.

There are numerous considerations to take into account when trying to estimate how much we plan to spend in Afghanistan before the Afghan Government is ready to assume responsibility for security and development. While I cannot address development costs, military cost considerations for sustaining Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), the U.S. commitment to the ISAF, and contributing to the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM–A) include:

- Troop subsistence; special pay; supplies; fuel; ammunition; and transportation for troops, vehicles, tanks, helicopters and other equipment.
- Repair or replacement of equipment that has been destroyed, damaged, or worn out during operations.
- Funds for training and equipping Afghan military and police units, as well as funds to help the Government of Pakistan build a counterinsurgency capability that will support U.S. military efforts in Afghanistan.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL EFFORTS

54. Senator KIRK. Secretary Gates and Secretary Clinton, as part of the national security team, I believe you were asked earlier this year by the President to identify and evaluate regional and local Afghan leaders who might support a political solution. New efforts are now reported in Afghanistan's eastern region to get the Taliban to sit down and talk. What do you see as the prospects for these regional and local efforts?

Secretary GATES. Reintegration of those insurgents and their leaders who want to renounce violence and join mainstream Afghan society is an important effort, which must be led by the GIRoA and be community-focused. Our civil-military team is actively working alongside GIRoA to develop their reintegration program. Part of the reintegration program includes utilizing local leaders to vouch for the reliability of those who are willing to leave the insurgency.

To assist the GIRoA in assimilating these insurgents, USFOR–A is working with the ISAF to develop support to a GIRoA reintegration program in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010. Job training, education, and relocation assistance stand out as potential opportunities for support.

Finally, security is also essential. To attract insurgents to an Afghan-led reintegration program, ISAF will partner with ANSF and community leaders to provide sufficient security and prevent retribution.

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

55. Senator KIRK. Secretary Gates and Secretary Clinton, what more can we and our NATO allies do to strengthen these prospects going forward?

Secretary GATES. Afghanistan's international partners have demonstrated their strong commitment to our common goal in Afghanistan. As the U.S. Government has increased its troop levels, so have our partners in the ISAF. As a result of recent NATO and non-NATO pledges to commit approximately 7,000 forces, inter-

national assistance will reach 50,000 forces. Furthermore, several allies and partners, led by Japan, have made major financial contributions to programs to help the Afghan military and economy.

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

ROLE OF NEW TROOPS AND ALLIED SUPPORT

56. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, you have described our mission in Afghanistan as "hand in glove." What do you mean by that?

Admiral MULLEN. Achieving our objectives in Afghanistan requires more than military might. Our strategy includes civil and military efforts that work together to achieve success in the region. The duration of our military presence is not open-ended—nor does it need to be. However, our civilian commitment must continue, even as our troops begin eventually to come home. Our counterinsurgency approach focuses on measurable security progress and protecting the Afghan population. Supporting the establishment of responsible security elements and government at the sub-national level is an important example of integrating civil and military efforts. For example, our support for Afghan reintegration policies and anti-corruption efforts demonstrate the importance of coordinated civil-military action that will greatly contribute to our progress. Similarly, through the U.S. Government Integrated Civilian-Military Campaign Plan For Support to Afghanistan, military components work closely with international and Afghan governments and NGOs to ensure military plans and operations account for the contributions of civilian agencies. Civilian expertise is needed from the very beginning to shape governance conditions and help build Afghan capacity.

57. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, you seem to envision our troops in Afghanistan playing some role in development. What is that role specifically?

Admiral MULLEN. DOS and USAID are the lead for development for the U.S. Government. By working with U.S. Government civilians, our forces play a significant supporting role in helping the Government of Afghanistan provide public services within key areas of Afghanistan.

Traditionally, U.S. and combined operations secure the populace, providing access for government development specialists. Having secured the area, commanders work with other U.S. Government agencies, the GIRoA, and international NGOs to identify and coordinate projects that will provide both immediate benefit and lasting effects.

In a more recent development, U.S. forces have been able to contribute to stability through the National Guard's Agri-business Development Teams (ADTs). These teams, comprised of Army National Guard members and USDA and USAID civilians, provide technical assistance to Afghan farmers in Afghanistan. In addition to aiding farmers, ADTs advise Afghan officials assigned to the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock on how to best assist the population—a short-term investment in building the long-term confidence Afghans must have in their government. ADT efforts are coordinated with U.S. development and security programs. Recently, the U.S. Embassy hosted an agricultural aid conference to share information and organize efforts.

58. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, what do you see as the difference in mission for the 68,000 already deployed and the 30,000 more that will be deploying? Will these new troops have a greater focus on development?

Admiral MULLEN. The additional 30,000 U.S. forces will include three maneuver brigade combat teams to perform comprehensive operations, a training brigade, and required associated enablers. The additional forces that will arrive in 2010 will expand upon the gains made by the existing and additional forces added in 2009, and collectively will allow us to more effectively execute our new strategy. Their presence will accelerate the growth and development of ANSF through direct training by ISAF training forces and comprehensive partnering with both existing and additional counterinsurgent maneuver brigades. In addition, these forces will serve as a bridging force to provide the space and time to support improvements to governance, the capacity of the Afghan Government, and to grow the ANSF.

I fully support the expansion of civilian efforts in Afghanistan as part of an all-of-government approach. Enabling economic development will offer the Afghan people the ability to sustain security gains and is among the key efforts of our fully-integrated civil-military plan. Additional forces, together with the existing 68,000

U.S. forces and our allies and partners, will work hand-in-hand with civilian partners to achieve the President's objectives and our long-term core goal.

59. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, where do NATO troops fit into this mission as we send additional troops to Afghanistan?

Admiral MULLEN. NATO troops continue to play an integral role in our strategy in Afghanistan and their additional troop offerings provide increased flexibility and coverage across a range of missions. They are lead nation for Regional Command (RC)-North (Germany), RC-West (Italy), RC-South (UK), and RC-Capital (Turkey). Additionally, they provide Operational Mentor Liaison Teams (OMLTs) that mentor, train, and now partner with the ANA and Police Operational Mentor Liaison Teams (POMLTs) that mentor, train, and partner with the ANP.

60. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, what commitment do we have from NATO today, December 2, 2009, to also send more troops and resources to the region? Will we have help militarily, financially, or both?

Admiral MULLEN. As of December 2, 2009, there was discussion and political commitment of 5,000 additional forces from international partners. After the December 4, 2009, NATO Foreign Ministerial and the December 7, 2009, ISAF Force Generation Conference, NATO and non-NATO Troop Contributing Nations pledged 6,800 forces, which was more than we originally expected. Additional commitments are also possible. Several shortages in capabilities remain, including the need for additional trainers, OMLTS, and POMLTs. There are a number of nations that the United States may have to assist militarily and/or financially, within the existing budgeted resources and authorities. Some of these nations have provided combat forces without caveats, offsetting the need to use U.S. forces.

61. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, you have also indicated that our troops are not yet at their "tipping point." Do you think this increase in troops will keep our military forces from tipping at all?

Admiral MULLEN. Our men and women in uniform and their families continue to bear a significant burden. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and I, along with the Secretary of Defense, closely monitor the health of the force and are taking active measures to address and mitigate risks.

The deployment of 30,000 additional forces to Afghanistan comes alongside a parallel drawdown of forces which will reduce forces in Iraq from about 115,000 to 50,000 by August 2010. The Iraq drawdown remains on track and on schedule.

The Army's overall operational tempo will reduce slightly in the coming year, although reaching the desired long-term ratio of dwell time to boots-on-ground time of 2-to-1 will come a bit more slowly than originally planned. Current Army assessments indicate that at least 70 percent of our Active component forces will be able to achieve the 2-to-1 ratio in 2011. We will continue to make significant progress toward dwell-time goals in the Marine Corps. Across the force, we are closely managing the deployment of small-unit enablers, who often operate at a 1-to-1 ratio.

Meanwhile, the Services continue their efforts to care for servicemembers and their families. These efforts include a vast array of initiatives that will continue to address servicemembers' mental and emotional health, quality of life, predictability in their assignments and deployments, and recruiting and retention.

62. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, will deployment lengths or dwell times change as a result of sending more troops to Afghanistan?

Admiral MULLEN. The Services do not anticipate any increase to deployment lengths and dwell times will remain above Service redlines as a result of sending additional troops to Afghanistan.

The Army has already programmed growth in capabilities needed to support ongoing operations which will lead to improved dwell ratios in both Active and Reserve components.

The Marine Corps deployment lengths will not change as a result of the addition to the force in Afghanistan.

The Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard reported that the troop increase will have no significant overarching effect on deployment lengths and dwell time.

63. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, how heavily will we rely on our National Guard and Reserves for this troop increase in Afghanistan?

Admiral MULLEN. The Services will continue to rely on the National Guard and the Reserves as a part of the total force in support of OEF.

Commander, U.S. CENTCOM has not yet completely defined his requirement for optimal use of the 30,000 authorization; therefore, the ultimate composition of Active and Reserve component forces cannot yet be determined.

For the Army, of the approximately 13,000 soldiers currently scheduled for deployments associated with the Afghanistan reinforcement, only approximately 1,000 of them are Reserve component members.

The Marine Corps will continue to rely on its Reserve component through a rotation of forces while continuing to meet its deployment-to-dwell policy of 1:4.

64. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, please describe the training mission. How dangerous will embedding additional trainers and an increased force presence in the region be for our troops and allies?

Admiral MULLEN. Our new approach toward training ANSF includes tighter, restructured training programs to deliver more counterinsurgency-capable units. ANA and ANP elements upon completion of a formal program of instruction will have the capability of conducting hold operations with some capability to clear while closely partnered with coalition forces.

However, the ANSF training mission extends beyond the initial program of instruction at the training center. Coalition advisory teams will join ANSF units before entering training and remain with ANSF units through training and beyond as they are fielded. ISAF maneuver units are partnering with ANSF elements to provide mentoring and valuable on-the-job training, as well as enabler support while Afghan enabler capabilities are subsequently developed.

Advisory teams are indeed largely provided by coalition allies. We expect that ANSF units and their mentors, not unlike the coalition maneuver units with which they are partnered, will face an increased threat in the initial months of the deployment of additional forces as the insurgency's momentum is reversed. ISAF training, advising, mentoring, and partnering will prove critical to mitigate risks as rapidly expanded ANSF growth and fielding occurs and ANSF capabilities develop.

CIVILIAN EFFORT AND COLLABORATION

65. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, we owe an immense debt to the troops serving in Afghanistan today. It is now time to strengthen their mission of training local army and police forces in preparation for the gradual reduction and ultimate disengagement of U.S. forces, so that our civilian personnel can help build responsive governance infrastructures at the provincial level. When will that happen and how would DOD support this?

Admiral MULLEN. The ANSF is continuously developing the capacity that will ultimately allow them to take responsibility for their nation's security. In some cases, ANSF units are already doing this. In all cases this will be executed responsibly, taking into account conditions on the ground which will differ from region to region.

As U.S. forces are able to begin our military transition, international forces will continue to partner with and support the ANSF for some time. In addition, a significant civilian commitment will remain in Afghanistan during the progressive military drawdown and long after our troops depart in order to support Afghan programs and policies for political-economic development.

However, our civilian commitment must continue, even as our troops begin eventually to come home. Our counterinsurgency approach focuses on measurable security progress and protecting the Afghan population. Supporting the establishment of responsible security elements and government at the subnational level is an important example of integrating civil and military efforts. For example, our support for Afghan reconciliation and reintegration policies and anti-corruption efforts demonstrates the importance of coordinated civil-military action that will greatly contribute to our progress. Similarly, through the "U.S. Government Integrated Civilian-Military Campaign Plan For Support to Afghanistan," military components work closely with international and Afghan governments and NGOs to ensure military plans and operations account for the contributions of civilian agencies. Our forces understand that security operations can provide a basis for stability, but civilian expertise is needed to provide mid- and long-term political-economic development.

66. Senator KIRK. Admiral Mullen, will there be a concentrated civilian effort with this surge?

Admiral MULLEN. DOD strongly supports civilian increases in Afghanistan as a critical element of our strategy and as an essential element of improving civil-military integration. We have already seen significant improvements with initial civilian increases in 2009 and the establishment of a U.S. Government senior civilian struc-

ture, whereby a U.S. Government civilian counterpart is established at each level of the military chain of command to coordinate civilian efforts. We are aware that military force increases put a further strain on scarce civilian expertise. DOS will work with our military commanders to identify civilian requirements. I refer you to DOS for further details.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JEFF SESSIONS

AIR FORCE AERIAL REFUELING TANKER

67. Senator SESSIONS. Secretary Gates, General Duncan McNabb, the Commander of U.S. Transportation Command, testified before the House Armed Services Committee on March 17, 2009, to the following: "The KC–X will be a game changer. Its value as a tanker will be tremendous. Its value as a multi-role platform to the mobility enterprise will be incomparable. It will do for the whole mobility world what the C–17 did for theater and strategic airlift. It will be an ultimate mobility force multiplier."

The logistical challenges that a landlocked country such as Afghanistan poses during a prolonged conflict such as OEF are undeniable. The military leader assigned the task of addressing those challenges recognizes the game changing value of a multi-role platform.

With this information in mind, why would you not afford a certain amount of extra value on cargo capability in the assessment of a future tanker proposal in the upcoming competition?

Secretary GATES. The Department has valued extra KC–X cargo capability in the draft Request for Proposal (RFP). For example, to meet the KC–X mandatory self-deployment requirement, the KC–X must be able to carry at least 14 cargo pallets. This exceeds the KC–135's capability of only six cargo pallets. In addition, the number of mandatory airlift requirements has increased from 6 in the last competition to 42 in the current draft RFP.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR SAXBY CHAMBLISS

REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL FORCES

68. Senator CHAMBLISS. Admiral Mullen, please provide details on all requests for U.S. Forces from U.S. commanders for Afghanistan between January 2002 through January 2009, including the number and type of forces requested, whether or not the request for forces were met, when it was met, and, if the request was declined, why it was not met. Please provide an unclassified response, and, if necessary, only classify those portions of the response considered to be classified.

Admiral Mullen did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAVID VITTER

NATION BUILDING

69. Senator VITTER. Secretary Clinton, there is much talk of building capacity or fostering economic development in Afghanistan, though the administration has insisted that our efforts in Afghanistan do not constitute nation-building. Can you explain the difference between nation-building and what the President plans to do in Afghanistan?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

ALLIES AND THE REGION

70. Senator VITTER. Secretary Clinton, how have our key allies, including Canada, Britain, Germany, France, and other European allies, responded to the President's proposal?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

71. Senator VITTER. Secretary Clinton, do you expect our key allies to fully cooperate with the President's request for additional coalition forces?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

72. Senator VITTER. Secretary Clinton, is Pakistan fully prepared to cooperate with the President's latest plan, including providing full support and staging for intelligence gathering and airstrikes?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

73. Senator VITTER. Secretary Clinton, to what extent do you believe that the stability of Pakistan is linked to the stability of Afghanistan?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

74. Senator VITTER. Secretary Clinton, does the Pakistani Government share the view that the stability of Pakistan is linked to the stability of Afghanistan?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

ILLEGAL DRUG TRADE

75. Senator VITTER. Secretary Clinton, it is widely acknowledged that insurgents in Afghanistan profit directly from the narcotics trade, to the tune of hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars per year. Can you discuss what efforts are being undertaken to stem the illegal drug trade and what successes, if any, have been achieved?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

76. Senator VITTER. Secretary Clinton, what is the status of agribusiness development efforts aimed at encouraging farmers to produce legitimate crops rather than narcotics?

Secretary Clinton did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

NEW STRATEGY, TIMELINE, AND BENCHMARKS

77. Senator VITTER. Secretary Gates, on March 27, 2009, President Obama announced a "comprehensive, new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan" that included 21,000 new troops. Is the December 1, 2009, announcement an indication that the previous comprehensive strategy was insufficient and, if so, what new facts caused the President to realize this?

Secretary GATES. The President made clear in March 2009 that it was important to regularly reassess our progress in Afghanistan to ensure that we had the right strategy, the appropriate mission, and the necessary resources. In the 6 months after the strategy was announced in March 2009, several important factors changed, resulting in the appointment of new U.S. leaders to Afghanistan. As General McChrystal reported in his September assessment, the situation in Afghanistan was more serious than we had believed and the Taliban had gained the initiative in many areas. In addition, the Afghan election process highlighted serious corruption within the Afghan Government and illustrated the necessity for effective governance in Afghanistan. In Pakistan, the situation had also changed as Pakistanis took the fight to the extremists that threatened their state.

The strategic review completed on 1 December 2009 was a deliberate process to check alignment of goals, methods for attaining those goals, and resources required. This led to a more focused approach to achieving a clear set of concrete operational objectives in Afghanistan. Our refined strategy calls for a more rapid deployment of additional U.S. and international forces to reverse the Taliban's momentum and accelerate ANSF growth. Most important, the President's 1 December speech reaffirmed the March 2009 core goal: to disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat al Qaeda and to prevent their return to either Afghanistan or Pakistan.

78. Senator VITTER. Admiral Mullen, reports have indicated that General McChrystal's assessment requested up to 80,000 additional troops in Afghanistan. How did the President arrive at the troop figure he announced on December 1, 2009?

Admiral MULLEN. The strategic review was a deliberate and disciplined three-stage process to check alignment of goals, methods for attaining those goals, and resources required. The President focused on asking the hard questions and took the time to carefully consider all of the options before agreeing to send any additional U.S. forces to war. General McChrystal's assessment was certainly a key input into the process, as were consultations with our NATO allies, ISAF partners, and regional stakeholders.

A number of issues were explored in depth: national interests, core objectives and goals, counterterrorism priorities, safe havens for terrorist groups in Pakistan, the health of the global U.S. military force, risks and costs associated with troop deployments, global deployment requirements, international cooperation and commitments for both Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Afghan capacity in all areas to include Afghan security forces, central and sub-national governance and corruption (including the narcotics trade), and development and economic issues.

After considering all of these issues, the president announced the deployment of 30,000 additional U.S. forces on an accelerated timeline. In addition, our allies and partners have added some 7,000 additional U.S. forces through the NATO/ISAF Force Generation Process. Additional international commitments are possible.

79. Senator VITTER. Admiral Mullen, do you believe that we can achieve victory in Afghanistan with fewer troops than General McChrystal said would be needed for maximum success?

Admiral MULLEN. I am confident that the President's decision to deploy 30,000 additional U.S. forces, along with at least approximately 7,000 additional forces from our allies—all of which will arrive on an accelerated timeline in 2010—will give the commander on the ground the tools necessary to achieve the President's focused objectives.

80. Senator VITTER. Secretary Gates, do you believe that a timetable for withdrawal is consistent with a commitment to victory in Afghanistan?

Secretary GATES. The President did not pick the summer of 2011 date arbitrarily. During the strategy review, we looked closely at the current and projected capacity of the ANSF in some parts of the country. Based on that analysis, we reached the conclusion that July 2011 is a realistic date for us to plan to begin transferring responsibility for security to the ANSF in some parts of the country. At the same time, we will assess conditions as we move forward. Based on those assessments, the President will determine the scope and pace of a gradual and responsible drawing down of U.S. combat forces.

This is an issue of balance. We need to show both our partners and our adversaries in the region that we mean business: we will deploy the forces and the civilian resources that we believe are necessary to accomplish our strategic goals, and retain the tactical flexibility to adapt if circumstances require. At the same time, we have to send a clear message to the Afghan Government that the U.S. military is not going to be there forever. We are not an occupation force. Afghans must take primary responsibility for defending their own country—and prepare to do so with a sense of purpose and urgency.

81. Senator VITTER. Secretary Gates, do you believe that the United States can afford to accept anything less than full achievement of its objectives in Afghanistan?

Secretary GATES. The goal of the United States in Afghanistan and Pakistan is to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda and to prevent its return to both countries. The international military effort to stabilize Afghanistan is necessary to achieve this overarching goal. Defeating al Qaeda and enhancing Afghan security are mutually reinforcing missions. They cannot be untethered from one another, as much as we might wish that to be the case.

The Taliban and al Qaeda have become symbiotic, each benefiting from the success and mythology of the other. Taliban success in retaking and holding parts of Afghanistan against the combined forces of multiple, modern armies—the current direction of events—has dramatically strengthened the extremist mythology and popular perceptions of who is winning and who is losing. The lesson of the Taliban's revival for al Qaeda is that time and will are on their side. With a western defeat, they could regain their strength and achieve a major strategic victory—as long as their senior leadership lives and can continue to inspire and attract followers and funding. Rolling back the Taliban is now necessary, even if not sufficient, to the ultimate defeat of al Qaeda.

Failure in Afghanistan would mean a Taliban takeover of much, if not most, of the country and likely renewed civil war. Taliban-ruled areas could in short order

become, once again, a sanctuary for al Qaeda as well as a staging area for resurgent militant groups on the offensive in Pakistan.

What makes the border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan uniquely different from any other location is that this part of the world represents the epicenter of extremist jihadism: the historic place where native and foreign Muslims defeated one superpower and, in their view, caused its collapse at home. For them to be seen to defeat the sole remaining superpower in the same place would have severe consequences for the United States and the world.

A stable security situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan is vital to our national security. Success will require patience, perseverance, and sacrifice by the United States and our allies.

82. Senator VITTER. Secretary Gates, you have indicated that the timetable in Afghanistan is not a fixed deadline for withdrawal. Can you explain why the summer of 2011 was selected as the target date for beginning troop withdrawals?

Secretary GATES. As previously stated in my response to Question 80, the President did not pick the summer of 2011 date arbitrarily. During the strategy review, we looked closely at the current and projected capacity of the ANSF in some parts of the country. Based on that analysis, we reached the conclusion that July 2011 is a realistic date for us to plan to begin transferring responsibility for security to the ANSF in some parts of the country. At the same time, we will assess conditions as we move forward. Based on those assessments, the President will determine the scope and pace of a gradual and responsible draw down of U.S. combat forces.

This is an issue of balance. We need to show both our partners and our adversaries in the region that we mean business: we will deploy the forces and the civilian resources that we believe are necessary to accomplish our strategic goals, and retain the tactical flexibility to adapt if circumstances require. At the same time, we have to send a clear message to the Afghan Government that the U.S. military is not going to be there forever. We are not an occupation force. Afghans must take primary responsibility for defending their own country—and prepare to do so with a sense of purpose and urgency.

83. Senator VITTER. Secretary Gates, under what circumstances could the summer of 2011 timetable be adjusted?

Secretary GATES. As previously stated in my responses to Questions 80 and 82, the President did not pick the summer of 2011 date arbitrarily. During the strategy review, we looked closely at the current and projected capacity of the ANSF in some parts of the country. Based on that analysis, we reached the conclusion that July 2011 is a realistic date for us to plan to begin transferring responsibility for security to the ANSF in some parts of the country. At the same time, we will assess conditions as we move forward. Based on those assessments, the President will determine the scope and pace of a gradual and responsible draw down of U.S. combat forces.

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84. Senator VITTER. Admiral Mullen, what are the minimum benchmark conditions that would allow the United States to confidently begin withdrawing troops from Afghanistan with a minimal risk of a failed state or civil war?

Admiral MULLEN. DOD is currently working with our interagency partners to refine the benchmarks that we will use to measure progress in light of the President's new strategy. However, broadly speaking, success in Afghanistan will emerge as the ANSF develops the capacity to provide security for the nation and effective governance and development take root. As this happens, the United States will continue to provide overwatch, eventually withdrawing our troops to the point where we have a minimal presence. The pace and locations at which this process will take place will depend on several factors, the two most important of which are the performance of the Afghan Government at all levels and the development of the Afghan security forces. We will not transfer responsibility to the Afghans until the Afghans have the capacity to manage the security situation on their own.

[Whereupon, at 12:46 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

CONTINUE TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON AFGHANISTAN

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2009

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:35 p.m. in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Bayh, Webb, McCaskill, Udall, Hagan, Begich, Burris, Kirk, McCain, Inhofe, Sessions, Chambliss, Graham, Thune, Wicker, LeMieux, Vitter, and Collins.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; Christine E. Cowart, chief clerk; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Howard H. Hoege III, counsel; Jessica L. Kingston, research assistant; William G.P. Monahan, counsel; and Michael J. Noblet, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Joseph W. Bowab, Republican staff director; Adam J. Barker, professional staff member; Lucian L. Niemeyer, professional staff member; Diana G. Tabler, professional staff member; and Dana W. White, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Paul J. Hubbard, Jennifer R. Knowles, Christine G. Lang, and Brian F. Sebold.

Committee members' assistants present: James Tuite, assistant to Senator Byrd; Vance Serchuk, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Carolyn A. Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Nick Ikeda, assistant to Senator Akaka; Christopher Caple and Greta Lundeberg, assistants to Senator Bill Nelson; Ann Premer, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Patrick Hayes, assistant to Senator Bayh; Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Jennifer Barrett, assistant to Senator Udall; Roger Pena, assistant to Senator Hagan; Lindsay Kavanaugh, assistant to Senator Begich; Nathan Davern, assistant to Senator Burris; Bethany Bassett, assistant to Senator Kirk; Brandon Andrews, Anthony J. Lazarski, Mark Powers, and Jared Young, assistants to Senator Inhofe; Lenwood Landrum and Sandra Luff, assistants to Senator Sessions; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Adam G. Brake, assistant to Senator Graham; Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune; Erskine W. Wells III, assistant to Senator Wicker; Brian Walsh, assistant to Senator LeMieux; Kevin Kane, assistant to Senator Burr; and Rob Epplin and Chip Kennett, assistants to Senator Collins.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome. Today the committee hears from Karl Eikenberry, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, and General Stanley A. McChrystal, Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) International Strategic Assistance Force (ISAF). Let me begin by thanking you both on behalf of the committee for your repeated and continuing service to our country. Thanks to your families for their continued support of the task that you've accepted, and please also convey our thanks to the troops and the civilians that you lead and their families for their extraordinary service.

General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry, you're charged with executing a civilian-military plan of action to implement the strategy that the President announced last week. The President's plan emphasizes protecting the Afghan people consistent with the recommendations in General McChrystal's assessment, and includes military and civilian actions with the goal, according to Secretary Gates, to clear, hold, build, and transfer security responsibility to the Afghans.

Key elements of the President's plan for going forward in Afghanistan include: First, training, equipping, and partnering with the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to empower them to provide for Afghan security.

Second, the President has called for rapidly deploying an additional 30,000 U.S. soldiers and marines over the coming months, likely to be joined by at least 7,000 additional soldiers from NATO and other allies participating in the Afghanistan mission.

Third, the President has directed that a reduction of U.S. forces will begin in July 2011, with the pace and location of troop reductions to be determined by conditions on the ground.

Our Achilles heel in Afghanistan, in the words of one Marine company commander, is not a shortage of U.S. troops; it's a shortage of Afghan troops. To succeed in Afghanistan, it is important that we have adequate Afghan partners in combat operations and that after a town or village is cleared of the Taliban the security forces left to maintain order are Afghan forces.

In the key province of Helmand, the ratio of U.S. troops to Afghan troops is about five U.S. troops to one Afghan soldier. The desired ratio should be much different, one Afghan company to one U.S. company at the beginning of partnering, leading to three Afghan companies for every one U.S. company as training of Afghan troops progresses.

Currently, the 10,000 U.S. marines in Helmand Province have approximately 1,500 Afghan soldiers and 700 Afghan police, just over 2,000 combined Afghan strategic forces, with whom to partner. Doubling the number of U.S. troops in the south without a much larger increase in available Afghan troops will only worsen a ratio under which our forces are already matched up with fewer Afghan troops than they can and should partner with.

The limited availability of Afghan forces to partner with raises a troubling question: Why aren't there more Afghan forces in the fight? By most accounts, Afghan soldiers are good fighters, are motivated, and are well respected by the Afghan people. Yet there were recent news reports that the Afghan Army soldiers in

Helmand were declining to go on some missions because they said they were not there to fight, but to rest. Last week Secretary Clinton was reported as saying: "We have to bring the Afghan security forces into the fight."

According to the latest numbers from the Combined Security Transition Command in Afghanistan, there are currently some 95,000 Afghan soldiers trained. Of this force, there are 80 combat battalions. About half of those are listed as capable of independent operations or of leading operations with coalition support. But last week the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mullen, said in an interview that there are very few Afghan soldiers that are in the lead.

I hope our witnesses this afternoon can give us the ground truth as to how many Afghan soldiers and police are present for duty and are now partnered with U.S. combat troops in the fight and how many Afghan units are in the lead in combat operations anywhere.

In addition to the ANSF, there is a community defense initiative, which appears to be an Afghan version of the Sons of Iraq. I hope our witnesses will describe this initiative and discuss its strengths and weaknesses.

I understand that the President has directed his military commanders not to begin clearing an area unless our troops will be able to turn that area over to Afghan security forces. What our witnesses could clarify is at what point in the "clear, hold, build, and transfer" process the Afghan forces will take over responsibility for an area's security. Is the plan that we hold? Do the Afghans hold? Do we hold together?

As Marine Corps Commandant General Conway recently pointed out, "It isn't nearly as effective to have U.S. marines standing on street corners in Afghan villages as it is to have an Afghan policeman or a soldier." I agree, U.S. troops should not be left for months holding street corners in villages recently cleared of the Taliban, waiting for Afghan security forces to take over that mission.

Increasing the number of U.S. forces acting without sufficient Afghan partners will feed Taliban propaganda that portrays U.S. forces in Afghanistan as occupiers, and could lead to greater, instead of lesser, Afghan dependency upon us.

The President's strategy also makes clear that our commitment to the future of Afghanistan requires action on the part of the Government of Afghanistan to fight corruption, deliver services, institute policies for reintegration of local Taliban fighters, and address other urgent problems. President Karzai has pledged to do these things and President Obama rightly insists on holding him to that pledge.

Setting the July 2011 date to begin reductions of our forces is a reasonable way to impart to the Government of Afghanistan a sense of focus and urgency, something that has been lacking there up to now and is essential to success, both theirs and ours. President Karzai has acknowledged the value of the July 2011 date, saying that "It's good that we are facing a deadline" and that the Afghan people "must begin to stand on our own feet." I'd like to hear from our witnesses whether they support and agree with the President's decision to establish a July 2011 date to begin a U.S. troop reduction.

Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry for joining us today. I want to thank you both for your many years of distinguished service to our country and I want to express my deep gratitude to the Americans you lead, both our civilians and our men and women in uniform, as well as their families, who are serving and sacrificing at this moment.

I want to reiterate up front that I support the President's policy for Afghanistan. I think he made the right decision, really a brave decision, against the objections of many in his own party, to reject half measures, to affirm a counterinsurgency strategy and to resource it properly. I think this policy can succeed and I think it deserves robust public support, both from Republicans and Democrats alike.

My main concern is the decision to begin withdrawing our forces in 2011 regardless of conditions on the ground. We discussed this issue a lot last week and I appreciate the efforts of Secretaries Clinton and Gates and Admiral Mullen to try to clarify the meaning of this decision. I understand that this date marks the beginning of a process and that the pace of our drawdown will be condition-based. Still, the fundamental problem remains: We've announced a date, divorced from conditions on the ground, when we will start to withdraw our troops.

It doesn't matter whether we call it a cliff or a ramp or anything else. It's still an exit sign, and it sends the wrong signal to our friends and our enemies. On this issue, the administration and I will just have to agree to disagree.

It matters immensely what signals we send. That's why I was very pleased to see Secretary Gates is in Kabul today and that the message he delivered was: "We are in this thing to win." I couldn't agree more, and we can win.

With this counterinsurgency strategy, plus the additional troops and resources we are committing, we can reverse the momentum of the insurgency. We can create conditions for the vast majority of insurgents to lay down their arms and reconcile with their fellow Afghans. We can train appropriate numbers of more capable and battle-tested Afghan security forces to lead the fight in time against a degraded enemy. We can isolate al Qaeda and target them more effectively, and we can create the time and space for Afghan leaders, with our support and pressure, to reform their government, to crack down on corruption, and to build a nation that will never again serve as a base for attacks against America and our allies.

That is our theory of victory. But we can only succeed if our civilian and military efforts are completely joint and integrated, beginning at the top with our distinguished witnesses today. We've all read the reports of differences between you gentlemen. I know you're both professionals and I trust that any tensions you may have had are now past and that you are now focused, as I am and as I trust the President is, on the future, on your common mission, and on succeeding.

This requires a joint civilian-military campaign plan, which we were told last week that our civilian and military leaders are now in the process of drafting. We've heard a lot about numbers, both troop levels and civilian surges. We've heard a lot about dollar amounts and various programs. We've heard a lot about goals and aspirations.

I want to hear about strategy. What is our strategy for helping the Afghans build political and economic order after we clear and hold ground? What is our strategy for supporting Afghan leaders in reforming and strengthening their government? What is our strategy for working with President Karzai in getting the best performance possible from him and his government? I hope we can gain greater clarity in this hearing today on the elements of our civil-military strategy.

We have questions, of course. But we cannot lose sight of one important fact: We now have an opportunity to build a bipartisan consensus in support of a vital national security priority: defeating al Qaeda and its violent, extremist allies in Afghanistan and Pakistan and ensuring that these countries never again serve as bases for attacks against us and our allies.

Americans need to know why winning this war is essential to our country's security. They need to know that things in Afghanistan will get worse before it gets better; that, sadly, casualties will likely rise in the year to come, but that ultimately we will succeed. Americans need to know these things, especially those brave Americans who are leading this fight.

If you take only one thing back with you to our fellow citizens in Afghanistan, let it be this: America and this Congress are fully behind them. We believe in them. We believe in their mission. We believe they can succeed. We in Congress will do all in our power to get them everything they need to win and then to return home with the honor they deserve and the thanks of a grateful Nation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.

General McChrystal, let's start with you.

STATEMENT OF GEN STANLEY A. MCCHRYSTAL, USA, COMMANDER, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE AND COMMANDER, U.S. FORCES AFGHANISTAN

General MCCHRYSTAL. Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, distinguished members of this committee: Thank you for the chance to appear before you today.

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

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

We also recognize the toll paid every day by our counterparts in the Afghan security forces and by Afghan civilians, who ultimately suffer the most from this insurgency. It is for them and for all of

us that we seek a stable Afghanistan, a defunct al Qaeda, and a secure future——[Audience interruption.]

Chairman LEVIN. You'll have to remain seated, please, and no more outbursts, please.

Thank you. You can continue.

General MCCHRYSTAL.—and a secure future in that vital region of the world.

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

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

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

The mission in Afghanistan is undeniably difficult and success will require steadfast commitment and incur significant costs. I participated fully in the President's assessment and decision-making process and was afforded multiple opportunities to provide my recommendations and best military advice, which I did. Combined with insights and policy considerations from across our government, I believe the decisions that came from that process reflect a realistic and effective approach.

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

The President's decision rapidly resources our strategy, recognizing that the next 18 months will likely be decisive and ultimately enable success. I fully support the President's decision. The President also reiterated how this decision supports our national interest. Rolling back the Taliban is a prerequisite to the ultimate defeat of al Qaeda.

The mission is not only important, it is also achievable. We can and will accomplish this mission. Let me briefly explain why I believe so. My confidence derives first from the Afghans' resolve, since it is their actions that will ultimately matter most in ending this conflict with their interests and, by extension our own.

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

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

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

I've been back in Afghanistan for 6 months now. I believe that with the President's decision and ongoing reforms I outlined in our initial assessment, our efforts are now empowered with a greater sense of clarity, capability, commitment, and confidence.

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

From that point forward, while we plan to have fewer combat forces in harm's way, we will remain partnered with the Afghan security forces in a supporting role to consolidate and solidify their gains. Results may come more quickly and we must demonstrate progress towards measurable objectives, but the sober fact is that there are no silver bullets. Ultimate success will be the cumulative effect of sustained pressure across multiple lines of operation.

Increasing our capability has been about much more than troop increases. For the past 6 months, we've been implementing organizational and operational changes that are already reflecting improvements in our effectiveness. But the additional forces announced by President Obama are significant. Forces to increase our capacity to train the ANSF and forces to partner with Afghan Army and police in expanding security zones in key areas will provide us the ability to reverse insurgent momentum and deny the Taliban the access to the population they require to survive.

The additional capability we are building translates into credibility in the minds of Afghans, who demand proof, not only that we want to protect them, but that we can. In a war of perceptions where the battlefield is the mind of an Afghan elder, the hope of an Afghan mother, the aspirations of an Afghan child, this can be decisive. Our commitment is watched intently and constantly judged by our allies and by our enemies. The commitment of 30,000 additional U.S. forces, along with additional coalition forces and growing ANSF numbers, will be a significant step toward expanding security in critical areas and in demonstrating resolve.

The commitment of all coalition nations will be buttressed by a clear understanding of how we will mitigate risks. I'll briefly mention three. The first is the Afghan Government's credibility deficit, which must be recognized by all, to include Afghan officials, as a critical area of focus and change.

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

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

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

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

In closing, my team and I would like to thank you and your colleagues for your support to the American men and women currently serving in Afghanistan and to tell you a bit about them. We risk letting numbers like 30,000 roll off our tongues without remembering that those are fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters serving far from home, selfless in their sacrifices for each of us.

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

This is not a force of rookies or dilettantes. The brigade commander in Khost is completing his fourth combat tour in Afghanistan and his experience and expertise is reflective of the force that represents you. All have felt fear and loneliness. Most have lost comrades. None have lost heart.

In their eyes, I see maturity beyond their years. In their actions, I see a commitment to succeed and a commitment to each other. I am confident that I share your pride in what these great Americans are doing for our country in Afghanistan, and it will be my privilege to accept your questions on their behalf.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of General McChrystal follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY GEN STANLEY A. MCCHRYSTAL, USA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We also face a complex and resilient insurgency. The Quetta Shura Taliban, or Afghan Taliban, is the prominent threat to the Government of Afghanistan, as they aspire to once again become the Government of Afghanistan. The Haqqani and Hezb-e Islami Gulbuddin insurgent groups have more limited geographical reach and objectives, but they are no less lethal.

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

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

I participated fully in the President's assessment and decisionmaking process and was afforded multiple opportunities to provide my recommendations and best military advice—which I did.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We can and will accomplish this mission.

Let me briefly explain why I believe so.

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

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

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

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

I've been back in Afghanistan for 6 months now. I believe that with the President's decision and ongoing reforms I outlined in our Initial Assessment, our efforts

are now empowered with a greater sense of clarity, capability, commitment, and confidence.

Let me start with clarity.

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

We also have greater clarity on the way forward.

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

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

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

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

Increasing our capability has been about much more than just troop increases. For the past 6 months we have been implementing organizational and operational changes that are already reflecting improvements in our effectiveness.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Many of our servicemembers and families have experienced and sacrificed much.

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

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

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

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

It will be my privilege to accept your questions on their behalf. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, General.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY.

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

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Chairman Levin, Ranking Member McCain, and distinguished members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to present my views on Afghanistan today, and I'd like to ask that my full statement be submitted for the record.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. It will be.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Last week in his speech at West Point, President Obama presented the administration's strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. His decision came after an intensive, deliberative, far-reaching review. I'm honored to have been part of that.

I believe that the course that the President has outlined offers our best path to stabilize Afghanistan and to ensure that al Qaeda cannot regain a foothold to plan new attacks against us. I can say without equivocation that I fully support this approach.

I consider myself privileged to serve as the U.S. Ambassador and to represent an amazing team of diplomats, developmental specialists, and civilian experts who form the most capable and dedicated United States embassy anywhere in the world today, and I'm extraordinarily proud of them.

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

Mr. Chairman, the United States is at a critical juncture in our involvement in Afghanistan. On December 1, the President ordered 35,000 additional troops to deploy to Afghanistan on an accelerated timetable, with the goal of breaking the insurgency's momentum, hastening and improving the training of the ANSF, and establishing security in key parts of the country. On the civilian side, we aim to increase employment and provide essential services in areas of greatest insecurity, and to improve the critical ministries in the economy at the national level. These steps, taken together, I believe will help to remove insurgents from the battlefield and build support for the Afghan Government.

As the President said, we will be clear about what to expect from those who receive our assistance. After a difficult election, the Afghan Government does show signs of recognizing the need to deliver better governance and security. We await urgent concrete steps in a number of areas.

I would also like to briefly discuss the three main pillars of our efforts in Afghanistan: security, governance, and development. General McChrystal has already addressed our plans for improving security and building the ANSF. Since assuming my post, I've made a special point of getting outside of Kabul to see conditions firsthand, and I fully concur with General McChrystal's assessment that the security situation remains serious. Sending additional U.S. and other NATO ISAF forces to Afghanistan is critical to regaining the initiative and I'm confident that as these troops arrive, the situation will stabilize and turn in our favor. Additional troops will also permit us to expand our work with the Afghan Army and the Afghan police so that they may take a larger role in providing for the security of their own people.

As President Obama said, "The transition to Afghan responsibility will begin in the summer of 2011, when we expect Afghan security forces to begin assuming lead responsibility for defending their country."

Moving on from security, the second pillar of our comprehensive strategy focuses on governance. At the national and the sub-national levels, our overarching goal is to encourage improved governance so Afghans may benefit, see the benefits of supporting a legitimate government and the insurgency in turn loses its support.

As General McChrystal has pointed out, one of the major impediments our strategy faces today is the Government of Afghanistan's lack of credibility with its own people. To strengthen its legitimacy, our approach at the national level is on improving key ministries by increasing the number of civilian technical advisers and by providing more developmental assistance directly through these ministries' budgets. By focusing on ministries that deliver essential services and security, we can accelerate the building of an Afghan Government that is sufficiently visible, effective, and accountable.

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

Underpinning all of these efforts is the need to combat corruption and promote the rule of law. With our assistance, the Afghan Government is steadily building law enforcement institutions to fight corruption, organized crime, and drug trafficking. In his inaugural address, President Karzai stated his intention to make merit-based appointments in his new cabinet and to implement an anti-corruption strategy. We're encouraged by his statements.

Cultivation of poppy and trafficking in opium also continue to have a debilitating effect on Afghan society. Our strategy is multi-pronged, involving demand reduction, efforts by law enforcement agencies and the military to detain traffickers and interdict drug shipments, and support for licit agricultural development.

The narcotics problem will, of course, never have a solution without economic development. This leads to the third pillar of our effort, which is development. In recent months we've adjusted our approach to focus on building key elements of Afghanistan's private sector economy, increasing our emphasis on agriculture, enhancing government revenue collection, and improving the coordination of assistance within the U.S. Government and the international community. These steps were taken to produce improvements in the lives of ordinary Afghans and to contribute directly to more effective government and lessen support for the insurgency.

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

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

In closing, I need to mention two important risks we face in carrying out our strategy, and I know that General McChrystal shares these. The first is that, in spite of everything we do, Afghanistan may struggle to take over the essential tasks of governance and security on a timely basis; and the second is in our partnership with Pakistan. The efforts we're undertaking in Afghanistan are likely to fall short of our strategic goals unless there's more progress at eliminating the sanctuaries used by the Afghan Taliban and their associates in Pakistan.

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

Achieving our goals for Afghanistan will not be easy, but I'm optimistic that we can succeed with the support of Congress. Our mission was underresourced for years, but it's now one of our government's highest priorities, with substantial development funds and hundreds more civilians.

We will soon have increased our civilian presence in Kabul over threefold and in the field over sixfold, and this is just over the past year. We will, of course, need more.

U.S. foreign assistance is also comparatively small, but an essential fraction of the total amount spent in Afghanistan over the last 8 years. Additional resources will be necessary and we look forward to sharing more details of our anticipated needs with Congress in the coming days and weeks.

Mr. Chairman, Afghanistan represents a daunting challenge, and success is not guaranteed, but it is possible. With the additional troops and other resources provided by the President and with the

help of Congress, we will work tirelessly to ensure al Qaeda never again finds refuge in Afghanistan and threatens our country and our Homeland.

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

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Eikenberry follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR KARL EIKENBERRY

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Levin, Ranking Member McCain, and distinguished members of the committee,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

No way forward is without risk. Eight years after the terrorist attacks of September 11 and the removal of the Taliban from power, Afghanistan remains a disconnected society, divided by factionalism, plagued by corruption and illegal narcotics, and challenged by insecurity. These problems are in large measure the product of nearly three decades of war, which broke down the fabric of Afghanistan's centuries-old society and contributed to deep poverty, illiteracy, drug addiction, and unemployment. This has been compounded in recent years by a growing disillusionment among Afghans, both with their own government and with the uneven results of the assistance delivered by the international community. The United States must approach the daunting complexities of Afghanistan with an awareness of our limitations. Our forces and our civilians are trying to help a society that simultaneously wants and rejects outside intervention. Afghans yearn for the peace and stability that has been denied them for too long. We will not fully heal their society's deep-seated problems, but we can help them along a path to normalcy and stability that is key to protecting our own vital interests. We are, simply put, helping Afghanistan build security forces and other basic institutions of government to prevent a return to the conditions that it endured before September 11, 2001.

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

I say this with conviction, because for the first time in my three tours in Afghanistan—two while in uniform and now as ambassador—all the elements of our national power are employed with the full support of the President and, increasingly, of our allies. We have made great strides over the last 6 months in improving interagency coordination and civil-military collaboration. Our military and civilian teams on the ground are the best ever fielded. More important, after a difficult election, the Afghan Government shows signs of recognizing the need to deliver better governance and security, though we await concrete steps in many areas.

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

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

SECURITY

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

Since assuming my post in May, I have made a special point of getting outside Kabul as frequently as possible to see conditions around the country first-hand and to consult with Afghans, allies, and our own civilian and military personnel. I fully concur with General McChrystal's assessment that the security situation, which worsened dramatically this past year, remains serious. The Taliban and other extremists groups exercise increasing influence in many areas of the south and east, and attacks and instability are rising in parts of the north and west as well, which long have been relatively stable. The insurgents are loosely organized, yet resilient and effective in many areas. Augmenting U.S. and NATO-ISAF forces is critical to regain the initiative. I am confident that, as the additional U.S. troops arrive in coming months, the situation will stabilize and turn in our favor. Most Afghans have little interest in a future under the Taliban's brutal and arbitrary rule, and the troops now deploying will reassure them that they have the opportunity for a secure and better future. Our troops will serve as a bridge, improving security in key areas, just as the Marine and Army units sent earlier this year are doing with great skill in Helmand and Kandahar provinces.

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

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

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

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

We should recognize that one reason Afghanistan has been slow to assume a larger role in providing for its own security is the widespread concern among the populace that it will be abandoned by the international community, as happened after the withdrawal of the Soviet Union in 1989. For more than a decade afterward, Afghanistan endured brutal civil war, anarchy and later, the repressive Taliban regime that harbored and enabled al Qaeda. The fear of once again having to fend for itself again is deeply felt in the country, which lies in a volatile region where many of its neighbors have competed to control events inside Afghan borders.

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

GOVERNANCE

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

As General McChrystal points out, one of the major impediments our strategy faces is the Afghan Government's lack of credibility with its own people. To build its legitimacy, our approach at the national level is on improving key ministries, both by increasing the number of civilian technical advisers and by providing more development assistance directly through these ministries' budgets. By focusing on key ministries that deliver essential services and security, we can accelerate the building of an Afghan Government that is visible, effective, and accountable.

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

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

With our assistance and that of our allies, the Afghan Government is steadily building law enforcement institutions to fight corruption, organized crime, and drug trafficking. With the support of the Federal Bureau of Investigations, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and our military, the Ministries of Interior and Counter Narcotics, and the Afghan National Directorate of Security recently created the Major Crimes Task Force, which is responsible for investigating major corruption, kidnapping, and organized crimes cases. Similarly, Afghanistan's Attorney General recently established a special Anti-Corruption Unit, aimed at prosecuting misconduct by mid-and high-level government officials. In addition, a specialized Anti-Corruption Tribunal is being created to handle significant corruption cases, including prosecutions involving provincial officials. Our Mission's Department of Justice team is also providing support.

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

Beyond the national level, I would like to address our efforts to promote governance at the provincial and district levels. We are working jointly with the military through our Provincial Reconstruction Teams, District Development Working Groups, and District Support Teams, which help build Afghan capacity in key areas, particularly in areas of greatest insecurity in southern and eastern Afghanistan. We are improving governance beyond Kabul through rule-of-law programs and other mechanisms that have proven effective in giving Afghans a greater stake in their government, including through the National Solidarity Program. We have expanded our support for the Afghan Social Outreach Program to create provincial and district councils and build citizen involvement. We are working with the Afghan Government to provide incentives for sub-national leaders to improve performance. I would like to emphasize that we are concentrating on what is essential and attainable. In all of these efforts, we must not wait too long to create an Afghan autonomous capability, or we risk building a dependency that will be that much harder to break.

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

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

The cultivation of poppy and the trafficking in opium without a doubt has the most debilitating effect on Afghan society, feeding corruption and undermining the legal economy, while generating funds for the insurgency. Our strategy for combating the pervasive impact of illegal narcotics is multi-pronged, involving demand reduction, efforts by law enforcement and the military to detain major traffickers and interdict drug shipments, and support for licit agricultural development. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration works closely with Afghan partners to investigate and prosecute major traffickers. With our support, the Counter-Narcotics Justice Task Force has become the most effective judicial organization in Afghanistan today, with successful investigations, prosecutions, and convictions of hundreds of

drug traffickers. But the narcotics problem will never have a satisfactory solution without economic development in this still desperately poor country.

DEVELOPMENT

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

We are targeting much of our assistance where violence is worst and shifting to more flexible and faster contract and grant mechanisms, to ensure our dollars are effectively supporting our efforts in the provinces. Development specialists at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), joined by experts from multiple departments and agencies of our government, are focusing on key sectors, such as agriculture. Rebuilding the farm sector is essential for the Afghan Government to reduce the pool of unemployed men who form the recruiting base for extremist groups. We estimate that at least 80 percent of the Afghan population derives their income, either directly or indirectly, from agriculture. Our agriculture efforts also seek to reinforce our governance strategy, so that the Agriculture Ministry will increasingly be—and be seen as—a tangible example of a more effective government.

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

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

Additionally, our Department of State and Commerce experts are assisting the Afghans to promote regional trade to help their economy. We expect that Afghanistan and Pakistan will shortly conclude a Transit Trade Agreement that will open new opportunities for commerce between the two countries. Finally, we also seek Congressional support to soon pass Reconstruction Opportunity Zone legislation to create long-term and sustainable employment opportunities. Improving official commercial and trade relations will also contribute to an improved Afghanistan-Pakistan security relationship.

OUR CIVILIAN EFFORT

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

In coming months, as our troops conduct operations to stabilize new areas, they will be joined by additional civilian personnel to work with our Afghan partners to strengthen governance and provide basic services as rapidly as possible. The integration of civilian and military effort has greatly improved over the last year, a process that will deepen as additional troops arrive and our civilian effort expands. We have designated Senior Civilian Representatives (SCRs) as counterparts to NATO–ISAF commanders in each of the Regional Commands. These SCRs are senior professionals, experienced in conflict environments. They direct the work of U.S. Government civilians within their regions, subject to my overall guidance. This organizational structure has two important features: First, it ensures that our civilian efforts are fully integrated with the military's in the field. Second, it is decentralized, enabling quick response to local needs, which is essential to deal with the varying conditions in Afghanistan. To maximize our impact in priority areas, we have created District Support Teams, which allow civilians in the field to collaborate with the military to build Afghan capacity in assigned districts.

U.S. foreign assistance is a comparatively small but essential fraction of the total dollars spent in Afghanistan over the last 8 years. Our increased civilian presence has enabled us to more effectively and more rapidly invest our assistance in the areas of agriculture, job creation, education, health care, and infrastructure projects. Additional resources will be necessary for our effort to keep pace with the military's expansion, to carry out the President's strategy on a rapid timetable. We look forward to sharing additional details on our anticipated needs with Congress in the coming days and weeks.

We have also improved our contracting to enhance performance and increase the effectiveness of our development aid programs. In a conflict zone, a degree of program risk is unavoidable, but U.S. Government agencies in the mission remain accountable to Congress for every dollar they spend. Given the great amount of resources and emphasis devoted to Afghanistan, our programs receive extraordinary oversight, including by a Kabul-based Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction, multiple audits of USAID and International Narcotics and Law Enforcement programs, and a hotline to report fraud, waste, and abuse.

PAKISTAN

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

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, Afghanistan is a daunting challenge. I have tried to describe how our Mission, as part of an integrated civil-military team, will pursue the President's goals and our country's interests. I have also given you my best assessment of the risks we face. Let me, in closing, once again thank the men and women of the U.S. Mission in Afghanistan and our Armed Forces. Together with the members of other NATO–ISAF armed forces, the international community and our Afghan allies, they do exemplary work on a daily basis that helps to protect the American people. They are prepared to work even harder to help the Afghan Government to stand on its own and handle the threats it faces. They believe firmly that our mission is necessary and achievable, and so do I. Success is not guaranteed, but it is possible. With the additional troops and other resources provided by the President—and with the help of Congress—we can ensure al Qaeda never again finds refuge in Afghanistan and threatens our country.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Ambassador.

We'll try a 7-minute round and hope that we can get to everybody by the time that you two have to leave us.

General, let me ask you the first question. Is it your personal professional judgment that the President's strategic plan is the correct plan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, Mr. Chairman, it is.

Chairman LEVIN. Are there any elements of the plan you don't agree with?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I'm comfortable with the entire plan, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Ambassador, do you support the President's plan and each of its elements?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I do, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, the President has set a specific date of July 2011 for the start of U.S. troop reductions. It's specific and it's set, as directed by the President. He's also indicated that the pace of the reductions is dependent on conditions on the ground.

General, do you fully agree with the July 2011 date which the President directed as the start of reductions of some U.S. forces?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Mr. Chairman, I do, and I'd like to explain why.

Chairman LEVIN. Please.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, from the military strategy point, I view it in a wider context. First, most importantly, I think the President has stated and other leaders of our government have the commitment to a strategic partnership with Afghanistan and the Afghan people. So I believe that the context that provides, that we will not abandon them over time, is very, very important. It gives them a consistency in our commitment to them and some assurance for the future.

Sir, on the other end of that, in the very near term, the President has provided our force additional combat forces, which I view, and I described in my opening statement, as being able to provide us time and space to reverse Taliban momentum and make progress against the insurgency in the near term, which I think the next 18 months are critical. During that period, I believe we'll be able to degrade the ability and the capacity of the insurgency significantly. Simultaneous to that will be growing the capacity of the Government of Afghanistan's security capability, the Afghan Army and Afghan police specifically, but also supported by governance.

So I believe that when we hit July 2011 that's not a significant factor in our campaign plan. In fact, I think it has a positive forcing function on our Afghan partners in reminding them that, although we have a long-term commitment, we also have shared responsibility. So I think there are some positives.

I do want to point out that I understand that there's an information operations challenge. The Taliban particularly will try to paint this in a particular picture, and I think we just have to deal and combat that.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

General, how many Afghan soldiers are now partnered with U.S. combat troops and are in the fight in Regional Commands (RC)-South and RC-East, where the major fighting is occurring? What's that number?

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, if you'll permit me to pull out my numbers here.

Chairman LEVIN. If you could just give us the number of Afghan soldiers, one number, partnered with U.S. combat forces, in the fight?

General McCHRYSTAL. In RC-South, sir, that would be 16,700.

Chairman LEVIN. 16,000?

General McCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. How about east?

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, that would be 23,300 army. Neither of those numbers include the police.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, in Operation Cobra Anger in Helmand it's reported we have 1,000 marines there right now in that operation and there's about 150 Afghan troops. When we were in Helmand Province, where we visited, there were five U.S. troops for each Afghan troop. I think I stated it correctly. But currently in Operation Anger there's 1,000 marines, joined by 150 Afghans. That's about seven U.S. troops for every one Afghan.

Given the number of Afghan troops that are there, why are these ratios so inconsistent with what our own doctrine is, which says that we should have a one-to-one partnership, one unit of ours for one unit of the Afghans, hopefully leading to one unit of ours to three Afghan units by the end of the partnering period? How come the ratio is so reversed of what our doctrine requires?

General McCHRYSTAL. The primary reason is there are not yet enough Afghan National Army (ANA) or Afghan National Police (ANP). The main focus of our coalition element or strategy has recently been in the south. In the Helmand area, when you and I were there, you're correct, it was about one Afghan security force participant to five coalition. That's now 1 to 3.6 and by the end of January we'll have it 1 to 2.3.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, the British insist on one-to-one. The Australians insist on one-to-one. It's their doctrine. It's their mission that they are mainly there for partnering with the Afghan troops, and so their requirement, which they insist on, is about a one-to-one to begin with. Why do we not have that same insistence, determination, that our doctrine, which is one-to-one, be implemented, since partnering and training the Afghan forces is such an important part of our mission?

General McCHRYSTAL. Mr. Chairman, I could not agree more. There are simply not yet an ANA to meet everyone's requirements. We are fielding as we speak this month 1,900 additional ANA soldiers between December and January. That's 16 new ANA companies. All will go into the Helmand area.

Chairman LEVIN. We're going to have 20,000 there by what time?

General McCHRYSTAL. Of our additional forces?

Chairman LEVIN. No, of our forces. We have 10,000 in Helmand now. We're going to add another 9,000 or 10,000.

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, by mid-spring, late spring.

Chairman LEVIN. So the ratio is still going to be overwhelmingly U.S. to Afghan, even after those Afghan additions; isn't that right?

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, by April we will create another brigade of ANA forces that will go to the south—I'm sorry. Two brigades by summer and an additional corps headquarters. We're

flowing everything we can build in the Afghan army into that area. I absolutely agree with your point.

Chairman LEVIN. General Jones indicated in a news interview last weekend, I believe, that currently at least 7 of the 34 Afghan provinces today—that's 20 percent of their provinces—have the conditions for successful transition, right now. Now quoting General Jones: "Specifically, security, economic development, and reasonably good governance."

Why not transfer responsibility now, since the conditions exist now for successful transition?

General MCCHRYSTAL. In fact, the Afghans have the lead over the entire country. Legally, they're a sovereign country. It's different than Iraq.

Chairman LEVIN. Then why did Secretary Gates and Secretary Clinton repeatedly say that transition is going to begin in July 2011, if the conditions for transition in seven provinces exist now? Why wait?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, in fact, the city of Kabul has already transferred to——

Chairman LEVIN. How about the other seven provinces?

General MCCHRYSTAL. There are areas where they, in fact, have the lead now, they execute, because there are not coalition forces operating in those areas. So the legal mandate that might be executed to do that I think is really in that case a formality. They have the lead in most of those areas right now, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Eikenberry, during the decisionmaking process there were several cables that you sent back that were classified Secret and yet were revealed to the media. They indicated that you had strong reservations about the surge.

Have those reservations been resolved in your mind?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, 100 percent with the refinement of the mission and with clarification on the ways that we're going to move forward and the resources allocated against this, absolutely.

Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, Secretary Gates said today in Kabul: "We're in this thing to win." Do you agree with his statement and do you have what you need to win?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I agree with the Secretary's statement. We are in it to win. I think we have what we need to win. But I think the ultimate winners become the Afghan people.

Senator MCCAIN. What do you expect we will have achieved by 2011? I understand there's going to be a major review of the plan by December 2010. What do you expect we will have achieved by 2011 when, as the response to Senator Levin's statement, is a firm date for beginning withdrawal of U.S. troops? We will have benchmarks that you will be sharing with us, I'm sure. Go ahead.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Absolutely. The most important thing we will have done by the summer of 2011 is convince the majority of the Afghan people that in fact we are going to win, we and the Afghan Government are going to win, and that, that is going to be the direction for the future. What we will do is start by reversing

the Taliban momentum and the perception of momentum, because at the end of the day success in this fight is about what the people believe.

We will be able, between now and summer of 2011, to reverse that momentum, to increase the number of security zones we have, providing more areas contiguous security. So for example, a farmer in Garmsir in the central Helmand River Valley, which has been secured now by a combination of Afghan forces and marines, who've done a great job, we'll be able to move product all the way from Garmsir to Lashkar Gah and Kandahar. Currently we don't have contiguous security; we have pockets of security. We'll be able to grow that. We'll be able to increase their ability not only to live in their own neighborhood more normally, but also to live a life more normally.

Senator MCCAIN. What if we haven't achieved those objectives by July 2011? What do we do then, since we have a firm date for the beginning of a withdrawal?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, of course we always assess our strategy as we go along and make decisions based upon the situation.

Senator MCCAIN. But we still have a firm date.

You said, General McChrystal, "The success of this operation will be determined in the minds of the Afghan people." What would you say to Afghans, Pakistanis, and others in the region, both our friends and enemies, who may now feel like hedging their bets or sitting on the fence because they doubt America's commitment and resolve?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, there will be some who are in opposition and some who are in ignorance, who will try to use that as a point of propaganda. I think if we point out the long-term strategic partnership both to the Government of Afghanistan and to our Pakistani partners, and our short-term clear commitment by the additional forces and the focus of our strategy, I believe that we can make that point effectively.

Senator MCCAIN. It is obvious from your experience in Afghanistan that the Afghan people do not want the return of the Taliban, and that is a significant advantage and one that perhaps has not been made as clear to the American people, not only because of the things they might do to harm the United States, but the terrible treatment of the Afghan people, including women in Afghanistan.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, that is absolutely correct. Everywhere I go, I have never seen evidence that the Taliban have popular support, like a political liberation movement. They get their support largely through coercion. So the average people are simply waiting to see whether or not their government can defeat that insurgency.

Senator MCCAIN. Is it still your goal to train 400,000 Afghan security forces by 2013?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I believe that we need to significantly increase the ANSF. I recommend that we stay on a very aggressive timeline to try to reach that, but adjust those goals on two things: one, if the insurgency's size creases, it might be able to be adjusted; and also the ability of the Afghan Government to provide recruits, retention, and those things which enable the growth.

Senator MCCAIN. What level do you expect it to be by July 2011?

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, I believe between the army and police total it will be approaching 300,000 people.

Senator McCAIN. What about the strain on the men and women in the military, General?

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, I think the strain is significant. But I was out at Walter Reed yesterday morning, as I went through with my wife and visited soldiers who'd been wounded, not just in Afghanistan, but also in Iraq. Every soldier we spoke to talked about wanting to get back in the fight, even though it was clear that many would be very challenged to do that.

Every soldier that I see in the field expresses the same sort of focus. So I believe that while there's clear strain on families, and we cannot understate the importance of the programs that this body has done for wounded warriors and for families, I believe this force wants to win, and I believe that commitment is the most important thing.

Senator McCAIN. How important is it that we find and bring to justice Osama bin Laden and what effect would that have on our effort there?

I'd also be interested in your view, Ambassador.

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, I believe he is an iconic figure at this point, whose survival emboldens al Qaeda as a franchising organization across the world. It would not defeat al Qaeda to have him captured or killed, but I don't think that we can finally defeat al Qaeda until he is captured or killed.

Senator McCAIN. Until he is captured or brought to justice.

Ambassador?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, I'd only add to that, that it does remain important to the American people, indeed the people of the world, that one day Osama bin Laden is either captured or killed or brought to justice for his responsibility for the murder of many Americans and citizens of the world on September 11, 2001.

Senator McCAIN. I thank the witnesses. I know you have an enormous task ahead of you. You have our support and our thoughts and our prayers are with you. We look forward to making your life miserable by coming over to visit you. [Laughter.]

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCain.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

I promise to come with Senator McCain and to the extent that I can try to make his visit less miserable for the two of you than it would otherwise be. [Laughter.]

I thank you both for your extraordinary service. I do want to say a word about Senator McCain's opening statement today. It builds on what he said last week when Secretaries Gates and Clinton and Admiral Mullen were here. It's obvious that he disagrees on the question of the deadline, or whatever one calls it, for July 2011, exit strategy. But he made an important statement today, which is he's just going to have to agree to disagree. The administration and he are going to have to agree to disagree and go forward, because he supports the basic program.

I hope this sets a tone for people in both parties. No matter what they feel about one or another detail of the decision the President

made, it is now American policy, and the truth is we all ought to come together behind you, General McChrystal, and the troops that you're leading, and Ambassador Eikenberry, you and the civilian personnel you're leading, and give you 18 months when you don't have any carping or backbiting from Washington to get the job done for us. I thank you for that.

I never felt uncomfortable or critical about the length of the deliberative process that President Obama conducted, but I thought the worst thing about it was that it appeared that people associated with it were leaking documents or arguments to try to affect public opinion, and one was this alleged email that you sent, Ambassador Eikenberry, because none of us, obviously, saw it. I didn't see it.

I appreciate what you said to Senator McCain, that you have a good working relationship with General McChrystal. But what the media was reporting was that the substance of the email was your concern that if we sent too many troops too quickly, it would take the pressure off of the Afghan Government. I wanted to ask you to deal with that in two ways, if you would. It's awkward to ask it and yet the media is talking about it, so I think it's best to give you a chance to comment in public.

The first is, to what extent the publication of that email, with its skepticism, that a lot of people here in Washington share, about the government in Kabul, what effect, if any, it's had on your relationship with President Karzai and the government. The second is, if you could deal with the substance, which is I gather—what we heard of the email, it had a substantial policy argument, which was that first we better get the Afghans to shape up before we send in more troops.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Thanks, Senator. Let me take the second half first, on the substance. There was a very deliberate review process that both General McChrystal and I talked about in our opening statements, and during that review process all of us were encouraged to render our best analysis and best advice. It was an extraordinary process, as it should have been given the complexities and the consequences of the decision. During that time, all of us participating had opportunities in videoteleconferences, through face-to-face discussions, through written correspondence, to submit our views.

The second point I wanted to make is that at no time, Senator, was I opposed to additional forces being sent to Afghanistan. I do share General McChrystal's security analysis that he conducted. It was comprehensive and it was correct. The situation in parts of Afghanistan, the security had deteriorated, and still in parts of Afghanistan it remains very difficult.

The only way to address those problems, those challenges of insecurity, is additional forces, whether U.S. or non-U.S. NATO forces. We have an absolute consensus that we need to accelerate the building of the Afghan army and police. The best way to do that is additional U.S. forces. But all of us had questions, of course, when we have a very significant decision to be made about additional forces, important to understand the number, the timeline, the purpose, the context.

But the third point I'd make then: With the President's decision, with the refinement of the mission, with clarity on what ways we were going to use and what resources would be allocated against that, at that point in time I was 100 percent, and am now 100 percent, supportive of the decision that was made.

With regard to effect on my relations with the Afghan Government, I maintain, Senator, good relations with President Karzai. My embassy, our embassy, maintains excellent relations with the Government of Afghanistan, and we're going to continue to improve upon what is already a very good working relationship.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate both parts of your answer. When I was last there with Senator McCain in August, it was clear that you had a good, an honest relationship with President Karzai and the administration, there are disagreements, but then a commitment to one another, that's exactly what we want.

General McChrystal, just following up, I take it that the leak of the email has had no lasting effect on your ability to work with Ambassador Eikenberry? Obviously, if we're going to employ all elements of our national resources to Afghanistan, the relationship between the two of you is critically important to that.

General MCCHRYSTAL. It's fine, Senator. We work together literally every day. We have dinner together. That is an absolute misperception. We also know that we're only going to be successful together, both the two of us, but then also all our coalition and Afghan partners.

Senator LIEBERMAN. That's great. Thank you.

When Secretary Gates was before the committee last week, he told us: "Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal are, as we speak, working on a joint civil-military campaign plan just as General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker developed for Iraq in 2007."

I wanted to ask you first whether the Secretary is correct? Are you writing such a plan? Second, if so, can you tell us a little bit about the process by which the plan is being written? Ambassador?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Actually, if I could, Senator, there is an existing civil-military plan. General McChrystal and myself back in August, after intensive combined staff work on the civil-military side, we had signed a joint campaign plan that General Petraeus, when he reviewed it along with Ambassador Holbrooke, said it was absolutely the best civil-military plan that he's ever seen. We're proud of the work that was done on it.

We are in the process of having to revise that plan based upon the implementation now of the new strategy. This plan is not a document which sits on a shelf. To give you an example of the integration that follows from this plan, at the national level we have 14 national level working groups. What do I mean by that? We have a national level working group for agriculture, a national level working group for infrastructure development.

These are fully integrated teams that sit on these working groups. For instance, agriculture; members of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) sit on the team, the Department of Agriculture. Very importantly, from General McChrystal's command, we have the National Guard sitting on there and more of their military command.

I could go through all of these various functional groups that we've established. That's at the national level horizontally. But vertically, from Kabul all the way down through the province, all the way through the district, we have a fully integrated civil-military unified effort. We're impressed with what we have. We're committed to making it better.

Senator LIEBERMAN. General McChrystal, do you want to add to that? I'm curious as to whether you have integration at the staff level on civil-military to work on the next phase of the plan.

General MCCHRYSTAL. We absolutely do. On a daily basis, they are meeting and working.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you both.

Thanks very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Wicker.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General McChrystal, when there's fighting near the Afghan-Pakistan border area and our troops are engaged with the enemy insurgents, what have been the rules of engagement with regard to what our troops can do when the enemy retreats back into Pakistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The intent of our rules of engagement is always to protect our forces, to never take away from our forces the ability to protect themselves, their wellbeing. We have the ability to fire across the border—artillery, air strikes, direct fire weapons—and that actually happens with a fair amount of regularity. But it also happens with coordination. We have a series of mechanisms in place with the Pakistani army so that as an incident occurs, before we shoot we immediately contact them and try to work out all the details so that they in fact approve the engagement with the enemy. That reduces misunderstandings.

There are times when there are misunderstandings about that. So we constantly work with our forces to try to make sure we don't create issues. But we also try to prevent, both the Pakistani military and us, there being any kind of a scene.

Senator WICKER. So we don't pursue across the border? Our troops don't have the ability to do that; is that correct?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I'd like to take that part for the record, whether they actually legally can. We have not been doing that, not going across on the ground.

Senator WICKER. So they're under orders not to do that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, let me take that for the record, to make sure.

[The information referred to follows:]

[Deleted.]

Senator WICKER. I just wondered, because you had testified that "organizational and operational changes were going to need to be implemented, and I just was curious, and maybe you might want to take for the record that question too, as to whether our ability to pursue the enemy across the border, with the cooperation of the Pakistanis, might be part of those changes.

So thank you for that, and I look forward to your answer.

Mr. Ambassador, there are going to be Afghan parliamentary elections next year. I think it's beyond dispute that the presidential

election was riddled with fraud and that the turnout was much lower than expected because of intimidation by the Taliban. What are our lessons learned from the presidential election to help us going forward to the parliamentary election?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, clearly the presidential election that Afghanistan went through was a very difficult process. There was fraud. In areas of Afghanistan that were challenged by insecurity, there was lower voter turnout. I would emphasize, however, that the rule of law, the rules according to the constitution, remained intact, and for that the Afghan people are proud.

In the early 1990s when there was a change of political power in Kabul, it took place through warlords firing rockets down into the city of Kabul. So the Afghan people are proud that they made it through this process, difficult though it was.

Now, against that, what lessons were learned, Senator? There has to be improvement in the electoral system of Afghanistan. The commission which has the oversight for the running of the election, it needs improvement. It needs help from the international community in that regard.

Second, I think that the Afghans are politically going to have to come together and look at the election cycles that they've established right now. Between this year and 2024, every year except one has elections. They're going to need to look hard at that pace of elections.

Then third, there's going to have to be reform and work done for voter registration to get a better handle on who is actually eligible to vote out there. I think that the Afghan parliament and President Karzai's administration, over the next several months, will be looking at this. Right now the parliamentary elections are scheduled to take place in the spring. That will be a very ambitious timeline. I know it has security consequences, but it's a major point on the political agenda, for Afghanistan, and we're talking with the government about this.

Senator WICKER. Is a major point of your political agenda to provide better security against coercion of the voters? What would be our plans for that?

Let me interject: Were you surprised at the low turnout?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I was, I was, Senator, not on the day of the election. If you had asked me when I first came into Afghanistan on this tour of duty in May 2009, several months before the election, I would have suggested a much higher voter turnout in eastern and southern Afghanistan. One of the key factors that voter turnout was not high in those areas was insecurity. So as I said earlier in the testimony that I agreed with General McChrystal's security assessment, low voter turnout in areas where there is insecurity, not surprising.

I was surprised, though, to see how far security had trended downward.

Senator WICKER. Is a major agenda item providing better security for voters so they'll have more confidence that they can get back and forth to the polls?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I'd defer to General McChrystal on that, Senator.

Senator WICKER. Is that a major item, General?

General MCCHRYSTAL. It absolutely is, Senator.

Senator WICKER. Let me ask this, then. President Karzai in his inauguration speech mentioned his desire to convene a loya jirga. It has been further elaborated on by spokesmen saying that members of the Taliban would be invited to this loya jirga.

Was this an American idea? I understand much of the President's inaugural address was written in consultation with Americans. Is that our view, Mr. Ambassador, that a loya jirga would include members of the Taliban? When might this occur?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I know that President Karzai has discussed holding a loya jirga. He has articulated that the purpose of the loya jirga would be to gain a consensus among the people, renew their support for the presence of the international community in the way ahead.

With regard to Taliban participation in this, Senator, I don't know. I have not discussed that with President Karzai.

Senator WICKER. Do you have an opinion with regard to whether that would be advisable?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. With regard to political discussions between the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban, Senator, that's very much a political question for the Afghan Government's administration. The principles that President Karzai has set forth about discussions of anybody rejoining Afghan society, Taliban rejoining Afghan society, the set of principles that he's established—number one, that they would have to renounce their ties to international terrorism; number two, renounce violence; number three, to follow the constitution of the Government of Afghanistan—those are entirely consistent with our own views.

Senator WICKER. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Just a quick procedural point.

We do expect that we'll have an opportunity at least for a brief second round. I want everyone to know that we expect that opportunity will be present.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, gentlemen.

General McChrystal, the rules of engagement within Afghan emphasize minimizing civilian casualties. That was a point you made when you took over, and Admiral Mullen made the same point yesterday at Camp Lejeune. I don't want to be presumptuous, but my understanding is it is based on your experience, your understanding of counterinsurgency warfare, the experience of the Soviets before us; you were not directed to do that by anyone; is that correct?

General MCCHRYSTAL. That is correct, Senator. I did before I deployed out watch the situation going on, so I had formed opinions, but got no specific direction.

Senator REED. Very good.

One of the issues here is not only the increase in size of forces, but it's the unity of command and the unity of effort. That stretches across several dimensions—COIN operations, counterterrorism operations, counternarcotic operations, civil-military coordination, operations between NATO and Afghan security forces, oper-

ations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, intelligence operations versus tactical operations in the field.

Can you in a few minutes tell me, Ambassador Eikenberry also, what are you doing specifically to address this issue of unity of effort, and how important is it to your success?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, it's absolutely critical to our success, unity of effort across the civil-military and within military operations. What we have done is, as we arrived out, we've done some organizational changes. The standup of the Intermediate Joint Command, General Dave Rodriguez's command, provides a corps-like headquarters over the regional commands that allows him to orchestrate this fight much better than we could have done before or was the habit before.

Additionally, internal to each what we call battle-space owner, starting at the regional command level down to typically a brigade combat team, we have moved to put all the elements that operate in that battle space under the control of that single battle space owner.

I'll let Ambassador Eikenberry talk more about what they've done. But we've also established a civil-military lashup so that each regional commander has a senior civilian represenative that is right next to him all the time. So that gives us unity of effort so that they are literally joined at the hip as we move forward there.

We've changed the structure and focus of our special operating forces so that they come under either the regional commander's focus, to ensure that they are implementing his. What we can't do is have multiple wars being fought. We have to have one overall effort.

There is still a distance to go. There are some national limitations. There are cultural limitations within the U.S. military, and there are other steps. But we have made huge progress.

The last point I'd make is, our effort to partner with the Afghans starts at the Ministry of Defense level, the Ministry of Interior, which is much more robust than we did before. I see the ministers almost every day. We have video teleconferences (VCTs) with them. They're in our VTCs every day. So that we and the Afghans are planning the fight together, executing the fight, talking about the fight afterward together. That goes down at the lower levels and increasingly, as Senator Levin said, the partnering down at the lowest levels, the closer we get, that gets us not only better forces, it gets us unity of effort.

Senator REED. Mr. Ambassador?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, four points in our own efforts on the embassy side to try to achieve unity of effort. First of all, within the government itself, within the embassy. I'd mention as an example of some of these working groups that we have established an agricultural working group. We're very proud of the success that we've had in pulling together the interagency on the civilian side of the government, so that you will not have one agricultural group meeting with USAID, another led by the Department of Agriculture—fully integrated. If you were to go into our rule of law group, you'll find in that same room the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Drug Enforcement Administration, the Depart-

ment of Justice, State International Narcotics and Law, and the military.

General McChrystal already mentioned the second point about our civil-military coordination. I mentioned that to Senator McCain. As you get down to outside of Kabul, for the first time I truly believe we've really got it lashed up well. The senior civilian representative concept we have for a military regional commander, not a political adviser but a fully empowered co-equal that has responsibility for all the civilians from all agencies assigned in that sector, and, very importantly, can take the resources assigned and can allocate them so that they're in support of major military efforts.

Third point is with our unity that we have with the international community: difficult, challenging, but still the United Nations mission led by Kai Eide. We work closely with Mr. Eide. He's made good progress there. We have more work to do in that area. That's important because Afghanistan's going the need international commitment for many more years. So we continue to work hard to ensure that's a success.

Then the fourth and final area, just what General McChrystal had said on the military side. Really, who's the key partner for our unity of effort? It is the Afghan people. So increasingly as we see more competency within Afghan ministries, we will be encouraging the Afghan ministry partners to lead the efforts. We'll go down to their ministry. We'll help them, but they'll be in the lead and we'll be in support of those efforts.

Senator REED. A quick question to follow up, Mr. Ambassador. In terms of the civilian surge, not just in numbers, but in the duration of the service: I think there are some agencies that are giving you or giving this effort 3 months, 4 months, in terms of personal assignments. Is that adequate?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Tours of that length are not. We've made great progress, though, Senator, with support of most of our departments and agencies in really getting that turned around. There's a real commitment there. I'll give you an example. The Afghans have established a major crimes task force in Afghanistan. It's going to be their FBI. Our FBI has sent a group of mentors to work with them. The initial plan was each mentor would be there for several months and rotate out. We talked to Director Mueller directly and said, for an endeavor like this you can't build trust in a couple of months; it has to be a long-term endeavor. So he has 10 agents on the ground right now in Afghanistan, 1-year tours of duty each. So we're making a lot of progress in that area. We still need to do better, though.

Senator REED. General McChrystal, but you might want to also comment, Ambassador: Even with the most dedicated and talented government in Kabul, Afghani Government, the ability to reach out into the provinces is limited. It's limited by the constitution. The governors are appointed by President Karzai. It's limited by the lack of any ability to raise revenues locally. In the short run you're going to have to essentially fill in the gaps, which seems to be similar to the issue in Iraq with the Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP) funding, where military units and their civilian

counterparts were using funds to jump-start some of the build activity.

Is that your plan, essentially?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, it is. We will seek every chance we can to use the central government's ability to reach down, every chance we can to use existing provincial or district governments. But we'll also help wherever we can. In some cases, just security alone makes it difficult, for example, for a district subgovernor to get out and do the kinds of things that he wants to do or would normally do. So we're going to have to partner with them, and it'll be unique in every place, doing the right answer.

Senator REED. Mr. Ambassador?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I'd agree with what General McChrystal laid out. We are working very hard as well, Senator, with the different programs, with our developmental programs delivered in the civilian side, to make those much more agile and much more flexible, so that, as General McChrystal's forces move with ANSF into a new district and it becomes imperative that on an urgent basis we're able to start delivering economic assistance and try to get jobs created. We've made a lot of progress here in the last 6 months about refining programs, so that, as an example, when General McChrystal's marines went into Nawa District in Helmand Province in the summer, 24 hours later we had a USAID developmental specialist on the ground, several days after that agricultural programs, jobs for work programs, digging of irrigation districts, that was underway.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator LeMieux.

Senator LEMIEUX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador and General, thank you for being here. Thank you for your public service all these years.

I had the opportunity to visit with you in Afghanistan along with Senator Burr and Senator Whitehouse at the end of October. Since the time of our trip—and perhaps, General McChrystal, you could answer this question first—has the situation improved in terms of our fight against the insurgency, stayed the same, or slid backwards?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, I believe it's improved. I'm not going to say dramatically, and I try to always let events be provable. But I absolutely believe it's improved.

Senator LEMIEUX. Ambassador?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I'd say, Senator, if we take this through the political lens, there's been some very significant improvement. Of course, what's happened since your visit, we made—the second round was decided upon, and then Abdul Abdullah withdrew, President Karzai elected, inauguration. I have to say that when we looked at President Karzai's—listened to his inauguration address, there was a lot of positive things in that about governance and about security.

I think we're seeing more confidence being displayed right now from President Karzai's administration. Actions have to follow the words. I heard that Secretary Gates, today in his visit to Kabul, in his discussions with President Karzai and the national security

team of President Karzai, came away with the very good impression that the Afghan leadership has a sense of determination about them.

Senator LEMIEUX. Thank you.

General McChrystal, it seems to me with the addition of the 30,000 troops and a goal, at least an aspirational goal, to draw down those troops, at least start to by July 2011, that this puts a lot of pressure on you and your team. You're going to get these troops starting in January. The troops I guess will not be fully deployed in theater until maybe the summer, and even that might be ambitious. So you have what it seems to me is a year to show real success with the full complement of the troops.

Do you think that that's possible? Would you think that on a scale of one to ten, with ten being very likely and one being not likely at all, that you have a chance for success in that period of time?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe the chance is very high. I am confident that, although there's pressure on us to move forward, I think that's fine. There's also pressure on our Afghan partners, because they realize we need to move forward, and that's good. I think there's going to be a tremendous amount of pressure on the enemy. Because of the forces already on the ground and then the changes we've made and this additional 30,000, I think we're going to be able to make very, very significant progress.

Senator LEMIEUX. Ambassador, do you think that the Afghan Government senses the pressure of this timeline and that they are fully engaged to make this a successful period for us?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, I do. Success for all of us in Afghanistan, of course, is the point when the Government of Afghanistan is able to provide for the security of its own people. There's a bit of ambivalence right now on the Afghan leaders and their people, and it's understandable. On the one hand, they do want to stand up and have full control of their sovereignty. That was reflected in President Karzai's inauguration address, where he said within 5 years over the course of his second term he wants Afghanistan's security forces to be in the lead responsible for security nationwide.

Against that, given the history of modern Afghanistan, given the uncertainty of the neighborhood that they live in, there's a nervousness about losing the presence of NATO ISAF and the Americans. So there's the tension. I believe, as the General does, that this July 2011 date is a very good forcing function to get the Afghan leadership to stand up, to have a hard target for their army and police to move to.

President Karzai's initial reaction to it was positive. He said: "We need that kind of pressure; we want to stand up." But at the same time, as General McChrystal has said, we're going to have to be cognizant of Afghanistan's long-term needs for security. So, as President Karzai said in his inauguration address, the idea of having a strategic partnership with the United States or refining that is something that I think is going to be essential as we move forward and define what that long-term relationship with Afghanistan is about.

Senator LEMIEUX. Thank you.

General, the American people still want us to capture and kill Osama bin Laden. It occurs to me that, in terms of your warfighting and trying to break the will of our enemy, that that would be an important strategic military goal as well. Are we still about the business of trying to capture and kill him? Recently Secretary Gates said that we haven't had good intelligence on his whereabouts in years. Can you discuss with us what part of the mission capturing and killing Osama bin Laden is for you right now?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, I am responsible as Commander of ISAF for inside Afghanistan. Were Osama bin Laden to come in there, of course that would become a huge priority for all of our forces. If he is not inside, it's outside of my mandate right now. I do believe it's very important.

Senator LEMIEUX. Ambassador, can you speak to that at all?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. The exact same perspective, Senator.

Senator LEMIEUX. The last thing I'd like to discuss with you is Pakistan. Recently the President said that we cannot tolerate a safe haven for terrorists, and this might be where Osama bin Laden is, whose location is known and whose intentions are clear. The New York Times has reported that the administration has said in private that if the Pakistani leaders will not allow us to follow these insurgents and fight them, that we will continue to do so even without their permission.

What kind of cooperation are you getting from Pakistan and do you believe that they are going to be willing and good partners as we fight this cross-border battle?

General MCCHRYSTAL. My current partnership with the Pakistani military, led by a personal relationship I have with General Kiyani, is very good and it's getting better all the time. Unlike a few years ago, they now face a very significant internal insurgency from the TTP or what we call the Pakistani Taliban. I believe that as they focus on that more, our shared strategic interests become closer in alignment, both ours the United States and Pakistan, but also Afghanistan's and Pakistan's, because neither can achieve security and stability without success on the other side of the border.

I think that helps to pull us into alignment. Pakistan does have sovereign strategic interests, which I respect, and I think it's important that what we as a Nation do is recognize those and, just like we do with Afghanistan, reinforce that long-term partnership.

Senator LEMIEUX. Ambassador?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, you know that a major shift that the administration made when it announced the strategy in March was to try to pull together the regional aspects of security in central and south Asia, so not looking just at Afghanistan or Pakistan in isolation, but looking at the two together. So with the naming of the special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, and his frequent partnership on the military side with General Dave Petraeus, there is a full-time effort being made.

I would also say that when you talk about our embassy in Islamabad, Ambassador Anne Patterson, our embassy in Kabul, that we do work together under Ambassador Holbrooke's direction to try to find ways to facilitate cooperation beyond the military and

security domain between Afghanistan and Pakistan—political dialogues that we try to encourage and more promising in the area of economic cooperation, trying to help both sides reach a transit trade agreement to improve trade, working with both sides to help improve customs posts along the frontier. Some of those projects have led to positive results. There's not going to be any real significant breakthroughs there, but we do have a comprehensive approach.

Senator LEMIEUX. Thank you. Again, thank you both for your service.

Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator LeMieux.

Senator Akaka.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to say welcome, add my welcome to Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal, and to thank you each for your extraordinary and dedicated service to our country.

I also want to thank all the men and women under your leadership for their sacrifices. As we discuss Afghanistan policy today, I ask that we keep our military and civilians in mind and also in our prayers as they stand in harm's way.

Ambassador Eikenberry, much has been said and written about the problems with the Afghan Government. One of them is corruption, of course. Clearly we must have a reliable Afghan Government to partner with in pursuing our new strategy. Without question, the goal of unity of effort I think has really set a new spirit in Afghanistan and has brought many parts of our government to bear on what we need to do.

You also mentioned about improving the key ministries in order to build legitimacy in the Afghan Government. Ambassador, you have a first-hand view of the ministries and local governments in Afghanistan. What is your view of how the government is doing today? You've touched on this, do you want to go deeper into it as to what we need to do to bring an improvement about?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, I'd start and say that, again having gone through a very difficult election process, President Karzai did emerge as the winner and he is our partner now as the leader of Afghanistan. I give you one area where I think we're doing reasonably well and I'm optimistic, another area where I think we can expect to see improvements; the third area will be the most difficult.

First of all, at the national level. You've talked abut some of the ministries of Afghanistan. We're focusing our efforts on the key ministries, the security sector, the financial sector of course, key ministries that deliver important services, health and education; and finally, those ministries which are going to be very important to Afghanistan for the generation of income for its people—agriculture, mining potentially, energy, water management, and so forth.

Those ministries have had a lot of progress over the last several years. We expect President Karzai over the next several days will announce his new cabinet. We're cautiously optimistic we're going to get generally good ministers named there. We'll work closely with those important ministries with good leaders. We think we

have good programs aligned here to see further success in capacity-building.

The next area is in the rule of law and justice. There is a lot of work that needs to be done, but we do have some success that we're building upon and we do have a commitment from President Karzai in his inauguration speech that he's going to tackle head-on the issue of corruption.

It's not going to be an easy fight at all and indeed help is needed from the international community, help for programs. But also the international community has to change its way over time of how we dispense aid. A lot of money that goes into Afghanistan right now goes outside of the Government of Afghanistan. We'll work with the Afghan Government. I think our government's setting a very good example for the international community to make improvements in that area.

The third area is at the sub-national level, and this, Senators, is the most difficult area, about how do you reach out into a district of Afghanistan, if you're a minister sitting in Kabul, and provide health services in insecure districts of Afghanistan right now that General McChrystal's forces and ANSF are moving into and trying to push the Taliban back. That's the area that is the most problematic. We have good work going on in that area. We have some good aid programs, but this is the one we're going to have to lean into very heavily with our Afghan partners to try to figure this out.

We talk about clear, hold, build, and transfer. That transfer piece out in that far district, that's the one that's the most problematic for us.

Senator AKAKA. You mentioned these different departments that we are sending there to help the Afghan Government. One that you alluded to but didn't mention is Commerce and the possible development of businesses within these districts, and also the government level as well.

General McChrystal, since the release of your assessment of the region there has been a healthy debate over the number of troops being deployed to Afghanistan. However, I feel we should not focus solely on the number of troops alone. General, ignoring the total number of troops proposed, my question has to do with equipment and with personnel. Are we sending the right personnel there, with the right equipment in place, to achieve the goals that we have in those regions?

As you mentioned, the ultimate goal is the capture of al Qaeda. You probably know what you need in terms of personnel and equipment. So my question to you is, do we have the right equipment and personnel to achieve our goals in the region?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, the short answer is we do, but the reality is the requirement keeps changing, so we have to keep on it. We've made extraordinary improvements in things like intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) equipment. In many cases people think of Predators, but it's a really wide array of that, differing capabilities, to include people. That's one that keeps growing and we've done a tremendous effort at continuing to grow, but it will need to continue.

Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles, things to protect our forces; the engineer equipment to help us find and dis-

pose of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). So the answer is, I think we're doing an extraordinary job across our government providing it, but I think it's something we have to watch constantly as this effort evolves in nature and scope.

One area that I never cease to talk about, we are getting great people out there. As Ambassador Eikenberry mentioned, tour length is something I continue to encourage all the participants, to include our coalition partners, not to go with very short tours because you lose continuity and language training. This is one where I would tell you, we across the Department of Defense (DOD) can do better and must do better. We don't have enough people who speak Dari, Pashtu, Urdu, and we are not producing them fast enough.

There is a ramp-up. Yesterday, I met with about 160 people that—under Chairman Mullen's direction we've created the Afghan Hands Program and I talked to them. They're midway through training, language training and cultural training in preparation to going to the key jobs. But that has to be a start. We have to produce people who are culturally aware, linguistically armed to be effective, and then have enough time in theater to be effective.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Akaka.

Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you both for your service to your country. I've been honored to visit you in the field and I appreciate that work and the good briefings we have gotten and the professionalism you've shown.

At the Senate Foreign Relations Committee not too long ago, a Brookings individual testified that he wasn't sure whether we should increase troops or not, but no military in the world was better prepared than ours to be successful if given that challenge. I think that's very, very true. I couldn't be more proud of what you and your soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and guardsmen have done.

General McChrystal, I read your assessment. I thought it was highly sophisticated and a nuanced analysis of the challenges that we face. Some people think the military never talks about civilian issues and economics and security and those kinds of things, but you are looking at it comprehensively. No issue I think raised by Members of Congress weren't at least addressed in your analysis of the challenges that we face.

I do not like that we've had to commit more troops to Afghanistan. I had hoped that we could be able to bring down those troops. I think the Commander in Chief has analyzed this and come up with a proposal that I intend to support. You say you can make it work. It sounds like to me that it can be made to work consistent with my analysis of the events, and I intend to be supportive of it, and certainly look forward to the hope that we will be able to draw down our troops and turn over the government to the local people.

Twice I've talked, or maybe three times, with Secretary Gates about the dangers of too great expectations about Afghanistan. They have historical challenges, regional history; extremely remote, extremely poor; and not a history of a strong national government. So I'd like to pursue this with you a bit.

Secretary Gates recently indicated in his prepared statement for his appearance, I guess it was last week, that he would want to engage the communities in Afghanistan, to enlist more local security forces to protect their own territories. I heard former National Security Adviser Brzezinski on television a week or so ago, talk about the need for local militias, and I think I know what he meant by that. Former President Musharraf of Pakistan in a Wall Street Journal op-ed a few weeks ago reminded us that for centuries Afghans have been governed loosely through a social compact of sorts between all ethnic groups, but under a sovereign king or a sovereign central authority.

Now, Ambassador Eikenberry, your statement made me a bit nervous. In your written statement you said that: "Some might argue that we are reaching too high, that Afghanistan has rarely in its history had a central government capable of carrying out these tasks, that to expect a coherent state to now emerge is unrealistic and a waste of resources. I disagree with that argument on several levels."

I also believe that one of the breakthroughs in Iraq was in Anbar, al-Anbar, when the marines made a compact with tribal leaders and basically funded those leaders to use their young men to oust al Qaeda, who they did not like and wanted to see ousted. To my knowledge, they weren't all sent off to Baghdad to be trained. They were loyal to their local leaders. They shared a common goal with us.

I know there's tension between creating militias not loyal to the central government. I know there's dangers in that. But it seems to me we have to take some risks and in some of these areas that are remote, that have good and decent leaders, that if we can just support them we could perhaps be able to not have to commit our own troops there.

So I'll ask both of you: Do we have this right? Are we overcommitted to a centralized authority? Or are we willing to look sufficiently at local militias and national guard areas?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, I think we are getting it right. Like you said, Afghanistan has a unique sensitivity to militias, even more so than Iraq did, because the history after the civil war that began in the period with the departure of the Soviets saw the rise in these militias that were predatory and they were under warlords, and they're just absolutely feared and hated today. But they also have a very strong local security tradition as well.

What we're trying to do, and we're working in a number of areas with something called a community defense initiative to enable villages and small elements of tribes to deny their area to insurgent access. What that means is we'll support them and they provide local security. We don't want to create militias that then move around the battlefield and become a problem. There's a balance.

There is still a need, in my opinion, for a very credible ANA because it helps bind the nation together. As we found in Iraq, it's also a source of pride there as well. So I think the combination of the two, keeping a very close eye on the sensitivity. Every time I talk to Afghans about the local security initiatives, I will get: "Yes, but be very careful; yes, but make sure you don't arm the wrong group that will do it." So I think we need to do it, but with caution.

Senator SESSIONS. Ambassador Eikenberry?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, I agree with General McChrystal. There is a balance here. It's the absence of a coherent state of Afghanistan that paved the way for the rise of the Taliban and then facilitated the entry of al Qaeda. So you can't ignore the need for a central Government of Afghanistan with the ability to provide for the security of its people and deliver sets of basic services.

Senator SESSIONS. Do you see as your vision that there has to be very strong control from the capital, from Kabul, to each one of the local security forces that might exist?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. No, I think I would agree with General McChrystal that it's essential that the Government of Afghanistan has a capable army that is able to reach throughout the country. It has to have control over its police forces. Then what's that right balance of minimum service provision from the Government of Afghanistan that has to flow through the country in the area of health care, education, I think that trying to get that proper balance right is essential.

Senator SESSIONS. I hope so.

My time is up, but I would say, Ambassador Eikenberry, that the Department of State (DOS) is challenged in fulfilling its responsibility, at least its paper responsibilities, in Afghanistan. We are well aware that the PRTs are dominated by the military because you don't have people there. Secretary Clinton said last week, I believe, that there are about 900 civilian DOS people in the country, 900 plus. That would be about 1 percent of our total.

So, if the DOS could fulfill a greater role, I would be supportive of it. But so far we're not seeing the numbers that justify confidence that you're going to get there.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Do I have a moment to respond, Senator?

Senator SESSIONS. Yes.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, the civilian uplift that we've had over the last year is most impressive. I've had a 35-year military career and I have gained over this past year an extraordinary respect for how the civilian elements in our government have responded to the requirements of Afghanistan. We've had a threefold increase of civilian personnel assigned to our embassy and throughout Afghanistan, as I said in my opening statement, we'll soon reach that point over a 12-month period of time, a sixfold increase of who we have out in the field.

Senator, it's not the number of people. Given that the numbers are impressive, but it's not the numbers of people ultimately that matter. An example: Right now in Helmand Province we have 5 agricultural experts who in turn are mobilizing a 500-man Afghan agricultural delivery capability that's reaching 14,000 farmers. We have in the Ministry of Agriculture several advisers and their expertise at the level that they're able to over time really help build a capable Ministry of Agriculture.

So it's not necessarily the number of people; it's what those people can do. If we're talking about military units—the military deploys platoons, companies, battalions. On the civilian side, we deploy individuals. Every individual is unique, and I'm very proud of

the fact that over this past year we've tripled our presence on the ground. We intend to keep going.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you. It's still a small number.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to begin by saying I share a number of the concerns that Senator Sessions just raised with respect to this potential contradiction between the cultural and political history of Afghanistan and what we are attempting to do in this policy.

Ambassador Eikenberry, I'd like to start by saying I read your written statement in full. I really appreciate its frankness. I think it is important for us to set out with an awareness of the limitations that we have, which is something that you mentioned. I want to come back to that in a minute.

Let me really begin here by saying I supported strongly this evaluation process, this lengthy evaluation process. I think it was very important for us to get the best minds of our government involved in it.

In that respect, General McChrystal, I'm going to give you an opportunity here to straighten the record on something a little bit along the lines of what I think Senator Lieberman posed to the Ambassador. This process took several months. In early September the Senate Majority Leader wrote a letter to Secretary Gates asking for an update on the evaluation. Secretary Gates wrote back: "Until the President makes his decision on the way forward in Afghanistan, it would be inappropriate for me or our military commanders to openly discuss the advice being provided or the nature of the discussions being carried out."

That was right about the time that you popped up on 60 Minutes with a rather lengthy interview. When people were actually in the White House discussing options, you were seen giving a speech in London, and there are a number of people who believe that this was detrimental and even divisive as this process moved forward.

So can you explain to us your view on how those actions were compatible with the policy outlined by the Secretary of Defense?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, Senator. The 60 Minutes interview was scheduled before I deployed and filmed in July, so it was before this process and before that guidance. So there was no intent or connection with that.

The discussion in London which you're referring to, there was no intent on my part to influence or in any way negatively impact the decisionmaking process. I regret if there's any impression that it did, but there was absolutely no intent for that.

Senator WEBB. You are aware that it was the same day that people were meeting in the White House to discuss the way forward?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I was not aware of that at the time.

Senator WEBB. Ambassador, I would like to ask you two questions. The first: In your testimony you talk about "we need to address our efforts to promote governance at the provincial and district levels," which I totally agree with. My question for you is, do you believe this is achievable under the current constitutional system that Afghanistan has or would you prefer to see another sys-

tem of government that devolves power in a way that would make this more compatible with the history and culture of Afghanistan?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I think the limiting factor right now is not the framework of the constitution; the limiting factor that exists, Senator, is just the difficulties that the Government of Afghanistan has, after 30 years of war, trying to develop the necessary organizational capacities to deliver services. They're challenged very much in terms of the development of human capital.

Senator WEBB. So it's your view that this is not a result of the present constitutional system, but rather just of governance, given the interruptions in the structure that has been in place?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. That would be my view. I know that the Afghan leadership right now, starting with President Karzai, is looking at the possibility of reforms that are perfectly within the constitution. A very important one is the idea of taking more financial resources and allocating that to a provincial governor, allocating that to a district governor. Right now they're really starved for funds.

There is additional discussions going on about what should be the right mix of electoral bodies and representative bodies at the subnational level. But again, the way the constitution exists today I don't see that as a limiting factor. But I do see very significant challenges in developing governmental and economic livelihood at some of the most challenged districts in Afghanistan.

Senator WEBB. Thank you.

I would like to pose another question for you that I think you are perhaps uniquely qualified to address, given your experience on many different levels with China culturally, historically, and also governmentally. The Chinese Government was known to be on a very good relationship with the Taliban Government prior to our driving it out. There are a number of reports about Chinese economic projects in Afghanistan right now. Could you give us a summation of the nature of the relationship between China and Afghanistan and in terms of China cooperating with us in the program that you're putting forward right now?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I think that clearly China sees a stable Afghanistan as in their own security interests. The Chinese Government has its own concerns with international terrorist groups that are known to operate in the border regions and inside of Pakistan, that have an impact on Chinese internal security. The Chinese have made very significant investments inside of Afghanistan. They have one major investment right now, a billion dollar investment in a copper mine in Logar Province, and they're looking at potential additional investments in other of the mining sectors of Afghanistan.

Senator WEBB. I'm aware of that project. It's an interesting one to follow.

Are they cooperating with us on a government-to-government level with respect to what we're attempting to do here?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. We have an active dialogue with the Chinese Government, as we do with many others, in terms of the overall development strategy and political strategy in Afghanistan.

Senator WEBB. So are they proactively cooperating with the approach that we're taking? That's the question. Are you aware?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. They have their economic interests, which they've put investments into in Afghanistan——

Senator WEBB. Excuse me, but my time is up. Just as a question of fact, has there been a proactive announcement of any sort from China with respect to the policy that we're attempting to put into place?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. We have a good policy dialogue with the Chinese over Afghanistan——

Senator WEBB. Has there been a statement, yes or no, in terms of supporting what we're doing?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I would not say that their level of engagement in Afghanistan is on the level in terms of our——

Senator WEBB. Just answer, if you would, please. Has there been a statement to your knowledge from the Chinese Government that they support what we are attempting to do?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I'm not aware of policy——

Senator WEBB. Thank you.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY.—not aware of policy statements from the Chinese.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Webb.

Senator Chambliss.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, it's good to see you in this part of the world. Ambassador Eikenberry, thanks for your hospitality. General McChrystal, thanks for Thanksgiving dinner. We enjoyed visiting with 68,000 of your and my closest friends. It was a great day, and I want to second what you said about the morale of your troops. It's unbelievable that, in spite of the difficulties that we've had in Afghanistan, are continuing to have and will have, the morale over there is spectacular. I think a lot of that is attributable to leadership.

General McChrystal, we had the opportunity to meet with some of your team that you put in place. First of all, let me just ask you. I know a lot of these folks have been hand-picked by you. Do you have your team in place? I don't expect you to discuss individuals or specifics, but is your team in place there now? Do you have what you want?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I do. I've been extraordinarily well-supported, not only by the leaders and organizations who provided me the people, but by the families who've given them up for this period.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Resource-wise, of course we know you're going to have to plus up as you bring additional troops, but where are you from the standpoint of having the equipment that you need to carry out your mission?

General MCCHRYSTAL. With the additional forces that have been approved, we're going to have to work through getting additional MRAPs. We're going to continue to increase our ISR equipment, and some other things. But it is generally on track, Senator.

Senator CHAMBLISS. I want you to walk through with us this issue of building up of the Afghan troops, both the military and the security police, because I went back and read your report again and also read your testimony from today and heard what you've had to say, and obviously the critical point that we can seriously think

about turning that country over to the Afghan people from the standpoint of security—not governance, but from the standpoint of security—is the point in time when the military as well as the security police are trained to the point to be able to protect the citizens of Afghanistan.

In your report you indicated that at that point in time we had about 94,000 Afghan military personnel trained. Is that still in the range of where we are?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, Senator.

Senator CHAMBLISS. You indicated that we had about 84,000 ANP trained. Again, is that in the range of where we are?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We're a little higher on the police now. It's in the low 90,000s.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Now, of those numbers, General, what percentage of that can we really count on? What's the hard-core number that you can say, "go hold and secure X province" or whatever?

General MCCHRYSTAL. For the Afghan army, we work with a calculus of about 77 percent present for duty. There are some not available in training, some that, in fact, are not available because they've gone AWOL and different challenges. But it's pretty good. So a significant percentage of that 93,000 or 94,000 we can put out on actual operations.

On the ANP, it's less, and that is because the level of training and the commitment that we've had over time is much newer and much more immature. So while there may be most of the 92,000 or 93,000 ANP currently on the payroll out in their jobs, the ones that I would say are effective is smaller than that. They have a drug problem, they have a few other things.

Senator CHAMBLISS. On the military side, are the Taliban paying their soldiers more than we're paying Afghan troops?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, there's no set pay scale, but by our intelligence they are paying them the equivalent of about 300 U.S. dollars a month, and that is higher than we are paying Afghan army or police.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Do we intend to ratchet that pay up so that we can at least compete financially with the Taliban?

General MCCHRYSTAL. In coordination with the Government of Afghanistan, we just almost doubled Afghan army and police training. It's at parity now. It's less than $300 a month, but it's much closer.

Senator CHAMBLISS. I'd like for you to go through some benchmarks relative to these training numbers. My understanding is you eventually want to get to 240,000 military and 160,000 police. You indicated to Senator McCain that you're still on the timeline of 2013 of accomplishing those numbers. But looking at where we are today and knowing that in 2010, the end of 2010, you're going to assess the situation on the ground, the biggest part of that assessment is going to be the number of military and security police that you have available to be assigned to different areas to start transitioning to them.

How many do you expect to have trained by the end of 2010 from both the military and security police standpoint?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, for the Afghan army our goal is 134,000 soldiers in the force trained, all have gone through initial

entry training, and through partnering we expect to be able to raise the effectiveness of each of their force's individuals and organizations. But about 134,000. Of that, obviously less are actually in units in the field, but a good significant percentage would be.

Sir, of the police, I expect to have us get over 100,000. They are currently authorized 98,000. Expect to get approval to increase that to the low 100,000 to 110,000 range. I think the biggest progress we can make in police, though, won't be in aggregate numbers. It will be in improving their leadership, improving their levels of training.

We were only partnering with about 20 percent of the police as of this summer. We are increasing that dramatically with the forces that the President approved in March, and we will increase that significantly again with these additional forces that have come forward.

Senator CHAMBLISS. In your report to the President on August 30, you indicated by October 2010 you wanted to get to that 134,000. So the additional troops that are being sent are not going to plus up that number in your mind relative to the number of military folks you can have trained?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, we don't believe that we can speed it up any faster than the 134,000 about a year from now, October 2010. But we are going to put a significant portion of the force that the President just authorized into both the training base, where they get initial training, and then the rest of the force will essentially all be partnering.

Senator CHAMBLISS. One of the areas where you're going to send some of these 30,000 additional troops is down into Helmand, where you're obviously having a very tough time, a very tough fight down there, where the Marine Corps deployed some additional marines recently. Let's assume that you have great success there. Assume you have great success against the Haqqani network over in RC-East. General, if you have that success and they get to the border and they cross the border into Pakistan, what do we have to have from the Pakistan military on the other side of that border to really accomplish our mission and meet the challenge that you've laid out there?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, what I'm seeking the Government of Pakistan to do is essentially be intolerant of the Haqqani network. The Haqqanis are Afghans. They want a sphere of influence from the Khost bowl all the way up into Kabul. That's their aspiration. They live in northern Waziristan, in the Miram Shah area, and they have a sphere of influence there. They have had historic relations with al Qaeda and now with the TTP.

What I am hopeful that the Pakistani Government will do is be intolerant of the existence of the Haqqani network inside Pakistan. If they will prosecute that policy, I believe inside Afghanistan we can deal with the remainder of the Haqqani network.

Senator CHAMBLISS. And Helmand?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, in Helmand—one point I'd want to make. You're right, the Marine Corps and our British partners and the Danes and others—it's a team effort down there—we're not reinforcing failure; we're reinforcing success down there. We're ex-

panding the areas. The additional forces are going to let us expand so that we have contiguous security zones.

There's a significant area that I want to get at as soon as we get the first marine forces in and we're going to do that, and that's going to send not only a powerful operational pulse to us, but it's going to send a powerful communications network or message to not only the narcotraffickers but to the Taliban.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Chambliss.

Senator McCaskill.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for your service to our country. While I think the President made the best choice, I think we have to remember that he made the best choice among a lot of bad choices.

I would like to speak a little bit about contracting as it relates to the Afghans that are being hired. Following up a little bit on Senator Chambliss's line of questioning, I know the Joint Contracting Command has issued directives to some contractors, especially on security personnel, that at least half of the contracting force must be from the area, not just Afghans but Afghans in the immediate vicinity of the bases that we're hiring them to perform security on.

I know that for the other civilian contractors we're running at a very, very high percentage of Afghans. It is a marked and much different situation than we had in Iraq. Now, it's my understanding that President Karzai has expressed frustration with this because these contractors are paying more than the military police and the army. So it is even worse than us competing against the Taliban; we're competing against ourselves since, as you have clearly stated, the most important part of this mission is to add to the police and the army.

So how are we going to fix this problem?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, two points. What you're raising is very important. It's very important. First of all, President Karzai said in his inauguration speech that he would like to move forward and over the next several years take these various contracting companies, foreign contracting, private security companies, and move those under a more formal licensing from the Government of Afghanistan. We fully support that. It will be difficult to try to agree upon the standards, but we see examples where it can work and we think that's the direction that we should be going.

That's very consistent with the idea over the next several years about Afghanistan taking further steps to really reclaim its full sovereignty, getting its army out front, its police out front. Private security contractors is another issue.

Second, with regard to our own embassy policies, we're already working very hard, wherever we can, to try to take any kind of security contract group that is expatriate and we're trying to move that in the direction now where there's increasing numbers of Afghans, beginning with the strategic detachment for our U.S. embassy.

Senator MCCASKILL. You haven't addressed the problem, though. I'm somebody, I'm an Afghan, and I am toying with whether or not I want to continue to be a hanger-on with the Taliban or I want to join the good side. I look and I can go and get trained as a police

officer, or I can get hired—I have a little bit of English, just a little bit—or I can get hired for more money watching an American base.

That's not hard. I go for the more money watching the American base, or even a more extreme example, which is even more frustrating, I can peel potatoes in the mess and make more money than taking up arms on behalf of my country.

I understand that this was great in theory, but in executing this policy to use Afghans aren't we denying ourselves success in our own mission?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. When I talked about the move towards Afghan licensing of security companies, that would address—I didn't explain that, Senator. That would be a move to try to address what you're getting at then, pay structures that are inconsistent with the national security——

Senator MCCASKILL. What about on our other kinds of contracts? What about the LOGCAP contract and all the people that are being hired in terms of moving supplies and food and all of those services? How are we addressing this pay disparity, that they're making more from us than they could make by joining forces with the Afghan Government?

General MCCHRYSTAL. You've hit something that's very, very important, and I bring it back to counterinsurgency and unity of effort. Counterinsurgency is a complex system. Every time you change one thing, it has intended and unintended effects somewhere else.

Senator MCCASKILL. Right.

General MCCHRYSTAL. What we have done since 2001 is come in with all good intentions, and someone is given a requirement to do something like build a school. The quickest and most efficient way to do that particular task may be to hire people from outside Afghanistan. It may be to pay a higher wage because you can get it done faster. But the unintended consequences are that people who would be school teachers or people who would be soldiers pick up and move into something that is not effective or efficient for the nation for the long haul.

What has happened in Afghanistan is a number of things are now out of balance. We have doctors and educated people doing things because they could make money, usually for the international community, but they're not taking their rightful place in the economic system overall.

Senator MCCASKILL. Right.

General MCCHRYSTAL. This is where we have to improve unity of effort because when you aren't unified, decisions are made that seem to make sense, but it's very complex because it's not just U.S. military, it's not just U.S. Government, it's international community, and then, in some cases, just straight business interests.

Senator MCCASKILL. I hope that you get with the Joint Contracting Command and discuss this because I hate that we could be working against ourselves on this. I get it that it was a good idea in isolation, but, as you said, it's like a lot of other things, there's always unintended consequences and I think we need to be realistic about the unintended consequences of this policy.

On CERP funds, when I first came to this committee it was explained to me this was walking-around money for people on the

ground to help. I remember General Petraeus explaining it to me, it would be like somebody realizing if they helped fix a storefront in Baghdad that could do more to stabilize that neighborhood than many other things we could be doing, and for them to be able to do that quickly and efficiently is great.

What has happened in Afghanistan with the $1.6 billion we've spent there, now 67 percent of that money is being spent on projects that are bigger than a half a million dollars. We are doing big stuff. I'm very worried that we don't have a singular database between USAID and the military on these projects. I'm worried that the training for CERP was about committing funds, but not about monitoring or oversight of these large projects.

General, who is the person that signs off on sometimes multi-million dollar projects that are much bigger than fixing a window on a storefront, or much bigger than what I believe CERP was originally intended to do?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Inside my command now, it goes by levels of spending. I sign some. Others have to go to General Petraeus for approval. But I absolutely agree that there is a need for walking-around money kind of CERP, and then there is a need for larger projects that particularly enable COIN.

I bring up roads. Sometimes people ask me, "how can you build a road with CERP?" In fact, sometimes building a road is the best COIN thing we can do. I'm pretty proud of where we've gone. Ambassador Eikenberry and my teams have pulled together the review of all the money that's spent, USAID and CERP, because it's looked at together now. We don't spend CERP money without their team on it, and we're allowed to be part of the USAID part.

It's not perfect, Senator, I'm not going to kid you.

But I think we have come a long way and understand the importance of targeting that money effectively.

Senator MCCASKILL. I think that's great. I'm going to continue to keep a very close eye on that, because I think there's going to be some problems if you don't stay joined at the hip on this particularly. I get the insurgency strategy, but I don't think the military ever envisioned training people to oversee large construction projects. That was why USAID got its mission. So I want to be careful that we don't drift too far away, especially if you guys are working together.

I hope you're handing off to USAID where appropriate.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCaskill.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for your service. When our colleagues go over to visit, I would just make a recommendation to committee members. If you get a chance, go to the Bagram Confinement Facility.

General McChrystal, you have done a great job. I wish we had jails like that in South Carolina. It really is a very impressive facility, and I want to commend you and your staff and the embassy, working together, to come up with a new detainee policy that I think will help the war effort. You've done a good job there.

The narcotics court, where we're doing some of the high-profile narcotics cases, well-vetted judges, secure environment. Obviously,

we need to expand that into the corruption area, but those are two facilities I think where you can see some real success. So I want to commend you both for that.

Now, to make sure I understand the way forward, because it's been pretty difficult, quite frankly, to figure out what the rules are going forward, but I think I have a better understanding today. July 2011, it is my understanding that we're going to begin withdrawing troops on that date, according to President Obama. The only question is how many and how fast. Is that right, General McChrystal?

General MCCHRYSTAL. That's my understanding, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. So let it be said that the policy going forward is that in July 2011 somebody in Afghanistan, even if it's just one guy, somebody's coming home, right?

General MCCHRYSTAL. That's correct.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. On a scale of 1 to 10, failure in Afghanistan, a failed state, what would that mean to our national security, 1 being inconsequential, 10 being catastrophic?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe it would be a 9 or 10, not just because I believe al Qaeda would move back in, but also because I believe regional instability as it would spill over into Pakistan and other areas would be absolutely negative to our interests.

Senator GRAHAM. Ambassador Eikenberry, what would you say to that question?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I concur with General McChrystal's assessment.

Senator GRAHAM. How many Taliban are there, generally speaking? I know you don't have exact numbers.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Our estimate right now is between 24,000 and 27,000 full-time fighters, with some people obviously part-time.

Senator GRAHAM. How much of the country do they have significant influence over?

General MCCHRYSTAL. They affect people's lives significantly in much of the south—Kandahar, Helmand, Gosni, Zabul, up to Kabul. They do so in significant parts of RC-East, and then in patches of north and west—Kanduz, Baklan, a little bit in the Balkh area, out in Bagdiz and out in Ferra. In the north, it doesn't change the pattern of life significantly for the average Afghan who lives up there, except in selected areas.

In the south, because of their ability to impact things like the Ring Road and commerce, it is a significant impact on everything, the way everybody lives.

Senator GRAHAM. Is every Taliban a Pashtun?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The vast majority, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. So that's one reason why they're a problem, because that's where they live.

Now, how big is their air force? They don't have one. I don't mean to be cute. They don't have an air force. They don't have a navy. Their biggest weapons system would be what?

General MCCHRYSTAL. They have rockets, ground-launched rockets, 122s, things like that.

Senator GRAHAM. How have they been able to accomplish what they've been able to accomplish with thousands of coalition forces,

90,000 Afghan army folks, 90,000 Afghan police? How have they been able to come back so strongly?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Several reasons, I believe. The first is there weren't that many coalition forces or Afghan security forces.

Senator GRAHAM. That's a good point. If you had to rate the reasons in terms of the majority, would it be lack of security forces on our part?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I would put that right with weakness in governance at the local level in Afghanistan. The two together, weakness in security forces and inadequate governance, opened the door for them to come in.

Senator GRAHAM. Why haven't previous commanders asked for more troops if it was that obvious?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I haven't asked commanders. I know there were some previous requests tabled.

Senator GRAHAM. At the end of the day what part of the lack of governance has led—is it at least an equal contributing factor to them coming back, a lack of the Afghan Government to deliver basic services?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I believe that it is.

Senator GRAHAM. One of the reasons they've been able to seize power and influence is they can provide services the Afghan Government is unable to provide, like resolving legal disputes; is that true?

General MCCHRYSTAL. That's correct.

Senator GRAHAM. So in the next 18 months, to roll them back we're going to put combat power in that we've never had, right? We're going to do the governance piece differently than we've ever done; right, Ambassador Eikenberry?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. We're going to make efforts, yes, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. On the legal system front, there are less than 500 lawyers in all of Afghanistan as I understand it. Is 18 months realistic for us to basically recapture lost momentum in the area of governance and security, knowing that at the end of the 18 months we're going to be withdrawing no matter what?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I think when you look, I think we can reverse momentum, I absolutely do. I think the most important thing is much of what happens in an area determines who secures that area. If we secure that area and then we can provide the opportunity for the Government of Afghanistan, with assistance, to start to build those nascent legal capacities and what-not, I think that is much of it.

What has happened is a vacuum of security and a vacuum of governance together.

Senator GRAHAM. Yes, sir. That vacuum is being filled in different forms throughout the country.

Do you feel totally comfortable with the idea that the enemy now knows that we're going to be withdrawing, but they don't know at what pace; that that's not going to compromise your ability to be successful?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I think more importantly, if we carefully articulate and strongly articulate the concept of a strategic partnership over the long haul, that's a much more powerful idea. In the

short term, we have a tremendous additional capability that's being fielded in addition to what we're already using, as you saw when you were out. Then the idea of a strategic partnership, in my view, that takes the strategic horizon away from the insurgents.

Senator GRAHAM. Let's go down on some of the constraints that both of you will be working under. I want the American public to know the hand you've been dealt and the assignments available to you. Number one, no matter how many Afghan army folks are on the payroll or numbers on a piece of paper, we're only using 150 in this new operation. So I think that says a lot about the state of the army.

Another rule you have to operate under is the 96-hour rule. As I understand the policy, ISAF forces have to turn over a detainee within 96 hours of capture to the Afghan Government, and all they can do in field interrogation is basically ask them basic questions. Is that policy going to be in effect as we move forward?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, we're working through that policy, how it will affect U.S. forces as we try to move additional forces under ISAF. I'm working with General Petraeus on what the right calculus is there. In the long term, as you mentioned, we now call it the Detainee Facility in Parwan. We changed the name of the Bagram facility. That will go to Afghan control, and with our assistance they will run that facility. We will help provide them expertise, particularly in things like exploitation, effective use of intelligence.

I believe in the long term that's the most effective thing we can do, is build their capacity to do counterinsurgency when we partner with them.

Senator GRAHAM. My time has expired. Could you send the committee a list of the rules of engagement that each country operates under now and in the future, so we could evaluate what these new troops are actually able to do in terms of engaging the enemy?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Their caveats and what-not?

Senator GRAHAM. If you could do that.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Certainly, sir.

[The information referred to follows:]

[Deleted.]

Senator GRAHAM. God bless. You have a big challenge and we'll be pulling for you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Graham.

Senator Kirk.

Senator KIRK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General McChrystal, Ambassador Eikenberry, let me render my own salute to you for patriotism individually and the people that you represent. Thank you for your patience this afternoon.

My first question, General, would go to you. It's a follow-up basically on the chairman's question about the disparity of troops, U.S. troops to Afghan troops. I understand we're working as hard as we possibly can to redress that imbalance. Just so we can understand perhaps what it is we're looking at here and what to prepare for, is there a risk until we close that gap in the trainers and the combat troops that our troops will be viewed more as occupiers and therefore we may incur or incite further insurgents and violence

and therefore perhaps even put our guys and gals in more harm's way than otherwise?

General MCCHRYSTAL. There are several components to that. The first is, we know that how we are viewed will be based on how we operate, more than the numbers we have. So I think it's very important that our forces operate with a level of cultural respect and clear desire to protect the population. They're doing a good job of that, although we obviously can always continue to get better.

As we work with the Afghans, they want to be secured by Afghans, but they are tolerant. They understand the need for coalition forces to do it until Afghan security forces are available to do it. So I would say that we need to continually communicate to them that, while we are doing this in the bridging period, that we are working as hard as we can to create their forces.

I think if they didn't see and feel that effort was real and significant, that it would be difficult to continue to win their support.

Senator KIRK. Just a follow-up. How do we communicate? Do we communicate through our trainees, to the population? Or is it we communicate as best we can in our combat gear that, we're really here to help you and not to occupy?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We do it on a number of levels. We start, of course, at the official interaction at the government level, then all the way down to our forces in the field and Ambassador Eikenberry's great civilians as we partner, to interface as much as we can, as often as we can—shuras at the local level, just day-to-day interactions.

We also do a number of communications activities, where we use different media ability to communicate the reality of what we're doing to the Afghan people. I participate in some of that. I talk to youth forums, things like that. In every case, we try to give them a clear view of what our real efforts are and our real intentions.

Senator KIRK. Thank you.

This is also on training, because I understood that one of the problems or challenges that we face in our training is the fact that the middle level commanders, if you will, unlike our chain of command that's pretty direct and authoritarian, that a lot of these folks are cronies and that they're appointed through favoritism and so forth. I wondered first, is that an accurate representation? If not, maybe you could correct it. To the degree that it is accurate, how do we react to that? How long would it take to train and develop the kind of chain of command that we feel comfortable then handing off to, to know that the population is secure and they're doing their job?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, we have an extraordinary military in the United States. So whenever we try to compare ours to anybody else's, it's very difficult because at every level in the chain of command we just over many years built a culture that is very effective.

What I do recognize in the Afghan army and even more in the Afghan police is in many cases there's nepotism, there's corruption, there's inefficiency, and there isn't yet a culture that automatically produces those leaders. Yet for all the times we see challenges, I go out in Garmsir—Mr. Chairman, I think you met the young Afghan battalion commander, an extraordinary professional. Those

kinds of leaders are the future, and if we partner effectively we'll grow those kinds.

It will take them a generation or two to get to where I think they want to be. But we can make progress.

Senator KIRK. Thank you.

One other thing about this strategy, and I know you and I agree and I think the Ambassador agrees that this will only work if we can work it by, with, and through the Afghan Government. For everything I can see—a fraudulent sort of installation, an economy that's dependent on opium, corruption rampant throughout the government—am I wrong to say that we are taking a leap of faith here with President Karzai, and that my sense of it is—I have absolutely no doubt about the strength and the courage of our folks and what we're going to do, but the way I look at it, if there's a weak link in this formula, it's the bet we're placing on President Karzai.

Can you tell me if that gives you pause, and if so, your degree of confidence that this at the end of the day is going to be a sound bet and not that we're betting on the wrong horse here?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, the challenge of establishing accountable governance in Afghanistan goes beyond one individual. This is a societal problem. This is a problem of a state that was utterly decimated by three decades of warfare. It's a state that has two generations really without education. It's a very profound challenge.

We have programs that we're partnered with the Afghans to try to help them to develop accountable governance. We're making progress in certain areas, in the areas of law enforcement. We have a very robust training program, us with the international community and the Afghans, to try to help develop a more competent civil administration. It's a priority area for President Karzai. We support that.

We have major efforts to try to improve the financial accountability of ministries. We're making progress in those areas.

But against that, it remains an extraordinary challenge. We are encouraged with President Karzai's commitment in his inauguration address to try to place more emphasis on this area, and certainly political leadership and political emphasis is going to be absolutely indispensable to make further progress. But it's going to remain a challenge.

Senator KIRK. General, is that good by you?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir.

Senator KIRK. I thank you very much. My time has expired. I wish you Godspeed and thank you once again.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Kirk.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Let me first of all make sure you understand that I'm probably not alone in disagreeing with the comments made by the Senator who was somewhat critical of the way the CERP is put together. The CERP, train-and-equip, and IMET have been three of my favorite programs, and I think I've been somewhat responsible for advancing the CERP program and changing also the CCIF in other areas.

What's good about the program is they don't have to go through all that stuff. I've probably been over there as many times as anyone else has. When I talked to the commanders in the field, they say that anything we can do in 3 days instead of 3 months is going to have 10 times the value. So I'm hoping that you will continue to talk about the success of that program.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I'd like to throw something in on there. It's important for several reasons. One, whatever you do quickly the Afghans appreciate more, because they understand. It also increases the credibility of the local leader, the decentralized leader we have forward. If that person can say yes and then produce quickly, it raises his ability to do future interactions and leverage. That's one of the huge values of it.

Senator INHOFE. We'll continue to try to enhance that program.

Several people have mentioned the agricultural development team, but not really giving it the credit that I think it's due. People talk about the negative things. From 2007, the number of hectares that was in poppy development went from 193,000 to 157,000 to 123,000—a reduction of 22 percent in 3 years.

Now, I'm particularly proud of this because as we speak we have 60 of our Oklahoma 45th Infantry Division in a plane going over there for the second time. They come back and, Mr. Ambassador, they tell me the success of the story and the happiness that is generated by their relationships.

So I'd like to ask you, of course, if you agree with that assessment.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, I can go first. We absolutely agree with the assessment. The agricultural development teams, to include from the 45th of Oklahoma, are really making a profound difference.

We have a very good civil-military integrated agricultural approach. Each element brings their own strength. The United States Department of Agriculture, they have tremendous technical expertise. They know how to build agricultural systems. Our USAID team members, they know how to deliver programs. What these agricultural development teams are able to do, they take the best of the military—they have their security, they have mobility—they can get out into parts of the farm areas of Afghanistan that are insecure.

Senator INHOFE. They've actually had their hands in the dirt before. These guys know what they're doing.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Absolutely. It's a great compliment to our overall ag strategy. Indispensable.

Senator INHOFE. Good. We want to just continue to see that success take place.

General McChrystal, I asked this question when Secretary Gates was here and I didn't get the answer I felt real comfortable with. I just would like to have you give me an idea. You put together threat assessments when you make recommendations, threats low, medium, high. When you made the recommendation at 40,000, what was the threat assessment that you would have said was attached to that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Moderate, Senator.

Senator INHOFE. Moderate, all right. Then 30,000 would be what?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We didn't try to grade it in great detail.

Senator INHOFE. All right, it would be below that.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir.

Senator INHOFE. I think that I would agree with that and I think that we need to have that for our own use to quantify some of the successes.

Now, for only the second time since President Obama has been in office, I want to compliment him and tell him how pleased I am. I think there have been some unfair questions in this meeting, concerning the end game, because I was upset with the end game until West Point. In West Point, the speech that he made—and I'm quoting right now—the last thing he said in terms of that: "Just as we have done in Iraq, we will execute this transition responsibly, taking into account conditions on the ground."

He said that. That's not you saying it. I know both of you agree with that, but that's the President saying it. To me, that means that the conditions on the ground are very important in any decisions to be made. It's not a calendar decision. It's a condition.

Do you agree with my interpretation of that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I do, Senator.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I do as well, Senator.

Senator INHOFE. You had made the statement, General McChrystal, "We are in this thing to"—well, actually it was Secretary Gates: "We're in this thing to win. We intend to partner for a long time to come." Keeping in mind, there will be troops over there for a long—we still have troops in Bosnia, in Kosovo, and some of these other places.

But he said: "We are in this to win." Would you define "win"?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Absolutely, and I absolutely agree with the Secretary. I would define winning as when we have our partners in Afghanistan, the government and the ANSF, to the point where they can defend their sovereignty with very limited help from the outside; obviously a strategic partnership, but they can take the strong lead.

What that then does is it allows them to enable the people of Afghanistan to build the nation, to shape their lives as they want to do that.

Senator INHOFE. That's good. Do you agree with that, Mr. Ambassador?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, I would say that it's very similar to what General McChrystal outlined: The Government of Afghanistan has the capacity to take responsibility for its own security, the Taliban's been degraded to levels that are manageable by their own security forces; most important, al Qaeda is prevented from regaining safe havens inside of Afghanistan.

Senator INHOFE. Mr. Ambassador, the last time you and I talked you were in uniform, and I would just compliment both of you on the great job that you're doing.

Lastly, because my time is about to expire, as people are talking about the non-U.S. participants we're going to try to—the plan is trying to get to the 7,000 figure. As I look through this thing—and I have a breakdown that at my request I got—Italy and Georgia

are both at 1,000. All the rest of them, Poland, the rest, are way below that, considerably below that. If you add them all up, that's 4,300. That was my math, so I might be wrong on that.

To get to 7,000, what can you do now? Is there any obvious thing you can do that you haven't done before? Because I know the effort has been there before, but is there something that's open to us now that wasn't there before? Perhaps one suggestion is that when the President made his commitment he first called the heads of state of our NATO and other allies over there, and I think that perhaps that might have changed their enthusiasm for sending troops and participating. What do you think?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, I believe our level of clear commitment on the part of the United States is a big part of the calculus. I think another thing we can do is we can encourage our partners to contribute where they can most effectively. What I am doing is asking for additional help, the training realm is initial entry training and partnering, because in some cases, that fits very well with what partners can provide.

Senator INHOFE. Do you agree with the fact that the President called these other heads of state and told them what he was going to say and what he was going to do was helpful?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I certainly do, Senator. Secretary Clinton, several days ago, with General McChrystal and I in attendance, was at the foreign ministers conference of NATO, and this was the first foreign ministers conference of NATO in Brussels since the President made his West Point speech. I think all of our sense was the reception there with General McChrystal's articulation of the strategy, understanding of what our way ahead was, it seemed to resonate well. So we left Brussels with some confidence.

Senator INHOFE. That's good. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Udall is next.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon, gentlemen. As many of us have said up here, I want to thank you for your service. I look forward as well to joining Senator McCain and Senator Lieberman in their upcoming visits to Afghanistan as you begin to implement this important strategy.

I know that we've all talked about, Secretary Gates and both of you, the limits of our ability to actually defeat the Taliban. There's been a lot of talk about reconciliation with the Taliban and how we drive wedges between those who are interested in the Taliban and its presence for political purposes versus those who are eager to push the forces of chaos and destruction and hatred.

I know that we're not in the best position to pursue reconciliation right now, given that the Taliban are strong and they lack an incentive to change sides. But I'd like to think we're doing more in this area than we have been and that we're working closely with the Afghan Government. Could both of you comment on my question?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I certainly can. I can start. I don't agree when people say we cannot defeat the Taliban. I absolutely believe that we—and I mean the Government of Afghanistan with coalition help—can defeat the Taliban. I define that by meaning putting the

Taliban in a position where they can no longer accomplish their objective of threatening the Government of Afghanistan. I believe that's absolutely achievable.

I believe en route to that, as we reverse the momentum that they perceive that they have now, we will weaken the resolve of many of the members of the Taliban. I think it's important in that process as we talk about reintegration that there be opportunities for Afghans who might have sided with the Taliban, whether they fought with them or they just supported them, to be able to come back under the constitution of Afghanistan, under a program that must be supervised by the government, with respect and with honor, not to feel like they are criminals being brought back in, but instead being brought into the political fold.

I think giving an opportunity for that if they are willing to meet the conditions of living under an Afghan Government with a constitution, I think makes a lot of sense, and we're working very closely with the government to do that.

Senator UDALL. Ambassador Eikenberry?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Again, Senator, I'd share General McChrystal's assessment that it's going to be important to have momentum in order then to push those fighters and mid-level commanders that are out there right now opposing the legitimate Government of Afghanistan to make the right choice. But with that momentum, I think that the push won't have to be that great in many areas.

It was interesting, during this past presidential election in Afghanistan there were 42 presidential candidates and they were all unified on one issue: All 42 talked about reintegration and reconciliation. So there's a desire out there among the Afghan people to try to find a way to achieve peace.

I know that President Karzai is very committed to it. He did mention it, again, in his inauguration address. We hope to soon have the delivery or decision by President Karzai to have the formal establishment within his government of a reconciliation, reintegration commission. With that then, I know that General McChrystal and NATO–ISAF are very prepared to provide full support in an array of areas in order to help the reintegration program achieve success.

Senator UDALL. Ambassador, if I might follow up on those comments. There is a perception among many ethnic Pashtuns that they don't really have a meaningful role in the central government, particularly in security institutions. Is this something we're attuned to? Do you agree with that assessment? Is this something that President Karzai could take the lead on, given that he is a Pashtun as I understand it?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I would say that if you look at President Karzai's cabinet, there is a very strong representation of Pashtuns. For instance, the Minister of Defense is a Pashtun, the Minister of Interior is a Pashtun.

Separate though from that, is there a feeling of disconnection from many of the Pashtun population from their central government? I think that President Karzai would say that there is. But that's the question of insecurity right now that exists in the Pashtun tribal areas, and that's a very important part, if we have

success in the year ahead and the next 18 months of further delivering security, that will have profound positive political impacts because it will help bring the Pashtun population then closer to their central government.

Senator UDALL. I would note for the record that the three Senators sitting right here met with you in May when we were in Afghanistan. We had a chance to meet with both of those ministers, Minister Wardak and Minister Atmar, and were very impressed with their plans and with the way they carried themselves, and we hope that that continues.

General, if I could turn back to Pakistan. For me, my support is based as much on the fact that Pakistan is inextricably linked to success in Afghanistan. Pakistan's reaction, is critical to the President's speech and his new strategy. I imagine that the comment that Prime Minister Gilani made last week where he said: "We need more clarity on it and when we get more clarity on it we can see what we can implement on that plan," I hope that was for public consumption.

Are either of you concerned by his statement?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Not by his statement, Senator. I talk routinely with Pakistan military leadership and I believe that we always have to work through aligning our campaigns, but I believe that they have a shared interest in our success in Afghanistan, as we do in their success.

Senator UDALL. Ambassador, would you have any thoughts on that?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. No, I couldn't add to what General McChrystal laid out.

Senator UDALL. Let me move to the concept that the President proposed, which was to move the bell curve to the left, in other words get the troops into theater faster and then leave faster. I have a few questions about shifting the bell curve. I apologize for throwing them all at you at once. Maybe some you will have to take for the record.

Are you confident you can expedite the deployment of these additional 30,000 troops? What sort of challenges would this pose for you logistically? Does this depend on a timely withdrawal from Iraq? General Odierno stated if the elections get pushed back this could make things more complicated in terms of getting our troops out as scheduled. In other words, would a slower withdrawal from Iraq impact the troop buildup in Afghanistan?

I see my time has run out. Gentlemen, if you want to try and answer one or two of those and maybe field the rest of them for the record, I'd appreciate it.

[The information referred to follows:]

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, I would just say that the deployment part is very complex, but we have a really good team working it and I'm very comfortable we're going to get the forces in as fast as possible.

Senator UDALL. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Udall.

Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, Ambassador, it's great to see you. Like everyone else here, I was planning to reminisce about having seen you in Afghanistan in August. But since I saw both of you yesterday at the White House, it seems it's been taken over by events.

Let me thank you both for your extraordinary service, which is so appreciated. I cannot imagine our having better leaders in Afghanistan than the two of you and I'm very grateful for your work.

I also would guess, having seen part of your hearing on the House side earlier today, that you're eager to return to Afghanistan and get on with the job, rather than appearing here in Washington before the House and the Senate.

General, you have such great knowledge and deep understanding of Afghanistan. You mentioned in your statement today that you were first deployed there in 2002 and that you've commanded troops there every single year since then, which is truly extraordinary. I also know that you've studied closely the history of Afghanistan. In fact, one of the first times that we met you told me you were reading "The Great Game" and that you were seeking to learn from the British and the Soviet experience in Afghanistan.

At one point the Soviets had more than 100,000 troops in Afghanistan and yet they did not prevail. Now, clearly our goals in Afghanistan are completely different from the goals of the British in Afghanistan—the British and the Soviets. But still, that history of the British and the Soviet experience gives me pause, no matter how brilliant our leaders, how brave our troops, how successful the civilian surge.

Could you share with us what lessons you take away from the failed British and Soviet experiences in Afghanistan, and why you believe that our experience can end up in a more positive way?

General MCCHRYSTAL. One of the things I have learned is to be very humble about thinking that we have the right idea, the better idea, and to be very careful as we go forward. I think the common theme that I see that caused failure in the past is when the Afghan people come to the conclusion that an outside force are either occupiers or they are culturally in opposition to the currents of Afghan history. In fact, Afghan leaders, Afghans, have been toppled because they went against the grain of the sense of the people, the social fabric of the people.

My view of both the British experience and the Soviet experience is, there came a time when there coalesced a sense, almost antibodies, in Afghan society against their presence. In the Soviet case, we can't be too superior thinking about this because they did a lot of things correctly. They did a lot of tactical things correctly. They did a lot of programs correctly. But at the end of the day they couldn't change the perception that they were outside occupiers trying to impose on Afghanistan a foreign system, a foreign thought process, in this case it was communism, but it was also a number of other social changes that just ran against the grain of society.

So I think it's very important that, from an overall point of view, we understand how Afghan culture must define itself and we be

limited in our desire to change the fundamentals of it. We have to respect those, and I think that's important.

Then tactically, in the counterinsurgence system, of course the Soviets became fairly heavy-handed and they killed more than a million Afghans in the process. Of course, that worked to cause their defeat. One of the reasons why we're working so hard on counterinsurgency with and respecting the people is because we understand it's only with their partnership that we can be effective here. So it's a very careful strategy, almost admitting what we don't know. What I tell people is every time you go to do something in Afghanistan, realize there's a lot of things going on you don't understand, and don't pretend that it's more simple than it really is.

Senator COLLINS. I think those are very wise lessons indeed.

When I look at the President's plan and his date for beginning the transition and the withdrawal of forces, while I share the concerns of some of my colleagues about the signal that sends, it may in fact be a helpful signal because it shows that we're not like the Soviets, that we're not trying to stay there and impose our way of life on them. So it may cut both ways.

Ambassador, let me ask you about another issue that troubles me gravely. We know that the Taliban is securing funding for its operations from the narcotics trade in Afghanistan. But another significant source is from wealthy individuals and bogus charitable organizations or charitable organizations that have two purposes from the Middle East, from Saudi Arabia, for example.

Do we have a strategy for engaging the countries whose citizens are funneling money to the Taliban fighters?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. In short, yes, we do, Senator. It's a pretty robust strategy. You're correct, sources of Taliban funding right now, it comes from profits from narcotrafficking, increasingly from taxation of areas that they might dominate, and then the third important source of funding is external funding coming from cover nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals from the Gulf and Pakistan itself.

Against that, we have a very vigorous law enforcement effort where we're trying to track finances, and we are working very closely with countries within the Gulf, to include Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and others, in order to try to get at these sources and find ways to shut it down.

Senator COLLINS. Are you optimistic about securing full cooperation from the Gulf countries?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. We're making some progress there, Senator. I wouldn't want to get into the specifics, but if you'd like for the record perhaps we can submit something to you. Progress is being made, but it's difficult. Trying to track finances in any kind of environment is difficult work, but we are making progress.

[The information referred to follows:]

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Collins.

Senator Bill Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Gentlemen, thank you for your service.

Today, Secretary Gates and President Hamed Karzai in Afghanistan had a press conference. I'm going to read to you from the Web site of the New York Times: "President Karzai said that his country would not have the resources to pay for its own security for another 15 to 20 years and would remain dependent on American and NATO financial aid until then."

So how does that comport with what you have announced, given that President Karzai has said this today?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, just four points on that. The first point would be that, as General McChrystal has said, we have to have a long-term relationship with Afghanistan that our leadership has talked about, a long-term diplomatic relationship, an economic and assistance relationship, also a relationship which is one of providing support for the ANA and ANP over time, their security organizations. That will be an effort that we'll do together, we hope, with NATO and with other countries. We don't know exactly what the cost will be, but it will have to be long-term assistance.

The second point is, against that, we recognize that this will be a burden on the Government of Afghanistan. They'll need assistance. So a lot of our economic programs that we are emphasizing right now are aimed at the generation of wealth and at the same time trying to find ways to help the Afghan Government with revenue collection. So we're looking at that.

The third point would be that, with regard to longer-term costs, while I don't know what the order of magnitude is for the cost of an American soldier or marine for 1 year in Afghanistan compared to an ANA soldier or police, but we know the orders of magnitude are probably 20, 30 to 1. So it's clearly, if nothing else, in our own long-term economic interest and certainly in the Afghan interest to continue to help the Afghans stand their police up and their army forces up. That's a pretty good tradeoff. If we're not having to send more U.S. soldiers and marines, but instead Afghan soldiers are on the front line taking their own place, that's a pretty good return.

The fourth point would be, as we move forward and Afghanistan does gain more security perhaps the army and the police of Afghanistan, perhaps they won't need very high levels in the future. Maybe at some point in time 10 years from now the army of Afghanistan might be a smaller force than it is 5 years from now.

Senator BILL NELSON. That's what Charlie Wilson was arguing for in 1989, to keep a presence going. But we pulled out and we made a mistake. Last week I recalled that for Secretary Gates when he was in front of us and he said we're not going to make that mistake again.

Let me ask you, General McChrystal. One of the things that I asked Secretary Gates and Secretary Clinton last week, we have a military force that can be all the more effective, not in nation-building, but in getting things settled down, if we use all the other civilian agencies of government along with NGOs. Do you want to sketch briefly for the committee how we're doing that and to whom you're listening as you set that policy as the commander?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The person I listen to the most is about 3 feet on my right. What we do is, before we even go into an area, we work together to figure out what's going to be required as we

provide security to make it durable, because the governance and development parts need to flow in almost simultaneously.

Of course, our Afghan partners aren't here today, but they're in that same meeting as we try to pull that together. We're working plans for an additional operation in the Central Helmand River Valley now, which will happen later this winter, and the idea is as security elements go in every other aspect is literally waiting to flow in with it and then grow.

It's not easy, so I don't want to paint it as a simple process. But it's very important.

The harder part is coordinating NGOs and other international partners. We do that through PRTs in many cases. We do that through other nations and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is helpful in doing that. But that's one of the areas where we need to continue to seek unity of effort so that every dollar or euro or man-hour of effort is focused towards a single outcome in Afghanistan. We are doing a lot of coordination. UNAMA is part of our planning process. They're in our planning process as we develop our campaign plan.

Senator BILL NELSON. General, let me recommend something for you to think about. You have been so successful with your CERP funds for your commanders. After combat, they have a ready pot of money that they have the authority to build a bridge or to repair a school or whatever, and it's been terrific. Don't we need that same kind of authority for the civilian agencies, Instead of having to go through this requisition process that takes months and months, where the people on the ground can make something happen just like your commanders can?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, I haven't been a civilian since I was 17, so I'd probably be out of my lane. But I absolutely agree that that's the right thing, and I'd defer to my friend.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, you're correct. We're taking measures right now to try to be faster, more responsive. We've gotten great support from Congress. We have what we call the quick response fund which is available to our DOS officers throughout Afghanistan. That's more of a quick spending program.

We're changing the nature of our contracts. Rather than have long, multi-year contracts, we're shifting to 1-year contracts. We get better performance from contractors as a result of that, NGOs that we work with frequently as implementing partners.

The last point I'd make is, with the reorganization of our civilian effort as we talked earlier about this concept of having senior civilian representatives out in regional commands that have really chief of mission kind of authorities within the region. They're a counterpart of the military commander. We're also now looking at ways we might be able to innovate to push then down more of the decision-making and the authorities for developmental assistance funds down to the regional level and perhaps even farther down, closer to the district level.

So we are innovating and in certain areas we may be coming back to Congress and asking for some help.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, Mr. Ambassador, thank you for your outstanding service to our country. You have what is a very challenging job on a good day and there haven't been many good days recently in Afghanistan. But I think the reason that the President and Members of Congress on both sides and the American people are willing to commit to this mission, to this effort, is because they have such a high level of confidence in your leadership. So thank you for your willingness to take that on.

I guess when you get to this point in a hearing pretty much all of the questions that can be asked have been asked. But I want to just touch on a couple of areas that I think are really important to our success.

By the way, just a clarification, too. There was the announcement of the additional NATO troops, but there was a report I think today in The Times of London that more than 1,500 of those extra troops that have been pledged by the allies to back up our surge there are already in the country and have been counted before, so that there may be some double counting going on.

Do you know exactly what that number is and how close that will bring us to the 40,000 number that you had requested, General?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I don't know that right now, Senator.

Senator THUNE. With regard to the NATO allies and the important role that they play in our effort there, one of the things I think that has impeded and inhibited our ability to make the best use of our forces has been some of the caveats that have been attached to some of the troops that have come in from other countries. Of the 43 countries that are allies in this fight, how many of them do have caveats and what are you doing to try and get some of those removed so that we can get everybody engaged more in the fight?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The first thing I'd say is when I deal with it as the coalition commander I'm actually surprised by how little the limitations are compared to the advantages of having the coalition. One of the advantages of the coalition is everybody is a little stronger together, and in the eyes of the Afghans we are a lot more credible than we would be as a single country. Even though clearly the United States is a huge factor, the fact that we are a coalition with the Afghan people I think is key.

Each of the countries brings different strengths and weaknesses. Some have caveats that I have urged be adjusted, give us a little bit more flexibility. Across the force what I've asked is for all countries to look at the policies that they have for their people. In some cases, their forces are not allowed to move out of a geographical area. But if they are partnered with an Afghan Army battalion and they can't move, then there's hesitation to let that ANA battalion move and that takes away from ANA leadership the ability to mass forces for operations, and it's one of the things that we'd asked people to work with.

In other cases there are limitations on night operations or things like that. So what we're doing is asking each of our partners to move more toward full counterinsurgency, and we do have progress in that, and then to look at all their caveats.

Some of our partners as well don't have caveats, but they have limitations in mobility, vehicles, or things like that, and the degree to which we can help them with that enables them to do even more.

Senator THUNE. Of the Afghan security forces—and there's been a lot of focus, as there should be, on getting them trained and ready. That again, I think as we have seen demonstrated in Iraq, is so critical. Are the Afghan security forces willing to take on the Taliban?

General MCCHRYSTAL. They are. The Afghan police die at the highest rate, then the Afghan Army, before coalition forces. They absolutely are.

Senator THUNE. There has been a lot of discussion about also integrating, reconciling elements of the Taliban that might be reconcilable, and I know I think that's been touched on already. But General Petraeus had indicated previously that we lack the nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the Taliban to be able to identify and distinguish between reconcilable and irreconcilable elements.

My understanding is that you have selected retired British General Lamb to head a program of reconciliation with members of the Taliban based on some of the success that he had in Iraq. I'm just wondering if you could provide some of the details of those efforts or at least maybe some of the broad features of the program?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, it's a partnered program, first. It has to be an Afghan program. It has to be under the Government of Afghanistan. So what we'd be doing is empowering them as much as we can with resources, some expertise and experience, and things like that.

What we've stood up with General Lamb is a section in my command. He also has now an additional British two-star general that has been provided, and we have a full element that works with the Government of Afghanistan to help craft their policy, help work this forward, partner with not just the U.S. embassy, but other embassies as well, so that as we go forward we have a program that is not only effective, but it's also understood by people.

Reintegration is really a question of confidence, and it's confidence on multiple levels, as we remember from Iraq. It's first the confidence of the individual who's going to reintegrate, that has to believe that as he comes back in he will be protected from his former Taliban partners, he'll also be protected from anyone in the Government of Afghanistan who might target him or throw him in jail or something.

It's also a question of confidence on the part of the government that the people they bring in are genuine, that they're not seeding the Taliban inside their ranks as well. Then the last part of the confidence is it's to undermine the confidence of the Taliban. So to the degree to which we can start to pull people out and they start to look at each other, it has a very good effect.

But for this reason, it's very important that this program be very carefully thought out and coordinated, because as soon as somebody loses confidence in it, it boomerangs on us.

Senator THUNE. Ambassador, do you have anything to add?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. No, Senator. We're fully engaged with General McChrystal's program. We have a DOS officer that serves as one of General Lamb's staff, and we're optimistic about the potential. It will certainly be predicated upon having some momentum, though, against the Taliban. With that momentum, with a good reintegration program, I think it will be a very important tool.

Senator THUNE. General, one last question—my time's running out. Over the past few years, the demand for persistent ISR capabilities has spurred the Air Force to field unmanned aerial systems (UAS) more rapidly than originally planned. The Air Force now has a goal of fielding enough Predator and Reaper drones by 2012 to man 50 orbits around the clock. The majority of this new capability has been dedicated to Iraq.

As we begin this drawdown in Iraq, the persistent ISR requirement there is not likely to decrease. So with fewer soldiers and marines on the ground that are gathering information, the joint forces are going to rely more heavily on the air component to provide intelligence.

Meanwhile, with the increasing troop presence in Afghanistan, you're going to have the need for persistent ISR in that area of operation, too. So I guess the question is, are you comfortable with the Air Force's current plan to operate 50 of those round-the-clock orbits by 2012 in order to meet the requirements in both Iraq and Afghanistan, or do we need to invest in a UAS capability over and above the current plan to ensure that those requirements are addressed?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, I haven't looked at exactly how they're going to break out around the world. I have looked at the balance between Afghanistan and Iraq. Secretary Gates leads a very focused effort.

The one thing I would say is almost everything we do to increase our ISR capacity, not just the unmanned, but also there's a number of manned aspects, and then there's what we call the part that digests it, or PED. It's people and it's information systems. It takes what we get and turns it into real intelligence. Those programs are expensive, but they are extraordinarily effective and extraordinary value added, because they allow us to operate with smaller numbers of our forces on the ground. The more we have those, we can go after IEDs, we can go after terrorist leaders, we can protect our forces.

So there's almost no amount of ISR in my view that would not be value added to my effort in Afghanistan.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Thune.

Senator Hagan.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you.

General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry, I welcome your testimony and I want to thank you for your sacrifice and your extremely hard work that you do every day on behalf of all of us. As Senator Udall said, Senator Begich and I and others visited Afghanistan and Pakistan back in May, Ambassador Eikenberry, just several days, I think, after you had taken over the post. I wanted to thank you for your hosting us, but I also want you to give my

best wishes to your wife. I think the fact that she is there touring the country with you by your side in a war-torn country says a lot about her character. I also think it speaks volumes to the Afghani women and in committee the Afghani men. So please give her our best wishes.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator HAGAN. We've had some questions concerning the Pashtuns. My understanding is that currently Pashtun recruitment to the ANSF is difficult along the Pashtun tribal belt that, General McChrystal, you mentioned, the southern and southeastern Afghanistan, because the Pashtuns would run the risk of having their families subjected to Taliban retribution.

General McChrystal, can you describe the ethnic composition of the ANSF?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, ma'am. I can get it to you for the record in exact numbers, but we're about 42 percent of the population is Pashtun and almost exactly that is the representation in the army. So Pashtun participation in the army matches it.

[The information referred to follows:]

The objective is to closely match the composition of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) with the country's ethnic breakdown. Pashtuns represent 42 percent of the Afghan population and comprise 41.83 percent of the ANSF (41.32 percent in the Army and 42.36 percent in the Police). Tajiks comprise 27 percent of the population, but represent 38.10 percent of the security forces (34.06 percent in the Army and 42.33 percent in the Police). Uzbeks and Hazaras each represent 9 percent of the Afghan population. Uzbeks comprise 6.19 percent of the ANSF (7.23 percent in the Army and 5.09 percent in the Police) while the Hazaras represent 8.17 percent of the ANSF (11.69 percent of the Army and 4.48 percent of the Police). Afghanistan's seven other ethnic minorities—Turkmen, Pashayee, Balooch, Bayat, Sadat, Arabs, and Nooristani—round out the remaining 13 percent of the population. These minorities comprise 5.71 percent of the ANSF (5.70 percent of the Army and 5.73 percent of the Police).

General MCCHRYSTAL. However, I would say that is Pashtun, but it is not represented from the south, as you mentioned. Kandahar and Helmand and those areas which have been under Taliban either control or threat are very underrepresented. So it's important to us that we be able to recruit from there.

But what we have to do first is get security there. So the effort now is to increase security, make their families feel comfortable, and then go.

The rest of the breakdown of the ANA falls pretty much along ethnic percentages in the country writ large, except for the Tajiks are slightly overrepresented in the army.

Senator HAGAN. Does an ethnically unbalanced ANSF pose linguistic and ethnic barriers within the local Afghan villages along this Pashtun tribal belt, as well as the legitimacy concerns and securing the local population and, as you mentioned, in the Helmand Province how does that affect our marines and allies? I understand the Tajiks speak actually a different language or a different dialect.

General MCCHRYSTAL. It's a challenge. There are two parts to this. First, every Kandak or Afghan battalion that we field is ethnically balanced as it comes out of training. So we field the force so that it has a mix. We don't field a Tajik battalion or a Hazara battalion or a Pashtun battalion, for the obvious reasons.

Senator HAGAN. But do you have enough of the different ethnicities to do that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We have enough of the ethnicities. What we don't have enough of is southern Pashtuns. So we have to recruit better.

So the things that you said about a battalion operating in Helmand, we would like to have more representation in that battalion of people from that area. But we wouldn't want to create again southern Helmand kandaks.

Senator HAGAN. How do you recruit these individuals?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The first thing we have to do is establish security there.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you.

Pakistan continues to pursue a dual-track policy of disrupting the Pakistani Taliban in its tribal areas, most notably in South Waziristan, while elements of Pakistan's military support the Afghan Taliban networks also in its tribal areas, most notably in North Waziristan, and the Afghan Taliban high command in its Baluchistan Province. The key question is if elements of Pakistan's military can be persuaded to change this dual track policy. In order to do that, we have to address Pakistan's regional concerns, taking into account its relationships with Afghanistan and India.

The Durand Line cuts across the Pashtun tribes and reduced the Afghanistan Pashtun territory and, as you mentioned, the Pashtuns comprise about 15 percent of Pakistan's population, or close to 26 million people, whereas, in Afghanistan it's about 12 million Pashtuns.

Despite Pakistan's attempt to permanently demarcate its border with Afghanistan, the Afghans claim Pakistan's Pashtun areas on the ground that Afghanistan is the home to all of the Pashtuns. Ever since the partition of India, Islamabad has attempted to utilize its proxies, I believe, to install a friendly Pashtun government in Afghanistan that would preserve the de facto border and prevent Pashtun aspirations of a homeland and prevent Indian involvement in Afghanistan.

Ambassador Eikenberry, in the interest of Afghanistan's stability, how are you working with the U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan, and our Indian Ambassador Tim Romer, as well as Ambassador Holbrooke, to facilitate positive relations between Islamabad, New Delhi, and Kabul?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, let me concentrate on Afghanistan and Pakistan. Ambassador Holbrooke is the special representative that has responsibilities for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Clearly the security relationship between India and Pakistan has consequences for Afghanistan, as you've articulated. But more specifically, with our efforts in Kabul have a very strong relationship with our embassy down in Islamabad. At the level of Ambassador Holbrooke and General Petraeus, they have a close civil-military partnership themselves and provide overall policy direction and have sets of programs that they've set into motion.

Then between Ambassador Patterson and myself, we take that direction. We are looking and continuously searching for ways to facilitate political dialogue between Kabul and Islamabad. They're leading. We try to facilitate wherever we can. We have an array of programs to try to develop mutual trust and confidence, anywhere between the law enforcement area, where Director Mueller

from the FBI hosts trilateral initiatives led by himself, but partnered with the Ministries of Interior of Afghanistan and Pakistan. We have programs to help both sides to improve their customs programs along the border. We have a very promising initiative in which we're hoping to see further progress between Afghanistan and Pakistan to reach an agreement for transit trade.

So it's a comprehensive effort that gets into improvements in law enforcement, trade, economics, and diplomacy, and then, of course, General McChrystal has a very robust program with the military tripartite between Afghanistan and Pakistan and NATO.

Senator HAGAN. That was my next question: What are you in CENTCOM doing to facilitate military-to-military confidence-building between Afghanistan, Pakistan, and then I threw in India too?

General MCCHRYSTAL. At our level what we're doing is, as Ambassador Eikenberry mentioned, we have a series of tripartite meetings at the principals level, myself, General Kiyani, and General Bismullah Mohamedi for the Afghans. But then we also below that have operational lower levels that happen very regularly. We have a series of border coordination centers. There's one in operation. There's a second one just moving toward that. There'll be a total of six.

We also have—for example, about a month ago we went over and briefed our full campaign plan to General Kiyani and his staff. They did the same back to U.S. forces some time back.

The idea is confidence-building. It's to get on the same page, but then also to have the mechanics in place for things like cross-border incidents, so that they don't become something that's a negative. There's a whole series of activities.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, also if I could add one important area that has been underway for several years. That is efforts to improve intelligence exchanges and cooperation between the United States and Afghanistan and Pakistan. Those efforts are led by CIA Director Leon Paneta and his counterparts in Afghanistan and Pakistan. That's been a very robust program as well.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you.

My time is out. Godspeed.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Hagan.

Senator Burris.

Senator BURRIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To our distinguished gentlemen testifying, General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry, I want to congratulate you also, as my colleagues have done. I just want to say most all the questions have been asked and I don't know what else you have to answer. I hope to be on a trip next month to Afghanistan. I just came back from Iraq and had a very interesting visit there, and I'm encouraged by what has taken place in Iraq and the confidence that the Iraqi Government officials—we didn't see too many Iraqi personnel because it just wasn't safe. But I was very encouraged by what the officials are saying, that the Americans are carrying out what they promised to do, and that is key.

So just permit me, gentlemen, to try to get some clarification, because the questions have been answered; so if I repeat some of these and you want to make your answers short, I would appreciate it because I have several clarifications to make.

Number one, how effective have the efforts been to reintegrate the former Taliban and the Northern Alliance and the mujahedin fighters so that they will no longer fight for the insurgency? How is reintegration going?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, in the case of the Taliban, that effort is still very young and has not yet, in my opinion, been effective. But we are posturing ourselves to do that.

Senator BURRIS. Ambassador, in terms of understanding that Kabul and President Karzai and the central government only control so many of those 37 provinces there in Afghanistan, what is taking place in the local provinces and working with the local tribal leaders to try to understand the issues that are taking place?

Are we working, not only on the military side, but also on the resource side, with the locals where, because of the divisions of that country and all the different ethnicities, the locals are really in charge?

So do we have a specific program that's working with the local provinces, with the governors that are there or the local councils that are there?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, our principal voice is working through the Government of Afghanistan.

Senator BURRIS. The central government?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Working through the Government of Afghanistan. The Government of Afghanistan, of course, it appoints at the national government level, it appoints provincial governors. It appoints district chiefs. So when I say "district chiefs," district governors. The police force of Afghanistan, it stretches down to the district level. The district level of Afghanistan is at the county level.

What I want to say first and foremost, though, is that our programs that we're delivering do work through the Government of Afghanistan. What we're trying to do in partnership with the Government of Afghanistan is help them get their reach down further, down to that local level. We do that through reinforcing what have been some very promising programs that have developed over the past 3, 4, 5 years.

An example of a program that has worked well, a developmental program, is called the National Solidarity Program. It's run by the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development and it's a program in which a community, a village, will elect for a particular small developmental project to benefit that particular community or village—it may be wells, it may be a road that connects them to the district center. But it's a program which empowers the community then through electing or voting on developmental projects.

So we have programs like that, that we're partnering with the Government of Afghanistan to try to extend further and farther across the country, that delivers security. Also, we're working right now with key ministries to see over the next year, the next 18 months, how more progress can be made in strengthening government at the local level and developing capability to deliver a very basic set of services, education, health, and so forth.

Senator BURRIS. Mr. Ambassador, Senator Hagan just raised a question about languages. Are we trying to teach them English? Are we trying to learn their dialect and their native tongue? The

American personnel that's there or any foreign personnel in any of those various provinces, whether it's British, German, or Polish?

Are we trying to teach them English or are we trying to learn their language so we can communicate with them in their language?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. First of all, let me say, Senator, the most popular foreign language on demand right now within Afghanistan in all the schools is the English language.

Senator BURRIS. Unfortunately. Mr. Ambassador, we must learn the language of the natives and they will accept us better when we can speak their language. As a student who studied abroad and speaks another foreign language, which was German, the fact that I could speak German, I was very well received. That is what we must do as Americans, is to learn the language there. I hope that we'll learn it.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Senator, you had asked about the English language. Your separate point here about our need to develop better language skills inside of Afghanistan—I know General McChrystal said earlier about the Afghan Hands Program being developed by DOD and the military. We're doing better on the civilian side. Many more of our political officers being assigned to Afghanistan are coming in now with a year of Dari language training or some Pashtun. We need to do better, though.

Senator BURRIS. Let me ask the General. Now, in terms of just for clarification, General, on the drawdown dates, what little I know about the military, I heard one of our distinguished Senators ask about whether they were going to start withdrawing the first troops on that date. There are rotations regularly in and out of Afghanistan, are there not? So I don't think we're going to be able to really zero in on whether on July 1 the first soldier is going to be withdrawn from the area. Am I correct in that assessment, General?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, the way we are interpreting the President's guidance is we would do troop rotations, but not count them in that drawdown. In July 2011 we believe—I am comfortable it is his intent we start to reduce the overall number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan. But the rate and pace of that reduction will be based upon conditions on the ground at that time.

Senator BURRIS. I see my time has expired, but you also indicated to another Senator—and I think it's a clarification, and please correct me—that on July 1 we will make the first withdrawal. That's what I understood you to say.

General MCCHRYSTAL. In July 2011, that's correct, Senator.

Senator BURRIS. But how do you reconcile that with, we will begin to assess it? As Secretary Gates said, he'll start assessing it in January 2011, and they're going to start the assessment, and if the assessment is not right and the ground is not right we may not withdraw a troop on July 1, 2011. Is that possible?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, we will be making constant assessments, with a formal assessment a year from now, and then in July 2011, I believe that the President has given us instructions to start to reduce U.S. force numbers, but that the pace and scope of that, how fast that happens, would be based upon the assessments and the conditions at the time.

Senator BURRIS. I see. So you could then withdraw one battalion or a squadron can go home and say, "well, now we've started our withdrawal," and then we halt it to see because we don't know what the conditions are?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, we would coordinate that with our entire chain of command up to, obviously, the President to meet his intent. We would have no intent not to do that.

Senator BURRIS. Thank you very much, gentlemen. I hope to see you all next month, and if everything goes well, I'll celebrate New Year's with you over there.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Burris.

Senator Begich.

Senator BEGICH. You have been so patient and what you have seen is a slow withdrawal of the Senate from this committee room. So it's all how we measure things in withdrawal.

Let me say thank you for enduring 3 hours or so of questioning, comments, and commentary from us. But it is an important issue. Again, I want to thank you both for your service to our country. Thank you both.

I want to follow up, in seriousness, about the transition and withdrawal. This is just for clarification, but I know some continue to bat this around, what is withdrawal, what is not withdrawal. Really, probably the proper word would have been in July 2011 we're going to start a transition, because a withdrawal could be 5 people, it could be 5,000 people; it could be 1 day, it could be 10 years. That's a determination that will come over time, not July hits and suddenly everything's starting to move out. It's a process, and transition is really what it's about. Is that a fair statement?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Senator, I want to make sure that I'm clear. I think that is. I think transition is also a process. I think we'll be transferring to Afghan lead in areas across the country as conditions permit, and I think that will occur. It may not wait until July 2011.

Senator BEGICH. Right.

General MCCHRYSTAL. I do believe that the President wants us to understand that we are absolutely going to start a reduction in forces in July 2011.

Senator BEGICH. Right. But that will all be determined on the quantity and the timing of that, in the sense you may start it, but it may be a short period, it may be a long period, it may be large numbers, it may be small numbers. Is that a fair statement?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Exactly, Senator.

Senator BEGICH. I know I hear from others sometimes—and Senator Inhofe was very good in repeating the President's words that it's not a sudden, July hits and our enemies know exactly what we're doing. They'll know no matter what, whenever we do withdrawal, because everything we do is very transparent. They will notice that and they'll have their own decisions as to what they will do or not do, and hopefully we'll be successful and they won't be doing much. So I want to make sure that's clear.

The other thing, I want to really echo what some other members said. I think what you've been able to do with the CERP monies has been very powerful, very positive. Are there always rooms for

improvement on accountability? Absolutely. I don't care how much money you have, if you have $10 or one point some billion dollars. There's an option, an opportunity to continue to improve, and it sounds like you folks have been doing that.

But I would also echo what Senator Nelson said, that I agree that the DOS should have as much flexibility in those dollars. I assume, Ambassador, you will agree with that. But I'm curious from the General's perspective: Would you agree also that the DOS should have some more flexibility with their dollars to do very similar activities, so you can join these resources together? Is that a fair statement?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I absolutely would agree.

Senator BEGICH. I again want to echo that anything, and I know you heard a couple Senators here, very aggressive about this: Whatever we can do to help streamline the rules, the regulation, and/or statutory issues, please let us know. We are motivated. We recognize there will be a little tug-of-war here on this committee, but I think there's a sizable majority that recognize the success you've had with the CERP funds and we should see the same with the DOS, rather than going through this maze that you have to go through to access their money and then access your money. So anything we can do, please feel free as we move through this process.

Mr. Ambassador, do you have any comment you want to add to that?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. No. We'd welcome that support, Senator.

Senator BEGICH. Okay. The other one I want to clarify—and Mr. Ambassador, I know it seemed like you wanted to go a little further in clarifying this—on do I think that going from 300 to 900-plus individuals from your operation is a great move? Absolutely. You're tripling it. Some will argue it's only 1 percent of the total force, but if I took both of your total workforces, the majority of what the military does is deploy people. You don't necessarily have that luxury. You have a huge number of people to deploy at any given time. You have to pick and select and be very selective.

So I understand the differences. I'm sure we would love a higher percentage, but that's not realistic based on the capacity that the DOD has in the sense of deployment between the military.

In your 2011–2012 budget process, 2011 that's moving forward, and you may not be able to tell us here, but are you looking at additional resources that could be added to your budget to create a more robust deployable force in the sense of what you need on the ground to assist the military in the civilian activities?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Indeed we are, Senator, both in terms of the personnel and in terms of our development programs. We're doing now a very careful analysis against General McChrystal's military campaign. In order to support that, we are going to need more civilians out in rural areas, out in different population centers to support. As he clears and holds areas, then it shifts on the civilian side to the building. So we're looking at additional civilians and development programs in order to support that. So there will be increases, yes.

Senator BEGICH. Would it be fair to say that——

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Begich, if I could interrupt you for a moment. I'm going to have to leave for a few moments.

Senator BEGICH. I'll close it off.

Chairman LEVIN. I don't want you to close it, because I have some additional questions. If you are finished before I get back, which will just be a few moments, would you just recess for a couple minutes.

Senator BEGICH. Sure, I'd be happy to do that, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator BEGICH [presiding]. Boy, I get the whole—this is a good opportunity. It's always good to be last.

I want to make sure one other piece in your allocation of resources for those people. Again, I'm not in your business, but my assumption is your people will need also longer-term potential with the country of Afghanistan because of the work you'll be doing.

It's not just you'll be doing the water lines, sewer lines, governance, and be done. You'll actually be moving through.

So that resource is not just about a 1-year, but a few years out. Is that how you look at it? That's how I look at it. I just want to make sure I'm on the same page.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Yes, Senator, absolutely, multi-year and the whole of government. We'll have to be looking then at the sustainment of our civilian force. There'll be changes in the composition, but it'll still be a sizable presence, and it will be multi-year. So it's not only the challenge of getting it there over the next year, year and a half. We would anticipate this to be a multi-year requirement and have to think through how we'll sustain that kind of presence.

Senator BEGICH. I guess I'm supportive of that. I just want to warn you ahead that's some of the questioning I'll have as we move down that path, and I just wanted to convey that to you.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. If I could, Senator, though, a point of emphasis here. More civilians needed, but to continue to emphasize that as our civilians move forward they're multiplying their effects through Afghans.

Senator BEGICH. Correct.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. As we now are starting to reach a point in Afghanistan where you had 7, 8 years after the fall of the Taliban more children, more young adults starting to graduate from high school, vocational schools, universities, the pool out there of talented people is starting to enlarge, and our civilians as they come in, they're going to be able to leverage that in increasing numbers. You can reach a point where it's starting to get diminishing returns, too costly, and also the possibility of dependency building up.

Senator BEGICH. I agree. I think that's a great outcome, if you have more of a larger Afghan pool.

General, you reminded me of this and I'm just trying to remember from our briefings when I was there and some of the folks you had on the ground. We have in Afghanistan, I want to say, "West Point Lite" for officer training—explain what we have there in regards to trying to do what we can to ensure that we have an officer corps within the Afghan Army that's well trained? Remind me of that just so I'm clear on that?

General McCHRYSTAL. Senator, they have stood up a military academy.

Senator BEGICH. That's right.

General McCHRYSTAL. They are expanding the size of that military academy in the next year or so. So that will provide a corps. But then they also have other commissioning entry ways as well. For their noncommissioned officer corps, which is critical, they have a sergeants major academy and then a series of stairstep professional development programs for their noncommissioned officer corps as well, and I think that's going to be very important for them.

Senator BEGICH. How involved are we now with that and how long before they take a very sizable role in managing those academies? Or are they doing it now?

General McCHRYSTAL. They really do it now. They get assistance on many of the courses, but they really do it now.

Senator BEGICH. They manage it with their own teaching aids and all the other aspects of it?

General McCHRYSTAL. That's correct. Again, we assist, but they run it.

Senator BEGICH. One last question I think I'll have time for, and that is, the efforts of their national security force and their police force, what do you think is the major change that can move them into these higher numbers that we want to get them to in short order? What's the one or two things that you think is going to make the difference, or that you believe is making the difference now?

General McCHRYSTAL. Senator, it's partnering. It's where we put our units with them and operate, often colocated in the same outpost together, and then as we go together. It's that shoulder-to-shoulder partnering that I think's going to help increase their professionalism and development most rapidly.

Senator BEGICH. Very good. Thank you very much.

I know, Mr. Chairman, you were very generous with allowing me more time as you vacated. So thank you very much.

Thank you again for your service.

Chairman LEVIN. Actually, Senator Begich, your last question segues perfectly into the first question I was going to ask. It goes back to this question of partnering. Our understanding is that we have about 19,000 U.S. troops now in RC–South. We have about 11 combat battalions in RC-South, with perhaps 40 companies, more or less. My question is: How many of those 11 U.S. battalions in RC-South are actually partnered with, colocated with, as you just put it, shoulder-to-shoulder now with Afghan units?

General McCHRYSTAL. Mr. Chairman, I would say I don't know the number that are colocated on the bases, but in terms of partnered, 100 percent.

Chairman LEVIN. What I'm talking about is colocation, actually physically with, eating with, living with, colocated with. How many of the 11 battalions or approximately 40 companies are physically actually colocated with Afghan units?

General McCHRYSTAL. I'll have to take that for the record, Mr. Chairman.

[The information referred to follows:]

Although the percentage of companies physically colocated with Afghan units varies daily, all of the U.S. battalions in Regional Command-South are partnered with the Afghan National Security Forces.

Chairman LEVIN. Could it be few? Might the answer be few?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I do not believe so, but I'd like to take that for the record and make sure it's accurate.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay, thank you.

When General Jones tells us that we have to get more Afghan troops out of their garrisons, that's to me a major challenge. It's something that I think needs to be our mission. This partnering needs to be our mission to the same extent that it's a British mission or an Australian mission. We had a little discussion about this before, but I want to be more precise. Our COIN doctrine is that our partnering strategy is aimed at achieving a ratio of one U.S. company—leading to three Afghan companies for every one U.S. company as their partnering progresses.

Is that your understanding?

General MCCHRYSTAL. It is.

Chairman LEVIN. Those ratios that you gave us that we currently have and that we hope to have will ideally lead up to that. But we're nowhere near one to one, quite the opposite in Helmand, from everything we can understand.

There was an article in the Washington Post this morning which described the increasing influence of Taliban shadow governments. I don't think anyone's asked you about this today here. If not, I would like to just quickly ask you this. Our votes have begun, so you're almost free.

These shadow governors establish Taliban governors, police chiefs, administrators, and judges in nearly all the Afghan provinces. Did you see the article this morning? Did you read the article, and do you agree with that report? Ambassador?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I did see the article and, Mr. Chairman, what I'd say is that this growth of parallel governance, in some provinces of Afghanistan effective shadow governance with real consequences and real capabilities—when I came into Afghanistan on my third tour of duty in May of this year and did my own assessment of the security situation, for me the development of this shadow governance was the most striking change that I had seen since early 2007 when I last left.

In that regard then, when General McChrystal did his security assessment and highlighted the deterioration of the security situation in important parts of the country, I had keyed in on that and that was one of the factors that led me to be in absolute concurrence with his own analysis of the deterioration of security.

Chairman LEVIN. Would you say it's as extensive as the Post article suggested? Is that about accurate in terms of its——

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I'd defer to General McChrystal for specifics.

Chairman LEVIN. General, have you had a chance to read the article?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I did.

Chairman LEVIN. Is the shadow government's existence by the Taliban as extensive or approximately as extensive as the Post article stated?

General McCHRYSTAL. Mr. Chairman, it is, but I'd like to provide some wider context.

Chairman LEVIN. Sure.

General McCHRYSTAL. They have established shadow governors in 33 of the 34 provinces. In some areas those shadow governors can do what was outlined in that article and have an awful lot of influence. In other areas it's more aspirational. They have a shadow governor, but the individual doesn't have that kind of reach or control. Even within a province where they have a shadow governor, they will typically have areas where they have a tremendous amount of influence—south primarily, some in the east.

So what was described in the article was accurate, but not for everywhere.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay, thank you.

On the reintegration initiatives, you were both, I think, extremely clear about the importance of these initiatives taking place and that the Afghan Government is going to have to lead those initiatives. General, you talked about keeping open the door to reconciliation. General, you said there are some important opportunities—it's important that there be opportunities for Afghans to come back under government rule, and that they be treated when they do so, providing they abide by the rules, treated with respect when they do that.

Ambassador, you also felt that we have to try to find a way; more importantly, the Afghan Government has to try to find a way for this reintegration; and that there's a commission which is going to be created, you indicated.

Have we been supportive of that reintegration effort?

Whenever I talk to President Karzai he says: "You know the reason we haven't gone ahead with this; your guys don't want us to." Have we been an impediment to this in any way? Or to put it positively, are we clearly supportive of this effort, whether it's a reintegration commission or whether it's a plan for reintegration? Is it clear to President Karzai that we're supportive of that effort?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. It's absolutely clear.

Chairman LEVIN. Have we not been supportive over the last year, say?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, the efforts up until today have been very uneven, very uneven success by the Government of Afghanistan.

Chairman LEVIN. Is that partly our fault, that we've sent signals that we have some reluctance in this area?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I don't know going back to 2004 and 2005. I was not in a position at that point——

Chairman LEVIN. How about in the last year?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. In the last year, it's been very clear. I would say since the arrival of General McChrystal and myself it's been crystal clear, absolutely clear to President Karzai and the Afghan leadership that we would be in full support of their efforts.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. Would you agree with that, General?

General McCHRYSTAL. Absolutely.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. That's fine. Thank you.

Can you get us that figure which I asked you about? Can you get us that, if possible, overnight?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay, thank you. I would really appreciate it.

We all very much appreciate your staying power, not just in Afghanistan, but your steadfastness through this process of ours. I know you're committed to the process in Afghanistan. We all wish you, obviously, godspeed and good luck in that regard. Your answers today, I think, have been clear. Your understanding of the President's directives, it seems to me, is clear. You both indicated you not only support them, you agree with them. I think that's clear and it's important, because the clarity of our mission is essential as well as the resources to accomplish it.

I know I'm speaking on behalf of everybody, everyone but me who is now voting in the Senate, that we're grateful again to you, your families, your troops, the people who work with you on the civilian side. Just pass along our thanks if you would and our gratitude and support for this effort.

Thank you. We will stand adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROLAND W. BURRIS

TROOP INCREASE

1. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, do you believe that the President's new strategy of quickly deploying 30,000 additional troops will be sufficient to stop the insurgency within the timeframe to begin transition and withdrawal in July 2011?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

2. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, what is the timeline for the deployment of all 30,000 troops?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

3. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, regarding logistics for deploying these 30,000 troops quickly, please explain the challenges associated with a less than robust theater logistics and throughput infrastructure?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

4. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, how are you mitigating any major shortcomings to ensure that quality is not sacrificed for speed?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I have been given great flexibility by the President and the Secretary of Defense in determining the composition of the additional 30,000 forces. While these forces will deploy on an accelerated timeline, I am confident that I am getting the force structure I need to be successful.

The reality, however, is that requirements will continue to change commensurate with conditions on the ground. I will consistently review our progress towards meeting our military objectives to ensure that we have the right mix of forces.

5. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, is there sufficient air and sealift assets to meet the troop deployment timeline?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, we currently assess air and sealift assets as adequate to meet troop deployment timelines. We will further refine this assessment during the U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM)/U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Force Flow Workshop, which will directly address this assessment.

6. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, how will this troop increase affect the ongoing drawdown of troops in Iraq?

General MCCHRYSTAL. As the Commander of U.S. Forces Afghanistan, I do not make decisions on resource requirements across different theaters. As such, it would be improper of me to speculate on how future changes in General Odierno's area of operations (AOR) may affect the flow of forces into Afghanistan. As Commander of U.S. CENTCOM, General David Petraeus is best suited to answer this question.

7. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, how is the normal force rotation and dwell time affected by the troop increase given the planned rapid pace of deployment of additional troops?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Our men and women in uniform and their families continue to bear a significant burden. The issues of force rotation and dwell time are best answered by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the individual Service Chiefs, executing their duties under title 10. I am confident that the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff closely monitor the health of the force and are taking active measures to address and mitigate risks.

AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES

8. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, as we work to increase the capability of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), can you please clarify the security force goals? Are we aiming at meeting the projected March 2009 goals of 134,000 Afghan National Army (ANA) and 82,000 Afghan National Police (ANP)—or levels you recommended of 240,000 ANA and 160,000 ANP?

General MCCHRYSTAL. We are no longer using the March 2009 goals. Our current growth objective is to grow to 134,000 ANA and 96,800 ANP by October 2010. Pending approval by the Secretary of Defense, we will request to grow the ANP to 109,000 by October 2010. We will also request to continue growth of the ANA to 171,600 and the ANP to 134,000 by October 2011. We will reexamine the need for any future growth based on security conditions and ANSF performance.

9. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, how many U.S. forces are currently training ANSF?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The primary means for U.S. forces to train ANSF is by partnering with them in order to help them build capacity and assume responsibility for their nation's security as quickly and as successfully as possible. As of December 2009, 32 of the 44 U.S. combat battalions were partnered.

U.S. forces also contribute to institutional training. Currently, in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Training Mission Afghanistan (NTM–A)/Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC–A), there are approximately 830 U.S. servicemembers whose sole task is to instruct and advise ANSF in institutions, schools, and other formalized programs of instruction. These forces instruct ANSF trainers, coordinate resources exclusively in support of training, and advise and coach the ANSF on management of institutional training.

10. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, when all of the U.S. troops are in place, how many of them will be solely dedicated to training the ANSF?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Under current plans, there will be in excess of 1,800 U.S. servicemembers whose sole task is to train ANSF forces in institutions, schools, and other formalized programs of instruction. These forces advise ANSF trainers, coordinate resources exclusively in support of training, and advise and coach the ANSF on management of institutional training.

11. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, for those U.S. troops whose responsibility is to train the Afghan forces, what portion are/will be embedded with the Afghan Forces?

General MCCHRYSTAL. A key tenet of International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) strategy is partnering with the Afghan security forces in order to help them build capability and capacity, and assume responsibility as quickly and as successfully as possible. Today, 32 of 44 U.S. combat battalions that are capable of partnering are fully partnered and conducting daily combined operations with the ANSF. It is my intent that all U.S. forces will partner with Afghan units by December 2010.

12. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, how long will it take for American troops to train Afghan forces?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The process of training the ANSF is a long-term commitment by U.S. forces that includes three main efforts. The first is institutional, where soldiers and police receive basic training through schools and other formalized programs. American forces provide instructors and advisors to the ANA and ANP training institutions, with the intention that Afghans take on increasing responsibility for their own training.

The second training effort for U.S. forces are Embedded Training Teams (ETTs) and Police Mentor Teams (PMTs), which are provided to fielded ANA units from the

battalion to corps level and to ANP units from the district to police region level. There are currently two U.S. BCTs providing ETTs and PMTs: the 48th IBCT and 4/82 IBCT. ETTS and PMTs will remain with an ANSF unit until that particular unit has achieved the capability to operate independently.

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

13. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, when will there be sufficient and—I stress—fully trained Afghan forces prepared to protect their own country?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

14. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, given the current proficiency of the ANP Force, will Afghan policemen who were trained locally—in provinces outside of the new academy in Kabul—be retrained with the revised law enforcement standards?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes. Afghan Uniform Police (AUP) recruited and trained locally will complete the "Basic 8" 8-week training program. This program uses a curriculum reviewed by the Department of State's International Law Enforcement and Narcotics Division and approved by the Afghan Ministry of the Interior (MoI).

AUP patrolmen are being trained at a Regional Training Center either individually, or as part of their district through the Focused District Development Program, or in their home district through the Directed District Development program. MoI and NTM–A/CSTC–A are coordinating to maximize the rate of untrained police completing this reform training.

15. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, how effective has the effort been to reintegrate former Taliban, Northern Alliance, and Mujahedeen fighters so that they are no longer fighting for the insurgency?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The Afghan Government is currently developing their policy for reintegration, while leveraging lessons from earlier programs. These previous programs suffered from a shortage of Afghan political leadership, a lack of fiscal transparency, and deficiencies in monitoring and accountability of those who joined the program. The emerging Afghan reintegration policy aims to rectify these problems and our collaboration with them will help ensure the proper measures are put in place for a successful program. Once the policy is approved, the Afghan Government will develop an implementation plan. ISAF is working with members of the Afghan Government and the international community on the policy and implementation plan.

WITHDRAWAL

16. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, the President stated that a responsible withdrawal of troops will begin in summer 2011 but would also depend on conditions on the ground. What types of conditions would delay withdrawal or transition?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The Department of Defense (DOD) is currently working with our interagency and multinational partners to refine the benchmarks that we will use to measure progress in light of the President's new strategy. However, broadly speaking, progress in Afghanistan will emerge as the ANSF develop the capacity to provide security for the nation and effective governance and development takes root. As this happens, the United States and our ISAF partners will continue to provide overwatch. The pace and locations at which this process will take place will depend on several factors, the two most important of which are the performance of the Afghan government at all levels, and the development of the ANSF. The pace of transition will occur at a rate consistent with Afghan capacity to manage the security situation, with requisite support, and preparedness of governance.

A delay in transition could emerge due to any number of factors. The population is the ultimate arbiter of these conditions based on their confidence in their security situation. The insurgency is competing for control of the population through intimidation and coercion; ISAF and ANSF forces need to provide confidence to the population. In some areas, the insurgency is sufficiently rooted to a point where it could take a period of time to generate the necessary confidence that causes the population to identify and eliminate the threat. Commensurate with this situation is generation and employment of ANSF that can effectively maintain security in these areas. Finally, the pace of transition must be such that there is no deterioration in the security situation in areas that have undergone the transition process. Ensuring

that the security situation does not regress in areas that have transitioned may necessitate an adjustment to the pace of transition based upon conditions on the ground.

17. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, what policy goals and benchmarks are tied to the withdrawal of forces in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. DOD is currently working with our interagency and multinational partners to refine the benchmarks that we will use to measure progress in light of the President's new strategy. However, broadly speaking, progress in Afghanistan will emerge as the ANSF develop the capacity to provide security for their nation and effective governance and development take root. As this happens, the United States and our ISAF partners will continue to provide overwatch, eventually drawing down. The pace and locations at which this process will take place will depend on several factors, the two most important of which are the performance of the Afghan government at all levels, and the development of the ANSF. We will not transfer responsibility to the Afghans until they have the capacity to manage the situation on their own.

COST

18. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, the Office of Management and Budget Director estimated that each additional soldier sent to Afghanistan will cost $1 million. Is this estimate accurate?

General MCCHRYSTAL. My staff does not manage the estimate you are requesting. Those functions are managed by each of the military departments and then integrated by the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

19. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, does this cost estimate include any contractor support?

General MCCHRYSTAL. My staff does not manage the additional costs of contractor support in Afghanistan. Those functions are managed by each of the military departments and then integrated by the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE

20. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, I understand that many of the troop-contributing nations have placed very specific caveats on what missions and what type of support that they will provide. What, if any, are the challenges, and do these caveats pose an obstacle to meeting our stated objectives?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Military planners consider the constraints and restraints facing the unit—actions they must do and cannot do. National caveats are one form of those constraints. They do not prevent planning or execution, they merely need to be taken into account while planning.

These caveats do not impact our ability to reach our stated objectives. Some nations have placed legal caveats, mainly limiting the use of force by their soldiers, in accordance with their legal system. Other nations have placed operational caveats, limiting their operations to a specific area, for instance. We understand these caveats, put in place by their political authorities, who took into account their national sensitivities or simply the capabilities of their forces.

21. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, how many ISAF are currently conducting the mission?

General MCCHRYSTAL. As of 9 December 2009, coalition forces in Afghanistan total 109,370.

CONTRACTORS

22. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, will there be an increase in contractor support based on this troop increase? If so, what additional costs will be necessary?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The increase in forces will generate an increase in contractor support. However, those functions are managed by each of the military departments and then integrated by the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

With the dispersed force laydown throughout the country of Afghanistan, and the need to ensure the majority of the additional forces are operators rather than force support personnel, contractors will be necessary to provide the supplies, services, and construction needs of establishing new and expanding current base camps; as well as logistic and other noncombat related services, such as dining facilities. Con-

tract Support Integration ensures contracted support is planned, defined, prioritized, and validated prior to being delivered to the joint force. Contracted support is considered throughout the planning process to ensure mission success.

With regard to necessary additional costs, this amount is not readily available as it depends on the timing of both the force flow and duration of need; the existing capability of facilities at new beddown locations; and the division of support between the civil augmentation program contracts and local procurement, among others. I assure you, our contracting professionals regularly seek more efficient and cost effective ways to provide support, while the requirement determination and review processes ensure procurement of only valid requirements.

23. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, which American contracting companies are supporting the training of the ANP?

General MCCHRYSTAL. U.S. Training Center trains the Afghan Border Police; DynCorps trains the Afghan Uniform Police and Afghan National Civil Order Police.

24. Senator BURRIS. General McChrystal, how long have contactors been assigned this task, and how long will they stay should their contract be renewed?

General MCCHRYSTAL. U.S. Training Center has held the Afghan Border Police contract since September 2008. The contract will expire in August 2010. DynCorp has held the Afghan Uniform Police and Afghan National Civil Order Police since August 2008. The contract will expire in March 2010. The replacement for both contracts is in the award process with an anticipated award of no later than March 2010.

PRESIDENT KARZAI

25. Senator BURRIS. Ambassador Eikenberry, I assume that we have as part of our goals to address governance and corruption. In his inauguration, President Hamid Karzai stated that he was going to fight corruption. What tangible steps has he outlined?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

26. Senator BURRIS. Ambassador Eikenberry, what is President Karzai doing to increase transparency in the appointment of provincial and ministerial posts?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

AGRICULTURE

27. Senator BURRIS. Ambassador Eikenberry, overall development of the Afghan economy appears to be at a standstill and further agricultural development is necessary. What is being done to provide security for farmers who do not grow poppy so that the Taliban does not intimidate the farmers?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

28. Senator BURRIS. Ambassador Eikenberry, is there a comprehensive agricultural development strategy?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS

29. Senator BURRIS. Ambassador Eikenberry, diplomatic effort is essential to the stability and governance of Afghanistan. What is the division of responsibility between Ambassador Holbrooke, Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone, and yourself?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

30. Senator BURRIS. Ambassador Eikenberry, can you describe how and the extent of coordination between yourself and Ambassador Holbrooke?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

31. Senator BURRIS. Ambassador Eikenberry, what is the overall plan for reconstruction and who is leading the effort?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

32. Senator BURRIS. Ambassador Eikenberry, are relief and other reconstruction efforts aided or hampered by the presence of the Provincial Reconstruction Team? Does this vary by region?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BILL NELSON

ENABLERS

33. Senator BILL NELSON. General McChrystal, what is your plan for and how many enablers are required to support the additional 30,000 combat forces ordered to Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The 30,000 additional forces include approximately 12,500 enablers. These enablers include personnel with expertise in military intelligence, route clearance, aviation, and numerous other capabilities which allow forces to properly conduct their assigned missions.

AFGHAN SECURITY FORCES

34. Senator BILL NELSON. General McChrystal, what is your assessment of the Afghan Public Protection Program (AP3) and other local security forces?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The AP3 is fulfilling its intent of providing security at the local level with forces recruited from the same communities they serve. We are beginning to see a reduced requirement for the presence and employment of coalition forces for security purposes in areas where the AP3 forces are currently being utilized.

With regards to other local security forces, the Local Defense Initiative remains in nascent stages of development but has been operationalized in three communities. The program has had positive effects in these communities to include increased security, cooperation with GIRoA, and the beginnings of economic development. However, while AP3 has shown some small successes, it is important to remember local security initiatives that work in some regions are not necessarily transferable to all parts of the country.

35. Senator BILL NELSON. General McChrystal, are there plans to expand this program to other areas of Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. There are no plans to expand the AP3 beyond Wardak Province at this time.

PAKISTAN

36. Senator BILL NELSON. General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry, how will the stability of Pakistan be affected by the surge of troops in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Your question would be best served by asking Admiral Mullen or General Petraeus, both of whom have Pakistan within their respective areas of responsibility.

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

37. Senator BILL NELSON. General McChrystal, what type of border coordination is taking place between the United States and ISAF, and the Pakistani military and Pakistani civilian government to ensure that Taliban fighters are engaged once they cross the border into Pakistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Coordination between ISAF and Pakistan occurs at a variety of levels. At the tactical level, radios have been distributed to the Pakistan military (PAKMIL) and Pakistan Frontier Corps. These radios are used to coordinate and deconflict kinetic activities. Additionally, computer systems are being added to PAKMIL and Frontier Corps Battalions that will allow email communication between units across the border. The radios and computer systems improve situational awareness and coordination between coalition and Pakistan units, allowing coalition

and Pakistan forces to effectively execute cross border direct and indirect fires against malign actors.

At the operational level, Border Coordination Centers (BCCs) improve situational awareness between the coalition and Pakistani security forces. BCCs are made up of officers from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the coalition that work as a team to deconflict fires and reduce tension along the border. BCCs have been very successful as a confidence building measure and have improved coordination and resolved border issues at the lowest levels.

At the strategic level, ISAF has two organizations that work to deconflict issues between Pakistan and Afghanistan: the Tripartite Joint Intelligence Operations Center (T–JIOC) and the Border Issues Working Group (BIWG). The T–JIOC, established in 2007, brings senior Afghan and PAKMIL officers together to address border issues and keep each nation informed of operations and issues that impact the two nations. Since 2009, the BIWG has brought embassies, international organizations, GIRoA, and ISAF together to focus on issues that impact Afghanistan's borders.

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION

38. Senator BILL NELSON. General McChrystal, how has the streamlining of your command—overseeing ISAF and U.S. forces in Afghanistan—affected coordination and cooperation at the tactical and strategic level?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The establishment of the ISAF Joint Command (IJC) and NTM–A has greatly increased the efficiency of command and control. It is important to understand that prior to the establishment of these three-star commands, ISAF was providing the direction and guidance to the five regional commands, coordinating force generation with the CSTC–A, responding to the NATO command channels via Joint Forces Command-Brunssum and Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, while also conducting coordination with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) to address issues from the strategic to the tactical level. Creation of the IJC and NTM–A has allowed ISAF to focus "up and out," for increased coordination with our partners in GIRoA and the international community in Kabul and to communicate ISAF's requirements more clearly to NATO. By providing direction and guidance to the IJC and NTM–A, ISAF can focus attention on the efforts that enable the subordinates to accomplish assigned missions. In the case of the IJC, by focusing "down and in," they are able to provide greater operational direction and guidance to the regional commands, coordinating their efforts in a manner that has not occurred previously.

39. Senator BILL NELSON. General McChrystal, the additional marines ordered to deploy to Afghanistan will do so as a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF). Please describe how the Marines' air combat element will fit into the other air force elements supporting ISAF. Please describe the command and control plan for combat air support, medical evacuation, and air transportation and logistics. Will all air elements fall under the same structure? How are they different?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The MAGTF Commander retains operational control of all organic air assets. The primary mission of the MAGTF aviation combat element is support of the MAGTF ground combat element. U.S. Marine Corps aviation fits into the Combined Force Air Component Commander (CFACC) operational design by its inclusion in the Air Tasking Order and operating under the direction of the Airspace Control Plan.

The CFACC, as the airspace control authority, directs the employment of the theater air ground system that orchestrates the command and control of air operations. The Marines contribute by executing air command and control within the MAGTF AORs, by providing the CFACC with a radar control facility, and by providing excess sorties and theater aviation support as required.

Medical evacuation in RC(S) in Afghanistan is conducted by special medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) crews provided by the U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, and the U.K. Royal Air Force. These forces are geographically distributed throughout the battlespace to meet casualty movement needs. They launch in support of MEDEVAC missions when notified by RC(S), though their command relationships vary. All of these commanders retain launch authority for MEDEVAC missions while RC(S) holds release authority.

All non-U.S. Marine Corps aviation units fall under the same structure: the theater air ground system. Marine aviation differs because they are operationally controlled by the MAGTF when in the MAGTF AORs.

40. Senator BILL NELSON. Ambassador Eikenberry, in the past, U.S. Forces in Afghanistan, ISAF, the United Nations, and U.S. Agency for International Development maintained separate lists of completed and existing development projects in Afghanistan. What is the status of effort to coordinate and streamline theses lists between the various actors?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

41. Ambassador Eikenberry, how is this effort being coordinated with the various Afghan ministries?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

42. Senator BILL NELSON. Ambassador Eikenberry, what are your thoughts on the prospects of negotiating with elements of the Taliban? The Government of Japan has sponsored some discussions along these lines—would the United States consider playing a larger role in such discussions?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

43. Senator BILL NELSON. Ambassador Eikenberry, Germany and France are spearheading an international conference on Afghanistan within the next several months. Will Iran be included in this conference?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

44. Senator BILL NELSON. Ambassador Eikenberry, can you comment on Iran's political and economic involvement in Afghanistan?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

45. Senator BILL NELSON. Ambassador Eikenberry, General McChrystal mentioned in his testimony that Iran is providing financial assistance to the Taliban. Do you share this assessment?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

46. Senator BILL NELSON. Ambassador Eikenberry, what are the main sources of funding for the Taliban?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

TROOP INCREASE

47. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, a former Commandant of the Marine Corps once said that "Amateurs talk about tactics, but professionals study logistics." Unlike Iraq, where U.S. forces surged with the crucial assistance of neighboring countries and an advanced infrastructure network, we're about to surge at least 30,000 troops and their equipment into one of the most austere and undeveloped areas of the world in the dead of winter. A senior Army logistician was quoted in the December 7 edition of Defense News as saying, "Where do you put all these people? Life is going to suck for the first 30, 60, 90 days." The Washington Post reported on Secretary Gates' recent surprise visit to Afghanistan that "he would seek soldiers' views on 'the way forward.' That might include issues such as whether their equipment is adequate and whether they are ready to handle the difficult logistics of quickly moving 30,000 fresh troops into the country." The Post went on to quote Secretary Gates that "It is going to be a heavy lift, there's no question about it." I want to ensure that we have a plan in place to ensure that this surge of forces is accomplished in a manner that does not present unnecessary risks beyond what will be asked of them in success of their mission. Are you currently requesting 30,000 or 33,000 total personnel?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I did not submit a request for any specific number of forces. As directed by my U.S. and NATO commanders, I provided my best military advice as the Commander, ISAF and the Commander of U.S. Forces Afghanistan

up the appropriate military chains of command. This advice contained a recommendation for multiple force levels and their associated risks.

48. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, given the cap on the number of troops you will receive—what is the right mix of combat forces, trainers, support forces, and other combat enablers in order to meet your objectives?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

49. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, as your deployment plan develops, do you feel you have the flexibility as the warfighting commander to ask for additional forces above and beyond 33,000 in order to accomplish your objectives?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

50. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, when do you expect to have the surge combat forces you have requested on the ground in Afghanistan and fully operational?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

51. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, how much of the success of your mission relies on the accelerated flow and onward movement of these forces throughout Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. As I indicated in my opening remarks, time is critical. The insurgents have established momentum, particularly in the south. The rapid deployment of forces to key population centers is the critical factor in reversing this trend. Introducing additional coalition troops as a bridging force will buy time and space for the ANA and National Police to grow in both size and capability. Additionally, I believe that increased security, combined with a commensurate uplift in civil capability, will set the conditions for improved governance and development.

52. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, what plans are in place to ensure that the arriving forces will have the right training (to include mission rehearsals), equipment, and base support in order for you to be able to carry out successful missions before the administration's review in December 2010?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Each of the Services is responsible for training their own personnel and I would direct you to them for specifics. ISAF has a Counterinsurgency Training Center-Afghanistan (CTC–A) where we train and educate coalition forces and Afghan security forces to enhance their capabilities to defeat the current insurgency and contribute to the stability of Afghanistan. CTC–A also conducts mobile training to deployed force elements to meet deployed force specified requirements as well as conducts a monthly central COIN leaders course in Kabul. ISAF's Counterinsurgency Advisory and Assistance Team also visits NATO training centers, coalition forces combat support units, and key members of the intelligence community to develop the skills necessary for counterinsurgency operations.

53. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, does the current plan for the surge of forces ensure that arriving units will have all the vehicles, such as Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles and equipment they need for missions in high altitude and rugged terrain?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

54. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, what risks and challenges are inherent in an accelerated deployment schedule?

General MCCHRYSTAL. There are several challenges and risks associated with a deployment of a force this size in the timeframe demanded by the current strategic situation. I will focus my answer on three key factors that may influence the force flow. The first of these is the ability of Afghanistan's infrastructure to absorb and support a rapidly deploying force. This requires significant engineering and construction efforts. For example, we must provide water to our troops while minimizing the impact on the local population. This will challenge our engineers and logisticians to develop innovative solutions to problems that at first glance appear to have simple solutions. Second, the provision of Theatre Provided Equipment, (i.e material required for operations in Afghanistan that is not a part of a unit's peacetime inventory) will test our ability to identify sourcing, transport these materials, and prioritize our resources. The competing demands of resourcing a responsible draw down of forces in Iraq and flowing additional troops into Afghanistan may necessitate a reapportionment of specialized and low density equipment. Finally, managing dwell time for our returning servicemembers while simultaneously responsibly drawing down in Iraq will test our ability to meet a compressed timeline. Ulti-

mately, I am confident that we will deliver a force that is appropriately trained, equipped, and ready to execute the mission.

55. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, how do you plan to mitigate these risks?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The ISAF plan, developed in coordination with CENTCOM, TRANSCOM, and Joint Forces Command, addresses the challenges of this deployment. We are working to increase the capacity and throughput of Afghanistan's airfields. The acquisition of land and subsequent base construction are already underway. Without compromising force protection, initial modifications of base construction standards will greatly increase our ability to absorb the incoming forces. Coordination to increase both production and delivery of theater provided equipment began in early December. We will address this challenge by prioritizing equipment flows into theater and by deploying special teams and leadership to assist in planning and managing the flow. This will ensure that the troops who need it the most are provided with required equipment as they arrive. Finally, we are working closely with CENTCOM and Joint Forces Command to ensure that our units are appropriately supported by critical enablers.

56. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, if the Services are delayed in flowing the resources you have requested, do you feel you have the flexibility to ask for extra time before conducting a formal review of the benchmarks and indicators?

General MCCHRYSTAL. My leadership at all levels continues to be fully supportive of the mission and cognizant of the most critical aspects of the campaign, including the challenges associated with flowing resources into the Afghanistan theater.

57. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, what will need to be done to ensure we can adequately resupply 100,000 U.S. troops in a country with extremely limited infrastructure and limited routes into the country?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

58. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, what will be the most significant supply challenges?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The most significant supply challenge will be ensuring the ground lines of communication allow for the maximum of throughput at the traditional choke points, mainly the border crossing points, in a timely, safe manner to get the ground supplies to the forces beyond our operational logistics hubs. As we improve the Afghan Border Police and increase partners in these critical areas, we will implement sufficient control to ensure friendly force throughout operates at maximum efficiency.

59. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, on the specific issue of rotary wing assets which seem to be a high demand asset for both U.S. and coalition forces, the Army's OH–58D Kiowa Warriors have only limited lift capability in Afghanistan's thin air. Does the current flow of forces provide for adequate numbers of utility and attack helicopters and aviation support personnel early enough in 2010 to support the full range of counterinsurgency operations throughout the country?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

60. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, please explain why your new strategy and the many additional troops you will receive can bring success in Afghanistan when past efforts have not fully done so?

General MCCHRYSTAL. There are three key aspects of the current campaign that differentiates it from previous ISAF strategies: (1) A change in the operational culture; (2) Embedded partnering; and (3) Adequate resources.

The ISAF counterinsurgency strategy brings with it a clear mandate to protect the population. This orientation ensures that there is a distinct difference in how we interact with the population, in both word and deed, compared to the insurgent. This difference will be recognizable to the population.

Second, employing embedded partnering is the most expeditious way to build a competent and confident counterinsurgency capable force. Embedded partnering differs from past partnering methods in that the partnership does not end at the gates of the respective force operating bases. Afghan and ISAF partners live together, plan together, execute operations jointly, and return to the same location to debrief the operation. It allows for ISAF to quickly learn the critical cultural aspects of the counterinsurgency environment while our partners receive the reciprocal benefits of force professionalization through observation and imitation.

Finally, the forces directed by the President provide a bridging force to allow time and space for ANSF growth and a catalyst force that allows us to partner at substantially improved ratios. Previous personnel increases have arrived in theater behind the pace of the insurgency. At best, the previous additional forces were able to prevent the insurgency's ability to achieve their goals without being able to reverse the momentum of their growth.

AIRLIFT CAPABILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

61. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, the Washington Post reported this morning in an interview with Admiral Mike Mullen that, "To speed the flow of U.S. troops into Afghanistan, Mullen said the United States will build at least one new airfield in the land-locked country to accommodate U.S. cargo planes carrying new mine-resistant vehicles and weaponry." Where are you planning to build this airfield?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Between fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2012, USFOR–A is planning almost $1 billion in improvements to 15 airfields across Afghanistan. There are other ongoing airfield projects at locations such as a $167 million effort to construct a runway, strategic parking apron, and a rotary wing ramp at Camp Bastion, due for completion in December 2010.

62. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, when will you need to have this airfields constructed in order to support surge forces?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The airfields being programmed and the one being constructed at Camp Bastion will not be completed in time for the arrival of the troop increase. These airfields will be used for sustainment/resupply and to support combat operations.

63. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, will this be the only significant investment in infrastructure and new bases required to support the surge? If not, can you provide what other infrastructure requirements you have identified are needed to support the additional troops?

General MCCHRYSTAL. To support the troop increase, USFOR–A submitted to CENTCOM almost $500 million in other infrastructure improvements as part of the fiscal year 2010 supplemental MILCON call. These projects include improvements to airfields, fuel and munitions storage areas, utility systems, and operations facilities.

DRUG TRAFFICKING

64. Senator MCCAIN. General McChrystal, what are ISAF's common rules of engagement and/or strategy with respect to interdicting narco-traffickers?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

CIVILIANS

65. Senator MCCAIN. Ambassador Eikenberry, you have a lot of experience in Afghanistan. I'm not interested in the number of civilians we are now fielding, but in what they will do. Please explain how our current civilian strategy and operations are different than what we have done before, and why we can achieve success now when past efforts have not fully done so.

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

66. Senator MCCAIN. Ambassador Eikenberry, the President greatly accelerated the deployment of U.S. forces to the middle of next year. Will our civilians be fully in place at that time and able to commit resources as necessary so that our counterinsurgency operations can be decisive?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

67. Senator MCCAIN. Ambassador Eikenberry, do you have all the authorities you need to get our civilians into the field rapidly and to get our assistance programs implemented in a timely manner, with sufficient resources and flexibility, to achieve your mission?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAVID VITTER

MISSION

68. Senator VITTER. General McChrystal, last week you said that President Obama's plan has provided you with "a clear military mission." Can you please explain, as specifically as possible, what you understand that mission to be?

General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

69. Senator VITTER. General McChrystal, do you intend to pursue victory in Afghanistan, and if so, what must you accomplish there to achieve that goal?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Ultimately, we want the Afghan people to win. We have a mission that we will accomplish, but it is in support of the Afghan people. We must defeat al Qaeda, disrupt the Taliban, and to assist with the growth and development of the ANSF.

70. Senator VITTER. General McChrystal, do you realistically expect a significant number of U.S. troops to begin withdrawing from Afghanistan by July 2011? What is the likelihood of this occurring?

General MCCHRYSTAL. As the President articulated in his 1 December announcement, U.S. combat forces will begin the process of withdrawal in July 2011. I will comply with the President's guidance, but the pace of the withdrawal is to be determined, as stated by the President, by conditions on the ground.

71. Senator VITTER. Ambassador Eikenberry, do you consider our diplomatic and so-called "capacity-building" efforts in Afghanistan to be simply another form of "nation building?" Why or why not? If not, can you please explain the difference between our development efforts in Afghanistan and "nation building," which the President has indicated that he does not wish to do?

Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

AIRSTRIKES

72. Senator VITTER. General McChrystal, this summer, you issued new rules restricting the use of airstrikes in an effort to reduce civilian casualties. Have these rules in any way increased the danger to U.S. troops in Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I do not know of any incidents where these rules have directly resulted in increasing the danger to our troops. The Tactical Directive does not prevent troops from protecting themselves as a matter of self-defense. The restrictions described in the Tactical Directive create much less risk than the greater longer-term danger posed to U.S. troops from sustained insurgent determination, resolve, and recruitment brought about by indiscriminate use of airstrikes and consequent civilian casualties.

73. Senator VITTER. General McChrystal, to your knowledge, have any troops been killed as a result of delayed or denied airstrikes that would have been allowed under the previous rules?

General MCCHRYSTAL. No. The Tactical Directive does not prevent troops from protecting themselves as a matter of self defense. The restrictions described in the Tactical Directive create much less risk than the greater longer-term danger posed to U.S. troops from sustained insurgent determination, resolve, and recruitment brought about by indiscriminate use of airstrikes and consequent civilian casualties.

PAKISTAN

74. Senator VITTER. General McChrystal, what is the status of your working relationship with Pakistani military leaders?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Very good. I regularly meet with General Kayani and our staffs have a solid working relationship.

75. Senator VITTER. General McChrystal, how would you characterize their support of the President's new plan for the region?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Pakistan's leaders recognize that extremist groups pose an existential threat to Pakistan's national security. They recognize that Afghanistan and Pakistan stability are inextricably linked as extremist threats transcend regional boundaries.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANT FORCE

76. Senator VITTER. General McChrystal, what is the status of the request for additional NATO troops?
General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

77. Senator VITTER. General McChrystal, how many of our allies have pledged troops since the President's speech last week, and how many troops do they intend to send?
General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

CIVILIANS

78. Senator VITTER. General McChrystal, what is being done by non-military civilian roles to mitigate potential insurgent agendas?
General MCCHRYSTAL. Civilians in the U.S. Embassy work closely with the military. I personally meet with Ambassador Eikenberry on weekly basis to coordinate civil-military issues, and our staffs have multiple meetings where we communicate. As for their specific roles, Ambassador Eikenberry is better suited to answer your question.

79. Senator VITTER. Ambassador Eikenberry, does the Civilian Response Corps have a role to play alongside the military in bolstering the commitment the United States has in Afghanistan?
Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

AFGHANISTAN'S GOVERNMENT

80. Senator VITTER. Ambassador Eikenberry, what is your status of the overall stability of the Karzai Government?
Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

81. Senator VITTER. Ambassador Eikenberry, do you still believe that it is unwise to send additional American troops until the systemic corruption is addressed? Why or why not?
Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

82. Senator VITTER. Ambassador Eikenberry, can you provide an estimate of how much foreign aid, diplomatic spending, and economic development money has been allocated to the Karzai Government since Karzai initially took office? Of that amount, what percentage has ultimately been spent on the purposes for which it was originally intended?
Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR SUSAN M. COLLINS

TROOP TIMELINE

83. Senator COLLINS. General McChrystal, optimistically speaking, if all goes as the administration plans, how long do you envision U.S. troops would be needed in Afghanistan?
General MCCHRYSTAL. [Deleted.]

PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

84. Senator COLLINS. Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal, last week, the President announced his decision not only to the American people, but also to the people of Afghanistan, including President Karzai. What message do you think President Karzai received from the President's speech? Did he hear that the United States is sending more troops to do his job for him or did he hear "you have until July 2011 to get your act together?"
Ambassador Eikenberry did not respond in time for printing. When received, answer will be retained in committee files.

General MCCHRYSTAL. The President's speech conveyed a clear message that we seek a partnership with Afghanistan grounded in mutual respect. In President Obama's words, we will "forge a lasting friendship in which America is [Afghanistan's] partner, and never [their] patron."

The President's decision to deploy additional forces demonstrates the right level of commitment to reverse the insurgency's momentum, and build sustainable Afghan capabilities. Rather than do the job for the Afghans, our approach toward training the Afghan security forces is to partner with them at every level so that, as the President noted, "more Afghans can get into the fight."

Both President Obama's West Point speech and President Karzai's inauguration remarks indicated a shared commitment to improve governance and hold those who are ineffective or corrupt accountable. We stand together with our allies, partners, and the Afghan Government to help Afghans assume an ever-increasing role in establishing and maintaining their security.

[Whereupon, at 5:22 p.m., the committee adjourned.]