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U.S. STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN, PART I

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2009

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:30 p.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Howard L. Berman (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman BERMAN. The committee will come to order.

Before beginning my opening statement, I would like to make several brief announcements. As most of you know, our colleague, Robert Wexler, will resign from Congress at the end of this year to become president of the Center for Middle East Peace and Economic Cooperation. Effective today he is resigning as chairman of the Subcommittee on Europe, and he will be succeeded in that position by Bill Delahunt. Looking at Bill Delahunt you would think he is going to be focused on old Europe, but he is going to be focused on old and new Europe.

Russ Carnahan will serve as the new chairman of the International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight Subcommittee, following in the footsteps, believe it or not, of his grandfather, who chaired the same subcommittee in the 85th Congress, a contemporary of Bill's.

We thank Bob for his service in the Congress on this committee, a very good friend to many of us, and wish all three of our colleagues the best of luck in their new positions.

Second, I want to welcome the Prime Minister of Hungary Gordon Bajnai, who is here with us today. Hungary is one of our staunchest allies, and I want to thank the Prime Minister for his country's leadership of the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Baghlan Province in Afghanistan and for the brave men and women of Hungary who are serving there.

Welcome, Mr. Prime Minister.

Finally, given the time constraints on the witnesses, they must leave at 4:15 wherever we are, and to ensure that as many members as possible have a chance to ask questions, we will limit opening statements to myself and the ranking member. And I will not be taking all of my time. And without objection, all other members may submit written statements for the record.

And now I will recognize myself for an opening statement.

Last night President Obama spoke eloquently to the Nation about his plan of action in Afghanistan. Today we are pleased to welcome three senior officials to testify on the President's proposed strategy: Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of

Defense Robert Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen. We greatly appreciate your participation.

As the President stated, it is clear that the United States has vital national security interests at stake in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Determining the best policy to serve those interests is the most difficult foreign policy challenge before this President, before this Congress, and before the American people. It is a situation with no easy answers and no predictable outcomes.

Our goal in the region, as defined by the President, is to "disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to prevent its capacity to threaten America and our allies in the future." Many news reports suggest that there was a healthy debate in the administration about whether this critical objective could be met by pursuing a targeted counterterrorism strategy as opposed to a more extensive and robust counterinsurgency strategy.

Could the United States succeed in Afghanistan by employing relatively small numbers of Special Operations Forces and high-tech weapons systems to disrupt and defeat al-Qaeda and reverse the Taliban's momentum while also accelerating the training of Afghan security forces? Or does the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan call for a more ambitious strategy—one that includes military, political, and economic dimensions—to protect the people of Afghanistan and instill confidence in that country's fragile national government? If we pursue the latter approach, then, as the President indicated, success will hinge on a substantial deployment of civilian resources.

The President also noted that success in Afghanistan is dependent on what he referred to as "an effective partnership with Pakistan." What more will we expect Pakistan to do that they are not already doing? What more will the U.S. have to do to nurture that important relationship?

And finally, is the full cost of our efforts in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, in terms of military and civilian resources, something we can afford and are willing to pay?

The President took the time to consult carefully with his generals, his diplomats, his national security team, and numerous others to form a complete picture of the situation in Afghanistan.

Now begins the deliberative period for Congress and the people we represent. Now is the time for us to evaluate the strategy, to test its coherence, and to raise the questions that will examine the assumptions on which it is based. We cannot shirk our responsibility to ask the tough question; the stakes are simply too high.

I now turn to the ranking member, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, for any opening remarks she would like to make. And following that we will proceed immediately to the testimony of our distinguished witnesses.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

And before I begin my opening remarks, I wanted to state for the record and inform our distinguished witnesses today that our colleague Mr. Manzullo is unable to be at the hearing today because he is at a briefing that Senator Durbin is hosting on bringing Gitmo detainees to Thomson in Illinois. Mr. Manzullo will make every effort to join today's hearing following the conclusion of the briefing on Gitmo detainee transfers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Our security and vital interests are at stake in Afghanistan. As the President said in his speech last night, "This is no idle danger, no hypothetical threat. This danger will only grow if the region slides backwards and al-Qaeda can operate with impunity."

Our brave men and women in uniform understand this reality and stand ready for duty. They embrace the opportunity to defend our Nation and protect our homeland by defeating the enemy in a convincing manner so that they cannot ever again rise against us. It is our obligation to provide them and all of our personnel on the ground with the support and the resources necessary to win the war in Afghanistan and prevail against al-Qaeda, the Taliban and other militants.

I am, however, concerned that before the strategy has been implemented, the President has placed a deadline on our commitment and a timeline for the withdrawal of our troops. What message does this telegraph to the enemy? How does it impact the morale of our troops and the mind-set of our Afghan counterparts and our other allies in this effort?

This is a fight that we cannot afford to lose. General McChrystal wrote on August 30th that the next 12 months are critical, yet one-quarter of that time is already gone. As President John F. Kennedy said, and I quote, "There are risks and costs to action, but they are far less than the long-range risk of comfortable inaction." Now that the President has articulated the administration's approach toward Afghanistan, we must fully commit to doing everything possible to succeed there.

I ask that our distinguished witnesses address the following: What are the key differences between the strategy that the President articulated yesterday and those that he articulated last March? What action is the administration taking to ensure that those who have pledged to provide multilateral and bilateral assistance to Afghanistan actually fulfill their commitments?

And, Secretary Clinton, what is our anticorruption strategy in Afghanistan? What is our strategy for promoting a more capable, accountable and effective government in Afghanistan that truly serves the Afghan people?

Secretary Gates, what is our strategy for expanding the numbers and building the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces? What is our strategy for supporting Afghanistan in disrupting and dismantling narcotraffickers and breaking the narcotics/insurgency nexus?

I would like to refer to an editorial appearing on Monday in the Wall Street Journal Europe section where the author refers to a discussion he had with the chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court. The ICC's chief prosecutor said that he already has jurisdiction in Afghanistan because the Afghan Government ratified the Rome statute in 2003, and that he is already conducting a preliminary examination into whether NATO troops, including our American soldiers fighting the Taliban, may have to be prosecuted by the International Criminal Court.

Secretary Clinton, this past August you expressed "great regret that we are not a signatory" to the International Criminal Court. Then just a few weeks ago, the U.S. sent an observer mission to the ICC Assembly of States. What is the administration's current

position concerning the ICC, and what protections are being provided to our personnel in Afghanistan to ensure that they are not subject to ICC prosecution?

And in closing, Mr. Chairman, because the administration is concerned about cost and wants to put a price on the defense and the security of our Nation, I would suggest that we withhold U.S. contributions to the U.N. until reforms, accountability and transparency measures are actually put in place. I am confident that the American people would prefer that their limited taxpayer funds would be provided to our personnel in Afghanistan so that they have the tools needed to win rather than have it squandered away by a U.N. system hijacked by enemies of freedom and democracy. Just yesterday the U.N. General Assembly passed multiple anti-Israel resolutions in their International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, and the U.N. vote just continues to astound us every day.

The challenges in Afghanistan are great, Mr. Chairman, but they are not insurmountable. I look forward to the immediate implementation of a strategy that provides us the highest chances for success with the lowest risk to the safety and well-being of our brave patriots serving and about to serve us in Afghanistan.

Thank you very much for the time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. Thank you. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

And I would like to introduce the witnesses, as if they need an introduction. I will not go through your colleges and first four or five jobs. But Secretary Hillary Clinton is the 67th Secretary of State of the United States. Previously Secretary Clinton served as the junior Senator from New York for two terms, where she was known for working across party lines. As First Lady she was a tireless advocate of health care reform and worked on many issues relating to children and families.

Secretary Robert Gates is the 22nd Secretary of Defense of the United States. Dr. Gates is the only Secretary of Defense in U.S. history to be asked to remain in that office by a newly elected President. President Obama is the eighth President under which Dr. Gates has served. Previously, just before becoming Secretary of Defense, Dr. Gates was the president of Texas A&M University. Secretary Gates joined the Central Intelligence Agency in 1996—1966 and spent nearly 27 years as an intelligence professional.

Admiral Michael Mullen is the 17th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He serves as the principal military advisor to the President, the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Council and the Homeland Security Council. Prior to becoming Chairman, Admiral Mullen served as the 28th Chief of Naval Operations. His last operational assignment was as Commander, NATO Joint Force Command, Naples Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, and he did graduate Notre Dame High School in Sherman Oaks, California.

Secretary Clinton.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee. I am grateful for this opportunity to testify today. And I also want to acknowledge the leader of one of our very strong allies, the Prime Minister of Hungary, who the chairman has recognized and to whom we show our appreciation.

Yesterday President Obama presented the administration's strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Today we will be answering your questions and providing 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, we believe 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 11th, I grieved with sons, daughters, husbands and wives, those whose loved ones were murdered. It was an attack on our country; it was at the time an attack on my constituents. And I witnessed the tragic consequences in the lives of thousands of innocent families, 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. And 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 the President called for a careful thorough review of our strategy. I was very proud to be a part of that process, and 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, our interests. We will help to stabilize a region that is fundamental to our national security, and we will develop long-term, sustainable relationships with both Afghanistan and Pakistan so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past. The duration of our military presence may be limited, but our civilian commitment must continue even as our troops will begin to come home.

Now, accomplishing this mission and ensuring the safety of the American people will not be easy. It will mean sending more civilians, more troops and more assistance to Afghanistan, and significantly expanding our civilian efforts in Pakistan. And the men and women carrying out this mission, both civilian and military alike, are not just statistics on a PowerPoint slide, they are our friends and neighbors, our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters,

and we will be asking them and the American people who support them to make extraordinary sacrifices once again. I want to assure this committee we will do everything we can to make sure their sacrifices 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. The beginning of President Karzai's second term has opened a new window of opportunity. We do 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, which I attended, I witnessed President Karzai call for a new compact, a new compact with his country and a new compact with the international community. He pledged to continue to work with us, and 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 now must be matched with action, and we intend to hold the Afghan Government accountable. We will work with our Afghan partners to strengthen institutions at every level of society.

The President has outlined a timeframe for transition to Afghan responsibility. As he said in his speech last evening, the additional American and international troops will allow us to accelerate handing over responsibility to Afghan forces and allow us to begin the transfer of our forces out of Afghanistan in July 2011. Just as we have done in Iraq, we will execute this 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 the United States, our allies and our partners will have an enduring commitment, a civilian commitment, to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Our resolve in this fight is reflected in the substantial new increase in troops, but also in the significant civilian surge that will also accompany it.

The civilian effort is bearing fruit. The civilian experts and advisors are helping to craft policy inside government ministries, providing development assistance in the field. And when our marines went into Nawa Province this last July, we had civilians on the ground with them to coordinate assistance the very next day. As our operations progress, our civ-mil coordination will grow even stronger.

We are on track to triple the number of civilian positions to 974 by early in January. On average, each of these civilians leverages 10 partners, ranging from locally employed staff to experts with U.S.-funded NGOs. It is a 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 the agricultural experience of the USDA civilians serving alongside his battalion, or the rule of law and governance expertise of the civilian experts from the State Department. The colonel said to me, I am happy to supply whatever support these valuable civilians need, and we need more of them.

That is part of our strategy, our combined civilian-military strategy. We will be delivering high-impact economic assistance and bolstering the agricultural sector; we will be helping to support an Afghan-led effort to open the door to those Taliban who renounce al-Qaeda, abandon violence and want to reintegrate into society. We know that regional diplomacy is essential, and it will complement our approach.

I will be going to Brussels tomorrow to work with our allies to obtain additional commitments of troops and civilian aid. We also know that a strong, stable, democratic Pakistan is a necessity as a key partner in this effort. People in Pakistan are increasingly coming to the view that we do share a common enemy. I heard that repeatedly during my recent visit there. So we will significantly expand support to help develop the potential of the people of Pakistan, and we will do more to demonstrate to the Pakistani people that they must continue their efforts to weed out and defeat the Pakistani Taliban.

As we are moving forward with our international efforts, we have a great deal of commitment to troops, trainers and resources that will be reported in the days and weeks ahead. Ambassador Holbrooke, our Special Representative, is already there consulting with our allies. And we are especially reaching out to Muslims everywhere to make clear that those who pervert a great religion do not represent it, and everyone has a stake in ensuring that they do not dominate the message and the narrative of what Islam stands for.

So let me conclude where I began. We face a range of difficult choices, but the President's plan represents the best way we know to protect our Nation today and tomorrow. The task is as complex as any national security challenge in our lifetime. We will not succeed if people view this effort as the responsibility of a single party or 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 along with our allies and international partners to accomplish this mission. I look forward to working with you to ensure that we do.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Clinton follows:]

SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
WASHINGTON, DC
DECEMBER 2, 2009

Chairman Berman, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen, and members of the Committee, I'm grateful for this opportunity to testify today. I also want to acknowledge the leader of one of our strong allies, the Prime Minister of Hungary, who is here with us. Mr. Prime Minister, as best I know, the House Foreign Affairs Committee is the only committee in our Congress to have been chaired by a native born Hungarian, my friend, the late Tom Lantos. So your presence here is particularly appropriate.

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 eight years has not. The fog of another war obscured our focus. And 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 the President called for a careful, thorough review of our strategy. I was proud to be a part of that process. And 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. 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 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. And 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 NGOs. 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 USDA 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. And 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 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. And 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. And I thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Chairman BERMAN. Thank you, Madam Secretary.
Secretary Gates.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ROBERT M. GATES, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Secretary GATES. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, thank you for inviting us to testify today. I would like to provide an overview of the strategic thinking and context behind the President's decisions, in particular the nexus among al-Qaeda, the Taliban, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and our objectives on how the President's strategy aims to accomplish them.

As the President first stated last March and reemphasized last night, the goal of the United States and Afghanistan and Pakistan is to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaeda and its extremist allies, and to prevent its return to both countries. 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 the mythology of the other. Al-Qaeda leaders have stated this explicitly and repeatedly.

The lesson of the Afghan 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. Giving extremists breathing room in Pakistan led to the resurgence of the Taliban and more coordinated and 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.

Failure in Afghanistan would mean a Taliban takeover of much, if not most, of the country and likely a renewed civil war. A Taliban-ruled area 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, fundraising and more sophisticated operations.

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. 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 for 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 in 1993 on the World Trade Center in New York. We cannot afford to make a similar mistake again.

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.

The essence of our civil-military plan is to clear, hold, build and transfer. Beginning to transfer security responsibility to the Afghans in the summer of 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.

Making this transition possible requires accelerating the development of a significantly larger and more capable Afghan Army and police through extensive partnering with ISAF forces especially in combat. Even after we transfer security responsibility to the Afghans and draw down our combat forces, the United States must continue to support their development as an important partner for the long haul. We must not repeat the mistakes of 1989 when we abandoned the country only to see it descend into civil war and then into Taliban hands.

Let me offer closing thoughts. 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. And 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.

As always, the heaviest burden will fall on the men and women who have volunteered and often revolunteered to serve their coun-

try 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.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Gates follows:]

FOR SUBMISSION

STATEMENT OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT GATES
HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2009

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 un-tethered 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 re-taking 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 seven months ago, that largely motivated the current operations by the Pakistani army. And we know the Pakistan Taliban operate in collusion with both the Taliban in Afghanistan and Al Qaeda.

FOR SUBMISSION

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 twenty 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 five 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 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, 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 forces, 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 sub-national 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 forces will begin to arrive in Afghanistan within 2-3 weeks.

FOR SUBMISSION

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 five 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 three 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 re-volunteered – 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.

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Chairman BERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

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

Admiral MULLEN. Mr. Chairman, Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen and distinguished members of this committee, thank you for your time today.

Let me say right up front that I support fully and without hesitation the President's decision, and I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to what I believe was a healthy and productive discussion. I have seen my share of internal debates about various national security issues, especially over the course of the 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. And 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.

Secretary Clinton and Secretary Gates have already walked you through the larger 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 Afghan National Security Forces.

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 is 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 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 over the course of the next year.

Secondly, but not insignificantly, this new strategy gives commanders on the ground the resources and the support they need to reverse the momentum of a Taliban insurgency and to accomplish these more limited objectives. I have said it before, and I believe it still today, this region is the epicenter of global Islamic extre-

mism. It is the place from which we were attacked on 9/11, and should we be hit again, it is 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 Khorangow 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. And 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 there is no serious threat of Afghanistan falling once again into Taliban hands ignores the audacity of even the insurgency's most public statements. And to argue that should they have that power, the Taliban would not at least tolerate the presence of al-Qaeda again 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 understand 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 and 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.

And that brings me to my final point. The President's new strategy still recognizes the criticality of a broad-based 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 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, 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 have had in the past, one based on pragmatism and real possibilities. And 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 I appreciate his leadership.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Mullen follows:]

Statement of
Admiral Michael G. Mullen, USN
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Before the 111th Congress
House Committee on Foreign Affairs

Chairman Berman, Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen 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 9/11 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 NATO-ISAF force – 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 time frame. 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 COMISAF 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 eight 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 the 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 BERMAN. Well, I thank you and thank all of you.

We have 2 hours to go at our distinguished witnesses. As is the custom, the gavel will go down after 5 minutes. Members can make comments; we can ask questions. As a matter of common courtesy, if we expect an answer to the question, we might give the witnesses something more than 7½ seconds of that 5 minutes to answer.

I yield myself 5 minutes. I would like to ask a couple of short questions and then a little more time on the Afghanistan-Pakistan relationship.

First, and you sort of made it evident by your testimony, but, Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, do you believe a civilian surge is an essential part of the President's strategy?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

Admiral MULLEN. Absolutely.

Chairman BERMAN. Secretary Clinton, are you in a position at this time to know the resources you will need to accomplish this?

Secretary CLINTON. Mr. Chairman, we do not know specifically, but we will be submitting budget requests in order to achieve the numbers that are going to be needed.

Chairman BERMAN. Thank you.

Turning now to Afghanistan and Pakistan—that connection—the administration has described the current situation in Afghanistan as detrimental to the stability of Pakistan. It is publicly reported that elements of Pakistan's intelligence service continue to have ties with a number of the insurgent groups that seek to destabilize Afghanistan. Don't many in Pakistan see these groups as a means to maintain influence in Afghanistan? What incentive does Pakistan have to cut these ties and join us in going after these groups?

We do know that the Pakistan military is conducting unprecedented operations in Waziristan, but the way it looks, these operations are focused on the Pakistani Taliban and not against those extremists and Taliban that are using Pakistan as a sanctuary to launch operations in Afghanistan and against our troops. Do you see evidence that Pakistan will act against these groups? And for whoever and how many of you care to respond to that.

Secretary GATES. Mr. Chairman, I would say that, first of all, there is—one of the significant political developments in Pakistan over the last 7 or 8 months has been a strong shift in public opinion in support of the actions that the Pakistani Army is taking in—first in Swat and now in South Waziristan.

As I indicated earlier, there has developed over the last year a nexus between al-Qaeda, the Pakistani Taliban, the Tariki Taliban in Pakistan and the Taliban in Afghanistan, and they are mutually reinforcing both in their narrative and in their operations. What we have seen is the Pakistani Army going after the Taliban and other extremists in western Pakistan. There is no question but what it has put pressure on some of the insurgent groups that are acting against the United States. A number of these people have fled from South Waziristan into North Waziristan, some may be going into Afghanistan. So there clearly is a value to what the Pakistanis are doing.

The Pakistanis' relationship with these groups dates back, frankly, to when I was dealing with them more than 20 years ago when

we were taking on the Soviet Union in Pakistan. These relationships between the Pakistanis and these groups were established then as a vehicle for taking on the Soviets. They have maintained some of those contacts and those relationships, frankly, as a hedge because of their uncertainty whether the United States would be a reliable partner and ally for them going forward, and whether we would remain in Afghanistan until we were assured of success in taking care of the extremists.

I think as we make progress and as they make progress, their incentive to change this approach to opt strategically to partner with the United States becomes significantly more powerful.

Admiral MULLEN. I would only add that as I watch Pakistan, Mr. Chairman, that they have made great progress and great changes certainly compared to 12 months ago, and that from my perspective it is their view—how they will proceed will be based on in many ways how Afghanistan turns out. That is why stabilizing Afghanistan, having an Afghanistan that isn't a threat to them, stability in the region, I think that offers great opportunity for them to continue to change and break some of these relationships or change some of these relationships over time.

And I just remain extremely concerned about the collaboration—the collaborative aspect of what has happened with all these separate terrorist groups over the last couple of years who have joined hands in ways that we just haven't seen before.

Chairman BERMAN. Thank you very much. My time is expired.

The ranking member Ileana Ros-Lehtinen is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to our distinguished panelists today.

In his speech the President stated, "We will pursue a military strategy that will break the Taliban's momentum and increase Afghanistan's capacity over the next 18 months." How would we measure Taliban's capabilities, and what are the specific indicators that we are monitoring to assess the Taliban momentum? And if the Taliban momentum is not broken within 18 months, what are our contingency plans?

If you could care to comment on reports that U.S. assistance has made its way into Taliban coffers, what oversight mechanisms do we have in place to prevent funds from being diverted to pay for Taliban protection rackets, for example?

Lastly on Iran, would you agree that Iran plays a destabilizing role related to the security and stability of Afghanistan? Would you agree that we have seen an increase in the level of support that Iran has provided to the Taliban and insurgent groups, including lethal aid? What is our strategy in Afghanistan as it relates to the threat posed by Iran?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary GATES. Let me take on the second and third parts of your question and ask Admiral Mullen to take on the first part.

First of all, there is no question with respect to your second question. One of the concerns that I have, we talk about the narcotics trade being the source of a great deal of income for the Taliban and, frankly, also for corruption in Afghanistan. And one of my concerns is that another source of corruption and support for the

Taliban, I fear, is the enormous amount of international money coming into Afghanistan through our own efforts and those of our partners in Afghanistan, the 42 other nations that are contributing troops, the hundreds of NGOs and international organizations and so on.

There is a huge amount of money flowing into Afghanistan at this point, and one of the things that we have to think about is the way in which we approach our contracting, and the way we deal with the Afghan Government, and the way we use the funds that are available to us to reduce their contribution both to corruption and potentially some part of it flowing to the Taliban themselves. The place we can start is the place where we have control, and that is where we write the checks, so that is the place to start now.

It has been a long day, so remind me of your third question.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. It is about the influence of Iran. We had talked about the Pakistan——

Secretary GATES. That is good enough. I would tell you that we do have evidence of Iranian involvement, particularly in the western part of Afghanistan. But I think based on the intelligence and the information available to us from our commanders, it is still a relatively small and not significant—making a relatively small and not significant contribution to the Taliban effort.

I think that the Iranians are trying to straddle a very narrow divide. They want to support the Afghan Government, they want to have a friendly relationship with the Afghan Government, but there is no question they would like to inflict pain on us. And so I think trying to target their efforts in ways that are aimed at ISAF and not at the Afghan Government is what they are trying to do, but it is still at a very modest level.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

And, Admiral Mullen, just how we can calibrate success?

Admiral MULLEN. Ma'am, it happens through security, there is no question about that. And that is why flowing these forces as rapidly as we can, literally starting in a couple of weeks, but over the course of the next 6 or 7 months, is so critical.

And in General McChrystal's routine travel around the country, the elders tell him, the leaders tell him security is first. And through that comes training and equipping the Afghan security forces. And we will have very strong indicators over the next 12 to 18 to 24 months where we stand with respect to that.

And I really think it is a momentum piece. And we had an operation; there is a reconciliation, a reintegration piece of this as well, and we will know how well that is working.

We had a situation a couple of weeks ago where upwards—you know, there were tens of Taliban who said, I am done. And there are a lot of people out there that are tired of fighting. And I am not basing it all on that. The point is that will be a piece of this as well.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired. The chairman of the Middle East and South Asia Subcommittee, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Ackerman, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am really struggling with this one. It seems a bunch of years ago I participated in a clunkers for cash program. My President sold me a clunker, and I paid for it with my children's and my constituents' children and grandchildren's cash. We are still paying for that one. And I just want to make sure the best that I can that we are not buying another clunker.

I am trying to think this thing through. I think the best I come up with is that we have a shack that is on fire, but it is located next to the dynamite factory. And the question that I think I know the answer to, but my constituents keep asking, is it worth risking the lives of those who respond to the fire in a place that may or may not hold a lot of value in and of itself, and what is going to be the result, and what would happen if we don't respond to that?

I guess the question I would ask is this: As of 8 o'clock last night, do we have a new war, or do we have an old war under new ownership, or is it the same war with a new management strategy to muscle up and have a more elegant exit plan? Maybe we could start with that.

Secretary GATES. I think we have inherited the same war, but it is a dynamic war, and frankly the situation is getting worse. The fire is getting hotter. The situation in Pakistan, as we have seen in the last year or so, a number of terrorist bombings, a clear intent on the part of al-Qaeda to work with the Taliban in Pakistan to destabilize the Government of Pakistan with nuclear weapons and a much larger population. We have seen the Taliban, as Admiral Mullen said earlier, becoming more bold and more aggressive. And it is clear, I think, to the President and to the rest of us that we need to do something to change the dynamic, to change the momentum. And what I think the President has done is narrowed the mission.

One of the concerns we had coming out of March, one of the concerns that I had, was that those decisions were interpreted by many as saying, well, we are going into full-scale nation building, and we are going to try and reestablish or establish a strong central government in Kabul.

I think what we have done in this process, and one of the things that has taken us some time, is figuring out how to narrow the mission so that it is focused on the threat to the United States. How do we keep al-Qaeda and that terrorist nexus on that border from becoming an even greater danger to the United States? How do we disrupt them? How do we dismantle them? How do we defeat them? And the conclusion is we must stabilize the security situation in Afghanistan.

Of course, we don't need to build a 21st century country in Afghanistan to accomplish that objective. And so the purpose I think of what the President has announced is to narrow our mission, focus it on our security and as well the future of both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Secretary CLINTON. I think, Congressman, the process that we have gone through has been aimed at testing every assumption, asking all the hard questions. I think it is fair to say that if the President could have concluded that this was an old war that could be wound down and walked away from, that would certainly have been an easier choice.

He is, as we all are, well aware of the political and the economic and the loss of young men and women that this decision presages. But the dynamite factory is there, and, unfortunately, it has been stocked with even more dynamite in the last couple of years, and therefore we think we have to address it.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The ranking member of the subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Burton, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I believe that commitment is extremely important, and the civilian commitment the Secretary of State talked about is important, but they have to be covered by the military. And today, at 12:59 p.m., Admiral Mullen said, in part, that by roughly the July time frame we will have 20 to 25,000 troops in theater, and there will be 5,000 troops, Marines that will be over there very shortly.

Now, if the time frame is correct in my mind, the President has indicated he wants to start removing troops in July 2011, and you are telling us that they are not going to be there until July 2010. That gives 1 year before they start removing the troops.

Now, I understand that this can be adjusted, and the witnesses have indicated that this can be adjusted if the need arises, but what kind of a signal does it send to the Taliban and al-Qaeda when you know that the troops aren't going to be there until July and you are going to start moving them out 1 year from then?

Even if you reassess, you have given them a time frame within which to work. And I just think that is a terrible mistake.

And, you know, there is another issue that I want to raise. Last night, I was watching my good friend, Representative Poe, on the floor; and he raised an issue that has not been talked about in the media very much. You know, back in World War II, if the Japanese had killed and mutilated four Americans, hung them from a bridge, and then we captured one of the people that did that, one of the ringleaders and they got a split lip and a smack in the stomach, I don't think they would have been court-martialed. I think if the Germans in World War II had killed and mutilated American troops and hung them from a bridge and somebody busted them in the mouth when they captured them, they wouldn't have been court-martialed.

And yet, right now, one of the ringleaders of al-Qaeda, Ahmed Hashim Abed, was captured in Operation Amber. He was wanted for the murder of four U.S. contractors in Fallujah that were mutilated and hung, dragged through the streets and hung from the bridge there, and those Navy Seals that captured him in Operation Amber on December the 7th, the day we were attacked at Pearl Harbor, are going to be court-martialed.

I think that is insane. What kind of a message are we sending to our troops in the field when they do their duty, risk their lives, capture a terrorist that is wanted, one of the top 10 terrorists, and we are going to court-martial them?

I don't care if they broke the guy's nose or broke both his arms and his legs. This is insane. The troops need to know there is total commitment by the people of this country and the military leaders. And for us to start court-martialing people who capture a leader in

al-Qaeda who mutilated Americans and hung them from a bridge and we are going to court-martial them for capturing this guy and punching him in the stomach and giving him a broken lip? This is crazy.

We need to send a signal we are going to do whatever is necessary to protect our troops and protect the people of this country in this war against terror. And I hope that you will be able to give me a satisfactory answer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as to why these gentlemen are being court-martialed.

Admiral MULLEN. Sir, I have great faith in our judicial system.

Mr. BURTON. But why are they being court-martialed in the first place?

Admiral MULLEN. I have got great combat leaders out there, great leaders in the SEAL community specifically that I have tremendous faith in; and I await the results of whatever that leadership recommends and the procedures that would follow. And I wouldn't be involved in any more, in any way, shape, or form, in those proceedings. It would be improper for me to get involved in any way, shape, or form at this point.

Mr. BURTON. Let me just follow up by saying, sir, I think it is improper that these men are being court-martialed after capturing this guy in Operation Amber and him having a split lip and getting—and was hit in the stomach. Because that is what we were told happened. And if security is job one, then I think an artificial timeline in Afghanistan is improper as well. It sends the wrong signal, in my opinion, to the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

Respond if you like. You have 23 seconds to respond, if you like.

Admiral MULLEN. The timeline is one that gets—the decision is one that gets forces there very, very rapidly. The decision, the timeline in July is set to transition, transfer security responsibility, start to do that, and transition. And it will be a responsible transition, and it will be based on conditions on the ground.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The representative from American Samoa, Mr. Faleomavaega, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I would like to personally express the deepest gratitude and appreciation to you and your office for the splendid assistance that was given after the recent crisis in the earthquake and the tsunami in the Samoan Islands. I deeply appreciate that.

There was an article last month in the Washington Post which expressed some concerns that Ambassador Eikenberry had given, to the fact that his feeling was that if we increase our force structure in Afghanistan it will mean that the government will be more dependent on our support and our assistance. And I guess out of frustration President Karzai was noted in the same article in the Washington Post, and I quote: "U.S. Officials were particularly irritated by an interview this week in which a defiant Karzai said that the West has little interest in Afghanistan and that its troops are there only for self-serving reasons."

And the quote from President Karzai was, "The West is not here primarily for the sake of Afghanistan. It is here to fight terrorism. The United States and its allies came to Afghanistan after Sep-

tember 11th. Afghanistan was troubled like hell before that, too. Nobody bothered about us."

And I guess there is a sense of negligence that we had given because we were focused on Iraq and the problems that we have encountered there in that terrible conflict. What is your sense on this, Secretary Gates? Is there some truth in President Karzai's sense of frustration that after 6 or 7 years' absence all of a sudden we refocused, now suggesting Afghanistan is a very important issue for us to consider as far as our national security is concerned?

Secretary GATES. I think the frustration on the part not just of the Afghans but also on the part of the Pakistanis does not refer just to the last few years but rather goes back to 1989, where one of the major proponents in this House of providing support to the mujahedin to take on the Soviet Union similarly took on the cause of trying to provide additional U.S. help and support after the Soviets left. And of course I am talking about Charlie Wilson. And there is no question in my mind, and I have said before publicly that I was in the administration, I was the deputy of national security at the time, had the——

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I am sorry, Mr. Secretary, I didn't mean to interrupt, but my time is so limited. Would you basically agree——

Secretary GATES. My point is their frustration dates from 1989, not from 2003.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. And the frustration is well taken. I mean, there is some truth in what——

Secretary GATES. Absolutely. And that is why the emphasis in the President's policy on a long-term relationship with both of these countries.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Okay. General Petraeus appeared before a joint committee hearing that we had a couple years ago, and I expressed some real serious concern about the strained—severely strained military force structure that we currently have. Nobody wants to talk about the draft. We are going to be putting in an additional $30 billion for these 30,000 soldiers and about 100,000 soldiers that we are going to be sending to Afghanistan. Are we still working on the cheap as far as sending this number of soldiers? Some have estimated it is going to take a lot more than 100,000 soldiers from the U.S.

Secretary GATES. Let me make two quick comments and then turn it to Admiral Mullen.

First, the previous administration and this administration have significantly increased the size of the Army and the Marine Corps, 65,000 for the Army, 27,000 for the Marine Corps, another 22,000 for the Army just a few months ago. So we have tried to put in place some measures that will relieve the strain.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. And on the voluntary force structure, if I might add also, we have had to use about 30 percent of our National Guard and Ready Reserves to assist in fighting the war in Iraq. And is this really the intended purpose of our reserves, to fight a war? Admiral?

Admiral MULLEN. Sir, from what I have seen, I mean, the National Guard and Reserves have contributed at such high levels we would not be where we are. They actually are enthusiastic about this.

We have to achieve a balance. We can't deploy them in some cases as frequently as we have, although I don't think we are that far off. And I do think there is no question that the additional force structure that has been added over the last couple of years has made a huge difference, and I think it is about right.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Rohrabacher, is recognized.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I would like to identify myself with the remarks of Mr. Burton concerning court-martial of our military personnel who were involved in the capturing of terrorists. What we need to say very clearly, either we support our troops or we don't send them in. And, quite frankly, we shouldn't send them into a no-win situation. And I believe what I have heard today and heard from the President last night is not a strategy that will bring any type of victory to our efforts there in Afghanistan.

Let's note that there was a quick defeat of the Taliban after 9/11, and that was a tremendous, low-cost victory, and it was not accomplished by U.S. troops. It was accomplished with only 200 U.S. troops on the ground when Kabul was liberated from the Taliban. The rest of the fighting was done and almost all of the fighting was done by the Northern Alliance, which was basically mobilized village militias.

In the aftermath of that great victory, and contrary to their traditions and their culture, we, the United States Government, forced a centralized Kabul-based government structure on the Afghans, and then our military took over the fighting. It was a strategy that has not worked. And what we hear today, Madam Secretary, with all due respect, it just seems to me that we have got the same policy that has not worked with perhaps a few more troops, perhaps some more money, but basically the same strategy that has not worked. But yet we are going to send 30,000 more of our boys and women into Afghanistan to do the fighting that should be done and could be done by the Afghan villagers themselves.

I wonder if any of you have read—and I submit this, Mr. Chairman, for the record—a report by Major Jim Gant. Have any of you read this report? It is a report—he was embedded in the villages in Afghanistan. He comes up with a strategy that will work. And what will not work is simply having more U.S. combat troops doing the fighting or building, which we heard here today, this centralized Afghan military that is based in Kabul, the Karzai military establishment. We are going to bolster that and we are going to expect that that is going to bring the villagers and the tribal people over to our side? That is going to drive them into the arms of the Taliban, just like if we just sent in more U.S. troops to do the fighting.

[NOTE: The report referred to, "A Strategy for Success in Afghanistan, One Tribe at a Time," by Major Jim Gant, United States Army Special Forces, is not reprinted here but is available in committee records.]

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Again, why is it—what is different about what the President has said? Even today I don't hear anything dif-

ferent. But maybe a different facade, but it is the same old policy. U.S. troops do the fighting.

Americans are war weary of doing the fighting for other people. We would not have succeeded originally in Afghanistan had we sent in all of these major military combat units and done the fighting against the Taliban originally. So if it wouldn't work then, how come it is going to work now?

Secretary GATES. Two quick points.

First, there is recognition in the President's decisions of the importance of working with the locals. And I personally think that a big part of our progress going forward, particularly in terms of being able to transition responsibility for security to the Afghans, is not necessarily the Afghan National Army or even the police but local law enforcement, local police, local security people who are working with the government. They may not be in a chain of command, if you will, but clearly a major part of the President's strategy is more attention to the subnational government, to working with the tribes, working with the villagers.

And the second point——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Those are words. Those are words. But we haven't changed the structure a bit.

The provincial leaders are basically appointed by Kabul. Our State Department insisted on a centralized structure that is totally contrary to Afghan tradition. Then we expect that the Afghan people are just going to swallow it, especially when their government is so corrupt they can't even have an honest election? How can we expect our men and women to go over there and put their lives on the line when we haven't been willing to actually be tough with Karzai and force the restructuring of that system so it is more consistent with what the Afghan culture is all about?

Secretary GATES. We have to build consonant with the Afghan culture. And I think one of the things we have talked about is focusing our efforts in dealing with the existing tribal and other—and local structures, and trying to strengthen them rather than build something new.

Second, a big part of the President's strategy is, frankly, training up the Afghan Army as quickly as possible so that they can take over responsibility for the security from our troops.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Payne, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

I certainly would like to say that, you know, if we had done the right thing before we had gone into Afghanistan and Pakistan, where Osama bin Laden was and al-Qaeda, we would not be in the situation we are in today. We have the shock and awe, we go into Iraq, it had nothing to do with al-Qaeda, and now we find ourselves stuck in Afghanistan.

They criticized President Obama for taking a long time to come up with this plan and then secondly criticized him for having a date to come out. President Bush said that the mission was accomplished after 3 months, and we are still in Iraq. At least President Obama knows when he has a plan, and it wasn't 3 months after we go into Iraq that we get on an aircraft carrier saying the mis-

sion is accomplished and we are still there. So I don't think there is any comparison.

Secondly, we talk about the cost. We had a President that reduced taxes at a time we are increasing the war, and now we wonder why we are in this dilemma and all this criticism. I don't like the increase in troops. I don't think we can win a war in Afghanistan. I think that we have to hopefully transition the Afghans to be able to be trained, as it has been indicated, and fight for themselves.

We have three choices: One, stay the course and go nowhere. Two, withdraw and be criticized. Three, to increase troops. I mean, he had to pick one of the three, and so we made this one. But we have to quickly transition into having the Afghans take care of themselves, and I hope that that will happen.

I wonder, finally, if in your opinion do you believe that this time up until June 2011 is enough time?

And, secondly, I would like to mention that I would hope that we would also focus on other areas where al-Qaeda is coming in, like in Somalia. If we stay there and do not put in the assets, we are going to have the same problem with Kenya and Eritrea and Ethiopia there. If we stand up Sheik Sharif's militia now, we can prevent the al-Shabab and Hezbollah from taking over Somalia. We can prevent a lot of money being spent and destabilizing all of East Africa. So I would hope we would giving give that some consideration.

What about the fact do we have enough time and manpower to train the Afghans to prevent our troops from being in harm's way and have them take over? Because, like I said, I just feel very troubled that more American troops are going to be sent into Afghanistan.

Admiral MULLEN. Sir, I share your concern about other places where al-Qaeda is growing. Somalia and Yemen are two in particular, although their core leadership and their heart really beats in that border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. That is why it is so critical.

With respect to enough time, the entire military chain of command believes, including the Joint Chiefs, that we will know where we are by summer of 2011 whether we can succeed here or not. And that we know we have got to get these forces in. We have to secure—turn the security situation around. It is really under that umbrella that we will be able to develop the Afghan security forces, the Army, and the police.

We have got goals set to do that. There are some challenges associated with that. There is some significant risks associated with that. But we really think this is the right answer and that in fact is the way that we turn their own country over to themselves. Actually, in many ways not unlike Iraq.

We don't underestimate the challenge. But that really is the path, and we think there is enough time between now and then to really step out in that direction and know whether we are going to make it or not.

Mr. PAYNE. Just a last question, is there any way we can impress Pakistan that India is not their biggest enemy about Kashmir and

have Pakistan concentrate more on Pakistan and stop worrying about India and some India and Pakistan conflict?

Admiral MULLEN. President Obama in March, his strategy then focused—and I was a big supporter of this—on the region and greatly focused on Afghanistan and Pakistan. But it really is the region. And India is a big player in that region as well. And I think all of us international players, particularly the regional players, have to take steps to stabilize. And the relationship between Pakistan and India is critical and leadership there must I think step forward to stabilize that border more than anything else. And I think that would be a great step forward in stabilizing the region.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Royce.

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

I would ask the witnesses this. General McChrystal notes in his assessment that the Afghan insurgency is clearly supported from Pakistan and that insurgent groups are reportedly aided by some elements of Pakistan's ISI. Now, for the longest time, as I can remember, we have had a dysfunctional relationship with Pakistan in which many of the presumptions that the Pakistani ISI or intelligence service have made have not actually been in the interests of Pakistan, such as originally training and recruiting the Taliban.

Now we face a situation where the Taliban not only is a threat to Afghanistan but is also a threat to Pakistan. And since Pakistan has 100 nuclear weapons, that becomes quite problematic since al-Qaeda wants to get its hands on these nuclear weapons.

I guess at the end of the day the question is, what are we prepared to do to bring pressure to bear on that government in Pakistan to assure that they do not continue this practice of allowing the Taliban that kind of sanctuary, or at least support for certain elements of the Taliban inside Afghanistan?

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, that is obviously a critical question. Here is how we see it.

We think that in the last year the Pakistanis have really stepped up. Their military action against the Pakistan Taliban in both Swat and South Waziristan is an abrupt about face from their prior policies. And it has been a unifying policy, supported by the people of Pakistan. So they have taken an important first step, but they need to take more steps in their own best interests. And that is the case we have been making to them, that there has to be a recognition of the connection between those elements of the Taliban who have attacked their military headquarters, their intelligence headquarters, indiscriminately killed and maimed so many hundreds of Pakistanis and all the other elements of this syndicate of terrorism. Obviously, we think al-Qaeda is not only the inspiration but the funder, the equipper, the trainer, the planner. And so our task, which Admiral Mullen has been particularly and deeply involved in, is to make that case.

And so, if I could, let me turn to Admiral Mullen.

Mr. ROYCE. Well, I am just going to ask another question and make the point that I don't think to date we have been very effective in bringing the type of pressure to bear on Pakistan, and I would suggest that all of us think anew about a strategy that might work.

Now let me bring up the other point which was touched on earlier. But that is the report that Navy SEALs secretly captured one of the most-wanted terrorists in Iraq. The consequences of that, when they captured him, they are now facing charges because reportedly he told—the terrorist told the investigators he was punched by his captors and he had a bloody lip to prove it. So the three SEALs, Navy elite commando unit members, they have refused nonjudicial punishment. They called a captain's mast. They requested a trial by court-martial, is basically what has happened. And their attorney is saying, "I don't know how they are going to bring this detainee to the United States and give us our constitutional right to confrontation in the courtroom."

But, again, we have terrorists getting their constitutional rights in New York City, but I suspect that they are going to deny these SEALs their right to confrontation in a military courtroom in Virginia, which is what the SEALs are requesting.

The question I would put to Admiral Mullen, and certainly to Secretary Gates, goes to the issue of rules of engagement. When we are at war with terrorists abroad and you have the types of rules of engagement being dictated to our troops and you have this kind of action against our Navy SEALs at a time when we are talking about trying to stop the insurgency in Afghanistan, I do not think it is helpful. And I would like to hear any commentary on your part about what could be done on the issue of bringing terrorists to trial in New York City while the constitutional rights of our own American servicemen, in my view, are being violated.

Chairman BERMAN. Unfortunately, the time has expired.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. It hangs out there.

The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Wexler, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WEXLER. Thank you very much.

And, first, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for your very kind words earlier in the hearing; and I very much want to acknowledge what I think is an extraordinary privilege for all of us, to serve on this committee, particularly with your leadership and the leadership of Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen. Both of you exhibit the kind of character that I think the American people justly deserve.

I also very quickly would just simply say that I have cherished the opportunity to develop wonderful friendships not only with my fellow Democrats but with so many Republicans as well who I deeply respect, and I think the American people should understand the degree of respect and camaraderie that exists on this committee and that they are well served by it.

If I may, to Secretary Clinton and Secretary——

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman? I ask that the gentleman's full time be restored.

Chairman BERMAN. Yes, he is entitled to respond to the criticisms of him that were made earlier.

Mr. WEXLER. Once you say you are leaving, people are much nicer to you here.

If I may, to Secretary Clinton and Secretary Gates, this morning when you appeared before the Senate and Senator McCain, in his usual eloquent and sincere fashion, questioned you, he seemed to

be making the point that the President's creation of a timetable for transition and the consideration of conditions on the ground are mutually exclusive points of reference; and it would seem to me in the manner in which the President has constructed his plan that in fact that is not, respectfully to Senator McCain, the case and that the way the plan is constructed that both the creation of a timetable for transition and the consideration of conditions on the ground in fact will happen together. And I was wondering if you could explain that so that there will not be any confusion in that regard.

Secretary GATES. The President was very clear last night that his decision is that we should begin the transition to Afghan security control in July 2011. The key word here is "begin." This will be a process. And it will look a lot like Iraq, where some districts and provinces will be able to be turned over fairly quickly, with us in a tactical and then strategic overwatch, sort of the cavalry over the hill, if you will, for a time, and that that will spread in the country.

And so you will have situations where security control has been—responsibility has been taken over by the Afghans in one set of districts or one province, while there is still heavy combat going on in other provinces that are more contested with the Taliban.

The key here is, and one of the things that was central to our deliberations, how do you demonstrate resolve and at the same time convey a sense of urgency to the Afghans that they must step up to the plate and begin to take responsibility for their own security and to protect their own country against these extremists?

And I think that, you know, the interesting thing for me, appearing before the Congress now on my second surge, is that the Bush administration accepted firm deadlines for the withdrawal of U.S. forces in Iraq. The President is suggesting and is proposing a timeline for the beginning of a transition of responsibility for security in Afghanistan. We will review this formally in December 2010 and decide then whether our strategy is working and whether we think we are in a position whether we need to make adjustments. But the President's clear intent and his decision is that we will begin that process.

But the key is to realize that—I guess another point I would make is that, in Iraq, as soon as the surge was clearly going to be successful, the Iraqis wanted us out as quickly as possible. That is not entirely clear in Afghanistan. The Afghans live in a very tough neighborhood. They have been at war for 30 years. It would be understandable if they would enjoy having the United States Army and Marine Corps there for an extended period of time to provide protection.

We are not prepared to do that, and so what the President has tried do is set in place something that demonstrates resolve on the one hand but on the other puts the Afghans on notice that they need to step up the recruitment of their soldiers and their police. They need to get them trained, they need to get them experienced in combat, partnering with us, and then they need to begin to take responsibility. And we will do this in a gradual and conditions-based way.

Mr. WEXLER. Thank you.

And if you could share with us the administration's expectation as to the participation of our NATO allies, given the President's speech last night.

Secretary CLINTON. Yes. We are encouraged by the response of a lot of our NATO–ISAF allies. We have 43 countries that are troop-contributing countries. Working with the Secretary General of NATO, I will be going to NATO tomorrow to be there on Friday in Brussels. We anticipate a significant commitment of additional forces by our NATO–ISAF partners, as well as additional money. Because, of course, we want to establish a robust trust fund for both the Afghan National Army and the police so that the funding needs can be not only carried out in the next couple of years but be maintained after that.

Mr. WEXLER. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Paul.

Mr. PAUL. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I welcome the panel today. I wish I could promise you an eloquent statement where I could convert all of you to a noninterventionist foreign policy and a policy where we are not nation building, but I don't think I can promise you that.

I wish I could come up with some profound questions for the panel so that I could point out the inconsistencies not of the current foreign policy but the foreign policy that has been going on for quite a few decades.

But all I can think about are some terms that come to mind that I have learned all the way back in the 1960s when I was serving as a military officer, an Air Force officer for 5 years; and I come up with thoughts: Quagmire, perpetual war for perpetual peace, war is the health of the state, war is a racket, truth is the first casualty of war. And I think there is some profoundness to that, and I had to plagiarize them. Those are not my thoughts.

But today we are in a mess, and we are trying to figure out how to do it. We had a war going on for 8 years, and I think it has a lot to do with the way we get into the wars, and then we try to justify why we are there later on.

One thing that almost all debates are prefaced by is don't come off as an extremist. Can we have a military victory? Have 500,000 troops go in there and win like we used to? No, that is off base. But do you want to just come home? No, that is not allowed. We have to have this balancing act, which guarantees the politicizing of the war.

This is why we end up with courts-martial and arguments that are justified. We end up with military tribunals and secret prisons, because we are not precise of what our goals are and why we are involved, and I think that is the biggest problem that we have. And what we need to do I think is try to be more precise about why we are going to war.

Now, the question I have for the panel, and I hope each and every one of you can answer this question, is I would like to know whether or not you endorse the Bush doctrine. Ironically, last night the speech was given, which truly was eloquent, but it was given in the same place that the former President gave a speech in 2002 and emphasized a profound, dramatic change in our attitude to-

ward the world. And it is recognized now as the Bush Doctrine. I think it is something, maybe one of the most important events in our history when it comes down to foreign policy.

So each and every one of you, do you endorse the Bush Doctrine of preventive war or do you reject it?

Secretary GATES. I think that the term "preventive war" is a very important one, because it differentiates from preemptive war. A preemptive war in my view is one where you know you are about to be attacked and you strike first. My personal view is that the standard for intelligence and for confidence for preventive war is an extraordinarily high one; and there are very, very few instances where I think it is justified. If the experience of the last 8 years has taught us anything, it is to reaffirm the historic lesson that war is inherently unpredictable.

Mr. PAUL. Okay.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I think that Secretary Gates draws an important distinction. There are times when it is appropriate for a country to protect itself from what it knows would be a devastating attack. But that standard should be so high, and obviously we didn't see that standard met in the last 8 years. But let me just add that is not the situation in Afghanistan. We were attacked from Afghanistan. So even if the doctrine is or is not an appropriate one, it is not applicable to the situation before us.

Mr. PAUL. But we were never attacked by an Afghani.

Secretary CLINTON. That is not true. Al-Qaeda was embedded in Afghan society. It was given safe haven by Mullah Omar and the Taliban leadership. They were given a chance to turn over al-Qaeda and bin Laden before we attacked them, and they refused.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Sherman.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Our minimum objective in Afghanistan is so uninspiring that no one will embrace it or acknowledge that we have actually achieved it. That minimum objective is to make sure that Afghan territory is not used for a successful major attack against the United States and to achieve that objective 1 day at a time.

It may also be our minimum objective to make sure Afghan territory is not used successfully to destabilize Pakistan; and we have achieved that 1 day at a time for many years with a much, much smaller force than we have at the present time, let alone planned.

There is a bolder objective, and that is that we achieve our minimum objective without having to have troops there, that we have a functioning Afghan Army achieving that goal or those two goals for us. And then there is the maximum objective of a functioning, perhaps even democratic Afghan state.

We have rejected the idea of a smaller number of troops for a longer number of days because it clashes not so much with our strategic objectives but with our national culture. Playing defense and having to do it for as long as you have something to defend may be the Roman way; it is not the American way.

I have got a number of questions, and I will ask for responses for the record if time doesn't permit. But I will start with the Admiral.

This plan is based on roughly 5,000 additional allied troops, which may or may not materialize. If we don't get but a small percentage of those 5,000 troops, do we need to abandon this plan? Do we need to put in more American troops? Or are those 5,000 really not essential?

Admiral MULLEN. Sir, every indication I have—and this isn't hope, this has been through an awful lot of work—that we are going to achieve some level of increased support from NATO sort of at the minimum levels of 5,000, and it could be more than that. And that has been worked by myself, Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates, Admiral Stavridis, Secretary General Rasmussen. And so I am confident that we will see some level—at least some level around that number.

Mr. SHERMAN. Are you relying on any French troops as part of that total?

Admiral MULLEN. I wouldn't speak to any specific country right now. They have to speak for themselves.

Mr. SHERMAN. The risk of the strategy that is being announced is that we are telling the American people there will come a day when we don't need to have any troops in Afghanistan. Now, if the strategy works, we are going to have a functioning government in Afghanistan sometime after the middle of 2011, and that will prevent the Taliban's return. But the achievement of that strategy is outside the control of the United States. It relies in large part on the Afghan people and the Karzai government, which may be as bad as detractors indicate.

Secretary Clinton, are we prepared to go to the American people and say we tried counterinsurgency, it didn't work, not a fault of the U.S. military, and that we are returning to counterterrorism? Or are we promising the American people that by 2012, 2013 we will be out of Afghanistan?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I think it is important to draw the contrast between combat troops and between support troops, the kind that would be continuing to train, provide logistics, perhaps intelligence, airlift, the support that the Afghans might need going forward.

We have certainly determined that we have to stand up the Afghan security forces as quickly and effectively as possible so that the combat mission can transition. That is exactly what we are attempting to do. But there may well be in the——

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Secretary, if I may interrupt and rephrase my question. Let's not talk then about whether we still have troops on the ground but whether we are still sustaining casualties every day or every week. What if in 2013, 2014 the Afghan Government isn't doing what we want and the only way to have counterterrorism is to incur casualties?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I am not going to speculate about what is going to happen in 2013 or 2014. I happen to believe that as we implement the strategy that the President outlined last night we will change the reality on the ground. We will improve the chances of success in this mission.

Mr. SHERMAN. I can only wish you well.

I yield back.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Arizona, Mr. Flake.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the chair. I thank the witnesses.

First, I want to compliment the administration for taking the time to study this. I know there has been some criticism about the length of time that it took. That has not come from me. I think we would do well to study and deliberate more around here.

Having said that, when you look at the policy that was enunciated last night, there is an old adage that a camel is a horse designed by committee. And in many ways I think this looks to be a policy designed by committee, a little something for everybody. For those who want to get out, there is the timetable. For those who want to get in, we have the surge. But it may not work very well.

How would you respond, Secretary Clinton, to that assertion that this smacks of the problems of policy designed by committee?

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, camels are very sturdy animals. They are patient and may be plodding, but they eventually get to where you hope they will arrive. I think that this policy is the result of a very intense discussion that questioned every assumption, that put everything on the table, that invited the most vigorous debate.

I think, as Admiral Mullen said, for those of us who participated in I think it was ten meetings with the President and probably three times that many among ourselves, it was an exhausting and thorough process that led us to the decision that the President announced last night.

I don't think any of us believed that there were any easy or simple or quick options that we thought responsibly could be adopted. This is the best result of all of our efforts. And I am sure that there are many who can, you know, pick at it, but I think that it reflects an extraordinarily honest assessment.

And I think the time frame, which is often at the core of the concerns people reflect, is intended to do two things, because there are so many audiences for this policy. It is intended to send a message of both resolve and urgency. The resolve that we are committed, we are going to put additional troops in, our young men and women. We want a long-term civilian commitment. But that there is an urgency to this, that we cannot just have the Americans and our 42 other nation contributors bear this burden, that the Afghans, both governmentally and among the people, have to step up. And that is what we are attempting to deliver here, and we will be assessing it very closely for the months ahead.

Mr. FLAKE. Thank you.

In terms of that assessment, General Jones said just less than 2 months ago in answer to a question on CNN, well, I think this is one of the central issues that, you know, obviously the good news is that Americans should feel good about is that in Afghanistan that the al-Qaeda presence is very diminished. The maximum estimate is less than a hundred operating in the country. No bases, no ability to launch attacks on either us or our allies. He says the problem is with sanctuaries across the border. He said, "But I don't foresee the return of the Taliban; and I want to be clear that Afghanistan is no longer in danger, imminent danger of falling."

Now, if you have a statement like that, it might suggest caution in inserting 30,000 more troops. And then 1 year from now, or 18 months from now, in July 2011, what constitutes success? Is it 50, a maximum of 50 al-Qaeda operating in Afghanistan? And if we already acknowledge that Afghanistan is not in danger, imminent danger of falling, what constitutes success in July when we are going to decide whether we should pull troops out or not? Secretary Gates.

Secretary GATES. I think no one thinks the government in Kabul is in imminent risk of being overthrown. But it was certainly the conclusion of General McChrystal's assessment that the situation was serious and deteriorating. And we have seen the Taliban get more aggressive and more bold with each passing week.

What we want to do is, in helping the Afghans, make sure that that government doesn't fall and that we are able to sustain a friendly government in Kabul that will help us deny al-Qaeda a safe haven.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from New York, Mr. Engel.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman; and I want to thank all our distinguished witnesses for testifying.

I listened very carefully to the President's speech last night, and I am willing to give the President the benefit of the doubt. But my fear, as is the fear of so many others, is that we could easily get bogged down in an endless war.

What happens if this doesn't work? Do we leave in 3 years, as the President is stating, or do we stay longer? What happens if General McChrystal makes another public speech saying that he needs 10,000 more troops in attempting to back the President into a corner? What do we do then?

We talk about Afghanistan and Pakistan. I noted that just last week their representatives abstained in the recent resolution, the IAEA resolution critical of Iran's nuclear program. If these are our allies, I hate to see what our enemies think. So there are all these questions.

And, finally—and I would like anyone to comment on anything I have said—where is Osama bin Laden and why can't we seem to get him? If we are relying on our intelligence to tell us that this is what we should be doing next in Afghanistan and our intelligence can't even tell us where he is—there was a recent Senate report that says shortly after the war in Afghanistan began we had Osama bin Laden and we let him slip through our fingers—how much can we count on our intelligence now when we can't even capture one guy in 8 years?

Admiral MULLEN. Let me start with the last one first.

Actually, there has been a considerable diminishment of al-Qaeda over the last couple of years in terms of their leadership, obviously not bin Laden or Zawahiri specifically. And what I have learned over the years, and particularly in the last several years, is individuals like him—and it is not unique, quite frankly, to him in this area—that their job one for them is survival, and they do it really well. And so it is not—and we have good intelligence and good agencies, and it has improved a great deal, and I rely on them

tremendously. That said, it is still a big problem. And it doesn't mean we are not trying to find him and the rest of the leadership.

With respect to—I am sorry—the first part of your question?

Mr. ENGEL. Getting bogged down in an endless war.

Admiral MULLEN. No, sir. It is just not going to happen. It is very clear—this President has said it, the military leadership understands it—that this is not open-ended, and we are not going to escalate. We believe that these troops, this strategy, the civilian surge that goes with it, the opportunity we have because Pakistan is making progress, we have got a new President in Afghanistan, we have got the right leadership on the ground, we have got the right leadership in the embassy, that now is the time and we can actually turn this thing around. And so I don't have an expectation that we are going to get bogged down there or that there will be requests for any additional troops.

Mr. ENGEL. Secretary Clinton?

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, I think that your focus on bin Laden is absolutely appropriate. I share your frustration that 8 years from the attack that devastated New York has not led to the killing or capturing of bin Laden and his principal lieutenants.

As Admiral Mullen said, we have degraded their leadership, we have been successful in going after a number of the mainstays of his organization, but we haven't gotten him, and we haven't gotten Zawahiri, and we haven't gotten Mullah Omar. And I think that that has to be a primary goal of what it is we are doing. And it certainly is for me, and I think it is for the President, and part of the strategy that we are unfolding we think will assist us.

And I would just add that, you know, this strategy has been largely on the military side influenced by General Petraeus and General McChrystal, one of whom is our foremost expert on counterinsurgency, the other on counterterrorism; and I think that there is reason to put a lot of stock in their opinion.

Secretary GATES. I would just add one thing. The President gives the orders, but every man and woman that is deployed overseas is deployed over my signature. And if I came to conclude that we were bogged down and stalemated and we were sending young men and women into a maw with no purpose and no hope of success, I wouldn't sign any more of those orders.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Pence, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I welcome this distinguished panel. I thank you all for your service to the United States, and I greet you with respect.

Specifically, I have a question I want to direct first to Secretary Gates and then to Admiral Mullen having to do with some military aspects and issues arising out of the President's address last night.

First, let me say I, like many have said before, I welcome the President's call for reinforcements; I appreciate the President's embrace of this same surge strategy that worked in Iraq. Despite the fact that, as a candidate, the President opposed it, and I think every Democrat on this committee opposed it, the surge worked.

And as a point of clarification to Secretary Gates, you said this is your "second surge," I think that is an affirmation of that assertion that I made.

But I want to specifically talk about this issue of timetables for withdrawal and get your reaction. You made mention earlier that the Bush administration did embrace a timetable for withdrawal. Of course, that was after the surge worked. When President Bush announced the surge in Iraq, he did not announce a timetable for withdrawal. The timetable was negotiated in the status of forces agreement following what was universally accepted to be the success of the surge.

And so my question is really about this business of timetables. Because my Democratic colleagues I think made more than a dozen efforts in 2007 and 2008 to impose specific timetables for withdrawal on our efforts in Iraq, fortunately unsuccessfully on the floor. And the President made reference to July, 2011.

Secretary Gates, you said in April 2007 with regard to Iraq, "I have been pretty clear that I think the enactment of specific deadlines would be a bad mistake."

In September of this year, you told CNN, "I think the notion of timelines and exit strategies and so on, frankly, I think would be a strategic mistake."

I am someone who believes it never makes sense to tell the enemy when you are going to quit fighting in a war. Mr. Secretary, I wondered if you might elaborate on that—and then I have a quick question for the Admiral—on what has changed in your view here? What am I missing that distinguishes your opposition to timelines in Iraq, your opposition to a timeline you expressed here in September with regard to Afghanistan to the President's enunciation of July, 2011?

Secretary GATES. First of all, there may not have been a specific timeline associated with the announcement of the surge in Iraq, but it was quite clear that domestically it could not be sustained indefinitely. And the reality is the surge in Iraq lasted 14 months. The President is talking about at least 18–24 months with this surge.

I would say that—well, first of all, I have adamantly opposed deadlines. I opposed them in Iraq, and I opposed deadlines in Afghanistan. But what the President has announced is the beginning of a process, not the end of a process. And it is clear that this will be a gradual process and, as he said last night, based on conditions on the ground. So there is no deadline for the withdrawal of American forces in Afghanistan.

Mr. PENCE. Reclaiming my time—Secretary Gates, forgive me for the constraints of our time here—your line to CNN was you opposed "timelines and exit strategies," but I will leave that there, and I will accept your response.

Admiral Mullen, last night the President said in his speech, "Commanders in Afghanistan repeatedly asked for support to deal with the reemergence of the Taliban, but these reinforcements did not arrive." The Secretary's predecessor, Donald Rumsfeld, this afternoon called that a "bald misstatement"; and former Secretary Rumsfeld said he was "not aware of a single request."

I wonder, Admiral, are you aware of a request for reinforcements from 2001 to 2006 or 2008 that was not heeded? Can you tell the committee who made those requests? Can you tell the committee who in the chain of command denied those requests? Because I find the President's assertion, having been a part of a very strong bipartisanship support for Afghanistan, really astonishing.

Chairman BERMAN. Unfortunately, another issue left hanging. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PENCE. I would ask unanimous consent to permit the Admiral to answer the question.

Chairman BERMAN. Any objection?

Admiral MULLEN. Just in my tenure here, sir, that General McKiernan specifically had a fairly substantial request for upwards of 20,000 forces, which we couldn't meet because they just weren't there. They were in Iraq.

I spoke out very early that Afghanistan had been under resourced and that, from where I lived, the heart of that was under resourced with military forces. We didn't have them because they were pushed to Iraq, and we couldn't—we really didn't have the flexibility to move them. That was the priority of a previous President. We do what the President says. And that is what we did.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I thank the chairman.

And I would note, in response to the answer by Admiral Mullen, that I would submit that we are here today because over the course of the past 8 years we have been distracted from focusing on Afghanistan, and that is why we find ourselves in this terrible situation that we are discussing here today.

I think it was you, Admiral Mullen, that talked about turning it around. We have been there 8 years now, and we are still talking about turning it around. Is 18 months going to be sufficient? We have been talking about training the Afghan Army, the Afghan police. The rates of desertion have been particularly disturbing during the entire 8 years, and here we are in 2009 going into 2010 talking about training and building an Army. What has happened over the course of 8 years?

Admiral MULLEN. In my view, when you under resource an effort for an extended period of time, when you in many ways starve an effort, the impact—and I don't just mean with forces because we have done it with training, we have done it intellectually, we have done it diplomatically, politically, you name it. We were focused on the other war, and that was a priority. And the impact of that, I think, is evident in where we are right now.

So I understand better than anybody that this is our 9th year of war and we are losing people, and every single one is a tragedy, and I understand that. But in many ways this strategy is a new strategy, and it is as if we were starting over. And I know we are not. But what I said earlier with what Pakistan has done, moved, we have got a new government—or, I am sorry, new leadership, a freshly elected leadership in Afghanistan, we have got new leaders on the ground and all those things.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Admiral Mullen, let me interrupt you. That is a very difficult tale to tell to the American people that have been

there going on 9 years, and here we are still talking about turning it around. I respect what you have said, I concur with what you said. And let me indicate all three of you have served your country very well. But we are here to make a policy decision at some point in time in terms of what our position is going to be.

The President talked about consultation in conversations with world leaders, with our allies in NATO. Maybe, Secretary Gates, you can respond. Have we got hard commitments from our allies in terms of dollars, in terms of the civilian side? Do we have hard commitments in terms of incremental numbers of military personnel being assigned to this new surge, if you will?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir, we do, and we anticipate getting more during the meeting that Secretary Clinton is going to tomorrow and at the London conference in January.

I would point out that the Japanese have committed $5 billion for Afghanistan. We have some firm troop commitments. Those countries have not announced them to their own public, so we are not in a position to announce them for them.

Mr. DELAHUNT. The President has also used the figure of $30 billion last night in his remarks to the American people. I was unclear as to is that additional monies that the American taxpayer will have to put on the table? And what period of time does that cover? And if we are talking about an 18-month surge, can you give us an estimate of the additional monies that it is going to cost the American people?

Secretary GATES. The additional cost for Fiscal Year 2010 is between $30 billion and $35 billion, and it is additive to the overseas contingency proposal that the appropriations committees have in front of them of $130 billion. I would point out as a result principally of our drawdown in Iraq the supplemental in Fiscal Year 2008 for Afghanistan and Iraq was $185 billion. This OCO for 2010 will be about $165 billion.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Let me conclude by just commenting on an observation by Mr. Payne of New Jersey regarding India. Secretary Clinton, if you have time, have we consulted with the Indians in terms of their relationship with Pakistan in reducing the concern that the Pakistanis have relative to India?

Secretary CLINTON. Yes.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired. Yes, no questions are very good for the last 7 seconds.

The gentleman from Florida Mr. Mack is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MACK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank our witnesses for being here today and for your service to our country.

I agree with many of the President's points in his speech. I, too, believe that with every fiber of my being that we as Americans can still come together behind a common purpose. Nonetheless I disagree with the President's decision to personally relay to our enemies when they can regroup and when they can retake Afghan territory. I simply cannot understand and cannot agree with this approach. For President Obama to indicate that he has already made a decision that will take effect in 18 months irrespective of what the situation is on the ground not only emboldens our enemies, but allows them to prepare and plan. Imagine if the Taliban

leadership telegraphed to the world that on a certain day they would reinforce a certain region, and on another day they would withdraw their forces. That doesn't make sense, and neither does President Obama's decision to tell our enemies what our plans are.

And, in fact, when the President says that we will begin to withdraw troops in July 2011, doesn't that, in fact, say to all of you to begin your plans to withdraw troops, which in effect takes our eye off the ball? Shouldn't our purpose, shouldn't it be what we are looking for is to win the war? I will ask each one of you to answer.

Secretary GATES. Well, first, I think it is. We wouldn't be in this if we didn't think we could be successful and if success was not—and victory in terms of achieving our objectives was not possible.

Again, I would say that, you know, are the Taliban going to be more emboldened than they already are because of this announcement? I don't think so. They are moving as aggressively now as we have ever seen them. And what are they going to do? Are they going to lie low for 18 months? That would be terrific news because that would give us open-field running. Are they going to go back to Pakistan and wait for 18 months? Terrific. It gives us the opportunity without opposition to help the Afghans build. Are they going to lie low in Afghanistan?

If they are not attacking Afghans, if they are not blowing things up, if they are not attacking our coalition troops, then, again, that gives us a huge opportunity. On the other hand, if they are going to engage, if they are going to be as bold and as aggressive as they have been over the past year, then they will encounter 150,000 foreign troops and a couple hundred thousand Afghan troops who will root them out, and we will reintegrate those that are willing to come over to the government side, and we will take care of the rest. But the point is they are going to confront a very aggressive and very capable military force not just for the next 18 months.

Again, July 2011 is not a cliff, it is the beginning of a gradual process of turning over responsibility for security to the Afghans over a period of time as conditions on the ground permit.

Mr. MACK. Mr. Secretary, and Madam, that is probably a sentiment shared by all of you. So if I may, then, what is not terrific and what is not great is if at the end of 18 months we begin to withdraw and these terrorist groups then begin to retake Afghanistan. That is not something that I think the American people want or the administration wants.

But let me just say this then. It is well known that the President took his time, and I am not faulting taking time, to come to this decision. And I hope this means that you can answer some of these questions. When will the training begin, how many trainees does it take, how many trainees are available, what are the benchmarks, how long does it take to train the trainees, and do we have a schedule of how this training is going to take place?

Admiral MULLEN. The training has begun. And probably the most significant shift that General McChrystal put in place is to partner with the Afghan forces, the Army and police. We are at about 95,000 for both the police and the Afghan Army right now to get to increased goals of about 134,000 for the Army by the end of 2010. We have got specific goals; we assess it annually. We are very focused on what it is going to take to retain them—train

them, retain them, recruit them and retrain them. We know those are concerns as well. We have got strong leadership in place to get at this, new leadership to get at this. So this is really for General McChrystal, after security, his top effort.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

It is clear we will not finish giving all members an opportunity to ask questions. The panel has another 35 minutes. Next week we will be having a hearing with top—we hope to be having a hearing, it is not all tied down yet—with leaders in the field both on the military and civilian side. It will be the intention of the chair to start the questioning at that hearing where we leave off today. And I am going to ask Vice Chairman Ackerman to preside while I leave and be right back.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Chairman, with all due respect on behalf of myself and the rest of the senior members——

Chairman BERMAN. I am worried.

Mr. ACKERMAN [continuing]. Who chair subcommittees, we will defer down the line to Mr. Wexler to chair the rest of the hearing on this his last day as chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. And while he is walking over here, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Meeks, is recognized.

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, first please give my heartfelt congratulations to the youngest Clinton on her decision to make a monumental move in her life.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you. It was a very long, thoughtful process.

Mr. MEEKS. I also want to thank the President of the United States for, as he ended his speech last night, talking about the American people coming together and being unified. I think that we have forgotten that right after 9/11 the American people and, in fact, this Congress almost unanimously wanted to go into Afghanistan to make sure that we start doing the work that is being done now. The only time that when we became divided as a Nation is when this President decided that Afghanistan was not to be our focus, that Iraq should be.

And so I want to—and I think that part of what the President is trying to do is to bring this country back together so that we can refocus on where we was in the beginning when this horrific act took place that killed so many American people, American citizens. And I think that is the direction that we need to be going, moving back into in uniting as a country. Democrats and Americans were together at that particular time, and we should be together again as we move forward to do what we have to do, and not, as Secretary Gates says, just abandoning Afghanistan for several reasons. So I want to compliment the President on that.

With that being said, I also know that Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen have indicated that we need to show the American people a shift in momentum within 12–18 months to ensure public support. And my question is what do you think will demonstrate such a shift in momentum so that we can make sure that we have the confidence of the American people?

Admiral MULLEN. I think it starts, sir, with security, and the first individual who will be able to tell us that is General

McChrystal. It is what they seek, it is what the Afghans seek more than anything else as he travels through Afghanistan, because it is going in the wrong direction from security that gives us an opportunity to train and transfer security responsibility to the Afghan Security Forces.

But I also think it is very clear we need to see progress on the part of the Karzai government. This gets to the ministers, the provincial governors, things like reconciliation, reintegration, local governance, how that is going as well.

We need to look at—and I am optimistic—look at continuing contributions on the part of our international partners as a measure. And this is 43 countries. We are not in this alone at all; 43 countries are here.

So those are some of the areas that we would look at for progress over the next 18 months.

Mr. MEEKS. Well, let me ask. Our current policy that the President espoused, do you describe that as removing counterinsurgency or counterterrorism?

Admiral MULLEN. It is principally counterinsurgency. It is very focused. It is focused on key population centers, key production centers, key lines of communications. It is not focused throughout the country. And, in fact, we are going to ask our coalition partners to focus in the north and west, because the worst part of the insurgency is in the south and the east, in the Pashtun Belt, and that is where we have sent the Marines in the south, and we will put forces in there to turn the tide there.

But there is a counterterrorism piece of this as well that is resident not just in the east and the south, but will be part of operations throughout the country.

Mr. MEEKS. The prior strategy, I don't know whether it is the same, I guess General McChrystal had indicated that we would need about 400,000 Afghan security forces. Is that figure still what we are shooting for, aiming for?

Admiral MULLEN. Well, there is an aspirational goal out there that is somewhere in that number, but where we really are in this strategy is to look at it year to year. We know what we need, we know what we have, we know the things we have to fix with Afghan security forces right now, and we know where we want to be 1 year from now, 2 years from now, and we are going to assess that. And that is a high-risk area for us. So rather than put something out there that we couldn't achieve, we are going to look at it constantly, but literally year to year, and focus on achieving our annual goals.

Mr. MEEKS. And lastly, real quickly about the payment of that, but I heard some of that. I know that it worked with reference to the surge in Iraq. It was because the Sunnis turned against al-Qaeda, and that was the Awakening. And I was wondering if there is any such momentum that can be felt on the ground now in Afghanistan to show that that kind of shift is about to take place?

Admiral MULLEN. There is some of that. I would not say it is at the level of the Sons of Iraq at this point.

Mr. WEXLER [presiding]. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Fortenberry.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, Secretary Gates, Admiral Mullen, thank you for appearing today.

Afghanistan is not America's challenge alone, it is the world's problem. And right now our ratio of U.S. troops to NATO troops is 2 to 1. After this surge it will be 3 to 1, assuming no other NATO input.

The President last night was not exactly clear in the nature of the commitments that are going to be forthcoming. Many of the world's powers are content to sit while America sacrifices on their behalf. You have touched on this today, but I think the question deserves further unpacking. I believe you, Mr. Secretary, mentioned Japan is going to contribute $5 billion. There is a move toward meeting with other NATO allies to harden those commitments. But we are leading with our chin right now, and the American people need to know this is not a disproportionate burden that we are undertaking. Can you comment on that? And I will pivot to some other questions.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I think it is important to recognize that until relatively recently, the ratio between American and non-American NATO ISAF troops was very close, because, as Admiral Mullen was saying in response to, I think, Congressman Pence's question, we were at a level of 30,000 for a very long time. And the NATO troops, Bob, I think were about that or a little bit more all together. And so now before this latest decision by the President, we were at 68-, they were about at 42-, something like that. So it has been certainly a comparable commitment given the relative size of our respective force levels.

And I think if, as Admiral Mullen said, we get the kind of response we have reason to believe we will, yes, we will have additional support from our NATO ISAF allies, we will still be, at the end of our troop commitments, about 2 to 1, but there will also be a collective presence that is very significant since it was the United States that was attacked, and all these other countries under Article 5 of NATO, others like Australia coming in, have really seen this fight which was picked with us as their fight as well.

Secretary GATES. Congressman, I would just like to make one other point. Since 1941, the United States has borne a disproportionate responsibility for peace and security around the world. This is not a new development. And it has gone with our assumption of world responsibility along with our world power.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Let me thank you. Let me pivot to another question.

What is the definition of success, and, given his current plan, what is the probability of success?

Secretary GATES. I believe that success in Afghanistan looks a lot like—from a security standpoint looks a lot like success in Iraq, and that is the gradual transfer of responsibility for security to the indigenous forces and the local government, and with the United States being able to pull back into first a tactical and then strategic overwatch and then withdraw our troops to the point where we have a minimal presence.

I think we ought to think about, if the Afghans want us, a prolonged partnership well into the future of training and equipping. But fundamentally it is the transfer of this responsibility to an Af-

ghan security force that is able to sustain that security and protect their own borders.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. And the probability of that outcome?

Secretary GATES. I think if we did not believe that this outcome had a strong probability, we would not have supported it.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Let us go back to the earlier point about international commitments. Now, you mentioned a London conference. You mentioned that you are clearly trying to be nimble enough to allow other countries to manage their own internal political dynamics as they make these commitments. But how hard and real is the momentum toward burden sharing with us?

Secretary CLINTON. I think it is very real. Before coming into the hearing, I spoke with Secretary General Rasmussen, the Secretary General of NATO. He has been working very hard to help shape the commitments that NATO members will be making. I know everyone at this table——

Mr. FORTENBERRY. And other world powers as well.

Secretary CLINTON. And other world powers as well. And it is not only the commitment of troops, which are very important, but also the commitment of resources. And there will be a number of announcements over the next days and weeks that we will be sure that this committee has notice of.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you.

Mr. WEXLER. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Carnahan.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank all of you here today.

Secretary Clinton, you said this was one of the most complex foreign policy challenges you have ever seen. And, Admiral Mullen, you said you have never seen an issue so thoughtfully and thoroughly reviewed. Well, I want to thank the President, all of you, the entire team of the administration, for giving this issue the time and really the thoroughness that our troops, our values and certainly our security deserves.

Secretary Clinton, this past month you were in Afghanistan. You delivered a sharp message to President Karzai about needing to clean up the corruption to really address the needs of the Afghan people. What is it going to look like? What kind of benchmark should we be looking for in the weeks and months ahead to see if we are making progress on that front?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman Carnahan, there are some areas where we can actually measure the progress. For example, in education there has been significant progress. The United States has been quite involved in moving from a school population of a little less than 1 million, nearly all of whom are boys, to a population of 7 million, 40 percent of whom are girls, and there is about 5–6 million more. So we are going to be able to measure that.

In terms of agriculture, which we think is a key strategic imperative because it is the best way to raise incomes to wean people from poppies, the United States and other allies have been contributing to better seeds, better fertilizer, working with a really quite competent and effective minister of agriculture.

The minister of finance has begun to move against a lot of the petty corruption. There are 1 million cars in Afghanistan. It took

a month and a half to get a car registered, and you had to go through a lot of different hands to get there. The process has been streamlined. It has been not only cleaned up, but it is now benefiting the Treasury of the country to the tune of about $50 million a year.

So there are specific areas where we can see with a transparent, accountable partnership the progress being made. We are now certifying agencies. We are not going to put a penny of American assistance into any agency that is not certified. So I think that as we go through this, we will be submitting reports to this committee and other relevant committees demonstrating how our civilian assistance program, support for governance, the anticorruption efforts we are undertaking are working and what kind of expectations we have for them.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you.

And we also heard the President talk about these new resources that can allow us to make a final push that is necessary to train the Afghans so that we can transfer responsibility. I have big concerns about the training. We have heard some of the same discussion in Iraq. I visited there in 2005. We saw big claims about how quickly we were going to be able to train up the Iraqi troops and police. We were way off on those estimates in terms of quality, quantity, in terms of the time to train.

What lessons have we learned from that, and what kind of measure should we be looking for to be sure we are getting the Afghan Army and police trained in the numbers that we need? For Admiral Mullen and Secretary Gates.

Admiral MULLEN. I think that we have learned those lessons. We see similarities in the sense that police are not coming nearly as quickly as the Army, for instance. That was the case in Iraq. We have really taken those lessons and used them to focus on what we need in Afghanistan. But it is a big challenge. And I indicated earlier that is a high-risk part of the strategy is training and equipping the Afghan security forces.

That said, it is a good fighting force. We have had a considerable amount of progress on the Army. We are way behind on the police side. There are several programs in place to get at this, and I don't mean just brand new. And then the fundamental shift, as I said earlier, about partnering with them in the field, getting them off the bases so they are in the fight in the villages. Together with our coalition forces we think that will accelerate the ability to transfer that responsibility.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And Secretary Gates.

Secretary GATES. I think exactly what Admiral Mullen said. I think, as he mentioned, we have changed the personnel, the leadership of the training program. The key about the training that is important is the best part of the training is not the basic training where they learn how to march and learn how to shoot, it is when they partner with us in combat. And it not only teaches them the skills, what we saw in Iraq is that it gives them confidence. And the more confidence they have, the more ability they have to operate on their own.

Mr. WEXLER. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. McCaul.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me first say to Secretary Gates, Texas A&M misses you, but we need you exactly where you are today. And thank you for the great job and your service to our country.

To Secretary Clinton, Admiral Mullen, I was over in Pakistan, Afghanistan last 4th of July when the conditions were starting to deteriorate, and I remember coming back and visiting with President Bush about this and making the recommendation that we need more resources. I know in the transition team this is one of the recommendations that was made, was to do exactly what you are getting ready to do, and that is a surge in forces. In my view, we either get all in to win, or we get out, and I think that is how most Americans feel about this issue.

To Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, the way you turn the Iraq war around and many others, I think there are many lessons to be learned by that. The counterinsurgency mission, the surge, the Sunni Awakening, many of these actually turned it around so that we can say that we have won that war.

The one thing that we fought very hard in Congress was the idea of timelines. The President has announced an 18-month timeline before withdrawal. I sensed a bit of inconsistency in the message last night between withdrawing based upon conditions on the ground and a withdrawal based on an 18-month timeline. My concern is the Afghan people and the tribal leaders are trying to weigh who their alliance, allegiance is going to be with, and if they don't see a long-term commitment or a sustainable commitment on our part, and if they feel that we are going to abandon the mission at any given point, that they are going to side with the Taliban, because if we leave, they are dead. And that is a simple message.

And I want to pose that first question, if you can explain to me the inconsistency between withdrawing based upon conditions on the ground versus a withdrawal based upon an 18-month timeline.

Admiral MULLEN. I think the absoluteness of it is not intended at all. And I think withdrawal exit strategy, we are done, good-bye, that is just not going to happen. It is a transfer and transition strategy. And the decision is show strong resolve. This is a huge commitment. It is the right commitment. It gives us the forces to turn this thing around, we know we can do that, and at the same time it creates an expectation we are not going to be there forever.

And to the discussion about telling the enemy what we are doing, I mean, this insurgency has gotten worse every year since 2006. It is not going to significantly get better or worse based on July 2011, at least that is my view. So it is a signal that we are in, we can win this thing, and at the same time, Afghanistan, you have to pick up on this. And we cannot win this if the Afghan Government and the Afghan people don't reach out and share this. Another 30,000 troops on top of this wouldn't make any difference. That is the message. And that has got to happen over the next couple of years. And General McChrystal, I am sure, and he will tell you this personally when he is here, feels this way as well. We have got to turn this thing in the next 18–24 months.

Mr. MCCAUL. With respect to what we did in Iraq with the Sunni Awakening, can you tell me what this plan proposes? Because in

my view, winning the hearts and minds as we did with the tribal leaders in Iraq is critically essential in Afghanistan.

Admiral MULLEN. Great focus there. We have seen some of that. I think it is way too early to say that it is going to happen per se, but part of this strategy is the reintegration and reconciliation aspect of it at senior levels right down into the villages. And so we expect that will be a part of this as well, but it is not going to happen until we start turning security around.

Mr. MCCAUL. With the last minute I have, there have been reports that—and I believe we win this with good intelligence—there have been reports that terrorists are captured on the battlefield in Afghanistan and are taken to the detention facilities and then read their Miranda rights. The first line is, you have the right to remain silent; the second, you have the right to an attorney.

I don't know whether, in fact, that is happening. If it is, in my view, that cuts off the intelligence flow because we can't get inside the terrorist's head like we did with Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. Will the panel comment on that?

Secretary GATES. I don't think that is true.

Mr. MCCAUL. And it would be good to verify whether there is a lot of perhaps it is misinformation out there that this is occurring.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, we will try to find out for you, but I don't have any reason to believe that.

Admiral MULLEN. Nor do I.

Mr. MCCAUL. That is good to have that answer. Thank you.

Mr. WEXLER. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Sires.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank the panel for being here and the Secretary for all of your dedication to this country over the years. Admiral Mullen and certainly Secretary Gates, you could have been watching Texas play Texas A&M, and it would have been a lot easier.

Secretary GATES. That is the most painful thing to say in this entire hearing.

Mr. SIRES. I was watching a report the other day, and you see all these reports on television, and it goes to the question that my colleague asked before. It is regarding our U.S. soldiers, whether they have a difficult time building trust and confidence with the Afghan forces that they are supposed to train. If there is a lack of trust as an issue of our soldiers working with the Afghanis, isn't that going to imperil our efforts for the next 18 months?

Secretary GATES. Let me answer and then ask Admiral Mullen. I think that one of General McChrystal's central—one of the central themes of his new strategy is a genuine true partnering of ISAF and Afghan forces where they are working together, living together, operating together. Too often in the past, the Afghans were set over here, and we did the fighting or we did whatever was going on, and we didn't give them very much intelligence, they were starved for equipment, but mainly they were kept apart by some of our forces and by some of the other ISAF partner forces.

General McChrystal is determined to bring them together, and it is in that relationship that the trust builds. And that is exactly what we saw happen in Iraq.

Admiral MULLEN. And the stories that I hear based on this shift, which is focusing on partnership, are very positive, but it is very early. I mean, a significant—over about 80 percent of the Afghan units right now, we are partnered with them, and there were none in June. So that shift is really significant, and that will build a trust. And it is basically living with each other, planning, fighting, all the things that the Secretary mentioned.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you.

And I know the President mentioned the other day that we must, and I quote, "invest in our homeland security and improve and better coordinate our intelligence." I certainly believe in this. What are we going to do differently now that we haven't been doing for 8 years in terms of gathering intelligence?

Admiral MULLEN. Well, I think it is continuing to improve. We have learned a lot since 2001 with respect to all that. And I think in particular our intelligence has gotten better and better, and I think we just need to keep that up. And I would—I think our agencies, I think there are 17 intelligence agencies, and they are much more integrated, and they share much better than they have in the past, and we need to continue to do that. And this is an intelligence-driven—the counterinsurgency efforts is an intelligence-driven operation, and our ability to gather intelligence, teach the Afghans how to do this, and turn it around so with that fresh intelligence we can continue to succeed in terms of countering the Taliban is core to our ability to reverse this momentum.

Secretary GATES. I would also say that over the last 15–16 months, I have made it a high priority to send more intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance assets into Afghanistan. So Predators, Reapers, Warriors, all the different kinds of collectors and capabilities that we have were flowing in now, Liberty airplanes that are being put together in Texas to provide full-motion video. So there has been a huge influx of ISR assets to help our commanders in the field.

Mr. SIRES. And I assume we are doing the same thing with Pakistan in terms of the intelligence improvement.

Admiral MULLEN. Well, I mean, we are in support of them in many ways in terms of training. We actually have had a relationship with their intelligence service. And I recognize that there are views of that, but we have actually—there is a very positive side of that historically and recently as well. And these same kinds of things the Secretary is talking about, to work to try to share with them on our mutual objectives, is a big part of where we are and where we need to continue to go.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you. Thank you for your service to our country.

Chairman BERMAN [presiding]. The time of the gentleman has expired. We will have, I think, time for two more questions if that works, two more questioners.

Mr. Bilirakis, the gentleman from Florida, is recognized.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it. I thank the panel staying, and I really appreciate your service to our country.

I would like to address this question to all the witnesses. I know we have touched upon it, but maybe a little more detail. A 34-page document signed by General McChrystal and Ambassador

Eikenberry outlines an integrated civilian-military plan which contains 11 counterinsurgency transformative effects. Does the plan President Obama articulated last night execute these worthy goals, such as improving population security and reducing insurgent capability while advancing governments?

Secretary GATES. Yes, it does. And the difference is that it is focused—our strategy has focused very heavily, particularly from the United States standpoint, on the southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan.

Secretary CLINTON. Yes. And we have taken significant steps to actually accomplish the integrated civilian-military approach that both General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry have proposed. For example, we have beefed up the embassy in Kabul. We have assigned different responsibilities so that, for example, there is one ambassador there working with Ambassador Eikenberry who is responsible for coordinating aid.

There is a lot of work that brings together our military and civilian personnel. I met with a group of the teams that were out in the field when I was there for the inauguration and heard about how well they are coordinating and the fact that we are embedding civilians with our military units. So we are on the way to trying to implement exactly that kind of integrated strategy.

Admiral MULLEN. If I can just say briefly, I was in Helmand with the Marines right after their operation in July. And Secretary Clinton has said this, and she has seen this. I watched our civilians from the State Department literally go in right behind the fight, first of all.

Secondly, I have seen it in Iraq, I see it in Afghanistan, the multiplier that those civilians are. I am not sure what the right number is, but one civilian who can make a difference is just hugely impactful in terms of the overall strategy. I don't know if it is a company of marines or a battalion, but, I mean, in an area of expertise, that makes a difference, agriculture, et cetera.

So I just can't say enough about the shift and the focus and the difference that it is making in this strategy, and it needs to continue to do so.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you.

One last question. Is President Obama's specific—is this a specific plan, counterinsurgency plan, outlined by General McChrystal in August?

Secretary GATES. I think it is fair to say that the assessment that General McChrystal submitted in August was the basis of the entire dialogue that we have had for the last 3½ months. And what we have been working on is how do we—the assessment was based on his view of what he was being asked to do by the President's decisions in March.

What troubled me fairly early on was that those decisions were being interpreted fairly broadly as full-scale nation building and creating a strong central government in Afghanistan, neither of which was our intent, nor was it our ability to do in any reasonable timeframe and at any reasonable cost.

And so a good part of the debate and the discussion we have had is how do we focus that, how do we narrow the mission so that we are focused on selective capacity building in the government, capac-

ity building that is essential to our success and the transition of security responsibility and ultimately the defeat of al-Qaeda? How do we protect the population? What populations do we need to protect? How much of the country do we need to do that in, and so on? And so that was a good part of the discussion, but I would say that the starting point was his assessment.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Virginia Mr. Connolly. I am sorry, no.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I am sorry, you said.

Chairman BERMAN. No. I withdraw it.

Mr. McMahon of New York.

Mr. MCMAHON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And it is not the first time the good gentleman from Virginia has tried to do that to me.

Chairman BERMAN. That you know of.

Mr. MCMAHON. Hello, Madam Secretary. It is great to see you again. And, Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, I am Mike McMahon. I am a new Member of Congress from Staten Island and Brooklyn, New York.

We all remember September 11th with clear, vivid and sad memories, but for us in Staten Island and Brooklyn, the tragedy really hit home. A third of the firefighters who were killed that day came from my district, over 10 percent of the individuals. I will never forget the day because it was my first election. It was primary day in New York, and we were out campaigning. We heard the news of the first jet, then got down to the harbor, got on the ferry and watched the second jet come in, and then watched the buildings fall. And we kind of felt like that is what it would like to be in World War II.

As civilians we rallied, and we set up triage centers, and we set up blood banks and waited for the injured to come. Staten Island is the logical place to bring them, and a lot of people came that were not injured. We waited and waited, and no survivors ever came. And that was the most eerie feeling I think that any of us ever felt.

I say that because I think we all realize on that day or the next day or the next day, as a Nation, that we had a sacred trust, a mission that we had to complete. And it was simply, as you said here today, Admiral, to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to prevent its capacity and the Taliban's to threaten America and our allies from either country in the future.

Unfortunately, 8 years later we are still sitting here talking about this because we as a Nation were distracted. We were led down a pernicious primrose path by the prior administration, God knows why. So many lives were lost, so much treasure, as people say, were lost, our standing in the world. And here we are back again completing this mission that it is indeed our sacred trust to do. I want to thank you on behalf of the people that I represent for your resolve and the President's resolve to do this.

And, Madam Secretary, obviously from your testimony, from your statement, and for the way you have answered the questions, you have not forgotten what we have lost that day. It was a tragedy.

And if we were here in November 2001, we would not be having the distracting questions you are hearing today, like questions about individual cases of military justice. They are certainly important, but this should not distract us again, and issues of the timeline and whether that should distract us again. We must be resolved. And I am so proud of you that you have that resolve.

I do want to ask a question just from sort of a geopolitical point of view. If you look at the map of Afghanistan, if you look around and you see the countries that surround it, many are Muslim, including Turkey. And clearly the Turks in particular, because they are Muslims as well, have had great success in Afghanistan in dealing with the people there in gaining their trust.

What are we doing to encourage more help from Turkey, and help from Turkmenistan, and help from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and from China, and from India, and obviously Pakistan, all these countries that border Afghanistan? It would seem to me that their responsibilities should be raised, and their involvement should be raised. Could you just tell us is there hope there that a regional solution can be here as well as a global?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, thank you for what you said and for your leadership. And we are certainly working to add to the list of countries who are working on behalf of this mission. Turkey has been a great ally, and they have been with us from the very beginning. They are a NATO ally, and they are a true contributing country in Afghanistan. United Arab Emirates has also contributed troops and money. We expect that other countries will be as well, and we will be announcing some of those.

I think that the regional picture is a little more challenging, but we have gotten a lot of good help from the Central Asian countries in assisting us with the transit of material, with the use of military bases.

The Admiral just reminded me Jordan has also been working with us.

So we think that our renewed effort, the President's resolve, is actually going to bring more countries into this fight.

I happen to agree, unfortunately, with the thrust of your comments that, you know, we just took our eye off the most important ball. And there is no doubt in my mind that had we stayed with it, had we, you know, paid more attention to our commanders on the ground in Afghanistan, because it is a longer history—I know some of the people who did have command responsibility in Afghanistan, and there were very frequent requests up the chain of command for additional resources, but we are where we are right now. And just because it has been a frustrating and challenging 8 years, and it is unfortunate that this President has to face up to the hard decisions that we as a country have to make, doesn't mean we shouldn't be doing what we are doing, and that is why we are here today.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Our three witnesses, you wouldn't know it by listening to them, but they had to do this for 2½ or 3 hours earlier today. You were superb advocates on behalf of the administration's position. We thank you very much for being here. We will start our second hearing on this subject with field leaders from where we left off in

terms of questioning. Thank you all very much for being with us today.

[Whereupon, at 4:18 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

U.S. STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN, PART II

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2009

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Howard L. Berman (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman BERMAN. The committee will come to order. Before beginning my opening statement, I would like to make two brief announcements on procedure. First, given the time constraints on the witnesses and to maximize the time members have for questioning, only the ranking member and I will make opening statements; after that we will turn to the witnesses for their testimony. Without objection all other members may place written statements in the record, and, as I mentioned at the end of last week's hearing, I will recognize members for questioning at the point where we left off last week. So those who did not have an opportunity to question our witnesses last week will get the first chance to ask questions today. The staff has sent out specific information about the order in which members will be recognized. And now we will go to the hearing.

Last week the committee heard from Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates, and Admiral Mullen, three of the President's top national security advisors. They did an excellent job in making the administration's case for the new strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Today we welcome the top American officials on the ground in Afghanistan: Ambassador Karl W. Eikenberry, the chief of mission at our Embassy in Kabul, and General Stanley A. McChrystal, the commander of all United States and international forces in Afghanistan.

The President and his team have made it very clear that our efforts to degrade the Taliban and defeat al-Qaeda cannot stop at the Durand Line. Indeed, nearly all of the jihadi groups operating in Pakistan and Afghanistan—al-Qaeda, the Pakistani Taliban, the Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani network, LET, and others—have joined together in an extended terrorist network that shares the same goals, including destabilizing Afghanistan and destroying the Pakistani state.

Fortunately, there appears to be a growing recognition in Pakistan that it is impossible to differentiate between different terrorist groups, and that the same people killing American, international

and Afghan troops are now arming suicide bombers in the streets and markets of Pakistan and killing Pakistani civilians.

We sympathize with the plight of the Pakistani people who have suffered great losses from the growing number of terrorist attacks in that country. As reflected in the legislation recently passed by Congress, we are committed to doing what we can to improve their economic and physical security.

As all of our witnesses emphasized in last week's hearing, the President's military strategy in Afghanistan can only succeed if it is accompanied by a robust "civilian surge" designed to improve governance, strengthen the rule of law, and promote economic development in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. This fact often gets lost in the debate about troop levels and the time frame for withdrawal, and we must make sure that these critical civilian programs aren't shortchanged.

To that end, Ambassador Eikenberry, will you have enough capable civilians on the ground to help strengthen governance, build rule of law, and promote economic enterprise? Will these civilians have sufficient knowledge in these areas to be effective? Will they have sufficient experience operating in dangerous environments like Afghanistan? And are 974 civilians, as the administration has proposed having on the ground by next year, all we need? If not, when will you be able to tell us exactly how many are required? What will your new civil-military campaign plan include that the August plan did not?

With regard to the military strategy, I am curious: One of the keys to our success in Iraq was the "Sunni Awakening," in which thousands of Sunni tribesmen, many of whom had participated in or aided the insurgency, essentially switched to our side. Is there any prospect of a similar shift in Afghanistan? Can we succeed in Afghanistan without such an "awakening"?

Finally, General McChrystal, will 30,000 troops—even with an additional 7,000 apparently pledged by other nations—be sufficient to break the Taliban's momentum? Can we meet the President's objective of degrading the Taliban by focusing primarily on the south when the Taliban is already operating in the north? What types of soldiers—trainers, civil affairs, infantry—will comprise this 30,000 increase?

Now I am pleased to return to the ranking member, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, for any remarks she would like to make. And following that, we will proceed immediately to the testimony of our distinguished witnesses.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, General McChrystal, and Ambassador Eikenberry. For months we have been requesting your presence before the committee to discuss the Afghanistan strategy, so we are extremely pleased that the administration has now authorized you to provide testimony. Welcome, sirs. Last week we received a broad presentation. When the chairman asked Secretary Clinton if she knew the resources that will be needed for the civilian surge she was unable to provide specifics, adding that the administration, and I quote, "will be submitting budget requests in order to achieve the numbers that are going to be needed."

So we anxiously await a more detailed assessment on what you need to prevail against our enemies. Before we look forward, we must present an accurate portrayal of the last 8 years in Afghanistan, the progress that has been achieved, and the challenges that lay ahead. Claims of failure from some are an affront to our brave men and women, such as my daughter-in-law Lindsay who served as a Marine officer in Afghanistan in 2007, it minimizes their accomplishments.

And let me briefly contrast Afghanistan in 2001 to Afghanistan now. The Taliban is not in power, does not control Afghanistan. While our enemies are rebuilding, Afghanistan has not been used to launch attacks against the United States homeland. There are serious problems with corruption, but there is a duly elected government in power, one that is an ally of the United States. And Afghan women and girls have unprecedented access to the health and education services and are integrated into Afghan society.

As Ambassador Eikenberry noted this week, Afghanistan has come a long way since the dark days of the Taliban, and I have witnessed this progress during my travels there. Turning to the strategy announced by the President, I have five main issues for our distinguished panel. First, I am concerned about the delays in the decision making, the impact on our ability to succeed in disrupting, defeating, dismantling al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

General McChrystal, you wrote on August 30th that the next 12 months from that date were critical, yet one quarter of that time has already gone, and by the time the surge is expected to reach its full capacity three quarters of that time would have elapsed. Operations such as the Marine offensive Operation Cobra's Anger are being undertaken. Is this illustrative of the counterinsurgency strategy that will be carried out as part of the surge? And how does this compare to the counterterrorism strategy?

Secondly, General McChrystal, has the President provided you enough troops and other resources to successfully complete our mission? There have been reports that the mission's goals have changed from your original proposal focusing on the elimination of the Taliban to instead ensuring that insurgents could no longer threaten the Afghan Government's survival. Also, are our rules of engagement robust enough to repel and permanently eliminate the Taliban as a threat? And as the chairman asked, Ambassador Eikenberry, do you have the necessary tools to carry out the civilian component of this strategy?

Thirdly, I have concerns about the July 2011 trigger for withdrawal that has been highlighted in the President's speech. Talk of transition and exit ramps with an 18-month target to begin withdrawing telegraphs to our enemies that all they need to do is persevere and through a few difficult fighting seasons because the U.S. will retreat. Some also argue that withdrawal time lines make our troops wonder about the determination of Washington to succeed and could undermine our efforts to secure greater cooperation from our allies.

The New York Times recently reported that the President's time table for withdrawal of American forces in Afghanistan rattled nerves in that country and in Pakistan as well, prompting diplomats to scramble to reassure the two countries that we would not

in fact cut and run. A fourth concern involves the problems of command and control, coordination with our allies, and burden sharing. Our allies are being asked to provide more troops to help push the Taliban out of center and north.

Some such as the Dutch, Canadians, British, and French shoulder a greater burden. Do you foresee difficulties in securing a greater commitment from our allies to contribute to the war effort? Do the forces that the NATO Security General identified have the combat capabilities that you require? And what actions has the administration taken to convince countries to give you more flexibility in placing troops where they are most needed rather than leaving them in safe zones?

And fifth and finally, our Afghanistan strategy does not exist in a vacuum. At last week's hearing I referred to statements by the chief prosecutor for the international criminal court that he already has jurisdiction in Afghanistan, that he is already conducting a preliminary examination into whether NATO troops, including our American soldiers, may have to be prosecuted by the ICC. Also, as you know, three Navy SEALs, part of a team that captured the ringleader of those responsible for the 2007 brutal murder of four of our American contractors in Fallujah, are facing court-martial after the killer initially complained that he suffered a bloody lip while in U.S. custody.

So combined with the reinvestigation of our U.S. intelligence activities, the prosecution of CIA operatives, the transfer of Gitmo detainees for trials in the United States, the negative impact of our activities in Afghanistan could be dramatic and could undermine critical intelligence gathering that could save, save the lives of Americans serving there. Despite these concerns, our nation's safety is at stake, and we must ensure that the brave Americans serving in Afghanistan as well as our critical allies are provided the support that they need to win this war decisively. I thank you both gentlemen for appearing before us. Thank you so much for the time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. Thank you very much. And now to introduce our witnesses. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry retired from the United States Army with the rank of Lieutenant General on April 28th, 2009, and shortly thereafter was sworn in as the U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan. Prior to this assignment, General Eikenberry served as the deputy chairman of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Military Committee in Brussels, Belgium. He has served twice before in Afghanistan, first as U.S. Security Coordinator and Chief of the Office of Military Cooperation in Kabul, and then as Commander of the Combined Forces Command Afghanistan.

General Stanley McChrystal is the current commander, International Security Assistance Force and commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan. Previously, he served as director of the joint staff from April 2008 to June 2009, and as commander, Joint Special Operations Command from 2003 to 2008, where he led the operation that resulted in the death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq. Ambassador, General, we are honored to have you here. Ambassador, why don't you begin?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE KARL W. EIKENBERRY, U.S. AMBASSADOR TO AFGHANISTAN, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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

Last week, in a speech at the United States Military Academy at West Point, President Obama presented the administration's strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. His decision came after an intensive, deliberative, and a far reaching review, and I am honored to have been part of that process. I believe the course that the President outlined offers the best path to stabilize Afghanistan and 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 United States Ambassador and to represent an amazing team of diplomats, development specialists, and civilian experts who form the most capable and dedicated United States Embassy anywhere in the world today. I am extraordinarily proud of them. I am also honored to testify alongside General Stan McChrystal, my professional colleague and friend of many years. I want to say from the outset that General McChrystal and myself are united in a joint effort where civilian and military personnel work together everyday, side by side with our Afghan partners and with our allies, and we could not accomplish our objectives without this kind of cooperation.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, the United States is at a critical juncture in our involvement in Afghanistan. On December the 1st, the President ordered 30,000 additional troops to deploy to Afghanistan on an accelerated time table with the goal of breaking the insurgency's momentum, hastening and improving the training of Afghan national security forces 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 critical ministries and the economy at the national level. These steps taken together I believe will help to remove insurgents from the battlefield and to build support for the Afghan Government. As the President said, we will be clear about what we expect from those who receive our assistance. After a difficult election the Afghan Government does show signs of recognizing the need to deliver better governance and security. We await urgent, concrete steps in a number of areas.

I would like to briefly discuss the three main pillars of our efforts in Afghanistan, which are security, governance, and development. General McChrystal will address our plans to improving security and building the Afghan national security forces. Since assuming my post, I have made a special point of getting outside of Kabul to see conditions first hand, and I fully concur with General McChrystal's assessment that the security situation in Afghanistan remains serious.

Sending additional United States and other NATO ISAF forces to Afghanistan is critical to regaining the initiative, and I am con-

fident that if 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 can take a larger role in providing for security for 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 subnational levels, our overarching goal is to encourage, improve governance so that Afghans can see the benefit of supporting a 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 strengthen this legitimacy, our approach at the national level is to improving key ministries by increasing the number of civilian technical advisors and 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 are working jointly with our military teams, through our provincial reconstruction teams, our district development working groups, and district support teams which help build Afghan capacity, particularly in the areas of greatest insecurity in southern Afghanistan and eastern Afghanistan.

Underpinning all of these efforts is the need to combat corruption and to promote the rule of law. With our assistance, the Afghan Government is steadily building law enforcement institutions to fight corruption, organized crime, and drug trafficking. In his inaugural address, President Karzai stated his intention to make merit based appointments in his new cabinet and to implement an anticorruption strategy, and we are encouraged by his statements.

The cultivation of poppy and trafficking in opium also continue to have a debilitating effect on Afghan society. Our strategy is multipronged, it involves 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 of course will never have a solution though without economic development, and this leads to the third pillar of our effort, which is development.

In recent months we have adjusted our approach to focusing on building key elements of the Afghan private sector economy, increasing our emphasis on agriculture, enhancing government revenue collection, and improving the coordination assistance within the United States Government and the international community. These steps were taken to produce improvements in the lives of ordinary Afghans and to contribute 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 di-

rectly or indirectly from agriculture. Mr. Chairman, I want to emphasize that we are concentrating on what is essential and what is attainable. The President's strategy is based on a pragmatic assessment of the security interest of the United States and our belief that a sustainable representative government and a sustainable economy are essential to success.

We need a viable Afghan Government so our forces can draw down and the investment of U.S. taxpayer dollars can be reduced. In closing, I need to mention two important risks that we do face in carrying out this strategy. The first is that in spite of everything that we do, Afghanistan may struggle to take over the essential task of governance and security on a timely basis. The second is our partnership with Pakistan. The efforts we are undertaking in Afghanistan are likely to fall short of our strategic goals unless there is 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 am confident that we can achieve our strategic objectives. I say this with conviction because for the first time in my three tours 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 am optimistic that we can succeed with the support of the United States Congress.

Our mission has been under resourced for years, but it is now one of our Government's highest priorities with substantial development funds and hundreds more civilian personnel. We will soon have increased our civilian presence in Kabul threefold and in the field six fold just over this past year. And we will of course though need more. U.S. foreign assistance is also a comparatively small but essential fraction of the total amount that is being spent in Afghanistan and has been spent over the last 8 years.

Additional resources will be necessary, and we look forward to sharing more details on our anticipated needs with Congress in the coming days and weeks. Mr. Chairman, Afghanistan is a daunting challenge. Success is not guaranteed, but it is possible. With the additional troops and other resources provided by the President and with the help of Congress, we will work tirelessly to ensure that al-Qaeda never again gains refuge in Afghanistan and threatens our country. And thank you, sir, I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Eikenberry follows:]

STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR KARL EIKENBERRY
BEFORE THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 10, 2009

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Berman, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen, and distinguished members of the Committee,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECURITY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

GOVERNANCE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DEVELOPMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

OUR CIVILIAN EFFORT

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

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

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

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

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

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

PAKISTAN

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

CONCLUSION

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

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

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

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Chairman BERMAN. Thank you very much.

General McChrystal?

STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL STANLEY A. MCCHRYSTAL, COMMANDER, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE (ISAF) AND COMMANDER, U.S. FORCES AFGHANISTAN (USFOR–A), U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

General MCCHRYSTAL. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen, distinguished members of this committee, thank you for the chance to appear before you today. I welcome this opportunity to testify on our way ahead in Afghanistan, and I am pleased to do so with Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, an old friend. Let me begin by saluting the bravery of the men and women of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. They are anchored by over 68,000 courageous Americans, our close partners in the NATO alliance, and a 43-nation coalition. We honor the sacrifices of the fallen, the veterans, and their families.

We also recognize the toll paid every day by our counterparts in the Afghan security forces and by Afghan civilians, who ultimately suffer the most from this insurgency. It is for them and for all of us that we seek a stable Afghanistan, a defunct al-Qaeda, and a secure future in that vital region of the world. I first deployed to Afghanistan in 2002 and have commanded forces there every year since. Despite that experience, there is much in Afghanistan that I have yet to fully understand. For all of us Afghanistan is a challenge that is best approached with a balance of determination and humility.

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

The Quetta Shura Taliban, or Afghan Taliban, is a prominent threat to the Government of Afghanistan, and 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 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 has also reiterated how this decision supports our national interests. Rolling back the Taliban is a prerequisite to the ultimate defeat of al-Qaeda. The mission is not only important, it is also achievable. We can and will accomplish this mission. Let me briefly explain why I believe so. My confidence derives first from the Afghans' resolve, since it is their actions that will ultimately matter most in ending this conflict with their 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 have 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 have 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 in objectives.

We also have greater clarity on the way forward. Additional forces will begin to deploy shortly, and by this time next year new security gains will be illuminated by specific indicators, and it will be clear to us that the insurgency has lost the momentum. And by the summer of 2011 it will be clear to the Afghan people that the insurgency will not win, giving them the chance to side with their government. From that point forward, while we begin to reduce U.S. combat force levels, we will remain partnered with the Afghan security forces in a supporting role to consolidate and solidify their gains.

Results may come more quickly, and we must demonstrate progress toward measurable objectives, but the sober fact is that there are no silver bullets. Ultimate success will be the cumulative effect of sustained pressure across multiple lines of operation. Increasing our capability has been about much more than just troop increases. For the past 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 the Afghan national security forces 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 Afghan national security force 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 will briefly mention three. The first is the Afghan Government's credibility deficit, which must be recognized by all to include Afghan officials as a critical area of focus and change. Equally important is our ability to accelerate development of the Afghan security forces. Measures such as increased pay and incentives, literacy training, leader development, and expanded partnering are necessary to position the Afghan national security force to assume responsibility for long term security.

Third, the hazard posed by extremists that operate on both sides of the border with Pakistan with freedom of movement across that border must be mitigated by enhanced cross border coordination and enhanced Pakistani engagement. Looking ahead, I am confident we have both the right strategy and 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 a group of villagers resolves to reject the local insurgency.

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

In closing, my team and I would like to thank you and your colleagues for your support to the American men and women currently serving in Afghanistan and to tell you a bit about them. We risk letting numbers like 30K roll off our tongues without remembering that those are fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters serving far from home, selfless in their sacrifices for each of us. The other day I asked a young but combat experienced sergeant where he was on 9/11, and his answer, getting my braces removed, reminded me it has been more than 8 years since 9/11, and many of our service members and families have experienced and sacrificed much.

But as I see them in action at remote bases, on patrol, partnering with Afghan forces, recovering in combat hospitals, they don't talk about all they have given up, they talk about all they are accomplishing and their determination in this endeavor. This is not a force of rookies or dilettantes. The brigade commander in coast 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:]

[redacted]

Statement of
General Stanley A. McChrystal, USA
Commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force
House Foreign Affairs Committee
December 10, 2009

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen, distinguished members of this committee, thank you for the chance to appear before you today.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We also face a complex and resilient insurgency. The Quetta Shura Taliban, or Afghan Taliban, is the prominent threat to the Government of Afghanistan, as they aspire to once again *become* the government of Afghanistan. The Haqqani and Hezb-e Islami Gulbuddin insurgent groups have more limited geographical reach and objectives, but they are no less lethal.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We can and will accomplish this mission.

Let me briefly explain why I believe so.

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

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

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

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

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

Let me start with clarity.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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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.

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[redacted]

COMISAF Statement Congressional Testimony

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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.

Chairman BERMAN. Thank you both. And, General McChrystal, you are commander of the International Security Assistance Force as well as U.S. Forces, would you be willing to introduce a few of our NATO representatives who are here with us today?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir. This is part of my personal staff, of course I have got Colonel Charlie Flynn who is a U.S. Army officer. Kristoff is my German aide, I have two aides, one American and one German. Bill Rafferty is one of our planners, a British officer. Another allied officer from the U.S. Navy, Greg Smith, runs our communications. Jake McFarren is our political advisor in the headquarters. KC Welch is my other aide, my American aide, had 27 months in Iraq before he came to Afghanistan with only 5 months off between those two deployments. And then Dave Silverman works in my personal staff as well, obviously another naval officer.

Chairman BERMAN. Great, thank you very much. We will begin the questioning now, and I am first going to recognize the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Green, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for continuing the hearing. And I want to thank both Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal for what you do and your leadership for our young men and women, not only serving in the military but obviously on the civilian side. Having been to the Embassy in Afghanistan a couple of times and having been hosted there, it is not the plush area anyone ever thinks. But I appreciate what you all do and I know Members of Congress do.

General McChrystal, there are currently 94,000 Afghan soldiers on the ground, and current plans call for increasing that number to 134 by October of next year. There are currently about 91,000 Afghan police officers on the ground and there are current calls for boosting that to 96,800 by next October. This would make a total Afghan security force of around 230,000 police and military. During the strategic review you advocated for boosting the number of Afghan security forces to 400,000. Security forces in Iraq, with a much easier terrain, now total about 600,000. Do you think 400,000 with tougher terrain in Afghanistan is realistic? It is a lot more than 230—the estimate—but is it still within range of what we really need for the Afghans?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, as everyone knows Afghanistan must ultimately be secured by Afghans, that is what they want and that is the right answer. We did a detailed analysis of what it would take using basic COIN doctrine to secure Afghanistan, and the number reaches up near 600,000 total Afghan security forces of all kinds, police and army. But the insurgency is not in the entire country, not all the country is threatened.

So as we refined our focus, in fact we were able to reach what we believe is a better longer term instate. We came up with about 400,000 combinations of army and police as being the right number for Afghanistan to have as coalition forces drop down to a fairly small number of advisors or for the long term. That would of course be adjusted or could be adjusted based upon whether there is an insurgency at that point and the size of that insurgency. A number of 400,000 divided between the army and the police of 240,000 ultimately in the army and 160,000 in the police would not be really

out of range for that part of the world for standing armies and police.

But I think we need to view that not as a hard number at this point but as a goal we work toward and adjust constantly. The President's decision is to grow those forces like we are growing the army to 134,000 by next fall, and we will clearly continue to grow the police, but to relook that every year will allow us to reflect what the state of the insurgency is and then of course what their ability to grow is, can they make those numbers. We are getting some very heartening feedback here recently, there have been pay raises for both the army and the police implemented by the Government of Afghanistan with the international community's help, and we are seeing a significant improvement. But we have got to see whether that is sustainable long term.

Mr. GREEN. And you recognize that our goal is to make the Afghans protect their own neighborhood, and you share that and the President I know shares it and I know Congress does. General McChrystal, in your testimony you write "additional forces will begin to deploy shortly, and by this time next year new security gains will be illuminated by specific indicators. It will be clear to us that the insurgency has lost momentum." Other than generally saying conditions on the ground and knowing that the security situation will never be perfect, what specific criteria can the American people look to that we are basing that decision on sometime next year?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, we collect a tremendous number of metrics, but we try to pull those together in a number that is understandable both to us and then communicable. The first and biggest will be the security situation by district across the country within the 34 provinces, whether the district is in fact under solid government control, whether it might be contested or whether it might be under insurgent control. So we do a map that is fed by a tremendous amount of data that allows us to look at those districts. If we are seeing progress in those, that will be one of the major indicators.

I believe the other major indicator will be the growth and development of the Afghan national security forces or increasing capacity of Afghanistan to secure itself. In addition to those two major indicators that I believe will be most illustrative, we feed that with a tremendous amount of information from polling data of what the Afghan people think, which is key because ultimately this war will be won in the minds of the Afghan people, and indicators of their ability to go about their lives, whether they can drive through secure areas to market, the cost of goods, and things like that.

Mr. GREEN. And again, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Arkansas, Mr. Boozman. And the 5 minutes allotted includes questions and answers.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We appreciate you being here, Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal. We do appreciate the service to your country, and then also your families, and I think that was so illustrated by your staffer when you mentioned that he was in Iraq and now in Afghanistan and the time away from home.

General McChrystal, following the President's March speech to Congress, the President developed a series of metrics to judge progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Are those metrics still useful? Did they have any influence on the strategy and assessment that you did in August? Are these metrics still useful based on this President's new strategy? Do the metrics have any influence on the July 2011 withdrawal? And do the metrics need to be revised as a result of the new planning?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, I believe the metrics, they are still in place, they are useful. I do believe they will evolve over time because of the conditions on the ground evolve and we collect even more data and look at it I think it is important we keep being willing to evolve those to understand it. So I expect those to be baseline metrics, but I expect to inform that with many others as well, sir.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I know that you all are very metric driven. We have had many come and testify before Congress that President Karzai is going to be held accountable. Do the metrics that you have developed, do they specifically include assessment for President Karzai?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, our assessments, yes they include the effectiveness of the Government of Afghanistan at the national level and, as General McChrystal said, assessments that are at the subnational level as well, that we have a robust plan of assessments at all levels.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I know that Prime Minister Brown has reportedly given President Karzai a list of milestones and metrics that he will judge him by. Have you seen the list? Are we trying to replicate and work with them in that regard?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, I have not seen the specific list, but I am roughly familiar with the intent of it.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Good. Lastly, the other guys who were here and testified, Secretary Gates and also Admiral Mullen, and I think that, I know in my district, I think throughout the country, there really is a great concern of the four guys that are under indictment or whatever you call that in the military, and I think the concern is that somehow we are being caught up in political correctness. I wanted to tell Secretary Gates, I didn't get a chance to ask a question of him, but Arkansas played Texas A&M earlier in the year and beat them in Texas stadium.

But you know, in the heat of that battle, if somebody hit somebody in the mouth they would be suspended for a game. And I know it is different, the situation, but it is not that different. And I guess what I would like from you is just your reassurance, I know through the years people have stood up for me, your reassurance that you are looking into that, you know, and shepherding that process.

I know you can't get involved directly at the point it is now. Admiral Mullen indicated that he had confidence with the people that were taking care of it, and again my comeback to that is that I know that he had confidence in the people at Fort Hood and yet a third grader could have told that there was something going on there that was not right. And I think again the American people are concerned that that is due to political correctness.

General McCHRYSTAL. Congressman, I am not familiar because the incident that happened in Iraq, with the current one that you mentioned, with the specifics of that case, but I will tell you we stress to all of our people the importance of how they act, but there is also an absolute loyalty to people as well. So I think the balance is about right. I feel very good particularly, we have learned a lot over these years as we go through this.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I know that is an Iraqi situation, but it does make a difference in the sense your guys now, when they are deciding whether or not to do an action or this or that, the easiest thing to do is to not do, okay? It does make a difference as far as decision making and things, and so I would hope that you would work with your cohorts, and I know that you have got tremendous influence in various areas but that really is an important thing, it is an important thing with the American people and their support of the military. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Scott, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome, General and Ambassador. Let me start off with the mission as it was articulated by General Gates and Secretary Clinton last week was this, that our mission is to go in, destroy, dismantle, defeat al-Qaeda in both Afghanistan and Pakistan and see to it that they do not return. That being the case, what about Pakistan? Pakistan is where the crux of the problem is, but yet it is the least emphasis where we have seen our strategy. That is where al-Qaeda is, that is where the real apex of the situation is. Will our troops be able to go into Pakistan and do exactly what the mission says, destroy, dismantle, and see that it doesn't return to Pakistan?

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, the importance of the mission against al-Qaeda is about clear. As commander of ISAF my responsibility or my authorities stop at the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan. We do however work very hard, and I personally spend a lot of time with General Kiyani, developing a strategic partnership to enable them to meet their strategic objectives.

Mr. SCOTT. Well let me just ask you because I only just have a few minutes here and I have a number of questions. To your knowledge, of your involvement with the joint strategy with Pakistan, to your knowledge will our troops be able to go into Pakistan?

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, I am really out of my lane to discuss that.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. Let me ask you about NATO and our troops. NATO has said they are sending around 7,000, 6,000 7,000 troops. Those troops come with caveats. Can you comment very briefly on what that presents to you, where a nation may send soldiers but they tell them, you can go, you can see, but you can't conquer, you can't get into battle, you must sit on the bench. What does that do to our strategy?

General McCHRYSTAL. Sir, many of the 43 nations' forces come with no caveats and they operate just like ours.

Mr. SCOTT. What percentage of that?

General McCHRYSTAL. I am sorry?

Mr. SCOTT. You said 40 percent?

General MCCHRYSTAL. No, sir, many of them. I don't know the percentage; I would like to get that back to you for the record. The caveats are something that I work with all our NATO partners and ask them to reduce to increase our flexibility, and I think it is important that we continue to reduce those so that they can prosecute operations, particularly counterinsurgency, effectively.

Mr. SCOTT. Going back for a moment to you, Ambassador, you mentioned some things, there has been a hesitancy to stay away from the word nation building. But as I listened to you as you talked about setting up the Afghan Government, as you talked about your three corners which were security, which was governance, which was building up the economy, if that isn't nation building I don't know what is. Is not that nation building? Can we not be successful unless we do that?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, I think our goals are clear, they are narrowed. What we are seeking to achieve in partnership with our Afghan allies is a government that has the capability of providing for the security of its own people.

Mr. SCOTT. Let me just ask you though because I only have a little bit of time, are we in nation building in Afghanistan?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I think that what we have established are clear goals that are narrow that have to do with establishing sufficient security.

Mr. SCOTT. But I am asking you, yes or no, are we in nation building in Afghanistan?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. No, I would not characterize what we are doing, we are providing assistance to the state of Afghanistan, no I would not characterize it as open ended nation building, clearly not.

Mr. SCOTT. Well, all right. Let me go back to you, General McChrystal. You mentioned, and you spoke eloquently and I agree with you, of the sacrifice and the great job that our soldiers are doing, but here is what concerns me. There is a terrible strain on our military. Many of our young men and women are going on their third and fourth tours of duty. There has been an ugly side to this. Every time I have gone over there—for four times I have been to Afghanistan—I go back to Lonstall Air Base; I care about our military. The situation in Fort Hood was just the tip of the iceberg in terms of excessive stress, the mental strain, the suicide, the divorce rates. Tell me how deep is the strain on our military and what are we doing about it?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, the strain is significant, but the force is holding up extraordinarily well. I think the things we are doing to take care of families back in the states, the things we are doing to look after service members while they are there, to get leave, all those things to take care of wounded warriors, to me all of those come together to give the force much more resiliency than it would otherwise have and historically would have.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you both.

Chairman BERMAN. The gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. Wilson, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILSON. General, Ambassador, thank you very much for being here today. I have a special appreciation of your commit-

ment. As a Member of Congress I am grateful to be the co-chair of the Afghan caucus. I appreciate your hospitality at the briefings that I have had with both of you, I just have great faith in your service. Also I am very happy that we share that our army careers began together in the 1970s, and so I appreciate as a veteran your service, more particularly as a parent I have got four sons serving in the military of the United States today, I am very grateful for their service and military service means a lot to our family.

And that is why I want military families to know that I have faith in your integrity, I have faith in your ability, you truly are looking out for the troops, I believe you are going to be victorious in this second surge where we will be defeating the terrorists to protect American families at home. On Tuesday I was honored to be at the Armed Services Committee meeting, Ambassador, and was pleasantly surprised when you said that there has been progress in Afghanistan.

And sometimes I have to read about progress in unusual places like Rotary Magazine, and they were giving indications of rotary projects around the world, and one that they are backing up are schools, the number of schools have increased from 650 to 9,500. Can you tell us what you see as progress, and then what is the role of a provincial reconstruction team?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Thanks, Congressman. There has been remarkable progress since the very dark days of Taliban of 2001, you mentioned one, education. In 2001 there were 1 million children going to school; they were almost all boys; they were receiving a certain persuasion of education. Today there are 6.5 million Afghan children who are going to school; about 35 percent of those are girls. In 2001 very little of the Afghan population had access to any healthcare, now 80 percent of the population has access to primary, albeit rudimentary, but access to primary healthcare.

I could go on with the development of roads, I could go on with now 10 million Afghans have cell phones. And there have been profound changes. Against that, we know where the challenges are. General McChrystal and I both share our views of where those challenges are, but there is room to have great hope as we move forward, there is much to build upon. The provincial reconstruction teams; the provincial reconstruction teams have a very important role both as civilian-military combined effort in many of the provinces of Afghanistan under NATO ISAF command, and their roles are to assist the local government in strengthening their government to help them develop capacity in order to improve their distribution of basic services to the people in the area.

Mr. WILSON. And something that would be very helpful, I served with Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee in the Afghan caucus, if you could provide to us say a bullet type of presentation that we could distribute to our colleagues on items of progress that you see, that would be very helpful. And, General McChrystal, I have had the opportunity to visit the police training academy in Jalalabad, my former National Guard unit, the 218th, helped train the police units across the country, and I saw really dedicated persons but I am very concerned about their pay, the pay is so low that it certainly would call into question loyalty and then lead to some level of bribery. What is the status of pay, training; who is paying?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, well timed. The Government of Afghanistan just increased the pay of Afghan national army and police, didn't quite double it but brought it almost to twice. It is still, the design is to get to a living reasonable wage so that we don't have people who are forced to resort to corruption or family support to go forward. And it is foreign money that helps. The Afghan Government is required to pay 34 percent of their budget according to the London Compact 1996 toward their Afghan security forces, but that clearly does not cover the major part of the cost.

Mr. WILSON. And the cost largely covered, you say, by foreign contributions, it is my understanding that Japan has been a major contributor and should be given credit. Again people do not know the extraordinary efforts and support from around the world as unlikely as Japan supporting the police of Afghanistan. Thank you again for your service.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Arkansas, Mr. Ross, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General McChrystal, the Arkansas National Guard, like those in other states, plays an important role in responding to natural disasters and other domestic emergencies in Arkansas. It is not uncommon for them to respond in other states as well, such as Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina. In addition to these domestic roles, the Arkansas National Guard's 39th infantry brigade combat team has twice been deployed to Iraq, and while this team has to date not served in Afghanistan there is a significant National Guard presence in Afghanistan.

In fact the 39th has been to Iraq not once but twice and I think most of them have a pretty good idea of what may be in their future. I am grateful for the service the men and women of the National Guard provide our country. Their continued deployment leaves the National Guard fewer troops and equipment needed to respond to domestic issues. How many of the 30,000 additional troops do you envision coming from the National Guard? And how soon will National Guardsmen and Guardswomen return home after the planned draw down begins in 2011?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I will have to take for record the number of the 30,000 and get back to you that look like National Guards. The Services will determine that.

[The information referred to follows:]

WRITTEN RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM LIEUTENANT GENERAL STANLEY A. MCCHRYSTAL TO QUESTION ASKED DURING THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE MIKE ROSS

Force Packages 1, 2, and 3 presently include the following National Guard Forces: Combat Service Support Battalion (78), Engineering Company (Route Clearance) (122), Military Police Law and Order Detachment (45), Maintenance Company (173), and Communications Detachment (77). It is important to note that the sourcing process continues, and additional capabilities from both the Active and Reserve Force, in support of all three Force Packages are still being identified and sourced. We are continuing to work with USCENTCOM, USJFCOM, USTRANSCOM, the Joint Staff, and the Services to ensure the timely deployment of these troops. The pace and intensity of the transition that commences in 2011 is to be determined, as stated by the President, by conditions on the ground.

General MCCHRYSTAL. I would like to take a second though to talk about National Guardsmen in service, because they were extraordinary across all of the different disciplines, engineers, infantry, trainers, a significant number of people training the Afghan national security forces are National Guardsmen. And then the agricultural development teams that are there as well from many states, they provide a linkage to practical agriculture expertise that we can provide, and they also develop a sense of partnership with the Afghan people that is a combat multiplier, not just developmental assistance, it actually helps security as well. So I can't say enough about what National Guardsmen do or the sacrifices they have made.

Mr. ROSS. In my time remaining, approximately three quarters of the food, fuel, and other provisions that supply NATO forces passes through Pakistan. In the face of increased Taliban attacks on the supply routes the Pakistani Government has been unable to increase security. Since September 2008 the attacks have forced several temporary closures of NATO supply routes through the Khyber Pass. As a result of these attacks and the decreased security in Pakistan, NATO was forced to seek alternative supply routes into Afghanistan.

The continuing attacks raise concern for the deployment of additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan which will require a significant increase in supplies. While some of the additional supplies will be transported via other ways, such as the northern distribution network, much of the additional supplies will have to pass obviously through Pakistan. What will be done to ensure American and NATO forces receive the supplies necessary during their deployment in light of this?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, that is an important point. We look at very hard what we call the ground lines of communication that go through Pakistan are essential to our effectiveness there. And so what we work with is our strategic partnership with the Government of Pakistan to continue to secure those. We actually have a very good track record of amount of equipment that makes it through without any issues, it is a very, very high percentage, it has been a very strong, predictable flow. That said, we always understand that instability could threaten that, and that is why the northern distribution network was developed, not because we absolutely had to have it but we wanted to have alternate means so that if one means was threatened or one line of communication was threatened we would have the additional.

Mr. ROSS. And, Mr. Chairman, my goal in life remains keeping you happy, and with that I will yield back my remaining 40 seconds.

Chairman BERMAN. Well, I hope it is contagious.

The gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. Inglis, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. INGLIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And, General, you lead an awesome group of folks and we thank you for your service and for their service. You mentioned that our commitment as a nation is being watched intently, and you called it a significant step to commit 30,000 troops, is it sufficient?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, I am confident that it is.

Mr. INGLIS. And with the commitment being watched intently, what do we signal by a time line for transfer, does that undermine the signal of commitment or does it, what is the impact of talking about a date certain for transfer?

General MCCHRYSTAL. There are several points I would like to make on that. There is first a vulnerability in any date that is set, the enemy can take that date and use it for propaganda purposes, but I believe we can combat that. But there are a number of positives in where we are right now, and I would like to stress those. The first is that the date does serve as somewhat of a forcing function for the Government of Afghanistan and the Afghan people to understand that their responsibility for security is absolute and we need to move toward that, and I think we have already begun to see some of the effect on that, so that is positive.

But I would also step back and talk about the more important part to me at the security standpoint, the President has outlined his commitment to a strategic partnership over time, long term, which provides assurance to the people of Afghanistan and the government that we are partnering with them. Were I an insurgent and I saw that solid assurance from the United States, then I would understand that a date doesn't change anything.

In the near term, the 30,000 additional American forces combined with coalition forces is going to allow my force to turn this momentum and very seriously push back on the insurgency, and I think very effectively, and I think that will be clear to everyone. At the same time the growth of Afghan national security forces will be rising during that period so that any point whatever pace the President decides to draw down our combat forces, I think that is met with growing Afghan national security force and government capacity. So I really think we don't leave much of a window of opportunity for the insurgency, particularly when they see the long term commitment.

Mr. INGLIS. Thank you. And, Ambassador, you also lead an impressive group of folks and we thank you for their service and your service. And the General mentioned that the wonderful decision by a farmer to decide to harvest wheat rather than poppy, do you have any idea what the per acre profit margin is comparing those two crops? I mean what can a farmer make on wheat as opposed to poppies?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. It changes from year to year, it changes from region to region. I will submit for the record, Congressman, the most current data. The fluctuation of the price of wheat, one of the main staple crops of Afghanistan, has an extraordinary amount to do with decisions by farmers. But I would also emphasize there is a direct correlation, a known direct correlation between areas of insecurity in Afghanistan where there is no legitimate Government of Afghanistan presence and high poppy yields.

We see that very clearly in southern Afghanistan. In one province of southern Afghanistan, Helmand, over 50 percent of poppy production for the entire country occurs there, and it is exactly the area where General McChrystal's forces right now and the Afghan national security forces have part of their main effort. Part of that success that we will have there will have to do with pushing the Taliban back and securing the Afghan population, part of the suc-

cess will also yield reductions in poppy production and narcotrafficking, and there is a clear nexus between the two.

Mr. INGLIS. Yes, it seems to be a clear nexus between the security, the imposition, our ability to project forth so that we stop that poppy production. Because otherwise the unpopular, as a general statement, unpopular Taliban becomes more popular by comparison if you can feed your family selling an illegal crop as opposed to slaving away on a low profit margin crop that maybe isn't going to feed your family. So it is crucial I suppose to have these things to together, that we have to push to say that, well you can't grow this anymore, but also provide some hope that other crops will work and you can make a living.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. One of the key first principles of our developmental strategy is in the area of agriculture, and I think, Congressman, it gets exactly to what you are talking about.

Mr. INGLIS. Okay.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from New York, Mr. Crowley, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. I thank the chairman, I thank both of you gentlemen for being here before us today. Like many of my colleagues I have some very serious reservations about additional troop buildup in Afghanistan, especially in the midst of a tough economic cycle that we are under right now here, our first and foremost responsibility I believe is to the American people. In addition to the cost, the geopolitical realities of the Afghanistan and Pakistan and the greater region all raise questions about U.S. efforts in Afghanistan.

I am also concerned about the well being certainly of our troops. I had the opportunity to travel to both Afghanistan and to Iraq last year. Probably the sharpest distinction that I could draw after coming back was that the different assets that appear upon landing in Afghanistan. And I want to thank, I don't know if it has been done already, I noticed behind you, General, there are representation of the coalition of forces that are engaged in Afghanistan, I want to thank them for their participation, for the sacrifices that they have made as well, I know this is not just an American cause.

But having said that, we will be sending many, many more American troops than coalition forces from abroad. With that in mind, I just want to ask and just to follow up on the last questions that were brought up to both General McChrystal and to you, Ambassador, in terms of your initial report to Secretary Gates you said that the narco profits were a major earner for the insurgency. If we were to displace that as a profit mode for the rebels and for al-Qaeda, do you believe there are other alternative resources that they would be able to use to supplant that? And would they be enough to carry out the work they are doing right now?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, we calculate that the Taliban get about a third of their funding from the narcotrafficking, but that they could operate without it. They essentially tax the narco trade, they could tax licit crops as well.

Mr. CROWLEY. Right.

General MCCHRYSTAL. So we don't think that that would cripple them. The greatest threat from the narco trade is the corrosive cor-

ruption that it brings into governance. So what we need to do first is get security and bring all of those down together.

Mr. CROWLEY. I just thought it was important to make that point, and I appreciate you doing that, that that in and of itself will not end the problems we have. Yes, Ambassador?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Just briefly, Congressman, another source of revenue of course for the Taliban comes from outside of Afghanistan, funds that come from the Gulf, funds that come from different elements in Pakistan, and there is a full out combined intelligence, military, and law enforcement effort to try to choke that off.

Mr. CROWLEY. Thank you. I have limited time so I just want to get to another point. Testimonies by numerous government witnesses have pointed out that the United States is going to increase the number of trainers working to expand the Afghan army. Over time, if the plan works, the size of the Afghan army will grow substantially. Going forward, how will the Afghan army sustain itself financially? And does your plan include a measure of self sustainability so that American taxpayers are not footing the entire bill for decades to come?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, in the near term it is clear that Afghanistan will not have the funds to pay for security forces of the size that they need. As their economy grows, that would be the hope, but in the foreseeable future, that does not appear possible.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Also, Congressman, important to note that when we talk about the Afghan national security forces, the army and the police, I don't think we could tell you precisely what is the ratio of cost of having a U.S. Army soldier or Marine deployed to Afghanistan versus the cost of sustaining an Afghan national army soldier or policeman, but it is probably on the order of 30 or 40 to 1. So obviously the way forward of developing an Afghan national army and police that can provide for the security of their own people, it makes good sense for a lot of reasons.

Mr. CROWLEY. I appreciate it. Looking at my clock, I have less than 1 minute, so, Mr. Chairman, your work has been incredibly important in terms of the level of witnesses we have had before this committee, and I too want to stay in your good graces, and I will yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman BERMAN. Well that is nice, thank you. The time of the gentleman has been relinquished to the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Poe, recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you both for being here. I am from southeast Texas, I represent a guy by the name of Charlie Wilson's old district, and so I have a few questions. I just got back from Afghanistan on Tuesday, I met with our generals, German, Canadian, and British NATO allies and our troops down on the Pakistan Afghanistan border. I was pleasantly really surprised to learn that the Afghan people appear to me to be very supportive of our presence in Afghanistan, that they fear the Taliban, they fear the reprisals that they have lived under the Taliban, and they supply us a lot of information about the Taliban, good intelligence.

The question, several questions. We have heard about the President's position on more troops, I call it the surge and retreat policy,

but now that has been hedged a little bit, in the summer of 2011. General McChrystal, what is our policy now? Is it to reevaluate our troops, our position, in 2011, the summer of 2011, is that what it is as you understand it?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, my understanding is in July 2011 we will begin the reduction of U.S. forces. The pace of that and the scope of that will be based on conditions on the ground at that time.

Mr. POE. So we will start bringing troops home but we won't necessarily bring them all home then, is that what you understand?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Exactly, Congressman, there will be some slope, some pace that is determined by conditions.

Mr. POE. And if the conditions are worse, what happens then?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, the President can always make decisions based upon conditions on the ground, but it is my expectation that beginning on July 2011 we will start a reduction.

Mr. POE. You believe that you can accomplish the mission you have when you receive the troops, which is in several weeks or even months, maybe just a year time that you have to do that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, I do. I think that with the forces we have, the additional forces and that time, I am comfortable that we will be able to do that.

Mr. POE. Well I think it is obvious to anybody that goes to Afghanistan and Iraq too that our troops are just the best, there is no comparison to the quality of our troops. How many members of the Taliban are there? We would like to know how many of the enemy we are trying to defeat. How many of them are there, General?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, it varies based upon their popularity. We assess between 24 and 27,000 members of the Taliban, but I believe as momentum is turned that affects their ability to retain their force. So I think it is not people with long term enlistments, I think it is more flexible than that.

Mr. POE. Having been on the Pakistan Afghanistan border and talking to just regular troops, just my opinion is that the Pakistan Government isn't doing enough to ratchet up protecting their side of the border, that the Taliban come over in to Afghanistan and woe be to them if they do because the military is going to find them, but they run back over to Pakistan and have sanctuary, and it appears to me we know where they are, Pakistan gives lip service to doing something about it. I met with their people and I am not convinced that Pakistan is engaged in helping defeat the Taliban. Can you give me some insight on that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, I believe our long term way ahead is with a strategic partnership with Pakistan. They are absolutely focused against the TTP, or Pakistani Taliban internal to Pakistan. They have not focused on the Afghan Taliban that use sanctuaries. Interestingly, and I have a very close relationship with the Pakistani military and building this relationship

Mr. POE. Excuse me, General, for interrupting, I just have 30 seconds.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Yes, sir.

Mr. POE. So they take care of business with the Taliban that is the homegrown folks that just stick around in Pakistan to do mis-

chief, but people running back and forth across the border into Afghanistan, they don't consider that their problem?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, I think that may oversimplify it, I think they do but I wish they would do more against the Afghan Taliban.

Mr. POE. The only other thing I want to mention, and I am sorry we can't go into it, I too am concerned about the rules of engagement, the Navy SEALs capturing one of the worst guys in history, and it seems they ought to be getting medals rather than being court-martialed, but we don't have any time to talk about that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Minnesota, Mr. Ellison, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ELLISON. Let me welcome you and say good morning to both you, Ambassador and General, it is good to see you again. We were with you only a few weeks ago. We have talked a lot about 30,000 extra, but what about the civilian surge side of this, could you elaborate on that, Ambassador Eikenberry, what is our projected number, what are we hoping to arrive at, and how is that process going along?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Thanks, Congressman, good to see you again.

Mr. ELLISON. Absolutely.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. We have made very significant progress over the last 12 months in increasing our civilian numbers and our civilian capabilities in Afghanistan. By January of next year here in about a 7-week time frame, if you look back over the last month we will have had a threefold increase in our civilian increase in Afghanistan, very importantly in support of General McChrystal's efforts, a six-fold increase in the field. Numbers roughly then that we are talking about early next year, January February time frame, we will be looking at about 1,000 civilians overall in Afghanistan, about 400 of those we project to be out in the field.

It is a very diverse group of civilians. These are civilians not only from the Department of State as you know, but USAID development specialists, Department of Agriculture specialists around the country, members of the Federal Bureau of Investigation mentoring and helping establish an Afghan FBI. We have brave members of the Drug Enforcement Administration, members of the Federal Aviation Administration, a really impressive array.

We have had innovations over the course of the past 6 months in which the way that we organize our civilian efforts and multiply the effects of wherever they are through hiring Afghans and then through those Afghan organizations amplifying the effects, we have very close collaboration with General McChrystal in the integration of these efforts. Projecting ahead, Congressman, we are set to build to 1,000. Right now we are in discussions with the Department about what additional capabilities and numbers will we need on the ground, that is also in collaboration with General McChrystal understanding his campaign so we can support that. I don't have an exact number for what we will grow to, but it might be on the

order of needing several hundred more over the course of the next 6–9 months beyond what we have projected currently.

Mr. ELLISON. Well I guess my question is, I mean that is very impressive and I thank you for that, and the movement in education, girls' education, there are a lot of good stories to tell and I thank both of you for that. But as I look at what we are trying to arrive at at a civilian number and what we are trying to arrive at at a military number, it is like 100 to 1, is that the right ratio? I mean shouldn't we have a greater, I mean if we are trying to help stabilize the country, harden the country so that it is more impervious to, you know, these forces that would overthrow the government and hurt the county, shouldn't the proportion be a lot greater when it comes to civilian representation?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Representative, numbers are important at one level, but you have to look at the effects that they are going to be achieving. When we talk about the military we talk about mobilizing platoons, companies, battalions of 600 to deploy to Afghanistan to achieve effects. Remember when we are talking about civilians we are talking about individuals, three good Department of Agriculture specialists working in the Ministry of Agriculture of Afghanistan can help transform that entire ministry and its delivery of services, of agricultural services, throughout the country. And so, yes numbers matter, but at the end of the day it is how do you organize them and what effects are you trying to achieve? And if you wish, for the record I can give many more examples of that, Congressman.

Mr. ELLISON. Yes, and I would like that, but not now because I have got one more question for you. You know, when I was in Afghanistan only a few weeks ago, our mission as part of the House Democratic Partnership Commission, was to interact with our counterparts, other legislators there, and I was really impressed with many people I met including several women legislators. One of them was from Helmand province, she told us, this is what she said. She reported that without the intervention of the U.S. Marines she probably couldn't even be a member of the Parliament, and I guess my question to you is, you know, how is security related to women's rights in Afghanistan, in your view?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Security is a very critical dimension of the advancement of women's rights in Afghanistan certainly. There are many other factors, but security is fundamental.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Manzullo, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MANZULLO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. During the last 3 months the current prosecutor for the International Criminal Court has been making public statements that he has jurisdiction over alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in Afghanistan and is performing a "preliminary investigation into operations by U.S. and other NATO forces." This could lead to ICC prosecution of American soldiers even though the United States has never ratified their own statute.

Among other things he has declined to rule out ICC prosecutions based upon unmanned drone strikes against leaders there in Afghanistan. However, this administration has been moving the

United States closer to International Criminal Court, the Secretary of State has expressed great regret we are not a signatory to the Rome statute, and last month for the first time since their own statute entered into force the administration sent a delegation to participate in a meeting of the ICC assembly of parties. It is my understanding that the U.S. ambassador at large for war crimes, Ambassador Rapp, was at the meeting, said nothing to protest or dispute the ICC's prosecutorial jurisdictional claims.

We understand that there is an Article 98 agreement with Afghanistan that exempts Afghanistan as signatory to the Rome agreement from turning our troops over to the International Criminal Court, however the soldiers there in member states such as Japan, Germany, and even the U.K. may be subject to jurisdiction. I would like to hear your opinions on whether you agree or disagree with the ICC's prosecutorial claim of potential jurisdiction to prosecute U.S. and NATO troops over actions taken in Afghanistan.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, let me just speak from a United States perspective. We do have a bilateral agreement with Afghanistan, Article 98, as we do with certain other states that are parties to the ICC, and this precludes the Afghan Government from surrendering U.S. troops to the ICC. The bottom line is here, and the important bottom line is, our troops are protected from being turned over to the ICC, a commitment of this administration.

Mr. MANZULLO. While they are in Afghanistan. What if they are in other countries that are not signatories to an Article 98 agreement but the countries themselves are signatories to the Rome agreement?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Let me get back for the record on that important question, Congressman, I know it is a complicated legal issue.

Mr. MANZULLO. General McChrystal, do you have an opinion on that? I mean I think we need a definitive answer because young men and women are being asked to go overseas to Afghanistan to engage in combat, they need to know whether or not they can be arrested in countries that are signatories to the Rome agreement.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, I absolutely agree we need clarity. I would like to along with Ambassador Eikenberry take this for the record to ensure we get you an accurate answer.

Mr. MANZULLO. Well I had hoped that we would have it today. I mean we are concerned about the prosecution of the Navy SEALs. A lot of people contacted us, they don't think the military is standing behind the young men and women in uniform, they don't think that because some terrorist got punched out that they should be subjected to a court-martial that is taking place in this country. I would like the assurance of both of you that if there is no clarity on this that we will have clarity, especially in light of the fact that the Secretary of State is expressing regret that we are not a party to the Rome agreement. Ambassador, both of you, are you on record as saying that you are absolutely opposed under any circumstances to men and women in uniform being arrested anywhere in the world and tried before the ICC court as a result of their actions in either Iraq or Afghanistan?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, yes. And we will get back with you for the record on the very specifics of what you are talking about.

Mr. MANZULLO. And, General, your answer would be yes also?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Same position, Congressman.

Mr. MANZULLO. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Klein, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KLEIN. Thank you very much, gentlemen. Thank you for being with us today and thank you for your service to our country, difficult challenges and we appreciate you taking these challenges on. General McChrystal, this week when you testified before the Armed Services Committee, you explained that the Taliban may react to the arrival of reinforcements with a shift of asymmetrical tactics, suicide bombers, increased use of improvised explosive devices, strategies other than traditional large scale operations. Can you share with us what are we doing to prepare our troops who are already there to confront these types of asymmetrical threats and what are we doing to get the Afghan military to prevent these as well?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, on the direct tactical end we are doing extensive training on combating improvised explosive devices. We are using a number of technical means from engineer equipment to intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, drones and what not looking, we are using human intelligence as well. So we are doing the tactical things to try to combat the problem as it already arises. I think more widely the real way to get rid of things like IEDs is to secure an area.

When you secure an area it is like reducing crime in a neighborhood, rather than trying to stop each crime you can increase overall security, and so what that does is the population becomes intolerant of IEDs because they suffer the most casualties from IEDs, civilians do. So we are working in that way to improve. Our partnership with the Afghans is the same; we are trying to provide them equipment and training as well so they have the same expertise. Again, suicide bombers, it is mostly intelligence, sir.

Mr. KLEIN. Okay, and as a follow up, I think that one of the discussion points that many people are raising about the whole effort and the tactic and strategy is whether there is a different way to do this, which would be to continue with success to train the Afghan military, we know the police continues to be more complicated and a lot more effort, but continue to build the quantities of players there, and then use our military in a tactical way, special force tactical way to go after al-Qaeda where they are in those areas.

And of course this lends itself to the question of these organizations do not respect national boundaries, we understand that and the discussion has been Pakistan Afghanistan, but also they can also be more nimble and they can pick up from one area and go to another area, Yemen, Somalia, other weak states if you will. What is to stop them and what are we doing tactically within the territory that we are talking about here to prevent them from going to other areas and how do you assess those threats of those other

areas as being hospitable if we have success in eliminating them from Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, terrorists and insurgents do best in under governed or ungoverned areas. They thrive on that and they don't survive in areas that have effective rule of law and governance. So what we are trying to do inside Afghanistan is create first areas of security into which we can fill that vacuum with effective governance development hope for the Afghan people so that it becomes more durable. When you talk about outside Afghanistan, the same thing applies.

We see terrorists moving to places like Somalia, Yemen, where there is less effective governance. I think our best way forward is to partner with those nations to try to increase governance. We still need to complement that as we do in Afghanistan with precision strikes. So you can't allow leaders or sanctuaries to emerge, so you have got to keep them under pressure as you do these other things. So the thing about counterinsurgency or counterterrorism, because there are a lot of similarities, is there is no single answer. It is security, governance, development, precision strike force.

Mr. KLEIN. And I agree with that. I think that those people who are questioning in our communities back home about the effectiveness of the strategy in Afghanistan, also recognizing the threat of the Taliban's influence and the nuclear issue which is extremely important and is obviously part of the whole strategy here, is this question about, you don't necessarily need a whole nation state for al-Qaeda to operate in. I mean this notion of, it is all about Afghanistan or all about Iraq, you know, they need territory but it doesn't have to be large, it could be square miles, to train and to do some of the things, and they can very easily move to another place even if we were 100 percent successful in Afghanistan. So how do we respond to that notion, other than the nuclear issue, which is important, how do we respond to that notion of them picking up and going to other places and stopping them from doing that?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Sir, the best way is very extensive intelligence sharing with all our partners and then staying after them. It is like following a criminal gang around.

Mr. KLEIN. Ambassador, do you have any other thought on that?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. No, I share General McChrystal's assessment on that. It is a comprehensive diplomatic intelligence and military approach that is needed to defeat this network.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Smith, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you both for your extraordinary leadership and for your extraordinary service. Let me just ask a few questions. Number one, the Iraq surge of 2007 deployed, as we know, 20,000 combat troops, extended the tour of 4,000 Marines already in Iraq, and constituted intervention to help the Iraqis clear and secure neighborhoods, to help them protect the local population, and to help ensure that Iraqi forces left behind were capable of providing security.

Notwithstanding Senator Reid's infamous statement that the war is lost and that the surge is not accomplishing anything, stated back in April of '07, the surge did create space for a political solu-

tion and reconciliation. My question would be, did the success of the Iraqi surge inspire the Afghan surge? What lessons learned from that surge, pro and con, were incorporated into the new beefed up troop deployment?

Secondly, I agree that we need an exit strategy, but shouldn't it have been kept secret? Why announce it to the Taliban so they can craft and employ strategies, especially after redeployment begins some 18 months from now? And did either of you recommend that it be kept secret or go public? Third, what is Iran's role in Afghanistan today, including EFPs? Is it increasing, diminishing, or staying the same, and what are we doing about it? And fourth, is it true that the primary source of funding for the Taliban is no longer the opium trade but foreign donations from the Persian Gulf countries and others? What is our counter-threat finance strategy for Afghanistan?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, I will start on those, starting with the last first. We think that the funding for the Taliban is probably about evenly split between external donations, narco related raising, and then money that they can raise from kidnapping and other things inside both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Neither the loss of one of those three would stop them from operating, they don't cost a lot and we think they could make out. But we do have an extensive counter-finance task force that focuses on this and tries to reduce that. So I think we are focused pretty hard on it.

Sir, back to the first one on the surge, Iraq is very different from Afghanistan, but it is clear that we were informed by the experience in Iraq, and I was having spent so much time there, into the situation in Afghanistan. What I learned in Iraq that I think is applicable is that you must have an approach that is both counterinsurgency and includes counterterrorist capacity in it, and then of course the counterinsurgency has to be holistic. The governance and development parts, Ambassador Eikenberry's team has got to be shoulder to shoulder with us as we go forward, and I think we are pulling all of that together here. We were late doing it in Iraq, I think that we are doing that now here, and I think it postures us well.

And just last point, on the time line on July 2011, the key point for me is the President and the Secretary's very public pronouncement of long term strategic partnership for Afghanistan. I think that changes everything, I think that gives the Afghans and the insurgents, the Afghans hope and the insurgents a lack of hope because there is not going to be daylight in the long term. And I would turn it over to Karl.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Two quick points, thanks, Congressman. First of all on the threat financing, we have a very integrated, robust effort both within Afghanistan and outside of Afghanistan to look at the challenge of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and beyond, which is an integrated effort, which includes our intelligence agencies, Department of Treasury, our military diplomatic efforts. I also want to highlight that within Afghanistan itself our Department of Treasury agents on the ground are actually building within the Afghan Ministry of Finance and within their central bank their own independent threat finance capability, we are men-

toring with them and they are starting to get some impressive results.

Secondly, with regard to the emphasis that you placed on the date, the July 2011, the transition date, I am absolutely aligned with General McChrystal in how we look at this. Afghanistan, they have a lot of insecurity based upon their history, their people are insecure people based upon their history, based upon other nations withdrawing their support from them over time, they live in a very uncertain neighborhood. So they have an ambivalence about the long term presence of the United States, they want us here in Afghanistan because of that insecurity, but increasingly they want to stand up and take charge of their own security.

That was reflected in President Karzai's inauguration speech where his own aspirations over the next 5 years for Afghanistan to stand up and be in charge of its own security with their army and police. So that 2011, I agree with General McChrystal, it is a very good forcing function kind of date to get the Afghans moving forward, and President Karzai has shown his support for that date publicly.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Miller.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have now set ambitious goals for training and equipping Afghan army and police forces, but the Karzai government by anyone's estimation remains a very weak government. You said earlier much of Afghanistan is ungoverned still. Having a weak government and a strong military frequently leads to unhappy results in many parts of the world. We have also had at best mixed success in trying to build a military as a unifying national institution in nations that don't have a strong national identity.

We tried to do that in Iraq, and it appeared that we effectively armed and equipped every side in the sectarian civil war. The cell phone video of the execution of Sadam Hussein and the taunting by the Shi'a military but obviously also members of the Shi'a militia that was more loyal to Muqtada al-Sadr, did us great damage. It created the impression that that was a sectarian revenge killing, not the execution of justice in a society with a legitimate rule of law. What is the desertion rate now, where are those folks going, how are we going to make sure that the military we build is not going to dominate the government, and how are we making sure that we are not training and equipping the forces that will be fighting for warlords in a short time?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I think that it is important that I start with the fact that one of the things Afghans fear most is militias and warlords. There will be security forces that form in Afghanistan whether we form them or not. They will form in their own defense, and I think that it is important we form a national army and national police capacity, a recognized legitimate defense security apparatus, or the vacuum will be filled by exactly what the Afghans fear, which is a return to strong militias that in many cases are ethnically based and rose with the departure of the Soviets.

I think that there is an absolute national identity in Afghanistan. They don't expect the same things from their central government that many Western nations do, they expect less. But they do

have an absolute sense of being Afghans before they are any other ethnic or local identity. They take huge pride in the Afghan national army even though it is still a developing entity, they would like to be secured.

And when I talk to Afghan elders, they thank us for being there and then they always say, we would like to be secured by the Afghan national army, we are proud of them, but we will welcome you just until they are strong enough to do it. So I think that rather than being a threat to the Government of Afghanistan, I think it is a major source of credibility as they go forward. Now clearly it has to stay under civilian control, and I have seen no indications that that is not likely to be the situation. I would ask Ambassador Eikenberry to jump in.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Thanks, Congressman. My views are the same as General McChrystal on this. The Afghan national army was established on first principles of being all ethnic and all national, and indeed it is. It is a symbol of pride for the Afghan people, it is a sign of hope that this country after 30 years of warfare and fighting can come together, the Afghan national army is a manifestation of that. Secondly, the principles upon which the Afghan national army were established were good principles inspired by us, and that was that this military would be under civilian control, it would respect the rule of law, respect the people. I believe very much that those principles are still in place.

Mr. MILLER. What is the desertion rate? I have heard it is 25 percent. What is the desertion rate?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, I will get you that for the record, it is not that high. One of the things about desertion is, many of the young Afghans who enlist in the army go home because there is not yet a good leave policy established. There is also we are still working through issues of how they are paid, electronic pay is clearly the wave of the future, but in many cases they go home to take pay or to see family, great sense of family there. So it is something, and a significant percentage come back. So it is a significant problem, I don't want you to believe that it is not, but it is something that is less clear than it might be in another army.

Mr. MILLER. I will take the cue from my colleagues and yield back to curry favor with the chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. I thank the gentleman. We have had a little misunderstanding. My intention always was that every member gets to ask questions alternating between Democrat and Republican. We are now at the point, treating these two hearings as one, where every member of the Republican Conference on the committee who is here has had a chance to ask a question, a number of Democrats have not yet had to. It was my intention to proceed so that everyone gets to have time before we go back to alternating, but we did not make that clear with the minority.

So the compromise I would propose is we alternate but those who have asked a question get 1 minute for a statement and then we go back to the others. In the future it would be the intent that these rights are individual more than group and that every member should get a chance to question before we go back to the alternating. And at this point I will recognize the ranking member for 1 minute.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to yield my minute, and he can add his own minute, to Mr. Burton of Indiana. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The gentleman is recognized for 2 minutes.

Mr. BURTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There was a question asked a while ago about the international court, and both of the witnesses said that they would get back to us on that. There is a story I want to talk about that they wrote a book about. Have you heard of Petty Officer Marcus Luttrell, have you heard of him? He was on a mission, and they were supposed to kill an al-Qaeda leader, and they went up there and they ran into two people and a boy. And they couldn't decide whether they should kill them or not because they were afraid they would alert the Taliban to their mission and that they would all be killed.

Well they decided after an argument, Luttrell said, "Okay, we will let them go because we trust them, they won't say anything." Fifteen minutes later 200 of the Taliban came across, and al-Qaeda I guess, came across, killed him, killed his partners, and left him for dead. Sixteen Navy SEALs, other Navy SEALs, came in a helicopter; they shot them down when they came to rescue them, and killed all 16.

Now we have got these three Navy SEALs that are on trial right now. How do you say to these troops who were sent on a mission out there to kill an al-Qaeda leader what they should do? Should they have killed those three people? Should they have shot them right on the spot so they wouldn't alert the enemy that they were coming over the hill? And if they had, would they have gone to the international court? Would they have been court-martialed by the United States?

And here we are court-martialing three guys who in Operation Amber attacked one of the leaders and arrested him, turned him over to the Iraqi military, they turned him back over, they said he smacked him in the mouth and they hit him in the stomach and you are court-martialing, it makes no sense. And you are the General in charge and you are the Ambassador over there, and I talked to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs the other day, I just do not understand why somebody doesn't say, this is bologna.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentlelady from California, Ambassador Watson, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATSON. I want to thank our two witnesses for the service to our country and the image that you serve to fill abroad. I want to thank you for your experience and wish you well. Now my question goes to the Afghans. In the 8 years that we have been involved and more, what is it that is lacking in their government and their experience and their commitment to their own where they could not train their people to stand up and defend their own country? Let me start with the Ambassador first.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Well, Congressman, first there has been as we said extraordinary progress that has been made.

Ms. WATSON. Hold. How many years has it been and how many years will it take to train them? You see, I am looking ahead too, that is why I ask this question, and I am looking at our financial commitment to be there at a time of growing deficit, you know, how

long do we have to commit for them to bring their defense force up where they can protect their own country?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Well, Congressman, let me turn to General McChrystal for the specifics, but the President's strategy is very clear in that regard.

Ms. WATSON. No, I want you to tell me from your experience what is it with the Afghans where they don't seem to be able to succeed on their own.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congresswoman, they are succeeding, they have had great success.

Ms. WATSON. Then why do we have to have additional forces?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Well the context over the last 8 years, Congresswoman, is this mission over the last 8 years until recently has never received the adequate resources that have been needed.

Ms. WATSON. I am not talking about our resources, I am talking about their own.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congresswoman, starting where they were in 2001 and 2002, we are talking about a country that had been at war for 30 years, two generations of Afghans without education, we are talking about——

Ms. WATSON. Okay, let me stop you there because I am watching my time. General McChrystal, you have asked for additional forces to go in. We are giving a great deal, the life of our military, our finances, to a country that operates based on war, and they can't seem to bring their people to a point where they can defend their own nation. We are shedding blood, limbs, and building a tremendous deficit that will probably never be closed in my lifetime. What is the element that is missing among their own people?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, I agree with Ambassador Eikenberry, this was a society literally torn apart for 30 years, the tribal parts of society, the governance. And they die at a higher rate than coalition forces now.

Ms. WATSON. I would hope. You know, why do we have to be the international police? And that is what I don't get. With Iraq, and now with Afghanistan, maybe Pakistan, maybe Iran. But there is something in their psyche, and what I think is happening is that we are fighting an ideology rather than at the end of a gun kind of thing. And I don't know, if we knock out every Taliban village and kill them all, if that ideology doesn't continue among the Taliban and spread in the area. I don't know how we identify them as they go over their boundary lines into other areas. Are we having to maintain a force there in perpetuity, General?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I don't believe we will. I do think we need to have a strategic partnership to reassure the Afghan people, but they want to defend themselves. What they want is time and space and opportunity to build their nation.

Ms. WATSON. Well, and I am going to give you back my time, Mr. Chairman, I don't see any end to it. If we are going to put our people on the front line and put the resources behind, why would they put up, you know? I just think there is a lack somewhere in their ideology that, you know, we need you to help us defend ourselves. And so I would rather invest the money elsewhere than there. I yield back.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Rohrabacher, is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you. And, Mr. Chairman, let me just note for the record that I am very disturbed with a policy that has ended up with giving me 1 minute to express my opinions and to ask questions at this very important hearing considering my background on Afghanistan. So I am sorry, I apologize to the two witnesses, I am going to say some things and I just have to say it quickly. Number one, 30,000 troops, more troops in Afghanistan means $30 billion more a year.

My experience in Afghanistan tells me for a small portion of that we could buy the allegiance, we could earn the good will through payments to tribal leaders and village leaders throughout that country without putting anybody at risk. Number one, I would like your reaction to that. Number two, General, your statements about Afghans fearing their militias is disturbing to me, dramatically disturbing. Militias there are nothing more than all the male children in their villages.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank the chairman, and want to welcome both the Ambassador and the General to this committee, and indicate that at least speaking for this Democrat, I am generally supportive of the policy that is emerging from the White House. And after your deliberations, having been to Afghanistan, I believe that there are large swaths of the country that are not sufficiently secure and that the introduction of additional troops actually could make a dispositive difference. I don't believe this is like Vietnam, and I think our new President deserves the benefit of the doubt at least at this time in history.

Having said that, the policy deliberations were a little unusual. General McChrystal, a paper you wrote got leaked in advance of the President convening formal review and deliberations. And, Ambassador Eikenberry, your memo, or in the old days we would have called it telegram, also got leaked. And they represented seemingly very different points of view. And I just wonder if each of you might comment on what you think about, you know, developing foreign policy by, you know, leaking and counter-leaking, and what you think, you know, we should learn from that experience.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Thanks, Congressman, I will go first. The review that the President led was an extraordinary review. It was a very open, it was a deliberative process, everyone that participated was encouraged freely to provide their analysis and their best advice. We did that in a variety of ways, through video teleconferences, face to face meetings, and in writing. The leaks that occurred are absolutely regrettable.

Now, against that, my own views, during this process I want to emphasize, Congressman, at no time did I ever oppose additional troops being sent to Afghanistan, indeed I fully shared and share General McChrystal's security assessment. As he had written and is his analysis, security in parts of the country were deteriorating, security situation is serious today in many parts of the country. Against that, the only way then to move forward with regard to

troops is additional troops are needed to deal with those security issues.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Ambassador, I am going to come back to you on part two here about governance, I take your point. General McChrystal, did you want to respond?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I would, I agree with Ambassador Eikenberry. The leaks made our job harder. The difference between our views is really not very large at all, but selected leaks made it look like they were. We were shoulder to shoulder on this thing throughout, and I absolutely regret the leaks.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Okay, thank you. Let me go back then to I think where you were headed, Mr. Ambassador and General McChrystal, you also talked about, you know, the desire of Afghans is essentially to have some kind of government that functions in a particular way that protects the security. Mr. Ambassador, you expressed some skepticism about the current circumstances being able to meet even that kind of threshold. I want to give you both an opportunity to talk about, because some of the skepticism up here is, we are backing a government that is seen as frankly organized thuggery, it is corrupt, it doesn't deliver services efficiently, and frankly the Taliban unfortunately is an effective alternative. I would like your comments.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. We both share the importance of the need for a legitimate government respected by its people, credible. We have two challenges on the civilian side, the Afghans have two challenges. One is at the national level, the establishment of national level governance. There, Congressman, we do really have a lot to build upon, there are good functioning ministries, they need more capacity. We think our programs that we have moving forward are well focused.

Our greater challenge, though, is at the local level, the areas where General McChrystal's forces and the Afghan national army right now are dealing with these areas of insecurity out in some of the provinces, especially in the east and the south. We are working closely with the Afghan Government and our military to try to develop the right kind of combinations of service delivery and governance that as security is brought to a provincial area or to a district, that shortly behind that government can start to take hold, service delivery can take hold, and you start to have credible governance. I don't want to underestimate though the challenge that we are facing in this second category. Last point, Congressman, President Karzai's inauguration address that he gave several weeks ago, it does show some promise. Of we are waiting for action now.

Mr. CONNOLLY. General, you get 12 seconds.

General MCCHRYSTAL. I agree with Ambassador Eikenberry, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, and I yield back.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Royce, has been recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, General. I want to second my colleague's concern about the treatment of the three Navy SEALs now facing the court-martial for actions taken while apprehending a terrorist who cost the lives of four American security guards. Court-martial

is very serious business, I don't think it had to be this way, and I would like to ask what alternative actions might still be taken in place of a court-martial, informal councils, formal councils, non-punitive letter of reprimand.

Now the point I want to make is that there is ways of dealing with this issue, assuming there is an issue here at all, far short of a court-martial. And second, if acquitted, General, will these SEALs be given the opportunity to be restored to full fitness and duty, will their careers be spared a black mark which has a very harmful effect on morale?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, that incident happened in Iraq, so appropriately I don't have the details of the incident, nor do I have any responsibility and it would be inappropriate for me to talk about that case. I do believe, however, that the chain of command in the process has been extraordinarily good across the Services in providing fair hearings for people.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentlelady from California, Ms. Woolsey, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Terrorists and terrorism thrives in poor economies, in futures where the citizens consider their future hopeless, where there is lack of infrastructure, education, healthcare, roads and sewer systems. And terrorism thrives in areas where the citizens believe that they are being occupied by outside forces. I am concerned about the lack of focus on the civilian surge in this regard, because I think that is the balance to what being an occupier requires.

In his speech at West Point, the President dedicated most of his time to military might, and he just only once mentioned the civilian side of the equation. And so, you know, you both have said and other leaders in the military and throughout the diplomatic corps really agree, that one major way to secure stability is through the use of smart security where we win the hearts and the minds of the civilians, and we are talking about Afghanistan right now of course.

So I ask you, what resources are currently being dedicated, you said a little bit about that, to smart security? And in the years to come, here is the main question, what additional resources do you need? How will the administration promote this smart approach over a military solution? And will a smart approach ever be able to win over military? Start with you, Mr. Ambassador.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congresswoman, the President's strategy has been clear that the military effort is a necessary effort, it is not a sufficient effort. Ultimately, the need for good governance to be established in Afghanistan, for economy that allows Afghanistan to have a sustainable country all important. I do believe that the President's strategy and this way we are going about now, the implementation, does address the essential government services that are needed, the essential pieces of the economy. Again, I will just quickly mention agriculture. We see the absolute need for agriculture to help improve security, to help improve the economy, that is where our emphasis is.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Okay, let me just interrupt a minute, because you did say this and I really respected it, but tell us where our civilian

surge will come. Of course we want the Afghani civilians to do all this and we need to help them. How will our civilians help and how many?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congresswoman, the civilian surge has been ongoing, we are soon to triple our presence over the ground in the past year. So the surge is not something that we are ready to launch. We are going to add to our capabilities on the ground. Our areas of emphasis are in the areas focused on what is necessary in the economy, in the areas of agriculture, we are focused in the key areas of government and helping the Afghans develop further rule of law, law enforcement, we are focused in the financial sector helping the Afghans to develop the capability for more revenue collection, critical if it is going to be a sustaining economy, sustaining government.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well let me interrupt 1 more minute because we only get a little bit of time. We know we are sending 30,000 troops. Are we talking about a tripling of the surge from one to three people or from 100 to 300, 1,000 to 3,000? I mean give us some idea of what we are talking about.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congresswoman, at the start of this year, before the President announced his strategy in March, reflecting the under-resourcing of Afghanistan, we had a little over 300 civilians in Afghanistan. At the end of January of next year we will have 1,000 and we are continuing to grow beyond that. It is an impressive gain that we are making, and it is an all-government effort. Department of Treasury is on the ground, the Department of Agriculture, the Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, the Department of State, USAID, this is truly an impressive effort.

Ms. WOOLSEY. General?

General MCCHRYSTAL. The one point I would make, because I agree with Ambassador Eikenberry, when you talk about military it may not look like what you traditionally think. We have got military partnered with his who are out doing agricultural development, helping with governance, enabling the civilian expertise. And so I think it is key that we understand we are really trying to do this with every part of our capacity that we have.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you very much.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

The gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. Fortenberry, is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, gentlemen, for appearing today. Mr. Ambassador, I appreciate your emphasis on agricultural development, the Nebraska National Guard has helped lead some of this and I think that is noteworthy. Before my question, I want you all to succeed, the gravity of the downside to not succeeding is very apparent. With that said, Mr. Ambassador, and this was touched upon a moment ago, your cable to President Obama a month ago was decidedly pessimistic about Afghanistan's governance capacity as well as the potential for success of our military efforts. What changed?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I wouldn't characterize my views ever as decidedly pessimistic concerns express. With the President's decision, we have a refined mission, we have clarity at this point now

with what means we are going to use to move forward, resources appropriately matched against that, and you have got with a proper combination of ends, ways, and means, I am confident now as we move forward, Congressman.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired. The gentlelady from Texas, Ms. Sheila Jackson Lee is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for convening this hearing and the way that you have done it, you have been true to your word and I appreciate your leadership. Let me thank both of these distinguished public servants. I had the chance to greet them and I want to thank them again for their service, and it was good to see both of you in uniform today, Amabassador, you are not. It was good to see you, General, in Iraq, and of course you know that I have visited Afghanistan. Today the President received the Nobel Peace Prize, and I salute him and believe in him that he is a man of peace.

He defined for those esteemed audience members a question of a just war. But let me quickly say to you that I believe that we have a major dilemma, and I would call for as I speak, right now, an immediate beginning of negotiations to end this conflict, and that would be the only way that I could concede the possibility of any troops being added to Afghanistan, and I will tell you why. I would like to submit into the record very quickly, Mr. Chairman, an article by Jonathan Godomi, "Lessons from the Soviet Occupation in Afghanistan to the United States and NATO," I ask unanimous consent.

[The information referred to is not reprinted here but is available in committee records.]

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me indicate what was that came out of that article which is so true, the Afghan Government urgently needed to establish legitimacy, ethnic tensions were underestimated, Afghans were highly intolerant of foreign troop occupation, and a military solution was proven not sufficient. The Vietnam War in 1966 saw 200,000 troops committed to Vietnam, and at the peak of the war, 543,000 with 53,000 of our treasure lost. General, the CIA has indicated that Afghanistan is 4,000 feet up in the air, versus Iraq that is flat. You asked for 40,000 troops, you got 30,000. What is your commitment to protect troops as they travel up into those mountains and to save lives?

General MCCHRYSTAL. My commitment is absolute. Our rules of engagement provide them every responsibility and right to defend themselves, we believe that the equipment we are providing them is as good as we can, and we will continue to do that better, and I will push for every asset we need to protect their well being.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank you for that. I think the terrain is so difficult it brings to mind the Pat Tillman story that opportunities for friendly fire and loss of life are heightened. There is a theory of clear, hold, build, and transfer. President Karzai today said this week with Secretary Gates that it will be 15 years before he can maintain a military with his own resources.

Ambassador, why are we engaged with a country, of which I have great appreciation and want to see helped with political help

and social help and economic help and constitutional help and helping to make sure that they treat their women right and keep their schools open, how are we going to in essence fight against this concept that Afghans do not want foreigners on their soil and have a government that says it will take 15–20 years before they can maintain their own military? That is 15–20 years that the United States will have to be there guarding them. Why can't we go the political and social and economic route, Ambassador?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congresswoman, the Afghans first and foremost, they do want to take control of their own sovereignty. We have to appreciate the baseline that they begin at and have already articulated that the Afghans though they need security right now to help them get the time and space so that they can fully take charge, I think we are on a good path forward as we see our articulation of this July 2011 time line where the Afghans will start to move and take responsibility for security, President Karzai clear in his inauguration speech about his own goals. But we have to be clear, the Afghans beyond that period of time, they are going to need our assistance.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me have a quick intervention please, if you don't mind. This article says that by the time the Soviets realized that only a political solution could end the conflict, they had lost the ability to negotiate. Ambassador, what is the strategy for going in now and getting the parties to sit down and be engaged with Karzai, warlords, Taliban, governors, and this very weak government and the United States and NATO? Where are we now sitting down and beginning the negotiation to hand over the responsibility to the Afghan Government? Are we doing that as we speak?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Well, Congresswoman, we have a very clear way ahead right now with the eventual transfer as Afghans develop national security force capability, yes we do have a clear plan. Politically, President Karzai has made clear again in his inauguration speech, he would like to move forward with reconciliation and reintegration with Taliban leaders, with Taliban fighters, and we are working in support right now of the Government of Afghanistan to help achieve those goals.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. He needs to do that now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

The gentleman from Texas, Mr. McCaul, is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Pakistan has always been in my view the epicenter of this war on terror, it is where al-Qaeda has sought safe haven, Ramzi Yousef, the World Trade Center bomber, his uncle Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. The history with the Pakistani ISI has not been a good one. They tend to side with the extremists, at the same time help us with high valued targets. Has this improved, and what do you plan to do to work better with the Pakistan intelligence service?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, my official responsibility ends at the borders of Afghanistan. We do, however, have a close relationship with the Pakistani military so that we build up a partnership against the problems on both sides of the border. It still has a long way to go. I am absolutely committed, like our intel-

ligence agencies are, to improve in that so that our shared strategic goals are met.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, and what is the influence of Iran in Afghanistan right now?

General MCCHRYSTAL. It is both positive and negative. There are a number of positive things they do economically and culturally. There is always the threat that they may bring illicit or inappropriate influence in, and we watch for that.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, General.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Costa, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, again, good hearing, it is timely. I thank both of you for your service to our country. Mr. Ambassador, a lot has been discussed this morning about metrics and milestones, and on the leger of our milestones and the Afghan, the Karzai government's milestones as we try to achieve these metrics, one of the early I think determinations as to whether or not they are achieving them is in the naming of his cabinet.

Defense Minister Wardak I guess is leaving and another minister is leaving as well I have heard, and whether or not President Karzai is able to turn the page, it seems to me, is going to be evident in these early appointments. When will they be completed and what is your sense of that process? I mean will we be able to determine for example by the end of January when he finishes that process how that milestone has been achieved?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Congressman, President Karzai in his inauguration speech that was attended by Secretary Clinton, he made a commitment in that inauguration speech to the appointment of qualified, responsible individuals in his second administration.

Mr. COSTA. Right, and proof is in the pudding.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. It is. It is interesting, though, Congressman, when he said that he got a spontaneous round of applause from the Afghans in attendance, so it is the Afghans who have high expectations. Well to answer your specific question, we expect his cabinet announcements to be made relatively soon within the next several days before the Parliament goes on its recess, because these nominees would have to be approved by the Parliament.

Mr. COSTA. But we should get a good judgment here very soon as it relates to the cabinet selection.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Yes, and it will be very important.

Mr. COSTA. And then how does that relate then, follow through to the governors, some that have been closely associated we believe with this narco trade?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. We believe, Congressman, that after the initial announcements of cabinet ministers that subsequently there will be changes in the governors. Congressman, if I could though, I would like to emphasize that the cabinet of Afghanistan, President Karzai's cabinet, it has got a lot of very well qualified people in it, the Minister of Defense, Interior, Finance, Commerce, Agriculture, Education, Health, these are world class ministers.

They are challenged because they don't have the human capital right now given the 30 years war at they have underneath, but we are making progress.

Mr. COSTA. Because of my time I want to shift over here. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. General McChrystal, we talk about the army and the police force and the training that is taking place there, and I don't want to get into a discussion of semantics, but I think that part of this whole effort is akin to nation building because you are not going to be able to have a solid military or a police force unless you have got the credibility and you are relatively corrupt free. Since we are now taking over the training especially in the police force, and I have been there several times and I have heard all sorts of anecdotal stories I won't go into those talks about the dismay of our ability to do so, we are taking over the complete training of the police force now, is that correct?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Well NATO Training Mission Afghanistan is part of that, so it is the whole coalition is doing that, sir.

Mr. COSTA. Okay, but are these people with police backgrounds training the police or is this the military training the police, and are we going to end up with a paramilitary police force?

General MCCHRYSTAL. It is a combination, there are policemen that have been hired to do it, there is Jan Cambareet from European partners, and then there is some military as well.

Mr. COSTA. Ambassador, back to you, on the smart power issue, and I have been a big proponent of that and I have talked to the Secretary of State about this, we saw about the investments of the housing that got involved in corruption and $8 million, other anecdotal stories where money has been wasted, the housing hasn't been occupied, it has been substandard. What efforts are we pursuing to correct those kinds of investments and infrastructure, learning from Iraq?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. We have many, let me highlight two. First of all, in terms of how we are contracting, we think that we are designing contracts in a much better way that improve performance and transparency. Secondly, in terms of audit and oversight, we have many means for that. I want to emphasize that we think the most important is exactly with the United States Congress, as you know, you have the special investigator for Afghanistan reconstruction which provides oversight for DOD and State and USAID efforts. We think that it is a very important oversight area.

Mr. COSTA. Quickly, Mr. Ambassador, are you familiar with the Abstar Hospital in Kabul?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Sir, I am not.

Mr. COSTA. Okay, I want to make you aware of that, it is a success story that really we have not participated in but the Americans have made it happen.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Bilirakis, is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, gentlemen, for your extraordinary service to our nation. General McChrystal, in response to Senator McCain's question the other day about the inability to defeat al-Qaeda unless bin Laden is cap-

tured, did you mean that there would be U.S. presence in the theater until bin Laden is captured, and can your plan ever fully succeed if bin Laden is not captured?

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congressman, thanks for the opportunity to expand on that because that was a very short question in a long hearing. I believe that al-Qaeda can be defeated overall, but I believe it is an ideology and he is an iconic leader. So I think to complete the destruction of that organization it does mean he needs to be brought to justice, it will be another of the steps. However, I don't believe that simply getting him ends that organization either, I think it is one step in it.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentlelady from California, Ms. Lee, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for this hearing also. Let me just say I do very clearly remember your saying at the last hearing that those who didn't have the opportunity to speak would be in that order of priority today, so thank you again very much. I want to welcome and thank our witnesses and just say to you that, I have to say as the daughter of a military veteran, 25 years, served in World War II and Korea, I strongly support our troops, I want to thank all of you who are with us today for your sacrifices and your service, and my belief that the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform should always be acknowledged and honored.

Let me just say from the get-go, I think many of you may know that I opposed the war in Afghanistan from day one for many reasons. But now moving ahead, many of our military national security experts agree that the presence of our troop continues to fuel the insurgency in Afghanistan and give residence to al-Qaeda recruiters around the globe. I also happen to believe that, and disagree, respectfully disagree, with this overall prior 8-year strategy and the strategy today.

I was glad to hear you respond, because I was going to ask you about Osama bin Laden and if in fact his capture is part of the strategy and a benchmark in terms of the success or failure of this effort. But let me ask you, how does an increasingly expanded and costly role for United States troops in Afghanistan serve United States national security interests in combating al-Qaeda if it feels anti-American sentiment among populations sympathetic to extremist insurgents in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen, and elsewhere in the world?

Also let me just say that many have said, and you probably disagree but I would like to hear your response to this, to complete this mission will require about 400 to 500,000 troops, possibly 8–10 years, possibly $1 trillion, do you believe that to be the case or not, or why do we hear that so often now? And finally let me just say I am extremely concerned about the strain on our military members and their families in the face of this expanded indefinite commitment in Afghanistan.

The physical, psychological, and logistical strain in the U.S. Armed Forces under the stress of two wars to me seems to be untenable. And so just know that we are going to do everything here

to support our troops and to help them transition back, hopefully soon, to life with their families, but I am very concerned about the stress and strain it has taken. Thank you.

General MCCHRYSTAL. Congresswoman, thanks for the support for the troops and know how much it is appreciated, particularly this time of year. I think to step back, I think in terms of our national interest the eventual destruction of al-Qaeda is critical, and not just for the U.S. but for the world and that region as well. I think the role of Afghanistan first is denial of location for al-Qaeda to return to, which I believe they would. But I also believe that the Taliban have an absolute linkage to al-Qaeda, and for them to resume power even over significant areas of Afghanistan would create instability in the region, opportunities for al-Qaeda but also wider instability that would cause significant problems for the world, it would not be localized at that point.

I believe that it is important that Afghans secure Afghanistan. Your point about the concern about foreigners, there is an almost antibody-like response in many cultures to foreign forces there, and that is understandable. Xenophobia is a natural part of any society, even greater in that area. I think it is therefore important that we work as hard as we can to enable the Afghans to secure themselves, they want to secure themselves, they don't want the Taliban there, and they want us there only long enough and only in large enough numbers to enable them to get there. I wouldn't ask for a single force more than we had to have simply to give time and space to get the Afghan national security forces.

Ms. LEE. Sure, but the anti-American sentiment that is spurred by this in Pakistan and Yemen and Somalia and other parts of the world, I mean you try to nip it in the bud here, it pops up somewhere else.

General MCCHRYSTAL. It is a danger. I would offer that one of the greatest resentments in Afghanistan and Pakistan now is their perception that we deserted them in 1989. When the Russians pulled out we ended our involvement with them, and they believe that we walked away from them. So I think it is a balance, I think we need to give as much help as they need to get on their feet, and then I think we need to help them stand by themselves.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

The gentleman from California has graciously agreed to 1 minute.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Elton is on for 5 minutes.

Chairman BERMAN. He is entitled to 5 minutes——

Mr. GALLEGLY. I have 1 minute, I have like 52 seconds left. I would just like to say, General and Ambassador, thank you for your service, I know you face challenges that are in some people's views very difficult if not more so from Alexander the Great to the Soviet Union, but I appreciate the job you are doing and we want to try to give you all the support that we can here. As a member of the Intelligence Committee I have a little insight about some of the challenges that you have that maybe others don't know. But I would like to take my remaining time and yield to the gentleman from California, Dana Rohrabacher.

Chairman BERMAN. 10 seconds.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that those who did not get a chance to ask questions would have 5 minutes; Mr. Elton Gallegly did not have that chance to ask questions.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Point of parliamentary inquiry.

Chairman BERMAN. State your point.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Is that point that I just made not correct?

Chairman BERMAN. Mr. Gallegly was entitled to 5 minutes; just listen for a second. I was told he sought 1 minute. I am now recognizing the only person left in this committee room who, unlike you, has not had a chance to speak yet, the gentleman from Tennessee, Mr. Tanner.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Points of parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman, as you know, have precedent over other decisions. Point of parliamentary inquiry.

Chairman BERMAN. Yes, sir?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Do you think this has turned out fair?

Chairman BERMAN. I think because of you it hasn't. The gentleman of Tennessee, 5 minutes.

Mr. TANNER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. General Eikenberry, it is awfully good to see you again, and I remember many of our visits to Brussels with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. And, General McChrystal, I appreciate your conversation with me on the phone at the last NATO PA meeting. I see and am very encouraged by the reaction of the NATO parliamentarian members at the last meeting 3 weeks ago in Edinburgh, there is a new spirit and a new cooperation I think for the first time in several years.

It is my impression, to use a football analogy, that they realize and have no problem with the United States being the quarterback of NATO, they would just like to be in the huddle when the play is called. And you and I think the administration have done a good job of including them in the huddle and it makes a tremendous amount of difference, let me say, in the attitude and the atmosphere where all of these parliamentarians from member nations gather. And as a president of that organization for the next year, I want to thank you both for doing that. I would encourage you every way you can to always speak of this as a coalition led by, and not us going it alone.

I was on active duty during the Vietnam days, and I saw that critical mass of public support that is necessary for a prolonged overseas deployment sort of just fritter away, and I have been worried that that would be the case in Europe. And we have of course some people here with our situation in terms of our own economics, but it is important in my judgment to maintain this critical mass of public support for the coalition. And so anything you all could do, including reiterate from time to time that we are not there to westernize anybody, we got off the beam in Iraq. Talking about we are going to create this western style democracy won't work.

We are not there to westernize Afghanistan in my view, and I think that appeals to the European allies and NATO. We are there to enable the Afghani people and their institutions to say no to Taliban and al-Qaeda. And that is why we are there and if they

can do that and we can limit the sphere of influence that this poisonous philosophy has and hopefully limit it to an area where we can monitor and contain it, hopefully it will wither and die like a plant without water. Two questions real quick. On the civilian surge, talking with some of my colleagues and people who have been there, there seems to be a bottleneck on the civilian side with respect to getting projects actually on the ground.

You get people there but they can't get through the maze of okays or whatever, I know we were stolen blind in Iraq sometimes because we didn't have some protections. But if you could really take a close look, both of you, at the coordination of the commanders, the SERP money and how that can be streamlined with the civilian money and coordinated, I would really encourage you to do that because I think that is, both of you have said, is a critical part of our success. The other thing I would like to talk about is the reintegration, I think General Petraeus talked about it yesterday, and I knew him when he was at Fort Campbell in our district.

I think that is down the line maybe a part of it, and I would be encouraged to have your insight into what you think the chances there are. The state of play in Pakistan of course is a large, large part of this particularly if we are going to try to contain on the border in some physical manner these bad guys so that we can monitor and contain their sphere of influence if that is possible. And then finally, is there any thinking about what will happen if we pull back into the more populated areas in terms of our concentration of troops, how do we maintain in the rural areas the security that necessarily brings up? I know I have talked about a lot, and it is really great seeing you, General Eikenberry.

Chairman BERMAN. I think the important questions to be unfortunately answered at some other point because our time is expired, and we have zero time remaining on the clock on the floor.

The gentleman from Arizona for 1 minute.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the chairman, and I am sorry, this is ground that has been ploughed. General Jones less than 2 months ago, less than 2 months ago, gave a pretty rosy assessment of the situation there, stating that there were fewer than 100 al-Qaeda members in Afghanistan at present, that there was a diminished capability of the Taliban to destabilize the government. The question I have is, 18 months from now, will we be in a better position than that? Or maybe you disagree with the assessment in the first place, but General McChrystal, do you have a comment there?

General MCCHRYSTAL. I outlined in my initial assessment my view of the situation, and I think that it has improved slightly since that was published. I think we will be in a much better place 18 months from now, Congressman.

Mr. FLAKE. All right. Ambassador Eikenberry, any comment from you?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I share General McChrystal's assessment there, Congressman.

Mr. FLAKE. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired. Our prayers are with you for your success. Ambassador, yes?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. I wonder, Congressman, if you would give me 1 minute here, just not in response just one point I wanted to make for the record with your permission?

Chairman BERMAN. I think we owe it to you, sure, absolutely. This is not an effort to keep us from voting on the floor though is it?

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. No it is not.

Chairman BERMAN. No, okay.

Ambassador EIKENBERRY. Chairman, a lot has been said over the course of the morning about the great sacrifice of our men and women in uniform and our allies. I also wanted to say for the record just emphasize the great sacrifice that our great civilian team is making on the ground. On the 13th of October we had two civilians, one from USAID, Travis Gardner, 38 years old from Nebraska, and Jim Green from the Department of Agriculture, 55 years old from Oklahoma, they were in a convoy with the United States military in a striker, a unit, their convoy was hit by IEDs down in Spin Boldak.

I always make a point when I learn of that kind of trauma that our civilians are facing, giving them a call. I gave them a call both that night and asked how they were doing. They said they are doing great, and they said that very humbly and with great sincerity, we are just doing what we were sent over here to be doing. And we couldn't be more proud of our civilian force on the ground too.

Chairman BERMAN. Yes, our ranking member.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, gentlemen, and, Mr. Chairman, thank you so much, and some of our members would like to submit some questions to our great panelists.

Chairman BERMAN. We thank you both very much. Our prayers really are with you for the success of these efforts. And with that, the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Hearing Record

FULL COMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE

Committee on Foreign Affairs

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0128

Howard L. Berman (D-CA), Chairman

November 25, 2009

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held in **Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building:**

DATE: Wednesday, December 2, 2009

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

SUBJECT: U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan—Part I

WITNESSES: The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State

The Honorable Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense

Admiral Michael G. Mullen, USN
Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day Wednesday **Date** 12/2/09 **Room** 2172 RHOB

Starting Time 1:35 P.M. **Ending Time** 4:18 P.M.

Recesses - (to)

Presiding Member(s)

Howard L. Berman (CA), Chairman; Robert Wexler (FL)

CHECK ALL OF THE FOLLOWING THAT APPLY:

Open Session ☑
Executive (closed) Session
Televised ☑

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☑
Stenographic Record ☑

TITLE OF HEARING or BILLS FOR MARKUP: *(Include bill number(s) and title(s) of legislation.)*

U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan – Part I

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

See attached

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mike Coffman (CO)

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☑ **No**
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

- Report titled "A Strategy for Success in Afghanistan" by Major Jim Grant, USASF – submitted by Mr. Rohrabacher

ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE MARKUP: *(Attach copies of legislation and amendments.)*

RECORDED VOTES TAKEN (FOR MARKUP): *(Attach final vote tally sheet listing each member.)*

Subject	Yeas	Nays	Present	Not Voting

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED 4:18 P.M.

Doug Campbell

Doug Campbell, Deputy Staff Director

Attendance - HCFA Full Committee Hearing
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan - PART I
Wednesday, December 2, 2009 @ 1:30 p.m. , 2172 RHOB

Howard L. Berman (CA)
Gary Ackerman (NY)
Eni F.H. Faleomavaega (AS)
Donald Payne (NJ)
Brad Sherman (CA)
Robert Wexler (FL)
Eliot L. Engel (NY)
William D. Delahunt (MA)
Gregory W. Meeks (NY)
Diane E. Watson (CA)
Russ Carnahan (MO)
Albio Sires (NJ)
Gerald E. Connolly (VA)
Michael E. McMahon (NY)
Gene Green (TX)
Lynn C. Woolsey (CA)
Sheila Jackson-Lee (TX)
Barbara Lee (CA)
Shelley Berkley (NV)
Joseph Crowley (NY)
Mike Ross (AR)
Brad Miller (NC)
David Scott (GA)
Jim Costa (CA)
Keith Ellison (MN)
Gabrielle Giffords (AZ)
Ron Klein (FL)

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, (FL)
Christopher H. Smith (NJ)
Dan Burton (IN)
Elton Gallegly (CA)
Dana Rohrabacher (CA)
Donald Manzullo (IL)
Edward R. Royce (CA)
Ron Paul (TX)
Jeff Flake (AZ)
Mike Pence (IN)
Joe Wilson (SC)
John Boozman (AR)
Connie Mack (FL)
Jeff Fortenberry (NE)
Michael T. McCaul (TX)
Ted Poe (TX)
Bob Inglis (SC)
Gus Bilirakis (FL)
*** Mike Coffman (CO)

*** = Non - Committee Member

Verbatim, as delivered

December 2, 2009

Chairman Berman's opening remarks at hearing, "U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan"

Last night President Obama spoke eloquently to the nation about his plan of action in Afghanistan. Today we are pleased to welcome three senior officials to testify on the President's proposed strategy: Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen. We greatly appreciate your participation.

As the President stated, it is clear that the United States has vital national security interests at stake in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Determining the best policy to serve those interests is the most difficult foreign policy challenge before this President, before this Congress, and before the American people. It is a situation with no easy answers and no predictable outcomes.

Our goal in the region, as defined by the President, is to "disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to prevent its capacity to threaten America and our allies in the future." Many news reports suggest that there was a healthy debate in the Administration about whether this critical objective could be met by pursuing a targeted counterterrorism strategy as opposed to a more extensive and robust counterinsurgency strategy.

Could the United States succeed in Afghanistan by employing relatively small numbers of Special Operations Forces and high-tech weapons systems to disrupt and defeat al Qaeda and reverse the Taliban's momentum while also accelerating the training of Afghan security forces?

Or does the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan call for a more ambitious strategy -- one that includes military, political, and economic dimensions -- to protect the people of Afghanistan and instill confidence in that country's fragile national government?

If we pursue the latter approach, then, as the President indicated, success will hinge on a substantial deployment of civilian resources.

The President also noted that success in Afghanistan is dependent on what he referred to as "an effective partnership with Pakistan." What more will we expect Pakistan to do that they are not already doing? What more will the U.S. have to do to nurture that important relationship?

And finally, is the full cost of our effort in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, in terms of military and civilian resources, something we can afford and are willing to pay?

The President took the time to consult carefully with his generals, his diplomats, his national security team, and numerous others to form a complete picture of the situation in Afghanistan.

Now begins the deliberative period for Congress and the people we represent. Now is the time for us to evaluate the strategy, to test its coherence and to raise the questions that will examine the assumptions on which it is based. We cannot shirk our responsibility to ask the tough questions; the stakes are simply too high.

I now turn to the Ranking Member, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, for any opening remarks she would like to make, and following that, we will proceed immediately to the testimony of our distinguished witnesses.

Statement for the Record by Congressman John Boozman

House Committee on Foreign Affairs

Hearing on "U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan"
December 2, 2009

First and foremost, I want to thank Chairman Berman and Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen for holding this very important and timely hearing on U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. Last night President Obama announced his decision to deploy an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan to reinforce the 68,000 American soldiers currently serving there. Now that the decision has been made, we must act immediately to get the necessary resources our men and women in uniform need to accomplish the mission President Obama has given them. I will continue to support our troops and the task they are given by commanders on the ground and I am hopeful that President Obama's approach will secure a victory in Afghanistan much like the success of the surge in Iraq.

However, while deploying more troops to fight the war in Afghanistan is vital to defeating the Taliban and Al Qaeda, I am concerned about arbitrary and public timelines. Subjective, public timelines do more harm than good, especially to our men and women on the ground, and there is no sense in unnecessarily revealing specific details about our strategy.

As President Obama said, "This is not a war of choice. This is a war of necessity." We cannot stand by idly while those who attacked us on September 11th conspire to do so again. Through lessons learned in Iraq, we can see that success is also attainable in Afghanistan. I am confident that given the resources to support and the commanders' counterinsurgency strategy, we can achieve a stable Afghanistan that does not provide safe-havens for terrorist groups to plot another attack on U.S. soil.

STATEMENT OF

THE HONORABLE ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

"U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan"

DECEMBER 2, 2009

Mr. Chairman, thank you for calling this critically important hearing. Last night, the President provided a broad outline of his new strategy for Afghanistan. Today, I hope we gain a better understanding of the details of that strategy.

Unfortunately, President Obama inherited the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. And the conflict in Afghanistan, now eight years old, will soon become the longest in American history.

I appreciate the thoughtful, deliberative and inclusive process the President employed in developing his strategy. And I honor the sacrifices of our brave troops serving in Afghanistan. There is no more dedicated, disciplined and experienced military force in the world.

I recognize that the war in Afghanistan is linked to the problems we face in Pakistan. Indeed, I agree with the President when he said in his speech that, "the stakes are even higher within a nuclear-armed Pakistan, because we know that al Qaeda and other extremists seek nuclear weapons, and we have every reason to believe that they would use them."

But I remain a skeptic of the new strategy, at least as it has so far been described. I wonder whether the Taliban in Afghanistan really present a clear and present danger to the United States. I say that because I am unconvinced that if we left Afghanistan, the Taliban would reestablish the same relationship with al-Qaeda of 8 or 10 years ago. Indeed, the Taliban and al-Qaeda appear to have become increasingly distant in recent months with the Taliban focusing more on local grievances than on the global agenda motivating al-Qaeda.

I wonder how important a safe haven is to al-Qaeda's operations in a world with endless opportunities for instant communication. Moreover, if we successfully eliminate al-Qaeda from Afghanistan and Pakistan, can't they simply regroup in other countries – in Somalia, Sudan or the Congo? And if they do so, will the United States feel compelled to invade and occupy countries that offer safe haven? More to the point, with so few al-Qaeda operatives left in Afghanistan, and so many more in Pakistan, don't we need to focus our efforts more on Islamabad than Kabul?

And when it comes to Pakistan, don't we have to convince that country that al-Qaeda and the Taliban pose a greater threat to it than India? While I suspect that all of us

here recognize that to be the case, the disputes between Pakistan and India are so longstanding and so complex that I fear the Pakistanis may never be so persuaded.

I am also concerned that, as Matthew Hoh put it in his resignation letter to the State Department, the bulk of the insurgency in Afghanistan "fights not for the white banner of the Taliban but rather against the presence of foreign soldiers…" And so, an increased foreign military footprint may actually feed the insurgency rather than defeat it.

I am skeptical too about our ability to train Afghans properly and in large enough numbers to provide the security necessary for the requisite political, economic and social change to stabilize the country for the long-term. Afghan literacy levels and bureaucratic skills remain terribly low after three decades of war and misrule. Perhaps Ambassador Eikenberry was right when he was reported to have expressed his concern last month that providing additional U.S. troops now would only increase the Afghan government's dependence on us at a time when they should instead be taking on more responsibility for fighting.

How we will pay for this new strategy – the additional $30 billion per year – and how much will our allies contribute to the effort? While I appreciate what our friends in NATO, Central Asia and East Asia and other parts of the world have done, France has already said it will not contribute more troops, Canada and the Netherlands have decided to withdraw their forces, and the United Nations has moved many of its personnel outside of Afghanistan.

Moreover, even if we are able to establish the level of security that might permit political, economic and social change, is such change actually possible given the level of corruption in the country, the tribal nature of the Afghan society, and the fact that Kabul has never exercised true central authority over the country. Indeed, Afghanistan's history is replete with failures of outside powers attempting to take over or remake the Afghan people, from Alexander the Great and Genghis Khan to the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. As former Kabul CIA station chief Milton Bearden has noted, Afghanistan is the "graveyard of empires."

I honor the service of our military and civilian personnel in Afghanistan. No one could do a better job. And I understand there are no easy answers in Afghanistan, only difficult choices. I only hope the President's new strategy proves to be the right one.

U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan
HFAC Full Committee Hearing
Opening Statement
December 2, 2009

Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis

Six weeks ago I asked Chairman Berman in a committee hearing where our top policymakers were while we discussed Afghanistan. I am glad we finally have you here. I was in Afghanistan this past August and had the honor of meeting with General McChrystal. He shared with me important information about our progress in fighting the Taliban and Al Qaeda - information that would benefit this committee and the American people. He has also provided a clear, blunt report that articulated an unequivocal course of action.

I commend President Obama for recognizing the seriousness of the situation in Afghanistan and heeding General McChrystal's call for additional troops. Providing our military with additional troops and resources is critical to our long-term national security and will help achieve the goal of denying the Taliban and Al-Qaeda a staging ground for future attacks. My hope is that the extra forces will be utilized in a manner consistent with the strategy outlined by General McChrystal earlier this year. In addition, it is imperative that the Afghan people have confidence in both their new government and American resolve to stabilize the region.

While we must set clear benchmarks for the Afghan government to speed up the training of their own forces, we absolutely should not commit ourselves to artificial time lines which have our brave men and women departing Afghanistan independent of the realities on the ground. Telegraphing when our forces will leave the region emboldens our enemies and compromises the diplomatic and military progress which has been made.

I look forward to hearing from our distinguished panel of witnesses and learning their thoughts on the timeline, troop increase, and diplomacy efforts in this war.

I yield back my time.

Statement
Congresswoman Diane E. Watson
Full Committee: Foreign Affairs
Wednesday, December 2, 2009
1:30 p.m.

"U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan"

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this timely hearing about U.S. involvement in Afghanistan. President Obama spoke last night about the direction his administration plans to take in Afghanistan, including economic assistance and greater ties with Pakistan. It also includes sending additional troops, a course which I have yet to be convinced is justified.

While I share and support the President's overriding concern for the security of our homeland, I have grave concerns about our ability to secure Afghanistan from the Taliban through confrontation or combat, in any time frame. Nor do I consider a diversion of funds from America's critical domestic needs to combat troops in Afghanistan an affordable or acceptable option. It is time that we focus our attention on home.

If we must continue our presence in Afghanistan, then there needs to be a clear end game that is carried out swiftly and with purpose. I do support training the Afghan military and providing tools necessary to help the Afghans build their own nation. I sincerely hope the President's plan will truly be able to infuse strength into the Afghani people and allow Americans to return home.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the remainder of my time.

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)

HCFA Full Committee Hearing: U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan
Tuesday, December 2, 2009
1:30pm

The United States invaded Afghanistan for a legitimate national security interest which still exists—to overthrow the Taliban, a group which harbored the terrorists who perpetrated the 9/11 attacks. A sudden withdrawal from Afghanistan with no plan for minimal stability would have a catastrophic affect on the security of Central and South Asia, including nuclear-armed Pakistan. With last night's announcement for a new strategy in Afghanistan, President Obama recast the spotlight on a war that was neglected for several years. The President was clear that the ultimate goal is to stabilize Afghanistan and train Afghan forces so the United States and its allies can safely transfer security authority to Afghan forces.

The President's plan to increase troop levels to over 100,000 by the end of May is designed to definitively weaken Taliban insurgents and provide a suitable environment to strengthen Afghan security forces. The President emphasized that the increase of 30,000 troops is designed to stabilize Afghanistan and properly train the Afghan National Army. The ultimate goal is to prevent the Taliban's return to power and prepare Afghanistan for a transfer of security authority commencing in the summer of 2011. Such a deadline shows Afghanistan and Pakistan that the United States is serious about achieving progress in a reasonable time frame.

It is neither financially nor militarily feasible to expect that the international presence in Afghanistan is an open-ended commitment. Though patience for the war is understandably wearing thin among Americans and our allies, the stability of Afghanistan is not an indifferent thing. The

invasion of Afghanistan was a direct result of the most devastating terrorist attack in U.S. history. Al Qaeda—the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks—trained in Afghanistan and planned the 9/11 attacks from Afghan soil. The Taliban was a repressive government that provided safe haven to al Qaeda. Allowing the Taliban to return to power would be catastrophic for U.S. interests and would have a cascading and destabilizing impact in that corner of the world, and by extension, many other parts of the world.

The President's new strategy allows the United States and its allies to fully focus on stabilizing Afghanistan. In the past, a diversion of resources from Afghanistan into Iraq allowed Taliban insurgents to gain momentum within Afghanistan. The insurgents were able to regroup, reequip, and retrain, while the American focus was on Baghdad. There is an opportunity to stabilize Afghanistan and stop the momentum of the Taliban. If the United States and its allies can accomplish this goal, the peace and stability will benefit multiple nations.

Statement by Rep. John Tanner at House Foreign Affairs Hearing on U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan
December 2, 2009

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to submit my statement in support of the President's strategy in Afghanistan.

The next years will be significantly important for the NATO alliance and the global fight against violent extremism. I fully stand behind the President in committing more troops to Afghanistan. It is crucial to prevent the reemergence of safe havens that provided training grounds for the horrific attacks on September 11th, 2001.

The increase in troop levels in Afghanistan is necessary not only to prevent sanctuary for al Qaeda in Afghanistan, but to buttress neighboring Pakistan in its efforts to root out groups committing cross-border and domestic attacks to destabilize the Afghanistan and Pakistan region.

The surge in Afghanistan will likely utilize two brigade combat teams out of Fort Campbell, a portion of which falls within the 8th District of Tennessee.

Therefore, I have a vested interest to ensure that our troops are adequately equipped and have a clear objective towards the goal to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan. For the first time in eight years, the President on Tuesday announced a clear path forward in our fight in Afghanistan.

Our increased presence will allow the people of Afghanistan to more quickly assume the duties of denying Taliban, and by extension al Qaeda, safe havens within their country.

Through my role as a Representative, I will work with the Administration to make certain that our troops are properly equipped for this very important mission. Similarly, through my role as President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, I will work with the Administration to encourage our fellow NATO members and close allies to contribute troops, trainers, and aid to this region.

Statement of Congressman Gene Green
House Foreign Affairs Committee
"U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan"
December 2, 2009

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing, and I would like to welcome our distinguished witnesses, Secretary of State Clinton, Secretary of Defense Gates, and Admiral Mullen. It is an honor to have all three of you here today and thank you for your service to our country.

The Commander in Chief has made the decision to send more troops into Afghanistan, and I believe it is our responsibility to provide our troops with the support they need in order to succeed in this mission. The role of the additional troops — who will be supplemented by troops supplied by our allies — will be to weaken the Taliban in order to allow Afghanistan's military and police to finish them off. The new troops will also be responsible for training Afghan military and police. Like several of my colleagues, I have been to Afghanistan and seen the support our troops need from the Congress for their mission. They will need even more support with this increased mission.

The 451st Civil Affairs Battalion U.S. Army Reserve is located in our district. When I visited them in Afghanistan, they were spread out with just 3 or 4 members attached to combat and patrol units in forward operating bases across the country, primarily rebuilding schools, hospitals, roads, and other infrastructure. They have all returned from theatre, but we should be sure to provide our civil affairs officers combat troops for protection as well. Through this authorizing committee, we should also provide the necessary resources our aid personnel need to successfully complete their mission as well.

Last, but not least, I want to thank the brave men and women on whose shoulders this mission rests. We owe each of you and thank you for your service to our country. Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing today and our distinguished witnesses for being here; I look forward to your testimony.

CONGRESSWOMAN JACKSON LEE, OF TEXAS
Committee on Foreign Affairs

Full Committee Hearing on: "U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan"

December 2, 2009

STATEMENT

Foremost, I would like to extend my gratitude to the Chairman for hosting this important Committee hearing today. I would also like to thank our distinguished witnesses:

- Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton;
- Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates;
- Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen;

I thank you for bringing your advice and expertise today as we review the Administration's new policy with regards to Afghanistan.

Since the beginning of U.S. operations in Afghanistan, the gravity of our mission has not diminished. When our nation turned its attention away from Afghanistan, we lost precious ground. Today, we face difficult realities on the ground. The Taliban attacks our forces whenever and wherever they can. Agents of the Taliban seek to turn the people of Afghanistan against us as we attempt to provide them with help in every way we can. This situation is unsustainable.

The effort in Afghanistan is vitally important, but it should not be interminable. President Obama's inclusion of a timetable for ending the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan demonstrates that his strategy is tempered with a pragmatic, realistic perspective on the situation. Afghanistan's history has earned it the nickname, "The Graveyard of Empires," and I believe that we should not take this grim history lightly. By including a timetable for our operations in Afghanistan, we focus our mission and place it in a long-term context.

Although I do not agree that sending additional troops to Afghanistan is the best and most effective strategy to provide for the stability of Afghanistan, I respect and admire the President's thorough deliberation and thoughtful articulation of his decision. I look forward to working with my peers in Congress to define a response that must include a heightened commitment that first fixes the government of Afghanistan.

I am concerned about the cost of sending additional troops, as well as the effect that a larger presence in Afghanistan will have on troop morale. The White House estimates that it will cost $1 million per year for each additional soldier deployed, and I

believe that $30 billion would be better spent on developing new jobs, and fixing our broken healthcare system.

Many leaders in our armed forces, including Secretary Gates, have said that it is optimal for troops to have two years between overseas deployments; yet, today, our troops have only a year at home between deployments. Expanding the number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan by 30,000 will negatively impact troop morale and will bring us further away from the conditions necessary to maintain a strong, all-volunteer military.

I am also concerned that the United States is shouldering too much of the burden in Afghanistan. Although the terror attacks on American soil prompted NATO to respond with collective military action, no nation is immune from the threat of terrorism. Although the troops and resources provided by our allies have been invaluable to date, especially in regarding development for the people of Afghanistan, questions must be raised about how long other nations will remain involved in Afghanistan. France and Germany, for example have already questioned whether or not to send additional troops. NATO resources must continue to focus on improving the livelihoods of the Afghan people, but if the support of these governments waiver, American troops and Afghan citizens will suffer the consequences.

A stable Afghanistan is in the best interest of the international community and I was pleased to see President Obama's outreach to our allies for additional troops. Currently, 41 NATO and other allied countries contribute nearly 36,000 troops. That number is expected to increase by nearly 6,000 with at least 5,000 additional troops coming from NATO member countries. Multilateralism is vital to ensuring that our operations in Afghanistan succeed.

Ensuring that the government operates in a transparent, accountable, and ultimately honest manner is vital to our efforts in Afghanistan. The troubling reports about the elections that were held on August 20, 2009 were the first in a series of very worrisome developments. The electoral process is at the heart of democracy and the disdain for that process that was displayed in the Afghanistan elections gives me great pause. The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) recently released his quarterly report which detailed our nation's efforts to work with contractors and the Afghanistan government to prevent fraud and enhance transparency. The task of establishing legitimate governing practices remains formidable. A November 17, 2009 report from Transparency International listed Afghanistan as the second most corrupt country in the world, continuing its second straight year of declining in the corruption index. Such news is disparaging and provides an important dynamic to how we consider our strategy with regards to Afghanistan going forward.

As Co-Chair of the Congressional U.S.-Afghanistan Caucus, I have called for policies that allow the United States to provide benefits to the people of Afghanistan. Our effort must enhance our efforts at building both hard and soft infrastructure in Afghanistan. As I said before this committee on October 15, "Change in Afghanistan is

going to come through schools and roads, through health care and economic opportunity, and through increased trade and exchange."

Although development to improve the lives of the Afghan people is important, defeating al-Qaeda, and the threat they pose to America and our allies is the most important objective of our operations. To that end, I believe that Pakistan, not Afghanistan, is now the key to success and stability in the region. Over the past eight years, Coalition Forces have successfully pushed most of al-Qaeda out of Afghanistan and into Pakistan. This has not only put them outside the mandate of our forces, but has also forced Pakistan to address an enlarged terrorist threat.

Last night, President Obama spoke of the importance of Pakistan when he noted "America will remain a strong supporter of Pakistan's security and prosperity long after the guns have fallen silent, so that the great potential of its people can be unleashed." As the Co-Chair of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, I know, first hand, of the great potential of the Pakistani people, and I strongly believe that the recently approved assistance package to Pakistan will work to this end. U.S. foreign assistance to Pakistan will improve Pakistan's capacity to address terrorist networks within its own borders, but I worry that a troop increase will cause even more refugees and insurgents to cross into Pakistan.

Ultimately, we in Congress must decide what is in the best interest of the American people. At this time, I remain unconvinced that the projected gain from sending 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan is the best use of $30 billion from the perspective of the citizens of America or the citizens of Afghanistan. I hope our witnesses will shed light on how they define success in Afghanistan, as well as how the troop surge will achieve our objectives.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, I yield back the remainder of my time.

U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan
December 2, 2009
Congressman Ron Klein

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen, thank you for holding this important hearing today. I would also like to thank the witnesses for joining us as we discuss how the United States should move forward in Afghanistan. Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen, thank you for being here.

The goal in Afghanistan is to eliminate the threat that Al-Qaeda poses to our national security. We must never forget that we were attacked on September 11th, that we lost both thousands of American lives and our collective national innocence.

According to the State Department 2008 Country Reports on Terrorism, last year Al-Qaeda and associated networks "continued to lose ground, both structurally and in the court of world public opinion, but remained the greatest terrorist threat to the United States and its partners."

Now, the enemy that attacked us in 2001 is re-gaining momentum, and not just in Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda's leadership resides in Pakistan, and Al-Qaeda is building a presence in Somalia and Yemen. Officials have discovered and, in some cases, dismantled Al-Qaeda-affiliated organizational support cells in Spain, Italy, Morocco, Mauritania, Algeria, Tunisia, and Mali. That means that even if we are successful at rooting out the threat of Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, we must be cognizant and pro-active about preventing a terrorist threat from spreading to new and vulnerable places.

Let's be clear: terrorist groups ignore national borders, and they don't need to control a whole country to plan attacks. If the London and Madrid bombings taught us anything, it is that terrorists can plan attacks even from Western, urban areas. Al-Qaeda needs a satellite phone and perhaps enough space for a training camp. Therefore, I would urge our military and diplomatic officials to develop a comprehensive stabilization plan to ensure that Al-Qaeda does not create a sanctuary that could further threaten our national security.

The President made his case last night for a new strategy. This is not a blank check, nor is it an open-ended commitment. And as the President indicated, "this burden is not ours alone to bear." Our partners must include NATO allies as well as those countries with an elevated Al Qaeda presence. All of us face the same enemy. Furthermore, the President's strategy is a direct challenge to the Afghan government, its security forces and the Afghan people to take responsibility for their own country. If they cannot fight this war, we cannot fight it for them.

It is clear that there is a price to pay if we don't increase our troop presence—and there's also a price to pay if we do. Quite literally, we must commit ourselves to a rigorous oversight process of our federal resources that we spend in Afghanistan and around the world. As U.S. troops begin to transfer responsibilities to the Afghan National Security Forces, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that weapons and other equipment do not get into the wrong hands.

Finally, regardless of whether you agree with the President's new strategy in Afghanistan, we all have a responsibility to those Americans who put on the uniform. We must make sure that when they serve in theater and when they come home, we give them every tool they need and every benefit that they have earned.

We have much to consider as we move ahead. I look forward to hearing the testimony of our distinguished witnesses. Only with accurate and complete information can we make a truly informed decision.

Rep. Barbara Lee (CA)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan, PART I
Wednesday, December 2, 2009
Questions for the Record

Questions submitted to the Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State

Timeline/Political Progress

1. In a recent interview prior to his strategy announcement, President Obama stated, "I'm confident that at the end of this process, I'm going to be able to present to the American people in very clear terms what exactly is at stake, what we intend to do, how we're going to succeed, how much it's going to cost, how long it's going to take."

Unfortunately, I still have not heard how much this war will cost by its end, how it will be paid for, and most importantly, a clear and certain timeline for bringing the war to a close.

What will the withdrawal process look like after 18 months? At what pace will combat troops be redeployed?

Response was received from the Department of Defense (see page 155).

2. What specific conditions on the ground need to be met to end our military presence and when do we expect to meet them?

Response was received from the Department of Defense (see page 156).

3 I remain convinced that Afghanistan requires a political solution, not a military one. This will require a concerted diplomatic and regional effort for political reconciliation.

Do you agree with the recently reported U.S. intelligence assessment that only 10% of the insurgency is ideologically motivated?

Response was received from the Department of Defense (see page 156).

4. Is the Administration pursuing a political solution to the Taliban, as a means of isolating Al Qaeda and providing the security space needed to assist the Afghan people?

Question was referred to the Department of Defense. Response was not available at the time of printing.

5. What is the plan to pursue and sustain regional cooperation from Pakistan, India, China, Iran and others?

What specific diplomatic benchmarks or goals is the Administration pursuing with these regional parties and on what timeframe?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

Costs/Funding Priorities

6. Back in February, along with my colleagues Representative Woolsey and Waters, I wrote the President to outline several core principles that should guide a revised U.S. policy in Afghanistan including:

- A timeline for the redeployment of troops and military contractors
- A determination of the benefits and the costs of U.S. involvement, including that such a plan is determined to be affordable and in the national interest

The costs of deploying additional soldiers to Afghanistan are approaching $1 billion per year for every 1,000 troops, and as we work to reform our nation's healthcare and education systems, the tradeoffs are clear.

What is the Administration's estimate of the total long-term cost for our involvement in Afghanistan under the current strategy?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

7. In October the President's National Security Advisor, General Jim Jones cited that there are less than 100 Al Qaeda operatives in Afghanistan with "no bases, no ability to launch attacks on us or our allies…"

Is it the Administration's assessment that the United States faces its greatest threat of a future terrorist attack from Al Qaeda in Afghanistan?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

8. Is it appropriate to dedicate such enormous resources to a military-first strategy in Afghanistan given the strategic relevance of Pakistan and our already disproportionate spending between these two countries at a rate of 30-1?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

9. Counterinsurgency experts have noted that such a strategy should be 80 percent civilian and 20 percent military, yet to-date the United States has dedicated resources at a

rate of roughly 9-1 between military and diplomatic and development efforts. Further, it is estimated that for every dollar spent on development initiatives, roughly 10 percent goes directly to the Afghan people.

Do you believe this is the appropriate funding ratio and can you explain this tremendous disparity in funding priorities given the proposed counterinsurgency strategy?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

Election/Corruption

10. General McChrystal has referred to the Afghan government as "riddled with corruption" and asserted that this has given the people of Afghanistan "little reason to support their government." This assessment has only been reinforced by the widespread fraud which characterized the August elections and Karzai's eventual reelection by default.

What specific and meaningful steps has the Afghan government taken to date, or committed to take, to reduce corruption and improve its effectiveness?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

11. If our response to President Karzai's cronyism is adding 34,000 additional troops without a definite timeline for withdrawal, what reason are we giving his Administration to reform or to build capacity within Afghanistan institutions so that they might serve as a legitimate alternative to the Taliban?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

Sustainability/Effectiveness of Afghan Army and Police

12. General McChrystal has proposed growing the size of the Afghan Army and National Police to as many as 400,000 individuals, yet there are serious challenges to this goal. According to the United Nations, Afghanistan has an adult literacy rate of less than 30% and a GDP somewhere near $12 billion.

According to President Karzai, Afghanistan's security forces will need U.S. support for another 15 to 20 years. Do you agree with this assessment?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

13. Have we set any specific benchmarks that the Karzai government must meet prior to assuming independent control over the forces we will train, equip and finance to handle security responsibilities?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

14. The Afghan Army and National Police Force have faced charges of corruption as well as divisions along ethnic lines that threaten their legitimacy, particularly in the rural South and Southeast.

What percentage of these forces is Pashtun?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

15. How exactly are we ensuring they are not perceived as outsiders within the isolated valleys and tribes within which they will be operating?

Military Occupation

16. I recently met with Matthew Hoh, the first U.S. official known to resign in protest to U.S. policy in Afghanistan, who I know has met with several high-level Administration officials. We discussed the similarities between our current strategy in Afghanistan and the failed campaigns of the British and Russians.

Mr. Hoh also emphasized that the presence of foreign troops is contributing to the resurgence of the Taliban, and providing justification for those to fight against what they view as an occupation.

How does an increasingly expanded and costly role for U.S. troops in Afghanistan serve U.S. national security interests in combating Al Qaeda if it fuels Anti-American sentiment among populations sympathetic to extremist insurgencies in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

Congressional Approval

17. Madam Secretary, while you and the President Obama served in the Senate you sponsored S. 2426, the "Congressional Oversight of Iraq Agreements Act of 2007," which was co-sponsored by then-Senator Obama. The legislation provided that that any agreement between the United States and Iraq, including a status of forces agreement (SOFA) that involves "commitments or risks affecting the nation as a whole" and that is not approved as a treaty by the Senate or through legislation by the Congress does not have the force of law and barred funding for any such agreement between the United States and Iraq if such Senate or congressional approval is not obtained.

Should the Administration contemplate negotiating a status of forces agreement with Afghanistan that would make such commitments or risks affecting the nation as a whole, can we have your assurance that any such agreement will be submitted to Congress for approval?

Response was not available at the time of printing.

Rep. Barbara Lee (CA)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan, PART I
Wednesday, December 2, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from the Honorable Robert M. Gates, Secretary of Defense, U.S. Department of Defense and Admiral Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

1. In a recent interview prior to his strategy announcement, President Obama stated, "I'm confident that at the end of this process, I'm going to be able to present to the American people in very clear terms what exactly is at stake, what we intend to do, how we're going to succeed, how much it's going to cost, how long it's going to take."

Unfortunately, I still have not heard how much this war will cost by its end, how it will be paid for, and most importantly, a clear and certain timeline for bringing the war to a close.

What will the withdrawal process look like after 18 months? At what pace will combat troops be redeployed?

Answer:

Regarding the transition start date, it is imperative to understand that July 2011 is the beginning of a process. This will be a gradual process, and it will depend on the conditions on the ground in each province at the time. But the intent is to start the process. It is not when we rush for the exits; rather, it is when we begin the responsible drawdown of our forces and the responsible hand-off of missions to our Afghan partners.

There is no determination of how long this process will take, and there is no withdrawal date on the right-hand side of July 2011. We are going to be assessing conditions as we go along. Based on those assessments of conditions on the ground, the President will determine the scope and pace of a gradual and responsible drawing down of U.S. combat forces.

2. What specific conditions on the ground need to be met to end our military presence and when do we expect to meet them?

Answer:

The Department of Defense 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 Afghan National Security Forces develop 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 forces to the point where we have a minimal presence. The pace and locations at which this process will take place will depend on several conditions, 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.

3. I remain convinced that Afghanistan requires a political solution, not a military one. This will require a concerted diplomatic and regional effort for political reconciliation.

Do you agree with the recently reported U.S. intelligence assessment that only 10% of the insurgency is ideologically motivated?

Answer:

The motivations of insurgents are varied and changing; as such, identifying exact percentages is difficult. I have no reason to challenge the U.S. intelligence community assessment, however. There is no question that a significant number of insurgents can be reintegrated into Afghan society by addressing their grievances against the Afghan government and improving their livelihoods. The President's counterinsurgency strategy

emphasizes the critical role of political engagement and the reintegration of those former insurgents who renounce their ties to al Qaeda, affiliated transnational terrorist organizations, and violence against the Afghan government or its international partners.

4. Back in February, along with my colleagues Representative Woolsey and Waters, I wrote the President to outline several core principles that should guide a revised U.S. policy in Afghanistan including:

- A timeline for the redeployment of troops and military contractors
- A determination of the benefits and the costs of U.S. involvement, including that such a plan is determined to be affordable and in the national interest

The costs of deploying additional soldiers to Afghanistan are approaching $1 billion per year for every 1,000 troops, and as we work to reform our nation's healthcare and education systems, the tradeoffs are clear.

What is the Administration's estimate of the total long-term cost for our involvement in Afghanistan under the current strategy?

Answer:

The amount we plan to spend will depend on how much longer our forces need to be in Afghanistan, at what levels and how much training and equipment the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) require to assume the lead for security responsibility. Both of these factors are subject to changes in 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 International Security Assistance Force (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.

5. In October the President's National Security Advisor, General Jim Jones cited that there are less than 100 Al Qaeda operatives in Afghanistan with "no bases, no ability to launch attacks on us or our allies…"

Is it the Administration's assessment that the United States faces its greatest threat of a future terrorist attack from Al Qaeda in Afghanistan?

Answer:

As the President first stated in March 2009, 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. The missions cannot be detached from one another as Al Qaeda and the Taliban have developed a symbiotic relationship, both benefitting from the success of the other. Although Al Qaeda is currently under tremendous pressure, and dependent on the Taliban and other extremist groups for sustainment and access to safe haven in the

region, 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.

Additionally, if portions of southern and eastern Afghanistan come under Taliban control, it would provide significant space in which Al Qaeda could reconstitute itself. If allowed to do so, Al Qaeda could expand its operations and capabilities to launch attacks against the United States and its allies worldwide. Al Qaeda is already taking advantage of the situation in the region and playing a very destabilizing and dangerous role, despite being under pressure with limited numbers of Al Qaeda in Afghanistan.

In sum, rolling back the Taliban is a pre-requisite to the ultimate defeat of Al Qaeda. The President's decision provides the best capabilities to decisively change the momentum in Afghanistan, and fundamentally alter the strategic equation in Pakistan and Central Asia.

6. Is it appropriate to dedicate such enormous resources to a military-first strategy in Afghanistan given the strategic relevance of Pakistan and our already disproportionate spending between these two countries at a rate of 30-1?

Answer:

Although the security situations in Afghanistan and Pakistan are interdependent in many respects, U.S. efforts in each country are qualitatively distinct and therefore demand different types of resources. The political, economic, and security conditions in Pakistan and Afghanistan are different. The majority of the current U.S. resource commitment in Afghanistan reflects our pressing need to reverse the momentum of an insurgency that has gained a foothold across broad areas of Afghanistan and key population centers, and the simultaneous need to develop capable Afghan governance and security. The U.S. commitment to Pakistan reflects a long-term, strategic partnership

with an established government. Although the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan provides sanctuary to al Qaeda, which possesses global ambitions, Pakistan is fighting extremists and an insurgency with a more localized presence that facilitates al Qaeda's safe haven. Pakistan is a sovereign country with a modern, professional military and a functioning, though tested, model of governance. As we are able to reduce the commitment of U.S. forces to Afghanistan over time, we expect that the direct resource investment in both countries will balance over time.

7. Counterinsurgency experts have noted that such a strategy should be 80 percent civilian and 20 percent military, yet to-date the United States has dedicated resources at a rate of roughly 9-1 between military and diplomatic and development efforts. Further, it is estimated that for every dollar spent on development initiatives, roughly 10 percent goes directly to the Afghan people.

Do you believe this is the appropriate funding ratio and can you explain this tremendous disparity in funding priorities given the proposed counterinsurgency strategy?

Answer:

Successful counterinsurgency ultimately hinges on separating insurgents from the Afghan people and creating a sense of economic opportunity and governance for the people. Achieving the President's objectives requires an initial military and civilian resource-intensive approach toward protecting the population and reversing the insurgency's momentum. Much of our military's effort and resources directly support economic development and governance improvement efforts as they work with civilian partners. As we begin to transition to an Afghan lead, sustained US civilian commitment will remain significant and grow in proportion to the military as we begin to reduce troop levels.

8. General McChrystal has proposed growing the size of the Afghan Army and National Police to as many as 400,000 individuals, yet there are serious challenges to this goal. According to the United Nations, Afghanistan has an adult literacy rate of less than 30% and a GDP somewhere near $12 billion.

According to President Karzai, Afghanistan's security forces will need U.S. support for another 15 to 20 years. Do you agree with this assessment?

Answer:

Our current plan is to grow the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to 171,600 Afghan National Army (ANA) and 134,000 Afghan National Police (ANP) by October 2011, and to set future goals for the ANSF based on progress made and the requirements of the evolving security situation. There will certainly be a longer-term need for international assistance to sustain this force for some period of time. However, given that we cannot predict the security situation Afghanistan will be facing in future years, it is not possible at this point to determine the long-term costs of sustaining the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

In the current Afghan budget, $455 million will be spent on the ANSF, an increase of $140 million over the prior year. We will continue to work with the Government of Afghanistan to improve its revenue generating capability so it can take on a larger share of the ANSF sustainment costs in the future, but the ANSF will continue to need substantial support from the international community for some years to come. Additionally, we are urging international Allies and partners to contribute to the development of the ANSF and its long-term sustainment. Allies and partners have pledged approximately $300 million to the NATO ANA Trust Fund. To support the development of the police, the international community provided just over $600 million to the United Nations Law and Order Trust Fund since 2002.

9. Have we set any specific benchmarks that the Karzai government must meet prior to assuming independent control over the forces we will train, equip and finance to handle security responsibilities?

Answer:

ISAF is currently working with the Afghan government and international community on the ground in Afghanistan to develop the appropriate concept for the transition to greater Afghan leadership, ownership, and responsibility. This concept will be approved by the Afghan government as well as the North Atlantic Council to ensure full agreement on the conditions, process, roles, and responsibilities of transition. The U.S. Government believes that for transition to be meaningful and sustainable, benchmarks for transition cannot be measured simply by the number of Afghan security forces, their operational capabilities, or even the threat level. Rather, governance and development criteria must also be established to ensure that the appropriate conditions exist to achieve and sustain security in Afghanistan. We will not transition to full Afghan responsibility until the Afghans have the capacity in a particular district or province to manage the security situation on their own, with our allies and us initially providing tactical and eventually strategic oversight. Although conditions and benchmarks will be set within a national framework, they will also be responsive to the particular circumstances of each district and province.

10. The Afghan Army and National Police Force have faced charges of corruption as well as divisions along ethnic lines that threaten their legitimacy, particularly in the rural South and Southeast.

What percentage of these forces is Pashtun?

Answer:

Efforts are made during the recruiting process to achieve an ethnic balance in the Afghan National Security Forces that reflects the composition of Afghan society. According to data from November 2009, the approximate percentage of the Afghan National Army that is Pashtun is as follows: officers, 43%; non-commissioned officers, 46%; soldiers, 39%; actual overall, 41%. The approximate percentage of the Afghan National Police that is Pashtun is as follows: officers, 46%; non-commissioned officers, 29%; and patrolmen, 46%. Thus, the percentage of Afghan National Security Forces that is Pashtun roughly reflects the composition of Afghan society (approximately 40% Pashtun).

11. How exactly are we ensuring they are not perceived as outsiders within the isolated valleys and tribes within which they will be operating?

Answer:

Efforts are made during the recruiting and training process to achieve an ethnic balance in the Afghan National Security Forces that adequately reflects the composition of Afghan society. Overall, both forces work closely with local communities to establish and maintain security. Afghan National Army units are nationally recruited and deployed, but they consistently are the most respected and trusted Afghan government institution within local communities. The Afghan National Police are more locally recruited, often through community councils that have a stake in building local security.

12. I recently met with Matthew Hoh, the first U.S. official known to resign in protest to U.S. policy in Afghanistan, who I know has met with several high-level Administration officials. We discussed the similarities between our current strategy in Afghanistan and the failed campaigns of the British and Russians.

Mr. Hoh also emphasized that the presence of foreign troops is contributing to the resurgence of the Taliban, and providing justification for those to fight against what they view as an occupation.

How does an increasingly expanded and costly role for U.S. troops in Afghanistan serve U.S. national security interests in combating Al Qaeda if it fuels Anti-American sentiment among populations sympathetic to extremist insurgencies in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere?

Answer:

The President's December 1, 2009 speech reaffirmed the March 2009 core goal and U.S. national security interest: to disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat al Qaeda, and to prevent their return to either Afghanistan or Pakistan. This region is the heart of the global violent extremism pursued by al Qaeda, and the region from which we were attacked on 9/11.

While one could draw comparisons to previous occupations of Afghanistan, there are stark differences between these instances and our current operations. While the President determined that it is in our vital national interest to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan, he also stated his resolve to bring our troops home. The additional forces are resources that we need to seize the initiative, while building the Afghan capacity that can allow for a responsible transition of our forces out of Afghanistan.

Our more narrow strategy ensures that we are clearly focused on al Qaeda and the threat it poses to the United States; certainly not on the occupation of Afghanistan. Beginning in July 2011, we intend to start transitioning our combat forces out of

Afghanistan. As Afghans take on responsibility for their security, we will continue to advise and assist Afghanistan's Security Forces, and maintain a security partnership with them so that they can sustain this effort. Afghans are tired of war and long for peace, justice, and economic security. We intend to help them achieve these goals and end this war and the threat of reoccupation by the foreign fighters associated with al Qaeda.

Some Afghans, particularly the Taliban, will continue to perceive us as occupiers. Mr. Hoh correctly stated that some will continue to fight coalition forces solely on the basis of our presence in Afghanistan. However, this is not indicative of the majority of Afghans whose support we must ultimately win. As Afghan Minister of Defense Wardak commented: "Afghans have never seen you as occupiers, even though this has been the major focus of the enemy's propaganda…you enabled us to write a democratic constitution and choose our own government. Unlike the Russians, who destroyed our country, you came to rebuild."

13. I am particularly concerned regarding the strain on military service members and their families in the face of an expanded and indefinite military commitment in Afghanistan. The physical, psychological, and logistical strain on the U.S. Armed Forces under the stress of two wars appears untenable.

- More than 36,000 service members have been wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is estimated to be affecting 35% of soldiers deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan; and
- More than 330 members of the military services have taken their own lives this year alone.

Secretary Gates, how will the additional strain of increased troop deployments in Afghanistan impact your pledge to increase soldier's dwell time between deployments to two years, and the proposal to eliminate the practice of stop-loss orders, by 2011?

Answer:

Our forces are combat experienced and proficient in a wide range of combat and non-combat operations. They are without a doubt the best trained and equipped force in the

world. The All Volunteer Force is healthy, and our Services are achieving or exceeding their recruiting and retention goals.

We have increased end-strength for the Active Component Army, the Marine Corps, and Special Operations forces to help achieve our dwell goal of two or more years at home for every year deployed.

We are carefully managing the dwell time of our Guard and Reserve forces and we have limited their activations and deployments to one year. This is helping us achieve the five years at home for every year mobilized.

We have also balanced additional Afghanistan force requirements against those forces now available from the draw-down in Iraq to maintain both our Active and Reserve dwell goals.

Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (FL)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan, PART I
Wednesday, December 2, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from the Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State,
U.S. Department of State

1. Isn't sending 35,000 troops to Afghanistan a continuation of the "small footprint" strategy that many criticized President Bush and Secretary Rumsfeld for employing?

Response was received from the Department of Defense (see page 170).

2. There has been much said about "nation building," often with a negative connotation, I'm wondering if you could share with us the difference between nation building and the counterinsurgency plan that has been articulated by General McChrystal in his report. Secretary Gates, you noted in your testimony this morning that nation building is furthest from the U.S. should engage in. why?

Response was received from the Department of Defense (see page 171).

3. I'd like to address this question to all of the witnesses...a 34 page document signed by General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry outlines an integrated civilian-military plan which contains eleven counter-insurgency "transformative effects. Does the plan President Obama articulated last night execute these worthy goals such as improving population security and reducing insurgent capability while advancing governance? If not, why have we strayed from this pledge?

Answer:

Yes. The President laid out a comprehensive civilian-military strategy that recognizes that success in Afghanistan cannot be achieved by military means alone. The strategy is designed to strengthen the economy, extend good governance and support an Afghan-led political solution to end violence through reintegration. Showing tangible progress to the Afghan population and the international community is crucial, particularly in areas hard-hit by the insurgency.

The President's civ-mil strategy is already being implemented. There are now hundreds of U.S. civilians working hand in hand with military counterparts in the provinces. Ongoing operations in Helmand and elsewhere fully incorporate critical civilian elements, including close coordination with Afghan leaders to ensure full political engagement with tribal leaders, timely delivery of economic aid and responsive Afghan governance at the earliest possible juncture.

4. I couldn't help but note last night the incongruity of President Obama's speech...his insistence on setting July 2011 as a date for withdrawal coupled with conditions on the ground. Secretary Gates, how are we supposed to reconcile those two statements? What if conditions on the ground are worse in July 2011? You testified this morning that July 2011 was a hard and fast date for withdrawal. How would you justify withdrawing if the conditions on the ground were poor and unstable?

Response was received from the Department of Defenses (see page 173).

5. General Patreaus's Field Manual on counterinsurgency notes that there must be 20 counterinsurgents for every 1,000 residents. With Afghanistan's population of 28 million that would require a total of 550,000 counterinsurgents for success. The 30,000 Obama troop surge announced last night seems woefully inadequate, even counting the Afghan National Forces. How are we going to be able to avoid a "mission failure" with a fraction of the counter-insurgents needed?

Response was received from the Department of Defense (see page 174).

6. There have been reports that the Administration has engaged in back-channel talks with the Afghan Taliban – presumably a network we believe to be less menacing than the Pakistani Taliban. Is it true that we have engaged in negotiations? If so, for what reason and what were the results? Did it include urging the Pakistani military to fight the Haqqani network in North Wurzistan if we eased up on the Afghan Taliban?

Answer:

I am not aware of any back-channel talks or negotiations between the United States and the Afghan Taliban. Some members of the Afghan Taliban or other insurgents have approached our military or civilian personnel in the field to discuss laying down their arms and rejoining Afghan society, but as a matter of policy, we refer them to local Afghan government representatives. At the same time, we have urged the Government of Pakistan to confront the

insurgency inside Pakistan's borders, and our view is we have seen a real change in attitude by the Pakistanis. The Pakistani government is making considerable sacrifices to pursue the terrorists that existentially threaten Pakistan. The Haqqani network to which you refer is part of the insurgency that operates in both Pakistan and Afghanistan, and as such, is a legitimate target for us and our Pakistani and Afghan partners.

7. General McChrystal's report warned about India becoming too involved in Afghanistan, presumably because such involvement antagonizes Pakistan. While there have been several positive developments in Pakistan over the last six months, such as the Pakistan military's push into the Swat Valley to eradicate the Taliban and significant improvement in U.S.-Pakistani joint operations along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. But U.S. policymakers should not ignore India's vital role in the region. India was supporting the Northern Alliance against the Taliban before the attacks of 9/11, and as I understand it, India has been providing a great deal of reconstruction aid. India is also a significant importer of Afghan fruits as Secretary Clinton you noted earlier this morning. Like us, India sees the Taliban as an extremist threat that will undermine Afghanistan and the region. So what is the U.S. doing, and what should we be doing, about India's efforts to play a role in the Afghan stabilization effort?

Answer:

As Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's state visit in November 2009 demonstrated, relations are strong between the U.S. and India. We welcome India's significant and positive role in Afghanistan's reconstruction, and we will continue to consult with India as a critical partner in achieving lasting stability in Afghanistan and the region. India has already committed over $1.3 billion in reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan, and provides health and humanitarian assistance to many Afghans.

As we move forward in Afghanistan, we are undertaking an unprecedented effort with many countries, including India, whose interests are affected by instability in Afghanistan, and we are coordinating international efforts to achieve our goals.

Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (FL)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan, PART I
Wednesday, December 2, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from the Honorable Robert M. Gates, Secretary of Defense, U.S. Department of Defense and Admiral Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

1. Isn't sending 35,000 troops to Afghanistan a continuation of the "small footprint" strategy that many criticized President Bush and Secretary Rumsfeld for employing?

Answer:

The President's decision to deploy an additional 30,000 US troops in early 2010, in addition to the 21,000 US troops approved in 2009 and approximately 7,000 additional Allied troops, does not represent a "small footprint" approach. Rather, it represents a significant expansion of US commitment.

The President's decision is a significant change from previous approaches to Afghanistan where a culture of under-resourcing the requirement has led to the current serious situation. The force commitments announced by the President, augmented by Allied contributions, provides the right amount of resources to give us what General McChrystal and I agree is the best chance of success in the region.

This approach provides the resources needed to achieve our objectives in Afghanistan while avoiding being perceived as occupiers. It provides as much military force as quickly as it can be absorbed and deploys the combat brigades needed to achieve population security and partner with Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) forces in key areas to serve as a bridging force until the ANSF are capable of assuming the lead. This approach also provides additional trainers needed to support the ANSF growth plan and partnering and set the conditions that will

enable us to leave Afghanistan responsibly—in the hands of an Afghan government capable of providing long-term security.

2. There has been much said about "nation building," often with a negative connotation, I'm wondering if you could share with us the difference between nation building and the counterinsurgency plan that has been articulated by General McChrystal in his report. Secretary Gates, you noted in your testimony this morning that nation building is furthest from the U.S. should engage in. why?

Answer:

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 communications;
- Disrupting the Taliban outside secured areas and preventing Al Qaeda from regaining sanctuary in Afghanistan;

- Degrading the Taliban to levels manageable by Afghan National Security Forces;
- Increasing the size and capability of the Afghan National Security Forces 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.

3. I'd like to address this question to all of the witnesses...a 34 page document signed by General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry outlines an integrated civilian-military plan which contains eleven counter-insurgency "transformative effects. Does the plan President Obama articulated last night execute these worthy goals such as improving population security and reducing insurgent capability while advancing governance? If not, why have we strayed from this pledge?

Answer:

The USG Integrated Civil-Military (Civ-Mil) Campaign Plan, approved in August 2009, was developed and drafted to achieve the core goal to disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat Al-Qaeda and its safe havens in Pakistan, and to prevent their return to Pakistan or Afghanistan. The President reaffirmed that core goal in December and articulated that in Afghanistan: success means an Afghanistan capable of maintaining and securing its own sovereignty and able to

prevent al Qaeda from using its territory as a safe haven. The 11 transformative effects outlined in the USG Civ-Mil Campaign Plan are focused on improving population security and reducing insurgent capability while advancing governance to include elections; providing increasing access to justice; promoting reintegration; increasing jobs and agricultural opportunity; countering the nexus of drugs, crime and insurgent activity; facilitating border management; and controlling the communications "space." These effects remain critical to the counterinsurgency mission and will be prioritized within the resources provided to achieve the President's goals. As the President stated in December, "We will pursue a military strategy that will break the Taliban's momentum and increase Afghanistan's capacity.... We'll support Afghan ministries, governors, and local leaders that combat corruption and deliver for the people. We expect those who are ineffective or corrupt to be held accountable. And we will also focus our assistance in areas, such as agriculture, that can make an immediate impact in the lives of the Afghan people."

4. I couldn't help but note last night the incongruity of President Obama's speech...his insistence on setting July 2011 as a date for withdrawal coupled with conditions on the ground. Secretary Gates, how are we supposed to reconcile those two statements? What if conditions on the ground are worse in July 2011? You testified this morning that July 2011 was a hard and fast date for withdrawal. How would you justify withdrawing if the conditions on the ground were poor and unstable?

Answer:

Regarding the transition start date, it is imperative to understand that July 2011 is the beginning of a process. It is not when we rush for the exits; rather, it is when we begin the responsible drawdown of our forces and the responsible hand-off of missions to our Afghan partners. There is no determination of how long this will take and there is no withdrawal date on the right-hand side of July 2011. However, this process will be informed by ongoing

assessments of conditions on the ground as well as a formal review of our progress in December 2010.

5. General Patreaus's Field Manual on counterinsurgency notes that there must be 20 counterinsurgents for every 1,000 residents. With Afghanistan's population of 28 million that would require a total of 550,000 counterinsurgents for success. The 30,000 Obama troop surge announced last night seems woefully inadequate, even counting the Afghan National Forces. How are we going to be able to avoid a "mission failure" with a fraction of the counter-insurgents needed?

Answer:

Field Manual 3-24 provides a counterinsurgency doctrine or a framework. The 1/50 ratio for counterinsurgents to indigenous population is not a strict template. Various scenarios will require more tailored and flexible solutions. Additionally, our more narrowed approach in Afghanistan is not a fully resourced counterinsurgency strategy as described in Field Manual 3-24.

Although the President authorized the deployment of 30,000 additional U.S. forces on an accelerated timeline to Afghanistan, these will complement the 5,000 to 7,000 additional forces contributed by our NATO allies and ISAF partners. These forces will reinforce the 68,000 U.S. and 39,000 non-U.S. ISAF forces already there and partner with Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), so that we can target the insurgency, break its momentum, and better secure key areas in Afghanistan. Together we will focus on accelerating ANSF growth as rapidly as possible, with an emphasis on creating a quality Afghan force that is both effective and sustainable. The President's decision rapidly resources our strategy and recognizes that the next 18 months will likely be decisive.

6. There have been reports that the Administration has engaged in back-channel talks with the Afghan Taliban – presumably a network we believe to be less menacing than the Pakistani Taliban. Is it true that we have engaged in negotiations? If so, for what reason and what were the results? Did it include urging the Pakistani military to fight the Haqqani network in North Wurzistan if we eased up on the Afghan Taliban?

Answer:

The Department of State is the lead for the Administration in all diplomatic discussions and negotiations. The U.S. Government has not directly engaged in such strategic-level reconciliation efforts, although some aligned nations have lent their support as intermediaries on behalf of the Afghan government to engage the Afghan Taliban and other insurgent leadership. The U.S. Government encourages the Afghan and Pakistani government to find acceptable political solutions to the on-going conflicts that respect and strengthen the constitutions of both nations.

7. General McChrystal's report warned about India becoming too involved in Afghanistan, presumably because such involvement antagonizes Pakistan. While there have been several positive developments in Pakistan over the last six months, such as the Pakistan military's push into the Swat Valley to eradicate the Taliban and significant improvement in U.S.-Pakistani joint operations along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. But U.S. policymakers should not ignore India's vital role in the region. India was supporting the Northern Alliance against the Taliban before the attacks of 9/11, and as I understand it, India has been providing a great deal of reconstruction aid. India is also a significant importer of Afghan fruits as Secretary Clinton you noted earlier this morning. Like us, India sees the Taliban as an extremist threat that will undermine Afghanistan and the region. So what is the U.S. doing, and what should we be doing, about India's efforts to play a role in the Afghan stabilization effort?

Answer:

India has historic and cultural ties to Afghanistan which are the basis of its assistance in Afghanistan. India's current activities within Afghanistan include a multi-sector effort focusing on reconstruction and development programs. It is one of Afghanistan's foremost development partners since the end of 2001, with pledged assistance totaling $1.3B. The projects include initiatives in education to telecommunications and power generation.

Moving forward, we must ensure that we do not limit India's reconstruction and development activities, which offer an opportunity to cultivate necessary infrastructure that the Afghan government struggles to provide. At the same time, we must find a way to reduce Pakistan's suspicions of these activities.

Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee (TX)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan, PART I
Wednesday, December 2, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from the Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State,
U.S. Department of State

1. Secretary Clinton, please describe the security situation for American diplomats and other civilians currently assigned to Afghanistan. In the past, military surges are followed by increased insurgent activity; do you worry that this will threaten the security for American civilians in Afghanistan?

Question was referred to the Department of Defense. Response was not available at the time of printing.

2. What effect would sending additional troops have on the security of American diplomats and other civilians?

Question was referred to the Department of Defense. Response was not available at the time of printing.

3. Given that the additional troops will likely push more insurgents into Pakistan, please describe our strategy to eliminate the threat of insurgents in Pakistan?

Answer:

We are working in parallel in Afghanistan and Pakistan to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda. As we and our partners advance militarily in Afghanistan, we are expanding civilian efforts in Pakistan while supporting Pakistani military efforts to root out insurgents. Our robust security and civilian assistance program in Pakistan is fostering a stable civil-military relationship, enhancing U.S.-Pakistani military interoperability, and improving government capacity in areas critical to counterinsurgency operations.

While we press al-Qaeda militarily, our civilian assistance strategy aims to reduce the appeal of extremist recruitment by strengthening the Government of Pakistan's capacity to effectively provide services to its citizens. Progress toward this goal will result in better delivery of basic services to the population in the near term and enhanced sustainability of development efforts that Pakistan needs for long-term political stability. USAID will continue to work in areas affected by military actions against extremists such as the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). It will also continue its work in other areas vulnerable to extremism like northern Sindh and southern Punjab, prioritizing work on energy, agricultural and basic services such as health and education.

4. Given that the Taliban has a political base, is there a scenario in which the United States leaves control of Afghanistan in the hands of the Taliban? What about a scenario in which the U.S. supports a power-sharing government that includes the Taliban?

Answer:

There has been no consideration of leaving Afghanistan in the hands of the Taliban or creating a power sharing structure for Afghanistan's governance. We do, however, support a nationwide, Afghan-led reintegration process of reaching out to insurgents to offer them a way to break with the insurgent hard core and return peacefully to their communities. Such reintegration remains a key pillar of our strategy for Afghanistan. As President Obama has said: "We will support efforts by the Afghan government to open the door to those Taliban who abandon violence and respect the human rights of their fellow citizens."

Reintegration is a component of a larger counterinsurgency strategy focused on protecting the population. Reintegration is not a question of paying people to switch sides, but

creating conditions – through community-based programs and other efforts – whereby fighters have incentives to put down their weapons, renounce violence and join a peaceful political process.

5. What role will the expected U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator, Rajiv Shah, play in our new approach to Afghanistan and Pakistan?

Answer:

USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah will be absolutely essential to our programs in Afghanistan and Pakistan. We are engaged in a major revision of our assistance programs that will draw on his experience. His foci will be: developing programs that deliver measurable results and foster local capacities in Afghanistan as well as driving effective development that addresses our national security priorities and strategic objectives. Dr. Shah will oversee the execution of USAID's scaling up of civilian-led operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan. He is committed to a USAID that is more agile, focused, and flexible, all of which will assist in implementing the President's strategy in both countries. Dr. Shah will work with me and other senior Administration leadership within the interagency, with members of Congress, the private sector, and with our international counterparts to ensure that USAID's expertise and resources are being employed in the most effective manner possible.

Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee (TX)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan, PART I
Wednesday, December 2, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from the Honorable Robert M. Gates, Secretary of Defense,
U.S. Department of Defense

1. Last year, you stated "It has become clear that America's civilian institutions of diplomacy and development have been chronically undermanned and under-funded for far too long relative to what we spend on the military, and more important, relative to the responsibilities and challenges our nation has around the world."

Is the new strategy to deploy 30,000 troops at an estimated cost of 15 to 30 billion dollars (low estimate is Pentagon's, high estimate is White House's) a contradiction to your stated preference that more money should be allocated to foreign assistance and the State Department?

Answer:

The troop increase does not contradict my stated preference that more money should be allocated to the State Department and foreign assistance. As the President stated in his 1 December address, the addition of military forces is only one component of our overall strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. A more effective civilian strategy that allows the Afghan government to take advantage of improved security is also central to success. As such, the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development are sending at least 500 more civilians to promote economic development and good governance. I strongly support funding for international affairs and stabilization activities, including economic assistance for Afghanistan and Pakistan. As I have said for the last two years, I believe that the challenges confronting our nation cannot be dealt with by military means alone. They instead require whole-of-government approaches, but that can only be done if the State Department is given resources befitting the scope of its mission across the globe. This is particularly important in Afghanistan and Pakistan, where our ability to provide resources beyond military power will be the decisive factor. I ask

you to continue supporting not just our men and women in uniform, but also the men and women of the State Department who are just as committed to the safety and security of the United States.

2. Given that the additional troops will likely push more insurgents into Pakistan, please describe our strategy to eliminate the threat of insurgents in Pakistan?

Answer:

The President's strategy recognizes that the security situation in Afghanistan is inextricably linked to stability in Pakistan. Action on both sides of the country's shared border is necessary to ultimately disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaeda and its extremist allies and prevent its return to both countries. As such, the President's commitment to a long-term, strategic partnership with Pakistan is a critical component to his overall strategy. As General McChrystal stated in his recent testimony before your committee, "Our strategic partnership with Pakistan and the Government of Pakistan, I believe, is the critical long-term way to help reduce al-Qaeda."

By demonstrating our commitment to the region, recognizing our shared enemy, and providing significant resources for democracy and development, as well as counterterrorism and counterinsurgency, the President's strategy enhances our ability to work with the Government of Pakistan and build Pakistani capacity to address the insurgent threat within its borders. The Government of Pakistan has already taken promising steps in this regard with the military operations that it has conducted over the past year against insurgent forces in the Northwest Frontier Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. I believe that the President's strategy will help the U.S. better support the Government of Pakistan on these positive trends.

However, this partnership with Pakistan will go well beyond military cooperation. It will be a whole-of-government approach focusing on the long-term security and prosperity of the country.

3. The Taliban is an Afghan organization whose members have varying degrees of loyalty and different reasons for joining, often not including ideological sympathy. How does our enhanced "clear, hold, build, and transfer" effort address the members of the Taliban who are not ideologically sympathetic, but rather join for governance or economic reasons?

Answer:

Our more focused strategy recognizes the political dimensions of the Afghan conflict. It supports Afghan Government efforts to reintegrate those willing to renounce al Qaeda, lay down arms, and participate in the free and open society enshrined in the Afghan constitution. The reintegration of former insurgents peacefully into their communities has and will continue to be an Afghan-led effort supported by the United States and the international community. Our goal is that effective Afghan governance will both deter the extremist recruiting base and diminish the existing extremist membership.

Additionally, reintegration was one of the five key pillars of the President's 27 March 2009 strategy and its importance has not changed. As he stated, "In a country with extreme poverty that's been at war for decades, there will be no peace without reconciliation among former enemies.... There is an uncompromising core of the Taliban. They must be met with force, and they must be defeated. But there are also those who've taken up arms because of coercion, or simply for a price. These Afghans must have the option to choose a different course."

4. In your testimony, you noted the importance of combating al-Qaeda in Pakistan. Please elaborate on deploying 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan will improve the security situation in Pakistan.

Answer:

I would like to echo the response provided by Admiral Mullen to a similar question. Defeating al-Qaeda and enhancing Afghan security are reinforcing missions that cannot be untethered from one another. One cannot separate the security situation in Afghanistan from the stability of Pakistan. Giving extremists breathing room in Pakistan led to the resurgence of the Taliban and more coordinated, sophisticated attacks in Afghanistan. Conversely, an extremist sanctuary in southern and eastern Afghanistan would heighten the threat that Pakistan faces to its own security and stability.

The President's decision to send 30,000 additional U.S forces to Afghanistan aims to reverse the Taliban's momentum and reduce its strength while providing the time and space necessary for Afghans to develop enough security and governance capacity to stabilize their own country. A more stable Afghanistan will in turn affect the security situation in Pakistan, not only by denying the Taliban safe haven and freedom of movement in Afghanistan, but also by beginning to alter the Pakistani strategic calculus that has, in the past, made them reluctant to fight extremist groups. Pakistan's security strategy is, in many ways, shaped by the kind of governments and the kind of threats they see from their neighbors and from the region. Afghan stability will encourage Pakistan to accept the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan as a strategic partner and abandon support for the Afghan Taliban.

Furthermore, demonstrating a continued and significant U.S. commitment to the region by sending additional U.S. forces to Afghanistan will bolster Pakistan's confidence in the United States as a long-term, strategic partner, which is critical to promoting Pakistani action against al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other extremist organizations within their own borders.

Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee (TX)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan, PART I
Wednesday, December 2, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from Admiral Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

1. How does the topography of Afghanistan impact our ability to evacuate the wounded?

Answer:

There are multiple topographical factors which impact ground and rotary wing evacuation of wounded personnel in Afghanistan.

In the case of ground evacuation, the poor, or in many cases, non-existent road network constantly impacts our ability to evacuate patients. Limited access to roads is also compounded by the threat of IEDs. This is partially mitigated with the use of up-armored ambulances which are being employed in increasing numbers throughout Afghanistan.

Afghanistan presents a unique set of challenges for rotary wing evacuation. Weather, high altitude and extremely rugged, mountainous terrain directly affect our ability to evacuate our wounded. For Army MEDEVAC helicopters, the significant operating limitations in Afghanistan are: degraded performance during high altitude operations and communications. A MEDEVAC helicopter's performance starts degrading at approximately 5000 feet above sea-level, and worsens with increasingly high altitudes. The Army has mitigated this risk by installing more powerful engines in the MEDEVAC aircraft going into theater. The 701C and 701D engines increase performance and improve high altitude operations. These engines are part of the Army mission equipment package for MEDEVAC aircraft going into Afghanistan. Line of sight air-to-ground and air-to-air communications are significantly impacted by the high

terrain. To improve communications with MEDEVAC aircraft, the Army fields satellite communication radios to improve our over-the-horizon communications capability.

To expedite patient evacuation and to mitigate ground evacuation constraints, rotary wing MEVEVAC is the preferred method to evacuate patients in Afghanistan. Patient evacuation from numerous Forward Operating Bases to surgical assets located at Role II treatment facilities and Role III hospitals are supported by the disbursed distribution of MEDEVAC assets throughout the theater in order to provide a robust, flexible, and capable field medical force. MEDEVAC assets will increase commensurate with the planned uplift in forces.

2. Do we have sufficient capacity for medical units in the field, specifically in rural areas? Please describe the process for giving medical care to wounded soldiers in remote, mountainous regions.

Answer:

The Department of Defense does have sufficient capacity for medical units in the field and currently provides the highest standards of life-saving care for all of its forces through a robust, flexible, and capable field medical force.

Our field forces have an integrated continuum of care that starts at the point of injury and continues to our world class military hospitals at Landsthul and in the United States. Care starts immediately by our well-trained Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines, combat lifesavers, medics and corpsman who provide lifesaving care at the point of injury. Our wounded warriors are rapidly evacuated by the most expedient means to surgical care and then onward, as required, out of theater to more definitive care. In Afghanistan, the challenges of extreme weather, the necessity for hoist operations, significant differences in terrain contour as well as elevation

increases the risk and effects the execution time of MEDEVAC missions. However, our experiences in OEF and OIF suggest that regardless of the location of the casualty on the battlefield, resuscitation and stabilization by combat lifesavers, medics, and corpsmen rapidly rendered after a casualty is sustained contributes significantly to our troop survival rates.

During OIF and OEF, there have been a number of ongoing improvements to the Department of Defense's forward medical treatment and stabilization capabilities, such as:

- Self-Aid/Buddy Aid: All deploying military personnel are now issued an Individual First Aid Kit which includes the latest in medical supply innovations (Combat Application Tourniquet, Combat Gauze, Nasopharyngeal Airway, etc).
- Combat Lifesaver: Now trained and equipped to treat penetrating chest trauma and tension pneumothorax; more extensive supplies stocked as part of Combat Lifesaver bag.
- Combat Medic/Corpsman: More extensive Combat Casualty Care training; has skills comparable to an Emergency Medical Technician-Intermediate or –Paramedic.
- Forward Surgical Team/Forward Resuscitative Surgical System: Deploys lifesaving operating room capabilities to remote areas to save the lives of casualties whose injuries are so severe that they would not survive transport to theater hospitals.

3. Given that the additional troops will likely push more insurgents into Pakistan, please describe our strategy to eliminate the threat of insurgents in Pakistan?

Answer:

The President's strategy recognizes that the security situation in Afghanistan is inextricably linked to stability in Pakistan. Action on both sides of the country's shared border is necessary to ultimately disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaeda and its extremist allies and prevent its return to both countries. As such, the President's commitment to a long-term,

strategic partnership with Pakistan is a critical component to his overall strategy. As General McChrystal stated in his recent testimony before your committee, "Our strategic partnership with Pakistan and the Government of Pakistan, I believe, is the critical long-term way to help reduce al-Qaeda."

By demonstrating our commitment to the region, recognizing our shared enemy, and providing significant resources for democracy and development, as well as counterterrorism and counterinsurgency, the President's strategy enhances our ability to work with the Government of Pakistan and build Pakistani capacity to address the insurgent threat within its borders. The Government of Pakistan has already taken promising steps in this regard with the military operations that it has conducted over the past year against insurgent forces in the Northwest Frontier Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. I believe that the President's strategy will help the U.S. better support the Government of Pakistan on these positive trends.

However, this partnership with Pakistan will go well beyond military cooperation. It will be a whole-of-government approach focusing on the long-term security and prosperity of the country.

4. Admiral Mullen, in your testimony, you stated that "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."

Please elaborate on deploying 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan will improve the security situation in Pakistan.

Answer:

Defeating al-Qaeda and enhancing Afghan security are reinforcing missions. They cannot be un-tethered from one another, as much as we might wish that to be the case. As such,

one cannot separate the security situation in Afghanistan from the stability of Pakistan. Giving extremists breathing room in Pakistan led to the resurgence of the Taliban and more coordinated, sophisticated attacks in Afghanistan. Conversely, an extremist sanctuary in southern and eastern Afghanistan would heighten the threat that Pakistan faces to its own security and stability.

The President's decision to send 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan 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. A more stable Afghanistan will in turn affect the security situation in Pakistan, not only by denying the Taliban safe haven and freedom of movement in Afghanistan, but also by beginning to alter the Pakistani strategic calculus that has, in the past, created reticence towards fighting extremist groups. Pakistan's security strategy is, in many ways, shaped by what kind of governments and what kind of threats they face from their neighbors and from the region. Afghan stability will encourage Pakistan to accept the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan as a strategic partner and abandon support for the Afghan Taliban.

Furthermore, by demonstrating U.S. commitment to the region, sending additional American forces to Afghanistan will help to overcome the trust deficit that has existed between the United States and the Government of Pakistan for too long. A long-term, strategic partnership with Pakistan and with the region is critical to promoting Pakistani action against the al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and other extremist organizations within their own borders.

Rep. Jim Costa (CA)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan – PART I
Wednesday, December 2, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from the Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State,
U.S. Department of State

Question:

Madame Secretary, in your opening statement today, you spoke about civilian experts from the State Department working in Afghanistan and how vital they are to our overall mission there. I have spoken to you before about Afshar Hospital in Kabul, started by a small group of my constituents. In April 2009, Afshar finally opened its doors and saw 800 patients during their first month. Now, they see almost 3,000 patients in a thirty day period. This project, unlike others in Afghanistan, is free of the corruptive influence that plagues the country. What can be done to provide more private and federal investment in Afshar Hospital, along with the many other smart power projects ongoing in Afghanistan?

Answer:

The Government of Afghanistan, with the support of the international community, has significantly increased access to health care and reduced infant mortality rates. The number of primary health care facilities has doubled to over 1,200, and under-5 mortality has declined by at least a quarter since 2003. Many Afghans in rural areas live some distance from available health care facilities, and we are assisting the Afghan Ministry of Health in its drive to bring health care to the rural areas where the majority of Afghans live and die.

Private giving is an essential component of our overall assistance to the developing world. The accomplishments of Afshar Hospital, which you highlighted, are a testament to the value of American generosity and resourcefulness. USAID seeks to encourage certain worthy private charitable organizations through its Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad

(ASHA). I would encourage privately run hospitals to reach out to ASHA and other funding sources. ASHA provides grants to competitively selected private, non-profit universities and secondary schools, libraries, and medical centers abroad to effectively provide foreign nationals the benefits of American ideas and practices in education and medicine; serve as demonstration and study centers which foster interchange, mutual understanding, and favorable relations with the United States; and promote civil societies.

FULL COMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE

Committee on Foreign Affairs

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0128

Howard L. Berman (D-CA), Chairman

December 3, 2009

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held in **Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building:**

DATE: Thursday, December 10, 2009

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

SUBJECT: U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan—Part II

WITNESSES: The Honorable Karl W. Eikenberry
U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan
U.S. Department of State

General Stanley A. McChrystal
Commander, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and
Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A)
U.S. Department of Defense

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day *Thursday* Date *12/10/09* Room *2172 RHOB*

Starting Time *9:30A.M.* Ending Time *12:02 P.M.*

Recesses [ ] (_____ to _____)

Presiding Member(s) *Howard L. Berman (CA), Chairman*

CHECK ALL OF THE FOLLOWING THAT APPLY:

Open Session [✓]
Executive (closed) Session [ ]
Televised [✓]
Electronically Recorded (taped) [✓]
Stenographic Record [✓]

TITLE OF HEARING or BILLS FOR MARKUP: *(Include bill number(s) and title(s) of legislation.)*
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan – PART II

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:
See attached

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:
n/a

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes [✓] No [ ]
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*
Article by Jonathan Gandomi titled "Lessons from the Soviet Occupation in Afghanistan for the United States and NATO" - submitted by Sheila Jackson Lee (TX)

ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE MARKUP: *(Attach copies of legislation and amendments.)*

RECORDED VOTES TAKEN (FOR MARKUP): *(Attach final vote tally sheet listing each member.)*

Subject	Yeas	Nays	Present	Not Voting

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *12:02pm*

Doug Campbell

Doug Campbell, Deputy Staff Director

Attendance - HCFA Full Committee Hearing
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan, Part II
Thursday, December 10, 2009 @ 1:30 p.m. , 2172 RHOB

Howard L. Berman (CA)
Eni F.H. Faleomavaega (AS)
Donald Payne (NJ)
William D. Delahunt (MA)
Diane E. Watson (CA)
Russ Carnahan (MO)
Gerald E. Connolly (VA)
Michael E. McMahon (NY)
John S. Tanner (TN)
Gene Green (TX)
Lynn C. Woolsey (CA)
Sheila Jackson-Lee (TX)
Barbara Lee (CA)
Shelley Berkley (NV)
Joseph Crowley (NY)
Mike Ross (AR)
Brad Miller (NC)
David Scott (GA)
Jim Costa (CA)
Keith Ellison (MN)
Gabrielle Giffords (AZ)
Ron Klein (FL)

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, (FL)
Christopher H. Smith (NJ)
Dan Burton (IN)
Elton Gallegly (CA)
Dana Rohrabacher (CA)
Donald Manzullo (IL)
Edward R. Royce (CA)
Jeff Flake (AZ)
Mike Pence (IN)
Joe Wilson (SC)
John Boozman (AR)
Jeff Fortenberry (NE)
Michael T. McCaul (TX)
Ted Poe (TX)
Bob Inglis (SC)
Gus Bilirakis (FL)

Verbatim, as delivered

December 10, 2009

Chairman Berman's opening remarks at Hearing, "U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan – Part II"

Last week, the Committee heard from Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates, and Admiral Mullen, three of the President's top national security advisors. They did an excellent job in making the Administration's case for the new strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Today, we welcome the top American officials on the ground in Afghanistan: Ambassador Karl W. Eikenberry, the chief of mission at our embassy in Kabul; and General Stanley A. McChrystal, the commander of all United States and international forces in Afghanistan.

The President and his team have made it very clear that our efforts to degrade the Taliban and defeat al Qaeda cannot stop at the Durand Line. Indeed, nearly all of the *jihadi* groups operating in Pakistan and Afghanistan – al Qaeda, the Pakistani Taliban, the Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani network, LET, and others – have joined together in an extended terrorist network that shares the same goals, including destabilizing Afghanistan and destroying the Pakistani state.

Fortunately, there appears to be a growing recognition in Pakistan that it is impossible to differentiate between different terrorist groups, and that the same people killing American, international and Afghan troops are now arming suicide bombers in the streets and markets of Pakistan and killing Pakistani civilians.

We sympathize with the plight of the Pakistani people, who have suffered great losses from the growing number of terrorist attacks in that country. As reflected in the legislation recently passed by Congress, we are committed to doing what we can to improve their economic and physical security.

As all of our witnesses emphasized in last week's hearing, the President's military strategy in Afghanistan can only succeed if it is accompanied by a robust "civilian surge" designed to improve governance, strengthen the rule of law, and promote economic development in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. This fact often gets lost in the debate about troop levels and the time frame for withdrawal, and we must make sure that these critical civilian programs aren't short-changed.

To that end, Ambassador Eikenberry, will you have enough capable civilians on the ground to help strengthen governance, build rule of law, and promote economic enterprise? Will these civilians have sufficient knowledge in these areas to be effective? Will they have sufficient experience operating in dangerous environments like Afghanistan? And are 974 civilians, as the Administration has proposed having on the ground by early next year, all we need? If not, when will you be able to tell us exactly how many are required? What will your new civil-military campaign plan include that the August plan did not?

With regard to the military strategy, I am curious: One of the keys to our success in Iraq was the "Sunni Awakening," in which thousands of Sunni tribesmen, many of whom had participated in or aided the insurgency, essentially switched to our side. Is there any prospect of a similar shift in Afghanistan? Can we succeed in Afghanistan without such an "awakening?"

Finally, General McChrystal, will 30,000 troops – even with an additional 7,000 apparently pledged by other nations – be sufficient to break the Taliban's momentum? Can we meet the

President's objective of degrading the Taliban by focusing primarily on the South when the Taliban is already operating in the North? What types of soldiers – trainers, civil affairs, infantry – will comprise this 30,000 increase?

Now I'm pleased to turn to the Ranking Member, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, for any opening remarks she would like to make. And following that, we will proceed immediately to the testimony of our distinguished witnesses.

Statement for House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing:
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan – PART II
10 December 2009
Rep. Ron Paul, M.D.

Dr. PAUL: Mr. Speaker thank you for holding these important hearings on US policy in Afghanistan. I would like to welcome the witnesses, Ambassador Karl W. Eikenberry and General Stanley A. McChrystal, and thank them for appearing before this Committee.

I have serious concerns, however, about the president's decision to add some 30,000 troops and an as yet undisclosed number of civilian personnel to escalate our Afghan operation. This "surge" will bring US troop levels to approximately those of the Soviets when they occupied Afghanistan with disastrous result back in the 1980s. I fear the US military occupation of Afghanistan may end up similarly unsuccessful.

In late 1986 Soviet armed forces commander, Marshal Sergei Akhromeev, told then-Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, "Military actions in Afghanistan will soon be seven years old. There is no single piece of land in this country which has not been occupied by a Soviet soldier. Nonetheless, the majority of the territory remains in the hands of rebels." Soon Gorbachev began the Soviet withdrawal from its Afghan misadventure. Thousands were dead on both sides, yet the occupation failed to produce a stable national Afghan government.

Eight years into our own war in Afghanistan the Soviet commander's words ring eerily familiar. Part of the problem stems from a fundamental misunderstanding of the situation. It is our presence as occupiers that feeds the insurgency. As would be the case if we were invaded and occupied, diverse groups have put aside their disagreements to unify against foreign occupation. Adding more US troops will only assist those who recruit fighters to attack our soldiers and who use the US occupation to convince villages to side with the Taliban.

Proponents of the president's Afghanistan escalation cite the successful "surge" in Iraq as evidence that this second surge will have similar results. I fear they might be correct about the similar result, but I dispute the success propaganda about Iraq. In fact, the violence in Iraq only temporarily subsided with the completion of the ethnic cleansing of Shi'ites from Sunni neighborhoods and vice versa – and all neighborhoods of Christians. Those Sunni fighters who remained were easily turned against the foreign al-Qaeda presence when offered US money and weapons. We are increasingly seeing this "success" breaking down: sectarian violence is flaring up and this time the various groups are better armed with US-provided weapons. Similarly, the insurgents paid by the US to stop their attacks are increasingly restive now that the Iraqi government is no longer paying bribes on a regular basis. So I am skeptical about reports on the success of the Iraqi surge.

Likewise, we are told that we have to "win" in Afghanistan so that al-Qaeda cannot use Afghan territory to plan further attacks against the US. We need to remember that the attack on the

United States on September 11, 2001 was, according to the 9/11 Commission Report, largely planned in the United States (and Germany) by terrorists who were in our country legally. According to the logic of those who endorse military action against Afghanistan because al-Qaeda was physically present, one could argue in favor of US airstrikes against several US states and Germany! It makes no sense. The Taliban allowed al-Qaeda to remain in Afghanistan because both had been engaged, with US assistance, in the insurgency against the Soviet occupation.

Nevertheless, the president's National Security Advisor, Gen. James Jones, USMC (Ret.), said in a recent interview that less than 100 al-Qaeda remain in Afghanistan and that the chance they would reconstitute a significant presence there was slim. Are we to believe that 30,000 more troops are needed to defeat 100 al-Qaeda fighters? I fear that there will be increasing pressure for the US to invade Pakistan, to where many Taliban and al-Qaeda have escaped. Already CIA drone attacks on Pakistan have destabilized that country and have killed scores of innocents, producing strong anti-American feelings and calls for revenge. I do not see how that contributes to our national security.

The president's top advisor for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, said recently, "I would say this about defining success in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the simplest sense, the Supreme Court test for another issue, we'll know it when we see it." That does not inspire much confidence.

Supporters of this surge argue that we must train an Afghan national army to take over and strengthen the rule and authority of Kabul. But experts have noted that the ranks of the Afghan national army are increasingly being filled by the Tajik minority at the expense of the Pashtun plurality. US diplomat Matthew Hoh, who resigned as Senior Civilian Representative for the U.S. Government in Zabul Province, noted in his resignation letter that he "fail[s] to see the value or the worth in continued U.S. casualties or expenditures of resources in support of the Afghan government in what is, truly, a 35-year old civil war." Mr. Hoh went on to write that "[L]ike the Soviets, we continue to secure and bolster a failing state, while encouraging an ideology and system of government unknown and unwanted by [the Afghan] people."

I have always opposed nation-building as unconstitutional and ineffective. Afghanistan is no different. Without a real strategy in Afghanistan, without a vision of what victory will look like, we are left with the empty rhetoric of the last administration that "when the Afghan people stand up, the US will stand down." I am afraid the only solution to the Afghanistan quagmire is a rapid and complete US withdrawal from that country and the region. We cannot afford to maintain this empire and our occupation of these foreign lands is not making us any safer. It is time to leave Afghanistan.

Statement
Congresswoman Diane E. Watson
Full Committee: Foreign Affairs
Thursday, December 10, 2009
9:30 p.m.

"U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan- Part II"

Good Morning Mr. Chairman, and thank you for convening a second hearing on the Administration's new strategy in Afghanistan. As we recommit additional taxpayer resources and time, we must ensure that we thoroughly vet this policy.

I share President Obama's concerns about the threat to Americans from the Taliban who are hidden in the hills of Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, I do not share the confidence of the Administration in being able to contain the threat through military engagement. Nor do I support the use of valuable American tax dollars in Afghanistan when there is so much need at home.

If we must continue military presence in Afghanistan, I sincerely hope the President's plan will truly be able stabilize Afghanistan and allow Americans to quickly return home. Thank you Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the remainder of my time.

Opening Statement for Congressman Joe Wilson

Afghanistan

House Committee on Foreign Affairs
December 10, 2009

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for calling this second important hearing today on Afghanistan. With the recent announcement from the Administration, it is imperative that we continue to better understand the focus on Afghanistan.

On December 1, 2009, President Obama laid out his decision to send a much needed 30,000 troop increase to Afghanistan to occur within the next six months. I applaud the President's decision to send more troops into Afghanistan so that U.S. and Coalition forces will have the needed manpower to get the job done. While many of us would have liked to see this decision a lot sooner, I am pleased that the President has listened to our commanders on the ground on a way forward.

I cannot stress how vitally important it is for Afghanistan to turn the corner. September 11, 2001 was a defining moment in my own life. Never would I have thought that terrorists could plot an attack on the U.S. from the caves and hills of Afghanistan. Given the threats made against the West, we cannot allow Afghanistan to once again become a safe haven for terrorists. That is why U.S. and Coalition forces must do everything promised to the people of Afghanistan to provide for a secure and stable society. A stable Afghanistan is a safe and secure world. It is that simple.

With that said, I am concerned about placing an absolute time of U.S. troop withdraw. Media reports from all sectors in this discussion have offered to clarify what has been said. We must remember the lessons we learned from the early days of the troop surge in Iraq was to resist any and all calls for a set timetable. The success of the surge was dependent on the locals understanding and buying into the fact that we were there to stay until the work was done. Placing any timetable, hard or soft, on Afghanistan will only allow the terrorists to go underground and emerge when forces pull out. I ask the President to consider this as plans move forward.

Thank you again for calling this hearing. I am eager to hear from our distinguished witnesses.

CONGRESSWOMAN JACKSON LEE, OF TEXAS
Committee on Foreign Affairs

Full Committee Hearing on: "U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan II"

December 10, 2009

STATEMENT

Foremost, I would like to extend my gratitude to the Chairman for hosting this important Committee hearing today. I would also like to thank our distinguished witnesses:

- General Stanley A. McChrystal, Commander, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A); and
- The Honorable Karl W. Eikenberry, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, U.S. Department of State;

I thank you for bringing your advice and expertise today as we continue our review of the Administration's new policy with regards to Afghanistan.

Since the beginning of U.S. operations in Afghanistan, the gravity of our mission has not diminished. When our nation turned its attention away from Afghanistan, we lost precious ground. Today, we face difficult realities on the ground. The Taliban attacks our forces whenever and wherever they can. Agents of the Taliban seek to turn the people of Afghanistan against us as we attempt to provide them with help in every way we can. This situation is unsustainable.

The effort in Afghanistan is vitally important, but it should not be interminable. President Obama's inclusion of a timetable for ending the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan demonstrates that his strategy is tempered with a pragmatic, realistic perspective on the situation. Afghanistan's history has earned it the nickname, "The Graveyard of Empires," and I believe that we should not take this grim history lightly. By including a timetable for our operations in Afghanistan, we focus our mission and place it in a long-term context.

I am concerned that statements made by the Administration, subsequent to the President's West Point speech, reflect an equivocation of the Administration's adherence to that timeline. For example, last weekend on CBS' "Face the Nation" Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said that "There isn't a deadline," and on CNN's "State of the Union" the National Security Advisor Gen. James Jones said, "We're going to be in the region for a long time." Moreover, how can we guarantee that we will begin an 18 month draw-down when President Karzai has said that Afghan forces will be able to secure Afghan cities within three years and take over responsibility for the country within five years? I look forward to hearing from both of you a more specific explanation of the Administration's vision of when the United States will have troops out of Afghanistan.

Although I do not agree that sending additional troops to Afghanistan is the best and most effective strategy to provide for the stability of Afghanistan, I respect and admire both of your hard work in Afghanistan. General McChrystal, your August 30, 2009 report, while not originally intended for public release, provides valuable insight into the situation in Afghanistan as well as a detailed plan for action. Ambassador Eikenberry, your service to this country first as a member of the armed forces and now as

diplomat is well-documented. You are known as an engaged figure in Afghanistan, doing your best to ensure that our efforts there are full-fledged.

I am concerned about the cost of sending additional troops, as well as the effect that a larger presence in Afghanistan will have on troop morale. The White House estimates that it will cost $1 million per year for each additional soldier deployed, and I believe that $30 billion would be better spent on developing new jobs, and fixing our broken healthcare system. The cost and the long-term commitment were given renewed significance on Tuesday, December 9, 2009 when Afghan President Hamid Karzai said, as reported in the New York Times, that "Afghanistan would not be able to pay for its own security until at least 2024." Secretary Robert Gates echoed that sentiment when he said that "For another 15 to 20 years, Afghanistan will not be able to sustain a force of that nature and capacity with its own resources." If our strategy will require $50 billion to build up Afghanistan's police and military forces as well as a decades-long commitment, I am not sure that the American people will support such an effort.

Regarding morale, many leaders in our armed forces, including Secretary Gates, have said that it is optimal for troops to have two years between overseas deployments; yet, today, our troops have only a year at home between deployments. Expanding the number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan by 30,000 will negatively impact troop morale and will bring us further away from the conditions necessary to maintain a strong, all-volunteer military. General McChrystal, I would like to hear your thoughts on how the additional troops will impact morale.

I am also concerned that the United States is shouldering too much of the burden in Afghanistan. Although the terror attacks on American soil prompted NATO to respond

with collective military action, no nation is immune from the threat of terrorism. Although the troops and resources provided by our allies have been invaluable to date, especially in regarding development for the people of Afghanistan, questions must be raised about how long other nations will remain involved in Afghanistan. France and Germany, for example have already questioned whether or not to send additional troops. NATO resources must continue to focus on improving the livelihoods of the Afghan people, but if the support of these governments waiver, American troops and Afghan citizens will suffer the consequences.

A stable Afghanistan is in the best interest of the international community and I was pleased to see President Obama's outreach to our allies for additional troops. Currently, 41 NATO and other allied countries contribute nearly 36,000 troops. I was pleased to hear that NATO promised to send over 7,000 troops to Afghanistan, although ensuing reports have revealed that the actual number of new troops may be lower. Multilateralism is vital to ensuring that our operations in Afghanistan succeed.

Ensuring that the government operates in a transparent, accountable, and ultimately honest manner is vital to our efforts in Afghanistan. The troubling reports about the elections that were held on August 20, 2009 were the first in a series of very worrisome developments. The electoral process is at the heart of democracy and the disdain for that process that was displayed in the Afghanistan elections gives me great pause. The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) recently released his quarterly report which detailed our nation's efforts to work with contractors and the Afghanistan government to prevent fraud and enhance transparency. The task of establishing legitimate governing practices remains formidable. A November 17, 2009

report from Transparency International listed Afghanistan as the second most corrupt country in the world, continuing its second straight year of declining in the corruption index. Such news is disparaging and provides an important dynamic to how we consider our strategy with regards to Afghanistan going forward.

As Co-Chair of the Congressional U.S.-Afghanistan Caucus, I have called for policies that allow the United States to provide benefits to the people of Afghanistan. Our effort must enhance our efforts at building both hard and soft infrastructure in Afghanistan. As I said before this committee on October 15, "Change in Afghanistan is going to come through schools and roads, through health care and economic opportunity, and through increased trade and exchange." Ambassador Eikenberry, I would like to hear from you a status update of USAID's activities in Afghanistan and how Mission Director William Frej is proceeding.

Although development to improve the lives of the Afghan people is important, defeating al-Qaeda, and the threat they pose to America and our allies is the most important objective of our operations. To that end, I believe that Pakistan, not Afghanistan, is now the key to success and stability in the region. Over the past eight years, Coalition Forces have successfully pushed most of al-Qaeda out of Afghanistan and into Pakistan. This has not only put them outside the mandate of our forces, but has also forced Pakistan to address an enlarged terrorist threat.

President Obama spoke of the importance of Pakistan when he noted "America will remain a strong supporter of Pakistan's security and prosperity long after the guns have fallen silent, so that the great potential of its people can be unleashed." As the Co-Chair of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, I know, first hand, of the great potential of

the Pakistani people, and I strongly believe that the recently approved assistance package to Pakistan will work to this end. U.S. foreign assistance to Pakistan will improve Pakistan's capacity to address terrorist networks within its own borders, but I worry that a troop increase will cause even more refugees and insurgents to cross into Pakistan.

Ultimately, we in Congress must decide what is in the best interest of the American people. At this time, I remain unconvinced that the projected gain from sending 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan is the best use of $30 billion from the perspective of the citizens of America or the citizens of Afghanistan. I hope our witnesses will shed light on how they define success in Afghanistan, as well as how the troop surge will achieve our objectives.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, I yield back the remainder of my time.

Congressman Michael E. McMahon (NY)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan – PART II
Thursday, December 10, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from the Honorable Karl W. Eikenberry, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan,
U.S. Department of State

Question:

Ambassador Eikenberry, in the most recent quarterly report to Congress on the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan (SIGAR), General Arnold Fields stressed the need for improved integration, not only amongst international actors, but amongst our own US agencies, as well. General Fields mentioned the need for a comprehensive database to view other agency projects in Afghanistan. Secretary Fields in his report wrote, "The inspector general community is acutely aware of the need to coordinate its work to maximize oversight, avoid duplication and minimize demands on the implementing agencies." Has there been any progress on such a database? How can Congress help?

Answer:

USAID currently has a database in place called Afghan Info, which is accessible by USAID and Dept. of State. This database tracks the development activities of the United States Agency for International Development and, starting at the end of the first quarter 2010, it will track the Department of State activities. Discussions are currently ongoing with the Department of Defense to include their development related activities in this database. Afghan Info is managed by U.S. government direct hire personnel with data collected on a quarterly basis. Currently, the database accounts for approximately $900 million of U.S. assistance in 7,000 locations implemented in FY2009 throughout Afghanistan. The next update will occur shortly and will include project sites and disbursement amounts for the first quarter of FY2010.

Congressman Michael E. McMahon (NY)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan – PART II
Thursday, December 10, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from General Stanley A. McChrystal, Commander, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A), U.S. Department of Defense

Question:

General McChrystal, last month Ambassador Holbrooke mentioned that the United States was being out-communicated by extremists. In your memo to the President, (COMISAF) you speak of the need for a comprehensive strategic communications strategy. Would you please detail this further? Will the Afghan people be incorporated into this strategy? How many of our forces will be engaged in developing and executing this strategy?

Answer:

ISAF's communication mission is to increase public perceptions of legitimacy for both NATO-ISAF and GIRoA, and inspire the Afghan population to play an increasingly active role in their own security, governance, and development. More specifically, ISAF will plan, align, and execute external and internal messaging, as coordinated with interagency, international and Afghan partners, to increase positive perceptions of ISAF and GIRoA intentions, goals and commitment. These messaging efforts will incorporate all communication capabilities, efforts, and considerations, to include Information Operations, Public Affairs, Public Diplomacy, etc. Moreover, when sources of negative influence on public support are identified, ISAF will develop robust and detailed plans to counter these sources, particularly the insurgency's manipulation of public perception.

This strategy incorporates Afghans both as audiences and as participants. As they become convinced of ISAF and GIRoA legitimacy and necessity to participate and contribute to Afghanistan's success, Traditional Communication efforts will, by word of mouth, spread this message. More tangibly the Joint Media Operations Center will house a completely partnered

ISAF-Afghan media operations organization to enable shared situational awareness and consistent information sharing internally and externally.

The full complement of ISAF military personnel will participate in this effort – approximately 105K at present, and some 150K by the end of 2010. The point is that every person acts, and our actions communicate.

In terms of personnel shaping the strategy, its execution, and its assessment, approximately 500 ISAF military and contractors will be engaged in this effort.

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (FL)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan – PART II
Thursday, December 10, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from the Honorable Karl W. Eikenberry, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, U.S. Department of State

1. In the 1980's, the Afghan people were able to defeat the Russians without a huge influx of American troops. Instead, the U.S. provided weapons and training to the Afghans so they could drive out their Communist invaders. If this model worked against the Russians, why do we need so many American troops in Afghanistan today? Why couldn't we just arm the Afghans so they could defeat the Taliban on their own like they defeated the Russians in the 1980's?

Answer:

Developing native Afghan ability to resist the Taliban and other insurgents is at the very center of our strategy. The addition of 30,000 U.S. troops will bolster Afghan National Security Forces and aims to achieve three ends to enable the Afghans to take over their own security by: 1) training Afghan National Security Forces – both police and army; 2) creating space for the Afghan government to deliver services to its people in order to win their allegiance; 3) set conditions to enable us to transition security responsibility to the Afghans while developing Afghan governance.

In July, 2011, our troops will begin to come home. While they are on the ground, these troops are meant to help us achieve the President's narrowly-defined goal of disrupting, dismantling, and defeating al-Qaeda and its extremist allies, a task the Afghan National Security Forces are not yet prepared to shoulder alone.

President Karzai and his government clearly want to reserve responsibility for Afghanistan's self defense and internal security to Afghanistan's legally-constituted national

security forces. We support Afghan efforts to secure their own country and are working hard with their government to ensure a timely transition to Afghan-led security.

2. Earlier this week, President Karzai said that Afghanistan would not be able to pay for its own security until at least 2024. In essence, President Karzai is saying that Afghanistan will need our military and financial assistance for at least another 15 years. Do you agree with President Karzai's assessment that U.S. troops may have to remain in Afghanistan until at least 2024?

Answer:

The President stated in his speech at West Point that we will begin a process in July 2011 that will transfer responsibility and security to the Afghan Government. This drawdown of our military forces and the nature of our commitment in Afghanistan will evolve over time. Initially, the military surge will provide needed combat support to reverse the Taliban's momentum and stabilize the situation. As areas become more secure, we will focus transferring security to the Afghan National Security Forces on a district-by-district basis. Our civilian commitment and some, much reduced, military presence must continue so that we can strengthen economic and governmental institutions at every level of Afghan society to prevent Afghanistan from descending into chaos as our combat forces return home. Ultimately these efforts will result in a self sufficient Afghan government that can provide for its own security while serving its people.

3. According to a report in the Washington Post, a senior U.S. military intelligence official in Kabul said there are perhaps fewer than 100 members of al-Qaeda left in the country. If this is indeed the case, why can't we defeat al-Qaeda with a smaller troop footprint even using Special Forces to search and destroy this enemy with the support of the CIA?

Answer:

Given the ties between the Taliban and al-Qaeda, our long-term strategy in Afghanistan must include developing Afghan National Security Forces so they are capable of preventing the re-establishment of Taliban rule and al-Qaeda sanctuary in Afghanistan. Additional international

military presence, including U.S. troops, to train and assist Afghanistan's national security forces, is necessary to achieve this goal. In the short-term, this will allow us to target al-Qaeda when its members cross into Afghanistan. In the long-term it will enable us to provide the Afghans the capacity to prevent al-Qaeda from returning to Afghanistan and the Taliban from regaining control of the country. Over time, we expect to focus increasingly on training of the Afghan security forces, and civilian support for the development of Afghan governance and the economy.

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (FL)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan – PART II
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Questions for the Record

Response from General Stanley A. McChrystal, Commander, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A), U.S. Department of Defense

1. In the 1980's, the Afghan people were able to defeat the Russians without a huge influx of American troops. Instead, the U.S. provided weapons and training to the Afghans so they could drive out their Communist invaders. If this model worked against the Russians, why do we need so many American troops in Afghanistan today? Why couldn't we just arm the Afghans so they could defeat the Taliban on their own like they defeated the Russians in the 1980's?

Answer:

The troops from the U.S., Allied, and partner nations are necessary to reverse the Taliban-led insurgency's momentum, and provide the time and space needed to develop sufficient Afghan security and governance capabilities to prevent subsequent Taliban resurgence.

2. Earlier this week, President Karzai said that Afghanistan would not be able to pay for its own security until at least 2024. In essence, President Karzai is saying that Afghanistan will need our military and financial assistance for at least another 15 years. Do you agree with President Karzai's assessment that U.S. troops may have to remain in Afghanistan until at least 2024?

Answer:

As the President articulated in his 1 December announcement, U.S. combat forces will begin the process of transition to our Afghan partners in July 2011. This transition will take place at different times in different provinces, and will be executed responsibly, taking into account conditions on the ground. It will also include the reduction, at varying levels and speeds, of U.S. forces in "transitioned" areas. Coalition forces will be replaced by trained and capable Afghan forces.

July 2011 is the beginning of a process. It is when we begin the responsible drawdown of our forces continuing the responsible hand-off of missions to our Afghan partners. There is no determination of how long this will take and there is not a pre-determined withdrawal date after July 2011. This allows us to have flexibility to conduct our mission, but sends two clear messages to the Afghan Government; that we are not an occupying forces and that they will have to assume responsibility for their country.

3. According to a report in the Washington Post, a senior U.S. military intelligence official in Kabul said there are perhaps fewer than 100 members of al-Qaeda left in the country. If this is indeed the case, why can't we defeat al-Qaeda with a smaller troop footprint even using Special Forces to search and destroy this enemy with the support of the CIA?

Answer:

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.

Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, despite being under pressure, are taking advantage of instability and insecurity in the region to try and increase their strength and influence. The President's decision to send 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan aims to reverse insurgent momentum and strength while providing the time and space necessary for the Afghans to develop enough security and governance capacity to stabilize their own country.

Rep. Christopher Smith (NJ)
U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan – PART II
Thursday, December 10, 2009
Questions for the Record

Response from the Honorable Karl W. Eikenberry, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, U.S. Department of State

1. Could you please describe our strategic communications strategy?

Answer:

Our Afghanistan Communication Plan is designed to demonstrate America's commitment to Afghanistan, support President Obama's agenda, strengthen Afghan institutions and moderate voices, counter insurgent messaging, and enhance America's enduring partnership with the people of Afghanistan. This plan aims to reduce the ability of al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and other extremists to influence public perceptions and attitudes; support Afghanistan's people and government as they establish a more secure, moderate, just, and lasting state; and to demonstrate American commitment and strengthen the partnership between Afghanistan and the United States. Our communications plan is designed explicitly to provide mutual support with our integrated civilian-military campaign plan.

We face several communications challenges in Afghanistan and Pakistan, including: insurgents mix messaging, intimidation, fear, and hostile actions to achieve their goals; the ability of the U.S., Coalition, and GIRoA to directly suppress or compete with the insurgents' message is inadequate; our ability, and that of our Afghan partners, to influence attitudes, perceptions and behaviors, is not strong enough; and, we must amplify moderate voices in Afghan civil society.

To meet these challenges it is imperative that we communicate effectively with the Afghan and Pakistani peoples and governments. In order to be successful, our strategy devotes resources along four key avenues to: ***expanding media engagement*** by the U.S. mission and U.S. military commands and fostering a parallel engagement by the Afghan government; ***building communication capacity*** of the Afghan people and government; ***countering extremist voices*** that recruit, mislead, and exploit; and ***strengthening people-to-people*** ties to demonstrate commitment and deepen the partnership between Afghanistan and the United States.

2. What are the various roles and responsibilities assigned to information operations, psychological operations, public affairs (with respect to the DOD) and public diplomacy (as it relates to the State Department)?

Answer:

Our Afghanistan Communication Plan is designed to support our integrated civilian-military campaign plan. Though different agencies and departments have different mandates when it comes to Communication, there is very active cooperation and coordination between Embassy Kabul's Public Affairs section, ISAF Communication Offices, our Regional Command and PRT Public Affairs, and other government agencies through regular meetings and planning sessions. This collaboration is not only conducted by the Embassy's Public Affairs team, but with members from all Embassy sections – Economic, Political, USAID, Treasury, USDA, to name a few. ISAF liaison officers work with the Embassy team on a daily basis and help ensure close coordination.

Because it is impossible to completely separate roles and responsibilities in the information arena, we integrate and coordinate constantly, and we follow common principles. Some of the principles that guide all of our work, be it State or Defense, are

adaptability (fast response; targeted messages for distinct audiences); clearly providing facts ; projecting strength (showing our commitment to helping Afghans build a better future); showing respect (fostering dialogue; building Afghan government institutions); and stressing the shared goals of the Afghan people and the international community.

Our new civilian strategy is under consolidated leadership at the Embassy and follows four key avenues: Expanding Media Engagement; Building Communications Capacity; Countering Extremist Messaging; and Strengthening People-to-People Ties. ISAF has also revamped its efforts through an integrated communication team with increased resources. Information operations and psychological operations run by ISAF are also now better coordinated, including with civilian partners, under a joint civil-military campaign plan. To ensure all of our efforts are mutually supportive, the Embassy interacts daily with all ISAF communication sections, from ISAF Public Affairs to their Information Operations Task Force. This is true in Kabul and in the field, where senior civilian communication experts work with Regional Commands, PRTs and Task Force commanders and their staffs to ensure our public messaging and our information and psychological operations all support our overall effort in Afghanistan.

Finally, we work closely with our Afghan partners at every level on both the civilian and military side.

3. What are your objectives and supporting objectives, and how are they being translated into plans and programs? Please elaborate.

Answer:

Our primary objective is to disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat al-Qaeda. We are working to achieve this through improving security, governance, and

reconstruction and development. All of our efforts are aimed at building Afghan capacity in these areas, with the ultimate goal of putting Afghanistan in the position of being able to stand on its own two feet, and normalizing our relationship with the Afghan government. We seek an Afghanistan that is able to defend itself, maintain its internal security, run its internal affairs, and relate with its neighbors through normal diplomatic practice.

Translating these into objectives and supporting objectives is done through a rigorous planning exercise that occurs at all levels in Afghanistan: provincial, regional, and national. Our Provincial Reconstruction Teams, maneuver battalions and task forces, regional commands, and Embassy are active participants in this process as are our allies and partners. S/CRS in the State Department is responsible for managing the planning process, and has representatives at all levels in Afghanistan, and back here in the Department, who are working diligently to ensure that our plans and programs make sense, support our objectives, and are measurable.

State Department representatives in the field in Afghanistan have one and three year plans to help guide their efforts, and these have been coordinated with their civilian colleagues from USAID and USDA, and their American, allied and partner military colleagues. These plans and programs are available to all our civilian and military personnel in the field and in Kabul.

Statistics and qualitative assessments sent in from the field are factored into quarterly, inter-agency assessments that State prepares, which are shared with Congress.

4. How is this being implemented at the regional, country-team, and tactical levels? Please elaborate.

Answer:

Implementation of our governance and development plans and programs are coordinated at all levels with our military counterparts. At the Provincial and District level, we have civilian employees who work for USAID, USDA and the State Department on their agencies' respective governance and development projects. Based in Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and District Support Teams (DSTs), each team has a lead civilian representative, who serves as the commander's civilian counterpart. The lead civilians coordinate closely with the military commanders of the PRTs to ensure civilian and military projects reinforce one another, and support our objectives in all the lines of effort, including security.

Each of those civilians reports to a civilian supervisor at the Regional Command level (or where appropriate also through the battalion / Task Force level between PRTs and Regional Commands). Similarly, the PRT commander at a given PRT reports to a military superior at his or her respective Battalion and Regional Command. This ensures that civilian-military coordination on all matters – including security, governance and development – occurs at the Regional Command level.

If matters need to go higher for review or resolution, the civilians send them to the U.S. Embassy, while the military personnel send them to the U.S. and ISAF Commands in Kabul. Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal have a close working relationship and meet regularly to share views and coordinate activities.

At the national-level we have also created a dozen civ-mil working groups to improve coordination on key issues and to support work in the field. The net effect of this is that we have developed synchronized civilian-military chains of command, to ensure coordination of our plans and programs at each level: district, provincial, regional, and national.

So far, this has promoted coordination on security, governance, development and other issues. But as our military and civilian demands increase, we will need to adapt our mechanisms to ensure our work is linked together across civ-mil and U.S.-Afghan lines, both at the Afghan national and sub-national levels.

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This strategy incorporates Afghans both as audiences and as participants. As they become convinced of ISAF and GIRoA legitimacy and necessity to participate and contribute to Afghanistan's success, traditional communication efforts will, by word of mouth, spread this message. More tangibly the Joint Media Operations Center will house

a partnered ISAF-Afghan media operations organization to enable shared situational awareness and consistent information sharing internally and externally.

2. What are the various roles and responsibilities assigned to information operations, psychological operations, public affairs (with respect to the DOD) and public diplomacy (as it relates to the State Department)?

Answer:

The various roles and responsibilities assigned to ISAF information operations (IO); psychological operations (PSYOP), public affairs (PA), and defense support of public diplomacy (DSPD) remain consistent as outlined in current DOD Policy and Joint Doctrine. IO integrates five core capabilities (electronic warfare, computer network operations, PSYOP, military deception, and operations security) in concert with the specified supporting capabilities (information assurance, physical security, physical attack, counter-intelligence, and combat camera) and related capabilities (PA, civil-military operations, and DSPD) to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp adversarial human and automated decision-making, while protecting our own.

As a core capability of IO, PSYOP consists of planned operations to convey information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence emotions, motives, objective reasoning and ultimately behavior. PSYOP carries the special distinction and responsibility of being the only DOD operations authorized to influence foreign target audiences through the use of radio, print, and more sophisticated and emerging media. This distinction and its inherent potential for strategic effects when employed at any level necessitate the additional responsibility to ensure that all PSYOP are conducted under the authority of interagency-coordinated and OSD-approved PSYOP programs.

Separate from PSYOP in both organization and purpose, PA's roles include public information, command information, and community relations activities with a principal focus of informing domestic and international audiences of ongoing operations. Whether through relaying the truth of insurgents' cultural and religious violations and anti-Islamic and indiscriminate use of violence and terror or by communicating the tragedy of a civilian casualty incident with speed and transparency, PA's role of countering insurgent misinformation and disinformation by being 'first with the truth' serve to exploit the cultural and ideological separation of the insurgents from the vast majority of the Afghan population and strengthens our credibility. Although necessarily distinct, PSYOP and PA staffs closely coordinate and cooperate to achieve information superiority. Key to this is maintaining credibility with their respective audiences.

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