

Posture Statement of
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Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Before the 110th Congress
House Armed Services Committee

Chairman Skelton, Representative Hunter, distinguished members of the committee, I am privileged to appear before you and report to you on the posture of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Let me begin by recognizing and thanking our Service members and their families. The brave men and women who answer the noble call to defend our Nation and the spouses, children and parents who support them are our most valuable national asset.

Your Armed Forces, and their families, have faced the challenges of continuous combat for more than six years. Our men and women in uniform serve our Nation, accepting unwelcome separation from their loved ones, long hard work under difficult circumstances, and in some cases making the ultimate sacrifice.

Military families are equally deserving of our gratitude. They bear the brunt of the loneliness, the uncertainty, and the grief that too often comes home when our Armed Forces are at war. Acknowledging the importance of their support, we must consider new initiatives such as transferring GI bill benefits to military spouses and children, military spouse employment support, expanded childcare and youth programs, and long-term comprehensive support of Wounded Warrior families.

We must provide our Service members and their families with the leadership, the resources and the support required to defend the homeland, win the Long War, promote security, deter conflict, and win our Nation's wars.

Introduction

Over the past year your Armed Forces have done much to improve the security environment. Operating globally alongside allies and partners, often in concert with the interagency and non-governmental organizations, they have successfully protected our Nation's vital interests: a homeland secure from catastrophic attack, assured access to strategic resources, a strong national and global economy, sustained military superiority and strategic endurance, and sustained global influence, leadership, and freedom of action.

A diverse set of perils threaten those interests and demand sustained action. Those threats include the proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology, transnational terrorism and rising regional instability. Today, these challenges manifest themselves most clearly in the Middle East.

We face additional challenges in other areas: a number of state actors who appear intent on undermining U.S. interests and regional stability, a growing global competition for scarce natural resources, the constant threat of natural disasters and pandemics, as well as increasing cyber and Space threats. Our military is capable of responding to all threats to our vital national interests, but is significantly stressed while conducting combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and other operations worldwide as part of this multigenerational conflict against violent extremism. A decline in our strength or a gap in readiness will undermine the U.S. Armed Forces capability to complete its range of missions from combat overseas to providing civil support at home. That is why I believe we must reset, reconstitute, and revitalize our Armed Forces while balancing global risk.

We do not—and should not—face these challenges alone. Today, more nations are free, peaceful, and prosperous than at almost any point

in history. While each has its own heritage and interests, most share our desire for security and stability. Increasing free trade, regional security partnerships, treaties, international institutions, and military-to-military engagements and capacity building strengthen the bonds between us and other nations. Our engagement with allies and friends demonstrates our leadership and resolve to fulfill security commitments, and works toward the common good. Most often, it is by taking collective action—and not going it alone—that we increase our ability to protect our vital interests.

With this context in mind, and in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, I have set three strategic priorities for our military. First, we need to increase stability and defend our vital national interests in the broader Middle East. Second, we must reset, reconstitute, and revitalize our Armed Forces. Third, we need to deter conflict and be prepared to defeat foes globally by rebalancing our strategic risk. Finally, to achieve our objectives in each of these areas we need to place increased emphasis not only on development of our own capabilities and the capacity of other agencies (State, USAID, Agriculture, Treasury, and Commerce and so forth), but also on building the capacity of our foreign partners to counter threats including terrorism and to promote regional stability.

Defend Our Vital National Interests in the broader Middle East

Although our vital national interests are clearly global in nature, the broader Middle East is the epicenter of violent extremism. Too many countries suffer from burgeoning populations and stagnant economies, which have increased radicalization. State and non-state actors alike foment instability. Terrorists and insurgents are at war with

governments in the region. The confrontational posture of Iranian leaders with respect to nuclear proliferation, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Sunni-Shia rivalries, the threat of terrorism, tensions in Pakistan, Hezbollah in Lebanon, political instability in the Maghreb, and the existence of Al-Qaeda and like-minded groups, all threaten regional stability and, ultimately, our vital national interests.

My near-term focus remains combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The surge of U.S. forces to Iraq, a well executed counter-insurgency strategy and an Iraqi population increasingly weary of violence, and willing to do something about it, have all combined to improve security conditions throughout much of the country. Violent activities against our forces and against the Iraqi people have substantially decreased. These reductions have come about because of the hard work of Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces and the decisions of the Iraqi people and their leaders. Insurgent activity is down and Al Qaeda in Iraq is on the run—although both remain dangerous. Much hard fighting remains for Iraqi and Coalition forces before the job is done. Increased security has promoted reconciliation in some key provinces and the beginnings of national level reconciliation. We are working to secure a long-term security relationship with Iraq that will serve the mutual interests of both countries. As we continue to progress forward, Congressional support of future war funding will remain critical to success. An important component of that funding will go to building the capacity of increasingly capable Iraqi security forces.

Security is a necessary condition but is not sufficient for achieving our strategic end-state in Iraq. Political, diplomatic and economic development together with expanded governance and the rule of law form the foundations that will underpin long term stability and security in Iraq. We are making solid progress, but we still have a long way to go. I ask that Congress continue its support for increased interagency

participation in Provincial Reconstruction Teams, stability and reconstruction initiatives, U.S. business investment, DoD business transformation efforts, and good governance initiatives. I encourage your continued emphasis on the importance of achieving political and economic goals. Your visits with the Iraqi government and other Iraqi political leaders support the efforts of American, Coalition, and Iraqi forces.

In Afghanistan we are seeing a growing insurgency, increasing violence, and a burgeoning drug trade fueled by widespread poppy cultivation. In response, more U.S. forces will deploy to Afghanistan. At the same time, the Afghan National Army and Police have increased in numbers and capability. The Afghan Provincial Reconstruction Teams continue to aid the local populations, and President Hamid Karzai is reaching out to support the provinces. In the U.S. section of RC East, access to basic health care has more than doubled and provincial councils have become functioning entities active in development. NATO forces provide a credible fighting force, but the alliance still faces difficulty meeting its force level commitments and some nations' forces in theater must be more operationally flexible. These challenges emphasize the importance of retaining U.S. freedom of action on a global scale. Just as in Iraq, your continued support for funding U.S. operations and efforts there, including PRTs, Afghanistan National Security Force development, and infrastructure development, is needed.

In short, a stable Iraq and Afghanistan that are long-term partners and share our commitment to peace will be critical to achieving regional stability and security. This will require years, not months, and will require the support of the American people, our regional allies, and concerted action by the Iraqi and Afghan people and their leaders.

I see daily reminders of other challenges in this part of the world. Recent irresponsible actions by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps

in the Strait of Hormuz could have led to a crisis between our nations. Restraint in our response does not signal lack of resolve or capability to defend ourselves against threats. Much more worrisome in the long term, however, is Iran's hegemonic intent, their continued refusal to verifiably suspend uranium enrichment, their continued support of terrorism and the resultant instability these actions foster throughout the region.

Al Qaeda safe havens in the under-governed regions of Pakistan, combined with the recent assassination of Benazir Bhutto, also contribute to regional instability. In my judgment, the most likely near term attack on the United States will come from Al Qaeda via these safe havens. Continued Congressional support for the legitimate government of Pakistan braces this bulwark in the long war against violent extremism.

Despite—or maybe because of—these diverse challenges, we are fortunate to enjoy the cooperation of many courageous partner nations in the region. A recent regional commitment to work toward an Israeli-Palestinian peace accord is one example. We should not inadvertently signal ingratitude toward any of these nations. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) are programs that have the potential to have significant strategic repercussions. I therefore seek Congressional support to ensure the Department of State's FMF and IMET programs remains fully funded.

After three visits to the Middle East since becoming Chairman, I am more convinced than ever that we will not achieve regional security and stability unless we strengthen all instruments of international cooperation, regional partnerships, and national power. We need to ensure our plans sustain current gains and chart a course that both capitalize on lessons learned while focusing on future demands and dynamic conditions on the ground. Our forces must remain in theater as

long as necessary to secure our vital interests and those of our partner nations, and they must operate with the full confidence and support of the American people and the Congress.

Reset, Reconstitute, and Revitalize our Forces

To be successful in defeating our enemies and deterring potential foes, U.S. Armed Forces require talented people who are fully trained in their specialties and well equipped with warfighting systems. The pace of ongoing operations has prevented our forces from fully training for the full-spectrum of operations and impacts our ability to be ready to counter future threats. This lack of balance is unsustainable in the long-term. We must restore the balance and strategic depth required for national security. Continued operations without the requisite increase in national resources will further degrade our equipment, platforms and people.

Our Nation's servicemen and women—and their families—are the primary focus of my efforts to reset, reconstitute, and revitalize our forces. Caring for them is a critical consideration in every decision I make. Our All-Volunteer Force continues to meet the requirements and demands of national security, but with great sacrifice. This is the longest time that our All-Volunteer Force has been at war. Our Service members, in particular our ground forces and their families, are under significant strain. However, they remain dedicated, they are resilient and combat hardened, and they are taking the fight to our enemies. I do not take their service for granted and recognize that their resilience has limits. I am extremely concerned about the toll the current pace of operations is taking on them and on their families, on our equipment,

and on our ability to respond to crises and contingencies beyond ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Secretary of Defense fixed and limited deployment cycles at fifteen months deployed/twelve months home for the Army, seven months deployed/seven months home for the Marines, and one year mobilization with five years back for the National Guard and Reserves. I strongly support his decision as it stabilized rotations and provided predictability. However, at our current force levels, we cannot sustain these cycles. Fifteen month deployments are too long. To preserve personal, operational, and family readiness, we must shift the Army's deployment cycle to twelve months deployed followed by twelve months at home and then as quickly as possible to twelve months deployed followed by twenty-four months at home. We must do the same for the Marine Corps by moving to fourteen months at home for each seven month deployment. Therefore, the most important investment in the President's fiscal year 2009 budget is the commitment to expand our Army, Marine Corps, and Special Operations Forces. This continuation of the "Grow the Force" initiative is a long-term plan to restore the broad range of capabilities necessary to meet future challenges and restore a capacity for sustained action. This commitment encompasses nearly 33 percent of the total real growth of the DoD budget from fiscal year 2008 to 2009.

Recruiters have a tough job during peacetime and it is made even more difficult now given the expansion of both the Army and the Marine Corps and the decrease in the propensity of key influencers to encourage potential recruits to enlist during this period of war. In spite of these challenges, our recruiters are doing exceptional work. The military departments met their recruiting goals for fiscal year 2007 and remain on track for fiscal year 2008. We are also making sure we retain the people and the skills we need. The Services are using the full range of

authorities given to them by Congress in the form of retention incentives, and I ask your continued support for these programs to sustain our combat-experienced force. Last year, the Army and Navy employed the Critical Skills Retention Bonus to retain mid-career active duty officers who fill key positions. Likewise, the Services have offered bonuses to senior enlisted members of our Special Operations Forces. Investment in our people as our most important resource is vital. The cost of people continues to grow and we need to recognize this as we debate the right level of investment in defense.

Retention challenges impact more than just our active duty forces. Though they met their recruiting and retention goals this last year, the Army Reserve and National Guard have experienced some shortages in company grade officers and mid-grade non-commissioned officers who lead our troops. We are overcoming these personnel shortfalls through enhanced incentives for Reserve and National Guard service, flexibility in terms of service requirements, competitive pay, and enhanced retirement benefits. These initiatives are important steps towards transitioning the Reserve Components from a “strategic reserve” role to part of the “operational reserve,” creating the depth and staying power to respond to multiple global requirements, and maintaining our professional Guard and Reserve force.

Maintaining our professional Armed Forces, however, takes more than talented recruiters, attractive incentives, and competitive pay. We must understand our next generation of Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen. Their affinity for technology and collaboration may revolutionize the way we fight. The willingness of future generations of Americans to serve is directly related to how they, and their role models, perceive the veterans of today are treated and appreciated. The All-Volunteer Force depends upon the trust and confidence of the American people in our institution; it depends on trust and confidence in our leaders; and, it

depends upon trust and confidence that America's sons and daughters will be well-trained, well-equipped, and well-cared for in peace and in war.

While all our service members and their families have done their duty with great discipline and honor, one group in particular stands out: our returning Wounded Warriors and the parents, spouses and family members who care for them when they come home. As a Nation, we have an obligation to care for those who have borne the battle and who bear both the seen and unseen scars of war. Their sacrifices will not end following completion of their initial treatment. We should strive to provide only the finest medical and rehabilitative care for them and their families for the remainder of their lives.

As leaders, we must ensure all our Wounded Warriors and their families receive the appropriate level of care, training, and financial support they need to become as self-sufficient and lead as normal a life as possible. Our support can mean the difference not just between life and death, but between a life of severe disability and one of manageable limitations. To the degree that we fail to care for them and their families, and enable their return to as normal a life as possible, we undermine the trust and confidence of the American people and ultimately put at risk the preservation of our professional All-Volunteer Force.

It is also imperative that we retain the experience of our combat hardened leaders. We live in a dangerous and unpredictable world and in a time of incredible change. I believe this change will accelerate, not slow down. Today's combat veterans are the ones that will take our military into the future. Their experience in fighting terrorists and insurgents as well as caring for those wounded on the fields of battle will enable us to better prepare for the challenges of tomorrow, but we cannot afford to lose their hard earned experience today.

In addition to taking care of our people, we must repair, rebuild, and replace the equipment that has been destroyed, damaged, stressed, and worn out beyond economic repair after years of combat operations. As you are well aware, Service equipment has been used at higher rates and in harsher conditions than anticipated. In addition to the wear and tear experienced by our ground vehicles in Iraq and Afghanistan, our airframes and ships are aging beyond their intended service lives. Indeed since Desert Storm, seventeen years ago, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy have flown near continuous combat missions over the Middle East and the Balkans. The impact of this usage is illustrated in the recent groundings of the oldest F-15 Eagle fighters, our repeated request to retire some of our C-130 Hercules and KC-135 Stratotankers, and the strains placed on our twenty-nine year old P-3 Orion reconnaissance aircraft.

Despite usage levels sometimes five to six times above peacetime rates, and in the midst of extremely demanding environments, equipment readiness in theater remains high, well above the peacetime goals. Your support has been helpful in accomplishing this mark. However, this high in-theater equipment readiness comes with a price—namely the impact on the remainder of the Service equipment. For example, our ground forces borrow equipment from non-deploying units in order to equip deploying units. While our deploying units are fully resourced to meet the challenges of the fight that they are in, we must get ahead of this challenge.

Our forces are relying upon the balance of funds requested in the fiscal year 2008 Global War on Terror request to accomplish equipment reset and to address readiness shortfalls. I urge the Congress to quickly appropriate the remaining GWOT request for fiscal year 2008, as it is essential to have continued, predictable, and adequate funding for the repair and replacement of both operational and training equipment. I

also ask for your continued support for our upcoming fiscal year 2009 Global War on Terror funding request.

Revitalization includes force recapitalization, modernization, transformation, re-stationing, and repositioning, along with personnel and family support programs. A revitalized force creates a vital deterrent effect. Preventing future wars is as important as winning wars. Such prevention requires global presence and persistent engagement. A revitalized force provides the means to expand cooperative relationships with other nations and contribute to a global capacity to promote security and stability for the benefit of all. A revitalized force will also ensure that we remain prepared to meet our global responsibilities.

Finally, a revitalized force is central to balancing global strategic risk. A revitalized force is a balanced total joint force, capable of operating across the spectrum of conflict. A balanced force possesses the capability and capacity to successfully conduct multiple simultaneous missions, in all domains, and at the required levels of organization, across the full range of military operations. A modernized, balanced total joint force is necessary if we are to successfully answer enduring and emerging challenges, and win our Nation's wars.

Properly Balanced Global Strategic Risk

Beyond the Middle East, and in addition to revitalizing our forces, we must take a worldwide and long term view of our posture and its implications for global strategic risk. We have global security responsibilities across the range of military operations. The challenges in Asia to the vital interests of the U.S. and our allies are an example.

We must be sized, shaped, and postured globally to leverage the opportunities for international cooperation and build the capacity of

partners for stability, while at the same time, deterring, confronting and preparing for profound dangers of the future. I am concerned, as are the Combatant Commanders, that we do not have sufficient resources to meet all the needs. By working with other growing powers, and by helping emerging powers become constructive actors, we can ensure today's dynamic environment does not devolve into a prolonged state of conflict and disorder.

The imbalance between our readiness for future global missions and the wars we are fighting today limits our capacity to respond to future contingencies, and offers potential adversaries, both state and non-state, incentives to act. We must not allow the challenges of today to keep us from being prepared for the realities of tomorrow. There is risk that we will be unable to rapidly respond to future threats to our vital national interests.

Funding by the Congress is critical to restoring balance in the long term. But resources alone are not enough. We must think more creatively, more deeply, and more systematically about how to best use our resources. We have learned a great deal about how to leverage modern technology and interagency participation to counter terrorism—those lessons can be shared with our partner nations, and applied to other security threats such as our Nation's counter narcotics efforts. Similarly, our new maritime strategy emphasizes the importance of leveraging other nation's capabilities. The growing interdependency of the community of nations will continue to offer similar opportunities. I support the United States' accession to the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention, and I believe that joining the Convention will strengthen our military's ability to conduct operations.

Our enduring alliances and partnerships promote stability and security. The twenty-six nation North Atlantic Treaty Organization leads the effort to help extend security and stability inside Afghanistan.

Australia and Japan have also made key contributions to operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Another key ally, the Republic of Korea, has supported Operation Iraqi Freedom for the past three years—and continues to maintain a robust national commitment to security in Northeast Asia. Singapore and the Philippines work with us to counter international terrorist threats in Southeast Asia. Colombia’s highly successful counterinsurgency struggle promotes stability in a critical region of South America. Our military to military relationships with Mexico and Canada are laying the ground work for greater Homeland Security. Enhancing our teamwork with our allies and partners is essential if we are to protect our shared interests.

Persistent engagement and capacity building with allies and international partners is a key means of properly balancing global strategic risk. Persistent engagement consists of those cooperative activities that build partner capacity, provide humanitarian assistance, counter common threats, and safeguard the global commons. As I noted earlier, we need to fully fund our Foreign Military Finance and International Military Education and Training programs and streamline the process for executing these and similar funds. Fostering and sustaining cooperative relationships with friends around the world contributes significantly to our shared security and global prosperity. Relationships take time to grow—and they require investment to stay strong.

In many cases, other countries have significant competencies, relationships, and resources that can promote security and stability. One way to build relationships with other nations is to help them accomplish the goals they cannot achieve alone. Helping other nations overcome security problems within their borders by increasing stability and eliminating terrorist safe havens bolsters our security as it boosts theirs. Our Theater Security Cooperation programs also form a

foundation for shared and interoperable response to contingencies. Regional Combatant Commands—such as U.S. Northern Command, U.S. Southern Command, and U.S. Africa Command—are being structured with interagency and international relationships in mind to boost our security and humanitarian assistance capabilities, and to foster long-term U.S. military relationships with regional nations and security institutions.

Legislation that increases the expeditionary capacity of civilian U.S. government agencies is critical to rebalancing global strategic risk. Increasing the ability of the U.S. government, as a whole, to deal with crises reduces the strain on our military forces. We need to empower the State Department to help other countries prevent and recover from conflict. I also fully endorse increased support for our intelligence agencies' global activities – upon which our Armed Forces depend. We additionally need to look at increasing the capacity of other U.S. government agencies—such as the Justice and Agriculture Departments, which are otherwise oriented on domestic missions—to help contribute civil expertise that the military lacks in stabilization and capacity building missions overseas.

Rebalancing strategic risk also means addressing capability gaps. The technology advantage that we have long enjoyed has eroded, with significant ramifications. Interruption of our access to cyberspace could substantively damage our national defense and civil society. Addressing this threat, the President's budget for fiscal year 2009 includes funds to reduce our cyber vulnerabilities. Likewise, freedom of action in Space is vital to our economic, civil, and military well being. We need to increase our capacity to defend our access to that domain. We must also address shortfalls identified by our Combatant Commanders in our Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance sensors and processing infrastructure.

Fighting and winning wars is the main mission, but deterring them is always preferable. This is even more the case in deterring nuclear threats. We now face the prospect that nuclear weapons will be employed against us and our allies by non-state actors and rogue states. To defend our Nation and assure our allies, we must enhance our capability to rapidly locate and destroy targets globally. We seek to improve conventional prompt global strike capability, further develop global missile defense systems, and modernize our strategic weapons systems and infrastructure, to include developing a Reliable Replacement Warhead and a conventional ballistic missile. These components of our “New Triad,” together with improved intelligence and planning systems, will help to ensure credible deterrence across a range of threats in the twenty-first century strategic environment.

Building Partnership Capacity

Building partnership capacity underpins all three of my strategic objectives and is an area that requires additional Congressional support. Unfortunately, there are serious shortfalls in the U.S. Government’s ability to build the capacity of foreign partners—both within and outside DoD. The Departments of State and Defense conducted a systematic review of gaps in authority and developed an omnibus bill called the Building Global Partnerships Act which was personally brokered by the Secretaries of State and Defense. I strongly urge Congress to enact all of these authorities.

Foremost, DoD requires extension and expansion of its Global Train and Equip authority. Every single combatant commander cites this as DoD’s most important authority to counter terrorism and to promote regional stability by building the capacity of partner military forces. These programs will not get funded or executed properly unless

DoD funds them and collaborates with State on implementation. Over the past three years, all Combatant Commanders, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Commandant of the Coast Guard, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of State have requested extension, expansion, and funding for these programs. Now is the time to make Global Train and Equip authority permanent, to increase the ceiling, and to provide annual baseline funding.

The Commander's Emergency Response Program has been enormously successful in Iraq and Afghanistan, and other Combatant Commanders have requested this same authority to enhance prospects for mission success in other regions of the world. Our commanders in the field view this as a critical force protection tool that allows them to shape the operational environment so force is not required.

Building the security capacity of our partners is important, but partners often need additional assistance to promote stability.

Stabilization and reconstruction assistance authority allows DoD to transfer funds to the Department of State to provide assistance to aid foreign police forces, to improve governance, rule of law, economic development or essential services, and for humanitarian assistance. Stabilization and reconstruction assistance authority recently allowed DoD and State to enhance stability in Haiti, Somalia, Nepal, Trans-Saharan Africa, Yemen, and Southeast Asia.

We are in a new national security era that requires building new institutional capacity that does not currently exist. Most authorities to provide other broader forms of assistance reside at the Department of State, where patriotic foreign service officers and development professionals are doing everything they can with the force they have. But that force is woefully small relative to need. I support Secretary Rice's request for the Civilian Response Corps and ask Congress to enact quickly legislation authorizing its creation. I also strongly support the significant plus-up in people that the State Department and U.S. Agency

for International Development are seeking in the President's 2009 budget as well as its request for increased foreign assistance funding. The increases that Secretary Rice is seeking in 2009 are crucial to supporting our foreign policy goals; under-funding these activities undermine our national security. I would also support the reconstitution of the U.S. Information Agency or an equivalent functional entity to more effectively counter extremist ideology. Finally, I appreciate the Congress' direction to study the national security interagency system, and will strongly support that effort.

Conclusion

The past year saw America's men and women in uniform continue to engage in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, while they also provided humanitarian assistance, worked with partner nations, and stood guard around the globe. Our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and our Nation's Coast Guardsmen are making a positive difference. They do so willingly and unflinchingly. Their valor and dedication are inspiring and they serve this nation superbly. It is an honor to serve alongside them and my most solemn responsibility to represent them.

The American Armed Forces have evolved throughout our Nation's history. During the nineteenth century, while our country was an emerging power, the norm for our military included service at either small army posts on the Nation's Western frontier or single ship patrols off whaling stations in the Pacific. Throughout the twentieth century, our military fought—and deterred—large scale conflicts against powerful competitor nation-states, or their proxies, around the world. Today and for the foreseeable future, we are embarked on something new.

Our military challenge is to protect and preserve the American way of life by promoting greater global security, stability, and trust—building up the strength of our friends, defeating violent extremists, and deterring regional conflicts. Our strategic environment requires that we have a force that is ready for operations across the range of military missions.

We have yet to fully institutionalize the lessons learned particularly as it applies to building the capacity of partners and reforming the interagency. America has undertaken a staggering array of tasks in the past six years: securing the homeland, fighting global terrorism, applying a new counterinsurgency doctrine, expanding governance and rebuilding armed forces in shattered countries, and increasing our capability and capacity to assist other nations through a variety of material aid programs and expeditionary teams. All of these efforts have seen successes and setbacks. They have come at considerable cost to our Nation's sons and daughters, and to the treasure of the American people. We must do more than just document our lessons learned. We must accept that the future will likely require sustained engagement and continued operations that will focus on interagency and international participation. We must go beyond pondering and push to embed these lessons into a truly reformed interagency. We need continued Congressional support to make this imperative a reality.

As for your Armed Forces, we need a total, joint, expeditionary force that is suited to irregular warfare against asymmetric threats as well as supporting civil authorities at home and abroad. We also need a large-scale total force capable of major combat operations against traditional nation-state foes. We cannot do it alone; our forces must be part of a more encompassing team that includes other federal departments and partner nations. We must also recognize building international and interagency capability will take time. In the interim,

our superb military men and women, and their families, will fill the leadership role demanded of them.

All this takes sustained, robust investment and partnership. With your continuing help, our military will be ready for the challenges and opportunities ahead. Thank you for your unwavering support in time of war.