

**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT M. GATES
TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
APRIL 15, 2008, 9:30 A.M.**

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Hunter, members of the committee.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear with Secretary Rice this morning.

The subject being discussed and debated at this hearing goes to the heart of the challenge facing our national security apparatus – how we can improve and integrate America’s instruments of national power to reflect the new realities and requirements of this century.

For years to come, America will be grappling with a range of challenges to the international system and to our own security – from global terrorism to ethnic conflicts, to rogue nations and rising powers. These challenges are by their nature long-term, requiring patience and persistence across multiple administrations. Most will emerge from within countries with which we are not at war. They cannot be overcome by military means alone, and they extend well beyond the traditional domain of any single government agency or department. They will require our government to operate with unprecedented unity, agility, and creativity. And as I have said before, they will require devoting considerably more resources to non-military instruments of national power, which will need to be rebuilt, modernized, and committed to the fight.

Over the last 15 years, the U.S. government has tried to meet post-Cold War challenges and pursue 21st century objectives with processes and organizations designed in the wake of the Second World War. The National Security Act that created most of the current interagency structure was passed in 1947. The last major legislation structuring how America dispenses foreign assistance was signed by President Kennedy. Operating within this outdated bureaucratic superstructure, the U.S. government has sought to improve interagency planning and cooperation through a variety of means: new legislation, directives, offices, coordinators, “tsars,” authorities, and initiatives with varying degrees of success.

I have addressed these issues both in speeches at Kansas State and more recently at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and have discussed them in meetings with members of Congress. I’m encouraged that a consensus appears to be building that we need to rethink the fundamental structure and processes of our national security system. Towards that end, and due to the initiative of the Congress, the Department recently awarded a contract to an independent, nonprofit group to produce a study that will consider how we might re-craft the National Security Act of 1947 for the 21st century. I look forward to seeing the result, which perhaps will form the basis of debate and even legislation in the next administration.

Though recent efforts at modernizing the current system have faced obstacles when it comes to funding and implementation, some real progress has been made. One of the most important and promising developments of recent years is the main subject of today’s hearing – the U.S. government’s ability to build the security capacity of partner nations.

In summary, the Global Train-and-Equip program – known as Section 1206 – provides commanders a means to fill longstanding gaps in an effort to help other nations build and sustain capable military forces. It allows Defense and State to act in months, rather than years. The program focuses on places where we are not at war, but where there are both emerging threats and opportunities. It decreases the likelihood that troops will be used in the future. Combatant commanders consider this a vital tool in the war on terror beyond Afghanistan and Iraq. It has

FINAL FOR SUBMISSION

become a model of interagency cooperation between State and Defense – both in the field and in Washington, D.C., as I hope will be displayed here today.

Some have asked why this requirement should not be funded and executed by the State Department. Or that the issue is a matter of increasing State's manning and funding to the point where it could take over this responsibility. In my view, building partner capacity is a vital and enduring military requirement – irrespective of the capacity of other departments – and its authorities and funding mechanisms should reflect that reality. The Department of Defense would no more outsource this substantial and costly security requirement to a civilian agency than it would any other key military mission. On the other hand, it must be implemented in close coordination and partnership with the Department of State.

For a long time, programs like the State Department's Foreign Military Financing were of minimal interest to the U.S. armed forces. That our military would one day need to build large amounts of partner capacity to fulfill its mission is something that was not anticipated when the FMF program began. The attacks of 9/11 and the operations that followed around the globe reinforced to military planners that the security of America's partners is essential to America's own security. As borne out by Afghanistan, Iraq, and in other theaters large and small, success in the war on terror will depend as much on the capacity of allies and partners in the moderate Muslim world as on the capabilities of our own forces.

In the past, there was a reasonable degree of certainty about where U.S. forces could be called to meet threats. What the last 25 years have shown is that threats can emerge almost anywhere in the world. However, even with the plus-up of the Army and Marine Corps, our own forces and resources will remain finite. To fill this gap we must help our allies and partners to confront extremists and other potential sources of global instability within their borders. This kind of work takes years. It needs to begin before festering problems and threats become crises requiring U.S. military intervention – at substantial financial, political, and human cost.

As a result, the Department came to the Congress three years ago asking to create a DoD global train-and-equip authority. We knew that the military could not build partner capacity alone. We recognized this activity should be done jointly with State, which has the in-country expertise and understanding of broader U.S. foreign policy goals. For that reason, Defense asked the Congress to make State a co-equal decision maker-in-law.

I would also note that Section 1206 should not be considered duplicative of, or a substitute for, how the State Department conducts Foreign Military Financing programs. Historically, the FMF account has been used by State to build relationships and nurture access over a period of many years.

As I said earlier, the cooperation of DoD and State on Section 1206 has been excellent. All projects are decided jointly – both in the field through combined approval by the chief of mission and the combatant commander, and in Washington by the secretaries of State and Defense.

The primary benefits of global train-and-equip will accrue to the country over 10 to 15 years. But the 1206 program has already shown its value. Examples include:

- Providing urgently needed parts and ammunition for the Lebanese Army to defeat a serious al Qaeda-affiliated terrorist threat in a Palestinian refugee camp;
- Supplying helicopter spare parts, night-vision devices, and night-flight training to enhance Pakistani Special Forces' ability to help fight al Qaeda terrorists in the Northwest Territories; and

FINAL FOR SUBMISSION

- Setting up cordons run by partner nations in waters surrounding Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines that, over time, will reduce the risk of terrorism and piracy in Southeast Asia.

Furthermore, if we stay committed to these programs in a determined, strategic way:

- We will strengthen the nine-country Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership in northern Africa, to box in the al Qaeda network;
- We will assist African nations to develop their capacity to monitor and control their own coastlines and sovereign waters; and
- We will build a forward defense line in the Caribbean for the southern portion of the United States.

But we need help from the Congress to sustain this program that military leaders – from the combatant command to the brigade level – say they need, as Section 1206 is due to expire at the end of this fiscal year.

I would ask you to:

- Make 1206 permanent in recognition of the enduring DoD mission to build partner capacity; and
- Increase its funding to \$750 million, which reflects combatant commander requirements.

We must also expand Section 1206's coverage beyond "military forces" to include "security forces." As currently written, 1206 can only be used for the military, even though constabulary, coast guard, border guards, and similar units often perform the functions essential to fighting terrorism and maintaining stability. While security forces abroad come under many different names and categories, they often look like our own military forces. The Department does not seek to train "beat cops," but we cannot impose our institutional arrangements on our partners.

It is also important to remember that our competitors, antagonists, and potential adversaries are not standing still when it comes to extending their influence through security assistance. If we don't build the capacity of our own partners, then others may either exploit their vulnerabilities or look for ways to co-opt them.

I know the committee also has questions about Section 1207. Whereas 1206 is a DoD-State Department program with DoD lead, Section 1207 is a State Department-DoD program with State lead. They each engender interagency cooperation through the dual "turn key" mechanism. Congress authorized both programs through the Defense Department because they meet important military requirements: 1206 building partner security capacity and 1207 deploying civilian resources alongside of, or instead of, U.S. troops.

According to Section 1207, Congress has allowed DoD to transfer up to \$100 million to the Department of State to bring civilian expertise to bear alongside our military. This would give the Secretary of State additional resources to address security challenges and defuse potential crises that might otherwise require the U.S. military to intervene.

Although 1207 is not as mature as 1206, the authority has already been used with some effect in developing local police capacity in Haiti's Cite Soleil and clearing unexploded ordinance in Lebanon. In Colombia, State and Defense crafted a lean, effective program to address basic health, education, and infrastructure needs in areas reclaimed from local insurgents.

We recently agreed with State to seek a five-year extension and an increase in the authority to \$200 million. A touchstone for the Defense Department is that 1207 should be for civilian support for the military – either by bringing civilians to serve with our military forces or

FINAL FOR SUBMISSION

in lieu of them. As with Section 1206, this authority is “dual key” and fills critical gaps in our national security processes that will accrue to the benefit of future administrations. In some ways, 1206 and 1207 are ad hoc responses to structural deficiencies. But until substantive changes are made, they are terrific interagency partnerships that deal with the real world we face.

Before taking your questions, I’d like to say a few words about the broader topic of effective interagency cooperation. As I mentioned earlier, over the last seven years, we have seen a number of positive changes. Some examples:

- Under National Security Presidential Directive 44 (NSDP-44), DoD supports the State Department Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization in the development of a planning framework for the entire federal government;
- AFRICOM has been established and Southern Command reorganized, heralding a new approach to integrating civilian agencies and perspectives into the traditional military command structure. In fact, one of two deputy commanders for AFRICOM will be a State Department officer, and State is doubling the number of Foreign Service Officers assigned to military headquarters overall;
- A National Security Professional Development initiative provides incentives and opportunities for military officers and civilians to gain experience and receive training in other departments;
- In Iraq, DoD is working with Treasury and other agencies to undermine support for the insurgency through the Iraq Threat Financial Cell – an effort that has disrupted or eliminated several sources of terrorist support.

I would also, once again, give my strong support to the State Department’s Civilian Stabilization Initiative in State’s Fiscal Year 2009 budget request. This initiative will improve America’s ability to respond to instability and conflict by funding a corps of civilian experts that can deploy with the U.S. military.

From the military’s perspective, virtually any campaign we undertake today or in the near future is unlikely to succeed without civilian involvement and expertise. As we have seen with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams and other efforts, including even a few properly placed civilian experts, has become what the military calls a “force multiplier.” Past experiences have also shown that military campaigns and contingency plans improve greatly with civilian input.

I should note, however, that we do have to be realistic about how much even well-funded and well-integrated civilian agencies, or well-trained and equipped allies, can do to reduce the demands on the U.S. military. Nearly every major deployment of American forces has led to a military presence and mission to maintain a basic level of stability, reconstruction, and governance. It has been this way in virtually every conflict going back to the Mexican-American War, through World War II and Vietnam, and is likely to continue in the future. At least in the early stages of any conflict or post-conflict situation, military commanders will not be able to shed these tasks. Our military must retain and institutionalize the lessons learned from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and incorporate them into our core doctrine and procurement priorities – as the DoD has already begun to do.

I would close by noting that seeing these necessary changes through – including the now central mission to build the capacity of partner nations – will take uncommon vision, persistence, and cooperation – between the military and the civilian, the executive and the legislative, and among the different elements of the interagency. Though these kinds of initiatives are crucial to protecting America’s security and vital interests, they don’t have the kind of bureaucratic and

FINAL FOR SUBMISSION

political constituency that one sees with, for example, a major weapons system. So I applaud the members of Congress who have stepped up to make these issues a priority.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you again for the opportunity to testify today, and for all that this committee has done to support our armed forces. I look forward to your questions.

###