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Statement

of

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INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and members of this distinguished committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you on Department of Defense language and cultural transformation. The Defense Language Transformation is an ongoing Department priority that assumes greater importance as we understand the 21st Century challenges inherent in the various stages of conventional warfare; unconventional warfare; irregular warfare; and security, stability, transition, and reconstruction operations.

The initiatives we have undertaken are the first steps of Defense Language Transformation. The tasks in the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap were informed by DoD Strategic documents. The March 2004 Strategic Planning Guidance for Fiscal Year 2006-2011 clearly outlined the need for foundational language and culture capabilities in the active and reserve officers, enlisted, and civilian forces. It called for an ability to surge our language and cultural resources beyond foundational and in-house capabilities. The planning guidance directed DoD to establish a cadre of language specialists at the professional level in listening, reading, and speaking abilities, and required processes to track how we managed the linguists and Foreign Area Officers we had already. These requirements became the four goals of the 2005 Defense Language Transformation Roadmap, which have guided our efforts since.

In 2006, the Department issued its most recent Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). The QDR directed the Department to “. . . increase investments focused on developing and maintaining appropriate language, cultural skills.” It emphasized how developing broader linguistic capability and cultural understanding is critical to

prevailing in the long war and to meet 21st Century challenges. The QDR outlined that the “...Department must dramatically increase the number of personnel proficient in key languages such as Arabic, Farsi, and Chinese and make these languages available at all levels of action and decision – from strategic to the tactical.” The QDR emphasized the need that the Department “. . . must foster a level of understanding and cultural intelligence about the Middle East and Asia comparable to that developed about the Soviet Union during the Cold War,” and called on Military Departments to expand their Foreign Area Officer programs.

Within this overarching guidance, we developed DoD-wide programs, policies and initiatives to implement the strategic guidance. These initiatives are flexible. Each Service, with its varying combat missions, must allow for unforeseen contingencies, such as humanitarian assistance for natural disasters, and develop its own plan for providing the language and cultural training needed in its forces. These plans reflect the very different nature of employment among the forces.

Given the nature of the 21st Century deployments, a major challenge involves identifying which language and cultural capabilities we need and where and when we need them. We have established quarterly reporting of language and culture requirements, developed the Language Readiness Index, and established the Defense Language Steering Committee to provide senior-level oversight.

The quarterly reports from the Combatant Commands, Military Services, and Defense Agencies have identified more than 141,000 operational and organizational requirements for language and understanding of foreign cultures for General Purpose

Forces as well as Special Forces. The Combatant Commands identified over 60 different language and dialect requirements. Significantly, we are learning to better manage capabilities to meet requirements -- not all need to be met by a DoD service member or civilian. We are learning to leverage non-DoD personnel, contractors, host nation support, and technology to meet urgent needs. As an example, we have used more than 10,000 contract linguists to support Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM.

We recognize that the Department has more work to do in reconciling, validating, prioritizing, and expressing these requirements so that they can be addressed by the force providers. We are just completing a Capabilities-Base Review that examines how the Department identifies the languages most likely to be needed in the future and how the Department will manage these requirements as capabilities and not personnel billets. We established the Language Readiness Index, an application linked to the Defense Readiness Reporting System database that allows comparison of requirements to available on-hand assets. The purpose of the LRI is to provide senior level decision-makers within the DoD Agencies, Combatant Commands and the Services with the information necessary to assess language capability gaps, capabilities, overmatches and take appropriate action. The LRI will provide the Department a tool to conduct risk assessments and determine tradeoffs as we have competing needs for people and dollars.

Language and cultural understanding skills are difficult to learn, not easily measured, and extremely perishable, if not used frequently. This leads to necessary trade-offs as the Department balances resources and time against the many competing

priorities. I intend to share with you later in the testimony examples of show trade offs which are being made by the Services in terms of time, resources and training to meet language and culture needs. The outcome of the QDR provides an outstanding example when it identified junior officer language training as a pre-accession requirement.

Sufficient time is not available in young careers to develop the Service core competencies that would allow intelligent and effective use of the language and cultural skills desired for junior officers. With Service Academy curricula improvements, ROTC initiatives, grants to universities, and heritage recruiting, DoD is actively accessing more language and cultural capability than it ever has before. The unit commanders cited in this testimony who took soldiers away from other duties so they could attend language and cultural training made critical trade-off decisions. They balanced choosing which soldiers to train and calculated how long their units could afford them to be away. At higher levels, trade-offs involve budgetary decisions as leaders choose programs to fund and programs to pay the bill.

Language and Cultural competencies underpin Building Partnership Capacity, Irregular Warfare, Theater Security Cooperation, Train, Advise and Assist Missions, as well as Stability, Security, and Reconstruction operations. Service doctrine clearly reflects the recognition that they are essential for the success of our operations and that the risk of not developing these capabilities is high.

The Department of Defense (DoD) has therefore recognized and responded by transforming how it values, develops, employs, and deploys foreign language capability and regional expertise.

In addition to developing internal capabilities, the Department also supports the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), launched by President Bush in January 2006, to increase the number of Americans learning critical foreign languages. This national-level initiative augments the Department's transformation goals by helping to build a national language talent pool from which we can recruit for government service.

Through our efforts to strengthen the Defense language and culture programs and supporting NSLI, we are creating a framework that will allow us to build a globalized force with the right combination of skills, in the right numbers, who are equipped with the language and cultural proficiency skills to meet the diverse operational demands of the 21st Century. This framework is transformational, but the creation of the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap was the beginning of a journey to transform language and culture in the Department. I would like to share three examples of the impact of this transformation at the tactical training level — where it matters most.

The 3rd Intelligence Battalion, III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), held the grand opening of a language lab on August 5 of this year. The event attended by, the III MEF commanding general, included a demonstration of the lab's capabilities and functions, and a discussion group with Marines and sailors fluent in the Mandarin Chinese language. The language lab is dedicated to enhancing foreign language skills for language professionals in a variety of languages and their respective dialects, by facilitating classes and offering these Marines and Sailors' equipment and a place to study. A valuable feature of the lab is its capability to allow many students to individually study different languages at the same time by utilizing the individual

workstations equipped with headsets. A key objective of the language lab is for the Marines and Sailors to continue sharpening their language proficiency.

A second example is with a select group of Stryker soldiers at Fort Lewis. As recently reported in the *Seattle Times*, the Soldiers are learning basic Arabic so that once they deploy, they can communicate with Iraqi citizens in order to help their commanders distinguish between friends and foes.¹ 125 Soldiers are assigned to Fort Lewis' 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team as part of a new program to teach Soldiers basic Arabic. Once deployed to Iraq, they will be able to communicate with local Iraqis to help their units better distinguish between allies and enemies. The Arabic-language program is a high-intensive 10-month course developed by the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team upon its return to Fort Lewis in June after serving more than a year in Iraq. The 4th Stryker Brigade has about 80 Soldiers who can speak rudimentary Arabic. The goal of the 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team training is to have at least one Soldier in every company who has the ability to bridge the language and cultural divide separating American forces and Iraqis.

Lastly, at Fort Riley, soldiers who worked as advisors in Iraq and Afghanistan have developed an in-depth training program. These soldiers now train basic Arabic or Dari (one of the Afghan languages), and the fundamental tenets of Islam and cultural norms of Iraqis and Afghans to Army, Navy, and Air Force members from the Active Component, National Guard, and Reserves. At the end of their eight weeks of training,

¹ See Green, Sara., J. [Seattle Times](#), "Fort Lewis Soldiers Learn Arabic to Better Prepare for War", July, 28, 2008.

they are sent to a mock town where native Iraqi and Dari speakers act as local residents and test the U.S. military members on what they have learned.²

This training is not developing military members at the highest proficiency level. However, it is reflective that DoD recognizes, not only at the strategic level but down to the tactical level, the value of language and culture and that unit level commanders, in both active and reserve, and across Service lines, are actively “developing and employing” these skills in future operations as prescribed in the February 2005 Defense Language Transformation Roadmap.

Building Foundational Expertise -- Governance and Oversight

An early finding in our transformational journey was that Defense policies on foreign language were outdated and responsibilities for governance and oversight were not clearly established. Therefore, the Deputy Secretary assigned the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness responsibility for the Defense Language Program in March 2004, in order to integrate and synchronize the Department’s efforts and ensure oversight, execution, and direction for DoD language and regional expertise transformation. The Deputy Secretary also directed the appointment of Senior Language Authorities in the Military Departments, the Defense and Joint Staffs, Defense Agencies, and Defense Field Activities at the Senior Executive Service, and General and Flag Officer ranks to ensure senior-level involvement and oversight across the entire

² See Yousef, Nancy A., Miami Herald, “Advisors Prepare for Greater Role Abroad” July 24, 2008.

Department. The Defense Language Steering Committee, composed of the Senior Language Authorities, was established as an advisory board and to guide the execution of the Roadmap. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness appointed me as the Department's Senior Language Authority and Chair of the Defense Language Steering Committee. We revised the DoD Directive for the Defense Language Program and created the Defense Language Office as called for in the Fiscal Year 2005 National Defense Authorization Act, which accompanied H.R. 108-49 to provide oversight and execution of the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap and to institutionalize the Department's commitment to these critical competencies.

We used the new governance structure to create the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap as a collaborative, Department-wide effort.

The Department has made significant progress in the transformation of foreign language capability. The fact that over 88% of the tasks on the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap are complete demonstrates this accomplishment. We are well on the path to completing all the tasks by the end of the calendar year. Despite these achievements, execution of the tasks in the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap is only the first step of the journey.

We have already begun thinking about the next steps to continue transformation in the Department. Planning for "Phase 2 of Defense Language Transformation" has begun. Although we do not have a completed document, we plan to continue to institutionalize language and culture within the force and throughout the career of a military member.

We will also use the Department's strategic documents, lessons learned and other reports to influence the next five years.

Building Foundational Expertise—Identifying Capability

A first priority was self-assessment. Before 2004, we did not have a comprehensive assessment of the specific languages and proficiency levels of members of the Total Force. Each of the military services has been engaged in conducting a one-time self-assessment of their forces to determine what capabilities might already exist. We are nearly complete in this self-assessment of in-house language capability. We have discovered that we have a significant language capability that had not been apparent to us in the past. We have identified 217,200 service members with a self-professed language proficiency. As one might expect, this language capability consists primarily of the foreign languages traditionally taught in the United States such as Spanish, French and German. However, a surprising number of personnel are proficient in languages of contemporary strategic interest ranging from Chinese to Urdu. For example, in 2004 we identified a capability of 1,623 in Chinese and 72 in Urdu. In 2008, we realize we may have a capability of 7,357 in Chinese languages and 445 in Urdu. We now have policies in place so that individuals are screened as part of the military accession and civilian hiring process.

In order to encourage service members to identify, improve, and sustain language capability, we implemented a revised Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus (FLPB) policy, and, with the support of Congress, increased the proficiency bonus from \$300 maximum per month, up to \$1,000 maximum per month for uniformed members. We

also revised policy to align payment for Reserve and Active Components by increasing Reserve proficiency pay ceiling from \$6,000 to \$12,000, consistent with Section 639 of Public Law 109-163, the Fiscal Year 2006 National Defense Authorization Act. DoD policy for civilians assigned to non-intelligence positions allows Foreign Language Proficiency Pay (FLPP) of up to five percent of an employee's salary when duties require proficiency in a foreign language identified as necessary to meet national security concerns and the employee is certified as proficient in that language. The use of FLPP for civilians is also available within the Intelligence community and the National Security Personnel System (NSPS). Personnel in the Intelligence career fields and civilian personnel covered by NSPS may receive up to \$500 per pay period provided the language proficiency facilitates performance of intelligence duties or deemed necessary for national security interest.

Building Foundational Expertise – A Learning Organization

The language, regional and cultural domains present difficult skills to acquire and maintain. Oftentimes these skills are referred to as “soft skills”; however, these skills are anything but “soft.” It is very difficult to learn and maintain any language skill; and, learning about the cultural context in which that language is spoken, has become increasingly complex. World languages and cultures are in a continual flux, and we must continue to stay abreast of these changes to meet mission objectives.

In addition, there are challenges associated with selecting the languages and regions for study or emphasis. Unlike other occupational specialty skills, language and

regional expertise do not transfer from one area of operation to another. It is difficult to predict where we will operate or deploy in the future; however, we must cultivate the capability of responding quickly to the unexpected, such as we did when Operation Enduring Freedom required a rapid response to the need for personnel with Dari and Pashto language skills.

To acquire and sustain these capabilities, the DoD has committed to building and sustaining a “learning organization” that provides mission-focused instruction to all personnel at the appropriate times, with the appropriate delivery method including using training technologies, to support people in maintaining and enhancing these hard won skills. This learning begins even before potential recruits join the Total Force.

Building Language Training Pre-Accession

The goal of pre-accession language training is to create globally aware officers equipped with skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate in different languages and understand cultures of the world. Pre-accession language training allows the Department to focus on building language skills in future officers prior to commissioning. All three Service Academies have enhanced their foreign language study programs to develop or enhance pre-accession language and cultural knowledge. They expanded study abroad, summer immersion and foreign academy exchange opportunities; and added instructor staff for strategic languages. As a result, the United States Military Academy and the United States Air Force Academy now require two semesters of foreign language for all cadets. The United States Military Academy requires four semesters for

Humanities and Social Science Majors. The United States Air Force Academy requires four semesters for non-technical degree candidates and six semesters for language minors. The United States Naval Academy now requires all midshipmen to take four semesters of language study, except those with majors in Math, Science and Engineering. Language study programs have regional information such as socio and geo-political considerations and key aspects of culture embedded in the course of study. The United States Military Academy established two new language majors of strategic interest, specifically in Arabic and Chinese. The United States Naval Academy, for the first time in history, will offer midshipmen the opportunity to major in a foreign language, including Arabic and Chinese beginning with the Class of 2010. In Fiscal Year 2008, \$16.9 million was directed toward the Service Academies to continue the development and implementation of their language programs, including curricular development and hiring of staff and faculty to teach more strategic languages. The President's Budget for FY 2009 identified \$24.7 million (\$108.3 million for FY 2009-2013) to help the Academies sustain these efforts.

The Academies are aggressively pursuing increased opportunities for their cadets and midshipmen to study abroad to reinforce both their acquired language and culture knowledge, and they currently have programs available in 40 countries. Four-week language immersion programs are offered during the summer as well as semester exchanges with foreign military academies. The FY 2007 National Defense Authorization Act allowed the Academies to expand these exchanges from 24 exchanges

to 100 exchanges per academy per year, and this support from Congress is greatly appreciated.

Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) cadets and midshipmen also have expanded opportunities to learn a foreign language. The Air Force and Navy have ROTC students accompany their academy counterparts during familiarization and orientation travel opportunities. Of the 1,322 colleges and universities with ROTC programs, 1,149 offer foreign language study. Significantly, many of the languages we need for current operations are not widely offered at this time. Therefore, the Department has launched a program to award grants to colleges and universities with ROTC programs to expand opportunities for ROTC cadets and midshipmen to study language and cultures critical to national security.

The Department has awarded a total of 12 grants to colleges and universities in 2007 and 2008. Increasing the number of less commonly taught languages in college curricula remains a challenge in which we are actively engaged. We appreciate Congress' support in the FY 2009 legislative proposal to support our goal of encouraging ROTC cadets and midshipmen in Senior ROTC to study foreign language courses of strategic interest to the Department.

The framers of the last Quadrennial Defense Review embraced the pre-accession language training for officers and the need to provide training in regions and cultures throughout the course of an officer's development. Today, regional and cultural studies are included in the Service Academies, Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), during

the officer accession training pipeline, and throughout Professional Military Education (PME).

Building Regional and Cultural Expertise

The Defense Language Transformation Roadmap, required the Joint Staff and Military Departments to ensure regional area content was incorporated into language training, professional military education and development, pre-deployment training, and, in some cases, mid- or intra-deployment training. In response, the Joint Staff and Military Departments have made tremendous progress; cultural training and regional area content are now included in the curriculum at the Service Academies, Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), during the officer and enlisted accession training pipeline, and Professional Military Education (PME). Cultural and regional content have likewise been successfully integrated in pre- and mid-deployment training.

The Services have taken great efforts to prepare members to achieve optimum outcomes by understanding the regions in which they deploy and being culturally aware. The Services have established Centers of Excellence to oversee and standardize training and impart essential and mission-targeted cultural training to their members. The Army Training and Doctrine Command Culture Center, the Navy Center for Language Regional Expertise and Culture, the Air University Cultural Studies Center, and the Marine Corps Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning all focus on offering information and training that best supports their deployment model and is compliant with Joint Professional Military Education guidelines. Additionally, Services have incorporated

regional and or cultural knowledge within the accession training pipelines and Professional Military Education curricula. Since Service missions differ, this approach is logical and effective.

In June 2007, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, through the Defense Language Office, hosted a DoD-wide Regional and Cultural Expertise Summit in the Washington, D.C. area. This was a forum for leaders from DoD to share "best practices" and "lessons learned" and develop a strategy for synchronizing policies, plans and programs into an integrated DoD Regional Expertise framework that addresses the challenges facing Defense and the nation.

A White Paper summarizing the important concepts, issues, and recommendations was published during the summer of 2007. This paper is the first step in the "way ahead" and will be used in tandem with the Language Roadmap to sharpen the Department's ability to better understand different regions and cultures of the world in an effort to meet current and future mission demands. Later this month we are hosting a roundtable discussion with academia on dimensions of cross-cultural communication, to continue this dialogue.

Building Foundational Expertise -- Improving Primary Skills Language Training

We have made dramatic changes in how the Department trains members who require language skills to perform their primary jobs. The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) budget increased from \$77M in FY01 to \$270 million in FY08 to support these changes. More than 2,000 Service members graduate

each year from DLIFLC resident basic programs, having studied one of 24 languages in courses ranging from 26 to 64 weeks that also include cultural and area studies, enabling the graduates to achieve a baseline foreign language proficiency along with increased cultural awareness and regional knowledge. As a direct result of the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap, we have redoubled our training in strategic languages. For example, in 2001, DLIFLC had 1,144 students enrolled in Arabic, Chinese, and Persian Farsi; by the end of 2008, they will have 2,171 students studying these languages.

One of the major programs implemented in FY 2006 by DLIFLC is the Proficiency Enhancement Program (PEP). PEP is designed to graduate basic course students at increased proficiency levels as well as provide more opportunities for post-basic students to achieve 3/3. Changes include reducing the student to instructor ratio, increasing the number of classrooms, incorporating learning technologies into the classroom, retooling the curricula, incorporating overseas training into the program, expanding the number of teachers at the Language Training Detachments (LTDs) and expanding online materials available at the higher levels.

A critical component of our effort to improve the language capability is to validate and deliver tools for measuring language proficiency. We have taken key steps to strengthen our Defense Language Testing System by updating test content and delivery. The Services and Defense Agencies are taking the same tests, thus we are able to use the test scores to inform the Language Readiness Index and determine the gaps. We can then target our recruiting, training, and other interventions to reduce these gaps. By delivering these tests over the Internet, we are able to greatly increase the availability and

accessibility of these tests to defense military and civilian language professionals worldwide, and the use of advanced technology to store and track proficiency test scores is providing us the capability to use this information for national security planning. Since the inception of the web-delivery program, we have administered over 90,000 tests.

Building Foundational Expertise -- Providing Tools to Support Deploying Forces

The Department recognizes that not all personnel will be able or required to demonstrate intermediate or advanced level language skills and regional expertise; technology can help to address some of these demands. As directed in the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics is working to establish a coherent, prioritized, and coordinated DoD multi-language technology research, development, and acquisition policy and program. However, regardless of how advanced the technology, it cannot replace the need for personnel to acquire the language skills and cultural knowledge to interact effectively with the local population and their leaders. Therefore, Department policy requires that military units deploying into, or in transit through foreign territories be equipped, to the greatest extent practicable, with an appropriate capability to communicate in the languages of the territories of deployment or transit and to operate with an appropriate knowledge of the cultural norms.

“Just-In-Time” training is getting the right information to deploying personnel in time to be useful, but not so early that it is forgotten before they arrive. We have significantly improved our means of providing language and regional familiarization

training to units during their deployment cycles. DLIFLC's foreign language and cultural instruction extends beyond the classroom to service members and civilians preparing for deployment by offering Mobile Training Teams, Video Tele-Training, Language Survival Kits (LSK), and online instructional materials. Since 2001, the DLIFLC has dispatched more than 380 Mobile Training Teams to provide targeted training to more than 66,000 personnel. Deploying units have received over 1,000,000 LSKs (mostly Iraqi, Dari, and Pashto). Field Support Modules outlining the geo-political situation, regional AND cultural information, and fundamental language skills, key phrases and commands are available for 34 countries in 49 languages on the DLIFLC website. Computer-based sustainment training is available in 19 languages via the Global Language Online Support System. Six more language sustainment courses are available on the DLIFLC LingNet website.

Building Foundational Expertise – Heritage Speaker Recruitment

Ensuring that we have a strong foundation in language skills, regional expertise and cultural knowledge involves reaching out to personnel who already possess these skills into our Total Force. All of our Military Services have developed heritage-recruiting plans to bring personnel into the force with key language skills and regional expertise. These plans focus on reaching out to heritage communities and their children who possess near-native language skills and knowledge of the cultures.

One particularly successful program is the Army's 09L Interpreter/Translator Program. The Army launched this pilot program in 2003 to recruit and train individuals

from heritage Arabic, Dari, and Pashto communities to serve in the Individual Ready Reserve and support operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Due to the success of this program, the Army formally established the 09L Interpreter/translator as a permanent military occupational specialty with a full-enlisted career path, in 2006. More than 600 native and heritage speakers have successfully graduated and deployed; an additional 150 personnel are currently in the training pipeline. The Army continues to expand and develop the program in response to the positive feedback from the commanders and warfighters in the field.

Ensuring a Surge Capability – Generating Competencies to Meet The Unexpected

There are approximately 7,000 discrete languages in the world. It is not possible to predict with 100% accuracy which languages, in what numbers will be needed to meet the vast array of operations we may need for the future. This was proven in our assessment of mission operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, when we concluded that we did not have sufficient language capability within the force to meet demands. As a result, we have on-going efforts to identify creative ways of tapping into the talent pool within and outside our country to provide highly proficient contract linguists to commanders in theater. The Army, as the Executive Agent, coordinates this contract linguist support. We are also developing appropriate processes to maintain contact with our military and civilian retirees and separatees. The goal is to build a personnel database with language and regional experience information that will allow us reach-back capability for voluntary service. While current surge capability is focused on ongoing operations, we

are also looking beyond today to forecast potential or emerging areas in which the Total Force might be called upon to operate. The National Language Service Corps, which is described later in this testimony, will be an important component of this capability.

Building Professionals

Higher levels of language, regional and cultural knowledge and skills are needed to build the internal and external relationships required for coalition/multi-national operations, peacekeeping, and civil/military affairs. In 2005, the Department began building a cadre of language specialists possessing high-level language proficiency (an Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Proficiency Level 3 in reading, listening, and speaking ability or 3/3/3) and regional expertise. We are working with the DoD Components to identify the tasks and missions that require this professional-level proficiency and determine the minimum number of personnel needed to provide this language capability. The Foreign Area Officers (FAO) program fulfills the Department's need for this cadre of language and regional professionals. FAOs are highly educated, have professional-level foreign language fluency in at least one regional language, and have studied and traveled widely in their region of expertise.

The FAO is the Department's uniformed expert who possesses a unique combination of strategic focus, regional expertise, cultural awareness, and foreign language proficiency. The DoD Directive 1315.17, "*Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Programs*," updated in April 2005, established a common set of standards and required Services to establish FAO programs that "*deliberately develop a corps of FAOs who*

shall be commissioned officers with a broad range of military skills and experiences; have knowledge of political-military affairs; have familiarity with the political, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographical factors of the countries and regions in which they are stationed; and, have professional proficiency in one or more of the dominant languages in their regions of expertise.” The purpose of this approach to the FAO Program is to build corps capable of operating in a joint environment with similar training, developmental experiences, and expertise.

All FAOs must be qualified in a principal military specialty. Studies undertaken by the Department have confirmed that qualification in a principal military specialty must be an absolute prerequisite for FAOs to be successful, regardless of Service. In FY 2001, there were 1,015 Army and 149 Marine FAOs designated, qualified or in training. In FY 2008, there are now over 1,600 in Army, Navy, Marines and the Air Force. In 2001, the Department did not have a standardized FAO program to meet the needs of the Joint Commander, to have a standard for FAOs across Service lines for training, education and language is a huge transformational success story.

SUPPORTING A NATIONAL AGENDA

We recognize that in order to increase language capability in the Department and achieve higher levels of language proficiency among our language professionals, we must assume a more proactive role in promoting and encouraging foreign language education in the American population. We need to be able to identify and recruit individuals who have the language skills and regional expertise we need. In June 2004, we convened a National Language Conference to begin dialog and stimulate thinking to this end. The

conference led to the development of a White Paper published by the Department outlining a number of key recommendations.

In January 2006, the President of the United States announced the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI). The Initiative was designed to dramatically increase the number of Americans learning critical need foreign languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Hindi, and Farsi. The Secretary of Defense joined the Secretaries of State and Education, and the Director of National Intelligence to develop a comprehensive national plan to expand opportunities for United States students to develop proficiencies in critical languages from early education through colleges. The White House provides ongoing coordination as partner agencies work to implement this plan. The focal point for this department's role in the National Security Language Initiative is the National Security Education Program (NSEP). NSEP represents a key investment in creating a pipeline of linguistically and culturally competent professionals into our workforce. NSEP provides scholarships and fellowships to enable American students to study critical languages and cultures in return for federal national security service. The universities, providing grants for the development and implementation of National Flagship Language Programs, specifically designed to graduate students at an ILR Level Three (3/3/3) language proficiency (in reading, listening and speaking modalities), in today's critical languages. These programs provide a major source of vitally needed language proficiency in the national security community.

As part of the Department of Defense's contribution to the National Security Language Initiative, we have expanded the National Language Flagship Program to

establish new programs in Arabic, Hindi, and Urdu and to expand the Russian flagship to a Eurasian program focusing on critical central Asian languages. The flagship effort serves as an example of how the National Security Language Initiative links federal programs and resources across agencies to enhance the scope of the federal government's efforts in foreign language education. For example, the flagship program is leading the way in developing programs for students to progress through elementary, middle, and high school and into universities with more advanced levels of language proficiency. This enables our universities to focus more appropriately on taking a student from an intermediate or advanced level to professional proficiency. While focusing on early language learning, this effort has already succeeded in enrolling ten students, as freshmen, from Portland, Oregon high schools in an experimental advanced, intensive four-year Chinese program at the University of Oregon. We have also awarded a grant to the Chinese Flagship Program at Ohio State University to implement a statewide system of Chinese programs. Finally, we awarded Michigan State University a grant to develop an Arabic pipeline with the Dearborn, Michigan school district, announced in conjunction with the Department of Education's Foreign Language Assistance Program grant.

Our second commitment to the president's National Security Language Initiative is the launching of the National Language Service Corps (NLSC) pilot program. This effort will identify Americans with skills in critical languages and develop the capacity to mobilize them during times of national need or emergency. The NLSC represents the first organized national attempt to capitalize on our rich national diversity in language

and culture. This organization has a goal of creating a cadre of 1,000 highly proficient people, in ten languages by 2010 and began recruiting in January 2008.

In 2007, the Department coordinated a series of regional summits to engage state and local governments, educational institutions, school boards, parents, and businesses at the local level in addressing foreign language needs. The National Security Education Program reached out to the proficiency of its three flagship universities – in Ohio, Oregon, and Texas to convene these summits and develop action plans that reflect an organized and reasonable approach to building the infrastructure for language education at the state and local level. Industry, academia, federal, state, and local governments, business, non-governmental organizations and our international partners must continue to work together in order to achieve our mutual goals.

Since 2004, the Department has led a national effort to address serious national shortfalls in foreign language expertise. We must increase both the number of different languages that we teach in our schools and the levels of proficiency. We recognize that we cannot address our own language needs or those of the broader national security community and federal sector without a strategic investment in the development of a more globalized professional workforce – one that is multi-lingual and multi-cultural.

We are pleased with the results of our own Department language transformation roadmap. However, we also recognize that in order to successfully address our ever-expanding needs we simply must invest long-term in key “leverage points” in the U.S. educational system. Enlarging the recruitment pool will serve to lower the Department’s training costs and allow the Department to devote more time to mission-critical skills.

Moreover, as a side benefit, it will serve to change attitudes and increase the national capability to respond to military, diplomatic, economic and social needs.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to share the Department's language and cultural awareness transformation efforts. Our efforts are driven by the need to fulfill our nation's ability to shape and respond to national security challenges. We have been successful in building strategic language and cultural competency, which will influence future missions. Through policy and programmatic actions, we have taken the steps to institutionalize language and culture in our recruitment programs, compensation rules, plans, policies, training, and doctrine. We have made good progress in building a foundational framework that provides agility and flexibility to meet the changing language and culture demands of the future. Defense commitment to the development of these important competencies has never been stronger.

We will continue to work with our partners -- the military services, the Joint Staff, the Defense Agencies and the Combatant Commands toward continued transformation of these capabilities in the Department. Your continuing support and interest in our efforts and the efforts of other Federal agencies is very much appreciated as we continue this transformational journey.