**United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors
Office of Inspector General**

Security and Intelligence Oversight

Review of the Department's Patterns of Global Terrorism - 2003 Report

Report Number SIO-S-04-18, September 2004

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In a June 18, 2004, letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell, six members of the U.S. Senate requested that the Office of Inspector General (OIG) review how inaccurate and incomplete data and statements came to be included in the *Patterns of Global Terrorism - 2003* report. *Patterns - 2003*, released on April 29, 2004, asserted that acts of international terrorism had declined slightly in the past several years and that 2003 had the "lowest annual total of international terrorist attacks since 1969," suggesting that the Administration was winning the global war on terrorism. Shortly thereafter, an op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* alleged that there were statistical errors in the report. Subsequent articles in various periodicals claimed terrorist acts had been left out, mislabeled, and counted incorrectly. On June 22, 2004, the Department of State (the Department) issued a revised version of the *Patterns - 2003* report that identified an increase in the number of significant terrorist events.

Before Congress mandated that the Department report on terrorism in 1987[1], the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) produced a report on terrorism, which was viewed largely as the reference on significant trends in international terrorism. With the 1987 legislation, *Patterns* began its transition to serving as a "report card" on how well the U.S. government was responding to the threat of terrorism. Although the Department has overall responsibility for producing the annual report on international terrorism, the Terrorist Threat Integration Center (TTIC) produces the data that form the basis of the report's Appendix A- Chronology of Significant Terrorist Incidents. An Incident Review Panel (IRP), which includes members of the Intelligence Community, reviews a monthly listing of terrorist incidents provided by TTIC and determines which events are "significant."

OIG's review has found that the inaccurate statements in the report were based on omissions of IRP-adjudicated decisions and apparent inconsistencies in the database of terrorist events maintained by TTIC. The database formed the basis for Appendix A, as well as for the charts and graphs in the report's Appendix

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[1] Title 22 of the United States Code (USC), Section 2656f, requires that the Department of State produce an annual report of terrorism.

G - Statistical Review, and for the statistics used in the report's Year in Review section. The reasons for the omissions and inconsistencies in the TTIC database were:

- Data entry lagged toward the end of 2003, and IRP decisions of adjudicated terrorist incidents between November 11 and the end of December were not entered into TTIC's database until April 2004, after the report had been printed.

- No one questioned the omissions before the report was printed.

- It appears that there was no consistent, replicable methodology that IRP used for selecting events to be included in Appendix A.

OIG was also asked to look at whether the process for assembling the report and the participants involved in the process differed significantly from previous reports. The major difference in the process between the 2003 report and previous reports was the transfer to TTIC from the CIA's Counterterrorist Center (CTC) of maintenance of the database. The TTIC unit manager, who was formerly from CTC and who was responsible for updating the database, left TTIC in December 2003 and was not replaced. According to TTIC officials, data entry for the events adjudicated by the IRP in January 2004[2] did not begin until April 2004, well after Appendix A data was first sent to the Department in February 2004.

The offices and procedures involved in the preparation of *Patterns* within the Department were the same in 2003 as in prior years. However, a personnel change and staffing shortages within the office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism (S/CT) likely affected oversight of the report. A Foreign Service public affairs officer who previously helped produce the report left in the spring of 2003, and the position was reassigned elsewhere within S/CT. The S/CT associate coordinator, whose office was responsible for producing the report, began working in that office in June 2003 and had no previous experience in preparing the *Patterns* report.

In summary, OIG found that the omissions and apparent inconsistencies were due to a number of factors. The shift from CTC to TTIC of responsibility for maintenance of the database of terrorist events, along with the lack of trained, long-term personnel working in that office, also probably contributed to the lack of

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[2] The IRP met on January 23, 2004, to adjudicate events for the rest of November and December 2003.

supervision of the database. In addition, the process for assembling the report at the Department, while differing little from that of previous years, lacked sufficient oversight and coordination.

Both S/CT and TTIC personnel greatly regretted the errors in the 2003 report, and both have begun to formulate more rigorous methodologies for the compilation of data. OIG's recommendations, along with the innovations and remedial action already undertaken by S/CT and TTIC, should provide future *Patterns* reports a more useful and accurate analysis of terrorist and anti-terrorist activities.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The objectives for OIG's review were to determine: 1) how "inaccurate" statements came to be included in the Department's *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003*, 2) whether there was a significantly different process used in assembling the report, and 3) whether there were different participants involved in the process, compared to previous years.

OIG performed fieldwork in Washington, D.C., from July to August 2004. The team conducted interviews with Department management officials from S/CT, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. The team also met with the Director of TTIC and other relevant TTIC officials. TTIC also conducted an internal review of its support to the Department's preparation of *Patterns*, and OIG met with TTIC's review team on several occasions throughout the review process. Both teams shared their findings and recommendations. OIG's team consisted of Ambassador Fernando Rondon, team leader, and Anita Schroeder, Margaret Ann Linn, and Stephanie Hwang. This evaluation was conducted in accordance with the *Quality Standards for Inspections* issued by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency. OIG discussed its findings and recommendations with S/CT officials at an exit conference on August 27, 2004, and also briefed TTIC officials at the conclusion of the review. Their comments are addressed within the report.

BACKGROUND

In a June 18, 2004, letter to Secretary Powell, six members[3] of the U.S. Senate requested that OIG identify how inaccurate and incomplete data and statements came to be included in the *Patterns of Global Terrorism - 2003* report. The Senators referred to a need for clearer accounting in the war on terrorism as a reason why Congress mandated the annual *Patterns* report in 1987. Hence, they said they "were very disturbed" to learn of the inaccuracies in the report and of the incomplete picture of global terrorism that it offered. Furthermore, the Senators found the Administration's use of the report in press conferences and press releases to be "especially troubling." (For the full text of the Senators' letter, see Appendix A.)

Patterns - 2003, released on April 29, 2004, indicated that acts of international terrorism had declined slightly in the past several years and that 2003 had the "lowest annual total of international terrorist attacks since 1969," which was used to bolster the assertion that the Administration was winning the global war on terrorism. Shortly thereafter, an op-ed article in the *Washington Post* alleged that there were statistical errors in the report. Subsequent articles in various periodicals claimed events were left out, mislabeled, and counted incorrectly. On June 22, 2004, the Department issued a revised *Patterns - 2003* report that said there was an increase in the number of significant international terrorist events over the period.

HISTORY OF PATTERNS OF GLOBAL TERRORISM

The CIA issued the U.S. government's first annual report on international terrorism in 1976 as a research paper. The goal of that report, *International and Transnational Terrorism: Diagnosis and Prognosis*, was to provide a framework for understanding international terrorism. In 1978, the CIA began to issue the report annually and added coverage on significant trends in terrorist activities, including foreign-government support for terrorist groups and international efforts to deter terrorism.

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[3] Senators Tom Daschle, Joseph R. Biden, Jr; Carl Levin, Harry Reid, Patrick Leahy, and John D. Rockefeller IV.

In 1982, the role of producing a report on international terrorism shifted from CIA to the Department when the first publication under the Department's purview, *Patterns of International Terrorism: 1981*, was published. The first "Chronology of Significant Terrorist Events" (Appendix A) appeared in the following year's report.

In December 1987, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989 (P.L. 100-204, Section 104, as amended), required that the Department provide Congress a full and complete annual report on terrorism for those countries and groups meeting the criteria for international terrorism. The reporting requirement changed in 1996 to include the extent to which other countries cooperate with the United States in apprehending, convicting, and punishing terrorists responsible for attacking U.S. citizens or interests. A more complete history of the *Patterns* reports may be found in Appendix B.

As now designed, *Patterns* serves as a unique, comprehensive accounting of significant acts of global terror and of the diplomatic record of the United States and its partners in cooperatively countering such terror. Its unclassified nature facilitates wide distribution and contributes to greater public understanding of the global war on terrorism.

CRITERIA

Title 22, Section 2656f, of the U.S. Code requires that the Department, by April 30 of the following year, produce an annual report on terrorism that includes "detailed assessments" for each country in which there were significant acts of international terrorism. The law defines an international terrorist event as premeditated, politically motivated violence that is perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents to influence people and which involves citizens of two or more countries. The definition of "significant" is left to the Secretary. In November 1996, with further modifications in later years, criteria were developed to define which international terrorist attacks were "significant." An incident is now considered significant if there was loss of life or serious injury to people, major property damage of $10,000 or more, or the abduction or kidnapping of people.

In 1996, the congressional reporting requirements were amended to require the Department to report on the extent to which other countries cooperate with the United States in apprehending, convicting, and punishing terrorists responsible for attacking U.S. citizens or interests.

ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Although the Department has the overall responsibility for producing the annual report on international terrorism, other U.S. government entities (primarily TTIC) assist in writing portions of the report and in producing the statistics used for the report's Appendix A.

S/CT is the Department's program office responsible for coordinating and producing *Patterns*. The responsibility for preparing *Patterns* has belonged to S/CT since the Department began issuing the report annually in 1982. S/CT gets input from various sources (overseas posts, functional and regional bureaus) to prepare the report, drafts the Coordinator's Year in Review section, which discusses trends and numbers of events; and writes introductions to the regional overviews. S/CT also takes the lead on drafting Appendix D - U.S. Programs and Policy, with the assistance of the Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

The Department's INR draft individual country reports within the regional overviews. The drafts are then sent to S/CT, which sends them to the regional bureaus for review and comment.

TTIC[4] reviews information on terrorist events and maintains this information in a database, which it inherited from the CIA's CTC.[5] The database is used to compile Appendix A - Chronology of Significant Terrorist Incidents at the end of each year. TTIC also provides data for the charts and graphs that are used in the report.

The IRP,[6] which was made up of representatives from INR, CIA, Defense Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency, reviewed terrorist incidents and determined which events met the established definition of significant international terrorism. A representative from TTIC, a non-voting member of the IRP, chaired the panel. The results of the IRP's meetings are contained in TTIC's database.

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[4]TTIC's mission and organizational responsibilites are described in the Director of Central Intelligence Directive 2/4, *Terrorist Threat Integration Center,* dated 1 May 2003. These responsibilites include integration and analysis of terrorist-related information collected domestically and from abroad.

[5]Previously, CIA's CTC maintained the database, which produces data on Terrorism.

[6] TTIC informed OIG at the conclusion of this review that the IRP had been disbanded. A new group made up of individuals from TTIC's partners, with assignees to TTIC, will review and adjudicate terrorist events.

Appendixes B and C, which contain descriptions of "designated foreign terrorist organizations" and "other terrorist groups."

THE PROCESS

TTIC tracks worldwide acts of terror and maintains this information in a database. On a daily basis, TTIC analysts reviewed reporting of events for possible inclusion in the database. If an analyst determined that a terrorist incident should be considered by the IRP, a description of the incident was entered into the database and summary information, such as the date of the incident, the country, type of event (e.g., kidnapping), was also entered. Monthly, TTIC sent terrorist incident summaries[7] to the members of the IRP for their consideration. IRP members could study and share the information with staff from their respective agencies before they met, on the first Wednesday of each month, to determine (adjudicate) which of the previous month's events were significant international terrorist events. TTIC, in turn, updated the database with a record of the IRP's decision.

The Department began drafting portions of the *Patterns - 2003* report in November 2003, but the chronology of significant international terrorist events was not received by the Department until February of 2004. The draft version of *Patterns*, without Appendix A, was also circulated to regional and functional bureaus for review and comment. Because of the short timeframe in which S/CT has to coordinate the report, Appendix A was never circulated for review or comment within S/CT or with other Department offices, accompanied by the draft version of the report. In March 2004, the report was forwarded for production, to meet the April 30 congressional deadline. (A workflow of the process of producing the data for Appendix A is in Appendix C of this report.)

ADDRESSING CONGRESSIONAL CONCERNS

Congress requested that OIG determine: 1) how "inaccurate" statements came to be included in the Department's *Patterns of Global Terrorism - 2003* report, 2) whether there were significantly different processes used in assembling the report than in previous years, and 3) whether the participants involved differed

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[7] The TTIC database summaries provided to the IRP included information on the date, arena (international or not), type of event (e.g., bombing), and country of occurrence. The summaries gave a short description of the event. For example, the summaries might have noted that "extremists bombed two restaurants, partially collapsing a wall, which injured a pedestrian."

significantly from those who produced previous reports. The answers to these questions are summarized here briefly and are discussed in more detail in the Findings and Recommendations section of this report.

OIG found that the inaccurate statements were due to omissions and apparent inconsistencies in the database of terrorist events maintained by TTIC. These included:

- Even though the IRP had in January 2004 adjudicated terrorist events for the remainder of the previous calendar year, data entry lagged toward the end of 2003, and information on terrorist incidents between November 11 and the end of December 2003 was not entered into the database until April 2004.

- No one questioned the omissions before the report was printed.

- It appears that there was no consistent, replicable methodology used by the IRP for selecting events to be included in the chronology in Appendix A.

Given the above circumstances, Appendix A and the statistics used as a basis for official Department briefings cannot be viewed as reliable.

OIG was also asked to look at whether the process and the participants involved in producing the report were significantly different from those of previous reports. OIG found that the process remained the same, but that the major difference between the 2003 report and previous reports was the involvement of TTIC in the maintenance of the database used to prepare Appendix A. Prior to the formation of TTIC, responsibility for maintenance of the database rested with CTC. The TTIC unit manager, who was formerly from CTC and who was responsible for updating the database, left TTIC in December 2003 and was not replaced. Efforts to fill the position were unsuccessful until after the report was published. According to TTIC officials, data entry for the events adjudicated by the IRP in January 2004[8] did not begin until April 2004, well after Appendix A data was first sent to the Department, in February 2004.

The offices involved in the preparation of *Patterns* within the Department were the same in 2003 as in prior years. However, a personnel change and staffing shortages within S/CT likely affected oversight of the report. A Foreign Service public affairs officer who previously helped produce the report left in the spring

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[8] The IRP met on January 23, 2004, to adjudicate events for the balance of November 2003 and December 2003.

2003, and the position was reassigned elsewhere within S/CT. The associate coordinator whose office was responsible for producing the report began working in that office in June 2003 and had no previous experience in preparing the *Patterns* report.

In summary, OIG found that the omissions and apparent inconsistencies were due to a number of factors. The shift of responsibility from CTC to TTIC for maintenance of the database of terrorist events, along with the lack of trained, long-term personnel working in that office, probably contributed to the lack of supervision of the database. The process for assembling the report at the Department, while differing little from that of previous years, lacked sufficient oversight and coordination. Recommendations to correct these problems are presented in the following section.

OIG found that both S/CT and TTIC personnel greatly regretted the errors in the 2003 report and have already begun formulating more rigorous methodologies for the compilation of data. The recommendations discussed in the next section, along with innovations and remedial action already undertaken by S/CT and TTIC should provide future *Patterns* reports a more useful and accurate analysis of terrorist and anti-terrorist activities.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department's *Patterns of Global Terrorism - 2003* report contained erroneous information largely because of gaps in data entry, inconsistently applied methodology, and lack of oversight. In this section, OIG presents it findings and recommendations regarding these issues.

DATA INCONSISTENCY AND THE COMPILATION OF APPENDIX A

The omission from the report of terrorist attacks occurring after November 11, 2003, was perhaps the most egregious error, but OIG also found that this omission highlighted other weaknesses in the compilation of Appendix A. What appear to be inconsistencies in the application of the definitions, as described in the criteria and the adjudication by the IRP, also affected the quality of the data. Finally, Appendix A was never circulated within the Department nor was it made available to the analysts responsible for writing regional overviews and country specific narratives, individuals who could have identified the omissions and inconsistencies.

Appendix A Methodology

OIG reviewed a sample of significant international terrorist events that were identified in Appendix A in both the original and revised *Patterns - 2003* reports and found that the definitions and criteria for identifying and classifying international terrorist events appear to have been applied inconsistently. Some incidents were removed from the original version of Appendix A, but other incidents, similar to those that were deleted, were then added. For example:

- On March 31, IBM employees in Italy found an explosive device and notified police, who described it as a dangerous, though rudimentary, bomb. This incident was deleted from the revised Appendix A.

- On September 8, authorities in Madrid, Spain, safely defused a parcel bomb hidden in a book that was sent to the Greek Consulate. This incident was not included in the original version of Appendix A but was included in the revised version.

- On February 1, a time bomb was discovered and defused in a McDonald's restaurant in Turkey. There were no injuries and no one claimed responsibility. This incident was deleted from the revised report.

- On February 25, an incendiary bomb was thrown at a McDonald's restaurant in Saudi Arabia. There were no injuries and no one claimed responsibility. This incident was included in both reports.

TTIC explained that there are several reasons for what appear to be inconsistencies in the application of the criteria. In some cases, details were not available when the IRP first considered an event. Over time, as more information became available, the IRP would reconsider the event, and this may have changed how the event was categorized. Since the IRP did not keep records or minutes of how determinations were made, TTIC could only speculate on why some events were included or not included. TTIC also opined that the criteria are complex and decisions can be subjective. For example, when the IRP reconsidered the February 1 event, it may have deleted it because the panel determined that there was not enough firepower involved to cause significant damage. In contrast, the February 25 event may have been included because incendiary bombs cause significant property damage.

There also appear to be inconsistencies in how events are counted. Multiple similar events occurring more or less simultaneously or in succession in one area are sometimes counted as one incident and at other times are counted individually. For example:

- On February 25, two bombs that exploded in Caracas, Venezuela, and damaged the Spanish and Colombian embassies, were listed as one incident, as were four bomb attacks on March 25 in Pristina, Serbia, against police stations of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

- On April 12, grenade attacks at two different targets in Anantnag District, Kashmir, one at a bus station and another at an army patrol, were listed as separate events.

- On November 15 in Istanbul, Turkey, vehicle-bomb attacks at the Beth Israel and Neve Shalom synagogues were listed as separate events.

TTIC and S/CT explained that the IRP had analyzed these events and that the panel had a basis for determining that some events should be considered as one incident and other events should be listed as separate incidents. Unless a rationale is explained, it is difficult for the reader to understand why some multiple events are counted as only one incident and why others are counted individually.

TTIC and S/CT are developing an algorithm that explains how multiple events are counted. OIG encourages S/CT to include this supporting material in the report to assist the reader in understanding the methodology. OIG also believes that, for purposes of transparency, S/CT should include an explanatory footnote for each event that may not obviously fit the criteria and methodology.

Accepted standards of data collection and analysis require that there be a reliable and complete database (the universe of events under consideration) and that classification of events from the database be performed in a consistent, replicable manner. This means that a separate determination of events as significant or non-significant, using the same database, should yield the same results. When terrorist events do not fit established criteria or definitions, this circumstance should be flagged, allowing classification criteria to be adjusted periodically. The definitions for classifying events from the database (the criteria for determining if an event is significant, international or domestic, etc.) should be based on hard data. If hard data are not available, then a thorough explanation of how decisions are made must be provided.

The accuracy of the report is dependent on accurate and complete data and a comprehensive adjudication process. The role of TTIC in the preparation of the terrorism database is also vital to the accuracy of the data. Although S/CT does not have a direct role in the preparation of Appendix A, it is in the Department's best interest to ensure that a reliable methodology is used in determining the data for the *Patterns* report. Therefore, OIG recommends that S/CT and TTIC formalize the roles and responsibilities of the two agencies.

The following recommendation calls on S/CT to conclude a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with TTIC. This MOU should ensure that:

- Specific, replicable criteria for classifying terrorist events for *Patterns* are established and applied consistently;

- In cases where terrorist events do not fit the established criteria, an explanation is recorded as to how the event was classified; and

- The classification criteria are periodically adjusted to include or exclude certain types of events, as needed.

OIG also recommends that TTIC keep complete minutes of meetings and notes on how decisions were made, and that they make this information available to the Department and others users upon request, as appropriate.

OIG also found that the *Patterns - 2003* report contained internal inconsistencies, particularly between the chronology and the geographic overview sections and between the charts and graphs and other sections. For example, the Year in Review section refers to "190 acts of international terrorism." However, Appendix A lists 169 "significant terrorist incidents." Country-specific portions of the geographic overviews, meanwhile, often include references to domestic terrorist events and to international terrorist events.

In general, OIG found that the commingling of discussions of domestic and international terrorism and of significant and non-significant terrorism led to confusion and difficulty in interpreting the numbers cited. OIG suggests that S/CT include in the report's introduction an explanation of the report's methodology for classifying significant international terrorist events, preventing readers from becoming confused about which types of events are being discussed. OIG notes that previous early editions of *Patterns* included such a reference. S/CT has agreed and intends to include a section on methodology in future reports. That section would define international and domestic incidents and significant and non-significant incidents and state the procedures used to make these determinations. References to major incidents in future reports will make clear whether the incident is domestic or international.

Frequency and Review of Appendix A

In the past, the annual list of significant international terrorist events was forwarded to S/CT in February of the subsequent year. However, S/CT analysts who prepare the regional overviews did not have access to Appendix A. Moreover, the chronology has not traditionally been vetted throughout the Department by such bureaus as INR[9], the Bureau of Consular Affairs, and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, all of which have independent sources of information on terrorist

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[9] INR received a list of terrorist events before IRP meetings, but IRP members did not get the annual cumulative listing for review.

events. S/CT said there was insufficient time in the publishing schedule for it to circulate Appendix A to other Department offices for comment. It also stated that the chronology represented the vote of the IRP, and S/CT did not question the decisions made by the IRP. However, had Appendix A been circulated to other analysts at S/CT or elsewhere in the Department, these analysts would likely have identified the omissions and inconsistencies contained in *Patterns - 2003.*

Analyzing patterns of terrorism requires a reliable, periodic chronology of significant events that can be compared and examined in context, along with information from other sources. The chronology is more likely to be complete and accurate if it is vetted by a number of offices dealing in anti-terrorist activities and terrorism reporting. The final arbiter of the chronology must, however, be TTIC.

TTIC agrees that the chronology can be produced more frequently and has suggested that it will, in the future, produce a quarterly chronology.

Recommendation 2: The Coordinator for Counterterrorism (S/CT) should request that the Terrorist Threat Integration Center prepare and submit a chronology of significant international terrorism events (Appendix A) to S/CT for review and circulation within the Department. This chronology should be prepared at a minimum on a quarterly basis. S/CT should compile adjustments, corrections, and amendments to the chronology and return these to TTIC for consideration and updating of the database, if appropriate. (Action: S/CT)

OVERSIGHT AND STAFFING

OIG found that the process for assembling the *Patterns - 2003* report lacked oversight and adequate review. Statistics presented in the Year in Review section were not examined for appropriateness before being finalized. An experienced analyst might have questioned the inconsistencies and data abnormalities in the chronology while preparing the Year in Review figures; however, an individual experienced in data analysis and reporting did not draft that portion of the report. Data collection and analysis requires that analysts verify the suitability and completeness of the data and double-check their calculations against historical patterns and other existing information.

An S/CT Civil Service public affairs specialist, who had handled production of the report since 1986, directed general coordination of the report.

S/CT previously had a second public affairs position, a Foreign Service officer who helped produce *Patterns*. When this individual left, in the spring 2003, the position was transferred to other functions within S/CT.

Management of the preparation of a report as important as *Patterns* should include oversight of the entire publication by a knowledgeable person who has responsibility for the accuracy of the data analysis presented, the consistency of data presented in different sections of the report, and the cohesiveness of the entire report. Given the importance of the global war on terrorism to U.S. national interests and foreign policy, *Patterns* should have the support and staff needed to produce a world-class product.

> **Recommendation 3:** The Coordinator for Counterterrorism should re-establish a second public affairs officer position with analytic reporting skills and assign to this position responsibility for drafting and oversight of the analytical portions of the *Patterns of Global Terrorism*. (Action: S/CT)

> **Recommendation 4:** The Coordinator for Counterterrorism should establish and fill a Public Diplomacy unit chief position that will be responsible for providing oversight to the *Patterns of Global Terrorism* report. This individual should be responsible for ensuring that the entire report is consistent, that portions of the report do not contradict or disagree with each other, and that terrorist incidents are presented and described uniformly throughout the report. (Action: S/CT)

ATTRIBUTION

When the errors in the data were first brought to the public's attention the Department was presumed to be entirely responsible. With responsibility for maintaining the database comes acknowledgement of authorship and accountability for the charts, graphs, and lists of events generated from that information. This attribution is not acknowledged in the *Patterns* report, but OIG believes that it is an important factor in ensuring that the information presented in the report is accurate, transparent, and verifiable.

PROGRESS TO DATE

As it conducted its review, OIG found that S/CT and TTIC had already begun to review the steps involved in the preparation of *Patterns* and to discuss changes. S/CT is proposing to include more information in the report on the membership of the IRP and on how possible incidents are identified, processed, and adjudicated. Future reports will also discuss international versus domestic terrorism and significant versus non-significant events. In addition, *Patterns* reports will clarify the adjudication of incidents in Kashmir, Israel, and Chechnya, since all of these incidents involve cross-border support for terrorist groups.

S/CT has informed OIG that it has prepared a draft MOU with TTIC outlining the responsibilities of each office or agency. S/CT has also reviewed the clearance and approval procedures for *Patterns* and is improving the process. Finally, S/CT plans to add two positions having direct responsibility for *Patterns*, a Public Diplomacy unit chief and a Public Diplomacy analytic officer.

TTIC, meanwhile, has also conducted an internal review of the *Patterns* process. One of its key findings was the need to restructure and expand the scope of responsibilities of the incident adjudicative body that replaces the IRP. The new panel will include a more diverse representation from across the counterterrorism community and will include TTIC assignees from each of the original agencies whose members originally comprised the IRP, as well as TTIC assignees from the Department of Homeland Security and Federal Bureau of Investigation. TTIC is also requesting that a representative from S/CT, as a non-voting member, attend each session to provide insight into incidents that will be included in *Patterns*. TTIC is providing guidelines to address complex issues such as multiple events, disputed borders, timing of incidents, and the maintenance of records of the rationale behind these decisions, should questions arise in the future. TTIC agrees that there is a need to distribute the list of significant international terrorist incidents more frequently.

OIG believes that all parties involved in the preparation of *Patterns* are taking effective steps to ensure that future reports contain the most complete and accurate depiction possible of international terrorism.

ABBREVIATIONS

CIA   Central Intelligence Agency

CTC   Counterterrorist Center

DOS   Department of State

INR   Bureau of Intelligence and Research

IRP   Incident Review Panel

MOU   Memorandum of understanding

OIG   Office of Inspector General

S/CT   Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism

TTIC   Terrorist Threat Integration Center

APPENDIX A: REQUEST LETTER FROM CONGRESS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 18, 2004

The Honorable Colin L. Powell
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to express our deep concern with the latest edition of the Department of State's *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003* report.

Defeating global terrorism is a goal we all share. Yet, over the course of the last several months, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld has repeatedly indicated that the Administration lacks the "metrics" to determine whether the United States is winning the war on international terrorism. Given that this effort is likely to take considerable time and resources, we agree with Secretary Rumsfeld that success requires that the American people be provided a clearer accounting from their leaders of how we are fighting and faring in the war on terrorism.

This desire for clearer accounting of our efforts against terrorism was part of the rationale that led Congress in 1987 to pass legislation mandating an annual *Patterns of Global Terrorism* report. Congress believed this report could help ensure that our government's decisions to defeat terrorism are informed by the latest and most accurate data.

Because defeating terrorism will require accurate data, we were very disturbed to learn that the State Department's *Patterns of Global Terrorism* annual report for 2003 presented an inaccurate and incomplete picture. As you know, the *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003* report indicated a decline in global terrorism last year when, in fact, the number of terrorist incidents increased -- to the highest level in more than 20 years. Especially troubling is the fact that senior Administration officials used this erroneous data in a series of press conferences and press releases to claim that the United States is winning the war on international terrorism.

We are pleased that you committed to address this problem and urge you to aggressively follow through on these pledges. We submit a series of additional recommended steps for you to consider while you are editing the earlier report:

1) immediately remove from the State Department's website the inaccurate and incomplete version of the report as well as any public testimony, speeches or transcripts based on that report;

2) upon completion of the revised report, forward the new report to any Congressional Committee that heard testimony based on the faulty report;

3) in order to clear up any misimpression that the earlier report may have left with the American public or with Congress, particularly as the Congress begins deliberations on FY 2005 appropriations measures, hold a public press conference to describe the corrections made to the original report and the implications of the new conclusions for our government's success in the war on terror;

4) initiate an investigation by the State Department's Inspector General into how the inaccurate statements found their way into the latest version of this report and whether the process for assembling this report and the participants involved differed significantly from previous reports.

Prevailing in the war on terrorism will require the long-term cooperation of the American people and the world. Our government's credibility is essential to these efforts. By releasing an inaccurate report, the Administration has undermined our nation's credibility at a critical moment in the war on terrorism. We believe the best thing you can do to restore some of this lost credibility is to pursue the measures described above.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tom Daschle
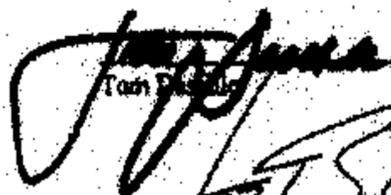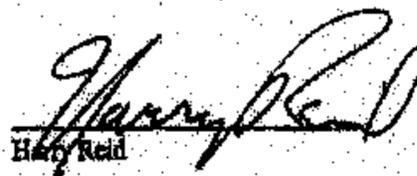
Harry Reid

Joseph R. Biden, Jr

Patrick J. Leahy

Carl Levin

John D. Rockefeller IV

APPENDIX B: HISTORY OF PATTERNS REPORT (1975 – 2003)
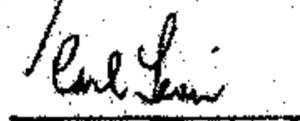
YEAR	REPORT TITLE	ISSUED BY	REPORTING
1975	International and Transnational Terrorism: Diagnosis and Prognosis[10]	CIA	Research study on trends in international terrorism. Data based on new "data bank" called International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events
1976	International Terrorism in 1976[11]	CIA	Research paper
1977 - 1979	International Terrorism	National Foreign Assessment Center, CIA	Research papers.
1981	Patterns of International Terrorism: 1981	Department of State (DOS)	Report issuance shifts from CIA to the Department.
1982	Patterns of International Terrorism: 1982	DOS	First time Chronology of Significant Events appears in Patterns Patterns Report as Appendix A.
1983	Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1983	DOS	The report title changed to "Patterns of Global Terrorism."
1987	Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1987	DOS	Public Law 100-204 (Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FYs 1988-1989) required Department to provide Congress a full and complete annual report on terrorism.
1996	Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1996	DOS	Congress amends reporting requirements to include a requirement that the Department report on the extent to which other countries cooperate with the in apprehending, convicting, and punishing terrorists responsible for attacking US citizens or interests and the extent to which foreign governments are cooperating in preventing future acts of terrorism.
2003 (revised)	Patterns of Global Terrorism	DOS	Appendix B, Chronology of Non-significant International Terrorist Incidents, was added.

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[10] Report contains caveat that study does not represent a CIA position, but that judgments are those of the author.
[11] Ibid.

APPENDIX C: PROCESS FOR COMPILING APPENDIX A OF 2003 PATTERNS REPORT

TTIC gathers terrorist incidents from various sources (i.e., press and FBIS)

TTIC stores Data

TTIC prints terrorist incident reporting

TTIC faxes Terrorist Incident Report to IRP members

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research

Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)

National Security Agency (NSA)

Terrorist Incident Report

OIG did not review about CIA process

DOS/INR IRP representative consults with INR analysts for the report accuracy

OIG did not review about DIA process

OIG did not review about NSA process

DOS/INR IRP representative attends IRP meeting

IRP meets first Wednesday of each month to determine whether prior month's terrorist incidents meet the legal definition of significant international terrorism