

**Opening Statement
of
Chairman Pete Hoekstra**

“Hearing on Terrorist Use of Strategic Communications”

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

Good morning. Today the Committee will conduct an open hearing on how terrorists and radical Islamists use the Internet as a primary and incredibly effective means to spread their venomous message of hate, terror and violence.

This hearing will demonstrate for the committee and the public how effective these groups are at packaging their message in images, songs and stories that appeal to the disaffected and young and the same moderate Muslims our nation needs to reach.

This hearing will also familiarize you with how these groups use the Internet to recruit and train new members and sympathizers.

The information we are hearing today was not conceived as part of an intelligence product, but it is being

used to help train U.S. forces deploying to Iraq on radical Islam and the need to respect Arabic and Muslim culture.

I believe this valuable information needs to be shared with more people in our government and armed forces. And it needs to be shared with the American people.

As a nation, it is critical that we understand the specific and sophisticated nature of the threat we still face from al-Qaeda and radical Islamist terror. It is also critical we understand that the Global War on Terror is not just being fought on land; it's being fought in cyberspace as well.

I want to let the Members know that our witnesses are not here to answer questions on government efforts to counter al-Qaeda or radical Islamists on the Web. That effort is being led by the State Department and the National Counterterrorism Center, and will be the subject of a closed hearing for the Members at a later time.

Our first witness leads the effort to research and analyze the presence and usage of the Internet by radical Islamists, with his team's research primarily focused on Iraq's Anbar province.

Our second witness leads the Rand Corporation's research on the use of the Internet by Islamic Extremists.

Testifying on our first panel is the Honorable Peter W. Rodman, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy and International Affairs.

And testifying on our second panel is Dr. Bruce Hoffman, Corporate Chair in Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency and Director of the RAND Corporation's Washington Office.

With that I want to thank Undersecretary Rodman for agreeing to testify at an open hearing and for the excellent research his team is doing on this issue. I would also like to thank Dr. Hoffman for agreeing to share his expertise in this area as well.

Before recognizing the Ranking Member, I would like to remind all Members that this is an open hearing and as such they should take extra care not to discuss classified information. I look forward to today's discussion and would now like to recognize the Ranking Member.