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Chairman Tierney, Ranking Member Shays, and Distinguished Members of the House Subcommittee,

My name is Lauren Ploch, and I am an Analyst in African Affairs with the Congressional Research Service. I'd like to thank you for inviting me to testify today regarding the Department of Defense's newest combatant command, Africa Command, or AFRICOM. In my testimony, I will explore a few questions related to the command's creation and its mission. I will also discuss various African reactions to AFRICOM's creation.

The command's billing as an innovative Department of Defense (DOD) approach to meeting U.S. security goals has put AFRICOM under increased scrutiny. Congress has considered the command not only within the framework of the competition for U.S. resources in Africa for humanitarian, development, and security programs, but also within the broader competition for resources between military and civilian programs within our foreign policy framework.

Why now? The Motivation for AFRICOM's Creation

The President's announcement of a new combatant command for the Africa in early 2007 reflects Africa's increasing strategic importance to the United States. The Administration's motivation for the creation of AFRICOM evolved in part out of concerns about DOD's division of responsibility for Africa among the geographic combatant commands (COCOMs). Until AFRICOM reaches full operating capability DOD responsibilities for Africa remain divided among three geographic commands.[1]

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[1] European Command (EUCOM), has 42 African countries in its Area of Responsibility (AOR); Central Command (CENTCOM), covers eight countries in East Africa, including those of the Horn of Africa; and Pacific Command (PACOM), is responsible for the islands of Comoros, Madagascar, and Mauritius.

Although some military officials have advocated the creation of an Africa Command for over a decade, recent crises have highlighted the challenges created by "seams" between the COCOMs' boundaries. Some observers say European Command (EUCOM) and Central Command (CENTCOM) have become overstretched given the demands created by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as by a significant increase in U.S. military activity in Africa. The Commander of EUCOM testified before Congress that:

> The increasing strategic significance of Africa will continue to pose the greatest security stability challenge in the EUCOM AOR. The large ungoverned area in Africa, HIV/AIDS epidemic, corruption, weak governance, and poverty that exist throughout the continent are challenges that are key factors in the security stability issues that affect every country in Africa.[2]

His predecessor, General James Jones, estimated in 2006 that EUCOM's staff were spending more than half their time on Africa issues, up from almost none three years prior.[3] As the current EUCOM Commander argued in his confirmation hearing, "a separate command for Africa would provide better focus and increased synergy in support of U.S. policy and engagement."[4]

Why Africa? U.S. Strategic Interests

The establishment of AFRICOM reflects an evolution in policymakers' perceptions of U.S. strategic interests in Africa. Africa was not included in the U.S. military command structure until 1952, when several North African countries were added to the responsibilities of EUCOM because of their historic relationship with Europe. The rest of the continent remained outside the responsibility of any command until 1960, when Cold War concerns over Soviet influence in newly independent African countries led DOD to include Sub-Saharan Africa in the Atlantic Command, leaving North Africa in EUCOM. Responsibility for Sub-Saharan Africa was transferred in 1962 to the now defunct Strike Command, which was also responsible for operations in the Middle East and South Asia. In 1971, responsibility for Africa was dissolved, leaving Sub-Saharan Africa out of the combatant command structure until 1983. Under the Reagan Administration, U.S. military involvement in Africa was largely dominated by Cold War priorities, and the Administration's "containment" policy led DOD to divide responsibility for Africa into its current configuration among three geographic commands.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, many U.S. policymakers considered the U.S. military's role on the continent to be minimal. U.S. military involvement in Africa in the early 1990s was dominated by the deployment of U.S. forces to Somalia. In 1995, DOD outlined its view of Africa in its U.S. Security Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa, asserting that "ultimately we see very little traditional strategic interest in Africa."[5] Political and

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[2] Testimony of General Craddock to the Senate Armed Services Committee, September 19, 2006.

[3] Greg Mills, "World's Biggest Military Comes to Town," *Business Day*, February 9, 2007.

[4] Advance Questions for General Bantz J. Craddock, USA, Nominee for United States European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, in his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee on September 19, 2006.

[5] The report did, however, note significant U.S. political and humanitarian interests. DOD Office of International Security Affairs, *United States Security Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa*, August 1995.

humanitarian interests guided U.S. engagement. In 1998, following terrorist attacks on two U.S. embassies in East Africa, the United States conducted a retaliatory attack against a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan that was at the time believed to be linked to al Qaeda. The embassy bombings, and the retaliatory strike against Sudan, are considered by many analysts to be a turning point in U.S. strategic policy toward the region.

In 2002, the Bush Administration outlined a more focused strategic approach toward Africa in its National Security Strategy: "In Africa, promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war, and desperate poverty. This threatens both a core value of the United States - preserving human dignity - and our strategic priority - combating global terror." To address these challenges, the document asserted that U.S. security strategy must focus on building indigenous security and intelligence capabilities through bilateral engagement and "coalitions of the willing."[6] The Administration's 2006 National Security Strategy identified Africa as "a high priority of this Administration," declaring that "our security depends upon partnering with Africans to strengthen fragile and failing states and bring ungoverned areas under the control of effective democracies."[7]

In 2004, a congressional advisory panel of Africa experts identified five factors that have shaped increased U.S. interest in Africa in the past decade: HIV/AIDS, oil, global trade, armed conflicts, and terrorism. They suggested that these factors had led to a "conceptual shift to a strategic view of Africa."[8]

HIV/AIDS. According to the United Nations, there are over 22 million HIV-positive Africans, representing more than two-thirds of infected persons worldwide. The rate of infection in some African militaries is believed to be high, reportedly as high as 50% in some southern African countries, raising concerns that those forces may be unable to deploy when needed.[9] As part of U.S. efforts to address the epidemic, DOD has established an HIV/AIDS prevention program with African armed forces.

Oil and Global Trade. The potential benefit from improved commerce between Africa and the United States is a key component of U.S. Africa policy.[10] Natural resources, particularly energy resources, dominate the products the United States imports from Africa, which now supplies the United States with roughly the same amount of crude oil as the Middle East.[11] In 2006, President Bush announced his intention to replace more than 75% of U.S. oil imports from the Middle East by 2025.[12] Nigeria has been Africa's largest producer of oil, and is the fifth largest global supplier of oil to the United

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[6] The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States,* September 2002.

[7] The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States,* March 2006.

[8] Walter H. Kansteiner III and J. Stephen Morrison, *Rising U.S. Stakes in Africa: Seven Proposals to Strengthen U.S.-Africa Policy,* May 2004.

[9] Kevin A. O'Brien, "Headlines Over the Horizon: AIDS and African Armies," *Atlantic Monthly,* Vol. 292, No. 1, July/August 2003.

[10] For more information, see CRS Report RL31772, *U.S. Trade and Investment Relationship with Sub-Saharan Africa: The African Growth and Opportunity Act and Beyond,* by Danielle Langton.

[11] See John Authers, "The Short View: African Oil," *Financial Times,* April 24, 2007. Data on U.S. crude oil imports is compiled by the Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration, and is available at [http://www.eia.doe.gov].

[12] The White House, "President Delivers State of the Union Address," January 31, 2006.

States. But instability in the country's Niger Delta region has reduced output periodically by as much as 25%. World oil prices have been affected by Nigerian political developments and by periodic attacks on pipelines and other oil facilities in the Delta. A senior DOD official reportedly commented in 2003 that "a key mission for U.S. forces (in Africa) would be to ensure that Nigeria's oil fields... are secure."[13] The United States has provided security assistance funding to help Nigeria strengthen security in the Delta's waterways.

Maritime Security. Africa's coastlines have been highly susceptible to illegal fishing, illegal trafficking, and piracy in recent years. Nigeria's waters have recently been named the most dangerous in the world in terms of pirate attacks.[14] The inability of African governments to adequately police the region's waters has allowed criminal elements to smuggle people, drugs, and weapons and dump hazardous waste, and has opened maritime commerce and off-shore oil production facilities to the threat of piracy and sabotage. In 2005, the Bush Administration introduced its National Strategy for Maritime Security, identifying the freedom of the seas and the facilitation and defense of commerce as top national priorities and indicating plans to fund border and coastal security initiatives with African countries.[15]

The United States government has engaged its African partners in a number of ministerial conferences on maritime security, and is currently conducting several activities to increase the capability of African navies to monitor and enforce maritime laws. The U.S. Navy has increased its operations in the Gulf of Guinea to enhance security in the region, although those operations have been sporadic. Through its Global Fleet Stations (GFS) concept, the Navy has committed itself to more persistent, longer-term engagement. In fall 2007, U.S. Naval Forces Europe launched the African Partnership Station (APS). Under this initiative, a navy ship was deployed to the Gulf of Guinea for six months to serve as a sea base of operations and a "floating schoolhouse" from which to provide assistance and training to the Gulf nations. Training focused on maritime domain awareness and law enforcement, port facilities management and security, seamanship/navigation, search and rescue, leadership, logistics, civil engineering, humanitarian assistance and disaster response. Several European partners and U.S. government agencies, including the Coast Guard and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), partnered with the Navy to use the Station for their own training and development activities. In the waters off the coast of East Africa, the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) is working with the Navy and with coalition partners in Coalition Task Force 150 (CTF-150), which conducts maritime security operations to protect shipping routes in the Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, the Arabian Sea, Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean. Coalition and U.S. naval forces have had numerous engagements with pirates in these waters.

Armed Conflicts. Political conflict and instability in parts of Africa have caused human suffering on a massive scale and undermined economic, social, and political

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[13] Statement by Gen. Charles Wald, former EUCOM Deputy Commander, Greg Jaffe, "In Massive Shift, U.S. Is Planning To Cut Size of Military in Germany," *Wall Street Journal,* June 10, 2003.

[14] For more information, see the International Maritime Bureau, [http://www.icc-ccs.org/imb/].

[15] The White House, *The National Strategy for Maritime Security,* September 20, 2005.

development. Although the number of conflicts in Africa has decreased in recent years, the continent is home to a majority of the United Nations' peace operations. Four African countries, Ghana, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and South Africa, consistently rank in the top 10 troop contributing countries to U.N. missions. Despite a willingness to participate in these operations, many African militaries lack the command and control, training, equipment, and logistics capability to effectively participate in such efforts. Instability in Africa has demanded substantial humanitarian and defense resources from the international community, and the United States and other donor countries have acknowledged the utility and potential cost-effectiveness of assisting African forces to enhance their capabilities to participate in these operations.

One of the most significant efforts to upgrade African peacekeeping capabilities is the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program (ACOTA). Established in 2002, ACOTA provides training, including light infantry and small unit tactics, and uses a "train-the-trainer" approach. In 2004, ACOTA became a part of the new Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), which attempts to address some of the factors limiting African militaries' ability to contribute to peace operations. As part of this effort, GPOI aims to support the creation of an international transport and logistics support system for regional peacekeeping forces in coordination with other G8 countries. While the State Department is the executive agent of GPOI and ACOTA, DOD provides small military teams for special mentoring assistance to ACOTA training events. Over 60,000 African peacekeepers have received training since ACOTA's inception.[16]

Terrorism. Current U.S. security policy is driven in large part by counter-terrorism efforts, which the Administration has identified as a top national security priority.[17] Terrorist attacks on the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998, on targets in Mombasa, Kenya in 2002, and most recently in Algeria, Mauritania, and Morocco, have highlighted the threat of terrorism in the region. DOD officials have emphasized the need to work with African governments to counteract the threat. Of primary concern to policy makers is the possible challenge posed by "ungoverned spaces."[18] The Administration has linked these areas indirectly to terrorist threats, asserting:

> Regional conflicts can arise from a wide variety of causes, including poor governance, external aggression, competing claims, internal revolt, tribal rivalries, and ethnic or religious hatreds. If left unaddressed, however, these different causes lead to the same ends: failed states, humanitarian disasters, and ungoverned areas that can become safe havens for terrorists.[19]

In 2002, the Department of State launched a program to increase the border security and counter-terrorism capacities of four West African nations bordering the vast Sahara desert. In 2005, the Bush Administration announced a "follow-on" interagency program known as the Trans Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership, or TSCTP. The Partnership is

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[16] U.S. Department of State, *FY 2008 Performance Summary,* February 2008.

[17] The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States,* September 2002.

[18] Jessica Piombo, "Terrorism and U.S. Counter-Terrorism Programs in Africa: An Overview," *Strategic Insights,* Vol. VI, Issue 1, January 2007. Piombo defines ungoverned spaces as "physical or non-physical area(s) where there is an absence of state capacity or political will to exercise control."

[19] The White House, *The National Security Strategy of The United States,* September 2002.

"aimed at defeating terrorist organizations by strengthening regional counter-terrorism capabilities, enhancing and institutionalizing cooperation among the region's security forces, promoting democratic governance, discrediting terrorist ideology, and reinforcing bilateral military ties with the United States."[20]

Overseen by the State Department, TSCTP has a significant U.S. military component, Operation Enduring Freedom - Trans Sahara (OEF-TS), which is currently implemented by EUCOM. Under the auspices of OEF-TS, which AFRICOM will take responsibility for this fall, U.S. forces work with their African counterparts from nine West and North African countries to improve intelligence, command and control, logistics, and border control, and to execute joint operations against terrorist groups. These military efforts are designed to support complimentary development activities led by State and USAID. To counter the recruitment efforts of terrorist groups like Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), for example, USAID supports job creation initiatives for disadvantaged youth. Young people are a key demographic in Africa, where high unemployment rates and scarce education opportunities compound the challenges posed by a growing "youth bulge." Such programs are coordinated with the efforts of U.S. military personnel working in the region. Increasing emphasis has been placed on Information Operations (IO), which use information to improve the security environment and counter extremist ideology through military teams deployed to U.S. embassies. Some question whether activities such as these should be a part of DOD's mandate.

On the other side of the continent, an effort initially designed to counter terrorism in the region has grown into something broader in scope. In 2002, CENTCOM developed Combined Joint Task Force: Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) to focus on counter-terrorism efforts in the Horn region and to provide a forward presence there.[21] CJTF-HOA personnel train the region's security forces on counter-terrorism, collect intelligence, serve as advisors to peace operations, conduct activities to maintain critical maritime access to Red Sea routes, and oversee and support humanitarian assistance efforts. CJTF-HOA has supported numerous humanitarian missions, including the airlift of humanitarian assistance supplies to Ethiopia and Northern Kenya.[22] CJTF-HOA also conducts civilian-military ("civ-mil") operations throughout East Africa as part of an effort to "win hearts and minds" and enhance the long-term stability of the region. These civ-mil operations include digging wells and building and repairing schools, hospitals, and roads, and have been part of a broader CENTCOM mission to "counter the re-emergence of transnational terrorism." Some within the development community question whether some of these activities might be more appropriately coordinated by a civilian agency or non-governmental organization than by the U.S. military.

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[20] U.S. State Department, "Africa Overview," *Country Reports on Terrorism, April 30, 2007.*

[21] CJTF-HOA covers the land and airspace in Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Seychelles, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Yemen, as well as the coastal waters of the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Indian Ocean.

[22] General Ward, in his confirmation hearing, testified that "the U.S. military is not an instrument of first resort in providing humanitarian assistance but supports civilian relief agencies...The U.S. military may be involved when it provides a unique service; when the civilian response is overwhelmed; and civilian authorities request assistance. The USAID Office of Disaster Assistance validates all such requests for U.S. military assistance. Our role in this context will not change."

Why Might AFRICOM's Mission Differ from Other Commands?
U.S. Military Assistance and Security Cooperation in Africa

Although the precise wording of AFRICOM's mission statement has evolved since the command was first announced in 2007, DOD officials have broadly suggested that the command's mission will be to promote U.S. strategic objectives by working with African partners to help strengthen stability and security in the region through improved security capability and military professionalization.[23] A key aspect of the command's mission will be its supporting role to other agencies' and departments' efforts on the continent. But like other combatant commands, AFRICOM would also be expected to oversee military operations, when directed, to deter aggression and respond to crises.

Earlier this year, DOD hosted a U.S.-Africa Defense Policy Dialogue that was attended by foreign ministry and defense officials from some 40 African nations. In an effort to explain AFRICOM's mission to those representatives, U.S. officials outlined what was jokingly referred to as their "hidden agenda," addressing skepticism at home and abroad about AFRICOM. According to DOD, America's security interests in Africa are tied to five overarching goals:

- eliminating terrorist networks and safe havens;
- preventing the proliferation of illegal arms, WMD, and narcotics;
- ensuring strategic access to sea lanes;
- securing means of access and transportation, both on land and at sea; and
- facilitating free market access.

The premise behind AFRICOM's establishment, according to its creators, was that stable and secure states would be more capable of deterring terrorism, proliferation and crime, thereby supportive of the goals the Administration outlined above. Stability and security are not created in a vacuum; they require an array of U.S. government agencies to work together, not only with each other, but with their African counterparts, in what some have referred to as a "whole-of-government" approach. Building partnership capacity is a key component of this approach, and has been at the forefront of U.S. military strategy in Africa in recent years. The U.S. military contribution to this effort would fall generally into three strategic categories: civilian control and defense reform, military professionalization, and capacity building. At present, military experts believe that no African nation poses a direct threat to the United States or is expected to; consequently an Africa Command would focus less on preparing U.S. forces for major

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[23] When first announced, AFRICOM's draft mission statement was: "U.S. Africa Command promotes U.S. National Security objectives by working with African states and regional organizations to help strengthen stability and security in the AOR. U.S. Africa Command leads the in-theater DOD response to support other USG agencies in implementing USG security policies and strategies. In concert with other U.S. government agencies and other international partners, U.S. Africa Command conducts theater security cooperation activities to assist in building security capacity and improve accountable governance. As directed, U.S. Africa Command conducts military operations to deter aggression and respond to crises." Its current mission statement, is "United States Africa Command, in concert with other U.S. government agencies and international partners, conducts sustained security engagement through military-to-military programs, military sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy."

combat in the region. Instead, the command is expected to concentrate much of its energies and resources on training and assistance to local militaries so that they can better ensure stability and security on the continent.

The mission of AFRICOM might be most closely compared to that of Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), Like SOUTHCOM, AFRICOM is expected to supervise an array of operations that relate to U.S. strategic interests but are not combat-related, unlike EUCOM, CENTCOM and PACOM, which have traditionally been more focused on preparing for potential warfighting operations. This is not to say AFRICOM will never be called upon to conduct more traditional "kinetic" military operations; alleged Special Operations activities in the Horn suggest both a hard and soft power role for the U.S. military in Africa. But with AFRICOM's creation, we see what appears to be an evolution in DOD strategy. One DOD official suggested that the U.S. government could consider the command a success "if it keeps American troops out of Africa for the next 50 years."[24] What does this mean in non-military terms? As one former EUCOM official succinctly summed up, AFRICOM appears to be designed not so much to use U.S. forces abroad to protect us at home, but to enable foreign forces in their home to protect us from a distance.[25]

Given its prescribed mission, some DOD officials have referred to AFRICOM as a combatant command "plus." This implies that the command would have all the roles and responsibilities of a traditional geographic combatant command, including the ability to conduct military operations, but would also include a broader "soft power" mandate aimed at building a stable security environment and would aim to incorporate a larger component from civilian government agencies to address those challenges. DOD, identifying instability in foreign countries as a threat to U.S. interests, issued a directive in 2005 defining stability operations as a "core U.S. military mission" with priority comparable to combat operations.[26] Although U.S. armed forces have traditionally focused on "fighting and winning wars," defense strategy is now evolving to look at conflict prevention, or "Phase Zero," addressing threats at their inception through increased emphasis on security cooperation and capacity building of partners and allies.[27] It is important to note, though, that the DOD directive identifies the military's role in stability operations as a supporting one and that many of these tasks "are best performed by indigenous, foreign, or U.S. civilian professionals. Nonetheless, U.S. military forces shall be prepared to perform all tasks necessary to establish or maintain order when civilians cannot do so."

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[24] Comments by Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Ryan Henry at a Meeting of USAID's Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA) on May 23, 2007.

[25] Rear Admiral Hamlin Tallent, USN (Ret.), "The Mission of AFRICOM: Enabling African Sovereignty."

[26] DOD defines *stability operations* as "military and civilian activities conducted across the spectrum from peace to conflict to establish or maintain order in States and regions." DOD, *Directive 3000.05: Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, November 28, 2005.

[27] Some analysts view four traditional phases for a military campaign: deter/engage, seize initiative, decisive operations, and transition. DOD officials have recently begun using a phrase, "Phase Zero" to encompass efforts prior to the first phase aimed at preventing the conflict. For more information on the Phase Zero strategy and TSC, also known as peacetime engagement, see General Charles Wald, "The Phase Zero Campaign," *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 43, 4th Quarter 2006, available at [http://www.ndu.edu/inss].

The prospect that DOD will focus less on fighting wars and more on preventing them engenders mixed feelings in some U.S. government circles. While many at the State Department and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) welcome the ability of DOD to leverage resources and to organize complex operations, there also is concern that the military may overestimate its capabilities as well as its diplomatic role in Africa, or pursue activities that are not a core part of its mandate. Some argue that the highly unequal allocation of resources between the Departments of Defense, State, and USAID, hinder their ability to act as "equal partners" and could lead to the militarization of development and diplomacy.[28]

AFRICOM's commander has referred to DOD's role in Africa as part of a "three-pronged" U.S. government approach, with DOD, through AFRICOM, taking the lead on security issues, but playing a *supporting* role to the Department of State, which conducts diplomacy, and USAID, which implements development programs.[29] DOD's effort to incorporate an unprecedented number of civilian personnel seems to reflect an acknowledgement that the U.S. military cannot prevent conflicts in Africa without a more holistic approach. AFRICOM's planners originally aimed to staff the command by as much as a quarter with intelligence, diplomatic, and development experts from civilian agencies such as State, USAID, Treasury and Agriculture. SOUTHCOM and Northern Command (NORTHCOM), by virtue of their missions, have also engaged civilian agencies on a more sustained level, but no command has incorporated interagency personnel within their staff at the level proposed for AFRICOM.

Creating these new civilian billets is one thing, staffing them is another. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has stressed the need to increase the number of diplomatic and development personnel, and has requested funding for new foreign service officer positions at State and USAID in her FY2009 budget request. These new positions, some of which would be assigned as political advisors to combatant commands like AFRICOM, would arguably allow State to focus greater effort on meeting national security goals, and would give the Department a much-needed cushion from which to rotate personnel through foreign language and other training programs. The Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has also advocated on behalf of the civilian agencies; in a speech on soft power at Kansas State University last November that stressed the need to strengthen our non-military instruments of national power, he emphasized that the State Department was critically understaffed. Secretary Gates reiterated this in April testimony before the House Armed Services Committee (HASC), arguing that while the State Department should be the lead national security agency, it does not in his view currently have the authority, resources, or power to act as the lead agency for foreign policy.

A study commissioned in 2006 by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on interagency cooperation overseas on counter-terrorism noted concerns raised by some host nations that America's profile overseas was seen to be increasingly military in nature. It also raised concerns over potential turf wars between the Departments that that

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[28] See, for example, Lisa Schirch and Aaron Kishbaugh, "Leveraging '3D' Security: From Rhetoric to Reality," *Foreign Policy in Focus*, Policy Brief Vol. 11, No. 2, November 15, 2006.
[29] Advanced Questions for General William E. "Kip" Ward, U.S. Army, Senate Armed Services Committee Nomination Hearing, September 27, 2007.

could undermine the effectiveness of our anti-terrorism efforts. AFRICOM's ability to address interagency concerns collaboratively within its organizational structure, and its ability to address the concerns of its African partners within the context of its operations, will be critical to its ability to promote peace and stability on the continent.

What do Africans Think About AFRICOM?

Since the announcement of AFRICOM, there has been considerable speculation on the African continent, as well some as back here in the United States, regarding U.S. motives for establishing a military command to focus on Africa. African perceptions of the new command are mixed. Some worry that the move represents a neo-colonial effort to dominate the region militarily. U.S. military efforts on the continent have been seen as episodic, leading some to question a more sustained focus from DOD now. Reports of U.S. air strikes in Somalia and U.S. support for Ethiopia's military intervention there have added to those concerns in recent years. Many Africans have viewed U.S. counter-terrorism efforts in Africa with skepticism, and there appears to be a widespread belief that the new command's primary goals will be to hunt terrorists and to secure U.S. access to African oil.[30] U.S. foreign policy analysts have focused increased attention on China's role in Africa in recent years, and such attention has led some to question whether AFRICOM might be part of a new contest for influence on the continent.[31]

Several African governments and militaries, on the other hand, have reacted to AFRICOM with cautious optimism.[32] They view increased American attention to the continent's problems as a positive move, potentially bringing increased resources, training, and assistance. U.S. foreign military assistance has increased in recent years, and military training programs in Africa have steadily been on the rise.

Much of the controversy on the continent surrounds the question of the location of AFRICOM. When initially announced, DOD maintained its intention to locate the command's headquarters on the continent. DOD officials have argued that locating AFRICOM in the region would allow its staff to develop greater cultural awareness and allow for easier interaction between AFRICOM officials and their African counterparts, given the logistical challenges posed by a continent over three times the size of the United States. Some in Africa have interpreted the location issue to mean that the United States would be establishing a military base with permanently deployed U.S. troops on the continent. Some countries have expressed opposition to the possibility of a permanent foreign military presence within their borders, while others have expressed concerns that an American military presence might embolden domestic terrorist groups. Some African governments that consider themselves to be regional powers may perceive a permanent American military presence, whether staffed by civilians or troops, to be a rival for political or military power in their sphere of influence.

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[30] See, for example, "The U.S., Oil, and Africa," *Egyptian Mail*, February 20, 2007.

[31] Dulue Mbachu, "Skepticism Over U.S. Africa Command," *ISN Security Watch*, February 19, 2007.

[32] See, for example, "Morocco Lobbying to Become Home for New U.S. Military Command," *Middle East Newsline*, February 9, 2007, and "Algerian Foreign Minister "Satisfied" With Plans for US-Africa Command," *El-Khabar*, March 24, 2007.

DOD officials have stressed that the location in question would be a staff headquarters rather than a troop headquarters. A number of factors, including negative African reaction, challenges in finding a suitable location, and a lack of consensus between State and DOD on the criteria for choosing a site, have led AFRICOM officials to delay answering the question of the command's permanent location.[33] DOD is still considering the establishment of small regional offices on the continent, possibly co-locating those facilities with the headquarters of the continent's regional and sub-regional organizations to link AFRICOM with the African Union's (AU) nascent regional security architecture. [34] DOD currently has military liaison officers at the AU headquarters in Ethiopia and with West Africa's regional body in Nigeria. Those presences are likely to expand under the new command, and additional liaison offices may be established.

Administration officials stress that there are no plans to establish any new military bases in Africa; President Bush reiterated this during his visit to the continent in February 2008. At present CJTF-HOA has a semi-permanent troop presence in Djibouti with more than 1,500 U.S. military and civilian personnel in residence. The command authority for CJTF-HOA, currently under CENTCOM, will be transferred to AFRICOM in 2008, and it will continue to be used as a Forward Operating Site. The U.S. military also has access to a number of foreign air bases and ports in Africa and has established "bare-bones" facilities maintained by host troops in several locations. The U.S. military used facilities in Kenya in the 1990s to support its intervention in Somalia and continues to use them today to support counter-terrorism activities.

AFRICOM's new commander has acknowledged the need for his staff to continue their public relations campaign to allay concerns.[35] In 2007, members of the Pan-African Parliament, the legislative body of the African Union, voted in favor of a motion to encourage member states not to host AFRICOM "anywhere on the continent."[36] Several African heads of state have issued preliminary statements about their views on the command. Some have advised DOD to consider how AFRICOM could complement the AU's regional security structure. During President Bush's second official visit to Africa in February 2008, Ghana's President announced, "I am happy, one, for the President dispelling any notion that the United States of America is intending to build military bases on the continent of Africa. I believe the explanation the President has given should put fade to the speculation, so that the relationship between us and the United States will grow stronger and with mutual respect."[37] Liberia's President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has been vocal in her support from AFRICOM, and has offered to host its headquarters.

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[33] AFRICOM's headquarters are currently located in Stuttgart, Germany.

[34] The African Union is working to create an African Standby Force (ASF), a multinational peacekeeping force composed of regional brigades organized by the continent's Regional Economic Communities. The AU anticipates the Force being operational by 2010 with a standby capacity of 15,000 to 20,000 peacekeepers. The ASF and its regional brigades are not intended to be standing forces.

[35] "U.S. Army Boss for Africa Says No Garrisons Planned," *Reuters*, November 8, 2007.

[36] Some details of the debate are included in "Gaborone Succeeds At PAP As Sebetela is Booed," *All Africa*, October 29, 2007.

[37] Press availability with Presidents Bush and Kufour in Accra, Ghana on February 20, 2008, available at [http://www.whitehouse.gov].

Issues for Congress

As AFRICOM approaches full operating capability, questions concerning the command remain. Among these questions are those related to the authorities and funding mechanisms needed to "borrow" and integrate interagency staff and to support the programs and activities identified to achieve AFRICOM's mission. Questions also remain regarding its ultimate location.[38] The unique nature of the command's mission has made AFRICOM the subject of a number of broader congressional inquiries regarding the appropriate roles of the various U.S. government agencies in U.S. foreign policy.

U.S. security assistance to foreign countries traditionally has been determined by the State Department. Some of this assistance is provided by DOD, some is provided by contractors. Congress has granted DOD temporary authority to train and equip partner militaries for counter-terrorism and stability operations. Some DOD officials have argued some of the current laws addressing security cooperation require simplification, and that new authorities would allow combatant commands like AFRICOM greater flexibility to respond to emerging threats and opportunities. Others have raised concerns, though, that modifying the administrative authorities could interfere with the Department of State's diplomatic decisions or bilateral relationships. The House Armed Services Committee has commissioned a Panel on Roles and Missions of not only the various military branches, but also of the various civilian agencies involved in protecting American security. Among its initial findings was the notion that shortcomings in the interagency process have led the U.S. military to take on missions that are not part of its core responsibilities. The FY08 National Defense Authorization Act requires the military to examine its core competencies, which may have implications for AFRICOM.

Interagency coordination on Africa and the need to realign U.S. resources to "better understand the threats emanating from this region" have been raised as particular points of concern for Congress.[39] Some suggest that the lack of legally binding requirements for agencies to coordinate their activities could make AFRICOM's "pioneering" interagency process more challenging, should other agencies not have the resources to participate adequately.[40] A 2006 Senate Foreign Affairs Committee Report found that:

> As a result of inadequate funding for civilian programs... U.S. defense agencies are increasingly being granted authority and funding to fill perceived gaps. Such bleeding of civilian responsibilities overseas from civilian to military agencies risks weakening the

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[38] See, for example, S.Rept. 110-77, accompanying S. 1547, the FY2008 Defense Authorization Act; S.Rept. 110-85, accompanying H.R. 2642, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008; and Conference Report 110-477 to H.R. 1585, the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2008

[39] See the House Report to accompany H.R. 2082, the Intelligence Authorization Act of FY2008.

[40] Some of the challenges in coordinating a more effective interagency process were outlined by John Hamre, President of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), in a hearing, "Organizing Department of Defense Roles and Mission Requirements," held by the House Armed Services Committee on June 20, 2007.

Secretary of State's primacy in setting the agenda for U.S. relations with foreign countries and the Secretary of Defense's focus on war fighting.[41]

As DOD stands up the new command and as AFRICOM becomes operational, Congress may exert its oversight authority to monitor the command's operations to ensure they support, rather than guide, the United States' political, economic, and social objectives for the continent.

As I have outlined above, AFRICOM faces a number of challenges in its establishment and its operation, and some of these challenges may become issues for Congress. Key oversight questions relating to the command include the following.

- How are U.S. strategic interests influencing the size and scope of the U.S. military footprint on the continent, and what effect will the creation of a new Africa Command have on future U.S. military operations in Africa?

- Is the command's mission well-defined? How prominent will counter-terrorism operations and programs be, particularly relative to the peacekeeping training and support components in AFRICOM's mandate? Should conflict prevention activities be an essential part of DOD's mandate, and are they sustainable? Would some DOD-implemented programs be more appropriately implemented by other U.S. agencies?

- What are the Administration's plans for the development of AFRICOM's interagency process and, in particular, how closely are the departments coordinating on plans for the command and on U.S. military efforts in Africa in general? Does AFRICOM's enhanced integration of non-DOD USG agency personnel into the command necessitate statutory changes? How will AFRICOM address the intelligence community's need to realign its resources directed toward the continent?

- How will the Administration ensure that U.S. military efforts in Africa do not overshadow or contradict U.S. diplomatic and development objectives? What are the authorities granted to U.S. Chiefs of Mission regarding AFRICOM activities in the countries to which they are posted, and are these authorities sufficient?

- Are the legal authorities guiding DOD's implementation of security cooperation reform programs sufficient? Do any of these authorities hinder the U.S. military's ability to conduct these programs? What efforts does DOD take to ensure that the training and equipment provided to African security forces is not used to suppress internal dissent or to threaten other nations?

- How are AFRICOM and U.S. military efforts in Africa perceived by Africans? Would locating AFRICOM's headquarters on the continent significantly enhance the command's ability to carry out its mission? What are the costs associated with an African location, versus one in Europe or the United States?

[41] Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, *Embassies as Command Posts in the Anti-Terror Campaign*, December 15, 2006.