

THE SOUTH ASIA EARTHQUAKE: IMPACT AND HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

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THE SOUTH ASIA EARTHQUAKE: IMPACT AND HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 1:35 p.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. James A. Leach (Chairman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. LEACH. The Committee will come to order. The subject of our hearing this afternoon is the United States and international response to the catastrophic earthquake that devastated much of Pakistan and parts of India on October 8th.

All Americans are united in expressing their condolences to the families of the victims of this tragedy. The case for prompt humanitarian assistance to the many thousands throughout the region affected by this calamity is compelling.

As our witnesses will describe in more detail, aftershocks continue to traumatize the beleaguered populace in the affected Himalayan areas of India and Pakistan. Meanwhile, courageous efforts to provide humanitarian assistance have been hampered by the daunting terrain and the onset of the Himalayan winter, as well as the damage wrought to transportation and related infrastructure.

To date, India has recorded approximately 1,400 fatalities, and the Government of Pakistan has confirmed approximately 50,000 deaths, while local officials suggest that the final figures may be substantially higher. Tens of thousands of people were injured in the quake zone, the vast majority of them in Pakistan-controlled areas of Kashmir.

While there are many pressing humanitarian needs around the globe, the importance of providing immediate shelter, food, and healthcare to the victims of this disaster must be considered an urgent, international priority.

In this circumstance, the United Nations, the United States, many other individual countries, and nongovernmental organizations have come together in a common effort to provide comfort and relief to the thousands whose lives have been devastated by this catastrophe.

Unfortunately, the response to date is clearly inadequate. Perhaps because of the tsunami, perhaps because of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and now Wilma, donor fatigue is a real problem. Un-

fortunately, also, problems of terrain and weather are compounded by the number of injuries.

In the tsunami, loss of life was far greater, probably by a magnitude of four, but injuries were fewer. Victims were either drowned or they survived with limbs in place. This earthquake, in a mountainous region, is different than a shoreline phenomenon. Many arms and legs have been broken and even amputated. Livelihoods have been totally disrupted in the face of a harsh winter clime.

In this sobering context, we look forward to your assessment of the current situation in the affected region and a description of U.S. relief efforts as well as the tests that lie ahead.

Mr. Faleomavaega.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Leach follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES A. LEACH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF IOWA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

On behalf of the Subcommittee, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our distinguished witnesses. We are appreciative of your expertise and your commitment to public service.

The subject of our hearing this afternoon is the U.S. and international response to the catastrophic earthquake that devastated much of Pakistan and parts of India on October 8, 2005. All Americans are united in expressing their condolences to the families of the victims of this tragedy. The case for prompt humanitarian assistance to the many thousands throughout the region affected by this calamity is compelling.

As our witnesses will describe in more detail, aftershocks continue to traumatize the beleaguered populace in the affected Himalayan areas of India and Pakistan. Meanwhile, courageous efforts to provide humanitarian assistance have been hampered by the daunting terrain and the onset of the Himalayan winter, as well as the damage wrought to transportation and related infrastructure.

To date, India has recorded approximately 1,400 fatalities and the government of Pakistan has confirmed approximately 50,000 deaths, while local officials suggest that the final figures may be substantially higher. Tens of thousands of people were injured in the quake zone, the vast majority of them in Pakistan-controlled areas of Kashmir. While there are many pressing humanitarian needs around the globe, providing immediate shelter, food and health care to the victims of this disaster must be considered an urgent international priority.

In this extraordinary circumstance, the United Nations, the United States, many other individual countries and non-governmental organizations have come together in a common effort to provide comfort and relief to the thousands whose lives have been devastated by this catastrophe.

Unfortunately, the response to date is clearly inadequate. Perhaps because of the tsunami, perhaps because of the hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and now Wilma, donor fatigue is a real problem. Unfortunately, also, problems of terrain and weather are compounded by the number of injuries. In the tsunami, loss of life was far greater, probably by a magnitude of four, but injuries were fewer. Victims were either drowned or they survived with limbs in place. This earthquake in a mountainous region is different than a shore-line phenomenon. Many arms and legs have been broken and even amputated. Livelihoods have been totally disrupted in the face of a harsh winter clime.

In this sobering context, we look forward to your assessment of the current situation in the affected region and a description of current U.S. relief efforts, as well as the tasks that lie ahead.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would first like to thank you for calling this hearing this afternoon, and I would like to offer my personal welcome to our assistant secretary, Christina Rocca, with the State Department; Mr. Hess, with the Agency of International Development; and Mr. Verga, with the U.S. Department of Defense.

Mr. Chairman, I join with you in welcoming our witnesses this afternoon. The House has passed House Resolution 492 and mourned the loss of life as a result of the earthquake that occurred on October 8th of this month in Pakistan and in India. It is estimated that the earthquake claimed the lives of nearly 40,000 people and left more than 2.5 million homeless. Millions of people throughout the region now lack clean water, food, proper sanitation, basic healthcare, adequate shelter, and other necessities. To date, the U.S. and 30 other donor countries have pledged several hundred millions of dollars in emergency assistance and long-term reconstruction aid, and many are involved in delivering humanitarian supplies at this point in time.

Like you, Mr. Chairman, I express my condolences to the victims and urge continued assistance to those affected. In the case of India, I especially commend the efforts of the Indian-American community for mobilizing its forces, members of the community throughout the United States in working with the Members of Congress to make sure help is given.

While the impact on regional economics has not yet been fully assessed, foreign and local press accounts suggest an impending political and economic fallout in Pakistan where criticism is mounting over the government's inability to respond properly to the hardest-hit areas in Pakistan.

The international response has been swift, with nations offering their condolences and pledging generous amounts of monetary aid and humanitarian assistance. The Bush Administration has pledged \$65 million, including rescue helicopters and rescue personnel, as part of the \$272 million in international assistance raised to help the people of India and Pakistan recover from this devastating tragedy.

The world community stands united, I am sure, in its commitment to assist in the relief efforts, and the Members of this Committee, I am certain, do join together in extending our condolences and offer our support. I welcome our witnesses to testify before the Committee this afternoon.

Mr. Chairman, again, I thank you for your leadership and your initiative in taking this hearing, and hopefully we will be able to render further assistance in this crisis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
[The prepared statement of Mr. Faleomavaega follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM AMERICAN SAMOA

Mr. Chairman:

I join with you in welcoming our witnesses and I thank you for holding this hearing. On Tuesday of this week, the House passed H. Res. 492 and mourned the loss of life as a result of the earthquake that occurred on October 8, 2005 in Pakistan and India.

It is estimated that the earthquake claimed the lives of nearly 40,000 people and left more than 2.5 million homeless. Millions of people throughout the region now lack clean water, food, proper sanitation, basic healthcare, adequate shelter, and other necessities.

To date, the US and 30 other donor countries have pledged several hundred million dollars in emergency and long-term reconstruction assistance and many are involved in delivering humanitarian supplies.

Like you, Mr. Chairman, I express my condolences to the victims and urge continued assistance of those affected. In the case of India, I especially commend the ef-

forts of the Indian American community for mobilizing its forces and working with Members of Congress to make sure help is rendered.

While the impact on regional economies has not yet been fully assessed, foreign and local press accounts suggest impending political and economic fallout in Pakistan, where criticism is mounting over the Government's (and the Army's) allegedly inadequate response to the hardest-hit areas.

The international response has been swift, with nations offering their condolences and pledging generous amounts of monetary aid and humanitarian assistance. The Bush Administration pledge of \$65 million, including rescue helicopters and medical personnel, is part of the \$272 million in international assistance raised to help the people of India and Pakistan recover from this devastating tragedy.

The world community stands united in its commitment to assist in relief efforts and Members of this Committee join together to extend our condolences and offer our support. I welcome our witnesses and look forward to their testimony.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Wilson, do you want to make an opening statement?

Mr. WILSON. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for calling this Committee today, and I want to thank our guests. I thought it was very impressive today that, in Congress, we had a minute of silence in memory of the persons who have been affected by the devastation. It was very moving to me to see the Congress of the United States unanimously—a great show of appreciation of the people affected to have that today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you, Mr. Wilson.

Our witnesses are the Honorable Christina Rocca, who is assistant secretary in the Bureau of South Asian Affairs at the Department of State, a position she has held since 2001. Prior to that appointment, Ms. Rocca was a foreign affairs adviser to Senator Sam Brownback of Kansas; a graduate of King's College in London; and the secretary has served for 15 years as an intelligence officer with the CIA.

Mr. Michael Hess is assistant administrator for the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance at the U.S. Agency for International Development. Prior to his appointment earlier this year, he was a Senior Risk Adviser and Vice President at Citibank. A graduate of West Point, and a 30-year veteran of the United States military, Mr. Hess served as the humanitarian coordinator in the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance during Operation Iraqi Freedom and later as deputy chief of staff for the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Mr. Peter Verga is the principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for homeland defense. Mr. Verga previously served as a special assistant for homeland security and director of the Department of Defense Homeland Security Task Force. A graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and a decorated combat veteran, Mr. Verga has held a variety of operations and management positions in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and also at the White House.

We welcome each of you. Secretary Rocca has been with us on a number of occasions. Mr. Hess and Mr. Verga, you are new to this Committee, but your reputations are well known, and we appreciate your attendance.

We will begin in the order of introduction, unless you have a different judgment. Secretary Rocca, you are welcome. Please proceed as you see fit, and without objection, all of your statements will be

placed in the record in full, and you may summarize as you see fit.
Ms. Rocca.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CHRISTINA B. ROCCA, AS-
SISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Ms. ROCCA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. Thank you for inviting us here today to discuss the United States response to the tragic South Asia earthquake and its aftermath.

I have appeared before this Committee several times to talk about the importance of this region to the United States, about the strong partnerships we are building with its government and its people, so you will be proud to know that in the immediate aftermath of this terrible tragedy, the United States took immediate action to support our friends' urgent humanitarian needs. Today, nearly 2 weeks after the earthquake, we can see that the magnitude of their need has yet to be fully realized, and much needs to be done.

The Government of the United States and the American people are responding generously in support of those suffering the effects of the earthquake. We will be with them throughout this challenge. We are providing funds for rescue and relief to both Pakistan and India. We are providing urgently-needed transportation and material support to the Government of Pakistan. We are mobilizing the private sector to provide additional leadership and support to address the many pressing needs faced by the victims. In the days ahead, we will urge the international community to join us in support of the earthquake victims and will be vigorously engaged at next week's UN meeting in Geneva. There is much that the United States can contribute, but we cannot do it all ourselves.

Mr. Chairman, let us briefly review what has taken place to date. Current estimates of the death toll from the October 8 earthquake are nearly 42,000 people dead and 70,000 injured. There is a grave risk now that the devastation left by the earthquake will be compounded as the weather turns bad. Winter is now arriving and bringing snows to the high mountain regions affected by the earthquake. The weather is already deteriorating, and we are in a race against time. Over 3 million people are estimated to have been left homeless and without shelter to protect them from the rapidly deteriorating weather. A second wave of deaths could occur if efforts are not stepped up immediately.

The United States has been out front, leading the international community by providing transportation assets, food, medicine, shelter, equipment, and disaster-management expertise. Within hours of the earthquake, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Ryan Crocker mobilized our Government's efforts to help. Our Government has stepped forward with a contribution of \$50 million in humanitarian assistance. On-the-ground assessments are ongoing, and the United States will participate at next week's donor conference hosted by United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in Geneva.

The United States rushed helicopters to Pakistan. At the moment, there are 19 U.S. helicopters operating there, including heavy-lift, twin-rotor Chinooks, available to move supplies, help

with evacuations, and establish contact with remote areas needing assistance. More of our helicopters are on the way, and I will, of course, defer to Mr. Verga to give you the details on that. We are also responding to the urgent need for winterized tents and blankets, food, medicines, water-purification equipment, and earth-moving equipment.

On October 12th, Secretary Rice traveled to Islamabad to meet with President Musharraf and Prime Minister Aziz in order to personally convey the great sympathies of the American people and determine what more the United States could do to help Pakistan in its hour of need. President Bush is also presently engaged in the issue and invited the Pakistani Charge to the White House to discuss the situation the day after the quake. The President also visited the Pakistan Embassy in Washington last Friday to sign the condolence book. On the day of the quake itself, the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad gave \$100,000 in emergency relief and five helicopters from the Department of State's INL-Government of Pakistan joint air wing. These helicopters began flying the first rescue missions and transporting relief supplies to the affected areas.

With India, the secretary of state has also called the Indian foreign minister to convey our sympathies with all of those affected, and there also, the Embassy immediately contributed \$50,000 to the prime minister's National Relief Fund and \$50,000 to Save the Children. We are working quickly to provide significant additional assistance to NGOs amounting to several hundred thousand dollars. Additional United States Government support, especially to NGOs established on the ground in Jammu and Kashmir, would help meet the urgent needs of affected communities and would demonstrate United States commitment and solidarity with those impacted by the earthquake. We have asked the Government of India if there are other ways that we can be of assistance.

This can be a significant moment for the relationship between India and Pakistan. We have seen Pakistanis and Indians working together to provide help to victims in Kashmir. The historic talks between the Governments of India and Pakistan over the past year and a half laid the groundwork for the trust that would allow this level of cooperation. The governments of both countries have found the political will to allow the people of Kashmir ready access to their relatives on either side of the Line of Control and to take measures which help the humanitarian crisis faced by this area. We, of course, strongly support these gestures and hope they will lead to increased long-term cooperation.

There are also those who are cynically using the situation to conduct violent terrorist acts, as demonstrated by the assassination of the Jammu and Kashmir state education minister. This is unacceptable. The real battle going on in Kashmir today and for the foreseeable future will be to save the hundreds of thousands of innocent lives and to overcome a natural disaster, the likes of which this region has never experienced.

As you have seen on your television screens, the mountainous terrain has made it extremely difficult to reach the affected areas. Weather and landslides have blocked access to remote villages worst hit. Thunderstorms, wind, and fog have made helicopter access impossible and efforts to clear roads more dangerous and com-

plicated. The threat of death by exposure adds to the suffering caused by the earthquake. The winding mountain roads that cling precariously to the hillsides in the best of times have, in many instances, been obliterated by mud and rock slides. They will need to be rebuilt with heavy equipment, equipment that is sorely needed in the towns and cities to recover those buried beneath the rubble. In short, the infrastructure of the entire region—hospitals, schools, water systems and wells, government buildings—is in ruins.

The United States will continue to take a leading role in the international effort to save lives in South Asia, but as I said earlier, this is not something that the United States can do alone, and we are all helping the Government of Pakistan, which is taking the lead in this effort. Seventy-six countries and major international entities, from Azerbaijan to the U.K., including NATO, the EU, and the United Nations, are stepping up to contribute to this effort.

Mr. Chairman, the Administration looks forward to working with you and the Committee as we move forward expeditiously to help the people of the affected areas. People are suffering, and the American people are responding, demonstrating the depth of our commitment to our friends in the region and revealing to the world the character of our great country. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Rocca follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CHRISTINA B. ROCCA, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting us here today to discuss the U.S. response to the tragic South Asia earthquake and its aftermath. I have appeared before this committee several times to talk about the importance of this region to the United States, about the strong partnerships we are building with its governments and its people. So you will be proud to know that in the immediate aftermath of this terrible tragedy, the United States took immediate action to support our friends' urgent humanitarian needs. Today, nearly two weeks after the earthquake we can see that the magnitude of their need has yet to be fully realized and much needs to be done.

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Mr. Chairman, let us briefly review what has taken place to date. Current estimates of the death toll from the October 8 earthquake are nearly 42,000 people dead and 70,000 injured. There is a grave risk now that the devastation left by the earthquake will be compounded as the weather turns bad. Winter is now arriving and bringing snows to the high mountain regions affected by the earthquake; the weather is already deteriorating and we are in a race against time. Over 3 million people are estimated to have been left homeless and without shelter to protect them from the rapidly deteriorating weather—a second wave of deaths could occur if efforts are not stepped up immediately.

The United States has been out front leading the international community by providing transportation assets, food, medicine, shelter, equipment, and disaster management expertise. Within hours of the earthquake, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Ryan Crocker mobilized our government's efforts to help. Our government has stepped forward with a contribution of 50 million dollars in humanitarian assistance. On-the-ground assessments are ongoing and the US will participate at next

week's donor conference hosted by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in Geneva.

The U.S. rushed helicopters to Pakistan. At the moment there are 12 U.S. military helicopters operating there, including heavy-lift twin-rotor Chinooks, available to move supplies, help with evacuations, and establish contact with remote areas needing assistance. More of our helicopters are on the way. We are also responding to the urgent need for winterized tents and blankets, food, medicines, water purification equipment and earth moving equipment.

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This can be a significant moment for the relationship between India and Pakistan. We have seen Pakistanis and Indians working together to provide help to victims in Kashmir. The historic talks between the governments of India and Pakistan over the past year and a half, laid the groundwork for the trust that would allow this level of cooperation. The governments of both Pakistan and India have found the political will to allow the people of Kashmir ready access to their relatives on either side of the Line of Control and to take measures which help the humanitarian crisis faced by this area. We of course strongly support these gestures and hope they will lead to increased long term cooperation between both nations. There are those who are cynically using the situation to conduct violent terrorist acts as demonstrated by the assassination of the Jammu and Kashmir State Education Minister Gulam Nabi Lone. This is unacceptable. The real battle going on in Kashmir today, and for the foreseeable future, will be to save the hundreds of thousands of innocent lives and overcome a natural disaster the likes of which this region has never experienced.

As you have seen on your television screens, the mountainous terrain has made it extremely difficult to reach the affected areas. Weather and landslides have blocked access to remote villages worst hit. Thunderstorms, wind and fog have made helicopter access impossible and efforts to clear roads more dangerous and complicated. The threat of death by exposure adds to the suffering caused by the earthquake. The winding mountain roads that cling precariously to the hillsides in the best of times have, in many instances been obliterated by mud and rock slides. They will need to be rebuilt with heavy equipment, equipment that is sorely needed in the towns and cities to recover those buried beneath the rubble. In short, the infrastructure of an entire region—hospitals, schools, water systems and wells, government buildings—is in ruins.

The U.S. will continue to take a leading role in the international effort to save lives in South Asia. Seventy-six countries and major international entities from Azerbaijan to the UK, including NATO, the EU and the United Nations are stepping up to contribute to this effort.

Mr. Chairman, the Administration looks forward to working with you and the committee as we move forward expeditiously to help the people of the affected areas. People are suffering and the American people are responding—demonstrating the depth of our commitment to our friends in the region and revealing to the world the character of our great country.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you, Madam Secretary.
Mr. Hess?

STATEMENT OF MR. MICHAEL E. HESS, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. HESS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to be able to testify before you today on this tragic event.

I have prepared a presentation for you that summarizes my testimony. May I have the first slide, please? This slide shows a summary of the events which you have summarized already, Mr. Chairman and Secretary Rocca. The number of affected people killed is growing daily as the Pakistani Government gets out into the far-reaching areas of the region, in the northeast, particularly. The latest figure we have on confirmed deaths is over 47,000, and we expect that number to grow. The Indian Government numbers, as you indicated, are around 1,400 dead, confirmed.

The next slide shows a map of the region, especially the rugged area up to the north and east of Muzaffarabad, where we are having a hard time accessing, getting relief supplies in there, and where they cling to the mountainsides, and as the winter rains begin, that makes things even more problematic.

On the next slide, I would like to highlight the process that we go through on every one of these crises, from the crisis invent and the declaration by the Ambassador to the formation of the team. This happened very quickly at USAID, something that we have had to go through, unfortunately, many times. By the ninth day after, we had already formed a DART team which began deploying into the region. A response-management team had been formed and was set up within the Reagan Building to begin assessing the needs and moving supplies forward.

We work very closely with not just my bureau, DCHA, but also with the Bureau of Asia Near East to make sure that we have a coordinated effort from the very beginning. That is reflected on the bottom of the slide down there because we recognize that for us to do part of this and then hand it off to our Asia Near East friends, that this has to be seamless from the very beginning, and we have worked very closely with them in the formation of a task force.

Now, the next slide talks about the immediate response. As I indicated, we began airlifting supplies into the region on October 9th. The first police began arriving then, and a task force was formed to make sure we had a seamless transition.

The next slide shows some of the humanitarian assistance, and \$16.8 million has already been obligated. We are currently reviewing \$18 million worth of proposals from partners, implementing partners, in Pakistan where we are looking at actual programs that can be used to alleviate some of the suffering.

That gives you some of the categories down below. Obviously, emergency supplies, tents, water bladders, things of that nature. Shelter, very important in this case, and I will talk to shelter in a minute. Health is extremely important because there was a large number of medical clinics that were destroyed, and we are very concerned about the ability to help those people who did survive. Water sanitation; as you know, clean water is needed in this region, and many of the water-sanitation capabilities were destroyed.

The next slide shows the six airlifts that USAID has sent into the region. I will highlight a couple of areas there: 1,500 tents. Those are winterized tents, the picture you saw on the previous page. Blankets. I will also highlight the 10 WHO emergency kits. Those kits can take care of 10,000 people each for 3 months. We recognize the need to get those in immediately because of the devastation to the hospitals.

The next slide shows the time line. Again, I will only highlight a couple of areas here. It shows the beginning of the earthquake. Those are all local times, Eastern Standard Time. But note there, on the 10th, we had already begun working very closely with the military from the very beginning. They detailed a liaison officer over to the RMT. Our DART teams, as you can see, linked up with Rear Admiral LeFever early on in Islamabad, and we have already deployed three DART members into Muzaffarabad so that we can forward locate, get a better assessment of the needs on the ground, and meet those needs as these supplies come into Islamabad, and they deploy forward.

On the next slide, you will see some of the challenges. We are very concerned about the onset of winter. Already, temperatures are below 20 degrees at night. We are concerned about getting relief supplies in there so that we can alleviate the suffering more quickly. It is important that we recognize here that this relief operation, which in an earthquake is generally a short period of time, is going to go on for quite a while. We are concerned that the relief effort and the reconstruction effort are going to have to happen simultaneously, but, unfortunately, in the more northeastern regions, the affected area, we will not be able to begin reconstruction until sometime in March or April after the winter snows subside, so relief efforts are going to have to continue throughout that period.

We are also concerned about the political sensitivity of this area and the restricted access that some of our implementing partners will have there. That is going to make us focus on those partners which we have used in the region for a long time.

On the next slide, we look at some of the donor-support issues. The UN flash appeal, as Secretary Rocca indicated, is \$272 million. Already, there have been over \$85 million in pledges, and you can see, on a bilateral basis, we estimate that over \$600 million have been pledged to Pakistan for the relief effort.

The last slide just shows the initial arrival of supplies into the area. You will see Ambassador Crocker there in the middle and some of our relief workers bringing supplies in on the ninth.

Thank you, sir, for the opportunity to appear here, and I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hess follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. MICHAEL E. HESS, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify today about the U.S. response to the recent earthquake in South Asia. As we speak, an intensive humanitarian response is underway, with the full collaboration of staff from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of State, the U.S. military, the Governments of Pakistan and India, international organizations, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

The crisis we are witnessing today began with a magnitude 7.6 earthquake that struck Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan on October 8 at 8:50 a.m. local time. The epicenter of the earthquake was near Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistani-administered Kashmir, approximately 60 miles north-northeast of Pakistan's national capital, Islamabad. Strong aftershocks continue in the affected areas to this day. The official death toll stands at 40,000 in Pakistan and 1,300 in India, and these numbers may increase as relief and recovery operations continue to access remote areas. Tens of thousands more have been injured, and millions have been left homeless by this disaster.

USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, which I head, has the lead responsibility in the U.S. Government for addressing humanitarian concerns. We are responding vigorously to this emergency on behalf of the American people.

The U.S. Government has pledged up to \$50 million in response to this disaster. This represents one of the largest responses to an international natural disaster this decade. As of today, USAID has committed over \$15 million to Pakistan, with more in process. USAID has also provided \$100,000 in emergency support to India, although the Government of India has not formally requested international assistance.

USAID has deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to Pakistan to assess needs, report on conditions, liaise with local authorities, and coordinate U.S. Government civilian and military assistance. The DART is composed of a team leader, deputy, and additional staff focusing on logistics, military liaison, relief programming, and technical sectors. To support the DART and the U.S. response effort, USAID has activated a 24-hour operations center in Washington staffed by a Response Management Team.

A key element of the U.S. response to the Indian Ocean tsunami was the excellent work of the U.S. military in providing logistical support to the relief community. Once again, the U.S. military has provided invaluable assistance in this disaster. Military aircraft have flown dozens of sorties to deliver supplies and evacuate injured persons. USAID staff has worked closely with U.S. military officials to coordinate their humanitarian contributions. Relations between U.S. Government civilian and military authorities have been very smooth, both in Washington and in the field.

To facilitate close coordination with the Department of Defense, USAID has relocated the DART team headquarters with the U.S. military's humanitarian response team in Islamabad, and a military liaison officer has been assigned to the USAID Response Management Team in Washington.

We are also working very closely with Government of Pakistan civilian and military authorities, respecting their overall leadership roles in this response. They have provided vital assessment information to our staff, and we in turn have offered our disaster management advice and expertise. This will likely continue for some time. Pakistani authorities have repeatedly expressed their gratitude to our DART leader for the contributions of the U.S. Government.

In the initial phase of this disaster, there has been a tremendous need for emergency relief supplies. USAID has been working around the clock to meet this need. Hours after the earthquake occurred, USAID provided an initial \$100,000 for local purchase of relief supplies, and began organizing additional shipments of commodities from our strategic stockpile in Dubai.

To date, we have organized six airlifts which have delivered 1,150 rolls of plastic sheeting, 1,570 tents, 15,000 blankets, 10,000 ten-liter water containers, eight water bladders, 20 concrete saws, and two mobile water purification units. We have also airlifted ten World Health Organization emergency health kits to the region. Each of the health kits contains enough supplies to treat 10,000 people for three months. We stand ready to organize additional relief airlifts as circumstances dictate.

In addition to airlifting our own relief supplies, USAID is funding partner organizations delivering relief supplies. Thus far, we have provided \$2 million to the American Red Cross, \$1.5 million to the International Organization for Migration, and \$500,000 to the International Committee of the Red Cross to provide relief commodities to victims in the hardest-hit areas.

The international community faces many challenges in responding to this disaster. The large number of relief flights is straining the logistical capacity of some Pakistani airports. We are working hard alongside our U.S. military and United Nations partners to ensure adequate offloading capacity at these airports, so flights can land, unload their shipments, and depart as rapidly as necessary.

Lack of access to isolated areas is another challenge. Damaged and destroyed roads in this mountainous region make it difficult or impossible to reach many villages by land. This creates problems for determining needs and delivering assist-

ance. The Government of Pakistan is working diligently to open primary and secondary roads. To further facilitate access to isolated areas for international relief teams, USAID is providing \$3.8 million to the World Food Program to facilitate logistical coordination and air operations. And again, the U.S. Department of Defense has provided invaluable support in transporting supplies and relief staff to remote areas, and evacuating injured civilians.

The earthquake generated scores of crush-related injuries, destroyed hospitals, and left thousands without access to health care. USAID is responding to these health needs in partnership with the World Health Organization, which has received \$2 million from USAID to re-establish primary and secondary health care, provide disease surveillance, and offer other essential health services.

Many people in the affected region are now without access to adequate water and sanitation services. If unsanitary conditions are allowed to persist, the spread of communicable disease could lead to hundreds of otherwise preventable deaths. We are working to ensure provision of clean water and adequate sanitation, providing \$2 million to UNICEF to meet critical needs in these relief sectors.

In addition to destroying homes and infrastructure, the earthquake had a devastating impact on local economies and livelihoods. Though it will likely take several years for affected areas to fully recover economically, USAID is planning programs to stimulate communities economically, including "cash for work" programs that offer income to residents in exchange for their work in rebuilding infrastructure.

The threat of frigid weather during the coming winter months has added a sense of urgency to the need to reestablish safe and secure living conditions for affected communities as quickly as possible. As a short-term solution, USAID has shipped winterized tents to the region. Efforts will be made to look at host family arrangements and other medium- to long-term shelter solutions. We have provided \$1.5 million to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to help provide transitional shelter options for displaced communities.

To this point, I have discussed USAID's emergency response to the earthquake. In addition to this short-term relief assistance, USAID's Bureau for Asia and the Near East has already begun looking at the requirements for long-term rehabilitation assistance for the region. As you know, USAID has a Mission in Pakistan with well-established relationships with governmental and non-governmental organizations and agencies in the country. The Mission is looking at needs related to recovery activities in education, health and infrastructure, among other areas.

The Pakistan Government has responded remarkably well given the situation and their military has been clearing roads, ferrying relief commodities, and providing medical care and other support. There has also been a strong international response to this disaster. Over \$650 million has been pledged from various governments so far—which includes a US pledge of \$50 million—and pledges are still being announced. In-kind donations have included search and rescue teams, mobile hospitals, aircraft, relief supplies, and coordination personnel. There are several experienced NGOs with proven track records in the affected parts of the country which are responding with programs to assist the affected communities. The United Nations has mobilized rapidly to assess needs and manage relief efforts. As I mentioned earlier, we have provided substantial funding to the UN to meet a wide range of needs, and are coordinating closely with their teams.

In conclusion, we at USAID are making every effort to support the Government of Pakistan in addressing critical needs as rapidly as necessary. We recognize that this terrible disaster represents an opportunity to help a close and trusted ally in its time of need. We also acknowledge the contributions from many nations around the world, including Pakistan and India, to the United States following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and welcome the opportunity to reciprocate.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to share these observations today with the Subcommittee. I welcome your questions.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you, Mr. Hess.
Mr. Verga?

STATEMENT OF MR. PETER F. VERGA, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. VERGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Members of the Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to address you today to discuss the DoD role in the United States response to the South Asia earthquake.

The Department of Defense's response to this tragic earthquake, as well as any other disaster around the globe, is always in support of a larger Federal Government response. The current effort in Pakistan is, of course, led by the U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, in coordination with the U.S. Department of State and the National Security Council.

For the Pakistan earthquake, the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team and the DoD Humanitarian Operations Military Office immediately exchanged liaison officers, as was mentioned, in order to ensure close civil-military cooperation.

DoD support to Pakistan has enabled unique military capabilities to be used where required. For example, the Department of Defense has provided logistic support, including air traffic control, airport cargo management, and air and seaborne transportation, as well as imaging support, heavy engineering equipment, and medical support and supplies.

Based on requirements compiled by USAID and the State Department, we at DoD initiated planning immediately, and within 48 hours of the earthquake, the Department of Defense took the following actions. The United States Central Command immediately directed the Combined Forces Command—Afghanistan, under Lieutenant General Karl Eikenberry, to lead the initial U.S. military response.

On October 10th, General Eikenberry traveled to the affected region and assessed the humanitarian relief requirements and then assigned Rear Admiral Mike LeFever, United States Navy, to establish a Humanitarian Operations Military Office to help coordinate military support with the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad.

A C-17, carrying meals ready to eat, blankets, water, a 10-ton forklift, cargo processing personnel, was dispatched to assess airfield capacity and landed in Islamabad on October 10th. With the C-17 on the ground, four additional aircraft carrying more relief supplies and an air traffic control unit, which we call a "Contingency Response Group," were headed to Pakistan.

Eight helicopters were deployed from Afghanistan to Islamabad on October 10th and began transporting humanitarian relief supplies and personnel, and on the next day, those same helicopters were evacuating victims of the earthquake.

DoD's ability to quickly respond to this disaster is a reflection of our force availability in the region and a testament to our close working relations with Pakistan and our civilian U.S. Government colleagues. Recognizing that further aid would be required, we began the process of drawing personnel and equipment from around the world.

Currently, the United States military continues to fully coordinate its relief operations with the Pakistan Government, in conjunction with the Embassy in Islamabad, and as of October 20th, 391 United States personnel and 12 helicopters are supporting relief operations in Pakistan, with 19 additional helicopters scheduled to arrive in the next few days. To date, the helicopters have completed 279 sorties, delivered 625 short tons of humanitarian relief, and evacuated over 3,700 personnel. Fifty-one airlift missions have also arrived with 246 tents, 1,900 cots, 6,000 blankets,

153,000 meals, and 32 tons of medical supplies, and over 1,000 short tons of other cargo. Additionally, the USS *Pearl Harbor* and the Motor Vessel, *Northern Lights*, have arrived and offloaded 32 pieces of heavy engineering equipment to assist road repair and reconstruction.

We must also note the exceptional performance of the Pakistani Army and Air Forces during this crisis. The principal burden of dealing with this relief effort, of course, has fallen on the Pakistani military. The military forces have effectively managed a relief system that has moved a significant amount of humanitarian assistance, along with rescue teams, medical personnel, and crisis managers, into some of the most unforgiving terrain in the world. Many soldiers and airmen of the Pakistani military have lost both comrades and family members in the earthquake, but their commitment to duty has been unwavering. Their dedication to their country, despite their own personal loss, is to be commended.

Our friendship with the Pakistanis has been enduring, and our support and aid to our friends continues in their time of need. Pakistan has been a close ally and an essential partner in the global war on terror, and President Musharraf and the Government of Pakistan have been extremely active in the campaign against international terrorism. They have captured key al-Qaeda and Taliban militants, expanded Pakistan military presence in the tribal areas, and continue to provide support to coalition forces operating in Afghanistan.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, the Department of Defense is gratified that we are able to participate in this life-saving operation and to be able to assist the people of Pakistan in their time of great need. The men and women of the U.S. military have once again answered the call, and we all are extremely proud of their service.

With your permission, sir, I would also like to note for the record some of the outstanding work by the members of the staff back here in Washington, represented by some of the folks who have accompanied me to this hearing.

Captain Mike O'Connor of the United States Navy on the Joint Staff; Commander Larry Zelvin of the United States Navy and the Office of the Secretary of Defense; Ms. Cara Negrette; Ms. Bailey Hand; and Ms. Marla Karlin of the Office of the Secretary have been laboring tirelessly here in Washington to make sure we are doing what we need to provide the support forward.

I thank you again, thank you for your leadership in this area, and look forward to any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Verga follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. PETER F. VERGA, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT
SECRETARY FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Introduction

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the Committee: thank you for the opportunity to address you today to discuss the impact of and U.S. response to the South Asia earthquake.

DoD Overseas Humanitarian Assistance Responsibilities

The Department of Defense response to this tragic earthquake, as well as other disasters around the globe, is always in support of a larger Federal government response. The current effort in Pakistan is lead by the U.S. Agency for International

Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in coordination with the U.S. Department of State and the National Security Council. For the Pakistan earthquake, the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team and the DoD Humanitarian Operations Military Office immediately exchanged liaison team members to ensure close civil-military cooperation.

DoD support to Pakistan has enabled unique military capabilities to be used where required. For example, the Department of Defense has provided logistics support, including air traffic control; airport cargo management; and air and seaborne transportation; as well as imaging support, heavy engineering equipment, and medical support and supplies.

Initial Response

Based on requirements compiled by USAID and the State Department, we initiated planning immediately and within 48 hours of the earthquake, the Department of Defense took the following actions:

- The United States Central Command immediately directed the Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan, under Lieutenant General Karl Eikenberry, to lead the initial U.S. military response.
- On October 10th, Lieutenant General Eikenberry traveled to the affected region and assessed humanitarian relief requirements. Then, Rear Admiral Michael LeFever, U.S. Navy, arrived to establish a Humanitarian Operations Military Office to help coordinate military support with the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad.
- A C-17 carrying meals ready to eat (MRE), blankets, water, a 10-ton forklift, and cargo processing personnel, dispatched to assess airfield capacity, landed in Islamabad on October 10th. With the C-17 on the ground, four additional aircraft carrying more relief supplies and an air traffic control unit (Contingency Response Group) were headed to Pakistan.
- Eight helicopters were deployed from Afghanistan to Islamabad on October 10th and began transporting humanitarian relief supplies and personnel. The next day, those same helicopters were evacuating victims of the earthquake.

DoD's ability to quickly respond to this disaster is a reflection of our force availability in the region and a testament to our close working relations with Pakistan and our civilian U.S. government colleagues. Recognizing that further aid would be required, we began the process of drawing personnel and equipment from around the world.

Current Situation

The U.S. military continues to fully coordinate its relief operations with the Pakistani Government in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad. As of October 20th, 391 U.S. personnel and 12 helicopters are supporting relief operations in Pakistan, with 19 additional helicopters arriving in the next few days. To date, U.S. helicopters have completed 279 sorties; delivered 625 short tons of humanitarian relief; and evacuated 3,778 personnel. 51 airlift missions have also arrived with 246 tents; 1,920 cots; 6,000 blankets; 153,600 meals; 32 tons of medical supplies; and 1,039 short tons of cargo. Additionally, the U.S.S. PEARL HARBOR and MV NORTHERN LIGHTS have arrived and offloaded 32 pieces of engineering equipment to assist road repair and reconstruction.

We must also note the exceptional performance of the Pakistani Army and Air Forces during this crisis. The principal burden of dealing with the relief effort has fallen on the Pakistani military. Pakistani military forces have effectively managed a relief system that has moved a significant amount of humanitarian assistance, along with rescue teams, medical personnel and crisis managers into some of the most unforgiving terrain in the world. Many soldiers and airmen of the Pakistani military have lost both comrades and family members in the earthquake, but their commitment to duty has been unwavering. Their dedication to their country despite their own personal loss is to be commended.

Our friendship with the Pakistanis has been enduring and our support and aid to our friends continues in their time of need. Pakistan has been a close ally and an essential partner in the Global War on Terror. President Musharraf and the Government of Pakistan have been extremely active in the campaign against international terrorism. They have captured key Al Qaeda and Taliban militants, expanded Pakistani military presence in the tribal areas, and continue to provide support to Coalition forces operating in Afghanistan.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, the Department of Defense is gratified that we are able to participate in this lifesaving operation and to be able to assist the people of Pakistan in their time of great need. The men and women of the U.S. military have once again answered the call and we are all extremely proud of their service. I welcome any questions you may have.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you all very much. Let me just begin with a couple of observations.

We are all learning many things about disasters in the last 6 months, and it would appear that the civilian side of the United States Government is perfectly capable of dealing with very small disasters. A major disaster requires assistance from the Department of Defense, and it ends up, as we do preliminary assessments, that in the initial stages particularly, only the Department of Defense has the logistics capacities, as well as a chain of command, that can really deal with disasters. It could be someone on the civilian side is better knowledgeable about what to do but cannot give a command to anyone that is going to carry it out. So chain of command plus capacity to be followed is very unique to a military establishment, and it has been very impressive what the United States military has done, the United States Navy in the tsunami and other aspects, as well as the other services, in this particular event.

Perspective-wise, as one who visited the region in the wake of the tsunami, I was thoroughly impressed with the coordination of military with the civilian side and very impressed with USAID's professionalism, as well as the commitment of many nongovernmental organizations in the field.

Again, by perspective, and I do not know this for sure, but it appears to me that the tsunami was more devastating for loss of life and immediacy, but this particular disaster could be many times more difficult in the aftermath than the tsunami was. That implies a question of resources, and I will tell you, and I know you are not prepared to respond—you are going to be speaking with the UN conference, but the Administration, I think, has to be very alert to making very specific requests of Congress at these end-of-the-year budget issues and, in my view, has to be prepared to be quite responsive and compassionate.

I think that the response to the tsunami was so impressive that it almost puts us on the spot with a comparable response to this particular disaster. And I will tell you that the *Abraham Lincoln* was unbelievably impressive in its positioning and what it did. The description of what you have so far done is credible but not extraordinary, and I think we are going to have to be far more committed with far more resources if we are going to make an impact. And I just would stress that it is going to take the Executive Branch to make the appropriate requests of Congress. I think Congress is not in a position to move directly on its own, but there is no reason that something cannot be put in a final package.

A third point, and this is a hair, and so I want to be very careful with this: I recently, with Congressman Lantos, was in North Korea, but prior to that, I visited Mongolia, and the reason I raise this is that Mongolia does not have exactly the same geographic circumstance as Pakistan, partly because there is very little rain-fall or snowfall in Mongolia, relatively speaking. But I was incred-

ibly impressed with a piece of shelter, and all of you are vaguely familiar with a yurt, but in terms of minimum cost, easy to produce, quickly able to transport, this is the most sophisticated tent in mankind's history.

It is only 1,500 years' old, but I would really recommend you to look seriously at the shelter implications of a yurt. I cannot think of a shelter that is more transportable at lower cost than this particular piece of shelter, and it protects against 40 degrees below zero and can be put together in 3 or 4 hours and is substantially stronger than any tent I have ever observed, by a massive margin. And I just raise that by perspective, and I do not know if there are any American yurt makers, but I really recommend looking into that.

Let me just end with that and ask Mr. Faleomavaega if he has any questions.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, yes. As most of us received most of their news through the media reports and the television broadcasts that were made when the earthquake occurred between Pakistan and India, and I am not trying to point fingers at anybody, but at least to my observation, it mentioned that President Musharraf was severely criticized by the families of these victims for the terrible response on the part of the government to provide aid and assistance. The response was too slow, and there were instances where the police forces that were brought to the areas just stood there doing nothing, and they were asked, "Why are not you doing anything to remove these ruins?" and the response was, "Well, we were never ordered to do so."

I am sure things probably have changed since that time, and I just wanted to know, what percentage of our contribution is there in this crisis, and will the Administration be asking for more funds to assist in this crisis? I guess that is a double-loaded question, if you will, but anybody can respond, if you would like.

Mr. HESS. It looks like I will have to take that one, sir. Thank you for your question.

In terms of the percentage of the contribution, that is hard to determine at this time. As you know, the flash appeal from the UN was \$272 million. We have already given over \$10 million to the UN to help them, and they have reorganized into what they call "clusters," and they have "cluster responses."

So, for example, UNICEF is responsible for water sanitation, and we have given them over \$2 million for water sanitation. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is responsible for transportation of evacuees so they can get people out of the area. We have given them over \$2 million. That gives you some of the scale and the size.

WFP is doing the logistics part of it. We have given them \$2.5 million for logistics operations, the establishment of a joint logistics center. That is key because the joint logistics center's function is to help coordinate the supplies that are coming into the air head in Islamabad and getting them out on the Chinooks, the helicopters that DoD is providing, and working with the Pakistani Government to make sure that that happens and gets integrated in a timely manner, which is critical. And there are also a lot of international donations that are coming in as well.

As I indicated earlier, we have, so far, pledged \$50 million for the relief and reconstruction effort. As I indicated, because of the onset of winter and the construction effort and the ability to get out and do the assessments on the ground, I cannot give you an accurate assessment of what the total needs will be. We have not even reached some of the farthest northeastern regions as yet, but we will get back to you on that.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I was not seeking a specific number but just kind of wing it. Like the Chairman indicated earlier, the *Abraham Lincoln* aircraft carrier was there helping the tsunami victims. I was looking at what would be the in-kind, the dollar value of the in-kind contributions that is not even written in dollar bills, but certainly the time, the effort, the compensation of all our—whether it be at the military or civilian level, I think, adds tremendously to the tab as far as the assistance that we are giving.

Has the Administration given any sense of what may be? I am not asking for a specific figure, but in addition to the \$272 million that we seem to have provided, do you sense that we may be requesting an additional half a billion maybe when this thing is over; \$500 million, if you want to put it in better terms?

Mr. VERGA. For the Department of Defense part, sir, as you are aware, we have an account called the Overseas Humanitarian Disaster and Civic Aid Account, called “OHDACAA.” There are currently about \$60 million in that account which is for purposes like this. That appears to be sufficient for what we plan or foresee the Department of Defense operations to be in support of this disaster. Of course, if it expands or goes beyond that, we will have to go back and ask for more, but right now it looks okay.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. And I suspect, with the previous initiative, Pakistan had wanted to purchase a couple of billion dollars’ worth of aircraft. Do you think that a portion of that fund, that the Pakistani Government is going to go into this more dire need than for its defense? Are they really that fearful that India might attack them for wanting to add another major portion of their budget for defense purposes and not for this crisis?

Madam Secretary, could you?

Ms. ROCCA. I am afraid I do not know the answer to that question, sir, so I will have to get back to you.

[The information referred to follows:]

WRITTEN RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM THE HONORABLE CHRISTINA B. ROCCA TO QUESTION ASKED DURING THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

Recently, the Government of Pakistan informed us that they would like to defer the purchase of F16s at this time due to the earthquake. They did, however, indicate that they expect the delivery this year of two EDA (Excess Defense Article) F16s, the transfer of which has already been notified to Congress. The Government of Pakistan further said that they remain committed to the F-16 package at a later date.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. At least, I would certainly be interested to find out. I understand that the first thing that the Pakistani Government had requested was a number of helicopters, and I think you mentioned that we have already provided about 17, and there may still be a need for more. Do you think that we may have to shift some of those helicopters from Iraq since it is not too far away

from where the crisis is at, or do we still need them in Iraq at this point in time, Mr. Verga?

Mr. VERGA. Right now, the initial helicopter response was made with helicopters that were in Afghanistan because they were close, and they essentially, what we call, "self-deploy." They flew from Bagrim over to Islamabad. We are currently moving more helicopters in, some from the Mideast, a couple of from Bahrain, for example, but we are also moving helicopters from the United States and Hawaii out there by air transport. They will fly into Bagrim airfield, be reassembled, and moved over into Pakistan.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. So your guess would be about another 30 helicopters?

Mr. VERGA. There are another 19 in the next few days, and a total of 25 right now are projected to flow in.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I just have one more question, Mr. Chairman.

Has there ever been any real serious assessment by the seismologists or the archaeologists or whoever else are experts in this region of the world? You mentioned something about reconstruction, and I notice some of these cities and towns have skyscrapers that went up to 15 floors or 20 floors, all crumbling because of this earthquake.

My question is, has there been no knowledge or understanding that this area is prone to earthquakes? And if we are going to do reconstruction, are we going to rebuild right in those very same areas where the earthquake has just occurred? Has there been any serious consideration to make a serious study that these are some of the areas? Why rebuild if you are going to expect another earthquake? It would just be throwing away money, it seems to me. Madam Secretary?

Ms. ROCCA. I cannot answer for the plans of the Government of Pakistan at this point, but I can say that they are very alert to what happens when rebuilding takes place, and they have asked for technical assistance for earthquake-proof kind of technical advice, and that is all I know so far.

Mr. HESS. That is absolutely correct. The secretary is correct. They have asked for technical support to look at earthquake-proof structures. We have had some experience with this in Central America in advising them on how to reconstruct in a manner that you cannot prevent total damage, but certainly you can alleviate some of the damage.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. We have that same problem here in our own country, Mr. Chairman. Hurricanes come into Florida just about every year, and you have these thousands of people building on the beach fronts, and they are destroyed and are reinsured. They keep giving them the funds. Is FEMA going to keep funding them forever? I just wondered if there is the same issue also with earthquakes. How much are we going to continue funding into an area where we know it is going to happen again and again and again? Madam Secretary, I would be very interested to know if the Administration will commit all of the technical capability, the resources that we have, as a country, to assist Pakistan and India.

Ms. ROCCA. I think we have already said that we would be more than happy to help them out. They are still working on their plan-

ning and how to go about it, and we stand ready to help them, of course.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. We have this tsunami center in Honolulu in Hawaii, Mr. Chairman. Now, all of a sudden, everybody is conscious about tsunamis all over the world, and this is the center that does all of the monitoring and everything, and I would think the same thing should be done with earthquakes in this region of the world. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the panel.

Mr. LEACH. Well, thank you, Mr. Faleomavaega.

Mr. Wilson?

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Madam Secretary—

Mr. LEACH. Excuse me, Joe. I think you want to turn your—

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here today, and I, Mr. Hess, want to thank you for the booklet that you provided. It is so reassuring to what you say it does in helping people around the world, and it is amazing to me, the level of assistance given to dozens of countries. It proves what I feel like, and that is that the people of America are good people, and our Government is a good government and certainly cares about the people of the world. This is very, very helpful.

I was very pleased, Mr. Verga, to hear of the Department of Defense and the initiatives taken to provide the blankets and cots and meals and tents. I do notice, though, that the great concern will be shelter as winter is coming on, and I appreciated very much the creativity and vision of our Chairman in regard to the yurts. That is a thought process.

Additionally, I thought I knew a lot about hurricanes, coming from South Carolina, but with Hurricane Katrina, the level of devastation was so extraordinary, something that we learned is relocation of persons from extraordinarily devastated communities for long-term relocation. We have set up a center in Columbia for persons from New Orleans, and I never even thought that something like this is necessary, but it is where the public infrastructure has been destroyed, it is not safe to be in someone's home, and I see the same thing with the phenomenal level of destruction here.

But I know, culturally, to be very sensitive, for voluntary relocation, are there any efforts to relocate individuals? And you think of, like, children in schools that are not functioning. I can just think of so many different ways that only in the past 2 months we have seen how important it is to relocate people for even up to a year until the infrastructure can be rebuilt. If anyone can comment.

Mr. HESS. Congressman, if I may comment on that, you are absolutely right. We are concerned about our ability to get temporary housing into the region. We are also aware that many of the people in the region are very concerned about aftershocks because, as you know, they continue in the region, and even if their shelter survived at some level, they are afraid to go back into it, rightfully so.

We are working with the Pakistani Government right now on a number of programs. We have not found the yurts yet, but we will be looking for them. We are working with them on relocating people out of the region through programs which we have used in other parts of the world. They are called "voucher programs" and

“host family programs.” We have already talked to the Pakistani Government about this to highlight some of these.

We have some proposals already in from IOM, the International Organization for Migration, and from some of our other NGO implementing partners to start to implement this program where we can bring people out of this devastated area down to the lowlands and use the voucher system and the host family system to relocate them.

Mr. WILSON. And within the country of Pakistan, are there sufficient numbers of host families, communities, which can absorb a significant level of relocation?

Mr. HESS. Yes, we are beginning the assessment process on that basis. We have to look at their numbers, but we think so. They have the food capability, and if we can do this voucher system as an incentive for those families to bring them in, that should help.

Mr. WILSON. I am very encouraged. As we look to both Pakistan and India, Pakistan has become such an important part of our partnership in the global war on terrorism, and this summer we were all pleased to have Prime Minister Singh visit to learn what we all knew, and that is that we have the best relationship that we have ever had with India. So with both countries, I want to thank all of you for what you are doing. It is a further indication of the affection of the people of the United States for the people of Pakistan and India. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Crowley?

Mr. CROWLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling this timely hearing, and let me thank the panel for being here as well.

Ms. Rocca, let me ask you this question, if you have an answer for it. When the United States military personnel—or you, Mr. Verga, for that matter—are making sorties into Pakistan with helicopters or other aircraft, the pilots of those craft are United States personnel?

Mr. VERGA. Yes, sir, although there are a number of helicopters from other countries in the region that are helping as well, but the helicopters I am talking about, the U.S. helicopters, are piloted by U.S. personnel.

Mr. CROWLEY. I appreciate you also adding that there are other countries contributing helicopters and other aircraft for use in this disaster relief. To your knowledge, Mr. Verga, are those sorties being flown by the respective country personnel that are lending those resources?

Mr. VERGA. To my knowledge, they are, yes, sir.

Mr. CROWLEY. So they are not being flown by Pakistan Air Force or military personnel.

Mr. VERGA. Not to my knowledge.

Mr. CROWLEY. Ms. Rocca, you may be able to add to this. I have received reports that express concern for Pakistan, on any helicopters that were asked or requested of India, that they not be accompanied by their personnel to fly those helicopters. Do you have any information on that in this relief effort?

Ms. ROCCA. I know what you know sir. I think that the issue of Indian personnel on the ground in that part of the country is sensitive, but I think that President Musharraf and Prime Minister Singh have both reached out to each other to do everything they

can to get beyond the politics of the situation and to do what they can to help on both sides of the border. The latest is this movement that they have made together to reestablish telephone contact and to allow Kashmiris to cross the border and cross the Line of Control in order to go and help families and to help with the reconstruction and with the rescue.

Mr. CROWLEY. I would only hope that we iterate to both sides that under the conditions that these individuals are dealing with, what are now possibly preventable deaths that could take place because of a lack of resources in the region, given the peace process that is underway and the drive toward mutual understanding, that, under the circumstances, they would expedite that so that would not be another reason as to why someone may have lost their life because of those resources being denied for that reason.

I do not want to harp on it too much. I understand the sensitivity, too, but I just wanted to make note of it.

I was out of the room for a moment. Was there a number put on what the estimated costs would be for reconstruction, not only for reconstruction but for rescue and reconstruction?

Mr. HESS. No, sir. We are still in the assessment phase. We have not reached parts of the region yet, so it is very hard, at this stage, to tell. Before you arrived, I think I may have mentioned that from a relief point of view, for an earthquake, this is not the typical earthquake scenario, in that we are going to have to maintain people in a very inhospitable region through the winter. Usually when an earthquake happens, you can begin the reconstruction right away, and we would have a better feel for that. But we are going to have to sustain people through this voucher program that I mentioned, host families, some method to keep them alive during the winter.

Mr. CROWLEY. It is my understanding that Kofi Annan has been disappointed with the response so far to his UN flash appeal for \$312 million. Somewhere about 12 percent of that has been committed, in comparison to the December tsunami where 80 percent of his flash appeal was acknowledged. Is State putting any—I wanted to say “pressure,” but are they talking to other donor countries in terms of what their commitments will be?

Ms. ROCCA. Absolutely, sir. It is one of the facets of the U.S. response. One is our monetary contribution; the other is our assistance in kind and with the military assistance, and also we are helping to mobilize the international community’s support and to step forward and step up to what is a truly devastating situation that is going to take a long time, just the rescue-and-relief portion of it, not to talk about the reconstruction. So we expect to take a very active role at the Geneva meeting next week.

Mr. CROWLEY. I would just add, I concur with what Chairman Leach had said before about the difference in the tsunami and this earthquake in terms of region and temperature and climate that make this significantly more difficult to manage, including heavy rains and mud slides.

But I would, just for the record, state that I think this, again, is an opportunity much like what took place during the tsunami, to show the soft power of the United States and how I think we will be able to turn many of the hearts and minds of people in In-

onesia, for instance, to look upon the American people for the genuine nature of the relief effort that took place, the heartfelt, genuine nature of the relief effort during the tsunami.

There is an opportunity here again because I know the relationship between our two governments, in particular, we know that India and the United States have a great relationship, and the Government of Pakistan and the United States also have a very good relationship, but people to people, their interpretation or opinion of Americans, I do not think, is what we would like it to be. And this is a great opportunity, and I hope we do not lose this opportunity for being taken as disingenuous. What we are doing is real. It is genuine.

I agree also with Mr. Wilson that that is what the American people would like to do as well. We are having our own difficulties right now with our own disasters, and it seems as though we can pick up a newspaper, and every day there is a new disaster in the world, but this certainly is an incredible one where estimates are, I believe, that upwards of 100,000 people may end up losing their lives when all is said and done. So thank you all again.

Mr. LEACH. Thanks, Jim.

Ambassador Watson?

Ms. WATSON. I want to thank our Chair for again showing this overwhelming humanity by holding this hearing. All of us were just stunned that there was another natural disaster affecting an area on this globe very, very far away from us, and we stepped up to the plate to address the needs.

It seems every day that a report speaks louder and louder about those who, (A) died but, most of all, the children that not only were part of the dead but were orphaned, schools were gone, and I guess this question goes to Ms. Rocca. How prepared are we, as the United States, to continue this support so that they can rebuild the schools, so they can bring families together, so they can do foster care, so that they can feed and clothe the hungry? I understand the weather has already turned foul and will get worse as winter comes on, and I also read that there is starvation, fear of people freezing to death.

So do we have the kind of long-term commitment that apparently these two countries are going to need, and not only the economic, fiduciary commitment, but the political commitment, too? You know, it is going to happen with Kashmir. It seems like they are doing all right now, but what is going to happen in the very near future, and are we there for the long haul? Can you respond, please?

Ms. ROCCA. Yes, absolutely, and I also will defer to Mr. Hess on some of the details, specifically with respect to schools and children.

I think the secretary of state's visit to Pakistan was intended specifically to convey the condolences and the sympathies of the United States, of the American people, for this dreadful disaster but also to say that we stand by our friends in their time of need, and that was not just for 1 day or 1 week or even 1 year. This is a disaster of enormous proportions such as which many of the experts say they have never seen before, the way this is happening.

The secretary has been quite outspoken in saying that we are there for the long haul.

Pakistan is an ally of the United States. They are good friends of ours, and we will stand by them in their time of need.

Mr. HESS. Thank you, ma'am, for your question. We have already begun assessing in two primary areas: Public health sector because of the large number of clinics and hospitals that were destroyed in the region. We need to get those assessed and look at rebuilding them. We are bringing in temporary facilities right now to stop the dying and alleviate the suffering.

But also, the second area we are looking at right now is schools. We have already begun assessing school damages within the area, and by the end of this week, we will have developed plans—the initial plans—obviously, not the detailed ones yet—plans for the reconstruction effort in those two areas primarily, public health sector and also in the schools. So we are very much aware that the children are suffering right now, and we want to alleviate that suffering as quickly as possible.

Ms. WATSON. If I might just follow up, how can we match up against the international community in what we are contributing, both financially and in kind, and are the other countries contributing equal amounts? I would like to know what the picture is internationally on support.

Ms. ROCCA. Once again, I will defer to Mr. Hess on the details, but I do want to say that one of the roles that we see the United States taking in support of the Government of Pakistan as they try to rebuild from this devastating event is to help move the international community to step up to the plate to provide more. This is more than any one country can fix in and of themselves, and this will be both a short-term and a long-term effort. We will certainly be out there galvanizing the international support for this effort.

Mr. HESS. Yes, ma'am. The response from the international community so far has been over \$600 million in terms of bilateral contributions to the Pakistani Government. We are monitoring that on a regular basis to ensure that it meets the needs of the Pakistanis and the people. We are also working very closely with the State Department and with DoD for the upcoming donors conference, which will happen on the 26th of November, to ensure that we get the message across that this is very important, that we provide the leadership, along with the UN, to ensure that other nations contribute to this.

We are concerned. There is a term in the trade called “donor fatigue.” As you can imagine, with the number of disasters that have happened around the world this year, not to mention the tsunami, we are very concerned that donor fatigue does not set in now and that we lose the momentum that we could gain while these people need the assistance now, and that will be very present with us while we attend these meetings in the next couple of weeks.

Ms. WATSON. We, as politicians, know a lot about donor fatigue. [Laughter.]

Pakistan has been very helpful to us in our war against terrorism. There was some speculation that Osama bin Laden could have been somewhere in the area. This is just related. We are spending resources going after terrorist in other areas of the world,

and he might have been in that area. Do you have any knowledge whether he was in the area? Now, this might be classified, but—

Ms. ROCCA. I do not have any knowledge on this issue.

Ms. WATSON. Just rumors that we hear.

Mr. VERGA. We have no direct knowledge of where he is. If we did, he would not be there anymore.

Ms. WATSON. Well, maybe the earthquake took care of that, but we do not know.

I would hope that we could, and I do not know how long we can provide the assistance, but I would hope we would do that because they certainly are pressed very hard, and if we see them as a continuing ally because of the threat that al-Qaeda might have its activities emanating from that area, I think they deserve our long-term support, and I hope that we can—you talked about donor fatigue—continue to have an open channel of resources flowing into the two countries.

And I will just end by saying I understand that India turned down some of our assistance. Can anyone comment on why that was so?

Ms. ROCCA. I do not know about having turned down any assistance. We have been talking with them about where we can be more helpful, but generally India sees itself as self-sufficient and able to handle these crises on their own, but I will defer to Mr. Hess.

Ms. WATSON. That is very encouraging—

Ms. ROCCA. We have provided some assistance, though.

Ms. WATSON [continuing]. Because they have a population of one point—is it 2 or 3 billion now? If they feel they are self-sufficient, that is a great relief.

Mr. HESS. We have also, ma'am, done a lot of programs with them in the past on disaster relief and disaster preparedness to try and get them prepared, because, as you know, India had a major earthquake a number of years ago. So we have been working with India in the interim to make sure that they were prepared as best they could be, and so we have done some training programs in disaster relief and disaster preparedness, so that has helped a lot as well.

Ms. ROCCA. And we have asked them where else we can be of assistance, and so that conversation is still ongoing.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Will the gentlelady yield?

Ms. WATSON. Certainly will. Thank you.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. It was just mentioned earlier about donor fatigue among the countries. I recall, when the tsunami hit, there was a bidding war going on among the countries. Our own country initiated what, a \$35 million contribution, and the next thing, it got up to \$900 million, and there were many other countries, I think, Germany, Japan, \$500 million.

What I am curious about is, do we have an actual record of actual contributions made by these countries, as a matter of record, to the tsunami crisis? And I am curious if we are going through this same thing. It is not so much donor fatigue; it is countries, when they make pledges, and they do not follow up or honor their commitments, and I am just curious. At least, I hope we are not one of those who make commitments and do not put our money where our mouth is, I guess, is the expression here in America.

Ms. ROCCA. The U.S. has a very good record of keeping its commitments and then some, but I would be happy to get back to you on the breakdown.

[The information referred to follows:]

WRITTEN RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM THE HONORABLE CHRISTINA B. ROCCA TO QUESTION ASKED DURING THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

We have more than exceeded our commitments to the tsunami-affected countries. In an Emergency Supplemental appropriation, Congress appropriated \$656 million dollars for tsunami relief and reconstruction. Of this total amount, we pledged for the five countries—\$400 million for Indonesia, \$134 million for Sri Lanka, \$18 million for India, \$10 million for Maldives, and \$5 million for Thailand—and the balance will support regional programs (i.e. regional early warning system), and program oversight and administration. As of October 31st of this year, funds committed through USAID alone have exceed \$550 million dollars for relief and reconstruction. In addition, the U.S. military has provided \$170 million in emergency relief assistance.

Ms. ROCCA. We continue to have a tsunami task force that operates—

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Both the tsunami as well as the earthquake.

Ms. ROCCA. Yes. Absolutely.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, ma'am.

Mr. LEACH. Let me first return to a physical item. In the tsunami, I was on the aircraft carrier, *Abraham Lincoln*, and we went by helicopter over Aceh, and I was impressed with the competence of the crew but also the age of the helicopter. In fact, we went through a squall, and inside the helicopter there was a great deal of rain. But what I am getting at is, with all of our emphasis on very sophisticated weaponry, I am not sure the military has enough helicopters, and I do not know if you, as a military, want to think that through. Do you have any sense for that or not, Mr. Verga?

Mr. VERGA. I will note that one of the things that we have learned from disasters, in particular, Katrina, is that helicopters are one of the things that are most immediately demanded and most immediately useful in making initial responses, that, along with reconnaissance and surveillance capabilities, so that you really know what the situation is.

One of the things that was clear in the Katrina experience was there was a delay before we really knew how bad things were—I am speaking “we” as the Government, generally—in order to be able to respond to it. So helicopters are extremely useful in these circumstances, and, of course, it is not necessarily a question of the total number of helicopters but where they are at any given point in time in order to be able to be employed in a particular situation.

Mr. LEACH. But I am just raising this, let me suggest, as a renewable item, that the United States military has, whether it has always wanted it or not, a role in natural disasters as well as man-made disasters.

Here, I might mention that on the *Abraham Lincoln*, I was impressed with our admiral's command of his troops, which was two words, “Do good,” and that struck me as a very impressive command, and it strikes me, in terms of competition, we ought to be commanding “Do good” again.

The other aspect, just like there are analogies between all wars and lots of failed judgment that can be connected with analogies between wars, there are analogies between all disasters. In the tsunami, there was a very extraordinary circumstance that in two significant countries, Sri Lanka and Indonesia, you had ongoing civil wars. And there was an almost immediate question that arose among policymakers around the world and people affected, and that is, if one can work together to deal with a natural disaster, can we work together to deal with man-made differences? It was something, you know, discussed and may well have made some difference, particularly in Indonesia and conceivably in Sri Lanka. In a third country, Thailand, there was also a minor civil war, although not exactly in the area affected by the tsunami.

Now we have a situation in the heart of Kashmir, and if two governments can work together that are at odds, that is interesting. If the United States can be helpful, and the rest of the Western community be helpful, that is interesting, too, and it raises all sorts of issues in international relations, as well as simply of a humanitarian nature. I hope that we are prepared to think large, and sometimes thinking large is hard because we are in the crunch here in the United States Congress of being tough on budgets, really tough, and so how do you think large when you have to be tough on the small, on a whole assortment of small items?

This is a particularly challenging time, and I think it is going to take Executive leadership working with the Congress, and I do not want to underestimate this, and a case in many different dimensions is going to have to be made. I will say, as you look at a donor conference that is UN-sponsored, it is my strong hope that you think in the most generous possible dimension.

I cannot tell you that I speak for the whole Congress, and that is a really awkward dimension of today's circumstance. So I think it is going to take a mutuality of effort here, and we are looking for advice from you to the maximum extent possible.

Mr. Wilson, do you have further questions?

Do you, Eni?

Ambassador Watson?

Well, let me, then, just conclude. I want to be very clear on this. The three of you represent the United States of America, and you represent a very professional dimension to it, and I stress this because, in American governance, we have got a lot of ideological elements today in play, particularly on the electoral side, and I want to thank you for your public service and for the professionalism of the institutions that you represent. Thank you. The Committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:45 p.m, the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

[*Note:* Additional material submitted for the record by USAID is not reprinted here but is available in Subcommittee records.

