Remarks and Q&A by the Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Collection
Mrs. Mary Margaret Graham

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ELIOT JARDINES: Okay. It's my pleasure to introduce our final keynote speaker, whom we've already pressed into service at this conference by having her introduce Ms. Townsend and the DNI. In May 2005, Mary Margaret Graham was appointed as the first deputy director of National Intelligence for collection. In this role, Mrs. Graham works on behalf of the DNI to coordinate and integrate collection efforts of all 16 intelligence agencies, and ensures that the DNI priorities are appropriately reflected in future planning and system acquisition decisions.

Prior to her current position, Mrs. Graham served as the associate deputy director of operations for counterintelligence at the Central Intelligence Agency. In her 27 years with the CIA, she has had numerous field and headquarter assignments. From 1999 to 2001, Mrs. Graham served as the chief of the Directorate of Operations' national resources division. She also served as the executive assistant to the deputy director of national security at a time, I might add, when the current DNI was director of NSA.

Mrs. Graham has earned two prestigious medals for her service, the National Intelligence Medal of Achievement in 1996, and the Donovan Award in 2002. On my first day on the job, Mrs. Graham gave me my marching orders, which were to build the size, scope, and capabilities of the intelligence community's open source efforts. Her vision was that of a distributed but federated national open source enterprise that capitalized on the disparate and unique centers of open source excellence operating throughout the intelligence community. She famously articulated her vision for a distributed open source capability as, let 1,000 flowers bloom. Well, Mary Margaret, your 1,000 flowers are here and waiting to hear from you. Without further ado, Mrs. Mary Margaret Graham.

(Applause.)

MARY MARGARET GRAHAM: Thank you, Eliot. I don't know about flowers at this late stage in the day or the conference, but it's very nice to be here. As you could tell from the skimpy information in my bio, I grew up in a world where I certainly never appeared in public. And one of the things I've had to get used to in the past two and a half-plus years is being in a room with a screen that size with my face on it. But as the days and months have gone on, I can't tell you that I'm completely comfortable. But I'm more comfortable than I was.

I'd like to take this opportunity to close the conference by talking to you about why we had this conference. When we, in those very early days after the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act – or IRTPA, as we fondly call it – was passed and Director Negroponte had been nominated as the first DNI, we did a lot of boxology (?) down in an office

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in the Old Executive Office Building, director Negroponte, General Haydn, Ambassador Pat Kennedy, David Shedd, and myself. And we began to talk about what should this organization look like.

And when we came to collection, one of the eachs, if you will, in collection, in addition to all the classified intelligence components that you can think of, there was open source. And we had quite a discussion about where we should cite it in the DNI. And at the end of the day, for me, the most persuasive argument was that at its essence, open source is a discipline of collection.

I would take it one step further. Some of my colleagues in the open source world, I know, don't agree with my characterization that I'm about to use, but bear with me for a minute. To me, open source – and maybe my view is a product of where I grew up – I like to think though that it's also a product of where I sit right now. For me, open source is not an INT; but it is, more importantly, an enabler of intelligence.

I don't care which of the intelligence disciplines you talk about, whether it be human intelligence, signals intelligence, and on and on. Those disciplines are better informed in an all-source context through the use of open source. So when we – Eliot told you what my charge to him was when he joined us and came to government for the first time – we basically, other than the Open Source Center, had a blank slate. And we had a lot of opportunities to take advantage of in those early days.

And so, when Eliot and Sabra came to me and said, you know, why don't we try to gather the totality of people interested in open source, whether they be people internal to the community – analysts or collectors – whether they be people from the academic sector, whether they be people from the corporate sector, et cetera – people from the fifth estate. I'm sure there are still some of you left at this late hour of the day. But all of you have a role in this discipline that we call open source.

Bring them together, because we don't have the market on all the ideas for open source. I have a vision that I think is about right, but I'm looking forward in the days and weeks to come to the feedback from all the various sessions that you've had here, because I want to understand from your perspective the capabilities of open source that we may not have thought of.

But if I look at the essence for me of why the intelligence community, which – as you know from the various speakers you've had, particularly the DNI himself this morning – open source give us a viewpoint that isn't secret. It's one of the reasons we talk about it as the source of first resort.

To me, if we can do – and I've been using this liberally over the past two and a half years – if we can decide how to do open source right, I am absolutely convinced that we will have a much better understanding of where we need to spend our classified intelligence resources. After all, if we can get the answer to a requirement from one of our customers from the data that is out there today, why would we spend our tax dollars collecting it secretly or clandestinely? We don't have that confidence yet.

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Recently, Tom Fingar and I, with a small group that we have that helps us think through issues, came up with an idea. We don't know the results yet, but we both have a gut feeling on how this is going to come out. We gave them a set of national intelligence priorities, and we said to them, we want you to take a three-month look, and we want you to look at nothing but open source. I'm very curious to see how many of the requirements that they're looking at or the priorities that they're looking at we can satisfy just by using open source. I know this isn't a term that is very used fondly lately in the past few weeks, but I'll tell you that my gut feeling is – we will be able to answer some of those priorities just by mining deeply the open source data and information that is out there.

Open source also, you've already heard from Dr. Fingar about his vision of how the analysts use it. My vision, if I look in the collection world, about this – and I am not a technologist – but my vision is, for the analyst or the collector, today, in a classified environment, most of them have to turn away from their machine and go to a different machine to look at open source data. The perfect world is when that open source data resides on the same space at the same time, with the information protected on both sides of that line, so that they can look at the classified information and the open source information at the same time. I think the technology is out there. The information security constraints that we live under, perhaps, are too rigorous on this, because that is going to be the fullness of the use of open source by the analysts in the future.

Our classified resources that exist – to go back to that theme – we spent a lot of money on them. I am not going to talk about how much money we spend on them. But that dollar amount, I think, in the very near term, will probably flat line or begin to flat line. And so the imperative for me, to make sure that we begin to mine the open sources, is huge, because we're going to have to make some hard choices. And if we can answer the questions or even partially answer the questions via open source, we need to be doing that. And reserving our capabilities in the classified sense, for the things that we really need to get at by using secret means.

I'd like to close and not keep you here any longer by telling you a story. When I began to think about open source – and frankly, growing up in the business that I grew up in, I didn't think a lot about open source. I used it to educate myself on a given topic, but I didn't use it in the way I did business the way I might today, knowing what I know now.

The story I'd like to tell you, I stole it from somebody who really is passionate about open source, a former ADDI at CIA, Carmen Medina. She came down and sat down with me one day for what was supposed to be a half an hour, and it ended up being two hours. She is completely passionate about the use of open source in the intelligence community and she told me a story that I think captures the breadth of what we can do with what we call open sources.

There is a book called "The Hitler Myth." The author of the myth, of the book, was trying to, in his book, pinpoint when the German people began to turn away from Hitler. And so, the period that he was looking at was 1941 to 1945. The creativity of this way of looking at it struck me and has always stayed with me as a way to use open source. What he did is he went to the obituaries in the two newspapers that at that time served Munich and Bavaria. In 1941, the

obituaries of the soldiers who were killed talked about the solders having died for the Fuhrer, the fatherland, and the Volk, the German people. And he was able to plot this. By the time 1945 came, the Fuhrer had disappeared and the German soldiers that were killed, for the most part, died for the Volk.

But think about it for a minute. Think about the creativity of understanding that piece of the puzzle. That, for me, describes what we're looking for in the open source arena. We have the Open Source Center. It does great work. It's not the FBIS I knew 29 years ago; it is so much more today. We're very proud of what they do. But we want them to franchise.

When I talk about 1,000 flowers blooming, there are – in the 16 agencies in the intelligence community, I guarantee you that each of them has their own expertise. Let's, for example, think about the Department of Homeland Security and the intelligence piece that my predecessor, Charlie Allen, runs for Secretary Chertoff. I bet you, taking into account all the civil liberties protections you would want to be taken into account, that if we resources Charlie Allen to set up a small open source unit, that they might develop an expertise in open source relating to protection of the homeland.

So when I talk about that 1,000 flowers blooming, the Open Source Center is very robust. But as important as its work is, part of its work is to franchise its expertise throughout the community and to teach the community how to do open source. It's the old gold standard story. You have the gold standard in the Open Source Center. How do you expand that to the rest of the community?

So that's what we're all about, what you have been doing here for the past two days has been part and parcel of that. I thank you for coming. I'm looking forward to hearing more about – as I said – what's gone on in the breakout groups. And I'm looking forward to taking advantage of what I'm going to hear. With that, I'd be happy to take a couple of questions, or not.

Q: Thank you. Miriam Shapiro (sp) from Summit Strategies International, formerly State and NSC where I was an avid customer. But I'm intrigued by – which fits the story well in your portfolio – is the extent to which there might be franchise, as you perhaps would say – collaboration with other governments on open source. When you're speaking of intelligence, you obviously have to be very careful about the governments with which you cooperate. But it would seem, notwithstanding perhaps some limitations, that there is more opportunity when you're speaking of open source. And to what extent has that been exploited so far?

MS. GRAHAM: Good point. I would tell you though, before we start off into the meat of your question that collaboration with foreign governments is at an all-time high, particularly on the subject of terrorism. It's better today than I've seen at any time in my career.

But collaboration, when you're thinking about open source, absolutely, is with foreign governments. It's very robust. The interesting thing is that's not the only place I would suggest to you that we should be collaborating. There is a public/private partnership that I think can be very useful to the larger effort. I don't think we do it well enough yet. There is, interestingly

enough, in the open source world, probably no reason why government has to do it all. Some – robust – but it doesn't necessarily have to be done just by government. So the collaboration piece of open source is pretty much as broad as you want to let yourself take it. Now, in the foreign sense, you could pretty much list mentally where you think we collaborate on open source, and I would just double it today.

An interesting piece – not quite collaboration – but think about the networks of people that exist on any given topic. Let me use for you an example that came across the scope in these past two and a half years – avian flu – came up, what, a year and a half ago now? I went to a conference on the subject where there were very few government people there. Interestingly enough, there was a whole network of people there – biologists, doctors, epidemiologists, people that had a network that had had its foundation, interestingly enough, in the SARS epidemic in China.

Listening to them talk about the kind of information that they were exchanging during that period, let alone during the avian flu concern, I thought to myself, how do we in an open source sense tap into and can government tap into those networks? That's another piece that we're doing a lot of thinking about.

So we need to collaborate, as you heard the DNI this morning, across the community on every INT. It is much easier and also much broader when you get into talking about open source. And the challenges really are just figuring out how.

Q: Gordon Middleton, Patrick Henry College. I think you referred to open source as a collection discipline. To what extent do you see down sides to that as opposed to it being an intelligence discipline? And my context here is largely the domestic side, not the foreign side, to which I think you've largely referred earlier, because of some of the legal and policy constraints in that area? Are there policy and/or legal issues there that we may need to relook at, or how do you think about that area?

MS. GRAHAM: The interesting thing is there are policy constraints. I won't say impediments; but whenever you're looking at open source collection or data collection or intelligence collection from a domestic point of view, a homeland point of view, you don't have the rules that you have for foreign intelligence collection. You heard the DNI talk about that this morning. And we need to – we have a point in time now where we're actually working hard on cleaning up some of that.

Most of our policies, most of our laws, most of our regulations, are far behind our reality of today. The civil liberties piece of homeland domestic intelligence, we need to keep that first and foremost, because we all hold that dear. And so, anything we do in that arena has to have that lens over it.

But when I called it a collection discipline, I didn't mean to be exclusive. It's as much an analytic discipline as it is a collection discipline. My point from a collection point of view is that it's data. It's data that can enable; it's data that can inform. So just like we collect other data, we

need to collect open source data writ large. And we need to have the proper lenses in place depending on where we collect it.

One more? Okay, I can tell you're all – oh, there's one.

Q: Hi, I'm Lisa Nunn with the National Criminal Justice Association. I used to be with the state police in South Carolina. I would like to see – well, first of all, thank you for hosting this. It's the first time for many of us that we've been able to touch and see and feel this intelligence community and feel like we can do something to contribute positively with it. But what I'd like to see after this conference is a working group; some group that is composed of individuals that represent the various disciplines that are here to come up with some ideas on how we can collaborate with you. I think there are those of us, like me, that started an intelligence fusion center kind of on our own, of course, on the direction of DHS, but we kind of pulled it together with other states in the Southeast, and kind of shared ideas and talked about it. But this whole concept of open source hasn't really been publicized enough for us, I don't think. And I'd like to see a working group that could kind of come up with some ideas on how we could do that in a systematic way that would help you and also benefit us.

MS. GRAHAM: Great. As you know, there has been a lot of progress in the last few years on fusion centers, on the connections between state, local, and tribal, and the federal government. DHS, of course, is in the forefront of that. But if you'll allow me, that's a good idea. We'll figure it out how to do it. I suspect that the how to do it will involve not only DHS but NCTC. But we're very interested, because as I said going in, we don't have a market on all the answers here. And one of the challenges that we still have today – it's getting better – but one of the challenges we still have today in the context of homeland issues is, I think, the push of information from the federal level to the fusion centers, state and local to tribal, is better. I don't think the pull works well yet.

And I believe in my heart of hearts that there is information at the state, local, and tribal level that someday is going to answer a question, a key question. So one of our challenges is that pull piece, and we are not there yet. But we are working at it. But thank you for the idea. Thank you all for coming. We'd like to hear from you back and forth about what you thought, ideas for doing this better. The Congress and our budget willing, we will do this every year. I think it's well worth it. We want to take it a further step each time we do it, so we do need your feedback. So thank you again.

(Applause.)

MR. JARDINES: Mary Margaret, thank you very much for your thoughts and I especially want to thank you for your vision and your championing of open source. Thank you very much.

MS. GRAHAM: Thank you all.

(Applause.)

SABRA HORNE: And finally, the end of the day. First of all, we want to thank all of you, the attendees, and your support and interest in open source and your efforts in growing open source capabilities as you leave here. You are the 1,000 flowers that Mary Margaret Graham has charged us with growing. So go forth and prosper.

I would be remiss if we didn't thank a number of people. It takes a village to bring something like this together. And first of all I wanted to thank Centra (sp) for the amazing effort that they've gone to. They pulled out all stops. There was no end of effort. (Applause.) Steve Schlanker (ph) and also Terry Shakatano (ph) who has just been an amazing support for us. Unflagging work ethic, and their good humor is appreciated to no end. So Terry could you come accept a token from us? Well, she's probably out there still working at this point, so we'll give this to her later.

We also wanted to thank three folks who were instrumental in bringing together our moderators and our speakers and our agenda. First of all, Shelby Coffey who made phone calls ad nauseum for us. We appreciate that so greatly. I don't know if Shelby is still here. Oh, come on up, Mister. Thank you so much for everything you did. (Applause.) Also, we want to thank Ron Marks who seemingly has the entire database of phone numbers and emails for the DC Metro Area stored in his brain who did a wonderful, amazing job of bringing together folks to the table. So thank you, Ron. Thank you. (Applause.) And finally, Tom Sanderston who was there from the very beginning last summer envisioning what this conference would look like. We could not have done this without him. So thank you so much for all of your great ideas. (Applause.)

Lastly, we want to thank not only our speakers but also our moderators who did such amazing work to make sure that we've had an incredibly exciting and scintillating conference this week. We appreciate their unflagging efforts. And finally, we would like to thank Mrs. Graham whose support of open source in the face of all adversity has gotten us to where we are today. So we hope we have expanded your horizons and we thank you so much. And we'll see you here next year.

(Applause.)

(END)