



Press Statement

**Sean McCormack, Spokesman**

Washington, DC

September 10, 2008

## **Afghanistan National Army Expansion**

We welcome the decision taken in Kabul today, September 10, 2008, by the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board to endorse the Government of Afghanistan's plan to expand the size of the Afghan National Army (ANA) to 134,000 soldiers. We fully support the Government of Afghanistan's efforts to assume the lead for security operations in the country. The Afghan National Army has made great progress in recent years and is well respected by Afghans for its operational success and professionalism.

A fundamental objective of our counterinsurgency strategy is to connect the Afghan people to their government through strengthened institutions, especially at the sub-national level, and improved rule of law functions. An expanded Afghan National Army will enhance security at the local level and support an environment conducive to social development, the strengthening of democratic institutions, and economic growth.

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