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**STATEMENT OF
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BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

ON

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A Commander's Perspective
on
Building the Capacity of Foreign Countries Military Forces

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Mr. Chairman, Congressman Skelton, and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the potential benefits of implementing Section 1206 to build the capacity of foreign countries national military forces in the United States European Command (EUCOM) Area of Responsibility (AOR). The authority provided under this provision will enable countries to conduct counterterrorist operations, and participate in, or provide support to military and stability operations in which the United States Armed Forces are a participant.

I would like to begin by placing the funding and authorities authorized under Section 1206 within the larger context of security cooperation within the EUCOM AOR. When I testified before this committee last month, I stated that we based our strategies on the principle that it is much more cost-effective to prevent conflicts than it is to stop one once it's started. I cannot overstate the importance of our theater security cooperation programs as the centerpiece to securing our Homeland from the irregular and catastrophic threats of the 21st Century. EUCOM's programs represent a proactive approach to building partnership capacity with the intent of enabling emerging democracies to defend their homeland, defeat terrorist extremists, develop common economic and security interests, and respond to health crises such as potential pandemic influenza outbreaks.

The changing security landscape that has emerged since the end of the Cold War continues to evolve in ways that were largely unforeseen just a few years ago. An increasingly inter-connected world is shaping our economic, political, and social realities in a manner that is in stark contrast to the previous century. The wide scope and unpredictable nature of this new landscape has compelled us to develop new strategies that require the harmonization of the full spectrum of

national power. Although the threats we face have changed dramatically, resources available for security cooperation, one of our key enablers in dealing with present day challenges, are still used as they have been since the Cold War. They are applied for deliberative, long-lead-time system built to address a single, enduring and predictable enemy.

Today, we require the capability to respond to threats wherever and whenever they materialize in the world. Our ability to achieve optimum success in this new security environment requires three essential elements: timely intervention to unanticipated challenges that will help mitigate or prevent crises that are harmful to U.S. interests; the need to work closely with our friends and allies to enhance regional security; and institutional innovations that contribute to comprehensive coordination throughout the interagency and within the framework of the international community. The new 1206 authority goes beyond simply reallocating funding by explicitly requiring US government agencies to work together to develop and execute programs—that is a paradigm shift and it will be a critical first step in security cooperation reform. The authority provided in Section 1206 is an important tool in our efforts to implement a strategy that recognizes the changed security landscape.

Traditionally, our armed forces have focused on fighting and winning wars. While we need to be prepared to operate across the full spectrum of conflict, the new security landscape demonstrates that early engagement, often requiring modest investment, can yield significant long-term dividends. EUCOM and other Geographic Combatant Commanders are using a new approach, focusing on terrorism's long-term, underlying conditions. This deliberate strategy, which focuses on addressing threats *at their inception*, once they have been identified, is

come to be called “Phase Zero.” The primary objectives are eliminating conditions favorable to terrorists and mitigating or preventing broader conflict. A critical component in fighting the global war on terrorism is putting together programs that build the capacity of foreign nations to conduct counter-terrorists operations and participate in or provide support to military and stability operations in which the U.S. is a participant.

EUCOM’s plan to promote cooperative security relationships, enhance the capacity of foreign partners, and expand cohesion within the interagency team is consistent with the four core pillars (Defeating Terrorist Networks, Defending the Homeland In-Depth, Shaping the Choices of Countries at Strategic Crossroads, Preventing the Acquisition or Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction by Hostile State or Non-State Actors) of the Department of Defense Quadrennial Defense Review. Leveraging the full spectrum of diplomatic, economic, and military options to advance our national interests and improve our ability to prevent conflict is an essential cornerstone to our theater strategy.

Our Security Cooperation activities are managed programs planned and executed for the purpose of shaping the future security environment in ways favorable to U.S. interests. Key among EUCOM’s TSC tools are Foreign Military Financing, Foreign Military Sales, Direct Commercial Sales, and International Military Education and Training. These programs provide access and influence, help build professional, capable militaries in allied and friendly nations, and promote interoperability with U.S. forces. We execute the larger security assistance programs using our 44 Offices of Defense Cooperation in concert with U.S. Embassy Country Teams, while smaller programs are executed by Defense Attachés and Embassy Offices.

I would like to highlight two European Command initiatives that would greatly benefit from the addition of 1206 authorities and funding, provided they are approved – the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Security Initiative and the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative. These programs illustrate EUCOM's efforts to help harmonize US government agencies in regional, preventive approaches to combat terrorism and build partner nation capability to secure ungoverned land and maritime spaces, increase counterterrorism capability, and improve the conditions that terrorists seek to exploit.

The lack of basic maritime awareness throughout large portions of EUCOM's AOR (and, to varying degrees, the rest of the world) creates an ungoverned maritime environment in which terrorists and criminals can freely move and operate. This is especially apparent in the Gulf of Guinea. The Gulf of Guinea's potential for great wealth is in stark contrast to the challenges of civil unrest, economic privation, political instability, and corruption. Piracy and theft are major concerns along a coastal area stretching nearly 2,000 nautical miles. Shipping ports, transit areas, harbors, oil production, and transshipment areas are largely uncontrolled and raise concerns about vulnerability to terrorist attacks. Corruption and complicity in local, regional, and national governments only serve to exacerbate this problem. In short, the region lacks significant maritime forces and coastal security forces, and is unable to provide a meaningful deterrent to the disorder that threatens the region's stability and future economic viability.

Developing African capacity and capability to provide maritime security in Africa is only a small part of the equation. Other issues such as poor governance, lack of legal infrastructure and rule of law, and rampant and pervasive corruption

must also be addressed in a parallel effort. If they are not, any solution focused on improving maritime security will be temporary and will surely fail over the long-term. EUCOM recognizes the importance of addressing this issue from both an interagency and a global perspective. Interagency and international cooperation are essential elements of the proposed EUCOM maritime security strategy for Africa.

Operationally, any Gulf of Guinea strategy must include a number of components. “Detection” and tracking of regional shipping would require an integrated maritime surveillance system; “deciding” whether a particular vessel is legally operated or a smuggler will require the development of a regional maritime command and control center; and “acting” to counter to potential illegal activities. These three components would naturally be linked by a command and control system to allow quick interaction within the system and among national military leaders. With such a system, we can enable these Gulf of Guinea nations to provide security in their combined 2,000 nautical miles of coastline and the littorals, and contribute to the stability they need to make further economic and political progress. Despite a growing willingness to cooperate in the development of a shared maritime awareness, many of our coalition partners have inadequate national and regional capabilities to monitor maritime surface traffic in a manner that enables maritime security operations.

One program that demonstrates the ability of the Department of State, Department of Defense, and USAID to work in a collaborative way on regional security is the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI). TSCTI is the long-term interagency plan to combat terrorism in trans-Saharan Africa using a full range of political, economic, development and security tools. It was approved as

an Interagency Initiative by the Deputies Committee in January 2005. The need for TSCTI stems from concern over the expansion of operations of Islamic terrorist organizations in the Sahel region, a region that approximates the size of the United States. In EUCOM we support TSCTI through our involvement in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM-TRANS SAHARA, commonly referred to as “OEF-TS.” OEF-TS is an interagency regional and preventive approach to combat terrorism and enhancing partner nation border security and response in Trans-Sahara Africa. It is designed to assist governments who seek to better control their territories and to prevent large areas from becoming safe havens for terrorist groups.

The overall approach is straightforward: to build indigenous capacity and facilitate cooperation among governments in the region. The participating nations, Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Nigeria and Tunisia have joined in the struggle against terrorism in the Sahel region. This cooperation strengthens regional counterterrorism capabilities, enhances and institutionalizes cooperation among the region’s security forces, promotes democratic governance, fosters development and education, emphasizes the military’s proper role in supporting democratic ideals and ultimately strengthens our bilateral relationships in the region. It also assists participating nations in stemming the illegal flow of arms, goods, and people through the region, helps nations better protect their vast borders, and contributes to common security.

Left unattended political instability in Africa could require reactive and repeated interventions at enormous cost, as in the case of Liberia. For a relatively small investment, TSCTI has the potential to produce significant results in countering terrorism. It builds the capacity of partner nations to effectively share information to disrupt and attack terrorist networks, as well as to receive, store and

act on strategic and operation information to conduct peace and stability operations.

EUCOM has transformed its security cooperation programs to focus on regional capacity building, assisting allies and partner countries with the development of capabilities required to conduct peacekeeping, participate in the War on Terror and perform contingency operations with US forces. Properly implemented within a synchronized, flexible Interagency campaign, these security cooperation efforts can help produce well trained, and highly disciplined allied and partner forces that will reduce the conditions that lead to conflict, prepare the way for warfighting success, and ultimately ease the burden on US forces. Section 1206 funding and authorities are important steps toward creating the kind of flexible, responsive, interagency programs we need for the 21st Century. These efforts support the long-term strategic objectives of the Global War on Terrorism by building understanding and consensus on the terrorist threat, laying foundations for future “coalitions of the willing,” and extending our country’s security perimeter.

We look forward to working with the Members of this Committee as we assist in the development of effective security structures that are essential to our theater, our nation, and to our allies.