STATEMENT OF

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U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

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ON

THE POSTURE OF U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

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I. Introduction

Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, and members of the committee, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) is now in its ninth consecutive year of major combat operations in an area of the world critical to the interests of the United States and our allies. With our national and international partners, CENTCOM promotes security cooperation among nations; responds to crises; deters or defeats state and non-state aggression; and supports development and, when necessary, reconstruction in order to establish the conditions for regional security, stability, and prosperity. Typically, executing this mission and achieving U.S. national goals and objectives in the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) involves more than just the traditional application of military power. In many cases, a whole of government approach is required, one that integrates all the tools available to international and interagency partners to defeat transnational groups that pose a threat to the United States or our partners; to secure host-nation populations; to conduct comprehensive counterinsurgency and security operations; to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD); to help reform, and in some cases build, governmental and institutional capacity; and to promote economic development.

These are challenging missions, and the conditions and dynamics shaping the region's security environment are constantly evolving. In the past year, there have been several important developments in the AOR – some representing progress, others presenting challenges. These changes include increased operations by the Pakistani military against groups that threaten the writ of governance in Pakistan, as well as continued

improvements in the capabilities and self-reliance of the Iraqi Security Forces coupled with the degradation of the capabilities of militant groups in Iraq. We have also seen increased insurgent violence in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a general diminution of al-Qaeda in the region despite an increase in the prominence of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen (AQAP), the emergence of significant domestic unrest and opposition in Iran accompanied by the regime's continued intransigence over its nuclear program and its support to militant proxies, an increase in piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia, and the continuing fallout from the global financial crisis.

The progress we have seen has not simply happened of its own accord. It is, to a great extent, the result of the work of U.S., partner, and coalition forces operating in the AOR over the past year. Since the delivery of last year's Posture Statement, CENTCOM has worked to implement national policies as well as the recommendations of the comprehensive strategic review we conducted last winter. We have begun the responsible drawdown of forces from Iraq, working to sustain the hard-won security gains achieved since the summer of 2007 and placing us on track to have 50,000 troops in Iraq after this August. We are implementing the President's strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, to include an increase in forces and non-military resources. Having put into place the proper organizations, people, and concepts for the civil-military campaign in Afghanistan, we are currently deploying additional resources to halt the downward spiral in security and expand the size and capabilities of the Afghan security forces. We have placed great pressure against al-Qaeda's networks and senior leadership, and we have also made good strides in developing a Regional Security Architecture to address

common security threats in the region. All the while, CENTCOM forces have continued to provide military support to major diplomatic initiatives in the region and to maintain a ready posture to respond to unforeseen crises.

Building on our past successes and achievements and responding to the region's dynamics, CENTCOM will focus on the following priority tasks in the coming year:

- Reversing the momentum of the insurgency in Afghanistan and training Afghan security forces to regain the initiative against militants and to increase public confidence in the government;

- Helping our Iraqi partners build on their progress while sustaining hard-won security gains, reducing U.S. forces in the country, and transitioning to a new mission of advising and assisting the Iraqi Security Forces;

- Maintaining persistent kinetic and non-kinetic pressure to degrade and counter transnational terrorist and militant organizations that threaten the security of the United States and our allies;

- Expanding our partnership with the Pakistani military, supporting its operations against militant groups, and assisting in the development of its counterinsurgency capabilities;

- Countering destabilizing Iranian activities and policies;

- Countering the proliferation of WMD and related material, technology, and expertise, while building the capacity and interoperability of our partners to prevent and, if necessary, respond to the use of WMD;

- Bolstering the military and security capabilities of our partner nations' security forces;

- Working with our partners to counter piracy, illegal narcotics trafficking, and arms smuggling;

- Bolstering oversight and ensuring responsible expenditure of U.S. funding; and

- Working with the U.S. military services to reduce the strain on our forces and the cost of our operations.

The intent of the remainder of this Posture Statement is to address these priorities and the broader, long term solutions they support by providing a more detailed overview of the AOR, a description of our strategic approach to defending and advancing our interests, assessments of the situation in each of the AOR's major sub-regions, and comments on the programs and systems that enable our operations.

II. Overview of the CENTCOM AOR

A. Nature of the AOR

The lands and waters of the CENTCOM AOR span several critical and distinct regions. It stretches across more than 4.6 million square miles and 20 countries in the Middle East and South and Central Asia and contains vital transportation and trade routes, including the Red Sea, the Northern Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Gulf, as well as

strategic maritime choke points at the Suez Canal, the Bab el Mandeb, and the Strait of Hormuz. The AOR encompasses the world's most energy-rich region, with the Arabian Gulf region and Central Asia together accounting for at least 64 percent of the world's known petroleum reserves, 34 percent of its crude oil production, and 46 percent of its known natural gas reserves.

Social, political, and economic conditions vary greatly throughout the region. The region is home to some of the world's wealthiest and poorest states, with annual per capita incomes ranging from $800 to over $100,000. Despite important pockets of affluence, many of the more than 530 million people living in the AOR suffer from inadequate governance, underdeveloped civil institutions, unsettling corruption, and high unemployment.

As a result of these contrasts and the proliferation of global communications and mass media, many people in the AOR are struggling to balance modern influences with traditional social and cultural authorities and to manage change at a pace that reinforces stability rather than erodes it. For the past century, the sub-regions of the AOR have been torn by conflict as new states and old societies have struggled to erect a new order in the wake of the collapse of traditional empires. These conflicts have intensified in the past three decades with the emergence of al-Qaeda and its Associated Movements, the specter of nuclear weapons, and enormous wealth derived from petroleum and illegal narcotics. Today we see stability in the AOR threatened by interstate tensions, the proliferation of

ballistic missile and nuclear weapons technology and expertise, ethno-sectarian violence, insurgencies and sub-state militias, as well as horrific acts of terrorism.

B. U.S. Interests and the Most Significant Threats to Them

Because of the CENTCOM AOR's geography, control of much of the world's energy reserves, and propensity for instability, the United States has substantial strategic interests in, and related to, the region. Chief among these are:

- the security of U.S. citizens and the U.S. homeland;

- regional stability;

- international access to strategic resources, critical infrastructure, and markets; and

- the promotion of human rights, the rule of law, responsible and effective governance, and broad-based economic growth and opportunity.

The most serious threats to these interests lie at the nexus of militant groups, hostile states, and WMD. Across the AOR, al-Qaeda and its Associated Movements are fueling insurgencies to reduce U.S. influence and to destabilize the existing political, social, and economic order. Meanwhile, some countries in the AOR play a dangerous game of allowing or accepting terrorist networks and facilitators to operate from or through their territory, believing that their own people and governments will be immune to their threat. Efforts to develop or acquire nuclear weapons and delivery systems magnify the potential dangers of the marriage between some states and their militant proxies. Indeed, the acquisition of nuclear arms by hostile states or terrorist organizations would constitute a

grave threat to the United States, our allies, and the countries of the region and would likely spark a destabilizing arms race.

In the near term, the greatest potential for such a threat to arise is found in the instability in South Asia, the activities and policies of the Iranian regime, the situation in Iraq, and the growth of AQAP in Yemen.

- **Instability in Afghanistan and Pakistan.** The insurgencies in Afghanistan and Pakistan constitute the most urgent problem set in the CENTCOM AOR. Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and the syndicate of militant groups operating in the border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan are engaging in an increasingly violent campaign against the people and governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Both states face a serious threat from these groups, and though some of these organizations perpetrate acts of terrorism against local targets and others operate internationally, these groups have increasingly cooperative, even symbiotic, relationships. As a result, the control by any of these groups of major population centers or significant economic or financial resources would present an enormous challenge to security in the region and across the globe.

- **Iran's Destabilizing Activities and Policies.** The activities and policies of the Iranian regime constitute the major state-level threats to regional stability. Despite repeated International Atomic Energy Agency findings of Iranian violations if non-proliferation obligations, five United Nations Security Council

Resolutions, and extensive diplomatic efforts through the P5+1, the Iranian

regime is assessed by many to be continuing its pursuit of a nuclear weapons

capability, which would destabilize the region and likely spur a regional arms race.

The Iranian regime employs surrogates and violent proxies to weaken competitor

states, obstruct the Middle East Peace Process, and expand its regional influence.

In particular, Iran uses proxy groups to train and equip militants in direct conflict

with U.S. forces operating in the region, to frustrate efforts to stabilize Iraq,

Lebanon, and Gaza, and to interfere with the domestic politics in each. In the past,

Syria has facilitated the Iranian regime's reach into the Levant and the Arab world

by serving as the key link in an Iran-Syria-Hizballah-Hamas alliance. The Iranian

regime's domestic activities are also troubling, as its recent violent suppression of

opposition groups and popular protests has violated the human rights of the

Iranian people and fomented further instability and unrest and increased the role

of the security forces in the affairs of the state.

- **Situation in Iraq.** Security in Iraq has improved significantly since the peak of

  the sectarian violence in mid-2007, but the gains there remain fragile and

  reversible, though increasingly less so. In Iraq, a number of factors continue to

  pose serious risks to U.S. interests and have the potential to undermine regional

  stability, disrupt international access to strategic resources, and frustrate efforts to

  deny terrorist safe havens and support bases. Internally, fundamental issues such

  as the distribution of political power and resources remain to be settled. The Iraqi

  state is still developing, and numerous challenges confront its leaders and people,

including lingering ethnic and sectarian mistrust, tensions between political

parties, strained governmental capacity to provide basic services, and the

continued displacement of hundreds of thousands of individuals. Externally,

Iraq's position with its neighbors is still in flux, with some playing a negative role

in Iraq. All these issues will remain in play, in particular, during the ongoing

formation of the new government following the Parliamentary elections earlier

this month.

- **Instability in Yemen.** The inability of the Yemeni government to effectively

  secure and exercise control over all its territory offers AQAP a safe haven in

  which to plan, organize, and support terrorist operations. This network poses a

  direct threat to the U.S. homeland, as evidenced by recent plots, including the

  attempted bombing of a U.S. airliner on Christmas Day 2009. At the same time,

  the Yemeni state faces challenges from separatist movements in the South and a

  six-year conflict with Houthi rebels, which despite the cease-fire in February

  could reignite and again spill over into Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the influx of

  refugees from Africa, pervasive arms smuggling, a deteriorating economic

  situation, and piracy continue to challenge the capabilities of the Yemeni

  government.

C. Cross-cutting Challenges to Security and Stability

While this statement will describe in greater detail the dynamics and challenges in the sub-regions of the AOR, there are a number of cross-cutting issues that serve as major drivers of instability, inter-state tensions, and conflict. These factors can serve as root causes of instability or as obstacles to security.

- **Insufficient progress toward a comprehensive Middle East peace.** The enduring hostilities between Israel and some of its neighbors present distinct challenges to our ability to advance our interests in the AOR. Israeli-Palestinian tensions often flare into violence and large-scale armed confrontations. The conflict foments anti-American sentiment, due to a perception of U.S. favoritism for Israel. Arab anger over the Palestinian question limits the strength and depth of U.S. partnerships with governments and peoples in the AOR and weakens the legitimacy of moderate regimes in the Arab world. Meanwhile, al-Qaeda and other militant groups exploit that anger to mobilize support. The conflict also gives Iran influence in the Arab world through its clients, Lebanese Hizballah and Hamas.

- **Militant Islamist movements.** The CENTCOM AOR is home to militant Islamist movements that threaten states in the region, exploit local conflicts, and foster instability through acts of terrorism. The most significant of these is al-Qaeda, which, along with its Associated Movements, seeks to impose its

intolerant ideology on the people through indiscriminant violence and intimidation. Although cooperative counterterrorist activities in many different countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Pakistan, over the past few years have eroded the network's support and safe haven and degraded the network's capabilities in many ways, al-Qaeda continues to plan and conduct operations and recruit new fighters. It remains a serious and formidable threat.

- **Proliferation of WMD.** The AOR contains states and terrorist organizations that actively seek WMD capabilities and have previously proliferated WMD related material, technology, and expertise outside established international monitoring regimes. In addition, regional states are increasingly interested in the development of nuclear programs, which, if not properly managed, could lead to the proliferation of illicit nuclear material or a regional arms race.

- **Ungoverned, poorly governed, and alternatively governed spaces.** Weak civil and security institutions and the inability of certain governments in the region to exert full control over their territories are conditions that insurgent groups can exploit to create physical safe havens in which they can plan, train for, and launch operations or pursue narco-criminal activities. We have seen these groups develop, or attempt to develop, what might be termed sub-states, particularly in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, and the Palestinian territories.

- **Significant sources of terrorist financing and facilitation.** The AOR remains a primary source of illicit funding and facilitation for global terrorist organizations and other militant groups. All this financing is transmitted through a variety of formal and informal networks, which include financial operatives and front companies throughout the region.

- **Piracy.** The lack of governance in Somalia has allowed piracy to grow off the coast and in the Horn of Africa threatening the flow of commerce through the region. Since the spike in piracy in 2008, we have worked in close cooperation with the international community to counter this trend by focusing on increasing international presence, encouraging the shipping industry to adopt best practices to defend against piracy, and establishing a sound international legal framework for resolving piracy cases. Despite some reduction in the number of successful pirate attacks in the region, piracy remains lucrative – increasingly so, as the ransom rates have nearly doubled over the previous year's – and pirates continue to modify their area of operations and techniques to avoid coalition presence.

- **Ethnic, tribal, and sectarian rivalries.** Within certain countries, the politicization of ethnicity, tribal affiliation, and religious sect serves to disrupt the development of national civil institutions and social cohesion, at times to the point of violence. Between countries in the region, such rivalries can heighten political tension and serve as catalysts for conflict and insurgency.

- **Disputed territories and access to vital resources.** Unresolved issues of disputed territorial boundaries and disagreements over the sharing of vital resources, such as water, oil, and natural gas, serve as sources of tension and conflict between and within states in the region.

- **Criminal activities, such as weapons, narcotics, and human trafficking.** Weapons smuggling, narcotics trafficking, and associated criminal activities undermine security, spur corruption, and inhibit legitimate economic activity and good governance throughout the AOR. In particular, state-sponsored weapons trafficking in support of groups like Lebanese Hizballah, Hamas, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad undermines regional security and the Middle East Peace Process.

- **Uneven economic development and lack of employment opportunities.** Despite substantial economic growth rates throughout much of the region over the past few years, significant segments of the population in the region remain economically disenfranchised, under-educated, and without sufficient opportunity. In addition many countries in the region face growing "youth bulges" that will strain their economies' abilities to produce sufficient employment opportunities. The recent global economic downturn has heightened these problems. Without sustained, broad-based economic development, increased employment opportunities are unlikely given the growing proportions of young people relative to overall populations.

- **Lack of regional and global economic integration.** The AOR is characterized by low levels of trade and commerce among countries, which diminish prospects for long term economic growth, as well as opportunities to deepen interdependence through increased political, commercial, social, and cultural ties.

III. Regional Strategy

To help defend and advance our national interests, CENTCOM executes a strategy that promotes security and stability in our AOR. In cooperation with our partners and in concert with national policy, we work to deter aggression as well as eliminate the conditions that foment conflict. Given the complexities of the AOR and its many security challenges, we have adopted a strategy that consists of active engagement in the region as well as prudent preparation for contingencies. The following sections describe the highlights of this strategy by outlining the strategic vision we seek to achieve and the guiding principles and major activities that characterize our approach.

A. Strategic Vision.

The conditions needed for security, stability, and prosperity in the region constitute the strategic vision we are working toward and the ultimate goals of our activities. They reflect our desire to strengthen the international system, while promoting effective and

responsible governance and broad-based economic development throughout the region. Specifically, we seek a region

- that is at peace with itself and its neighbors;

- that is focused on common security and cooperation;

- with stable governments that are responsive to the needs of their people;

- with patterns of economic development that advance people's well-being;

- where nuclear proliferation is not a threat and where nuclear energy use is verifiable and for peaceful purposes;

- with unhindered international access to strategic resources, critical infrastructure, and markets; and

- from which, and within which, groups such as al-Qaeda do not threaten the United States or our allies.

Working towards these objectives, in concert with the Department of State, is the most feasible and acceptable strategy for addressing the threats to our interests. To be sure, these objectives are broad and far-reaching, but they are nonetheless attainable.

B. Strategic Approach.

Achieving this vision and establishing these conditions necessarily requires changing – in some respects significantly changing – the security environment in the region, and as a result, our activities must be guided by the principle that our security solutions be comprehensive, cooperative, and enduring. This guidance recognizes that we must

simultaneously address security, political, and economic challenges in the region; that we

cannot do this through military means alone or without the cooperation of our partners in

the region and the broader international community; and that these changes must be long-

lasting and, eventually, self-sustaining.

- **Comprehensive Solutions.** Because instability and insecurity in the AOR stem

    from a complex mix of security, political, and economic challenges, we must

    pursue comprehensive solutions to problems in the region. This requires us to

    apply whole of government approaches that fully integrate our military and non-

    military efforts and those of our partners. For example, to address the threat

    posed by insurgent groups we are dismantling their networks and leadership, often

    through the use of security forces, while also working to eliminate their sources of

    support by protecting populations from these groups, disrupting their financial

    networks and sources of financing, delegitimizing their methods and ideologies,

    and addressing legitimate grievances to win over reconcilable elements of the

    population. We constantly strive to understand the complexities of these

    challenges and tailor our approaches to the unique circumstances on the ground.

- **Cooperative Solutions.** Because the challenges in the region are often

    transnational ones and because no nation can protect itself from these threats

    without cooperation from others, we must pursue cooperative, multilateral

    solutions. We seek collective action and an atmosphere of broad inclusivity and

    partnership to attract the needed pool of resources and to leverage each country's

comparative advantages, from expertise and facilities to information and even geography. To achieve this cooperation, we focus on interests we share with other nations, work to build effective partnerships for pursuing those interests, and actively engage with the people, leaders, and security forces in the AOR. We pursue security initiatives that may start out as a series of bilateral partnerships, but we work to integrate them to achieve multilateral effects and to expand them to form future, genuinely multilateral arrangements. Moreover, we are helping our partner nations bolster their own capabilities.

- **Enduring Solutions.** Finally, because we want lasting conditions of security and prosperity, we must seek long term, enduring solutions to the challenges in the region. To this end, we work to address the root causes of instability rather than apply quick fixes to their symptoms. Also, to achieve the cooperation described above, we pursue strategic partnerships with the nations of the region rather than short term transactional relationships. Lastly, we strive to increase integration and interdependence in the region in many different areas – diplomatic, commercial, social, and cultural – under the belief that increased interaction is a positive-sum game that benefits all parties and reduces the incentives for conflict. All of our efforts require sustained commitments of our attention, energy, and, in some cases, resources.

Adhering to these principles in our strategic approach and in the execution of our operations places a premium on unity of effort at all levels and with all participants. At

the combatant command level, this means working with our interagency and international partners to develop joint action or campaign plans that establish appropriate missions and objectives for our subordinate elements, from major commands such as U.S. Forces–Iraq and U.S. Forces–Afghanistan (USFOR-A) to our country-based offices of military cooperation. To effectively carry out these plans, we work carefully to coordinate our military elements with the corresponding State Department envoy or ambassador as well as our international and host nation partners.

C. Major Activities

In addition to our ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, our forces are engaged in numerous, wide-ranging endeavors designed to establish the conditions described above for security, stability, and prosperity in the region. Chief among these major activities are our efforts designed to do the following:

- Defeat al-Qaeda and its Associated Movements
- Deny sanctuaries and disrupt support for insurgent groups
- Counter proliferation of WMD and associated technology
- Deter and counter state-based aggression and proxy activities
- Support the peaceful resolution of long-standing interstate conflicts
- Build bilateral and multilateral security partnerships
- Develop partner nation security capacity
- Help nations protect their critical infrastructure and support infrastructure development

- Bolster at-risk states

- Respond to humanitarian crises, when called upon by our Ambassadors

- Counter arms smuggling

- Protect freedom of navigation

IV. Critical Sub-regions of the CENTCOM AOR

The complexity and uniqueness of local conditions in the CENTCOM AOR defy attempts to formulate an aggregated estimate of the situation that can address, with complete satisfaction, all of the pertinent issues. Thus, the best way to approach the challenges in the AOR is through a disaggregation of the problem set into six sub-regions, described as follows:

- Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India (though India does not lie within the boundaries of the CENTCOM AOR)

- Iran

- Iraq

- The Arabian Peninsula, comprised of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Yemen

- Egypt and the Levant, comprised of Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan (as well as Israel and the Palestinian territories, which do not lie within the CENTCOM AOR)

- Central Asia, comprised of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan

A. Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India

Instability in Afghanistan and Pakistan poses the most urgent problem set in the CENTCOM AOR and requires complementary and integrated civil-military, whole of government approaches. The two countries are linked by tribal affiliations and a porous border that permits terrorists, insurgents, and criminals to move relatively freely to and from their safe havens. Indeed, al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and other insurgent groups operating from the border region are engaged in an increasingly violent campaign against Afghan and coalition Forces and the developing Afghan state. However, while it is important to note that the problem sets are related, the United States must forge a unique partnership with each country.

Afghanistan

The past year was marked by a shift in strategic focus in Afghanistan. Over the course of the conflict, the Afghan insurgency had expanded its strength and influence – particularly in the South and East – and 2009 levels of violence were significantly higher than those of 2008. The Taliban have been resilient, with their activities fueled by revenues from outside the region as well as from narcotics-trafficking, the freedom of movement they enjoy in the border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan, ineffective

governance and services in parts of the country, as well as by contributions from other militant groups outside Afghanistan and Pakistan. To reverse this momentum and the downward spiral in security, we have embarked on a new 12-to-18-month civil-military campaign plan, and coalition forces and their Afghan partners are fighting to retake the initiative from the insurgency. The main goals of our strategy, announced by President Obama last December, include the following:

- reversing Taliban momentum through sustained military action,

- denying the Taliban access to and control of key population and production centers and lines of communication,

- disrupting the Taliban outside secured areas and preventing al-Qaeda from regaining sanctuary in Afghanistan,

- degrading the Taliban to levels manageable by the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF),

- increasing the size and capability of the ANSF and employing other local forces selectively to begin a conditions-based transition of security responsibility to the Afghan government by July 2011, and

- supporting U.S. government efforts to build the capacity of the Afghan government, particularly in key ministries.

To implement this strategy, we and our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners have spent a great deal of effort putting into place the right organizations and command and control structures needed to carry out a comprehensive civil-military campaign. This includes the capabilities for targeting of insurgents' resources and

finances, detention operations, ministerial capacity building, border coordination, strategic communications, and the conduct of reconciliation efforts. This began by ensuring the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Commander was dual-hatted as both a NATO Commander and the commander of U.S. forces, which helped to reduce many of the organizational firewalls between ISAF and Operation Enduring Force elements. We created the ISAF Intermediate Joint Command (IJC), a three-star headquarters to oversee operational execution of the counterinsurgency campaign. We established a Joint Task Force to address detainee operations and help develop rule of law capacity within the Afghan government, from policing and incarceration to trials and convictions. We developed a Force Reintegration Cell within the ISAF headquarters to support the reintegration and reconciliation process at the national level. We established an interagency threat finance cell, an intelligence fusion cell, and a full-fledged Joint Information Operations Task Force to conduct strategic communications. We formed the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan and made several other command and control adjustments, such as the integration of mentoring teams under the IJC and its battle space commanders and the restructuring of Army brigades, to improve our ability to train, advise, and assist Afghan security forces. Lastly, we formed the Pakistan-Afghanistan Coordination Cell on the Joint Staff and inaugurated the Afghanistan-Pakistan Intelligence Center of Excellence at CENTCOM to better organize our resources here at home. All of these organizations tie together and support the numerous activities taking place at the unit level across the country as our operations move forward over time, and to run them we have hand-selected some of nation's best civilian and military leaders, all of whom have been involved with counterinsurgency operations for quite some time.

Just as critical, we have strengthened our counterinsurgency approach and established

a wide-spread understanding of the critical concepts guiding and governing our

operations. First and foremost in this approach is a commitment to protecting and

serving the people. This focus is captured in Ambassador Karl Eikenberry and General

Stanley McChrystal's Integrated Civil-Military Campaign Plan, which directs our

military and civilian components to take a residential approach and, in a culturally

acceptable way, live among the people, understand their neighborhoods, and invest in

relationships. General McChrystal has also published counterinsurgency guidance, has

pushed to achieve greater unity of effort, has aggressively pursued the mission of

partnering with the Afghan security forces, and has issued appropriate guidance on

detention, reintegration, joint night raids, and tactical driving. All of these concepts are

designed to secure the Afghan people, to reduce civilian casualties, and to build their trust

in ISAF forces and the national government.

Critical to the organizations, leaders, and strategies we have put in place in

Afghanistan are the resources needed to support them, in this case, 30,000 additional U.S.

forces, additional civilians experts, and appropriate funding, each of which was

announced by the President in December at West Point. Just as important are the

additional commitments from other NATO and coalition partners totaling more than

9,000 troops. These resources are starting to flow into the country, and they will allow us

to better expand the security presence in population centers and along major lines of

communication, to better hold areas cleared of insurgent groups, and to build a new level of Afghan governmental control.

As a part of this approach, we will also invigorate efforts to develop the capabilities of the ANSF, including the Afghan National Army, the Afghan Uniform Police, the Afghan Gendarmerie Force, the Afghan Border Police, specialized counternarcotics units, and other security forces. We recognize the fact that international forces must eventually transfer security responsibility to Afghan security forces. In January 2009, the ANSF numbered 156,000; today, there are over 206,000 assigned, but significant work remains in improving the quality of the Afghan force through enhanced partnering, training, and recruiting. General McChrystal has placed a premium on comprehensive partnering with the ANSF, an emphasis that is being demonstrated in the ongoing Operation Moshtarak, in which ISAF and ANSF operate at close to a one-to-one ratio. Of equal importance, ISAF and ANSF leaders worked together in partnership to plan all aspects of the operation, a signal of ANSF development that goes beyond the number of ANSF boots on the ground. A properly sized, trained, and equipped ANSF is a prerequisite for any eventual drawdown of international forces from Afghanistan, and through our support and the assistance of the Afghan Security Forces Fund, the ANSF will continue to expand so that they will be more able to meet their country's security needs.

In addition, we, along with our civilian colleagues, will bolster the capabilities and the legitimacy of the other elements of the Afghan government – an effort in which, in much of Afghanistan, we will be building, not rebuilding. We will do this through our

support to local government at the provincial and district levels, utilizing the new structure of civilian representatives at each level of our deployed military. These, along with the efforts of Provincial Reconstruction Teams and national level civil-military and ministerial capacity building teams are empowering Afghans to solve Afghan problems and promoting local reintegration where possible. Most recently, we are supporting governance and development efforts as part of ongoing operations in Helmand Province.

Another major component of our strategy is to disrupt narcotics trafficking, which provides significant funding to the Taliban insurgency. This drug money has been the "oxygen" in the air that allows these groups to operate. With the extension of authority granted to U.S. forces to conduct counter-narcotics operations, we are able to more closely work with the Afghan government to disrupt the illicit narcotics industry though interdiction of the narco-trafficking network. To complement this effort, we support and promote viable agricultural and economic alternatives and the requisite infrastructure to help Afghans bring licit products to market for sale and distribution.

Executing this strategy requires clear unity of effort at all levels and with all participants. Our senior commanders (and I) have worked with Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan; Ambassador Eikenberry, the U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan; Stefan di Mistura, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General for Afghanistan; Ambassador Mark Sedwill, NATO's new Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan; and the Afghan leadership to improve and synchronize the whole of government approach. Our security

efforts have been integrated into the broader plan to promote political and economic development. We have urged partner nations to continue the invaluable support they are providing and to seek additional support as required for mission accomplishment.

The changes in approach launched in 2009 and 2010 (e.g., greater military and civilian resources, enhanced unity of effort and partnering) can help turn the tide over time, but we must manage expectations as we continue the buildup in our forces. Progress will be incremental and difficult. In 2010, the Taliban and other insurgent groups will attempt to build on their previous momentum and create further instability in the Afghan provinces, particularly in the South and East. We will endeavor not only to prevent that but to wrest the initiative from the Taliban.

Pakistan

The possibility of significant instability in Pakistan poses a serious threat to regional and global security, in large part, because Pakistan remains a critical strategic foothold for al-Qaeda and is important to the organization's efforts to rally supporters worldwide. Although al-Qaeda senior leaders are under considerably more pressure in Pakistan than in previous years, the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) still serves as al-Qaeda's principal sanctuary. More important, these leaders continue to plan and inspire regional and transnational operations from the FATA, while maintaining the ability to function as a structured organization, and foreign fighters continue to travel to Pakistan for training and to join al-Qaeda. Additionally, Pakistan continues to face a serious

insurgency fueled by militants operating from the country's tribal areas with casualties from violent incidents in Pakistan, particularly bombings and suicide attacks having increased dramatically over the past year.

However, the people and leaders of Pakistan have increasingly grown to see these groups as serious threats, and the Pakistani security forces have stepped up operations against insurgents, showing impressive determination and skill. They have conducted operations in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and the FATA on an unprecedented scale, successfully re-taking territory from the insurgent groups. Pakistan has sustained very tough losses in this effort, and it is clear that the country's leaders are keenly aware of the severity of the threat posed by these groups to the people and government.

We are working to forge a stronger partnership with Pakistan and to support its efforts in two ways. First, we aim to strengthen the military's capacity to target insurgent groups through the development of Pakistan's counterinsurgency capabilities. Second, we support Pakistan's governmental and economic development. Our efforts have helped as the Pakistani military has made progress in its counterinsurgency operations. The Pakistani Army and Frontier Corps have cleared many areas of militant groups. However, the hold and build phases of these operations and the subsequent transition to civil authority challenge the army and Pakistan's civil institutions. In fact, these institutions will be pressed by militant efforts to reassert control over the territory gained in 2009, risking a reversal of the past year's gains. The passage of the Kerry–Lugar–Berman Bill,

the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Fund, the $11.3 billion International Monetary Fund grant, and other key initiatives temporarily pulled Pakistan back from the brink of an impending economic collapse a year ago and helped increase Pakistan's capacity for counterinsurgency operations. Continued support for these initiatives is critical to enabling the Pakistan to continue its fight and to expand the writ of governance.

Finally, we are working to reduce regional tensions to enable adequate focus on the existential threat of militant Islamist movements in Pakistan. Though Indo-Pakistani tensions have eased since 2008, they could easily reignite in 2010, particularly in the event of another significant terrorist attack in India. A major escalation in these tensions would almost certainly result in the immediate redeployment to the east of Pakistani forces currently deployed to confront militants in the West, risking forfeiture of gains in FATA and the NWFP. This suggests a need for India and Pakistan to continue discussions begun on February 25th in order to reduce the strategic tension and the risk of miscalculation between these nuclear states.

B. Iran

The Iranian regime is the primary state-level threat to stability in the region. Throughout much of the region, the regime pursues a dual-track foreign policy. Overtly, the Iranian government cooperates with regional states through bilateral arrangements to promote Iran as an economic, political, and military power. In parallel, the regime entrusts the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC)-Qods Force to execute covert

aspects of its foreign policy using political influence, covert businesses, lethal and non-lethal aid, and training to militants supportive of the regime's agenda. The Qods Force is active throughout the region, and, in fact, controls Iranian foreign policy in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Gaza and influences heavily in Afghanistan and the Gulf Region. Through Qods Force soft power initiatives and destabilizing activities, such as coercion and direct attacks, Iran is subverting democratic processes and intimidating the nascent governments of our partners. The regime continues to intervene in the Israeli-Palestinian situation through its support to Hamas and Lebanese Hizballah, and it remains in violation of six United Nations Security Council Resolutions regarding its nuclear program and arms transfers.

Iran's nuclear program is a serious, destabilizing factor in the region and is widely believed to be a part of the regime's broader effort to expand its influence. Although the regime has stated the purpose of its nuclear program is exclusively for peaceful, civilian use, Iranian officials have consistently failed to provide the assurances and transparency necessary for full international confidence. This includes failure to provide verification as required by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to which Iran is a signatory, and failure to implement the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Additional Protocol, which would allow for more comprehensive inspections. The regime's obstinacy and obfuscation have forced Iran's neighbors and the international community to conclude the worst about the regime's intentions, as confirmed by the recent IAEA Board of Governors' near unanimous censure of Iran's recent disclosure of a secret nuclear facility near Qom. It appears that, at a minimum, Tehran is keeping open the

option to develop nuclear weapons. Iran continues to develop and improve its uranium enrichment infrastructure and is likely to use its gas centrifuges to produce fissile material for a weapon, should it make the political decision to do so. This pattern of conduct coupled with its rejection of international responsibilities is troubling, especially when viewed in the context that other regional states have recently announced their intentions to develop nuclear power programs. This behavior poses a clear challenge to international non-proliferation goals due to the possibility of such technologies being transferred to terrorist groups and the potential for a regional arms race, as other regional states may seek nuclear parity.

Domestically, the regime is taking dramatic steps to maintain power in reaction to the persistent civil unrest sparked by the apparent election manipulation leading to President Ahmadinejad's re-election in June 2009. The aftermath of the presidential election created a political rift among regime elites and further hardened certain leaders' views toward the U.S. and the West over alleged involvement in supporting a "soft revolution" in Iran. Tehran has deployed significant numbers of security forces, mainly comprised of Basij militia, to crack down on street protests and conduct mass arrests of protestors. The regime has also taken sweeping steps to control the information environment by slowing or shutting down the internet, telephone networks, and other forms of social media used by protestors to organize, execute, and publicize their efforts. The opposition movement, led by former regime insiders, poses the most serious political challenge to the regime since the advent of the Islamic Republic.

The Iranian regime has also attempted to thwart U.S. and international efforts to bring stability to Iraq, Afghanistan, and the broader region. In Afghanistan, the Iranian regime appears to have hedged its longstanding public support for the Karzai government by providing opportunistic support to the Taliban. In Iraq, however, the Iranian regime has embarked on a broad campaign led by the IRGC-Qods Force to influence Iraqi politics and support, through various means, parties loyal to Iran. The Qods Force also maintains its lethal support to Shia Iraqi militia groups, providing them with weapons, funding, and training. Additionally, al-Qaeda continues to use Iran as a key facilitation hub, where facilitators connect al-Qaeda's senior leadership to regional affiliates. And although Iranian authorities do periodically disrupt this network by detaining select al-Qaeda facilitators and operational planners, Tehran's policy in this regard is often unpredictable.

Pursuing our longstanding regional goals and improving key relationships within and outside the AOR help to limit the negative impact of Iran's policies. A credible U.S. effort on Arab-Israeli issues that provides regional governments and populations a way to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the disputes would undercut Iran's policy of militant "resistance," which the Iranian regime and insurgent groups have been free to exploit. Additionally, progress on the Israel-Syria peace track could disrupt Iran's lines of support to Hamas and Hizballah. Moreover, our development of a cooperative Regional Security Architecture, which includes a regional network of air and missile defense systems as well as hardening and protecting our partners' critical infrastructure, can help dissuade aggressive Iranian behavior. In all of these initiatives, our military

activities will continue to support our diplomatic efforts, and we will remain vigilant across a wide range of contingencies.

C. Iraq

Iraq made steady progress throughout 2009, a year that brought significant change in the security situation and in Iraqi politics. A broad backlash against the Islamist parties that have dominated the Iraqi government since 2005, along with the Iraqi people's increasing preference for emerging secular, nationalist parties and leaders, yielded a stunning result in January 2009's largely violence-free provincial elections and a peaceful transfer of power in every province that held an election. Various internal dynamics, however, have exacerbated the Arab-Kurd dispute over Kirkuk and other territories, and this issue now looms as the greatest potential Iraqi flashpoint.

The security situation in Iraq remained stable during the implementation of the U.S.-Iraqi security agreement, the handover of lead responsibility to the Iraqi Security Forces, and the drawdown of U.S. forces from some 130,000 in March 2009 to 96,000 today. The level of violence generally remained at record lows following the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraqi cities in June, demonstrating the Iraqi Security Forces' growing capability to handle security responsibilities independently. November witnessed the lowest number of civilian deaths since spring 2003, and December was the first month since the March 2003 invasion in which no U.S. forces died in combat in Iraq. A number of high-profile attacks in the second half of 2009 showed, nonetheless, that the Iraqis still

have much work to do in developing counterterrorism capabilities. While al-Qaeda in Iraq's (AQI) attempt to discredit and destabilize the government through massive bombings did not succeed, it did demonstrate AQI's resilience. At the same time, the Arab-Kurd dispute has lent new life to Ba'athist-related insurgent groups in northern Iraq, which have attempted to ignite a conflict along the Green Line. As we continue to draw down our forces in a responsible manner and comply with our commitments under the U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement, key to further improving the security situation and mitigating remaining risks will be continuing to help the Iraqi Security Forces and developing their capabilities through our advisory and security assistance programs and the Iraq Security Forces Fund.

This year will bring far-reaching developments in Iraqi politics and the U.S.-Iraq relationship. Just this month, Iraqis took to the polls and expressed their political will in parliamentary elections made possible by the security provided by the ISF. The significance of the elections was clearly evidenced by the strong voter turnout across the country and the political maneuvering – including the campaign by some Shi'a Islamists officials to ban a number of former Ba'athists and secularists from running – leading up to election day. The formation of the new national government following the election will shape the resolution of outstanding fundamental issues about the nature of the Iraqi state, including the Arab-Kurd question and the balance between central and provincial authority. As such, we expect Iraq's internal political landscape to continue to face evolutionary challenges. We will continue to work with the new Iraqi government to implement the Strategic Framework Agreement and strengthen our bilateral relationship.

D. The Arabian Peninsula

The Arabian Peninsula commands significant U.S. attention and focus because of its importance to our interests and its potential for insecurity. These Arab states on the Peninsula are the nations of the AOR most politically and commercially connected to the United States and Europe. They are more developed economically than any of their neighbors, collectively wield substantial defense forces, and are major providers of the world's energy resources. However, the Peninsula has, in the past, been a significant source of funding and manpower for terrorist groups and foreign fighters. Where governments face internal challenges, the situation is often aggravated and intensified by external factors, such as the Iranian regime's destabilizing behavior, instability in the Palestinian territories and southern Lebanon, political and security troubles in Iraq, and weapons proliferation.

Over the past few years, we have worked with the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, as well as other partners in the region, to develop a Regional Security Architecture to address common security challenges. This architecture is made up of an array of major components including a Shared Early Warning system; an increasingly integrated air and missile defense network; and an extensive array of ground, maritime, aviation, and special operations exercises each designed to respond to different types of threats. All of these cooperative efforts are facilitated by the critical base, port, and training facilities provided by Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, and others throughout the AOR.

This emerging but, nonetheless, significantly developed collection of partnerships improves our interoperability and our overall effectiveness in ongoing multi-lateral operations and security initiatives. The mechanisms and capabilities put in place to coordinate efforts in one area, such as piracy, smuggling, and littoral security, can often be employed to respond rapidly to crises in other areas. Moreover, progress made in generating cooperation on one set of issues can serve as an opening for engagement on other issues, thereby promoting greater interdependence in the region. Contributions of funding and forces by regional partners to our operations in Afghanistan evidence some of these positive spillover effects. Now that our Gulf partners have begun working closely to address common threats, the logical next step is to expand the model and encourage the integration of Iraq with our Gulf partners. Such a step would benefit the entire region.

Yemen stands out from its neighbors because of its underdeveloped governmental institutions and weak economy and because of its numerous security challenges, which include the Southern secessionist movement, the Houthi tribal rebellion, and the presence of AQAP. Yemen's strategic location facilitates AQAP's freedom of movement and allows it to threaten not only Yemen's neighbors but also the United States and Europe. In recent months we have seen several terrorist attacks attempted within and emanating from Yemen, the spillover of the Houthi rebellion into Saudi Arabia, the resurgence of Yemen's Southern secessionists, and the negative influence of al-Shabaab in Somalia. In view of these developments, we are working toward expanded, sustained, and predictable

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efforts to help build Yemen's security, counterinsurgency, and counterterrorist capabilities, and we seek to nearly double U.S. security assistance to the country in the coming year.

E. Egypt and the Levant

The Levant and Egypt sub-region is the traditional political, social, and intellectual heart of the Arab world and is vital to security and stability in the CENTCOM AOR. Because of its history as a primary battleground between rival ideologies, the dynamics of this sub-region, particularly with regard to Israel, influence the internal and external politics of states outside the region as well. In addition, U.S. policy and actions in the Levant affect the strength of our relationships with partners in the AOR. As such, progress toward resolving the political disputes in the Levant, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict, is a major concern for CENTCOM. Through a significant expansion of our engagement program, capacity building efforts, training exercises, deployment of Navy vessels to the Red Sea, and information sharing, we are working with our partners in Egypt and the Levant to build the capabilities of legitimate security forces, defeat transnational and sub-state militant groups, combat the spread of WMD and related materials, and disrupt illegal arms smuggling. In addition, we will work to develop the mechanisms of security and confidence building to support efforts to achieve a comprehensive Middle East peace.

Egypt remains a leading Arab state, a staunch U.S. ally, and a key actor in the Middle East Peace Process. In recent years, however, the Egyptian government has had to deal with serious economic challenges and an internal militant Islamist threat; as such, U.S. foreign aid has been a critical reinforcement to the Egyptian government. At the same time, concern over the possibility of the spillover of instability in Gaza has led Egypt to play a pivotal role in international efforts to address the situation there, to improve border security, and to interdict illicit arms shipments to Palestinian militants. In partnership with U.S. Africa Command, we are working with Egypt to combat militancy and smuggling across the Red Sea, Horn of Africa, Nile basin, and northern Africa.

Jordan continues to be a key partner in the region. The Kingdom's forces participate in many regional security initiatives and are at the forefront of police and military training for regional security forces. In addition to its regular participation in multilateral training exercises, Jordan promotes regional cooperation and builds our partner nations' security capacity through its recently opened King Abdullah Special Operations Training Center, Peace Operations Training Center, International Police Training Center, and Cooperative Management Center. We support these efforts, as they are critical to the continued development of legitimate security forces throughout the region, especially in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories and, as a consequence, will be important to the long term viability of the Middle East Peace Process.

In Lebanon, Hizballah's rearmament following its conflict with Israel in 2006, particularly its rocket and missile stocks, portends continued instability in the region.

Hizballah continues to undermine the authority of the legitimate Lebanese security forces, threaten Israel, and provide training and support to militant groups outside the country. Stabilizing Lebanon ultimately requires strengthening the capabilities of the Lebanese Armed Forces, fully implementing United Nations Security Council Resolutions, including 1559 and 1701, ending Iran's illegal support to Hizballah, and assisting the Lebanese government in developing a comprehensive national defense strategy through which the government can exercise its sovereignty, free of external intervention.

Last, despite continued support to Hizballah, interference in Lebanese internal politics, and accommodation of foreign fighter networks and facilitators operating from and through its territory, the Asad regime in Syria appears to be slowly seeking rapprochement with its neighbors and the United States.

F. Central Asia

Central Asia is a pivotal region on the Eurasian continent between Russia, China, Iran, and South Asia, has extensive national resources, particularly hydrocarbons, and serves as a major transit route for regional and international commerce and for supplies supporting coalition efforts in Afghanistan. Ensuring stability in Central Asia requires abandoning the outdated, zero-sum paradigms of international politics associated with the so-called "Great Game," replacing them with broad partnerships to address common challenges such as terrorism, WMD proliferation, and illegal narcotics trafficking. There

are numerous opportunities in Central Asia for cooperation that can simultaneously advance the interests of the Central Asian States and their neighbors.

However, public and civic institutions in Central Asia are still developing in the aftermath of decades of Soviet rule, and they present challenges to our efforts to promote security, development, and cooperation. Although there is interdependence across a broad range of social, economic, and security matters, these nations have not yet fully established a productive regional *modus vivendi*. Overcoming these challenges requires incremental approaches that focus on the alleviation of near term needs, the establishment of better governance, the integration of markets for energy and other commercial activity, and grass-roots economic development.

Over the past two years, a primary focus of our engagement with the Central Asian States has been the development and expansion of our Northern Distribution Network (NDN), which supports coalition forces in Afghanistan. Through diligent work by the State Department and U.S. Transportation Command, we have improved the flexibility, efficiency, and reliability of our logistical support to our operations in Afghanistan by diversifying the routes, approaches, and contracts that comprise the logistical network. In 2010, we anticipate expanding our use of the NDN as additional routes and methods of delivery become available. In addition to improving our regional access and logistics capabilities, work on the NDN has significantly increased our contact with our regional partners and provided opportunities to engage on numerous common causes and to increase our commercial ties.

In addition to increasing our engagement with the Central Asian States through the NDN, we continue to help build the capabilities of indigenous security forces, as well as the mechanisms for regional cooperation. We provide training, equipment, and facilities for various army, national guard, and border security forces through our Building Partnership Capacity programs. In addition, we continue to work with national level organizations to facilitate dialogue on security and emergency response issues through numerous bilateral training exercises and initiatives such as our annual Chiefs of Defense Conferences and the multilateral Exercise Regional Cooperation.

V. Critical Mission Enablers

Success in our ongoing missions and achieving comprehensive, cooperative, and enduring solutions to our challenges in the AOR, all the while maintaining a credible, responsive contingency capacity, requires the support of several key mission enablers. The effects of these capabilities range from the tactical to the strategic, and CENTCOM fully supports their continuation, expansion, and improvement.

In requesting and employing these enablers, we recognize the critical importance of proper oversight to ensure their proper usage, particularly for funding authorities. In many cases, we have established control mechanisms that exceed those mandated by Congress, including numerous additional outside audits and command reviews. This

oversight helps us know whether these programs are being properly implemented and, equally important, whether these programs are effective.

A. Building Partnership Capacity

Our security cooperation and security assistance efforts are critical to improving security and stability in the region. They help strengthen our relationships and build the security and response capabilities of our partners in the AOR. Continued strong support for global train and equip resources; Coalition Support Funds; and the State Department's Foreign Military Financing (FMF), Foreign Military Sales (FMS), and counter-narcotics security assistance and reimbursement programs are essential to generating comprehensive and cooperative solutions to defeat insurgent groups. FMF and FMS remain our mainstay security assistance tools, but the International Military Education and Training program is also an important contributor to developing partner nation capabilities and enduring ties, particularly for the officers of nascent security forces and from Pakistan, with whom we must reestablish personal bonds and trust after years without substantive interaction. While these programs are reasonably successful in meeting needs in a peacetime environment, we support the reformation of the security assistance programs and processes described in this year's Quadrennial Defense Review to create new, more responsive, long term mechanisms for developing our partner nations' security capacity.

Additionally, in the face of enduring conflict in the region, we look to expanded special authorities and multi-year appropriations to quickly meet the emerging needs of counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and Foreign Internal Defense/Security Force Assistance activities. Multi-year programs-of-record that provide training, equipment, and infrastructure for our partner nations' security forces enabled our successes in Iraq and are of prime importance if we are to achieve comparable progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan. These critical programs include the Iraq Security Forces Fund, the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund, the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Fund, and the Cooperative Defense Program.

B. Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP)

CERP continues to be a vital counterinsurgency tool for our commanders in Afghanistan and Iraq. Small CERP projects can be the most efficient and effective means to address a local community's emergent needs, and where security is a challenge, it is often the only immediate means for addressing those needs. CERP spending is not intended to replace longer term development assistance administered by agencies such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) but rather to complement and potentially serve as a catalyst for these projects. In Iraq as the security situation has improved and allowed USAID full access, CERP funding has been reduced commensurately. However, we fully support ongoing efforts to enhance U.S. humanitarian assistance programs in other parts of the CENTCOM AOR, particularly in Pakistan. In concert with the State Department, we also seek innovative mechanisms and

authorities to allow for greater cost-sharing and to create similar counterinsurgency tools

for use by coalition and host nation partners. These tools should allow for a variety of

funding sources, to include contributions from non-governmental organizations,

international governmental organizations, and partner governments.

Critical to CERP is its proper oversight. We support the ongoing Department of

Defense internal assessment of the program and its consideration of establishing a

Department-wide CERP coordinator. We will continue to sponsor outside audits and to

work with the Services to ensure proper pre-deployment training for CERP managers and

contracting personnel.

C. Information Operations

Operation Earnest Voice (OEV) is the critical program of record we use to

synchronize and oversee our Information Operations activities, to counter our

adversaries' ideology and propaganda in the AOR, and to amplify credible voices in the

region, all in close coordination with the Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy.

OEV provides CENTCOM direct communication capabilities to a regional audience

through traditional media as well as trans-regional websites and public affairs regional

blogging. Strategic, long term effects are achieved through our supporting Building

Partnership Capacity programs, humanitarian relief efforts, demining activities,

Cooperative Defense Initiatives, and counterterrorist operations. The audience analysis

and assessment component of OEV provides critical cultural understanding required to

connect with the region's population, tell us which techniques are effective over time and which are not, and gives us the long term ability to assess our success or failure in the war of ideas. Full and enduring funding of OEV and other Defense Department information operations efforts will best enable us to communicate our strategic messages and to counter those of our adversaries.

D. Force Protection and Countering Improvised Explosive Device (IEDs)

Initiatives focused on countering the threat of IEDs are of paramount importance to our operations in the AOR. IEDs continue to be the primary threat to our ground forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, and efforts to expedite the acquisition and fielding of personal protective equipment, IED jammers, route clearance vehicles and equipment, and the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) family of vehicles, which includes the MRAP All Terrain Vehicle, have saved countless lives. An urgent priority for us is the rapid fielding of MRAPs to support the increase in U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan. Because we expect IEDs to remain a key weapon in the arsenals of militants and insurgents for years to come, we urge continued support for the Joint IED Defeat Organization; the Services' baseline sustainment for the MRAP family of vehicles, base defense initiatives, and Counter-IED efforts; and Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation funding and procurement of equipment to counter IED tactics and networks.

E. Intelligence

Detailed and timely tactical, operational, and strategic level intelligence collection and analysis remain vital to all aspects of our operations. While we continue to balance the allocation of our Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) assets and to refine and optimize our procedures and existing architecture, changes in the operating environment and the expiration of old systems will require new, improved, or increased intelligence capabilities. We support the Department of Defense's planned growth in human intelligence and counterintelligence specialists, interrogators, and intelligence analysts, but we also have come to recognize the importance of non-traditional specialists such as threat finance analysts, human terrain teams, and document exploitation specialists. In addition, our requirements for signals intelligence geo-location capabilities, Ground Moving Target Indicator information, and aerial imagery from remotely piloted systems, including sea-based ISR, continue to grow. We also look to Operationally Responsive Space to temporarily fill the space-based reconnaissance gap to be created as several current systems reach the end of their operational lives. Finally, managing these capabilities and fully harvesting the information they provide requires innovative databases (such as the Combined Information Data Network Exchange system), applications, and communication systems.

F. Adaptable Command, Control, Communications, and Computer (C4) Systems

Continued operations across a dispersed AOR call for a robust, interoperable, high-volume theater C4 infrastructure. We are working to meet C4 requirements for current operations and to posture enduring theater C4 capabilities to meet post-conflict requirements as well as prepare for contingencies. Concurrently, we are working to expand our information sharing and to improve our partners' commercial and military C4 capabilities.

We aggressively seek greater bandwidth capacity to improve the reliability and diversity of our C4 networks. CENTCOM currently utilizes all available bandwidth to full capacity, but theater fiber networks are vulnerable to single points of failure in the global information grid. Military Satellite Communications capabilities are critical to theater operations, and the acceleration of transformational upgrades to these systems would reduce our reliance on commercial providers.

We are also pursuing the means to extend Joint Theater Expeditionary Command, Control, and Communications support and services to disadvantaged users throughout the AOR. Some of these means include our sponsorship of Joint Capability Technology Demonstrations (JCTDs). Under the JCTD Tactical Service Provider (TSP) program, we developed the capability to more effectively manage available bandwidth and provide coverage to frontline units. We continue to field and further develop the Distributed Tactical Communications System, which leverages new technologies to deliver reliable,

critical communications capabilities to the most remote users. Additional fielding and technology efforts include the Radio over Internet Protocol Routed Network and the Joint Airborne Communications System. Despite tremendous actions by the Department of Defense to help us overcome our communication and network challenges, to be more effective and efficient, we require a fully integrated space and terrestrial communications infrastructure that supports all joint and potential partner nation users.

G. Cyberspace Capabilities and Authorities

The openness of the global cyber commons exposes us to low risk, low cost threats from our adversaries. Our networks are constantly threatened by a range of actors from hackers to criminal organizations to state-sponsored saboteurs. This activity is aimed at retrieving sensitive information, exploiting our public domain information to gain an operational advantage, and disrupting our networks. In addition, our adversaries use the internet for command and control, recruiting, and fund raising.

To help address these challenges, we welcome the development and institutionalization of cyberspace capabilities to help us protect and operate within these critical systems. The formation of U.S. Cyber Command and other Defense Department-wide cyberspace activities will facilitate the fusion of intelligence, operations, and communications essential to our computer network operations. At the combatant command level, we have created our own Cyberspace Warfare Cell composed of

intelligence, operations, and communications personnel to synchronize our cyberspace activities and to integrate with national level efforts.

H. Joint and Multinational Logistics

The primary focus of our logistics efforts is the timely deployment, equipping, and sustainment of units engaged in combat operations. With our multinational and strategic national logistics partners, we continue to work toward an efficient and effective logistics architecture that supports our forces and operations and minimizes costs. Our logistics posture consists of pre-positioned inventories, air and sealift capabilities, and access to bases with critical infrastructure, all of which are key logistics components that support operational flexibility. To maintain this posture and our readiness, we must quickly reconstitute our Army and Marine Corps pre-positioned stocks and properly reset returning forces. Moreover, this logistics posture enables the increase in forces in Afghanistan while simultaneously supporting the drawdown of forces from Iraq, both of which remain on track to meet the President's timelines.

The Joint Contracting Command for Iraq and Afghanistan continues to support CENTCOM, USF-I, and USFOR-A by providing responsive contracting of supplies, services, and construction, and lays the groundwork for the capacity building efforts within Iraqi and Afghan ministries. As a result, in Fiscal Year 2009, the Joint Contracting Command for Iraq and Afghanistan executed over 33,000 contract actions and obligated a total of $5.4 billion. Over 36 percent of this funding went to Iraqi and

Afghan firms. CENTCOM is transitioning the Joint Contracting Command to a Joint

Theater Support Contracting Command, an initiative that will enhance management and

synchronize contracting across a greater portion of the AOR. We continue to improve

contractor oversight through other initiatives such as increasing the in-theater presence of

Contracting Officer Representatives and Quality Assurance Representatives, early

identification and training of these representatives for deploying units, and mandating the

use of automated Letters of Authorization for contractors.

In an effort to lessen our reliance on the ground supply lines through Pakistan, we are

moving an increasing amount of non-military supplies into Afghanistan via an air and

surface intermodal NDN, which transits through the Central Asian States. We have also

established routes to transport military equipment from Iraq through Turkey merging

with the NDN for onward movement to Afghanistan. Continued expansion of the NDN

and additional host nation access remain logistics priorities as we shift more sustainment

from the routes through Pakistan to the NDN and optimize the Pakistan routes for units

and equipment supporting the increase in forces in Afghanistan. Our relationships with

the Central Asian States continue to improve as a result of our NDN efforts, and this is

supported by legislation that allows us to expand our partnerships by locally purchasing

supplies for forces in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the region.

I. Overseas Basing and Theater Posture

CENTCOM's overseas basing strategy and its associated overseas Military Construction projects are developing the infrastructure necessary for the conduct of ongoing operations, as well as supporting global access, projection, sustainment, and protection of our combined forces in the AOR. Fully functional Forward Operating Sites and Cooperative Security Locations are essential to our ability to conduct the full spectrum of military operations, engage with and enable partner nations, and act promptly and decisively. Pre-positioned stocks and reset equipment provide critical support to this strategy but require reconstitution and modernization after having been partially expended to support operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Even with generous Overseas Contingency Operations budgets, military construction timelines are too slow to respond to changes in a combat environment. Major events such as the approval of the Strategic Partnership Agreement with Iraq and the recent decision to send additional forces to Afghanistan show how rapidly basing requirements can change. Expanded Contingency Construction Authorities made available across the entire CENTCOM AOR can serve as partial, interim solutions because they push construction decision-making authority to our engaged commanders in the field. Also, increasing the Operations and Maintenance construction threshold for minor construction in support of combat operations across the AOR would increase the ability of our commanders to quickly meet mission requirements and fully support and protect our deployed forces.

J. Adaptive Requirements, Acquisition, and Technology Processes

The technical community writ-large has responded exceptionally well over the past few years to the needs of our warfighters in the CENTCOM AOR. While the Services, Joint Staff, and Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) have responded to our calls for assistance, the Joint IED Defeat Organization, the Rapid Equipping Force, and Army Material Command's Fielded Assistance in Science and Technology programs have been particularly helpful in ensuring that our troopers receive the best, most advanced equipment and tools to make them effective and to keep them safe during the execution of their missions. In addition, several organizations under OSD-Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics and OSD-Defense Research and Engineering, in cooperation with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, have been instrumental in the discovery, rapid development, and early fielding of critical operational capabilities, such as more capable ISR systems, human terrain mapping and analytical tools, and improved ballistic protection for MRAPs. Last, the Quick Reaction Test Program has helped us use existing technologies in new and more efficient ways.

The Joint Rapid Acquisition Cell (JRAC) has proven important to addressing non-counter-IED rapid acquisition needs for our operations, and we will continue to use the Joint Urgent Operational Needs (JUON) process to support our warfighters. However, because the JUON process requires execution year reprogramming by the Services, we found in the past that the Rapid Acquisition Fund (RAF) was a useful JRAC tool for

supporting immediate needs. When the authority existed, the JRAC used the RAF to field capabilities such as radio systems used for Afghanistan-Pakistan cross-border communications, which were procured in less than four months from the initial identification of the need. The JRAC has also used RAF funding to initiate the fielding of critical biometrics equipment until the JUON process could further source the program, significantly reducing the time required to deploy the technology. Reinstating RAF funding and using it as a complement to the JUON process would allow CENTCOM to more quickly resolve warfighter needs.

K. Personnel

Having appropriately trained personnel in sufficient quantities for our commands and Joint Task Forces (JTFs) is critical to accomplishing our assigned missions and achieving our theater objectives. The CENTCOM headquarters has been satisfactorily manned through temporary augmentation but may require additional permanent manpower for enduring mission sets as well as mechanisms for quickly generating temporary manpower for contingency operations. Within our JTFs and deployed units, there continue to be shortfalls in many low-density, high-demand occupational specialties and enabling force structures. Most notably, critical shortages of intelligence specialists, counterintelligence and human intelligence collectors, interrogators, document exploitation specialists, detainee operations specialists, engineers, and military police continue to degrade mission effectiveness. As operations continue in Afghanistan, we see a critical need for increased public affairs and information operations personnel to improve our strategic

communications capabilities. Moreover, as we complete our combat mission in Iraq, we will require non-traditional enabling capabilities such as leaders to augment newly formed advisory assistance units, personnel to follow money trails in support of our threat finance cells, and an increased number of multi-functional logisticians to man critical logistics units. At the same time, we support a significant expansion of the U.S. government's vital, deployable civilian capacity, particularly in the State Department and USAID.

Quality of life, family support, and retention programs remain important to our operations in the AOR. The Rest and Recuperation program continues to be a success, having served over 875,000 since its inception in September 2003. We also continue to depend heavily on entitlement programs such as Combat Zone Tax Relief, Imminent Danger Pay, and Special Leave Accrual to support our deployed service members.

VI. Conclusion

There are currently over 220,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen serving in the CENTCOM AOR and soldiering magnificently against tough enemies during challenging operations in punishing terrain and extreme weather. Together with our many civilian and coalition partners, they have been the central element to the security, stability, and prosperity we have increasingly promoted throughout the region. They will be the key to achieving further progress in Afghanistan,

Iraq, and Pakistan and other locations where serious work is being done. These wonderful Americans and their fellow troopers around the world constitute the most experienced, most capable military in our Nation's history. They and their families have made great sacrifices since 9/11, and nothing means more to these great Americans than the sense that those back home appreciate their service and sacrifice.

All those in CENTCOM thank the American people for their extraordinary support of our military men and women and their families. And we thank the members of Congress for their unwavering support and abiding concern for our troops and their families as well.