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Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Hearing - "Consolidating Intelligence Analysis: A Review of the President's Proposal to Create a Terrorist Threat Integration Center-Day 2" - February 26, 2003

Opening Oral Statement

Good morning Madam Chair Collins, Ranking Member Lieberman, and other distinguished Members of the Committee. I would like to express my gratitude to the Committee for the opportunity to testify today. I am honored to be included in such a distinguished panel of executives from the U.S. intelligence and law enforcement communities. I would also like to thank the Committee for allowing me to add the following remarks to Mr. Wiley's written statement submitted for the record:

President Bush recently emphasized during a speech at FBI Headquarters that "the FBI has no greater priority than preventing terrorist acts against America." The FBI strongly supports the formation of the Terrorist Threat Integration Center (TTIC) and is proud to be a partner with the CIA, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, and all the other participating agencies. The FBI's experience in conducting complex criminal and terrorism investigations has shown that analysts are most effective when they are in constant and close communication with investigators. For this reason, the FBI strongly supports and looks forward to the expeditious implementation of plans to co-locate the FBI's Counterterrorism Division (CTD) with the CIA's Counterterrorism Center (CTC), the Department of Homeland Security, and other U.S. agencies participating in the TTIC.

As you may know, the FBI has established sixty-six Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) in FBI field offices around the country and a National Joint Terrorism Task Force (NJTTF) at FBI Headquarters. The JTTFs partner FBI personnel with hundreds of investigators from federal, state, and local agencies. These partnerships provide an effective and efficient mechanism to collect domestic threat-related information. The TTIC will fuse the information collected domestically by the FBI's JTTFs with threat-related information gathered abroad. The fusion of domestic and international threat-related information at the TTIC is critically important for the FBI to accomplish its mission of preventing terrorist attacks in the future.

The FBI views the TTIC as an important resource. The TTIC will not only provide all-source, integrated analysis to the FBI, but also to the officials in state and local law enforcement who are essential partners in the fight against terrorism. We recognize that the two-way flow of information between federal and local law enforcement is necessary to continuously sharpen both the collection and analysis of threat-related information. Once again, the dozens of FBI JTTFs around the country provide an effective channel to share the TTIC's analytical products with our partners in state and local law enforcement. The FBI is committed to working with the Department of Homeland Security to push information and analysis out of the TTIC to other federal agencies, and to state and local officials.

We are expanding our ability to collect, analyze, and disseminate intelligence. The centerpiece of this effort is the establishment of an Executive Assistant Director for Intelligence who will have direct authority and responsibility for the FBI's National Intelligence Program. Specifically, the EAD for Intelligence will be responsible for ensuring that TTIC's reporting requirements are met by field offices.

Our support of the TTIC will not change our mission, priorities, or operations. In fact, the TTIC will only strengthen our capabilities. The FBI is uniquely positioned to bring both national security and law enforcement authorities to bear in the war against terrorism. Recently, the ability to develop intelligence on terrorist activities and use law enforcement powers to disrupt them was exemplified in Buffalo, New York, where we arrested seven al-Qaeda associates and sympathizers indicted in September 2002 for providing material support to terrorism. Every FBI agent is trained to recognize that along with these broad authorities comes the responsibility to implement them fairly and in accordance with the protections provided by the Constitution. It is important to note that the FBI's role, and the roles of all TTIC participants, must and will remain consistent with the protections provided by privacy laws, Executive Orders, AG Guidelines, and other relevant legal authorities in order to protect Constitutional liberties and privacy interests.

Again, I offer my gratitude and appreciation to you, Madam Chair Collins, and the Governmental Affairs Committee, for dedicating your time and effort to this issue and I would be happy to respond to any questions.