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HEARING
ON
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014
AND
OVERSIGHT OF PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED
PROGRAMS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, EMERGING
THREATS AND CAPABILITIES HEARING
ON
**BUDGET REQUEST FOR
U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND
AND U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES**

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FISCAL YEAR 2014 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BUDGET REQUEST FOR U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND AND U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, EMERGING THREATS AND
CAPABILITIES,

Washington, DC, Wednesday, April 17, 2013.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 3:30 p.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Mac Thornberry (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MAC THORNBERRY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM TEXAS, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. THORNBERRY. A congressional hearing actually started one minute early. That doesn't happen very often, but I appreciate our witnesses being here. Mr. Langevin is on the floor dealing with the cyber bill, and we are going to have votes on that bill in about an hour. So we are going to move things along and cover what we need to cover, but once we have votes, we are going to be away for quite a while, and so I want to move along.

I will ask unanimous consent that any opening statements of Mr. Langevin and I be included in the record at this point.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Langevin can be found in the Appendix on page 25.]

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thanks to both our distinguished witnesses for being here. We have heard from both of you many times before, and with that I want to turn it to you to—and without objection, your complete written statement will be made a part of the record. I want to turn to you to summarize in whatever comments you would like to make, and then we will be able to ask questions for the time we have available.

Thank you both for being here. I don't know who goes first, but Mr. Sheehan, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL A. SHEEHAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Secretary SHEEHAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I will be very brief, as you have a copy of my extended remarks for the record. I first want to thank you and the members of the committee and your staff for the support you have provided to the special op-

erations community so that we can help implement the defense strategy to achieve our national security objectives. We very much appreciate it, and I will be specific about some of that support at the end of my remarks.

First of all, as I have spoken before here, talked about our new defense strategy, talked about innovative small footprint, low-cost solutions to achieve our defense goals, and of course the special operations community is ideally tailored, structured, and trained for that mission. I want to talk a little bit about the threat and a couple, how we—how I look at how the construct of our strategy, and end with a few comments about the authorities and funding that will enable us to execute that strategy in the months and years ahead.

First of all, on the threat, Mr. Chairman, we talked about this several times before. I always like to reiterate on the threat that the threat to the homeland, in my view, continues to emanate primarily from the AfPak [Afghanistan-Pakistan] region and Yemen, the two traditional strongholds of Al Qaeda, and from those two areas, even as we look around the world where Al Qaeda pops its head or we see terrorism even in our home streets in Boston, that those two traditional strongholds remain a constant concern for our community, continue to pound Al Qaeda's capability where they have demonstrated both the capability and intent to conduct the strategic attacks from those two areas.

Of course we have evolving new areas of concern of Al Qaeda, particularly in Africa, we have known about Somalia for several years, but now since the collapse of northern Mali and the intervention there by AQIM [Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb] with the Tuareg rebellion, we have a new threat there that is compounded by the instability of the Arab Spring, the instability in Libya after the fall of Gadhafi, and the flow of weapons that create a confluence of factors in northern Mali of great concern, and as you are aware, Mr. Chairman, the French are leading an effort there to try to put that situation back on track. I will talk a little bit about, more about that in my remarks on our strategy.

In Syria, of course, we are also very concerned about the strengthening of al-Nusrah Front and its clear links as an Al Qaeda affiliate, its clear links to other Al Qaeda organizations, and its potential as an ominous threat to the homeland is of major concern to our community.

Let me talk a little bit about the construct of how I look at the strategy. I don't know whether it is because I am an infantryman or my Jesuit training, I always look at things in threes. Three aspects of it. One is the direct-action and lethal-action aspect of our counterterrorism strategy, and that is, I am talking about the U.S., unilateral direct-action capability. The second has to do with building partner capacity so that our partner nations can take action to take down terrorist individuals themselves, and the third aspect of it has to do with denying sanctuary to terrorists.

Each of these come together to form a cohesive counterterrorism strategy in different parts of the world. For instance, in Yemen we conduct action there to take down Al Qaeda leadership, we also work with the host country to build their capacity so they can conduct the job within their territory. We also work with them to deny

space for Al Qaeda. All three aspects of the strategy has come together in Yemen, and, quite frankly, been very successful in the last year and a half, particularly with the Hadi, new Hadi regime.

In Somalia we also see a U.S. unilateral action there, building capacity among partners in the region to take action and also in the third category of denying space, we are using United Nations with African peacekeeping forces to deny space for Al Qaeda sanctuary. That model is particularly important because we are going to have aspects of that model of the strategy as we look at Mali. A combination of the lead direct action being done by the French, with us in support, training, advising, assisting partner nations so that they can take action, and, thirdly, working with the United Nations so that they can move in behind the French, occupy key towns, and deny the space to Al Qaeda. If we can pull all three aspects of this strategy together, our own support for the French with direct action, supporting with 1208 and other programs the capacity of our partners, and finally bringing in—rather than us having to occupy space with U.S. conventional forces, using multilateral forces like the U.N. and other nations, and building their capacity enables them to deny space to Al Qaeda and allows us to do the higher end action to go after HQ nodes and high-value targets. That is how I look at the construct of the strategy.

In terms of executing that strategy, I would like to conclude by saying, Mr. Chairman, that we could not execute this strategy effectively without the authorities that have been provided to the Department of Defense since 9/11, in my view, because I have experience in dealing with the pre-9/11 authorities for DOD [Department of Defense] which were scarce; post-9/11, the 1206, 1207 N, GSCF [Global Security Contingency Fund], which is still evolving but showing some promise, 1208 and other authorities that are provided the Department of Defense enable us to build the capacity of our partners so that we can execute the strategies, coupled with our ability to support U.N. and other nation-states provide security, we have the piece of the strategy. It is not perfect, and I would like—I hope that we can consider, the executive branch and the Congress working together, as we have over the last 10 years, can continue to improve those authorities, hopefully make them permanent, hopefully have a steady stream of funding, and also we have some proposals to fix a few of the gaps that still exist in those authorities, particularly regarding providing support to MOI [Maintenance Operating Instruction], to provide minor MILCON [Military Construction], to provide multiyear funding, and a little bit more flexibility in order to have the types of relationships that Admiral McRaven has articulated so well, the SOF [Special Operations Forces] partnerships and the partnerships with the countries around the world that enable us to execute this counterterrorism strategy consistent with the new defense strategy of the low footprint coalition approach, and we really believe that if we can get these authorities right and continue to modify them and fine-tune them it will enable us to be even more effective in the years ahead and continuing to crush Al Qaeda capability around the world like we have been successfully done for the last 11 years, hopefully we will be able to do it for the next 11 years because I think we are going to be at it for a while.

Mr. Chairman, I will conclude right now, as I know we are short on time. I will turn it over to Admiral McRaven with your permission and look forward to your questions. Thank you, sir.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Sheehan can be found in the Appendix on page 26.]

Mr. THORNBERRY. Admiral.

STATEMENT OF ADM WILLIAM H. MCRAVEN, USN, COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Admiral MCRAVEN. Thank you. Chairman Thornberry, distinguished members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to come here today and speak about the magnificent work being done by the men and women of the U.S. Special Operations Command, and I am pleased to be joined by my colleague ASD [Assistant Secretary of Defense] Mike Sheehan. Mike has been an absolutely fabulous partner as we have kind of gone through this experience together over the last year, 18 months, and he has just provided me invaluable support to the SOF enterprise. Mike, thanks very much.

Sir, since taking command I am proud to say that we have continued the great work that was initiated by Admiral Eric Olson, but at the same time we have adapted to the changing strategic and fiscal environment to keep SOF relevant now and in the future. In Afghanistan we established a new Special Operations Forces command structure which brought the various NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] and U.S. SOF elements into alignment under two star headquarters. This has allowed us to kind of have a common view of the enemy and synchronize our SOF to achieve a common end state. This change has made SOF even more effective than ever before. Partnered with our Afghan SOF, we have continued to attrite the enemy leadership while at the same time building and training Afghan security forces so they can stand on their own against this very determined threat.

Globally SOF is in approximately 78 countries around the world, helping to build partner capacity so that the host nation can deal with their own security problems. I recently returned from Colombia and the Philippines, where our long-term investment with their SOF has helped dramatically change the security situation in those countries. I believe that these efforts; that is, building allied SOF capacity and capability, represent the best approach to dealing with some of the world's more complex security problems.

In support of the Secretary's Defense Strategic Guidance, SOCOM [Special Operations Command] is working to strengthen these international partnerships and to build lasting networks, both formally and informally, so that we or our allies can create a secure environment in unstable areas and, if necessary, react to emerging crises rapidly and effectively. In all cases, those Special Operations Forces deployed to foreign lands are working for the geographic combatant commander with the approval of the chief of mission and always in support of U.S. policy goals.

Finally, I have made caring for our force and their families my top priority. In the past year my command sergeant major and I have met with soldiers and their families from around the SOCOM enterprise. We have listened to their concerns, and with the sup-

port of the services, we are aggressively implementing programs and plans to help with the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of the force. We have a professional and moral obligation to take care of our warriors and their families, and we greatly appreciate the support of your committee and other members on the Hill in our efforts to take care of these men and women.

Thank you again for your commitment to the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, and the civilians of the Department of Defense, and specifically to those great warriors who make up the U.S. Special Operations Command, and sir, I look forward to taking your questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral McRaven can be found in the Appendix on page 38.]

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you, and thank you both, and certainly one of the issues I am primarily interested in is the authorities issues that Mr. Sheehan raised, and we want to pursue that with you. But let me turn the first 5 minutes over to Chairman Kline for any questions he would like.

Mr. KLINE. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you gentlemen for being here, your testimony, your service, outstanding successes that the Special Operations Forces have had around the world.

I want to talk about authorities as well, but in a little different context. I think it has always been a little bit confusing—and I know you can reassure me, but I guess I am looking for that reassurance—in how relationships work, and let's use an example because we talked about Mali and the threat of AQIM, and that is a much larger area than Mali, and we have an AFRICOM [Africa Command], and we have Special Operations Command, and we have various chiefs of mission, ambassadors around. In Mali particularly we have an interesting situation of the French. Who is reporting to whom and how and why? How is that working with your command and these other entities? Let's just use that Mali as an example so I can get the players in place in my head.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Sir, I will take it from the military kind of chain of command, and then I will ask Secretary Sheehan to address maybe the broader context. Sir, as the U.S. Special Operations Command, we are really a supporting commander to the geographic combatant commander, whoever that happens to be. In the case of your analogy, U.S. Africa Command, currently General Dave Rodriguez. So my job is to provide him forces to carry out the missions that Africa Command gets assigned. At the end of the day the chief of mission is the President's representative, U.S. representative to that country. So as I mentioned in my opening comments, nothing that I do in support of AFRICOM or that AFRICOM does in support of whatever the chief of mission decides in Mali, it is all done through the chief of mission and with the chief of mission's approval. So the chain of command actually from our standpoint is pretty elegant. So my role is easy. I am a supporting commander. AFRICOM and the chief of missions of all the various nations in Africa, they work together very, very closely, and so while from the outside it may appear to be a little convoluted, I think those of us that work in it day in and day out realize, frankly, it is pretty elegant and pretty effective.

Mr. KLINE. Who is responsible for the coordination with the French?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Sir, I think on the military front again—yes, sir, on the military front, so AFRICOM would be in charge of coordinating with the French within that region. Again, on the policy side, the chief of mission would work with their French counterparts to work the policy piece there. So before a U.S. entity could come into Mali, for example, we would have to have the U.S. chief of mission's approval to have country clearance to come in, and then once that is done then again the coordination with the chief of mission and their country team with the U.S. Africa Command, and then if Africa Command needs resources General Rodriguez—

Mr. KLINE. Which presumably they do since they don't have any.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, sir, that is correct.

Mr. KLINE. So you are the resources, your forces are there, and are you then constantly working back through somebody in Africa Command to work with the French or is there sort of direct communications, and how does that work?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, sir, so there is—I would say there is both formal and informal communications. So the formal communications—well, both formal and informal—come from Africa Command to their French counterparts. So I don't do anything that circumvents the U.S. Africa Command chain of command and their linkages with the French. What I do receive on an informal basis because we have great relationships with the French Special Operations Forces is we dialogue with them routinely, and they discuss, you know, where they are in the fight and how things are going, and then it gives us an opportunity to work with Africa Command as well and say, hey, here is what we are hearing from our French counterparts, but at the end of the day the decisions regarding military forces in Mali are all worked through the U.S. Africa Command.

Mr. KLINE. Okay. It seems to me that might be a little awkward when you have French special operating forces taking action and presumably some of your forces taking action.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Sure.

Mr. KLINE. And somebody in Europe is trying to sort this out. It just looks to me like there should be direct coordination, and I am—frankly I am assuming there has to be—

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes.

Mr. KLINE. There is. Otherwise you are going to be shooting each other.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, sir. There is very close coordination on the ground. So if I—maybe I didn't portray that correctly. Tactically, of course, the U.S. forces and the French forces and the African forces that are there in Mali on the ground, there are tactical communications going on day in and day out so that we deconflict any movement or—and, again, any operational—

Mr. KLINE. But you don't have the equivalent of a joint operations center to deconflict this, it is just talking to each other?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Well, sir, I would prefer to take that offline. Suffice it to say, our coordination is very good at all levels, tactical through strategic.

Mr. KLINE. Okay. Thank you.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Sure.

Mr. KLINE. I appreciate that, and I don't know maybe, I don't know if we are going to get to offline today or not, depending upon—yeah. But at some point I do want to have that discussion about how that actually works.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, sir.

Mr. KLINE. I yield back.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Sheehan, do you have anything you want to add on this topic while we are one it?

Secretary SHEEHAN. Yes, sir, I think on the interagency level, the planning is coordinated at the White House and the National Security Council staff, the NSS, the national security staff, where those policies are brought together and consensus is built, and then that policy is directed down to the ambassador as the head of mission, and that ambassador makes sure that all the key players, the defense players, the Intelligence Community, State work together in the same direction, and when there is conflicts, they will be resolved in the interagency process, and it works fairly well. But in each country it is a different construct.

In Somalia, for instance, there is a U.N. [United Nations] operation that we embed with that operation, and we provide, we can help support and facilitate that, we help the nation-states that are—we help train and equip them, and we assist the U.N. operation to function. That keeps it all closely wired.

In Yemen, another key theater, we work directly with the host country, and again the country team, the ambassador pulls together the different elements of the interagency, the intelligence, primarily intelligence, State, and defense, and makes sure they are all working together in a common objective. So in each country it is a little bit different depending on the actors involved and who is really the lead on the security front. In Yemen it is the host country, in Somalia it is the U.N., and in Mali right now it is the French, but they will try to transition over to the U.N., and ultimately everywhere you go you want to hand it back over to the host country but when they are able to do it.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Filling in for Mr. Langevin, and I appreciate it, the gentlelady from California, Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I have a statement here that I will just submit for the record. Thank you all so much for being here. Good to see you, Admiral, Mr. Sheehan.

In just thinking about the size of the Special Operations Forces, and the fact that it has pretty much doubled since 9/11, I also noticed that in terms of funding, the O&M [Operations and Maintenance] budgets have increased, but actually in terms of the RDT&E [Research, Development, Testing & Evaluation] request that that is \$29.3 million less than 2013. I know, you know, we are in—we are trying to be more efficient in terms of our budgets, but I am also wondering in terms of the doubling and then we are moving up certainly by 2015–17, how does that mesh? Are we, you know, really not thinking ahead as well as we should?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, ma'am, I would tell you I think it is a little out of balance, and this is something my staff and I talk

about quite often is how do we get the research and development funding line kind of in balance with our broader procurement line, and of course with our O&M, and candidly, you know, the last 12 years we have been so focused on readiness as a function of our combat force that our research into kind of future technology has waned a little bit, but I will tell you, we recognize that, and my staff and I have these conversations a lot. We are trying to figure out how to make that more in balance, and I think we are getting there, and as we move forward in the next couple of years hopefully we will bring that more into balance because it is about making sure that we have an advantage, if you will, a technological advantage over our, both our enemies, and frankly there is an expectation that our technology is above the conventional force, the general purpose force because they want special technology to be applied in special cases. So—

Mrs. DAVIS. Does DARPA [Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency] pick that up for you in this case?

Admiral MCRAVEN. I am sorry, ma'am?

Mrs. DAVIS. I mean, are you able to utilize through DARPA—

Admiral MCRAVEN. Oh, yes, ma'am.

Mrs. DAVIS. So that—

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, ma'am, absolutely.

Mrs. DAVIS [continuing]. Maybe it doesn't all have to come out of SOF's budget?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Well, absolutely. We are all about other people's money as my comptroller so oft is wanting to say, trying to figure out where there are other pots of money, and DARPA has been a great partner with us. But as you know, DARPA is kind of an early phase—

Mrs. DAVIS. Right.

Admiral MCRAVEN [continuing]. Kind of blue sky approach in terms of looking at the highest and the toughest problem sets. But we have some pretty tough problem sets, and they have been very supportive of them.

Mrs. DAVIS. I wanted to just commend you as well, I know that you are focused on families.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. DAVIS. And recognizing the unique lives that the men and women have.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. DAVIS. As you think forward for that, I know that you are feeling that the services offered by the Navy, Marines, that they are not quite adequate, and in what specific way do you feel that you need to enhance the services for the men, and for the families really?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, ma'am. Well, I am a product of my experience. I came in in 1977, and most of the SEALs [Sea, Air, Land] that raised me were Vietnam veterans, and candidly we didn't do as good a job by them and their families as I think we should have, and I am committed, and frankly I know the service chiefs are absolutely committed to taking care of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and the DOD civilians that have been supporting us. I think it is—I would characterize it a little differently. I will tell you, the services are doing a marvelous job, but it is a function of

scale. The scale of my population base is smaller, and therefore with a little bit of extra funding I can potentially help out the families and the service members a little bit more, but I rely very, very much on the service support, the Army Strong Bonds program, the Navy Safe Harbor program, the Marines Wounded Warriors program, all those sorts of things we tap into, and we are very much a part of, and the services have been very, very supportive. So we are just finding, though, that as our deployments continue into Afghanistan, and of course that really hasn't changed for us as the conventional forces draw down, and we assume of course we will draw down as well, but our percentage of the population base of our deployed forces is still fairly large over there, so—and, frankly, I expect that after Afghanistan we will still continue to be deployed at a very high rate, so I am looking to the future to make sure we are postured well to take care of those soldiers and their families.

Mrs. DAVIS. Can you comment very briefly on the role of women in joining your ranks?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, ma'am. Happy to do so. One, the first comment I will make is they are just right now performing magnificently across the board, and I don't think that comes—certainly it doesn't come as a surprise to you or anybody else. But in our case we are putting them in harm's way every single night. As you know, they are not assigned to our infantry units, but they are tasked to them, so particularly our cultural support teams where we have young ladies that will go with our Rangers and our SEALs out on a target so that they can talk to the women and the children, we just find that relationship is much stronger, much more important, but as we go forward, and I have been given the task, and I have to report back to the Secretary of Defense in May on my plan to be able to incorporate women, bring women into the historically male-only military operation specialties, so the Rangers, the SEALs, the Special Forces, those sorts of things. So I am building a plan to do that. We are going to go through the whole, you know, what we call the DOTMLPF [Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel and Facilities], the whole doctrine and the operations and the training and the deployment of the forces to take a look at can we, in fact, do that. We are going to have a plan, we are going to build a plan to do that, but then I have got to find out whether or not we can actually pull it off, but I am committed to doing that because I have seen the value of it.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Dr. Heck.

Dr. HECK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks to both of you for the incredible service that you have rendered to our Nation over the years. You know, I think it was back in the 2009 House version of the NDAA there was some discussion about whether or not the 12 statutory core activities of the SOF community should have been reevaluated to see whether or not they match with what the current missions were, whether or not they were outdated, and it was dropped, it didn't make it through all the way, but I am curious now going on 4 or 5 years later, are the 12 statutory SOF ac-

tivities representative of the missions that the SOF community is executing, and does that list of 12 in any way hamper your ability to do activities or missions that you think you should be doing but aren't covering?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Sir, I think not surprisingly the wisdom of the original 12 has kind of proved out. I don't see any need to change the 12 core missions. Now maybe—you know, maybe it is a self-fulfilling prophecy. We obviously, we do the civil affairs and we do the information operations and obviously the direct action and the strategic reconnaissance and all of those components of the 12 mission sets, we do them, and we do them exceedingly well, and I think it really does a nice job of framing today's requirements for Special Operations Forces. So when we talk about building partner capacity, and this is an area where we know that the Special Forces piece, the indirect approach is important, but you begin that by building partner capacity, and sometimes building that partner capacity requires putting civil affairs folks on the ground so that they can build the relationships, they can dig wells so that we can have fresh water so that, again, we begin to build the relationships, and from the relationships you begin to build the security, and then from the security you begin to expand that out, and before long you have brought down the extremism because you have created a good environment within whatever area you were operating in. So they are very mutually supportive between, again, the indirect approach and the civil affairs and the information operations, and then of course if you have to make that transition to going kinetic, then the direct action and the strategic reconnaissance and those sort of things make again for both a nice continuum, and I think they frame SOF very well.

Dr. HECK. Mr. Sheehan, anything to add?

Secretary SHEEHAN. Yes, sir, I agree with the Admiral that the 12 do stand the test of time. However, within that there is a never-ending evolution of thinking within the special operations community since its inception in the 1950s and the Army in the 1960s and the Navy and more recently with the Marine Corps as well. Always revising, rethinking the missions and the emphasis. The emphasis changes over time based on the mission set that is handed the force. So over the last 10 years focus on the activities in Iraq and Afghanistan, there was an emphasis on certain types of activities, and now as we shift to a different defense strategy and are being asked to do different things, there is always a relooking at those missions, and I know within the Special Forces community at Fort Bragg they are relooking the irregular warfare, the unconventional warfare aspects of it and how they retool to do that for a capacity that is global, and the SEALs and Air Force are looking at that as well.

So in the Special Operations community, what makes us special, I always like to think of it in two areas. One is a very high, intense ability to do military action and particularly in denied areas, whether that be over air or land or sea, you have the special capability. But the other part of it that Admiral McRaven alluded to is also the capability, the language and cultural capability to work with partners in order to execute that mission, and again that goes back to the original creation of U.S. Army Special Forces, their

ability to jump behind Soviet lines to organize resistance. So I think there is always this evolution within those major constructs, and it is healthy, and we are always trying to adjust to stay ahead of the curve, and right now there is a renewed focus on the unconventional warfare aspects of it, getting back to those fundamentals, and regionally realigning ourselves as we shift away from the enormous demands put on the force for the two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Dr. HECK. And then just quickly my last few remaining seconds, Admiral, do you know, is SOCOM still on track to issue its contract selection for the ground mobility vehicle in May?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, sir, we are.

Dr. HECK. Thank you. Thank you both. Yield back, Mr. Chair.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Getting back, you all kind of talked around it a little bit. I noticed there has been some press stories, defense budget going down, withdrawing from Afghanistan, yet funding for special operations is going up. Can you explain to, you know, kind of on a high level why funding for special operations needs to go up when these other things are happening? And is the—I think this kind of gets to what you were talking about, Mr. Sheehan, is the composition of special operations funding shifting from more emphasis in one area to less emphasis in another?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Sir, on the funding side, obviously we will participate in the budget drills as the Services do. So while right now with the current President's budget we are very well taken care of, and obviously we strongly support the current President's budget, but it remains to be seen whether or not as we go through the next several years and how sequestration will affect us, whether or not we will take some cuts. My expectation is we will take some cuts. Again that remains to be seen what that will look like right now.

Having said that, I think we make a pretty good argument for the value of Special Operations Forces, and I go back to the Defense Strategic Guidance that was issued under Secretary Panetta and that we are now relooking under Secretary Hagel, but in either case I think the value of a, you know, small force with a light footprint that is culturally attuned, that is partnered, that has a great network is going to meet a lot of the challenges out there for the Nation, and therefore your investment and your return on that investment is pretty good.

If you look at the Department of Defense budget now, special operations is about 1.7 percent of the Department of Defense budget, so when I have an opportunity to make my case to the Chairman and to the Secretary about the return on that 1.7 percent being in 78 countries around the world, building partner capacity where we can allow other nations to take care of their problems so that then we don't have to expend more U.S. dollars going in to solve those problems, then that makes for, again, a pretty powerful argument, and therefore I think there is a willingness to invest in SOF as we look forward to the challenges of the future.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Admiral, when you were here before the full committee on March 6th, you mentioned some problems with the Leahy human rights amendment, and I was wondering if you could just elaborate on some of the challenges that that has presented to

you and your folks as you try to do these things in various parts of the world.

Admiral M CRAVEN. Well, sir, first, thanks for raising that issue on March 6th because it has created some momentum and some positive momentum forward. The Office of the Secretary of Defense is working closely with State Department to figure out how we can improve the process, and a lot of these, as I said on March 6th, we are very supportive of the tenets of the Leahy amendment. We understand, we don't want to be working with units that have committed gross violations, which is the language in the Leahy amendment.

Our concerns about the language and the spirit of the Leahy amendment and the process has to do with a couple things. First, the amendment itself has kind of the, kind of poison person/poison unit problem, so one, if an allegation, and it is an allegation, it is not a finding of wrong, and it is not a standard that would hold up in a court of law, but it is an allegation against an individual, then you have to vet that individual, but then you are also required to vet the unit. So if there is an allegation against one individual in the unit, then basically you kind of have to stand down that unit for a while as you are trying to find out whether or not you can conduct training with that unit. So that becomes one of the problems.

There is also not a sunset clause, if you will. So once a unit is determined several years ago to have been, to have had gross violation of human rights, how long before now they are clean and you can begin to stand them up again, so this is—or begin to work with them again. We are working through all of those issues, and again I am confident right now based on, again, some of the discussions that that generated on March 6th that we have a process for moving forward with that, and so we appreciate this committee and the full committee's interest in moving the Leahy amendment to an area where it will be representative of the basic tenets of the Leahy amendment but also give us the ability to move quickly to train our counterparts.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Sheehan, expanding out from that just a little bit, I am kind of reminded of the debates we had in the 1980s about dealing with authoritative governments against the Soviets. If we are thinking about your strategy, building partnership capacity, some of the people we want to build partnership capacity on may not, you know, be our ideal sort of folks. And so as you are weighing that, how does that work, going ahead?

Secretary SHEEHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We by definition in the special operations world are almost exclusively going into areas that are torn by wars, internal conflicts, breakdowns of society, and those types of tensions that we enter into almost always affect the security and political institutions of the countries we are working with. So you are exactly right, we deal, we are dealing with broken institutions most of the time, and they don't have great records.

My experience, my personal experience in the 1980s with some of these forces as a young Special Forces officer was that our relationship with them dramatically and steadily always moved in the direction of improving their respect for human rights and respect

for rule of law and the democratic institutions which are political, the framework of our strategy was always a part of. So as Admiral McRaven said, it is always in our interest to, when we work with partners, we want those people to share the same values that we have.

Having said that, we need to have flexibility, we need to have speed of action so that we can continue to advance the U.S. defense interests while we move forward in countries that are broken, and have the confidence in the operators we have on the ground that we are going to ensure that we are working with the best possible partners we have because in the long term it is those units and forces that respect the rule of law and human rights are going to be ultimately more successful, but we do need to make sure that we understand the realities we are working in, and some of the countries where we have some very, very important national security interests evolving right now have some of the worst records, and I will mention one right now to bring focus to it, and that is Nigeria. Nigeria has a very checkered—that is a generous term—record in this regard. However, we have some very important interests in Nigeria, not only oil, but as one of the most important countries on the continent, we have got to find a way to work with the Nigerians and move them forward in a proper way to address those interests, strategic interests that we share.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Well, I think so, and/or back to Chairman Kline's point, Mali is a messy situation, you know. It is a little hard to figure out who to build partnership capacity with, but we are not going to make things better by standing off and doing nothing until they get their act together, if you will.

Mrs. Davis, do you have other questions?

Mrs. DAVIS. Just to follow up briefly because I think in talking about the capacity building and I know that there is, you are requesting more dollars in terms of the joint combined training, I know how immensely proud you are of the men and women who are part of special operations and the tremendous skill sets that they have, but I wonder if you think out a few years with the importance of language skills and the diplomatic skills, all that is combined with that, are we putting enough emphasis on that as people move into that ability set because I think that you might find people who have the great physical skills but perhaps have not had the opportunity, especially with the tempo that we have been dealing with, to go to language school and to be able to develop so that their language skills are not just that they can read or speak, you know, in a limited way, but they actually get the nuance, and how are we doing that? Where are we in that effort, and think ahead 5 years, are we going to have a lot of people ready to do that?

Admiral McRAVEN. Well, I will take the first shot at that, ma'am. First, we are putting a tremendous amount of emphasis on our language skills. The Army Green Berets, of course, have always had that as one of their core competencies, but as we look forward across the special operations community, we find that Navy SEALs need that if they are working in the Pacific area or down in AFRICOM as well, the Air Force 6th Special Operations Squadron who goes down to train other air forces need to have those skills.

So, frankly, across the community if we are going to be that small, light, agile force that is networked that has both the language skills and the cultural skills, and this is a big part of it as well, so we are teaching, particularly in our JFK school but also in some of our schools, our Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force schools, we are teaching broad cultural language skill sets that allow all of our SOF operators to go down range and do this. So I do think we are putting a—well, I know we are putting a large emphasis on this, and part of this gets back, as Secretary Sheehan said at the beginning, we are really trying to change a little bit of the narrative about who Special Operations Forces are. I would tell you today, and really for the last, you know, 12 years in this fight, you have almost said SOF equals CT [Counterterrorism], counterterrorism, and frankly SOF has a much, much broader portfolio and mandate than counterterrorism. We are very proud of our counterterrorism skills. We think we are the best in the world, and we will continue to be the best in the world, and I am committed to that, but at the end of the day, we want to get to the point where we are not having to go out and capture and kill a high-value target because we have put the nation where the extremism was rising, we have put them in a position where they can deal with their own problems, and that really is about building that partner capacity, but before you can do that you have to speak the language, you have to understand their cultural values, you have to be aware of that, and it is not only that, you talked about the diplomatic aspect of this. We do find that, you know, there are the strategic corporals, if you will, down range, and so part of what we teach our young soldiers is you need to understand how to work with the U.S. country team, you need to understand that as an E5 or an E7 or an O3, a young captain or Navy lieutenant, you will be called up to the chief of mission, she is going to want to know or he is going to want to know what is going on in the country, and you have got to be able to answer that in a very professional manner. So the SOF operators of the future—in other words, I would say the SOF operators now, but the ones we are building for the future, they have got to be able to talk to the flag and general officers and the heads of state, and at the same time be down talking to the young NCOs [Non-Commissioned Officer] of whatever country they are working with, and that ought to be an expectation of your special operations force, and we are working hard to make that a reality.

Mrs. DAVIS. Mr. Sheehan, did you want to—

Secretary SHEEHAN. Congresswoman Davis, yes, I would like to add that, you know, when I joined the Special Forces in 1979, there was a lot of lip service to languages that, quite frankly, was weaker than it should have been, and quite frankly in the early days of Special Forces, they relied on second or native speakers to provide the language skills for the community, and as I said, there was a lot of lip service to it. Over the last 10 years, and sitting behind me my military assistant in my current job is former commander of 5th Special Forces Group. He made an enormous personal commitment and supported by the Special Forces community to train people in his case in Arabic and other languages, and of course as 5th Special Forces Groups understand is they were the ones who went into Afghanistan right after 9/11 and had to link up on horse-

back often with indigenous forces, and the ability to speak the language is absolutely fundamental to establishing the relationship that then enables the special operator to conduct the type of missions that we need executed in our national defense. So I consider the language training to be as important as being able to shoot an M4 [carbine assault rifle] in a tight shot group, and I think the commitment by Admiral McRaven and his staff is extraordinarily real, which has not always been the case, quite frankly.

Mrs. DAVIS. Yeah, thank you. I appreciate that. I know that San Diego State University has had a program that I think has been well tested.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. DAVIS. The difficulty as we have with many other programs is we have got to fight every year for that, and I think that, you know, there is a point at which we need to say, hey, you know, we have already taken a look at this and we have got to put it in the budget, so—

Admiral MCRAVEN. Ma'am, you will appreciate this. I was at a get-together just the other day, and the father of a young SEAL who just graduated from BUDS [Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL] training was there telling me about his young son who is going to one of the West Coast SEAL teams, and I said, Well, let me give him a call, and of course nothing like getting a call from a four star admiral when you are, you know, a brand new SEAL on the teams, and as I called him, he was studying his Farsi because he is in Farsi language training, and he was a little surprised to get the call from me.

Mrs. DAVIS. I bet he was. Keep that up, sir.

Admiral MCRAVEN. I am sure you will appreciate that. I will leave his name out of this so it doesn't get in the record.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you.

Mr. THORBERRY. Mr. Kline, further questions?

Mr. KLINE. No.

Mr. THORBERRY. Dr. Heck.

Dr. HECK. Thanks, Mr. Chair, for the second round. Just one follow-up question to the question asked by my colleague from California, Mrs. Davis, regarding the integration of women into Special Operations. Admiral, it sounded like you said you were going to develop a plan to integrate them.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, sir.

Dr. HECK. And then determine whether or not you can do it. I am just curious about the cart and the horse there. Isn't, you know, the idea, can we integrate women, and then if we can, develop the plan to do it effectively?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, sir. And what I don't want to imply is that this is going to be easy. Part of it is, I need to have a plan that looks at the DOTMLPF of this, so the doctrine, the manning, the training, all of those sorts of things that can get us to implementation of women in those particular units. So I am going to build the plan, the framework of the plan, if you will, to okay now I have got to look at the doctrine, now I have got to look at the training, now I have got to look at kind of the business case, now I have got to look at the standards, and the biggest issue for me are the standards. I get asked frequently, well, can you have gen-

der neutral standards? And I said, Well, this is easy for me because I have never had other genders, there is only one standard. So we need to find out, are those the appropriate standards. Because we have built standards over the years, and now we have got to test the value of those standards. So my point is, I will provide the Secretary a plan for determining how we are going to get women into those MOSs [Military Occupational Specialty], but frankly then I have to test the hypothesis, if you will, by going through and seeing whether or not we can actually make that happen. And I will be perfectly honest, it is a little bit of a cart and horse at the same time because I just don't know yet until we start to really flesh this thing out in detail.

Dr. HECK. Great. Thank you for the clarification. Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yield back.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, sir.

Mr. THORBERRY. Mr. Hunter.

Mr. HUNTER. No.

Mr. THORBERRY. Mr. Gibson.

Mr. GIBSON. Thanks, Mr. Chairman, apologize for being late. I appreciate the panelists, their strong leadership, sacrifice for our country.

Admiral, about the organization, your vision for the organization, how that is coming along in relation to the language last year and also, you know, if there is anything else that you might need in terms of effectuating your vision, I would like to hear on that. Thank you.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Sir, thank you very much. I am very pleased that with the support of OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense] and with the Joint Staff we are moving the vision along quite well, and just to kind of frame this again, this is about building the or enhancing, I should say, the global SOF network. As I mentioned at the beginning, we have SOF forces in about—we say 78 countries. Actually as of I think today we are in about 92 countries around the world. Sometimes that is one person, sometimes that is thousands of people, as we have in Afghanistan, but what I found in my time as the Commander of the Joint Special Operations Command was really the power of the network, and the network is an understanding that the better you connect people together, the more powerful that network will be, and sometimes it defies, you know, science because there is a little bit of art to it, but if you start connecting people at embassies and you start connecting people on the ground and you start connecting people in Tampa and in Washington, D.C., and you allow those people to communicate, and you give them the tools to communicate, and you give them the power to make decisions within the scope of what they can make decisions in, it is amazing what happens, and I saw it firsthand in my 6 years in the Joint Special Operations Command, and it is very powerful. So as we begin to build out and enhance the global SOF network, what I am trying to do is use the Theater Special Operations Commands, and this was a key component of it, Congressman, I think you are referring to, was use the Theater Special Operations Command as our entry point. As I mentioned earlier on, we are a supporting command, so the first thing I want to do is make the Theater Special Operations Commands the gold stand-

ard, if you will, for Special Operations Force. They are under the operational control of the geographic combatant commander, they are now under my combatant command, but the operational day-to-day operation is with the geographic combatant commander, so I am going to beef up the Theater Special Operations Commands, and then you begin to see how they partner with their respective partners in the region. So I think a great case in point is the Special Operations Command Europe and again our NATO SOF headquarters. I tell the story about when we established the NATO SOF headquarters, there were about 18 folks in it, 17 Americans and one Norwegian. That force now has about 220 folks and a brand new building there at the SHAPE compound. We had 300 NATO SOF warriors down range in Afghanistan in 2007. We now have 2,200 NATO SOF operators down range doing arguably one of the most important jobs around, building the provincial response companies. That is a function of networking with our partners. So if you begin to take those partners and you link them with other partners around the world, and we look at the Colombians, for example, you know. We have had a long-standing relationship with the Colombians. Now the Colombians are interested in how do they export their security, and it really does get back to what former Secretary Clinton talked about in terms of smart power, I mean, how are we doing that? Well, the Special Operations community through our Theater Special Operations Commands, through some of the regional, the SOF coordination centers that we are helping to establish out there, through that network of partners and allies, it becomes very, very powerful, and then we have a command and control, the C4I [Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence] network that kind of links them together both on the unclass and the secure side, and so that is the vision and, sir, I have had great support from the geographic combatant commanders, great support from the Joint Staff, great support from OSD, and I am pleased to say we are moving in the right direction.

Mr. GIBSON. And just to follow up—thank you, that was very clear. With regard to the institution itself, SOCOM, there was talk at one point possibly an academy or some kind of within SOCOM. Is that still thinking or would there be any more ideas and changes in that regard?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Sir, we do have a Joint Special Operations University. That university does smaller duration courses, but some of the courses—in fact, Congresswoman Davis' point about the cultural awareness, we do a lot of that at the Joint Special Operations University. We are trying to get JSOU [Joint Special Operations University] accredited so that actually we can make it a degree-providing institution, and that is going to require a little additional support and help, but the Joint Special Operations University teaches our enlisted academy, which is just a fabulous curriculum for our E8s and E9s trying to become sergeant majors and command master chiefs and a whole host of other curriculum.

Mr. GIBSON. Thank you very much. I yield back.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Admiral, do you have the authorities to establish these regional SOF coordination centers in other parts of the world? I mean, I have been to the NATO one several times. That is under the NATO alliance.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Yes, sir.

Mr. THORNBERRY. But what about in these other parts of the world?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Sir, it is—I would tell you, I am not sure it requires, and I may be going out on a limb here in terms of an authority. For example, we have, without opening this too much in a public forum because the host nation I think wants to unveil it, but we have one Latin American country that has become very, very interested in this. They want to host it as a kind of an academic forum, with one of their war colleges, so the point of these regional SOF coordination centers is really just to have any forum, any forum that happens to bring other SOF operators together. So I have deferred to the geographic combatant commanders and the host nations that are willing to support it. So the NATO was clearly an unusual one because there was a NATO charter and those NATO folks are deploying downrange. The other two institutions that we are looking at really are kind of a loosely formed alliance of the willing that want to come, that want to have, again, academic forums, but by bringing SOF operators in they will start to talk, they will build those relationships, and of course as you know, they will start off as young lieutenants or captains and then 10 years, 20 years from now they are generals and they are chairmen of their Joint Chiefs, and that relationship I think is incredibly important to continuing to enhance our network.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Absolutely. And State Department is okay with pursuing these things, I mean, has that been—the inter-agency, I should say, has that been a challenge?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Sir, we have had discussions with State obviously as we move forward with this, the Latin American country, I was down talking to the U.S. ambassador, they are very excited about it because their country is supporting this, very aggressively supporting this, but, again, sir, we don't do anything that doesn't have the support and approval of the State Department obviously.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Okay. Mr. Sheehan, let me find my turned down page, your predecessor, Mr. Vickers, testified that he spent about 95 percent of his time on operations issues and the rest of his time on programmatic policy and budget oversight roles. Would you say this is true for you, too? I was surprised by that, so I have got to ask.

Secretary SHEEHAN. Mr. Chairman, I don't think it is 95 percent. I remember that issue came up during my confirmation, and I committed to not doing that. I have been less than successful. The term they use in the Pentagon, a demand signal, which basically what you are being asked to do, I understand why Mr. Vickers was being asked by his boss, the Secretary of Defense, to do policy and operations. It is a day-to-day grind of policy deliberation within the interagency that really sucks up the tremendous energy of our office.

Now, I was around as a young captain when this office was created, and part of its original intent from Goldwater-Nichols and Nunn-Cohen was to have this oversight responsibility with SOCOM and, quite frankly, not only oversight of SOCOM but to make sure that special operations community was protected within the inter-agency process. So that role of SOLIC [Special Operations & Low

Intensity Conflict] I have tried to put more emphasis on and have, so I would not say 95 percent, it is much less, but still I would say that my ability to do that part of my job has been less than I hoped to 18 months ago. Part of it is also a function of the staff shift within my office that the staffing function for the oversight part of our office is very diminished from what it was even 10 years ago, and that, we are very small. The SOCOM staff has increased almost logarithmically since 9/11, whereas SOLIC is the same size it was on 9/11, about 140 people. SOCOM staff grows by more than that every year, so there is a little ability of my office to do all those functions because I only have a handful of people doing it, but what we do try to do is have a close relationship with the SOCOM staff so we can provide a value add to that function, but, quite frankly, the initial vision of SOLIC having a service Secretary-like function, we are just simply not resourced to do it, and with the demand signal as a part of the OSD policy formula, the demand signal to do policy dominates my day.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Well, part of the reason you made me think of it is your discussion about CT strategy. It is one of my biases that we don't do strategy very well in the United States Government. Have you—this is a really unfair question, but I will ask it anyway. Have you had the chance to read Max Boot's book about Invisible Armies: A History of Guerrilla Warfare [*Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present*]?

Secretary SHEEHAN. I am very familiar with it. I think I read both reviews in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, and it is on one of my piles in my office at home. I haven't got to it yet.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Well, it strikes me that your strategy is very consistent with the lessons he draws from, you know, hundreds of years of guerrilla warfare and what it takes to be successful against them, so it sounded familiar to me.

Anybody else have questions? Speakers? Thank you all very much for being here. We are going to have votes in 5 minutes, and that works out well. Appreciate it. The hearing is adjourned.

Admiral MCRAVEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Whereupon, at 4:27 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

APRIL 17, 2013

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 17, 2013

Statement of Hon. James R. Langevin
Ranking Member, House Subcommittee on Intelligence,
Emerging Threats and Capabilities
Hearing on
Fiscal Year 2014 National Defense Authorization
Budget Request for U.S. Special Operations Command
and U.S. Special Operations Forces
April 17, 2013

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to our witnesses for appearing before us today. Our Special Operations Forces are some of the most capable personnel in our military, and they are in high demand across the globe. In the last few years, we have seen a remarkable growth in the size and scope of those forces. In large part, that's a reflection of the strenuous demands two wars have put on them, but it is also an acknowledgement of how their highly specialized capabilities are so important today and into the future.

I believe it is reasonable to assume that our requirement for highly trained and superbly equipped Special Operations Forces is not going to decrease any time soon, even as we're faced with declining defense budgets. While the high-profile, direct-action missions SOF undertakes are well known, we must make sure that they are equally ready to address their broader set of missions, ranging from unconventional warfare and foreign internal defense to civil affairs, information operations, and counterproliferation, among others. Given the increasingly complex and interconnected world we live and operate in, I believe the need for such capable forces across the full spectrum of operations will only increase in the days ahead. Today, I look forward to exploring both how we're going to meet the challenge of providing our commanders with the SOF resources they need to provide for our national security, as well as the hard choices we will need to make to get there.

Most importantly, we need to take care of these extraordinary men and women—and their families. They have given everything we have asked of them for more than a decade of war, and they have paid an enormous cost. I understand that Special Operations Command has some specific proposals on how to help ease their burden, and I look forward to hearing about them today.

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

BY

THE HONORABLE MICHAEL A. SHEEHAN
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS/LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

ON

FISCAL YEAR 2014 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BUDGET REQUEST FOR
U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND AND U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

INTELLIGENCE, EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

APRIL 17, 2013

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Langevin, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee: thank you for the opportunity to speak about how we, at the Department of Defense, are addressing today's emerging counterterrorism threats.

While the past decade has been marked by two major wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have not lost sight of the more pervasive and immediate threat of terrorism, especially from al-Qa'ida and its affiliate networks. To combat this widespread and evolving threat, we have engaged with willing nations around the world, building their capabilities and strengthening our partnerships with them. We have also leveraged a whole-of-government approach, characterized by diplomatic, economic, intelligence, law enforcement, informational, financial, and military instruments. In doing so, and with support from many of you in this room today, we have protected the American people.

In January 2012, the President and the Secretary of Defense released new defense strategic guidance, which emphasized the need to rebalance towards Asia/Pacific, while retaining our focus on counterterrorism and irregular warfare capabilities. Specifically, it stated that "our [CT] efforts will become more widely distributed and will be characterized by a mix of direct action and security force assistance," and that we will "continue to build and sustain tailored capabilities appropriate for [CT] and irregular warfare."

Today I wish to expand upon our defense strategy and discuss how—in the context of the dynamic threat posed by al-Qa'ida and other terrorist groups—our CT efforts are progressing. I will also speak to the role of U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) in the context of this new defense strategy.

Only one year into the strategy, we are already witnessing its impact, particularly in Somalia and Yemen. For example, in Yemen we've taken key leaders off the battlefield and Yemeni security forces have pushed them out of safe havens in the South. We are not about to claim victory; however, we have made significant progress in achieving our objectives and greatly diminishing the al-Qaida network's ability to recruit, train and launch effective attacks in the twelve years since 9/11.

I'd like to talk first about the persistent and evolving threat from al-Qa'ida and its affiliates.

The Threat

Al-Qa'ida is significantly diminished in some theaters but still a persistent threat. Core al-Qa'ida's leaders are still based in the mountainous region between Afghanistan and Pakistan. As we wind down U.S. combat operations in Afghanistan, we cannot lose focus on this area. But al-

Qai'da and its affiliates are also evolving to exploit opportunities and fragile environments in Africa and the Middle East brought on by the unrest there over the last several years.

Outside the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, Yemen has been a safe haven for al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Yemen remains a place where terrorists aspire to attack the United States and our allies, and AQAP is bent on using violence to disrupt the ongoing political transition there.

In the Horn of Africa, al-Qa'ida commenced its global terrorist campaigns with attacks against U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998. Today East Africa-based al-Qa'ida associates are closely intertwined with al-Shabaab, which itself aspires to establish a Taliban-like Islamic State and launch regional and transnational terrorist attacks. Most of the key East Africa-based al-Qa'ida and al-Shabaab leaders have been removed from the battlefield. Despite the incredible progress in Somalia over the past few years, including the establishment of the first elected government in decades, some remnants of al-Qa'ida remain and are seeking to regroup.

Meanwhile, outside of their traditional strongholds, al-Qa'ida and other extremist organizations are adapting and regenerating in ungoverned or poorly governed spaces, carving out new sanctuaries, and threatening our overseas interests and those of our regional partners. In particular, they are taking advantage of the instability and turmoil resulting from the Arab Awakening, in places like Syria and Libya. We saw the dangers manifest through this combination of extremism and weak governance at our diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, where we lost an Ambassador and three other Americans; in Algeria, during the attack by a Mali-based terrorist group on the British Petroleum facility at In Amenas; in Nigeria, where al-Qa'ida affiliates have kidnapped and executed western hostages and bombed the UN Headquarters in Abuja; and in northern Mali, where al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and its allies were expanding their control over some population centers until the French and regional partner forces – many of them trained and supported by the United States – intervened to counter the terrorists and reverse their momentum.

In North and West Africa, AQIM is exploiting volatility in the region and a lack of state control over significant swaths of territory to establish new operating environments. Weapons from Libya and money from kidnappings and illicit trafficking are enabling al-Qa'ida activity that stretches from the Mediterranean to Mali and down to Nigeria. We rely on an indirect approach in the region, building the capacity of partner states to counter shared threats. Limited government capacity and frequent political instability – such as coups d'états – pose challenges to our efforts. But such challenges make a regional approach even more critical and are why we are working with a wide range of partners, including the United Nations and regional security organizations, to counter these threats.

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

In Syria, during an almost two year-long violent uprising to depose President Assad, al-Qa'ida in Iraq's (AQI) network in Syria—operating under the moniker al-Nusra Front—has sought to portray itself as part of the legitimate Syrian opposition. Al-Nusra Front is, in fact, an attempt by AQI to hijack the struggles of the Syrian people for its own malign purposes—attempting to establish an al-Qa'ida-governed state in the region.

The threat is also metastasizing. New groups, many with links to al-Qa'ida, are beginning to develop, such as Ahrar al Sham in Syria, Muhammad Jamal Group in Egypt, Ansar al Sharia in Libya and Tunisia, Tawhid Wal Jihad in West Africa in Mali, as well as Boko Haram in Nigeria. Although many of their operatives are focused on local targets and goals, many of these organizations have external operations agendas and can be expected to turn to international targeting if left unopposed. In some cases, as groups become entrenched, they begin to establish more sophisticated training camps. Although these camps do not match the scale witnessed in pre-9/11 Afghanistan, they are specialized, mobile, and attractive to new recruits. Some of these camps provide advanced explosive training and tradecraft, radicalize personnel, and are a means to provide funding and weapons, which when combined, enables them to become a strategic threat. It is also critical to enable effective local capacity before the threats grow too large for local security forces to manage.

We have learned from experiences in Libya and Algeria that these groups will take advantage of U.S. engagement and interests in fragile and conflict-affected areas to target our citizens. These opportunistic attacks can be challenging to predict and costly when executed. As we saw in the case of Algeria, these groups could target industrial or humanitarian compounds and threaten U.S. personnel and interests. This has reinforced our need to strengthen our relationships with regional partners to advance our common security objectives.

Development of persistent relationships with capable units in host nations is critical so that we can ensure agile and capable responses to a range of contingencies. SOF and other forces focused on security force assistance are skilled at taking country-specific approaches and seeking opportunities to establish critical operational and intelligence relationships needed to (1) maintain constant pressure on al-Qa'ida-affiliated groups and (2) ultimately defeat them. As we examine indicators and trends shaping our future security environment, regional specialization and the ability to operate independently in austere and denied areas will enable enhanced security for U.S. overseas personnel, facilities, and interests.

Elements of a Counterterrorism Strategy

We cannot allow al-Qa'ida to benefit from sanctuary with impunity, as they did in Afghanistan during the 1990s. To attack al-Qa'ida and diminish its influence, we must continue to employ a unique range of tools and activities. Along those lines and as mentioned earlier, the New

Defense Strategy describes the requirement for a mix of direct action and security force assistance.

Direct Action

The high-profile success stories of the last decade have often resulted from direct action precision strikes and raids, which have disrupted some attack plans and degraded elements of al-Qa'ida. But we cannot rely solely on precision strikes to defeat enemy networks and foster stability – these operations buy us time but do not provide a lasting solution. Ultimately, the decisive battle to defeat these groups must be fought—and won—“by, with and through” host nation efforts.

We must now transition to a period with partners in the lead but we will always reserve the right to defend ourselves. For this reason, we must retain high end capabilities to deploy and strike swiftly and precisely anywhere in the world.

Security Force Assistance

The effort to build the capabilities of partner nations' special operations forces can serve two purposes: (1) to deny space and sanctuary and (2) to develop partner capability to conduct specialized missions, including direct action against key terrorist group leaders but also elite capabilities to respond to a range of contingencies and threats as they emerge.

Helping our foreign partners to provide for their own security and contribute to regional stability is an investment that pays immediate and long-term dividends by reducing the need for costlier U.S. interventions in response to turmoil in regions critical to U.S. interests. These activities are a cost-effective way to strengthen our national security posture by building lasting relationships and alliances with partner nations. Efforts to build partners' capacity to conduct their own operations against terrorist threats are a fundamental aspect of our strategy. Capable partners mitigate the burden on U.S. forces and serve as the basis for future cooperation, improved U.S. access, and combined operations.

Security Force Assistance is often conducted by our special operations forces, whose history and proficiency at working “by, with, and through” partner forces makes them our provider of choice for this mission. SOF operate through persistent engagement in key countries, which generates “operational context.” Operational context is the thorough understanding and, in fact, expertise that is uniquely gained through multiple visits to the same areas. This includes understanding local culture, society, language, economy, history and politics. In short, SOF operators have valuable insights on the physical and human terrain of their areas, which allow them to be more precise and therefore successful in their enabling activities.

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

Beyond Afghanistan, SOF have been deployed to dozens of countries across the globe, conducting low-visibility, highly-sensitive missions that are putting pressure on and constraining the ability of the al-Qaida network to plan, train, and prepare for terrorist attacks.

There is nothing new about this mission, for the United States or for our SOF. Prior to 9/11, U.S. SOF were working around the world to train, equip, advise, and assist host nation forces to combat threats to security and U.S. interests.

For example, in Colombia, U.S. Army Special Forces trained and assisted host-nation forces to combat the drug smuggling and violence instigated by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC). The successful rescue of three U.S. hostages in 2009 marked the culmination of two decades of persistent SOF efforts to build Colombian SOF capabilities. Now, we are encouraged to see that Colombia is in turn providing justice sector and security force assistance of their own to other U.S. partner nations across the Americas and in Africa.

More recently, SOF have played a key role in places like the Philippines, where their decade-long engagement has yielded more capable partner forces that have made significant progress countering terrorism. The ongoing relationship between SOF and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) strengthened when SOF deployed in 2002 to act in a non-combat role to advise and assist the AFP in operations against the Abu Sayyaf Group, a terrorist entity taking advantage of safe havens in the southern Philippines. The units first engaged with local residents to learn their basic needs. This allowed U.S. SOF to then work with the AFP to address grievances in the community, severing their ties with the terrorist groups. As SOF trained and advised the AFP personnel, they helped coordinate security efforts and interagency---sometimes international---programs to address key issues such as water, medical care, transportation, and education.

Currently, our CT cooperation with the Yemenis has placed unprecedented pressure on AQAP, and we continue to support the development of Yemeni capacity to conduct intelligence-driven CT operations in a manner that respects human rights and makes every effort to avoid civilian casualties.

In North and West Africa, we are providing support to the French in their efforts to degrade the capacity of AQIM. We have moved assets and provided intelligence to enable the French to effectively prevent AQIM, its off-shoots, and allied insurgents from advancing farther south into Mali. These efforts illustrate that partners in the lead can include key allies, like France, as well as host nations such as Niger and Chad.

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

In Somalia, the U.S. works through the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). We have provided advising and assistance to AMISOM which has reduced al Shabaab's freedom of movement in south and central Somalia

In order to conduct these security force assistance activities, SOF must leverage a wide variety of authorities available to the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs). While many of these authorities contain valuable elements that enable our SOF to build capacities in key areas, we still face a pervasive management challenge matching various authorities and timelines in order to accomplish key missions can be burdensome even when individual programs are executed efficiently. Further, no authority exists that is specifically tailored to allow our SOF to rapidly engage where necessary in order to build critical SOF capabilities during windows of opportunity that might be fleeting.

Current Special Operations Efforts

Since 9/11, a key mission of SOF and U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) has focused on combating terrorism around the world, and that CT fight will not abate anytime soon. SOF will continue to work actively to deter, disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qa'ida and its associated forces and affiliates.

Section 1208, a valuable authority that allows us to enable and leverage willing partners to support USSOF operations to combat terrorism, has produced significant and tangible operational effects that greatly impact our efforts to defeat al-Qa'ida. In today's amorphous global threat environment, it is more important than ever that the GCCs have this critical tool to rely on the access and placement that our forces cannot attain unilaterally.

The need for persistent engagement around the globe and growth of mission requirements have resulted in an unprecedented growth in Special Operations Forces— in fact, the largest expansion of SOF personnel, force structure, budget and enablers since Vietnam.

This expansion will help support Admiral McRaven's vision of a global SOF network. This informal, global network of international Special Operations Forces will allow us to rapidly and persistently address regional contingencies and threats to our stability. This type of persistent engagement will develop trust, a common operating picture, and future cooperation operations against mutual threats. To develop this concept, we are excited to see the development and success of the supporting Theatre Special Operations Commands. These commands are present at each Geographic Combatant Command and help manage the SOF elements in that area of responsibility. As we expand these TSOCs, we hope to better integrate SOF efforts across the areas of responsibility to ensure plans and strategy development as well as their expertise are available to the Geographic Combatant Command

I'd like to emphasize that our successes have come at a cost. The continuous deployments over the past decade have placed extraordinary operational requirements on Special Operators. For example, 85% of the force has been engaged as front line warriors in Iraq and Afghanistan, and since 2001, we should not forget that more than 400 Special Operators have been killed and over 3,000 have been injured.

Future of Counterterrorism and SOF

Relative to the aforementioned, new defense strategy, the Department of Defense will take a strategic approach to security cooperation and ensure we have comprehensive and integrated capabilities in key regions in order to confront critical security challenges.

Over the past decade, much of the strategic emphasis in security cooperation has rightly focused on supporting current operations and helping states address internal instability. As we draw down from a decade of large-scale conflict, we will place additional strategic emphasis on preparing our network of allies and partners to confront the evolving threat of al-Qa'ida and its affiliates.

To do this, we require security cooperation tools that are calibrated to optimally prepare the United States optimally to exploit emerging opportunities and counter potential threats—this means lowering the barriers to defense cooperation and being prepared to leverage opportunities rapidly with like-minded partners. To better combat al-Qa'ida, Congress has granted temporary authorities to the Department of Defense. Tools such as the Section 1206 Global Train and Equip Program—an indispensable and proven authority; Section 1203 Support to Yemen and East Africa; Section 1208 Support of Military Operations by U.S. SOF to Combat Terrorism Program; and the Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program are indispensable to maintain constant pressure on al-Qa'ida and its affiliates worldwide. We will also continue to work closely with the State Department and other departments and agencies to ensure that the Department of Defense's efforts are agile in responding to partners' needs while being implemented with effective oversight in a manner that reinforces overarching U.S. foreign policy goals.

As we evolve to respond to the new set of demands, we cannot afford to lose sight of what makes our force truly great – the SOF Operator. Here we must stick to our principles – namely the first SOF truth -- that “Humans are more important than hardware.” There are two key attributes of the future SOF operator that will need to be sharpened: (1) regional specialization and (2) the ability to operate independently in austere environments. Our best hedge against an uncertain future is a well-educated and highly trained special operator.

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

SOF were designed to conduct operations in hostile, denied or politically sensitive areas to achieve national objectives by unconventional means. Executing the new strategy will demand the same level of regional acumen that SOF has always pursued. To meet Combatant Commander requirements for foreign internal defense, security sector assistance and unconventional warfare, SOF will need to continue sharpening their proficiency in language and regional expertise so they are conversant with the cultural and military history of regions where they will be deploying.

Probably the single greatest thing we could do to prepare our SOF for the expanded mission set of the future operating environment is to manage SOF talent properly and in a way that incentivizes the “indirect action” career path for the SOF operator. There is a range of ways through which to accomplish this goal. A critical component of our effort to implement the new strategy will be working with USSOCOM to develop appropriate Force Management practices to develop the SOF cadre needed in the future.

Equally important is our need to care for the SOF operator. This includes providing tailored services for post-deployment that consider the unique stresses a career in SOF places on one’s family. Admiral McRaven has taken strong steps towards these objectives, and I fully support his initiatives.

CONCLUSION

I am confident that SOF will provide our national policy leaders a steady and established option to engage – consistent with our national and defense strategies-- with a low footprint and a focus on enabling our partners.

Supporting and relying on these partner nation forces come with risk. I wish to close by discussing the difficult trade-offs that we, as policy makers, will face in the next decade.

The most evident risk is to the safety of our personnel. SOF are operating in dangerous locations against ruthless enemies where death or injury are real possibilities. We also risk being drawn into broader fights beyond our narrow CT objectives. I note: It is often difficult to draw the line between our CT objectives and regional, ethnic or sectarian fights wherein we have limited or no interest in becoming involved. And there is always the risk of the proverbial “slippery slope” –a gradual increasing of U.S. commitment that outpaces our national interest. There is no easy answer and no easy formula for deciding where and at what level to engage. There are sometimes risks to not doing enough to support a fledgling state, confronted by robust international terrorist groups with access to external financing, weapons and fighters. We risk allowing terrorist threats to fester and grow until they directly threaten us.

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

We also risk association with poorly trained and undisciplined partners. Some have weak legal systems and demonstrate a poor history of respect for the rule of law. And these partners may make mistakes – or operate in ways that we would not fully approve – which may tarnish our image, challenge our value sets, and – in some cases – force us to disengage. But these are the areas in which our SOF are required to work—not in countries with strong and mature defense establishments. Our challenge is two-fold: (1) to provide the capabilities to meet military challenges and (2) to do so in a way that respects the rule of law and legitimate governments. Our SOF can and will pursue U.S. national interests in a collaborative way with key partners, helping to counter the evolving al-Qa'ida threat.

The Department of Defense is committed to working to build our SOF to be the best, most effective force we have and to countering emerging threats to the United States and its interests. As the United States faces an ever-more dynamic security environment and adaptive threats, such as global terrorism, we must develop and support our SOF community so that our next decade is even more effective than the last.

Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Langevin, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you and testify on the Department's perspective on emerging counterterrorism threats. This concludes my statement.



Michael A. Sheehan

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict



Michael A. Sheehan was confirmed by the U.S. Senate and sworn-in as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD SO/LIC) in December 2011. He is the Secretary of Defense's principal civilian advisor on programs, policies, and resources for special operations. In addition, the office oversees Defense Department policies and programs regarding counternarcotics, humanitarian assistance, security force assistance programs for building partner capacity, and stability operations. Mr. Sheehan has over thirty-years in public service; much of it involved in counter terrorism, counter insurgency, peacekeeping, and law enforcement operations.



Mr. Sheehan is a 1977 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point. He served in a variety of infantry and special forces assignments. In the infantry, he commanded a mechanized company in an armored brigade in Korea with multiple tours on the Demilitarized Zone (1983-85). As a special forces officer, Mr. Sheehan served in a variety of counter terrorism and counter insurgency capacities. He commanded an Operational Detachment -Alpha in a hostage rescue unit in Panama (Company C, 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne)) and participated in numerous training and advisory deployments in Latin America including Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and Ecuador. In addition, Mr. Sheehan graduated from the Colombian Commando course, Lancero. He is Airborne, Ranger, Special Forces, Jungle Warfare, and Jumpmaster qualified, and is a recipient of the Combat Infantry Badge. In 1985 and 1986, Mr. Sheehan was the brigade counter insurgency advisor for the Fourth Brigade in Chalatenango, El Salvador, one of the most combative regions in the country.

While on active duty, Mr. Sheehan served in the field on peacekeeping missions in Somalia (1993-94) and Haiti (1995). In both cases, he was Special Advisor to the head of the United Nations (U.N.) mission and engaged in the integration of U.N. military and civilian police programs. Mr. Sheehan served on the National Security Council staff for both President George H.W. Bush (1989-92) and President William Jefferson Clinton (1995-97).

After retiring from the Army in 1997, Mr. Sheehan served at the State Department in the

Bureau of International Organizations. After the bombings of U.S. embassies in East Africa, Mr. Sheehan was appointed by President Clinton as Ambassador-at-Large for Counter Terrorism (1998-2000) and was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in 1999. During his tenure Mr. Sheehan established bi-lateral counter terrorism working groups with India and Russia (both of which are still operating). From 2001 to 2003, Sheehan went back to peacekeeping duty as the Assistant Secretary General of Mission Support in the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations, where he was responsible for supporting 16 missions around the world and over 40,000 military and police peacekeepers.

From 2003 to 2006, Mr. Sheehan served as the New York Police Department (NYPD) Deputy Commissioner for Counter Terrorism. In this position he was instrumental in reshaping the NYPD into what is widely regarded as one of the most effective counter terrorism organizations in the world.

Mr. Sheehan has master degrees from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service (1988) and the US Army Command and Staff College (1991). In both programs his dissertations concerned irregular warfare theory and practice. Mr. Sheehan spoke and lectured on counter terrorism and counter-insurgency policy and was a distinguished fellow at the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point and the Center for Law and Security at NYU. In addition, he was the on-air counter terrorism analyst for NBC News from 2006-11.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF
ADMIRAL WILLIAM H. McRAVEN, USN
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND
BEFORE THE 113th CONGRESS
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
INTELLIGENCE, EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE
April 17, 2013

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the House Armed Services Committee, thank you for this opportunity to address this subcommittee as the Commander of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM).

USSOCOM is one of nine Unified Combatant Commands, yet it is distinct in that it exercises numerous Service, military department, and defense agency-like responsibilities. Under Title 10 U.S. Code Sections 164 and 167, it is my legal responsibility to organize, train and equip my force; to build a strategy that supports the goals and objectives of the Defense Strategic Guidance; and to provide combat ready forces to the President and the Secretary of Defense to meet the challenges of today's security environment.

USSOCOM Strategy - SOF 2020

In January 2012, the Secretary of Defense issued his Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) and the Chairman followed with his Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO). The DSG describes the Joint Force of the future as "agile, flexible, ready" and

possessing global reach, thereby directing "the joint force to capitalize on networks and inter-dependency to maximize effectiveness in deterrence and evolving war." Building on this imperative, the CCJO envisions a "globally postured Joint Force... that quickly combine[s] capabilities with itself and mission partners across domains, echelons, geographic boundaries, and organizational affiliations." Special Operations Forces are uniquely suited to implement the guidance outlined in these documents. Specifically, SOF are "rapidly deployable...have operational reach... [are] persistent...and do not constitute an irreversible policy commitment." General Dempsey concluded his Capstone Document with the statement that military success in today's environment is "about building a stronger network to defeat the networks that confront us."

We live in a world in which the threats have become increasingly networked and pose complex and dynamic risks to U.S. interests around the world. These networks are diversifying their activities, resulting in the convergence of threats that were once linear. In today's environment, this convergence can have explosive and destabilizing effects - there is no such thing as a local problem. In the words of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, "Extremist networks squeezed in one country migrate to others. Terrorist propaganda from a cell in Yemen can incite attacks as far away as Detroit or Delhi. A flu

virus in Macao can become an epidemic in Miami. Technology and globalization have made our countries and our communities interdependent and interconnected. And today's threats have become so complex, fast-moving, and cross-cutting that no one nation could ever hope to solve them alone."

To address these problems, we must adopt a global perspective. With SOF deployed in over 75 countries on a daily basis, I can provide a global view of the problem and help link and synchronize global effects across geographic boundaries. However, as the SOCOM Commander, with some unique exceptions, I do not command and control any forces in combat or crisis. I am a "supporting commander" to the Geographic Combatant Commanders and the Chiefs of Mission (COMs). It is my job to provide them the best Special Operations Force in the world. It is their job, to employ those forces in support of U.S. policy. Special Operations Forces do nothing, absolutely nothing, without the approval of the President, the Secretary of Defense, the Geographic Combatant Commanders and the Chiefs of Mission - nothing. To best serve the interest of the GCCs and the Chiefs of Mission, SOCOM is developing a plan to enhance its already global force by networking with our U.S. interagency counterparts, and our foreign allies and partners around the globe. We aim to provide GCCs and Chiefs of Mission with improved special operations capacity and are aligning

structures, processes, and authorities that enable the network.

The Global SOF Network

Given strategic guidance, increasing fiscal constraints, and the networked and dispersed nature of conflict, SOF will play an increasingly critical role in the Joint Force of the future. And although SOF usually only garner attention for high-stakes raids and rescues, direct action missions are only a small part of what we do, albeit a very important part. USSOCOM will continue to ensure our nation has the best precision strike force in the world. We will not let up on that front. However, I'd like to emphasize that, in fact, on any given day USSOF are working with our allies around the world, helping build indigenous special operations capacity so that our partners can effectively deal with the threat of violent extremist groups, insurgents, and narco-terrorists - themselves. Indeed, SOF focuses intently on building partner capacity and security force assistance so that local and regional threats do not become global and thus more costly - both in blood and treasure.

Accordingly, with the support of the GCCs and Chiefs of Mission, USSOCOM is enhancing its global network of SOF to support our interagency and international partners in order to gain expanded situational awareness of emerging threats and opportunities. The network enables small, persistent presence in critical locations, and facilitates engagement where necessary

or appropriate – all under the authority of the GCC and COM.

Through civil-military support elements and support to public diplomacy, SOF directly support interagency efforts to counter violent extremist ideology and diminish the drivers of violence that al-Qa'ida and other terrorists exploit. These efforts to prevent terrorist radicalization, recruitment, and mobilization are critical to defeating this dangerous ideology in the future; neither we nor our partners can kill our way to victory in this fight. These efforts require continuity and perseverance. Episodic engagement is inefficient and has the potential to create animosity due to unmet expectations by the governments and populations we are trying to support. Over the long-run, these proactive activities reduce strategic risk, protect American lives, and reduce the need for expensive response to terrorist attacks.

To this end, using already programmed force structure, USSOCOM is methodically enhancing the capabilities of the Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) based on a multi-year deliberate process supported by detailed analysis and war gaming. The goal is to increase the capacity and capabilities of the TSOC and their assigned forces to the GCCs to conduct full spectrum special operations – ranging from building partner

capacity (particularly in austere, high-risk or sensitive environments) to irregular warfare and counterterrorism.

In partnership with the GCCs, COM, TSOCs, other U.S. Government agencies and partner nations, USSOCOM is working to develop opportunities to improve our partnership with regional Special Operations Forces. This approach was very successful in NATO, with the establishment of the NATO SOF Headquarters which allowed U.S. and partner nations to share information, improve interoperability and, when necessary, work together abroad. While the NATO construct is unique in the world, we believe there are other low-key opportunities that may present themselves in other regions of the world.

In addition to the SOF capacity inherent in all GCCs through the TSOCs, USSOCOM also employs Special Operations Liaison Officers (SOLOs) in key U.S. embassies around the world. SOLOs are in-country SOF advisors to the U.S. Country Team. They advise and assist partner nation SOF and help to synchronize activities with the host nation. Currently, there are SOLOs in Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, Jordan, Poland, Colombia, France, Turkey, Kenya, and Italy.

Similarly, as part of the global SOF network here at home, one-to-three person Special Operations Support Teams (SOSTs) work with our interagency partners in the National Capital Region (NCR). They comprise the SOF liaison network that assists

in synchronizing DoD planning for training, exercises and operations. Currently, we have SOSTs working within 19 U.S. Government departments and agencies.

Given the importance of interagency collaboration, USSOCOM is placing greater emphasis on its presence in the National Capital Region (NCR) to better support coordination and decision making with interagency partners. Thus, USSOCOM began to consolidate its presence in the NCR in early 2012. This is not a duplication of effort. We are focused instead on consolidating USSOCOM elements in the Washington D.C. region under the leadership of the USSOCOM Vice-Commander - who resides in Washington. Specifically, USSOCOM-NCR ensures that the perspectives and capabilities of interagency and international mission partners are incorporated into all phases of SOF planning efforts. The SOCOM NCR also conducts outreach to academia, non-governmental organizations, industry and other private sector organizations to get their perspective on complex issues affecting SOF.

At the USSOCOM headquarters in Tampa, the staff will serve as the focal point for coordinating information that supports USSOCOM warfighters. It is here that USSOCOM will maintain the global perspective on all SOF activities in support of the GCCs and U.S. Chiefs of Mission. As such, SOCOM will support operations, intelligence, logistics, planning, communications,

and provide critical information to enable forward deployed SOF to meet mission requirements. SOCOM will monitor SOF supporting campaigns, ensure that the Command is satisfying GCC theater requirements, maintain the global common operating picture for the SOF network, and monitor the readiness and availability of all U.S. SOF capabilities. The entire network will be enabled by the existing communications infrastructure. However, communication and information sharing must facilitate interconnectedness beyond the U.S.-only realm, and improve partner-nation capacity, interagency coordination, and stakeholder situational awareness by providing information technology infrastructure and communications services to unite U.S. and partner-nation SOF, plus other mission partners. This communications infrastructure will leverage existing networks and systems to avoid duplication of effort.

As a whole, the SOF network represents a way to improve the support to the GCCs and Chiefs of Mission and to empower a global effort with capable allies and partners. Recognizing that we have much to learn from each other, working with partner SOF will build mutual trust, foster enduring relationships, and provide new opportunities to affect shared challenges.

To this end, the SECDEF's authority to support foreign forces, irregular forces, and groups or individuals who support or facilitate ongoing military operations to combat terrorism -

namely Section 1208 of the FY2005 NDAA – remains critical to Special Operations. The drawdown of forces in Afghanistan will not diminish the need for 1208 authority. In fact, GCCs' demand for 1208 authority has increased, and the authority's utility is recognized as mission essential in winning their current fight.

Preserve the Force and Families

A SOF Universal Truth is that "people are more important than hardware." We recognize that none of the efforts described in preceding paragraphs are possible without having the dedicated, professional SOF warriors to bring them to fruition. Hence, it is imperative that we do all that we can to preserve the force and care for their families. Therefore, to lessen the strain, we are seeking improvements in the predictability of SOF schedules – training, education, deployment, and rest.

USSOCOM must ensure our SOF warriors and their families are properly cared for and that we work to help them reduce the stress they face related to high operational tempos. Difficulty also occurs as forces reconnect and reintegrate into garrison and family activities. DOD provides preventive and responsive counseling, medical, psychological, and rehabilitative care to institutionalize the resiliency of our SOF warriors and their families.

Everyone in the fight has been significantly changed by their experiences. Providing the treatment our troops need and

reducing the stigma associated with asking for help is a top priority for all USSOCOM leaders. For our service members and their families, we are implementing programs identified as best practices and aggressively institutionalizing education for our Chaplains and Mental Health professionals to emphasize prevention-oriented care. Through human performance improvement, readiness, and spiritual growth, we hope to preserve our forces for the duration of their careers. Recognizing that the readiness of many of our service members is inextricably tied to the well-being and happiness of their families, we have sought to bolster the care afforded to them. Additionally, to increase the predictability of service members' time, USSOCOM will redouble our efforts to reach out to families by opening up communication channels at all levels of the command through innovative use of varied media. We are committed to sustaining our force and families and will not break faith with our SOF family.

Maximizing SOF readiness also requires an enhanced capacity to anticipate and proactively preserve and manage the future force. I am implementing an enterprise-wide PERSTEMPO capability that will provide commanders increased visibility, fidelity, and ability to manage SOF readiness down to the individual service-member level. Once fully implemented throughout the command by FY14, SOF commanders from the O-5 level and above will have a

near real-time common operating picture of SOF readiness. This new capability further enhances commanders' force management decision making, improves the quality of life for the SOF force, and offers promise for maximizing force readiness through improved recruitment, retention, and protection of investments in SOF personnel and the resources that enable them.

Acquisition Excellence

Mobility, lethality, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and survivability remain critical SOF enablers for the full spectrum of SOF operations. USSOCOM's unique acquisition authorities remain critical to meeting the rapid, information sensitive and operationally peculiar demands of Special Operations. Specifically, USSOCOM employs rapid and tailored acquisition strategies to modify Service-common equipment, enhance commercial items, or - when required - develop, procure and field SOF-peculiar equipment and services to respond to global requirements.

USSOCOM will continue its emphasis on equipping SOF operators as a system. Development, procurement and fielding of the SOF individual equipment system (i.e. individual protection, visual augmentation systems, weapons and sights) needs to suit the wide variety of SOF tasks and environments. The Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) system and use of Freeze Dried Plasma (FDP) will combine to help care for wounded operators in remote and

challenging environments, often at great distance from primary care facilities.

To meet the wide range of SOF missions, USSOCOM employs platforms that are both versatile and agile. For example, current acquisition efforts focus on equipping both manned and unmanned fixed wing assets with intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities suitable for diverse global requirements. The Non-Standard Aviation fleet of aircraft supports SOF intra-theater mobility, Aviation Foreign Internal Defense (AvFID), and manned ISR. The SOF fleet of Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) – ranging from the man-portable RQ-20A Puma to the medium altitude MQ-9 Reaper – provides essential ISR capabilities and cutting edge sensor and communication technologies. USSOCOM's ability to efficiently modify service common ISR assets with capabilities such as high definition (HD) full motion video (FMV) provides game-changing, operational effects at relatively small investment.

USSOCOM is continuing to execute programs to modernize its rotary wing and maritime mobility fleets, replacing legacy equipment such as the MH-60 K/L, Mark V Naval Special Warfare Rigid Hull Inflatable boat (RHIB), and SEAL Delivery Vehicle in the coming years. On the ground, USSOCOM will maintain a family of special operations tactical combat vehicles with customizable, mission-specific payloads. A Non-Standard

Commercial Vehicle (NSCV) capability enables SOF operators to maintain a low profile among indigenous populations while providing necessary mobility and protection.

Global SOF rely on the SOF Information Environment (SIE) to achieve full operational potential. Within the SIE, USSOCOM will continue to incorporate a SOF Deployable Node (SDN), a family of Wide Band SATCOM systems, and increased access to SIE voice, data and video services to deployed headquarters and operational elements. Simultaneously, USSOCOM will continue its efforts to downsize system profiles and footprint through engineering efficiencies of common and scalable components amongst SDN variants, provide SIE access to tactical wireless users through SDN, and focus current efforts on providing SIE access to maritime and ground mobility platforms.

USSOCOM's Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate continues to pursue technology innovation, and utilizes a Special Operations Advanced Technology collaborative process for SOF-centric, S&T development. This process allows better synchronization of SOF-related technology initiatives with the Department of Defense and other government agencies to leverage external capital opportunities that address SOF capability gaps. S&T's near-term technology development efforts are focused on providing SOF operators with all-digital, multi-spectral visual augmentation systems and advanced novel materials to improve

protection and survivability for personnel and platforms.

Responsible Resourcing and Service Support

Despite an increase in operational commitments over the last decade, we have been able to sustain our obligation to appropriately organize, train, and equip the warriors from whom we ask so much. We are aware of current budget uncertainties, and are therefore committed to only prudent use of resources provided to us by the taxpayers. I am committed to exercising common-sense steps to cost-cutting and cost-avoidance. The Command has begun to restructure and realign resources to support the SOF 2020 vision which reflects the nation's strategic priorities. Currently, we are able to execute the vision I have outlined in this document without any increase in either civilian or military manpower outside of current programmed growth or additional funding. I will continue to manage cost-growth in acquisition programs, and implement requirements of the Combatant Commanders, Executive Order mandates, and DoD auditability guidance.

USSOCOM has successfully used the Rapid Acquisition Authority to source a validated Joint Urgent Operational Needs (JUON) Statement for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance activities. USSOCOM will rely more heavily on this authority

within the future fiscal environment.

The Command's ability to execute rapid acquisition of its materiel and service programs is essential to deliver and field critical requirements and new technologies. USSOCOM's capacity to maintain a competitive advantage on the battlefield depends on out-thinking and outpacing the enemy in speed, technology, equipment, and maneuverability. SOF capabilities are directly related to investments we make through our procurement budget.

USSOCOM, like the Services, has seen an extraordinary increase in operational tempo. Through advanced technologies, the battlefield has become smaller, highlighting a need for continued interoperability among the Services and SOF. SOF's reliance on the Services for institutional training, installation services and support - particularly in forward deployed locations where SOF can only sustain itself for short periods of time - remains critical. The Services' support for SOF's global persistent presence and annual deployments to over 100 countries is both vital and very much appreciated.

Conclusion

Budget uncertainties which face the Department of Defense and USSOCOM are of great concern in Fiscal Year 2013. The SOF network, as a vital tool to support the President and SECDEF's national defense strategy, seeks a strong and flexible global network of SOF, United States government partners, and partner

nations. We are working tirelessly to provide SOF capabilities and capacity to GCCs and Chiefs of Mission; capabilities and capacities that are supported by the required structures, processes, and authorities necessary for success. In the immediate future, and as stated by Chairman Dempsey, the "Joint Force 2020 must protect...against threats that routinely span regional boundaries." Notably, as presented by former Secretary Clinton at the International Special Operations Forces Week in May of last year, "Special Operations Forces exemplify the ethic of smart power - fast and flexible, constantly adapting, learning new languages and cultures, dedicated to forming partnerships where we can work together." Your support will ensure USSOCOM's continued ability to successfully address the most challenging security demands of our nation.



United States Navy Biography

Admiral William H. McRaven Commander, United States Special Operations Command United States Navy

Adm. McRaven is the ninth commander of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. USSOCOM ensures the readiness of joint special operations forces and, as directed, conducts operations worldwide.

McRaven served from June 2008 to June 2011 as the 11th commander of Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) headquartered at Fort Bragg, N.C. JSOC is charged to study special operations requirements and techniques, ensure interoperability and equipment standardization, plan and conduct special operations exercises and training, and develop joint special operations tactics.

McRaven served from June 2006 to March 2008 as commander, Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR). In addition to his duties as commander, SOCEUR, he was designated as the first director of the NATO Special Operations Forces Coordination Centre where he was charged with enhancing the capabilities and interoperability of all NATO Special Operations Forces.



McRaven has commanded at every level within the special operations community, including assignments as deputy commanding general for Operations at JSOC; commodore of Naval Special Warfare Group One; commander of SEAL Team Three; task group commander in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility; task unit commander during *Desert Storm* and *Desert Shield*; squadron commander at Naval Special Warfare Development Group; and, SEAL platoon commander at Underwater Demolition Team 21/SEAL Team Four.

McRaven's diverse staff and interagency experience includes assignments as the director for Strategic Planning in the Office of Combating Terrorism on the National Security Council Staff; assessment director at USSOCOM, on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations, and the chief of staff at Naval Special Warfare Group One.

McRaven's professional education includes assignment to the Naval Postgraduate School, where he helped establish, and was the first graduate from, the Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict curriculum.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

APRIL 17, 2013

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. LANGEVIN

Mr. LANGEVIN. A great deal has been written and said about the relationship between SOF and the CIA. How should Special Operators and CIA share responsibilities that interlock and overlap, given that their respective strengths and weaknesses are distinctively different? Do we need to look at additional deconfliction, and do you feel the current command structure allows for that?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Although SOF and CIA maintain different perspectives regarding operational and security activities, there is also considerable common ground shared on a variety of issues, especially in the counterterrorism (CT) arena. Utilizing the inherent strengths and authorities of both organizations allows for a more effective application of USG capabilities worldwide. SOF maintains a consistent and productive working relationship with CIA on multiple levels, resulting in a complementary and effective partnership. This close relationship is manifested through the successful conduct of global planning and operations, and highlights the strengths of both organizations while limiting redundancy and duplication of effort.

Mr. LANGEVIN. What are some of the more difficult advanced technology requirements that SOF need to maintain an edge on the battlefield? As we withdraw from major combat in Afghanistan, will the need for nonlethal weapons and directed energy weapons increase? How are you managing your research and development investments as budgets decline?

Admiral MCRAVEN. a. In no particular order (to remain unclassified) they are: Comprehensive Signature Management; Human Performance; Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) detection and render safe technologies; technologies that improve Small Unit Dominance; First pass accuracy and enhanced lethality weapons, Scalable Effects Weapons (SEW), and Directed Energy Weapons (DEW); political/social/cultural assessment and response prediction tools; Vastly improved situational awareness equipment and displays, enhanced sensors and Clandestine Tagging, Tracking, and Locating technologies; Leap ahead power and energy; Revolutionary Command, Control, Communications and Computers capabilities; and improved Sensitive Site Exploitation.

b. Yes. SOF will increasingly need the ability to precisely apply exact weapons effects on specific targets with near-zero collateral damage. SEW can be used in specific instances to stop vehicles/vessels, incapacitate personnel, or precisely on targets not intended to cause death or catastrophic damage to equipment or infrastructure.

c. Through the use of our Special Operations Advanced Technology Collaborative Process, we seek to cooperatively develop technology to reduce or remove the capability gaps in the high priority areas detailed above. This process allows better synchronization of SOF-related technology initiatives occurring with the Department of Defense and across other Government agencies. It also enables increased collaboration with external stakeholders such as industry and academia.

Mr. LANGEVIN. How do you maintain language and cultural capability when deployments are focused more on combat operations and less on global engagement in security assistance operations? Do you feel your forces are adequately postured and trained to pivot to increasing needs outside of the CENTCOM AOR?

Admiral MCRAVEN. USSOCOM is concerned about the impact of iterative rotations to the CENTCOM AOR of SOF units and individuals that are regionally aligned to other AORs. This has degraded global language and cultural capability in several ways.

Predeployment preparation for OEF includes instruction in the languages and cultures of Afghanistan because most SOF missions entail close work with Afghan partners. This is beneficial for SOF regionally oriented to CENTCOM but greatly reduces the time, classroom space, and funding available for non-CENTCOM AOR oriented SOF to sustain and enhance language and culture capabilities for their assigned AORs. The net result is that too much of SOF language capability remains at the lower proficiency levels (less than level 2). USSOCOM's goal is for at least 33% of the force with Level 1 proficiency, and another 33% at Level 2 proficiency.

The SOF schoolhouses continue to refine and improve the language and culture instruction provided within the initial SOF qualifying pipelines. Three of these schools now include Defense Language Institute detachments, to ensure a constant

flow of basic and some intermediate language and cultural capability into SOF units, but capacity for higher proficiency is limited.

Other areas of concern remain with Service resources and policies that indirectly support and affect SOF language and cultural capability, as all DOD agencies evaluate their priorities and fiscal constraints. Initiatives aiming to gain language and cultural capability through targeted recruiting (e.g., the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest pilot program) are a cost effective means of increasing advanced capability and must continue to be supported by all Services.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Can you outline for the committee what additional security force assistance authorities (SFA) may be needed? How are present authorities not able to meet SOF-peculiar needs, and what examples can you give where additional—or adjusted—authorities would improve the ability for the U.S. to provide security assistance and thereby enable stability in an important region?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Since my testimony on April 17, I have had numerous meaningful engagements with colleagues throughout the State Department. Together, we are relooking the Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF) and attempting to identify broader authorities in that fund that will help meet SOF requirements. State has been very responsive and it is my hope that we can move forward together.

However, the following reflects my position prior to the recent meetings with State officials on the question of deficiencies in existing security force assistance authorities.

Both Section 1206 and Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF) were purpose-built to respond to emerging opportunities and threats. Therefore, they leave TSOCs without reliable authority and/or resources to implement their Chief of Mission-approved regional engagement plans. TSOCs require a comprehensive authority that will help national security decision-makers detect and potentially mitigate emerging threats and instability before they require the use of more reactive authorities like 1206 or GSCF.

Additionally, the current slate of foreign military assistance authorities leaves TSOCs unable to plan or implement their unique strategies for theater SOF engagement with any budgetary certainty. Accordingly, as they develop their plans for partner engagement activities, TSOCs are left to patch together several authorities (almost universally intended for different purposes), resulting in limited effectiveness due to legal, policy and regulatory constraints.

Mr. LANGEVIN. A great deal has been written and said about the relationship between SOF and the CIA. How should Special Operators and CIA share responsibilities that interlock and overlap, given that their respective strengths and weaknesses are distinctively different? Do we need to look at additional deconfliction, and do you feel the current command structure allows for that?

Secretary SHEEHAN. Existing commands and organizations provide the structure by which we apply both DOD and CIA strengths toward our counterterrorism goals. I believe that the current structure facilitates appropriate de-confliction of responsibilities and activities.

Mr. LANGEVIN. What are some of the more difficult advanced technology requirements that SOF need to maintain an edge on the battlefield? As we withdraw from major combat in Afghanistan, will the need for nonlethal weapons and directed energy weapons increase? How are you managing your research and development investments as budgets decline?

Secretary SHEEHAN. The technology areas that we find most challenging are in the areas of signature reduction, nanotechnology, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) sensors. Much of this is reflective of how fast technology in the private sector is changing. DOD is also continuing to push the development of Tag, Track, and Locate (TTL), alternative power systems, increased operator protection (lightweight armor and material), special communications, and operational architecture for coalition-centric Special Operations Forces (SOF) communications networks. Finally, DOD is exploring aviation, undersea, and ground mobility modification improvements to increase our capability to get to the target and protect operators.

Non-lethal directed energy and kinetic capabilities have the potential to play a significant and increasing role in supporting U.S. force reductions in Afghanistan, such as in securing operating sites with reduced numbers of personnel. These non-lethal systems are also relevant to building partner forces' capability to respond responsibly and lawfully to situations such as civil unrest.

When added to a growing number of nonlethal ocular interruption devices and traditional nonlethal weapons used by the force for checkpoint, convoy and area security missions, these capabilities serve as a "force multiplier," enabling smaller, reduced U.S. security forces or enabling host nation security forces to secure sizeable areas such as, but not limited to, forward operating bases (FOBs), air bases, and

port facilities. Additionally, a growing array of blunt impact and directed energy nonlethal weapons, devices, and munitions offer U.S. forces with a significant “building partner capacity” and “rule of law” mentoring tool when working with coalition and host nation forces. We plan for U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) to continue to leverage and collaborate with the Military Departments/Services and DOD agencies on a number initiatives that will provide SOF the ability to invest in comparative SOF advantage in the future. This is an area that both the Commander, USSOCOM and I are continuing to review in this budget and future budgets.

Mr. LANGEVIN. How do you maintain language and cultural capability when deployments are focused more on combat operations and less on global engagement in security assistance operations? Do you feel your forces are adequately postured and trained to pivot to increasing needs outside of the CENTCOM AOR?

Secretary SHEEHAN. Rotational deployments of Special Operations Forces (SOF) units not regionally aligned to the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) area of responsibility have indeed taken a toll on the language, regional expertise, and culture capabilities of those units for their aligned regions. Operating tempo (OPTEMPO) limits the ability to retain and retrain SOF for primary areas of responsibility while still preparing for the next USCENTCOM deployment. This is being addressed to a degree by USSOCOM force structure growth; however, that growth also places increased stress on SOF training resources.

OPTEMPO reduces opportunities to send mid- and senior-grade operators to advanced regional education and professional development programs such as Foreign Professional Military Education and the Regional Centers program. SOF leverages these programs to improve specific regional language skills and cultural understanding.

Over the last year, USSOCOM was successful in sending more operators to Regional Centers; however, during the previous two years these slots were filled primarily by senior-grade USSOCOM Headquarters staff officers due to operational units executing rotational deployments. The returns on these investments were limited.

I support recent USSOCOM initiatives to implement higher language capability requirements and improved training processes for its components. In conjunction with USSOCOM, we will continue to pursue native/heritage recruiting, valuing language and regional capabilities in selections and promotions, language testing and incentives, maintaining Defense Language Institute detachments at some of our components, adding SOF-specific school billets and funding from the Services for foreign education, and encouraging the Services to award Intermediate Level Education and Senior Level Education equivalency for Foreign Professional Military Education programs.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Can you outline for the committee what additional security force assistance authorities (SFA) may be needed? How are present authorities not able to meet SOF-peculiar needs, and what examples can you give where additional—or adjusted—authorities would improve the ability for the U.S. to provide security assistance and thereby enable stability in an important region?

Secretary SHEEHAN. The current patchwork and temporary nature of authorities hinders the Department’s ability to establish mature management processes and ensure coherent, complementary security assistance efforts. As an example, although Section 1206 Global Train and Equip authority is a key authority for DOD, its temporary nature and single-year funds inhibit the overall effectiveness of capacity-building efforts. Security forces assistance authorities for Special Operations Forces (SOF) should reflect the Nation’s strategic shift toward strengthening partnerships and further developing low-cost, small-footprint solutions to achieve national security objectives. Through authorities that foster persistent engagement, U.S. SOF will be able to develop and maintain lasting relationships with key partners. These lasting relationships are essential to build the capabilities needed to address a range of contingencies that may result from the increasingly diffuse nature of threats, such as those in North and West Africa, the Horn of Africa, and potentially Syria. Supporting and partnering with Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior forces would also greatly enhance security assistance efforts by allowing U.S. SOF to engage the most relevant forces in the partner nation. The establishment of and demonstrated commitment to these relationships will be paramount in ensuring that U.S. SOF can adequately conduct counterterrorism, unconventional warfare, and irregular warfare missions with the support of or alongside foreign SOF.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. THORNBERRY

Mr. THORNBERRY. What SOF core mission areas and activities remain of critical importance to U.S. national security? In other words, given fiscal constraints, what should remain off the chopping block?

Admiral McRAVEN. Title X, Section 167 describes USSOCOM's core Special Operations activities as direct action, strategic reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, civil affairs, and psychological operations, now called Military Information Support Operations (MISO). The Secretary of Defense holds me responsible to organize, train, and equip SOF for those activities, and adds counterterrorism and countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to the SOF core mission list.

The Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) calls for a future joint force that is "agile, flexible, and ready" and possessing the global reach necessary to "capitalize on networks and inter-dependency to maximize effectiveness in deterrence and evolving war." Given this broad guidance and the asymmetric nature of many of our future security challenges, all special operations core missions and activities remain of critical importance to U.S. national security. Each Geographic Combatant Commander has unique requirements, and I would not want to put their requirements at risk by eliminating capabilities.

After ten years of conflict, during which the focus was largely on direct action and counterterrorism, my intent is to rebalance SOF toward more "indirect" activities, such as foreign internal defense. This will help support the DSG's emphasis maintaining strategic partnerships as an essential element of national security.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Nearly 12 years after 9/11—what can we improve upon in the near and the long term?

Admiral McRAVEN. In the 12 years since 9/11, Special Operations Forces (SOF) have become known for and have excelled at direct-action mission sets. Interagency processes to support these capture/kill/rescue missions have also become finely tuned. However, as security challenges are increasingly networked across geopolitical borders, it is time to turn our emphasis back toward the indirect approach as a critical component in the effort to deter, disrupt, and deny sanctuary to our adversaries. USSOCOM will continue to ensure our Nation has the best precision strike force in the world. Through the indirect approach, SOF can also act to preempt conflict by strengthening relationships with our international partners through building partner capacity, improving information sharing platforms and agreements, providing assistance to humanitarian agencies, and engaging key international populations. Indirect efforts increase partner capabilities to generate sufficient security and rule of law, address local needs, and advance ideas that discredit and defeat the appeal of violent extremism.

The January 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance directed the Department of Defense to build strategic partnerships through persistent engagement with the interagency and partner nations. Under the premise that "you can't surge trust" in times of crisis, USSOCOM's vision is focused on a global SOF network of U.S. SOF, interagency, allies and partners. Thickening these relationships builds trust and increases security options in the near and long term. Through the indirect approach, SOF is able to amplify our partners' capabilities, exemplifying the claim by the Secretary of Defense that "building capacity elsewhere in the world also remains important for sharing the cost and responsibilities of global leadership."

To support this renewed focus on indirect action, the U.S. Government requires a coordinated interagency vetting process for indirect-action missions that is as streamlined as the process for direct-action mission sets. This would improve Department of Defense's responsiveness in the face of emerging opportunities and requirements. The need for a clear process for indirect-action mission sets has emerged as a critical challenge.

Mr. THORNBERRY. There has been a great deal of press about very sensitive special operations activities over the past few years, culminating with the raid to kill Osama bin Laden. Are there concerns that SOF and the classified Special Mission Units have been perhaps too much in the limelight? Are there any concerns with leaks of classified information to the press from the special operations community, and what is being done about this? Are there any ongoing investigations?

Admiral McRAVEN. I have been very concerned about the volume and types of information put forth recently in books, newspapers and magazine articles. The publication of sensitive information, especially classified information that discloses Special Operations Forces tactics, techniques and procedures; provides details about past classified missions or other operational activity; or identifies operators from Special Mission Units potentially puts future operational missions, activities and personnel at risk for compromise. Potential compromise could lead to loss of life, loss

of critical information and equipment, or negate operational advantages that we require to successfully conduct our missions.

To that end, I have reemphasized the principles underlying operational security and “need to know.” Commanders at all echelons have recomunicated those ideas to their units, with the understanding that when it comes to disclosing classified information our people are subject to legal and UCMJ disciplinary action. We cannot afford to pay the consequences of not properly safeguarding that which is entrusted to us. We must reclaim the era of the Quiet Professional, when SOF activities were not broadcast for all to see and hear.

At this time, we are not aware of any DOD media leak investigations.

Mr. THORNBERRY. What role will SOF play in Afghanistan as we withdraw forces, and then beyond 2014? Can you outline for the committee what commitment will be required and how this will impact the rebalancing of SOF across the globe?

Admiral MCRAVEN. The role of SOF in Afghanistan throughout the withdrawal of forces and post 2014 is to provide a scalable force in a unified US/NATO command structure focused on providing operational level train, advise, and assistance to the broad array of Afghan Security Institutions and Afghan Special Forces. Additionally, SOF will conduct counter terrorism operations to deny designated transnational terrorist groups sanctuary in any part of Afghanistan.

The overall commitment of SOF to achieve our Nation’s post 2014 goals in Afghanistan remains predecisional. However, I am confident that U.S. Special Operations Command is prepared to resource our post 2014 efforts with whatever force disposition is required with no impact of rebalancing SOF across the globe.

Mr. THORNBERRY. How have ten years of repetitive combat deployments impacted the force and what challenges remain?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Across the board we have noted increases in key indicators of stress on the force over the past ten years. These trends have continuously increased over the past decade. The treatment rates for a host of mental health issues have increased, suicides have increased and the force has told us, unequivocally, that the pace of operations and the nature of those operations are taking a toll. Beyond what is reported in the medical system, SOCOM has collected data from the force directly through face-to-face meetings and surveys that tells us that there are unmet needs in terms of taking care of the psychological, physical and social needs of the force. As an enterprise, we have stepped out aggressively to address the acute needs of the force and their families in these areas. As these initiatives come to fruition, we will keep this committee apprised of their impacts.

Equally important to addressing those acute challenges that our forces and families are confronting, we are institutionalizing systems of support that will prepare our forces for the strategic challenges of the future. By embedding trusted and skilled professionals within our tactical formations and leveraging state-of-the-art practices, programs and equipment, we hope to optimize the performance of our force and reinforce the wellbeing of their families. We foresee these initiatives becoming an integral part our approach to human capital development and preservation and ask for your continued support in these areas.

Mr. THORNBERRY. What changes should be considered to the Joint Special Operations Command in the coming years? Can you provide us with more detail during the closed session?

Admiral MCRAVEN. [The information referred to is classified and retained in the committee files.]

Mr. THORNBERRY. How are the roles of women in SOF changing?

Admiral MCRAVEN. Women have served alongside SOF for years. In order to meet operational requirements, we have employed exceptions to policy restricting women in combat. We are now looking to formalize the process and give operational leaders the ability to meet their missions with the most qualified and able personnel, regardless of gender.

My staff is currently examining the implications of opening all SOF specialties and career fields to women. We will make the recommendation to the SecDef based on the outcome of the studies of my staff in keeping with my responsibility as the SOF force provider. I am committed to providing this Nation with the most capable Special Operations Force while providing opportunities for all SOF personnel to succeed.

Mr. THORNBERRY. What challenges remain with SOF integration with conventional or general purpose forces?

Admiral MCRAVEN. After 12 years of continuous combat in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas around the globe, SOF and general purpose forces (GPF) have never been more integrated than we are today. SOF has had up to battalion sized GPF forces assigned to its Task Forces and multiple operations have been conducted without any major command and control, and tactics, techniques, and procedures

(TTP) miscues. Everyday on the battlefield GPF units support SOF operations and vice versa. SOF units participate with GPF forces in predeployment training and conduct multiple mission rehearsal exercises to insure trust, confidence, and understanding on the battlefield. In addition to predeployment training, SOF units routinely participate with GPF forces during National Training Center and Joint Readiness Training Center rotations to increase transparency and understanding of SOF TTPs. Everyday SOFs and GPFs operate side by side all over the globe to keep pressure on violent extremist organizations, train partner nation forces, and conduct humanitarian assistance operations. Again, SOF and GPF have never been more synchronized and mutually supported than they are today.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Concerns have been raised about the pace of growth within the command and the stress that growth places on the standards and training of the force. What are your concerns regarding the quality of the forces amidst such rapid and notable growth?

Admiral MCRAVEN. As a result of continued Congressional support of Special Operations Forces (SOF), the increased growth has not diminished the quality of the forces. Since the events of Sept 11 2001, SOF has grown at 3-5% per year rate. This growth was adequately planned, resourced, and measured to ensure the high quality of the force was sustained. Subordinate SOF Component Commander's monthly readiness reports continue to maintain a positive assessment on their readiness standards and their ability to execute missions. While this growth has placed some additional demands on institutional training, the standards have not waived. To ensure these standards are maintained, U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) publishes and updates SOF Baseline Interoperable Standards for various SOF competencies. These institutions are periodically visited by a Joint SOF Assessment Team (JSAT) made up of subject matter experts to ensure these standards are maintained.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Can you outline any changes you are considering to SOCOM's acquisition framework and authorities?

Admiral MCRAVEN. USSOCOM has proposed an acquisition-related legislative proposals for the FY14 legislative cycle which if enacted would provide more robust support to the Special Operations Forces (SOF) warfighter or enhance our ability to deal with excess property.

The proposal would amend section 1903(a) of title 41 to expand the circumstances under which the special emergency procurement thresholds and authorities contained within that statute may be utilized. Currently, the statute applies an elevated simplified acquisition threshold and micropurchase threshold to acquisitions that are either in support of a contingency operation or that facilitate the defense against or recovery from nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological attack against the United States. USSOCOM's proposed amendment would apply these same elevated thresholds to acquisitions in support of an operation both covered by an execute order (EXORD) and involves USSOCOM. The concept is that as we move away from declared contingencies, USSOCOM still needs the ability to employ the same acquisition thresholds that were available in those contingency settings to the non-declared contingency environment in order to properly support the deployed SOF operator. I have been advised that this proposal was formally transmitted to Congress and request your support. Our contracting officers are stretched thin and anything we can do to alleviate their workload will directly translate into better support to my operators.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Please update the committee on SOCOM's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) requirements. What manned and unmanned systems are you investing in, and how do you coordinate with the Services in this critical area?

Admiral MCRAVEN. SOCOM maintains a variety of persistent ISR capability requirements. Special Operations Forces (SOF) should be able to detect, identify, and locate individual and groups of terrorists, terrorist facilities, equipment, weapons, financial and information resources, without reciprocal detection. SOF must monitor and track individual and groups of terrorists, terrorist facilities, equipment, weapons, financial and information resources, without reciprocal detection, from initial contact through a desired end state, including destruction, capture, or exploitation, and monitor and exploit terrorist communications and surveillance methods and equipment, without reciprocal detection. Coalition and interagency leaders, collectors, analysts, planners, and execution elements must be linked within a collaborative environment in order to support this enterprise.

SOCOM continues to require a mix of manned and unmanned as well as remote ISR, all-weather, day and night platforms, with long on-station loiter, multi-sensor modularity and ability to support emerging capabilities. Capabilities should be rap-

idly expeditionary, able to operate from unimproved sites and afloat, and maintain suppressed signature (noise and visual).

SOCOM continues to optimize organic SOF ISR capabilities, including communications systems and architectures, Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination (PED) of networked information, ground, air, maritime sensor capacities, and better utilization and synchronization of SOF human sensor activities. SOF requirements for ISR far exceed organic resources, and we continually pursue support from the Services. We engage Joint Staff for geographic component command-requested ISR assets in support of SOF to provide needed communications architecture/bandwidth to support SOF ISR needs, manpower to support ISR platforms (aircrew, PED), and accelerated fielding of service-programmed ISR to SOF. We also continue to develop allied relationship and pursue partnerships to improve regional capabilities—i.e. sensors, platforms and personnel, and tailored enhancement of partner nation/host nation capabilities through train, equip, and advise activities.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Can you outline your approach to update the current outdated fleet of SEAL underwater delivery vehicles (SEAL SDVs)? Are you concerned that we do not have a capable long-range mini-submarine to deliver SEALs to denied maritime environments?

Admiral McRAVEN. The SDV Mk 8 Mod 1 will be phase-replaced by the Shallow Water Combat Submersible (SWCS) Block 1. The SWCS, a wet combat submersible, will deliver improved performance in terms of range, speed, payload, operating depth and communications. The SWCS is scheduled for initial operational capability in FY2015. SWCS will provide theater commanders with the operational capability to conduct SOF undersea operations in the 2015–2032 timeframe.

In the interim, we have been modernizing the in-service Mk 8 Mod 1 SEAL Delivery Vehicle (SDV) through a series of upgrades. Recent efforts include enhanced computer upgrade (new operating system), a sonar replacement, increased navigation accuracy for more precise situational awareness, improved communications in various spectrums and diver thermal protection. The sonar systems and improved technologies will be transferred to SWCS as SDVs reach end of service life and are retired from the fleet.

The Dry Combat Submersible (DCS) advanced technology development strategy is currently developing prototypes of dry, one atmosphere, diver lockout submersibles, overcoming the thermal protection issues of the SDV and SWCS and increasing range. These prototypes are using international commercial design, construction, testing and classification standards and processes. Two contracts, awarded June and December 2012, for the rapid design, construction, build and test of the prototypes are scheduled for delivery in the August 2014 and December 2014 timeframes. Testing, evaluation and lessons learned from the prototype efforts will support a goal of establishing a competitive Dry Combat Submersible development program in 2016 with a planned initial operational capability in 2018.

The success of both the SWCS and DCS programs are critical for our future maritime mobility capabilities.

Mr. THORNBERRY. What SOF core mission areas and activities remain of critical importance to U.S. national security? In other words, given fiscal constraints, what should remain off the chopping block?

Secretary SHEEHAN. I believe the full range of special operations activities, as listed under Title 10, United States Code, continue to prove necessary and mutually supportive. When taking into consideration the current Defense Strategic Guidance, Special Operations Forces (SOF) are uniquely capable of meeting many of the primary missions of our U.S. armed forces. The SOF core mission areas underpin the skills and capabilities required to conduct effective counterterrorism and irregular warfare activities, build partner capacity, and deny safe haven to threat networks—among other specific mission areas in which SOF remain the force of choice.

At this time I would not advocate any changes to USSOCOM's statutory responsibilities.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Nearly 12 years after 9/11—what can we improve upon in the near and the long term?

Secretary SHEEHAN. A decade of war and a consistently high demand signal for Special Operations Forces (SOF) have resulted in a physical and emotional stress on our force and families. I support the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Preservation of the Force and Families initiatives that focus on enhancing readiness through innovative and interactive approaches designed to prepare our SOF personnel more effectively for the current fight as well as our future security challenges. These efforts build on existing service initiatives but also recognize the unique demands placed upon SOF personnel. They seek to improve predictability in the training and deployment cycles of units and individuals to provide a

more sustainable balance with training and deployment as well as family reintegration. In addition, USSOCOM is developing programs to enhance the physical and psychological readiness of our force through dedicated resources at the unit level that will integrate injury prevention, resiliency, and rehabilitative services throughout the entire SOF readiness/deployment cycle.

Additionally, I am encouraged by the improvements over the past decade in the establishment and expansion of DOD authorities aimed at building partner capacity and executing the defense strategy to defeat, deter, and deny terrorist threat networks. Post 9/11, the authorities enacted in Section 1206 and Section 1203 (formerly subsection 1207(n)) have proven effective in National strategic efforts to build the capacity of foreign partners. Further, authority enacted in Section 1208 has been a critical tool for Geographic Combatant Commanders to employ partner forces to support U.S. SOF operations. I believe there is still room for improvement as we continue to fine-tune these authorities to address a wider range of security challenges. Specifically, I would like to look at methods to improve the flexibility of these authorities to provide for more persistent, multiyear engagements with key foreign partners. I believe this is a key area of consideration to enhance our effectiveness in creating preventive approaches to counterterrorism and countering threat networks in support of the new defense strategy.

Mr. THORNBERRY. There has been a great deal of press about very sensitive special operations activities over the past few years, culminating with the raid to kill Osama bin Laden. Are there concerns that SOF and the classified Special Mission Units have been perhaps too much in the limelight? Are there any concerns with leaks of classified information to the press from the special operations community, and what is being done about this? Are there any ongoing investigations?

Secretary SHEEHAN. Yes, there are concerns within the Special Operations Forces (SOF) community that very sensitive special operations activities are increasingly subject to media coverage. I am particularly concerned that unauthorized disclosures related to the techniques, tactics, and procedures used against Al Qaeda will eventually cost lives.

I do not, however, believe that unauthorized disclosures are endemic among the SOF community. The overwhelming majority of the SOF community operates at an extremely high tempo for extended periods in relative obscurity. Our operators desire no more than the respect and admiration of their peers, and rarely seek the public spotlight. Admiral McRaven has been very proactive in addressing unauthorized disclosures with the force, and he has my full support.

Mr. THORNBERRY. What role will SOF play in Afghanistan as we withdraw forces, and then beyond 2014? Can you outline for the committee what commitment will be required and how this will impact the rebalancing of SOF across the globe?

Secretary SHEEHAN. Although the specific roles that Special Operations Forces (SOF) will play in post-2014 Afghanistan remain to be determined, denying Al Qaeda safe-haven in both Afghanistan and the Pakistan border region remains a national priority for both the United States and Afghanistan. U.S. SOF are uniquely qualified not only to train, advise, and assist Afghan National Security Forces' efforts to deny Al Qaeda sanctuary within Afghanistan, but also to ensure that the Taliban, Haqqani network, and other terrorist facilitators pose no threat to Afghan sovereignty post-2014.

As Al Qaeda threats emerge in Syria, the Sahel, and elsewhere, the drawdown of conventional forces and SOF in Afghanistan will provide additional options by which we can rebalance against those other threats.

Mr. THORNBERRY. The previous Assistant Secretary of Defense for SO/LIC, Mike Vickers, commented to the press that he spent about 95% of his time on operations issues and the rest of his time on programmatic, policy, and budgetary oversight roles. Do you spend the same amount of time on operations? With so much time being spent on operational issues is there concern that you are missing the larger planning, policy, and budgetary roles?

Secretary SHEEHAN. The planning, policy, and budgetary issues facing the Special Operations Forces (SOF) community are all intimately tied to operational issues. In the policy realm, we are closely involved in developing, coordinating, and approving operational concepts and overseeing their execution. For this reason, my time ratio spent on one area or another is difficult to define quantitatively. The consistently high demand signal for SOF, coupled with the nature of operations that we are asking SOF to accomplish certainly factors significantly into the time that I and my staff must dedicate to operational issues. I believe we are effectively accomplishing my statutory responsibilities to oversee special operations activities and to advise the Secretary of Defense on all SOF-related matters.

Mr. THORNBERRY. A recent report on Special Operations Forces by the Council on Foreign Relations suggested that, "the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Special

Operations/Low Intensity Conflict has difficulty fully providing civilian oversight of U.S. Special Operations Command's policy and resources as directed by law." Do you agree with this assessment? Can you outline for the committee how your office conducts oversight of policy and resources?

Secretary SHEEHAN. I, along with my staff, exercise the policy and resource oversight of U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) through multiple processes and forums.

In the policy realm, we are intimately involved in developing, coordinating, and approving operational concepts and overseeing their execution. Although it is true that USSOCOM has devoted significant resources to developing operational plans and coordinating specific activities in support of those plans, ultimately, I am the principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense for special operations and am responsible for recommending approval or disapproval of modifications to those plans. In addition, my office routinely represents the Department of Defense in numerous interagency forums that shape strategies for employment of Special Operations Forces (SOF) and approval of specific activities and operations. Although the volume of USSOCOM efforts is important for implementation and may appear overwhelming in nature, I am confident that I and my staff provide meaningful oversight and make appropriate recommendations both to the Secretary of Defense and to other senior Administration officials.

In the resourcing area, we are constantly engaged in the prioritization and decision-making processes that affect the funding, equipping, and resourcing of SOF. As a sitting member of the governing resourcing bodies both within USSOCOM and DOD, I and my staff provide the requisite civilian oversight over often complex and difficult trade-off decisions for SOF resources. Again, the ultimate decisions on SOF resourcing are made by the Secretary of Defense with substantial input from me, as provided by law. Even in those few areas that USSOCOM, by law, may exercise the functions of a head of an agency, I have significant input and routinely provide advice, including through my staff, to USSOCOM.

