

A NEW STRATEGY FOR AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

HEARING

BEFORE THE

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CONTENTS

	Page
Kerry, Hon. John F., U.S. Senator from Massachusetts, opening statement	1
Lugar, Hon. Richard G., U.S. Senator from Indiana, opening statement	4
Mullen, ADM Michael G., USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, DC	5
Prepared statement	8
Responses to questions submitted by:	
Senator John F. Kerry	33
Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr	36
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand	37

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THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2009

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:20 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John F. Kerry (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Kerry, Feingold, Menendez, Cardin, Casey, Webb, Kaufman, Lugar, Corker, Isakson, and Wicker.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN F. KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come order. Thank you all for bearing with us for a few moments.

Admiral, thank you for your patience. I know you have a busy schedule, and I apologize, but we had one of our many, many, many cloture votes in order to proceed forward. And this is on the supplemental. So, I know it's a matter of urgent importance to you and the troops, and we're glad that we were able to get that vote under our belt.

We're delighted to have you come here today. We value your insights enormously. And let me say how grateful we are for your service, personally. I know how many trips you've been making to a number of different regions, and how diligently you've been pursuing the important issues that we face.

And on behalf of all of us, and I know you do this anyway, but please convey to the troops in every theater our deepest respect and admiration for what they are doing. Everywhere we go—and we're privileged to go to many of these sites—we see them working on the front lines under extraordinary circumstances, and I have never failed to be impressed by the quality of the service. I think I told you, when we were at breakfast recently, about a Navy commander running the PRT in Konar province in Afghanistan, and doing an amazing job, as impressive a briefing as I've received anywhere. So, we really just want to express our gratitude. Thank you.

It's been 2 months now since President Obama announced the new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. The situation in both countries obviously remains challenging. In Afghanistan, the trend lines over the past 2 years have been disturbing to every single one of us. There's no debate about their direction. Casualty rates have risen for American troops, for our coalition partners, for Afghan security forces, and especially for Afghan civilians. Security

throughout most of the country is as bad as it's been at any time since the ouster of the Taliban. The Afghan people have little affection for the Taliban; that is very, very clear. And yet, support has been rapidly falling for America and for the international community and for the Kabul government.

Regardless of the result, August's Afghan elections are going to be a milestone for the country. If the elections are successful, they can offer a much-needed break with recent disappointments. But, if the polling is marred by intimidation, fraud, other forms of abuse, it could push Afghanistan back toward the succession of failed, illegitimate governments of the past. The reality is, with this new strategy, we know, from our commanders on the ground that things may get worse before they get better. Deploying an additional 17,700 troops to Afghanistan is necessary to reverse the tide and prevent the Taliban insurgency from gaining unstoppable momentum.

When I visited our troops in Kandahar and Qalat this winter, I heard, repeatedly, that our soldiers fully understand the tough road ahead. The American people need to understand it as much as they do.

The Obama administration recognizes the challenge, which is why it has set forth a clear and limited goal of not allowing Afghanistan to again become a safe haven for al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups that seek to attack us. Every time one goes through the options—and there are not many, and they're not great—but, every time you look at the options and consider the possibilities of either not being there or withdrawing to a level that diminishes our ability to do the mission, the dangers of that option leap out at you, loudly and clearly. To leave Afghanistan to the capacity of al-Qaeda to simply return, and of extremist religious fanaticism, globally, to somehow view it as a free license, green light, to engage in the activities they've been engaging, would be far, far more dangerous for the world.

Under the leadership of General Petraeus, we are implementing a classic counterinsurgency strategy that will focus on protecting the civilian population rather than focusing on the enemies' body count: treating the populace, rather than geography, as the terrain to be won over; training Afghan security forces, understanding the local culture and tradition so that we can forge genuine partnerships; empowering the populace itself and local leaders to make this struggle their own. And I'm confident that the administration and the military understand that, if we are ultimately to win over the Afghan people, we must redouble our efforts to reduce civilian casualties.

We must also devise a more sophisticated counternarcotics strategy. Unless we provide alternative livelihoods to farmers while cracking down on drug kingpins and processing labs, we're unlikely to break the stranglehold of corrupt government officials and narco-traffickers.

In Pakistan, the challenges are, in many ways, greater, and certainly our ability to confront them is, at the same time, far more limited. But, make no mistake, Pakistan is an absolutely vital and compelling national security concern for the United States. I don't need to tell anyone, but we ought to underscore it at every occa-

sion, that if a nuclear-armed nation of 170 million people were to become a failed state, it would pose an unimaginable peril to itself, its neighbors, and the world.

At our hearing with Ambassador Holbrooke last week, we discussed Pakistan in depth. But, I'd just emphasize, quickly, a few points.

First, to fix a Pakistan policy that has largely failed to the degree there's been a Pakistan policy—we need to create a new strategy. Senator Lugar and I have introduced legislation which we believe helps to do just that. By tripling nonmilitary aid, authorizing it for 5 to 10 years, and delinking this aid from our security assistance, we believe we can put our relationship with Pakistan on an entirely new foundation. We can ground our ties on the bedrock of the Pakistani people themselves. That's why President Obama explicitly called on Congress to pass the Kerry-Lugar bill as part of his overall strategy.

Second, I was struck, during my recent visit to the Frontier Corps headquarters in Peshawar, to hear that after the corps had fought so hard to clear the Taliban out of Bajaur and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, they had no capacity to bring in the type of development assistance necessary to consolidate their military gains. The bill that Senator Lugar and I propose will help provide the "hold" and "build" parts of Pakistan's counterinsurgency strategy.

It was striking to me to hear a competent general, Gen. Tariq Khan, sit there and explain how well they had done, and then, in exasperation, talk about how, for 7 or 8 weeks afterward, not a thing happened to change the lives of the people who had been displaced or impacted by the military operation. That is an invitation to those folks giving up on the notion that it makes a difference. And clearly, in the long run, we're not going to be successful if that's what happens.

If we can employ this new counterinsurgency strategy that is more people-focused than troop-focused, not only in the tribal areas, but throughout the country, before settled areas like the Punjab and Sindh are destabilized, then I believe we may be able to address the emerging crisis before it fully matures.

Third, the current humanitarian crisis in Swat Valley is a pressing, immediate need. It is an opportunity, frankly, and I welcome the administration's decision to follow up on what came out of our hearing with Ambassador Holbrooke, and to send \$110 million in humanitarian aid.

As I noted at last week's hearing, we have a chance here to demonstrate America's friendship and concern for the people in the communities of Pakistan. After the Kashmir earthquake, the sight of American service men and women saving the lives of Pakistanis was incontrovertible proof of our good intentions, and, for a time—for a time—Pakistani's trusted Americans more than their own government or religious radicals. The problem is, we failed to follow up on that effort with a broader strategy, countrywide. But, I believe the bill proposed by Senator Lugar and myself aims to correct that failure.

Finally, we need to be clear about what is possible. Ultimately, we can influence events in Pakistan, but we cannot decide them.

We can strengthen the hand of the moderate majority, but the choices need to be made by that majority and by the Pakistanis themselves.

Chairman Mullen, I look forward to your military assessment of this new plan. I know how much time you have spent building personal relationships with the leaders—their military leaders, their intelligence leaders, as well as the civilian leadership. You are trusted over there, and you're trusted up here, and we welcome your testimony today.

Thank you.
Senator Lugar.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR,
U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA**

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I join you in welcoming Admiral Mullen.

We very much appreciate your willingness to engage our committee today on Afghanistan and Pakistan. You know of my personal enthusiasm for your leadership as CNO and in this new capacity. We are very excited and enthused about all that you are doing and the vigor with which you have done it.

Let me say that this hearing gives members an opportunity to review the situation in the region, from a military perspective, and to more fully comprehend the scope of the integrated U.S. effort to combat extremism.

Yesterday's JCS briefing for members provided a chance to discuss some critical matters in a classified setting, including reports that Pakistan has continued to prioritize nuclear weapons production despite other budgetary challenges. We're also grateful that Admiral Mullen will discuss the Kerry-Lugar Pakistan legislation, S. 962, and how we might improve United States policy toward that country. He has been in the region frequently during his time as Chairman of the JCS. His perspectives are extremely valuable to our understanding of what is occurring there.

Chairman Kerry and I have listened carefully to those conducting a strategic review of United States policy in South Asia. We've tried to ensure consistency between our bill and the President's goals. The Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009 sustains the objectives outlined by the administration and provides tools to help implement them, including additional resources for oversight and accountability. Our legislation is intended to take advantage of the opportunity for revitalizing our relationship with Pakistan through greater diplomatic engagement, as well as a commitment to economic and political development.

The President and his senior leadership have voiced support for this legislation. At last week's hearing, Ambassador Holbrooke asserted that the assistance envisioned in the bill is seen in the region as a central element of enhancing our long-term relationship. The President has stated clearly that diplomatic, military, and development efforts related to Afghanistan and Pakistan are among our highest national security priorities.

The administration has backed this up with a request for billions of dollars of assistance to these countries. And with Admiral Mullen's announcement, the administration has designated

Afghanistan as the “main effort” of our strategic military focus. Such strategic emphasis and the resources allocated to these purposes require considerable planning by the administration to ensure a favorable outcome.

Thus far, the administration has provided overarching guidance for policy toward the region and plans for Afghanistan that are somewhat more detailed, but it has yet to produce a comprehensive strategic blueprint of how our assistance will be utilized to achieve specific goals in these countries. Also lacking is a clear representation of the commitments that the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan will undertake, as well as the contributions of other donor countries.

I’ve been encouraged by Admiral Mullen’s support for appropriate foreign assistance increases in the region. He has long recognized the importance of an integrated civil/military approach to many challenges, a view that has been reinforced by the President’s strategic review. Our committee is committed to strengthening the civilian capacity of the State Department, USAID, and other agencies in this strategic region, and we welcome the Admiral’s views on that process. We’re interested in how the Department of Defense has engaged with the White House and other agencies in providing assistance in the region. The dynamic and dangerous environment in Pakistan will require a clear understanding of the responsibilities of our varied government agencies as they engage with the host governments. Are agencies adequately coordinating? And if not, how can we improve the situation? Has the Defense Department assumed roles, out of necessity, that are better performed by civilian agencies?

The committee is also interested in Admiral Mullen’s perspective on the tools necessary to fulfill the administration’s regional policy expectations. After years of United States support for the Pakistani military, it’s extremely important for Members of Congress to understand how the United States will maintain effective oversight of funds to prevent misappropriation or diversion.

The committee is especially grateful for your insights, Admiral Mullen, on the proposed legislation on interagency coordination and cooperation, and obviously on your recent visits to the region.

Thank you so much for coming.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling the hearing.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Admiral, we welcome your testimony. Thank you for being here with us.

**STATEMENT OF ADM MICHAEL MULLEN, USN, CHAIRMAN,
JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, WASHINGTON, DC**

Admiral MULLEN. Thank you, Chairman, Senator Lugar, distinguished members of the committee. I’m grateful for the opportunity to appear before you to discuss our strategy for the way ahead in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as the merits of this committee’s efforts to help us resource that strategy.

As you know, Afghanistan and Pakistan are two very different countries, very much linked, not only to each other, but inextricably to the national security of the United States. Indeed, our national interests are tied to that region perhaps more than to any

other right now, and there's no corner of the world, none, that concerns me more.

I've spent much of my time since assuming this office intently focused on the challenges in this region and on developing personal and professional relationships with leaders there whose decisions are now, and will remain, indispensable to our common desire for security and stability. We simply must try harder to see their problems through their eyes. If I've learned nothing else, it is that nothing we do here in Washington will matter much in the end if it doesn't reflect our earnest desire to reestablish lost trust and regain lost opportunities to prevent either nation from being crushed in the grip of extremism.

You don't need to look very hard at the headlines to see that we are not making enough headway in that regard. That's why one of the things I like most about the proposed legislation I see being considered here is the long-term commitment it represents specifically to the people of Pakistan, but also, quite frankly, to those in Afghanistan, as well. It is not just the money, it's the 5 years of steady friendship and partnership it will demand of us. It's the promise that we will stay and we will help and we will stand shoulder to shoulder with them in ways we've not always done.

That's why I'm also so committed to our new strategy for the reason, a strategy that, likewise, demands commitment from us and holds us accountable to achievable goals to deter, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda through whole-of-government resources and critical enablers.

Let me speak first to Afghanistan. We are, from a military perspective, shifting the main effort there as we drawdown responsibly in Iraq. There's no question in my mind that this is appropriate, given both the Taliban's dangerous ambitions and their steady progress. But, it is also a testament to the hard work and sacrifice of our men and women in Iraq over the last 6 years. Were it not for their efforts, for the relative success we've achieved there, we would, I fear, be unable to devote this level of attention to Afghanistan. And I am reminded that we still have more than 135,000 troops in Iraq, doing critical and dangerous work, that nearly 4,300 have lost their lives in that pursuit, and that, as we shift the weight of our footprint further east, we must capture their lessons learned, their combat experience, and tap into their wisdom.

The war in Iraq has taught us things about counterinsurgency warfare we might never have discovered otherwise. We will be smarter now in Afghanistan, and more successful, in my view, not in spite of Iraq, but because of it.

To that end, I see four distinct pillars for that success:

First, developing better security and better protection for the Afghan people, who are the real center of gravity, by continuing to train and build the Afghan National Security Force.

Second, setting the conditions for good governance, not just from Kabul, but at the local, district, and provincial levels.

Third, devising a sustainable path for Afghan-led development and opportunity, not propped up by poppy, but rooted in legitimate economic ways and means.

And finally, delivering and developing our own, and their, civilian capacity to overcome the obstacles to sound civil institutions, quality education, and the rule of law.

The Taliban may not be some monolithic or homogeneous body in makeup or ideology, but they do have governing ambitions. It's not just about instilling fear or spreading violence; they want Afghanistan back. We can't let them or their al-Qaeda cohorts have it. We can't permit the return of the very same safe haven from which the attacks on 9/11 were planned and resourced. And yet, we can't deny that our success in that regard may only push them deeper into Pakistan, which is the main topic of today's hearing.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, Pakistan faces many complex challenges: Perceived threats from the north and east, the very real threat of insurgency from within, and the growing risks of poverty and illiteracy unchecked. Yet, our ongoing engagement with Pakistan is yielding, and will continue to yield; promise. We still recover from almost 12 years of silence during which the Pressler amendment was enforced. Our military relationships, which often have been national relationships, have, in many ways, started anew. I value the relationship General Kiyani and I have cultivated over the past year and a half, and, more importantly, that kind of a relationship is slowly being replicated down our respective military chains and in our war colleges. In all this, there is opportunity now for both sides.

The ancient martial history that is Pakistan's is a proud one, indeed, going back to the days of Alexander the Great. And Pakistanis are just as proud today. We focus a lot of our attention on their conventional and even nuclear capabilities, but they are working to expand their counterinsurgency capability, as well. Just a few weeks ago, General Kiyani took me into the field to visit two division-based counterinsurgency exercises for two of their battalions. It was impressive, both in scope and complexity, but clearly they have more work to do. As we have seen in their recent operations in Buner and Swat, and again, as we have learned, ourselves, effective counterinsurgency warfare must be permanent enough to displace the enemy, and nimble enough not to displace the people.

We are happy to help contribute to relief efforts in those areas, but we look forward to the day, as they do, when they can return home to more prosperous and stable lives. Here, they need our help as much as we need their results. And with this committee's help, we can provide the right resources at the right time, creating needed flexibility with the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capabilities Fund, for which I ask your continued and expeditious support. Yet, military support alone will not be sufficient. It will also require complementary assistance to the civilian elements in Pakistani society so that they continue to support the civilian government and its move against the militant threat. Most of all, we must actively demonstrate patience in these relationships, on both sides of the table. We must expect that lasting results will take time, and be clear and candid with each other about how these results are being realized.

Finally, in addressing these issues, we must always view the second and third order effects from every perspective, for each one is

critical. We must remain cognizant of key regional linkages, such as India and China, as well as Russia, NATO, Iran, and the rest of the Middle East.

More than all this, we must continue to listen and learn directly from the people in Afghanistan and Pakistan themselves, to see things through their eyes. Their trust in us is the key to their success. And no tactical victory is worth the strategic failure of that trust.

Ours is a common enemy. We face a common task. This is the struggle of our age.

I thank you, sir, this committee, and the rest of Congress, for your assistance and counsel on these most pressing issues, and I thank you for your commitment to our military and our families, as well as our many civilian expeditionary and Foreign Service officers and their families.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Mullen follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ADM MICHAEL G. MULLEN, USN, CHAIRMAN OF THE
JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, WASHINGTON, DC

Chairman Kerry, Senator Lugar, distinguished members of the committee, it is my privilege to testify on our strategic partnerships with Pakistan and Afghanistan.

I set three priorities for the U.S. military upon becoming Chairman that continue to guide our efforts. First, we must continue to improve stability and defend our vital national interests in the broader Middle East and South Central Asia. Second, we must continue efforts to reset, reconstitute, and revitalize our Armed Forces. Third, we must continue to balance global strategic risks in a manner that enables us to deter conflict and be prepared for future conflicts. The three strategic priorities are underpinned by the concept of persistent engagement, which supports allies and partners through programs abroad and at home and which must be led by and conducted hand in hand with our interagency partners to achieve sustainable results. These three priorities all contribute to our Nation's ability to build and sustain enduring relationships with our Pakistani and Afghan partners.

REGIONAL ADJUSTMENTS

In Afghanistan and Pakistan we are providing additional resources to address the increase in violence we have seen over the past year. The strategic goal as outlined by the President on March 27, 2009, is to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda and its extremist allies in Pakistan and Afghanistan and to prevent their return to either country. As that strategy was being developed in consultation with our NATO allies and other partners, we began responding to conditions on the ground by reinforcing the International Security and Assistance Force with some 17,700 troops, the majority of which will arrive by this summer. Our aim in Afghanistan is to check the momentum of the insurgency, train additional forces, and ensure security for the Afghan national elections in August while in Pakistan we will work with the Pakistani military to further develop their counterinsurgency skills and build stronger relationships with Pakistani leaders at all levels.

The main effort is Afghanistan, though our residual footprint in Iraq will remain larger than in Afghanistan until well into 2010. The strategic environment we face beyond these ongoing conflicts is uncertain and complex, particularly in South Central Asia. In the near term, we will maintain focus on threats to our vital national interests and our forces directly in harm's way. Increasingly, the greatest mid-term military threats will come from transnational concerns—the proliferation of nuclear weapons and missile technology, transnational terrorism, competition over energy, water, and other vital resources, natural disasters and pandemics, climate change, and space vulnerabilities.

The global economic crisis has obviously affected South Central Asia, which, on top of existing conditions, increases the likelihood that internal strife, virulent nationalism, manufactured crises, or state conflict may generate additional crises. Economic concerns will increasingly be the lens through which we—and our partners and competitors—filter security considerations. Many nations may decrease expenditures on defense and foreign assistance, thus making the pool of collective resources we have to address challenges smaller. We will work through our military-to-mili-

tary contacts to address this tendency directly and help to coordinate priorities, emphasizing that we are all bound together in this global economy.

SOUTH CENTRAL ASIA

Given its strategic importance and our vital national interests, the United States will continue to engage in South Central Asia—as a commitment to friends and allies, as a catalyst for cooperative action against violent extremism, as a deterrent against state aggression, as an honest broker in conflict resolution, and as a guarantor of access to natural resources.

Attaining our goals in this critical region requires time, resources, patience, and endurance. Most of the challenges in the region are not military in nature and can only be met successfully through development and political leadership from within. Our role remains one essentially of consistent, transparent partnership-building. These actions send an unmistakable message to all that the United States remains committed to the common good, while steadily expanding the sets of partnerships available to address future challenges.

Central to our efforts in South Central Asia is the relentless pressure we will maintain on al-Qaeda and its senior leadership. Al-Qaeda's narrative will increasingly be exposed as corrupt and self-limiting. Though too many disaffected young men still fall prey to al-Qaeda's exploitation, I believe the populations in the region will ultimately reject what al-Qaeda offers. The U.S. military's task is to partner with affected nations to combat terrorism, counter violent extremism, and build their capacity to shoulder this same burden.

Afghanistan and Pakistan are key partners in the fight against al-Qaeda and militant global extremism and must be understood in relation to each other. Afghanistan requires additional resources to counter a growing insurgency partially fed by safe havens and support networks located within Pakistan. Additional United States troops will conduct counterinsurgency operations to enhance population security against the Taliban in south/southwest Afghanistan and to accelerate and improve training and mentoring of Afghan security forces. As in Iraq, our troops will live among the population. We must make every effort to eliminate civilian casualties, not only because this is the right thing to do but also because it deprives the Taliban of a propaganda tool that exploits Afghan casualties and calls into question United States/NATO endurance and effectiveness in providing security. Although we must expect higher alliance casualties as we go after the insurgents, their sanctuaries, and their sources of support, our extended security presence must—and will—ultimately protect the Afghan people and limit both civilian and military casualties. Our troops will integrate closely with Afghan forces, with the objective of building Afghan security forces that are capable of assuming responsibility for their country's security.

We expect the reinforcements to have the most pronounced effect over the next 12–24 months. Security gains can only be assured when complemented by development and governance programs designed to build greater self-sufficiency over time. Our commanders in the field can lay some of this groundwork through the proven Commanders Emergency Response Program to start smaller projects quickly, but these projects can not compensate for the larger, enduring programs required. A temporary boost in security that is not matched with commensurate political and economic development will not only fail to generate faith in the Afghan Government and fail to convince Afghans of our commitment, but also fail to accomplish our objectives. Over time, these objectives will be met more through civilian agencies and nongovernmental organizations, with a lighter military presence. Getting to that point, however, requires that military forces generate the security required for political and economic initiatives to take root.

Pakistan is crucial to our success in Afghanistan. In my nine trips to Pakistan, I've developed a deeper understanding of how important it is that we, as a nation, make and demonstrate a long-term commitment to sustaining this partnership. In my military judgment, the programs outlined in the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009 can serve as an important demonstration of our Nation's enduring commitment to the government and people of Pakistan. The bill's long-term approach, extending over the next 5 years, can help to allay the fear of abandonment that I have encountered during my interactions with Pakistani leaders. These programs, focused on civilian projects, will be essential complements to the programs we have underway with our military counterparts. It is essential that we have an expansive program of civilian assistance alongside our military assistance to the Government of Pakistan. We look forward to working with the committee to ensure that this proposed legislation best positions us to achieve our strategic goals. In my military judgment, I also believe the Reconstruction and Opportunity Zone

legislation the President has asked Congress to pass is an accompanying program which can stimulate badly needed jobs in Pakistan's troubled border region as well as in Afghanistan. These jobs would encourage legitimate livelihood alternatives for economically vulnerable young men and help counter the illicit and destabilizing income options that are now prevalent.

We are taking multiple approaches to rebuild and strengthen relationships and address threats common to both of our nations. One key approach in the near term is to help Pakistan's military to improve its overall—and specifically its counter-insurgency—capabilities. Beyond the trainers we will continue to provide the Pakistani Counterinsurgency Capability Fund, Foreign Military Financing and Coalition Support Funds the means to address this issue directly, and I ask the Congress to support these initiatives and provide the flexibility to accelerate their implementation. We will ensure that greater accountability measures are in place so that these funds go where they are intended to go. These programs will help the Pakistanis take continued action to combat extremist threats in western Pakistani territories which will complement the reinforcement of troops and special operations efforts in Afghanistan to maintain pressure on al-Qaeda and Taliban leadership. We will also be well served by a substantially larger International Military Education and Training program with Pakistan, to help enhance and forge lasting mil-to-mil relationships. I endorse a similar approach for and with our interagency partners, and I fully support the building of the Civilian Response Corps, which could be of considerable use to our diplomats in South Central Asia. Achieving the objectives of any campaign requires increased emphasis not only on fully developing and resourcing the capacity of other U.S. agencies (State, USAID, Agriculture, Treasury, and Commerce, and so forth), but also on increasing our Nation's ability to build similar interagency capacities with foreign partners.

Al-Qaeda has expressed the desire for WMD and their intent to strike our homeland is undisputed. Consequently, the nexus between violent extremism and the proliferation of WMD, most dangerously in South Central Asia, remains a grave threat to the United States and our vital national interests. The defeat of al-Qaeda would significantly diminish the threat from this nexus, but does not fully remove it given the conceptual blueprint already established for other extremists. We will continue to support national efforts to counter, limit, and contain WMD and missile proliferation from both hostile state and nonstate actors. We will also team with partners inside and outside the region to reduce vulnerabilities and strengthen regional governments' confidence that we can address the WMD threat. To this end, I remain satisfied that Pakistan's nuclear weapons are secure and that Pakistan's leadership and military are intensely focused on this issue. We have worked together closely and share the same strategic concerns, namely that this threat requires vigilance for the duration, given the magnitude of damage that could be wrought by even a single incident. We both recognize that we can never take the duty to safeguard nuclear weapons and material for granted.

In all, we must recognize the limits of what can be accomplished at what price and at what pace in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. This will be a long campaign. In keeping with the President's pledge to hold ourselves accountable, the interagency is working to develop measures of effectiveness to help us measure progress in both countries. We do understand the sensitivity to these measures our partners have, but our Nation's efforts also make it clear to them that we are committed to providing sustained, substantial commitment. Progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan will be halting and gradual, but we can steadily reduce the threats to our Nation that emanate from conditions in those countries. We are taking steps now to move additional troops into place, to refine the command structure, and to benefit from the pertinent counterinsurgency lessons we have learned thus far as we move forward with our Afghan, Pakistani, interagency, and international partners in accomplishing the strategic goal directed by the President.

Of particular importance in accomplishing this goal is India, which has emerged as an increasingly important strategic partner of the United States. The historic regional security dynamics between Pakistan and India complicate an already complex situation. We have seen some progress in transparency and timeliness of communications between the two nations, particularly in the aftermath of the attacks in Mumbai last November. To the extent that we can continue to assist our two partners in resolving points of potential conflict and cooperating to address extremist threats to both nations, the better will be the effects of our actions already underway in South Central Asia.

CONCLUSION

In providing my best military advice over the past 18 months, one important point I have made, consonant with Secretary Gates, is that our military activities must support rather than lead our Nation's foreign policy. Our war fighting ability will never be in doubt. But we have learned from the past 7-plus years of war that we serve this Nation best when we are part of a comprehensive, integrated approach that employs all elements of power to achieve the policy goals set by our civilian leaders. This approach is crucial in South Central Asia. To this end, I believe we should fully fund the State Department as the lead agent of U.S. diplomacy and development, an action that would undoubtedly resonate regionally and globally. This approach obviously requires the backing of a robust military and a strong economy. As we win the wars we are fighting and restore the health of our Armed Forces, the military's approach will increasingly support our diplomatic counterparts through the persistent engagement required to build networks of capable partners. By operating hand in hand with partners and integrated with the interagency and nongovernmental organizations, we will more successfully protect the citizens of this Nation.

On behalf of our servicemembers, I would like to thank Congress for the sustained investment in them and for your unwavering support in time of war.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Admiral, very, very much.

Let me begin by following up on something that you just said. I think the testimony you read from—was that a summary? I think it was a little different from the statement—

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. We'd had previously. And you mentioned four priorities. Am I correct?

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Core security, setting the conditions for good government, sustainable plan for Afghanistan development, and deliver the civilian capacity.

The question I think a lot of Senators have on their minds—I'm sure you'll hear it today in the course of some of the questioning—is, Is the delivering of a civilian capacity, in the way in which you're describing it, measurable in the context of the timeframe that we have? When do you measure success, in terms of that capacity being sufficiently developed? And is it possible that there's a narrower goal that could perhaps reduce the American footprint, but still meet America's security needs?

Admiral MULLEN. I think delivering civilian capacity, both ours and creating it for them, can't be done unless there's a secure environment. And with where we are right now—and this is the—I think this is founded very strongly in the AfPak strategy—with the level of violence in Afghanistan, the increasing insurgency in Pakistan, that security conditions must improve rapidly in order to create the conditions to allow the civilian capacity to, first of all, be established, and then grow.

I was just in southern Afghanistan, Kandahar, Helmand, and I was struck by the fact that there are 13 civilians from our Government in all of southern Afghanistan, and that's about half the number that are in the PRT in northern Iraq—just for a comparison. We've got to generate more capacity in that regard, and they've got to—we've got to have a reasonably secure environment in which to do that. The leverage of a civilian—of an experienced civilian that can help in education, that can help in finance, that can help in the rule of law, that can help in the areas that we need to build institutions—and not just in Kabul; this is really at the local level, the provincial level—it far outweighs, on a per-person basis, the

leverage of military troops. So, we don't need thousands, but we need more than 13.

The CHAIRMAN. Following up on that, again, I want to try to just push the envelope of what the options are so that we're all clear about what we're deciding, here. Al-Qaeda is basically situated, to the best of our knowledge, in northwest Pakistan, not in Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda is in Yemen. Al-Qaeda is in parts of the Horn of Africa and in other countries. But, we don't have the kind of military footprint in those—

Admiral MULLEN. That's right.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Countries we do here. And, nevertheless, we're tracking them, we're keeping a good eye on what they're up to, maybe not as in-depth as in Afghanistan. But, the question people are asking themselves is, Do we need to have that large of a presence in order to be able to protect ourselves against al-Qaeda? And might we better disperse these assets in a more effective way, more broadly, so that we're not on the ground trying to do what Alexander the Great couldn't do, the Soviets couldn't do, the British couldn't do, and many people are questioning whether or not we can, even under this new strategy?

Admiral MULLEN. I think it's a fair question, and yet, the strategy, I think—the comprehensive strategy across all elements of national power focuses on the overall requirements that must be developed, I believe, from a counterinsurgency standpoint, which includes the security piece, the development piece, the rule-of-law piece, the governance piece, and the ability to have a government in Afghanistan that actually delivers goods and services, including security, to its people. And that's just not going on right now. The—while al-Qaeda—and a government and an environment in Afghanistan that does not permit al-Qaeda to go back, and that's fundamentally what I believe would happen, should the Taliban return.

And, while al-Qaeda is not located in Afghanistan, and they are headquartered clearly in Pakistan, they—what I have watched over the last couple of years is this growing integration between al-Qaeda and the Taliban and the various networks of the Taliban, whether it's Haqqani or Mehsud or Hekmatyar. And that has alarmed me in its growth and in its integration over the last—over the last couple of years. And it's that, quite frankly, that also is extant in Pakistan, which is moving toward Islamabad.

So, the—clearly, with al-Qaeda resident in Pakistan, we can't send troops in there to do anything about that. I understand that. That's why the investment in, support of, relationship with, the people of Pakistan, the military of Pakistan, is so important, because in the long run the only way we're going to get at that is with them and through them, and that's going to take some time.

The CHAIRMAN. We know that narcotics are part of the financial—

We'll have order. I'm going to issue a warning. The committee will stand in recess until the police restore order.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. Order. There will be no demonstrations in this hearing. And if anybody chooses to do so from this point forward, they will be removed.

Narcotics provide the critical financial basis of the insurgency, and we know that the insurgents collect about 10 percent in direct taxes. This is known as the “usher”——

We will stand in recess. Can we have the sergeant at arms, police, please remove——

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you.

Let me just make clear to everybody, one of the great things about America is our ability to have people voice their feelings. This is what we fight for, it’s what we stand for, and everybody has a right to have their voice heard, but we’re going to do it in a way that maintains the order and decorum of a good, viable discussion. And let me just say to anybody who might be thinking of standing up, we’re having a good discussion here, and we’re looking at this, fulfilling our constitutional responsibilities to examine this policy. I’d like to do that in a competent way, and these interruptions, frankly, are both disrespectful to that process and to the ability of people who are following this to be able to listen carefully. So, I’d ask people to do that.

Let me say, also—and I want to make this clear—the United States of America did not ask to be in Afghanistan. Since World War II, there isn’t an instance in which the United States has been attacked in the way that we were attacked. And the U.S. Congress voted overwhelmingly—I believe, unanimously—that this is the place that is the center of the war on terror, and a place that we ought to be involved.

Now, how we’re going to be involved is now under discussion. The American people did vote, and they got change, and they now have a change in policy. And Admiral Mullen is here to discuss that change in policy, and we intend to have a competent discussion of it. But, he and a lot of other people are doing their best to try to develop a policy that honors the sacrifice of every soldier on the front line, and we’re going to respect that process.

On the narcotics issue, Admiral, I understand that the biggest source of funding for local farmers is from protecting opium convoys in poppy fields. And in 2007, the U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime estimated that the core of the Taliban, under Mullah Omar, collected about \$56 million from the usher tax, \$133 million from taxes on refineries, and as much as \$250 million from protection fees. So, the Taliban are now earning about \$½ billion a year from the drug trade, even though they’re not running the drug trade. And \$½ billion, as we all know, in that part of the world, is a lot of money.

So, it seems that they’re profiting from the cartels that have operated for a long time in the region, and there’s considerable evidence linking the Afghan insurgency with those major drug traffickers. Can you share with us your judgment about how extensive those ties are, whether we should regard the insurgents and the drug kingpins as essentially the same threat, and tell us what you’re thinking about how to tackle this with greater returns than we’ve had over the last 7 years.

Admiral MULLEN. Chairman, first of all, if I may, with respect to your statement about disparate voices and who we are as a country, it’s literally why I serve and represent that.

Second, with respect to the narcotics, the threat that's there, it's very clearly funding the insurgency; we know that. And strategically, it's—my view is, it has to be eliminated. There's—we have had almost no success in the last 7 or 8 years doing that, including this year's efforts, because we're unable to put viable livelihood in behind any kind of eradication.

And so, the term I use is “alternative development,” and what—and Special Representative Holbrooke—and others—but, he has singled this out as an absolute requirement for the rich agricultural potential that actually is in Afghanistan. It was three or four decades ago, but there was a time when they fed their own people and they exported food. Those fields right now are full of poppies, and not full of agriculture.

So, I think we've got to have a concerted effort, not just the United States, the international community, to displace it and to do it in a way that makes sense so that the season that I'm no longer growing poppies, I'm still able to feed my family.

Second, your statement about most of the resources coming in transport, I understand that to be very accurate. There are varied estimates of how much it is. I've heard as low as \$60 million, up to what you say, which is \$½ billion. Clearly, it is a significant resource that is funding the insurgency, and it is a very healthy mix of drug lords and Taliban. And I think we've—and I think we have to go after both.

Recent rules of engagement have allowed us to go after labs, people associated with labs. That's a step in the right direction. But, until we get a—until we are able to execute a comprehensive agricultural strategy, it's going to be very difficult to really have a strategic impact on that, though I think we absolutely must, and that's a key part of this strategy.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Admiral Mullen, as we've discussed today we have tried in this bill, S. 962, The Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act, to outline the thought that one of the attractive features of this is the idea that it would be at least a 5-year relationship. That commitment appears to have been, from the start, very attractive to Pakistanis, at least reflected in the press and comments made by government officials, on the basis of a fear that our relationship would be a fairly short one—

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

Senator LUGAR [continuing]. That we would tire of this, and the American people would tire of it. But, the thought of 5 years of commitment is attractive.

Now, the dilemma—and we faced this as we quizzed Ambassador Holbrooke the other day—is that trying to sketch out a plan, while you and the Ambassador and others are doing so many other things, is very hard to explain to our constituents how education might be enhanced, how health care might change, or how civil governmental reforms might change. Who physically, in Pakistan, city by city or region by region, would be in a position to accomplish any of this, quite apart from, as you say, the constraints of the security situation such that American civilians, working with American military, would be able to be cooperative in all of this?

Our legislation calls for 6-month reports; every 6 months throughout the 5 years, at least 10 reports, with some metrics as to how we're doing. And I think that's probably important, because this would proceed through at least 2½ Congresses and at least another administration for President Obama or somebody else. And the Pakistanis, we want to reassure, will not be forgotten, even if we have a congressional election here or a Presidential election.

But, this is why I stress the need to begin to fill in some of the outline, because that will be important, to begin with. The American people have been given the impression of vast corruption in governmental officials in both countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan; fair or unfair, the need for some credibility of these procedures is of the essence.

How do you see the progress of at least some outline, some report, some metric, some ability even to get to the first 6-month report of this, quite apart from the rest of it?

Admiral MULLEN. When I go to the region, Senator Lugar, both in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the question, both stated and unstated, is, Are you staying, or are you going? We've left, before. And, you know, I'm reminded that it was a well-resourced Mujahideen group that—from—by the United States, to fight the Soviets that—and, to some degree, we could argue about how much they're—I take it, you know, there is responsibility associated with that, and how much of that we accept is one thing. Believe me, the people that live there remember that, and then they remember, in both countries, one—in both countries, we physically left after the Soviets were kicked out of Afghanistan, and second, we sanctioned the Pakistanis for that 12 years. So, that question is out there, and, I think, until it gets answered, and that's the trust issue, that we're going to—we're going to struggle in reestablishing this relationship, and that's going to take time, and that's why one of the things I argue for is patience.

I think we know how to do this; meaning, the kinds of things, Senator Lugar, you were talking about. What needs to be done—sorry, I think we know what needs to be done. I think there are some significant challenges in the how-to-do-this. You've got to have the security umbrella. But, the key is education, long term. The key is village by village. The key is putting institutions, which are not corrupt, developing capacity at every level, including the district level, the subdistrict level, as well as the provincial level, which provide for their people. And that's what the people, certainly in the west of Pakistan, are calling for, and actually in other places, as well as the people of Afghanistan.

So, it is—it is jobs, it is education, it's an ability to provide for oneself. There are things—we know what we need to do; it's a question of exactly how to do it, and that's going to take the engagement piece, that's going to take more than 13 civilians in the southern part of Afghanistan.

But, I also have great hopes, given that opportunity—and this isn't just for U.S. civilians—given that opportunity, that it's doable, and it will create capacity over time. But, it's “over time.”

So, fundamentally, the question is, Are we going to stay or go? And are we patient enough to see that through? We are starting a new relationship with both these countries, and that's going to

take—with countries where we have an enduring decade-long relationship. I was just in Egypt; I was struck by the fact that we have—we have provided money to Egypt every year since the Camp David Accords, to the tune of about \$1.3 billion—and I was struck by the solid foundation of that relationship. Whatever our differences might be, very critical partner in a very critical part of the world. That's 30 years later, at a really critical time. We are beginning that kind of relationship with Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Senator LUGAR. Let me shift to an entirely different subject. You've mentioned—or, rather, the chairman, really, has—the importance of your relationship with General Kiyani. And this really is profoundly important. Now, in that relationship, is it possible, at some point, just picking up at least the experience we've had with the Nunn-Lugar Act in—with Russia and other countries—

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

Senator LUGAR. Now, this was Cooperative Threat Reduction. Now, this doesn't mean that every country we've cooperated with has reduced all of their weapons, but it does mean that we shared the threat, we understood the mutual problems that were involved in this. And it seems to me this might be a fertile opportunity in due course, for cooperation between the United States and Pakistan so that we both understand the threats that we both face, and, likewise, have a degree of trust and cooperation that would be important to them, as well as ourselves.

Admiral MULLEN. I agree very strongly, and General Kiyani and I work on that all the time in our meetings and discussions, and in our chains of command, and that has to do with the relationship between Pakistan and India. And they've built a military that's been focused almost exclusively on that. That's shifting. He recognizes the extremist threat that he has in his country. When you look at the number of Pakistani citizens that have been lost to bombs in the last several years, and when you look at the number of his people—you know, over 1,000 soldiers have been lost in this fight, as well. And obviously in the tough fight they're in right now, those sacrifices continue.

And he is shifting. I talked about the training I went to. A year ago, there—I was not aware of any counterinsurgency training, and there was a lot of criticism, Are they shifting? Again, we would like to see them do this more rapidly. That said, that's his army, his country, you know, his political leadership, his citizens, and, in the end, they decide how fast they're going to move in that direction.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Senator Feingold.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for holding the hearing. It provides a nice counterpoint to last week's hearing with Ambassador Holbrooke. And given the critical national security issues we're discussing today, having the Defense Department testify before our committee helps to provide a full and comprehensive framework.

And, Admiral Mullen, thank you for coming before the committee today. It is good to see you again.

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, sir.

Senator FEINGOLD. As the President and the Secretary of State have made clear, security in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as for us here at home, are inextricably linked. I appreciate your commitment to ensuring U.S. military activities support, rather than lead, our Nation's foreign policy, and that you have so candidly reminded us of how important it is for our military to be part of, as you put it, "a comprehensive integrated approach that employs all elements of power to achieve the policy goals set by our civilian leaders." However, as you know, I am concerned that, by sending 21,000 new U.S. troops to Afghanistan, we may end up further destabilizing Pakistan without providing substantial lasting improvements in Afghanistan.

Weak civilian governments, an increased number of militants, and an expanded U.S. troop presence could be a recipe for disaster for those nations in the region, as well as our own Nation's security. So, I look forward to discussing some of this with you.

Admiral, at the hearing last week, I asked Ambassador Holbrooke whether he was confident that an increase in U.S. troops in Afghanistan would not somehow counterproductively drive militants into Pakistan and contribute to greater instability. I think you can certainly argue that that's what happened after 9/11. And what Ambassador Holbrooke said was—I'm quoting here, "No, I am only sure that we are aware of the problem, that we are working intensely with the Pakistani Army, that they are aware of it, that the lesson of 2001-02 has been absorbed."

Do you share the Ambassador's concern?

Admiral MULLEN. I share your concern with respect to that. Clearly, we're—first of all, I think the troop level is about right. I was just in RC East. We've recently added a brigade there in January. And General McKiernan, General Schloesser, who is the two-star that is in the eastern part of Afghanistan, from a force perspective, force laydown perspective, thinks that's about right. The 10,000 marines that go into southern Afghanistan here, starting now and throughout the summer, we think that is about right. And I am—I don't know of any other way to provide for the security—and what's also—the 17,700 is one; the other 4,000 who are going in, to get to 21, are really trainers, and it is—it is in the training capacity-building in both—for both the police and the military, that, as they take over their own security, that's absolutely key.

But, I—your point—and I've discussed this with General Kiyani, very specifically—your point about insurgents going, particularly, in to Baluchistan, but particularly across that border, is one—we all share the concern for that. He shares the concern for that. Where I'm—where I'm comfortable is—at least planning for and having some expectation will allow us to address that, and that is going on, not just where I live, but certainly where General Kiyani is, as well.

Could I—can I—you know, 100-percent certain that won't destabilize Pakistan? You know, I don't know the answer to that. I don't think it will, because we're aware of it, and I think—I think Pakistan is further away from being totally destabilized than a lot of people realize. The military and civilian leadership recognizes this potential, and so, we're addressing it ahead of time.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, that's a candid answer. And I'm also concerned that, while the Pakistani military has undertaken—undertaking operations in Swat, they may be moving selectively against certain militants, and not necessarily going after key Taliban leadership in other critical regions. Have you—and you just mentioned this—have you seen a change in Pakistani behavior in Baluchistan?

Admiral MULLEN. Not significant, at this point. And where I find General Kiyani, in distributing his and apportioning his capability, and shifting his weight to the west, he does it in a measured way, and he does it within the capacity that he can, in terms of rotations. And, you know, being someone who is also fighting two wars, I have—you know, I have sympathy with the need to provide forces in two different places. And, in fact, one being a conventional fight, basically, and the other one being a counterinsurgency fight. So, he's changing on the run, and he's worked his way through Mohmand and Bonir and Dir, and he's now back in Swat. The key for Swat is to follow the military capability up, or the security up, with some hold capability, which gets to the importance of this bill, and to be—hold and build. And that's—he's moving—starting to move into that phase in parts of Swat right now. But, there's north Waziristan, southern Waziristan, Baluchistan, writ large, which he also knows is a problem. It's a question of, How do you execute a campaign plan? And you can't do it all at once.

Senator FEINGOLD. In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee last week, you expressed continued concern about cooperation between the ISI and the Taliban. And Secretary Clinton testified yesterday that the State Department is preparing contingency plans in the event that, 6 months from now, we continue to see members of the ISI supporting the Taliban. How would you recommend that we alter our military-to-military relations, in the event that such support continues in 6 months' time?

Admiral MULLEN. I haven't—I haven't taken myself out to a specific target date with respect to that, Senator Feingold. I have had lengthy discussions with, not just—well, actually, with PAC civilian and military leadership. The military leadership is critical here. And what I have watched General—and certainly expressed this concern, and my belief has been, for some time, that I believe the ISI has to change its strategic approach in order for progress to be made on the long term.

What General Kiyani has done, and the civilian leadership has done is changed out the leadership of that organization. Almost the entire leadership—not just Pasha, but the principal directorates, are all people that General Kiyani trusts. We've had this discussion. This has happened over the last 6 months.

So, I think this is going to take some time. There's—you know, the ISI is very supportive in ways that—and constructive—in ways that we concur in. There are still challenges about connections with militants, and their support of those militants, as well. And I've constantly addressed those concerns, will continue to do that.

I think part of that answer is answering the question about how Pakistan sees its future. Pakistan is—you know, created the ISI, and it is—its strategic approach has been to foment toward India, foment toward Afghanistan. And in their insecurity in that regard,

the ISI has a mission. I think that that has to change. A lot of that'll change, I believe, long term, if they have more confidence in their own security.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much, Admiral.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Feingold.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Admiral Mullen. Great to——

Admiral MULLEN. Hi, Senator.

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. Have you back.

Wednesday morning, I had breakfast with a Member of the Parliament of Pakistan representing the Punjab province——

Admiral MULLEN. Yes.

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. And we talked at great length about the current situation in the Swat Valley. He commented to me that his biggest concern is what will occur post-confrontation, in terms of the need for reconstruction and for economic support in the Swat Valley and to the refugees from that battle. And in your prepared remarks you addressed the supplemental funding and the \$497 million for, and I quote, “to help stem rapidly deteriorating security and economic conditions confronting Pakistan.” Is that money, in your judgment, enough? And is it targeted in the area of the Swat Valley?

Admiral MULLEN. As best I can understand, Senator Isakson, it is certainly enough right now for the needs that we understand. The whole IDP issue—actually, I've been—the two-star Navy admiral that we have who runs our Office of Development there was the lead for the earthquake relief, so he has an awful lot of experience in Pakistan, and great relationships. And the general that Pakistan has appointed, General Nadeem, is the right guy to address this issue.

I've been impressed, from what I've seen—and obviously this is being here—with the initial efforts in that regard, even though it's grown to, on some estimates, as high as \$1.7 million. I've seen the camps. They're very well organized. Certainly, there's assistance that we've given, and I think that's critical, as well as other international organizations.

But, it does—and so, the amount of money that's in the bill right now, as best I can tell, is both focused in the right areas, and will hit the target for the timeframe that we're talking about.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I am really glad that you made reference to the earthquake in your response, because the Member of Parliament, at that breakfast, made the comment that the positive——

Admiral MULLEN. Yes.

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. Feelings toward the United States in Pakistan were never higher than——

Admiral MULLEN. Right.

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. Following the earthquake, when we delivered so much humanitarian relief to that country.

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, sir.

Senator ISAKSON. And he equated our helping with the economic and destabilizing situation in the Swat Valley to the level of aid provided following the earthquake, saying he believed it would bring back those positive feelings toward the United States.

Admiral MULLEN. The feedback I get from that part of Pakistan, in particular, is not unlike the challenges in Afghanistan, in the sense that there are people there waiting for their government institutions—local, you know, at every level—to deliver the goods and services. I mean, it has a counterinsurgency very strong threat to it, just like it does in other counterinsurgencies. And so, the ability to not just get the aid there, but then get it to the people—and that's the key that we've got to focus on—not just the United States, international organizations, NGOs—to deliver to the people, that's where the impact will be felt, and that's the Government of Pakistan's next step, as well as ours.

Senator ISAKSON. And on the issue of local infrastructure with regard to Afghanistan, of those 4,000 troops that will be deployed for the training—

Admiral MULLEN. Right.

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. Most of them will be coming from Fort Stewart, in the 48th—

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, sir.

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. If I am not mistaken. I spoke with General Cucolo, who just returned from Afghanistan a couple of days ago. I also had a dear friend who was there 2 years ago, Capt. Hunter Hill, one of the first to go in as a military police officer to help train the civilian police force. And, as I understand it, culturally, police and civil justice in local communities really did not exist in Pakistan.

Admiral MULLEN. Pakistan or—

Senator ISAKSON. I mean in Afghanistan, I'm sorry. Are these 4,000 troops going to be the jolt that we need to get enough people on the ground to train these local folks?

Admiral MULLEN. This is the "hold" piece, really, which is— which are the local police. And this brigade, 4th of the 82d, will, in fact, focus almost solely on training police. And it's that piece that we've got to—we've got to increase both dramatically in size and as quickly as we can. And we went through this—there was a time, not that long ago in Iraq, where there was—the MOI was corrupt, the Ministry of Interior was corrupt. We had great problems with the police in Iraq. It comes in after the military, meaning it's slower, we're progressing more slowly. And so, we know we have to do that. And so—but, fundamentally, this is the piece that will get at the "hold" so that when security is established, it actually will be sustained.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you very much for your service and leadership.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

Senator Cardin.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral Mullen, it's a pleasure to have you before—

Admiral MULLEN. Hi, Senator.

Senator CARDIN [continuing]. The committee. We thank you very much for your service.

I want to get your views on the challenges that are being posed because of nuclear weapon capacity in that region. We know that Pakistan has the capacity and India has the capacity. We are unclear as to whether they are increasing their capacity or not.

There's always the issue about the stability of the government with relation to the control of nuclear weapons in Pakistan, at least that's an issue that has been talked about frequently more recently. And then there is the development within Iran, and the pressure that that puts within the region on nuclear issues.

So, I would just like to get your assessment as to how you see these developments challenging our goals in that region, and whether you have any specific recommendations.

Admiral MULLEN. I am extremely concerned about the whole of issue of nuclear weapons in the region. Senator Webb asked me, at a hearing last week, about whether or not the Pakistanis were increasing their inventory, and my answer to that was a single word, which was "yes." And in an open environment, I wouldn't want to talk more about that right now.

I was struck with the Mumbai attacks, that 10 terrorists, obviously supported by more, could move—with relatively simple technology—I mean, AKs, hand grenades, cell phones, and a Garmin GPS receiver—could move two nuclear states closer to war. That really alarmed me. It took on a new—for me, a new perspective on terrorists. This wasn't about hitting one country or one building or a series of buildings or, you know, sort of a single attack, but, strategically, that really got my attention, in terms of how—the impact that terrorists can have, and the need to address that and then move these countries who have had, certainly, a spotted history, with respect to this, and obviously they're both nuclear-capable countries.

I am confident in the controls that the Pakistanis have on their nuclear weapons. That's basically under the military. We've invested a significant amount of resources through the Department of Energy in the last several years. They've improved those dramatically. They still have to improve. They—and that being said—and I'm also comfortable with the command-and-control architecture that is in place to both control them and make decisions about whether they'd use them or not, and that we have—we have an understanding of that.

Moving to Iran, I—and I'm one who believes that Iran getting a nuclear weapon is calamitous for the region and for the world. And part of me—it's addition to having it and destabilizing it. It then, in my view, generates neighbors who feel exposed, deficient, and then develop or buy the capability themselves. So, I'd just take that region and—if I take India and Pakistan and what's going on there with respect to nuclear weapons, and now I just project that to the gulf region, 20 or 30 years from now, I just think the downside potential is absolutely disastrous.

So, that's why I feel—one of the reasons I feel so strongly about, you know, Iran not achieving that objective, because I think it's incredibly destabilizing now, as well as in the future. And I think—I think, you know, big powers, major leaders, internationally, have got to come together to arrest this growth, or the long-term downside for the people in the world is really, really tragic and drastic.

Senator CARDIN. Well, I appreciate that response. It appears like we do have a common interest with our allies around the world to make sure that does not happen, and that we need to energize that group if we're going to be effective in our policies to prevent Iran

from becoming a nuclear power and to deal with the current threats in that region.

I want to change gears and just mention one other issue. I had the opportunity to chair the Helsinki Commission in the Congress in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. I mention that because one of the President's stated goals in Afghanistan is to bring in more international presence in—

Admiral MULLEN. Yes.

Senator CARDIN [continuing]. Dealing with objectives, whether it is civilian or governmental capacity. Currently, Afghanistan is a partner in OSCE for cooperation, and there are OSCE resources in Afghanistan—I believe mainly dealing with border security or border training issues.

One of the suggestions being made is that Pakistan might want to consider becoming a partner in the OSCE, allowing that organization's capacity to bring in resources to help build governmental capacity and civilian capacity. I mention that because I think your involvement here in trying to bring in more international support for nation-building is a positive step in the United States objectives in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, and would just urge you to focus on this and see whether we all can have a workable strategy.

Admiral MULLEN. Senator, I spent most of my time in NATO, obviously, in Europe, because of that alliance and my responsibilities, but what I'd do, if I were going to use NATO, and I'd—they're—I'm not trying to directly compare OSCE and NATO, except to say where I see NATO going is increasingly toward a broader and more in-depth relationship with Pakistan, because of the common interests. General Kiyani asked—sorry, the chairman of the Military Committee in NATO asked General Kiyani to come to the Military Committee last year, and he came and laid out, you know, a very clear view to the military CHODs, the chiefs, from all 28—or, 26 countries at the time. There are ongoing discussions in various venues outside the military to connect more internationally through these organizations, alliances, whatever they might be. And I see that as growing. And certainly the capacity in some of these other areas that other organizations have and represent are critical, and the more that we can do, and the sooner we can do it, I think the better off we'll be.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

And, Admiral, thank you for your service.

Admiral MULLEN. Senator Corker, good to see you.

Senator CORKER. One of the first high, high military people I met when I came here, and I certainly appreciate your service.

I wonder—I missed part of your testimony—I read your testimony last night, I missed some of the other questions, for the markup, and if I'm being redundant, I apologize. But, I wonder if you might just state what our mission in Afghanistan is.

Admiral MULLEN. It's a mission that tied to the Afghanistan and Pakistan strategy; it is to make—it is basically to ensure that governmental organizations, security organizations, development orga-

nizations, economic, rule of law, all those things, are put in place in such a way that an environment to which—or, in which the al-Qaeda could return is not possible. And I believe—first of all, I think there's a strategic goal the Taliban have, is to move back and take over the country, and then, second, in that goal, in that environment, that that is fertile ground for al-Qaeda, who continues, not just to be in Pakistan, but is now moving into Yemen, is connected very well in Somalia, and in other parts of the world—and their strategic objectives remain the same—to threaten us, to threaten the West—and that fertile ground to do that would be Kandahar and Kabul again if we don't get this right.

Senator CORKER. So, does that mean, listening to testimony, that we will be doing the same thing we're doing in Afghanistan in Yemen and Somalia soon?

Admiral MULLEN. No. I'm increasingly concerned about the growing safe havens—

Senator CORKER. Well, what—

Admiral MULLEN [continuing]. That are in Yemen and that are in—that are in Somalia. And those are—those are issues that I think the international community's going to have to address, because al-Qaeda's not going away, at least at this point.

And that said, the very proximate location of al-Qaeda, you know, in the border area to Afghanistan gives them an opportunity to return very easily.

Senator CORKER. So, is the difference between us not being in Somalia and Yemen the fact that we just happen to be in Afghanistan already? I mean, I'm having a—

Admiral MULLEN. No, I think—

Senator CORKER [continuing]. Hard time—

Admiral MULLEN. I mean, Afghanistan is the place from which 9/11 was originated. Al-Qaeda was there, and can—

Senator CORKER. But, those—

Admiral MULLEN [continuing]. And can return—

Senator CORKER. But, those guys are not there today, right?

Admiral MULLEN. They're—no, they're not. They're—plenty of their agents are there. Believe—they're very well connected with the Taliban. They have mutually converging goals. And, in fact, you know, their headquarters and their leadership is in Pakistan, not very far away.

Senator CORKER. Well, so let me ask you this. I—the—what you laid out sounded to me like we're nation-building in Afghanistan. So, I mean, that—everything you just laid out, we're, in essence, taking a nation that was basically hollowed out in earlier years, and we're building it, is—would that be a fair statement?

Admiral MULLEN. I would—I think that, to some degree, we're speaking about things that were there before, and to an additional degree, we're talking about things that haven't been there—

Senator CORKER. But—

Admiral MULLEN [continuing]. In any kind of capacity—

Senator CORKER. Yes.

Admiral MULLEN [continuing]. In the past; let's say, economic—
or in—

Senator CORKER. Yes.

Admiral MULLEN [continuing]. In the recent past, for sure.

Senator CORKER. But, in Iraq, at least they had been accustomed to a central government. In Afghanistan, that certainly is not the case; it's a tribal country. And so, in essence, in many ways our task in Afghanistan, as far as building a nation, is much greater than in Iraq. Is that correct?

Admiral MULLEN. Actually—I mean, I'm—I would—in terms of building a nation, yes, because of the resources they don't have. But, in terms of the requirements—and it's in Iraq, as well—we're not just in Baghdad; I mean, we're in local governments, provinces throughout Iraq. This is not going to work in Iraq, and it's not going to work in Afghanistan unless we build that capacity at the districts, the subdistricts, in the villages of Afghanistan, as well as some capability—institutional capability in Kabul.

Senator CORKER. So, if I understand what you've said—and I respect you tremendously, and certainly appreciate your service—we are nation-building in Afghanistan. So, let me just—I think that's been made clear. And that, to me, has been said over and over again, kind of, sort of. I think the part that we're leaving out more so in Afghanistan is, we're not so sure about building a really great democratically functioning country, because of some of our partnerships and other kinds of things, but we, in essence, are nation-building.

So, let me just move on, then. I have asked for some benchmarks and objectives. Look, I support our military, I support our country's efforts to, certainly, root out terrorism, the transnational type that will affect us, certainly. I've asked for some objectives and benchmarks. I think we have finally made a deal on the floor that, in this supplemental, there will be—the National Security Council or somebody will have to come forth and—

Admiral MULLEN. Right.

Senator CORKER [continuing]. Tell us what our objectives are. By the way, I think that would be very helpful to the President of Afghanistan—

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

Senator CORKER [continuing]. Who I don't think has a clear idea, either. So, it would help him. OK? Certainly help us, I think, as legislators, to know what it is that our objectives are, some benchmarks, and then some reporting. You don't have any—

Admiral MULLEN. Well—

Senator CORKER. There's no strings attached, there's no time-tables; it's just asking you to tell us what our objectives are, and to benchmark those, and to give us reports. You have no issue with that, do you?

Admiral MULLEN. None. No, sir, I am a big fan of benchmarks. They are being developed. I think they'll be available in the very near future, and I think we do need to assess ourselves, later this year or early next year, about how we're doing, and then adjust the strategy accordingly.

Senator CORKER. Can you—

Admiral MULLEN. And it covers—

Senator CORKER [continuing]. Imagine—

Admiral MULLEN. And it will cover the security area, the economic development area, the rule-of-law/governance area, and it'll go national to local.

Senator CORKER. So, I guess—I know my time is up—I guess the one thing I've learned over the last 2 years and 4 months is that if we, as a country, plant our flag in another country, we're going to be there until we rebuild that country. We've been Afghanistan for 8 years now. Based on what I'm hearing you say we need to do in others—and I understand that it—we don't want it to be a safe haven for transnational terrorism; I understand that. But, it sounds to me like there's a great possibility that we will be there another 8 years, that this is a long, tough, slog.

Admiral MULLEN. It is a long—

Senator CORKER. And once we—

Admiral MULLEN [continuing]. Tough—

Senator CORKER [continuing]. And once we put our flag down, it's very tough to leave, because, more than just as in Somalia and Yemen, where we have the same similar dynamics—I repeated myself—similar dynamics, OK? In Afghanistan, the fact is—another reason is, we're there, and once we plant our flag, we don't want to leave folks behind that have been supportive. But, once we're there, we're going to be there for the long haul until that country is rebuilt, even though our partners may be corrupt, even though our partners may not share our goals, even though our partners actually are hugely benefiting, because their country's budget couldn't even pay for half of their army, I don't think. So, while we're there, we're building roads, we're doing everything that they cannot do themselves. And so, the longer we're there, the better they are as it relates to their own country. And that's something I think all of us need to understand and know, that once that flag goes down, we're probably going to be there until that entire country is rebuilt. And I don't know if you want to rebut.

Admiral MULLEN. Just—I'd only comment, sir, that the flag went down in 2002. We have not resourced Afghanistan, haven't even come close to resourcing Afghanistan, to put ourselves in a position to succeed since then. That's where we are now. I take your point about, this is the eighth year of war. I understand that. That said, we have gotten to a point now of a much more comprehensive view and a commitment and ability to resource it. And it's not 2002; the conditions have changed dramatically in Afghanistan. And I think this strategy, with its objectives, gets at the future, recognizing where we are and the requirements that we have.

Senator CORKER. And I applaud you for that.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. And you support the bill.

Senator CORKER. The supplemental? [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. We're trying to figure it out.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral, thank you for your exemplary service to our country.
We—

Admiral MULLEN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Appreciate it. I've been questioning our Pakistan side of this—

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Equation in the last several hearings, and you've probably given me the greatest sense of solace

here, about being a big fan of benchmarks and making commitments to it, because I asked for a GAO report, with Senator Harkin, about what we did in Pakistan over the last several years. We've spent \$12 billion, and we have very little to show for it.

Admiral MULLEN. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. And now I'm looking at a supplemental that has about \$1.6 billion in it, in this vote probably later today—\$400 million for the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Fund, \$439 million in economic support funds, and \$700 million in coalition support funds. That coalition support funds is largely what we haven't accounted for in the last effort.

So, I have two lines of questioning that I hope you can help me with. One is, Can you tell me that, in fact, we've improved and will have the accountability necessary for these funds, moving forward? Which was not the case in the past. No. 1.

No. 2—if so, how? No. 2 is, in April we saw reports coming out that the Inter-Services Intelligence—the ISI—in Pakistan was actually assisting the Taliban. That was April. That was just last month. And now I understand that the Pakistanis are on the offensive, but I'm wondering, What is ISI's role, here, at this point in time? How engaged are they? Because when I look at those reports, when I look at the release of the video of our CIA Director, which should have been a private meeting and obviously was meant to undercut whatever that conversation was, and when I look at the set of circumstances of acquiring nuclear weapons when we are giving money—money's fungible, at the end of the day—it makes for a concern for me. So, as I hear a new strategy, particularly on the Pakistan of this Afghanistan-Pakistan equation, I get concerned.

So, help me out, here, if you can.

Admiral MULLEN. Money is fungible. I understand that. I spoke earlier about our investment in Egypt, post-Camp David Accords, over 30 years now, which was significant in providing a long-term relationship in a really critical part of the world and that I think we're starting over. Actually, I would argue we're starting in a hole with Pakistan because we sanctioned them for 12 years. So, it's not even like a fresh relationship. The question they ask is, Are you sticking around? And that has an impact on ISI's role, and I'll come back to that.

We have not had good controls on the CSF, the Coalition Support Funds, although they're not the only country that gets them. And we have improved that fairly dramatically in the last year, year and a half, so it gets audited at the Embassy, by our military team there, it gets audited again in CENTCOM, and it gets audited in the comptroller's office at SECDEF's level, when the requests come back. And these are—Coalition Support Funds are funds which essentially reimburse them for operations. So, they asked, most recently, for \$1.5 billion, I think, and out of that, we approved about \$400 to \$500 million, if I remember the figures correctly. So, the controls are much more focused than they were a year ago. So, that's one point.

In the PCCF piece—this is basically money that we—and FMF, for that matter—that we, essentially, administer, so we see where it goes.

Going back to CSF for just a second, when we reimburse them, it goes into their treasury, just like we would put it in our treasury, so tracking it—tracking what happens to that \$400 million once it drops into their accounts, we can't do that. The controls that we have on the PCCF, the FMF, or we would have if it gets approved—essentially, we would look to that, and it would be the Embassy, and certainly the military section, for the military areas, to see if it, in fact, bought helicopters, bought ISR, bought training, and we saw an increase there, and we could measure that over time and we could look at it over time. I don't know how much we can, in the next 6 months, to the direction of report every 6 months how we're doing, but certainly over time we'd be able to do that, if we have that time.

So, I'm confident we've got more visibility. We will have more visibility than we've had in the past.

What I've also learned in the 18 months and 10 trips that I've taken to Pakistan, a couple of things that don't work for them, or really have an impact on our ability to move forward. One is public criticism. And I've found that out personally, I'm not—this is because I have. And then, second, are conditioning. And we—as I've looked back through our history, we've had conditions on financing and programs, and we've not had. So, I would only ask that, as we condition things, we create as much flexibility as we can, and then look at it over time, as opposed to heavy conditions up front that almost make it impossible to get started.

And then, the new piece is—controls are good. I believe that command and control, security measures on the part of them, have improved dramatically in the last several years. We've put resources, so have they. They still need to improve, and that the military has good visibility on the weapons, as well as their security, as well as if and when they'd ever be put in a position to be used.

Senator MENENDEZ. The ISI?

Admiral MULLEN. The ISI is an organization that, as long as last summer, I've talked publicly about needing to change its strategic direction. I think, at a very high level, it gets to the question of how Pakistan ensures its security, and it has historically done that by agitating, both in Afghanistan and in India. And to the degree that they're secure, they feel good about their security in the future, I think that that argues for, and presents potential for, a strategic shift.

Kiyani has changed out the—all the principal leaders in the ISI with his people. He certainly knows of our concerns, because I've expressed them. And there's ongoing work. That said, there's a gray area in the ISI that many of us don't understand, and clearly those kinds of connections that you talked about have been there, and they need to cease at some point.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate your answers. Let me just make one comment, and then I'll cease; \$12 billion later, largely without conditionality, it may not have worked for them, but it certainly didn't work too well for us.

Admiral MULLEN. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Menendez.

Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, to Senator Menendez, I actually offered an amendment yesterday, on the exact point that you just made. I'm going to discuss it in a minute with the Admiral. I think it's a very valid point.

Admiral, with respect to your comments about our exchange last week, let's let the record show that we both left it as a yes—

Admiral MULLEN. Yes.

Senator WEBB [continuing]. That I also declined to pursue that, because of venue, and I will not pursue that in any detail today.

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

Senator WEBB. I would like to start by saying something about what Senator Corker was mentioning, and that is that I don't believe it's always necessary that, if the American flag goes down, that we end up staying to rebuild a nation. It has happened, I think, pretty frequently over the past 8 or 9 years. I wrote a piece in the Washington Post, 6 months before the invasion of Iraq, basically saying this was a strategic error and the subheading of the piece was, "Do You Really Want To Be In Iraq for the Next 30 Years?" And I think that Senator Corker made a very valid point, in terms of how we define our strategy, when he raised Somalia. It's another failed state. We see al-Qaeda relocating. So, the question here is valid. We need a strategy that has clearly articulated endpoints, not simply benchmarks, so we really know where we are going.

With your, I think, very valid comments about people in this region needing to know—or asking you the question, "Are we going to stay or are we going to go?" I think we still need to be very careful in terms of how we are articulating what that means to us.

Admiral MULLEN. Sure. Yes.

Senator WEBB. Militarily, we should go, at the right time. I think everyone should know that. Diplomatically, culturally, we should be staying. But, when I see the situation with the Pakistanis, the hesitation that I have, in terms of the way these are being presented, is that they should understand that there is reciprocity, in terms of understanding interests. You know, your comments are that we need to understand the world in terms of how they are seeing it and in terms of recent history. But, they need to understand in terms of us. And that's why I asked the question about their expanding their nuclear capability. And this is not simply a question of whether we should be addressing that in a visible way, but it does relate to how Americans see the measure of assistance or—that it's a very complicated environment, where they have other strategic concerns. And it also relates to how we are perceived around the world, outside of Pakistan, in terms of potentially being seen as assisting in a program, when, in reality, we are trying to discourage proliferation.

So, with all that in mind, I drafted an amendment yesterday, and introduced it yesterday. Essentially, my thought at the time, and with some discussions we had after I had introduced the amendment, in terms of refining it, was that we could just clarify this. We could basically have a certification saying that none of the moneys that were appropriated were going to go to support, expand, or in any way assist the development or deployment, the active deployment, of nuclear weapons, or to support programs or

purposes other than those in the appropriations measure. And that actually goes to Senator Menendez's comment, which you and I discussed last week in a different way, about the \$12 billion in various forms that have gone over there, and the inability to follow the money. This isn't simply a comment about their nuclear program, which is the way I think it has been perceived; it's a comment about removing the opaqueness from the process, getting a comfort level from the U.S. perspective, and basically saying, "Yeah, we're not doing this. We're not contributing to corruption, we're not contributing to a program that they are developing in a strategic area that is outside of where we do have agreement."

And I understand there are some significant hesitations from the administration on that amendment. I wonder if you could clarify that.

Admiral MULLEN. I haven't seen all the hesitations. I've gotten some feedback on it, Senator Webb. Probably the biggest concern is the conditioning of all the money against that requirement and the ability to actually do it, and to be able to do it so quickly.

Where I am on these kinds of things is—and I don't have a rich history, in the last 8 years, in terms of CSF and, you know, how it started and—you know, I mean, all the kinds of moneys that we sent. And I recognize it's a lot of money, and I would certainly—you know, certainly in many ways, didn't deliver what we had hoped it would deliver.

What I'm asking for is some time on these conditions so that the conditions aren't so rigid that we can't get started.

And I agree with, and take your point about, this isn't just about the Pakistani people, this is—these are—these are American dollars that are funded by American people at a very significant financial time in our lives. And I don't think—I don't think we'd have different objectives, I just think, How do you get there? And what I understand about your amendment is that it would really restrict and condition almost every dollar we take to them, and then I get to a point—you know, can I do it? Can I even execute it in time that's going to make any difference, where time is so critical?

Senator WEBB. Well, that's certainly not the intention of the amendment. And one of the strong focuses here, as I mentioned, is that we do not want to be perceived, outside of the nature of this relationship, as being in any way assisting that. And, at the same time, I take the point, this is strategically—it's off the table from the area that we are working with Pakistan on.

Admiral MULLEN. Yes.

Senator WEBB. I go back, actually, to the instability that came out of the Iran-Contra situation, when we were pushing around the world, saying, "We're not going to support terrorism," and then it came out that we actually were giving weapons to Iran in this sub-rosa program, and it dramatically affected our credibility. This is an attempt just to clarify that."

And I think what I would like to do, since this has involved our staff over the past week, is to sit down and work with you and perhaps the National Security Council, and let's come out with a way that we can inject transparency and accountability into the process, for all of the reasons that it went the other way after 9/11, but in a way that would be workable.

Admiral MULLEN. Transparency, in our process, I think—you know, clearly committed. Getting transparency into what Pakistan does is going to be a—going to continue to be a challenge. The—it's the sovereign-country piece, it's the—they'll only tell us so much. Not that we don't know more than we used to; I just think it's—

Senator WEBB. But, in terms of where American money goes, this is—

Admiral MULLEN. Right.

Senator WEBB [continuing]. Where reciprocity comes in.

Admiral MULLEN. Understood.

Senator WEBB. And we require it in other areas. They need to understand us every bit as much as we need to understand them. So, I will look forward to working with you on it, sir. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Webb.

Let me emphasize, Admiral, that General Kiyani needs to know it. General Pasha needs to know it, President Zardari and others need to know it—and that is while they are coming to us and asking us for additional assistance—and we understand the stakes—there is a significant unease here in the Congress, in all of us, for what has happened previously in the—

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Transfer of our funds. And many of us did not learn, until last year sometime, that, for those 6 or 7 years that the prior administration was supporting and transferring very significant sums of money to Pakistan, they didn't have a clue where it was going. And we learned, subsequently, that most of it, particularly funds that were ostensibly being spent to support their military, was going into their general revenue, their general budget, and being spent simply to sustain normal activities in Pakistan. That is not going to fly, here. And they need to know that, point blank, which is why Senator Lugar and I have put in our legislation what we think is adequate levels of scrutiny, accountability, benchmarking, and so forth, without getting to a point where you begin to create havoc, in terms of the relationship and the sovereignty issues and all the rest of it. I don't think that anything we've done is insulting. I think it is a protection to the American taxpayer. I think it's a de minimis expectation—

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. From the Congress, and I would hope you would agree with that and—

Admiral MULLEN. Yes, sir; I would.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Convey that as powerfully as possible to your counterparts. And to the degree you want to point to us as the people putting these requirements in place, please do so.

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

The CHAIRMAN. We're happy to do that.

On this track, there was, yesterday, in the New York Times, a front-page story suggesting that arms procured by the Pentagon have leaked from Afghan forces for use against American troops. And that raises the question of the Afghan controls on the vast inventory of weapons. Can you speak to that a little bit and just

comment on that story and share with the committee the steps the Pentagon is taking to deal with it?

Admiral MULLEN. That weapon—there were 10 weapons in that story, not one of which was—had been—had come out of the Afghan National Auxiliary Police issued in February 2007, a unit that no longer—an organization that no longer exists. There have been significant steps taken with respect to this. In 2008, General Cone, who was head of the training of the Afghan—American major general who was head of the organization which trains and equips the Afghan National Police and Army, and subsequently General Formica, who relieved him, put in very strict controls. And so, that story was focused, 2007, some concerns in 2008, and we put in very strict accountability and auditing controls on those weapons.

The ammunition that was spoken to in the story, we've been unable to source. It—there were various—there was varied ammunition there. But, we recognize the serious potential there.

And the other thing that's happened is, Minister Atmar, who I know you know, who is the Minister of Interior, has also initiated, in recent months, very strict controls and accountability in the police, as well.

So, significant steps taken. Certainly don't—you know, we're not in the—we're not going to be in a position of issuing weapons and issuing ammunition that's going to come back on us.

The CHAIRMAN. I would assume so, and I'm glad to hear that explanation, and we thank you for it.

Also, the committee would be interested to know, in the context of this larger shift in American policy, perhaps you could share with us the expectations you now have about how this policy will be implemented differently under the leadership—it's not a small deal when you make a change of command. You've chosen to do so, you've obviously chosen to do so with a purpose in mind. And if you could share with the committee the expectations that you have now, from General McChrystal's assumption of command, I think that would help us understand how we're moving down a different road here.

Admiral MULLEN. Certainly not presuming confirmation of General McChrystal, and, I think, also General Rodriguez, it is their—it is the respect and regard that these two individuals are held in by such a broad spectrum of people that actually gives me great hope in their ability to lead at this time. It is a very critical time, 2009 and 2010. It's my belief we've got to stem the violence, over the next 12 to 18 months there, to put ourselves in a position to develop these other capabilities—and we've talked about that—in classic counterinsurgency form.

I have great faith in both of them. General Rodriguez, who will initially be the United States deputy there, was the two-star commander in RCE, so he has a wealth of experience in Afghanistan. General McChrystal had been in theater and fighting two wars for the better part of almost 5 years before he was brought back. I've watched him, as my director over the last year. That was malice of forethought to understand him. One, I admired him greatly, far beyond his ability to hunt down terrorists, which he did better than anybody else, but it's really his expanded mind, his intellectual

capability for—and understanding of what really needs to happen here.

And so, I would expect him to take significant steps in the area of Afghan civilian casualties. We cannot proceed forward—if we're killing Afghan civilians, we're backing up. And we've got to protect our own people, certainly; obviously, carry out the missions; but, we've got to be more protective of Afghan civilians. So, that's a specific charge.

He understands the fullness of the challenge. I look for his assessment, when he gets there, to say, "This is what I need to do," before I'd say it's going to change, one way or the other.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, Admiral, I know you have a White House meeting and a fairly hard departure here, and that's the appointed hour, so if I could just say to you, first of all, I personally admire your leadership enormously. And I've watched you dig into this issue, and I know you've done a lot of reading and examining in quarters that aren't normally the areas that the Pentagon digs into. And I respect the fact that you're doing that and looking at all of the aspects of this challenge.

I would just say to you that I think it is a mistake for us, as a country, to overly raise the stakes in the context of the language of war. This is a counterinsurgency challenge, above all, as you know, and you've defined it that way. And the normal applications of warfighting are not what are going to win this.

Admiral MULLEN. Right.

The CHAIRMAN. And you know that. This is going to require America's significant commitment on the things that—I can't figure out yet whether Senator Corker supports it or doesn't support it, in terms of those efforts, but I think he's been accurate in defining some of it. It is impossible to define, getting to a place where you have a sufficient level of stability, where you have a sufficient level of reliance on an Afghan army, a sufficient level of reliance on a police force, a sufficient presence of a structure of civilian institutions that you can pull back with confidence that the insurgency doesn't just take over, that al-Qaeda doesn't just return—it's impossible to get there unless you have done some of this sort of groundup—

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Rebuilding.

Admiral MULLEN. Right.

The CHAIRMAN. For a lot of people, that's a tough confrontation up here—

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Because many people have always opposed that kind of thing. I think it's the natural state of the new beast that we confront. But, it's not a traditional war. And I think we sort of get into our box when we frame it that way.

I'd like to see our military footprint be as small and as careful and as restrained as humanly possible. I know we're going to need to do some special ops. We're going to have to take out bad people when that opportunity presents itself. But, to the degree we can give people a sense of security with a minimal amount of proactive, big operation, traditional military kind of footprint, the better off we're going to be, here.

Admiral MULLEN. Chairman, there is nobody that understands that better than Stan McChrystal.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, that's why I think this is a pivotal moment for us. And obviously the next months are going to be key to that. We stand ready to work with you as closely as we can, and we understand the difficulties.

And I repeat, for those people who are concerned about the presence, we're all concerned about it; we're there for a purpose, and that's to protect the security interests of our country from a repeat performance of what we experienced in 2001, and we're trying to find the best way to do that. We are certainly not there because it's a place of choice.

Admiral MULLEN. Right.

The CHAIRMAN. It's a place of obligation—

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. And critical to our security.

So, we thank you for your thoughtfulness here today. We need your help on this legislation, and we'll look forward to continued work with you.

Senator LUGAR.

Senator LUGAR. Just one more comment, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate very much the comments you've made about General McChrystal. This is probably too concise a summary, but he has been successful in hunting down terrorists.

Admiral MULLEN. Right.

Senator LUGAR. Frequently, no one knew where he was, according to the press, for periods of time. If the mission is, in fact, hunting down terrorists, whether they be in Afghanistan or Pakistan or Somalia, Yemen, or anywhere else, and General McChrystal is able, working with you and others, to fashion a strategy for the United States, this will be an extraordinary achievement.

And so, I'm excited about what we have read about the—General McChrystal, but really looking forward to hearing more about that, and, likewise, how our own planning, as the chairman has mentioned, takes in consideration his views as they mesh with General Petraeus and your own.

Admiral MULLEN. Sure.

Senator LUGAR. And I think it's a potentially promising course for us.

Admiral MULLEN. We all see it the same way.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Admiral, thank you very much for being with us.

Admiral MULLEN. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. We wish you well. Thank you, sir.

We stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:05 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF ADMIRAL MICHAEL G. MULLEN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

LINKING MILITARY AND NONMILITARY AID

Question. Do you believe (as advocated by President Obama in his championing of the Kerry-Lugar bill, and his cosponsorship of S. 3263 in 2008) that military aid

should be de-linked from development aid—with development aid as a long-term commitment to the Pakistani people, and military aid carefully calibrated annually to the requirements and the will of the Pakistani military? Or do you believe that military and nonmilitary aid should be authorized in the same piece of legislation?

Answer. Military support alone will not be sufficient to meet the threat of extremism in Pakistan but it will also require complementary assistance to the civilian elements in Pakistan society. The significant increases in nonmilitary assistance in the Kerry-Lugar bill are essential to meet these economic, developmental, and educational needs. This assistance will also lay the foundation for building a long-term relationship and demonstrating that the United States is committed to Pakistan and the region. Military assistance needs to be requirements driven while also being flexible enough to meet changing conditions on the ground. Authorization for military assistance does not necessarily need to be separate from nonmilitary legislation but the language should not have conditionality that undermines the long-term relationship and trust that we are trying to build.

LEVELS OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Question. Do you believe that the level of military assistance channeled through the State Department should be locked in place now for the next 5 years, or (as advocated by President Obama in his championing of the Kerry-Lugar bill, and co-sponsorship of S. 3263) that it should be authorized on an annual basis, depending on the actions, needs, and commitment of the Pakistani military?

Answer. Kerry-Lugar bill reinforces a long-term relationship with the nonmilitary assistance, but it is also important to affirm the longer term military partnership. A multiyear authorization for military assistance channeled through the State Departments' FMF can reinforce this. Funding and implementation would still be dependent on the actions, needs, and commitment of the Pakistani military as determined by the strategy execution, benchmarks, and other oversight/accountability methods, and does not need to be restricted by legislative language. Moreover, we still require the flexibility to determine funding levels and authorities required to address the evolving situation on the ground.

Question. Do you believe that the Pakistani military will be more cooperative with U.S. efforts or less cooperative if they know that they will receive exactly the same Foreign Military Financing authorization every year for the next half-decade, regardless of their actions?

Answer. A long-term commitment for Foreign Military Financing will reinforce the long-term relationship, mil-to-mil cooperation and the ability for the Pakistani military to develop consistent longer range planning for requirements and equipment. Provision of such assistance would still have the oversight/accountability and benchmarks required by the President's strategy.

LIMITATIONS ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Question. Do you consider the limitations on military assistance contained in section 6 of S. 962 (and the waivers provided) to be a reasonable compromise between setting no conditions on security aid and setting overly restrictive limitations on such assistance?

Answer. It is critical that U.S. assistance to Pakistan be tied to benchmarks and results and that we have transparency and accountability, but this should be based on the President's strategy rather than on legislation. Conditionality in legislative language results in negative perceptions with the Pakistani population and leadership and is counter to the President's strategy and goals of building a long-term relationship and trust with Pakistan.

Question. What do you think would be the impact of conditioning military aid on issues of great political sensitivity in Pakistan, such as those contained in other pieces of legislation but excluded from S. 962?

Answer. "Conditionality" in general on military aid to Pakistan has negative effects on perceptions of the Pakistani people and leadership and reinforces a transactional relationship and the Pakistani perception that the United States is not interested in a long-term relationship. Conditioning all the military assistance on the politically sensitive issues in some other legislation is too rigid, hinders timely execution and undermines our ability to move forward effectively with the strategy.

COALITION SUPPORT FUNDS (CSF)

Question. Congress has appropriated billions of dollars in CSF to reimburse Pakistan for its operational and logistical support of U.S.-led counterterrorism operations. Much of the money spent, particularly in the earlier years, has been unauditible, and this committee has yet to receive a full and current information on the CSF program.

- Do you consider existing oversight and accountability procedures for Coalition Support Funds to be adequate? If so, when were procedures changed to provide greater oversight and accountability?

Answer. Department of Defense (DOD) takes very seriously its oversight of the Coalition Support Fund (CSF). Accountability and oversight procedures were enhanced in 2008 to include the following: Claims are first processed and vetted through the 2-Star command of the Office of Defense Representative–Pakistan. U.S. Central Command then reviews the claims and forward them to DOD. The Under Secretaries of Defense for Comptroller and Policy review each claim before they are finally approved by the Secretary of Defense.

- Will you insure that this committee is, in future, given full access (in classified or unclassified form) to all documents necessary to understand and evaluate the effectiveness of the CSF program in Pakistan?

Answer. In accordance with public law, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, provides documentation for each claim to the congressional defense committees. Additionally, the Secretary of Defense provides quarterly reports to the congressional defense committees on the use of funds provided.

- In rough terms, what percentage of CSF payments over the past 7 years have reimbursed costs incurred in the battle against al-Qaeda and the Taliban, as opposed to other missions of the Pakistani military or redirection to the general budget?

Answer. Payments are reimbursements for expenses incurred in support of U.S. military operations. To that end, all CSF reimbursements to Pakistan represent costs incurred by the Pakistani military in the battle against al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

IMPROVING PAKISTAN'S COUNTERINSURGENCY CAPABILITIES

Question. The administration has requested \$400 million for PCCF in the FY09 supplemental to build the capacity of Pakistan's security forces to combat insurgents in Pakistan. The traditional State Department-guided security assistance framework has built up protections to prevent the supply of U.S. arms and training to military forces that have engaged in human rights violations, to help ensure that the system is not abused by bribery or other procurement irregularities, and to prevent the diversion of equipment to unauthorized recipients. Many of the purchases envisioned for the PCCF seem compatible with that traditional security assistance framework.

- What are the specific constraints imposed by the traditional security assistance framework that would hinder the work you think is needed in Pakistan?

Answer. Traditional security assistance authorities bring with it the added complexity and multiple bureaucratic processes and timelines associated with a peacetime environment. Pakistan is too important and too fragile to rely on processes which lack built-in agility for the Combatant Commander to effectively build Pakistan's capabilities during wartime. The situation in Pakistan is of grave concern to U.S. national security, and PCCF provides us the flexibility we need to help reduce the risk to U.S. troops, our regional partners, and the U.S. homeland.

- If PCCF is routed through the Department of Defense (either for 1 year, or longer), what steps will you take to ensure that the safeguards of the traditional security assistance framework are used to prevent predictable problems from arising in the PCCF?

Answer. Most of the PCCF funds will be executed within the Department of Defense (DOD) acquisition system, thereby reducing the risk of abuse or irregularities. Additionally, the Office of Defense Representative–Pakistan (ODR–P), is dual-hatted and works for both the Ambassador and the CENTCOM Commander. It is the ODR–P commander who has the responsibility to ensure equipment is not diverted to unauthorized recipients. Additionally, DOD has 5 years worth of experi-

ence and lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan to execute this type of wartime program. These lessons learned are being incorporated into the PCCF.

COUNTERNARCOTICS

Question. According to the NYT July 20, 2003, Secretary Rumsfeld personally approved over 50 U.S. airstrikes in Iraq which were expected to kill up to 50 innocent Iraqi civilians each. According to Pentagon policy at the time, any strikes expected to result in 50 or more civilian deaths as unavoidable collateral damage were to be approved personally by the Secretary. The media was informed of this policy in July 2003 when the chief U.S. commander disclosed the sign-off policy. Does that policy continue today in Afghanistan, and, if so, in what form? Do White House or Pentagon officials sign off on bombing runs where civilian casualties are expected to be higher than 50? Which officials?

Answer. (CLASSIFIED—DELETED)

RESPONSES OF ADMIRAL MICHAEL MULLEN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.

THREAT PERCEPTION AMONG PAKISTAN'S MILITARY LEADERSHIP

Question. There is widespread speculation that even though Pakistan's military has increased the mobilization of forces against the Taliban in the Swat and surrounding areas, the military leadership continues to view India as the most serious threat to Pakistan's security. You have an established relationship with General Kiyani and the rest of Pakistan's senior military officials. Accordingly, you are in a position to evaluate whether they are changing their perception of the existential threat posed by the Taliban and other religious extremist groups.

- Is it accurate to say the military leadership still sees India as the most serious threat to Pakistan? Could a change in thinking inside the leadership help to allay fears about India's intentions among the Pakistani population?

Answer. While Pakistani senior military leadership continues to view India as its most significant threat, General Kayani does recognize the extremist threat that he has in his country. The increasing number of attacks against Pakistan's citizens and institutions by extremists as well as the losses suffered by Pakistan's security forces in killed or wounded in action, particularly in the operations this past year, demonstrates a changing perception and recognition of the extremist threat and a willingness to engage extremists groups.

- Do you believe the Pakistani Army should redeploy the majority of its troops along the Indo-Pakistani border to the Swat and surrounding areas to fight the Taliban? If not, what more should the military do?

Answer. (CLASSIFIED—DELETED)

INDIA

Question. The obsession of the Pakistani military and civilian elites with the perceived threat posed by India is unhelpful and is constraining a more effective response by Pakistan to the current threat posed by Taliban extremists. It is Pakistan that bears the most responsibility for the current state of affairs, and we cannot forget that.

- However, are there any actions that India could take to lower the temperature along the common border with Pakistan? Any actions that can provide a public relations excuse for the Pakistanis to shift troops from the border to northwest Pakistan where the real war lies?

Answer. India is sensitive to external involvement in their relations with Pakistan, as they consider it a strictly bilateral issue. They maintain forces on the Line of Control in attempts to interdict terrorist and militant infiltrations, and any changes to their posture would be extremely sensitive politically. The U.S. has told India that we are pressuring Pakistan to take action against LeT, and the Pakistani Government has said that it opposes terror in its borders. India is waiting to see definitive action from Pakistan in that regard.

- If so, are you encouraging your Indian counterparts to take such steps?

Answer. We are. Appreciating the extreme domestic political sensitivities surrounding the issue in India, we nevertheless urge senior leaders to consider actions

which would avoid provocation, build trust, and increase Pakistan's comfort with focusing its military efforts elsewhere.

SUPPLY ROUTES INTO AFGHANISTAN

Question. U.S.-NATO supply routes into Afghanistan through Pakistan are not only susceptible to attacks by extremists, but are also increasingly strained. Roughly 70 percent of Western supplies heading into Afghanistan traverse Pakistani territory. With the closure of the U.S. airbase at Manas, Kyrgyzstan, and President Obama's directive to deploy an additional 21,000 troops to Afghanistan, I am very concerned that the two existing routes in Pakistan will be unsuited to manage all the additional traffic.

- What is your assessment of the vulnerability of the two supply routes in Pakistan? Will the routes be able to support the increasing volume of supplies heading into Afghanistan?

Answer. The two supply routes in Pakistan do remain vulnerable to attack, but to date loss due to pilferage, theft, and damage have been negligible. Flow of U.S. supplies through the Chaman and Torkham border crossings from Pakistan into Afghanistan are at historically high levels and are currently meeting USCENTCOM requirements. Additionally, we project that combined with the flow of supplies through the Northern Distribution Network (NDN), these two routes through Pakistan will be able to support the requirements associated with the increase in U.S. force levels in Afghanistan.

- What alternate supply routes in Central Asia or elsewhere in the region have you identified to compensate for the loss of the Manas base? Is it possible to increase the load on the "Northern Route" traversing Russia and Central Asia?

Answer. CENTCOM has identified primary and alternate locations in the region to replace the aerial refueling and passenger/cargo transload operations at Manas Air Base. Additionally, we continue making excellent progress developing alternate lines of communication through the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) to support the full spectrum of current and future operations in Afghanistan. We began booking substantial supplies from the north via train through Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and have explored additional opportunities to engage regional partners to further expand sustainment alternatives. As we increase force levels over the next few months in Afghanistan, we will gain greater fidelity on the capacity of the NDN, but early indications are that we should be able to increase the load from the north more than previously estimated. This will provide an excellent alternative route with which to support our overall Afghanistan logistics requirements.

RESPONSES OF ADMIRAL MICHAEL MULLEN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED
BY SENATOR KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND

AFGHANISTAN

Question. To implement the surge in Afghanistan, the administration proposes an additional 21,000 troops, 4,000 of them to be engaged in training the Afghan security forces, and 430 civilians. I am concerned about the low number of civilian personnel, particularly when compared to the number of military. As you noted this morning before the committee, civilians can be trained for nation-building and may be perceived as less threatening to the average Afghani. As the President has said, we need to win the hearts and minds of the Muslim world, particularly in countries where we have become so invested.

- How do you think we can change the perception of the Afghani people if our presence on the ground has an overwhelmingly military face?

Answer. The additional 21,000 troops in Afghanistan are needed to improve security and set the necessary conditions for a significant increase in the civilian personnel who can work directly with the Afghan people and improve conditions throughout the country and within the Afghan Government. We are working closely with our partners within the interagency to significantly increase the number of civilians contributing to U.S. efforts in Afghanistan as a purely military solution is not the key to long-term growth and stability in the country.

- How are we ensuring that the civilians going into theater are appropriately trained in counterinsurgency and self-protection?

Answer. Civilians assigned to Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) receive military familiarization training, training on military planning, civilian-military integra-

tion training, and participate with their military members in counterinsurgency situation training exercises for 3 weeks at Camp Aterburry in Indiana prior to their deployment. The State Department's Foreign Service Institute provides training to American diplomats and other professionals to advance U.S. foreign interests overseas. We believe the additional 21,000 troops will help improve security in Afghanistan and help set the conditions necessary for our civilian counterparts to work safely with their Afghan counterparts and both coalition and U.S. military.

CIVILIAN RAPID RESPONSE CORPS

Question. At the hearing, you discussed the need for many more civilian experts than the 13 currently in place in the southern Afghanistan PRTs. I support a robust civilian capability, with appropriate military and counterinsurgency training, so that it can be used in the future to swiftly respond to Afghanistan and similar situations.

- How large of a Civilian Rapid Response Corps is needed to respond around the world? What kind of training would they need?

Answer. Future conflicts will not be won by military means alone and the U.S. requires a robust civilian capacity and capability to operation with our men and women in uniform. We need to ensure that military gains are followed by commensurate progress in governance, economics, reconstruction and development. We do not yet have a formal position on what the appropriate size would need to be or what the expertise and capabilities such corps would need. We will continue to work with the Department of Defense and the Department of State.

- How large of a Civilian Rapid Response Corps is needed to respond around the world? How much funding do they need?

Answer. To meet the needs of current and foreseen national security missions, the Department of Defense supports the creation of the Civilian Response Corps (CRC). The CRC consists of three components: Active, Standby, and Reserve. The administration has requested funding to support the establishment of 250 Active Component members, 2,000 Standby Component members, and 2,000 Reserve Component members as part of the Civilian Stabilization Initiative. These numbers are based on best estimates of personnel needed to plan and execute three simultaneous engagements—one large, one medium, and one small—to include deployed personnel and Washington-based support.

For FY 2010, the President has requested the Civilian Stabilization Initiative, which provides funding for the CRC, at \$323.4M. DOD supports that budget request because it will build the capacity for critical civilian enablers.

PAKISTAN

Question. Pakistan is among the world's leading recipients of U.S. assistance, obtaining more than \$5.3 billion in overt aid since 2001, including about \$3.1 billion in development and humanitarian funding. Pakistan also has received \$6.9 billion in military reimbursements for its support of counterterrorism efforts. Yet, we have not seen adequate results from our funding. We have not been assured, until recently, of the Pakistan military's willingness to fight extremists on their soil. My belief is that a significant factor in the current military offensive by the Pakistan military is that it has the support of the country's population.

- How are we going to build an environment where our two governments' interests are aligned?

Answer. It is essential that assistance we provide results in effective Pakistani efforts against the extremist threat. The U.S. Government is engaging with the Government of Pakistan at the highest levels emphasizing the threat that extremist and insurgent networks pose to their nation and the U.S./international community. Many of Pakistan's leaders recognize the threat and we continue to emphasize the need to take sustained action to mitigate it. This increasing alignment of our interests with the interests of Pakistan on tackling the extremist threat is a positive development, but will require continued senior leader engagement and U.S. assistance as we continue to work together in pursuit of common interests.

- The drone attacks into Pakistan have been unpopular in Pakistan; although there is a military value to them. How do we balance our need for military effectiveness with our concern regarding the Pakistani people's perception?

Answer. Pakistan is a sovereign nation with over 100,000 military and other security forces conducting operations along the western border against extremist/terrorist groups. The United States is working closely with the Government of Paki-

stan to assist them in combating extremists on their territory. We also reserve the right to protect the U.S. Homeland from terrorist threats from al-Qaeda and other affiliated groups. We continually evaluate our efforts to protect the U.S. Homeland with the need for patience in supporting Pakistani efforts to build an environment in the border regions that is nonsupportive of extremists.

PEACE TALKS

Question. The May 21st New York Times reports that the Taliban and other armed group leaders are engaging with the Afghan Government in peace talks, and that one of their demands is the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Afghanistan, to be supplanted by a peacekeeping force drawn from predominantly Muslim countries.

- What is your assessment of the seriousness of these discussions?

Answer. We are aware that multiple media outlets have reported that the Taliban have engaged the Government of Afghanistan in peace talks (i.e., reconciliation) to include specific demands and conditions. It is the objective of the United States to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda and prevent terrorist and extremist use of safe havens in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The people and Government of Afghanistan and the international community share these objectives. Any discussions regarding reconciliation cannot move forward if any or all of the conditions are unacceptable to the Government of Afghanistan and the international community. Denying terrorist and extremist sanctuary in Afghanistan will require the presence of U.S. and international forces in the country. Hence, the withdrawal of U.S. forces as a condition by any group seeking to reconcile with the Government of Afghanistan cannot be considered a serious proposition.

- Do they impact on your decision or timing with regard to sending in more troops?

Answer. No. Decisions regarding timing with regard to sending more troops are made based on resources available and the prevailing conditions within Afghanistan.

