

THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

—————
JUNE 15 AND 16, 2010
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THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

TUESDAY, JUNE 15, 2010

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m. in room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Webb, Udall, Hagan, Begich, Bingaman, Kaufman, McCain, Inhofe, Sessions, Chambliss, Graham, Thune, Wicker, Brown, and Collins.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Joseph M. Bryan, professional staff member; Ilona R. Cohen, counsel; William G.P. Monahan, counsel; Michael J. Noblet, professional staff member; and William K. Sutey, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Adam J. Barker, professional staff member; Michael V. Kostiw, professional staff member; Daniel A. Lerner, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, minority counsel; and Dana W. White, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Jennifer R. Knowles, Christine G. Lang, and Hannah I. Lloyd.

Committee members' assistants present: James Tuite, assistant to Senator Byrd; Vance Serchuk, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Carolyn Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Nick Ikeda, assistant to Senator Akaka; Greta Lundeberg, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Ann Premer, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Tressa Guenov and Stephen C. Hedger, assistants to Senator McCaskill; Jennifer Barrett, assistant to Senator Udall; Roger Pena, assistant to Senator Hagan; Lindsay Kavanaugh, assistant to Senator Begich; Halie Soifer, assistant to Senator Kaufman; Anthony J. Lazarski, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Sandra Luff, assistant to Senator Sessions; Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune; Brian Walsh, assistant to Senator LeMieux; Kevin Kane, assistant to Senator Burr; and Ryan Kaldahl, assistant to Senator Collins.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. This morning the committee receives testimony on the progress in Afghanistan from Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michèle Flournoy and Gen-

eral David Petraeus, Commander, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM).

General Petraeus, please extend to all of the men and women who are serving under your command the thanks of this committee for their tremendous service, their valor, their dedication to the causes of this country. They deserve our support and I know our committee gives them that full support, and to their families as well.

General PETRAEUS. I'll do that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Last month a milestone was reached when it was announced that for the first time more U.S. troops are serving in Afghanistan than in Iraq. This month marks 1 year since General Stanley McChrystal took command of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The news from Afghanistan in recent weeks has been largely negative: the increase in casualties among U.S., coalition, and Afghan security forces, the mixed results in Marjah, and the apparent return of Taliban intimidation and assassinations of local officials there, the failure of Afghan Government officials to deliver much-needed services to win local allegiances, the delay in the Kandahar campaign, the resignation of two senior Afghan security officials who seemingly were among the most competent members of the cabinet and had strong coalition support, the role of local power brokers, including members of the Karzai family, in Kandahar, the growth of militias, and the counterproductive activities of some U.S.-hired private security contractors, apparent differences with the Karzai regime over approaches for reconciliation with the Taliban.

At a press conference last week, General McChrystal acknowledged these press reports, but he emphasized that "You also have to step back and see the trend in direction." This morning we want to hear from our witnesses on how they see these trends.

My focus is and always has been on getting the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) trained and equipped to take over the responsibility for their country's security. Doing so is the key to success in Afghanistan. As General McChrystal said at a press briefing last week, the ANSF are "the strategic main effort and they're key to the long-term stability in Afghanistan." General McChrystal has repeatedly set out the goal of putting Afghans in the lead and making them responsible for their future, and Afghan leaders have said they want to be responsible for their own security and their own affairs.

At the Consultative Peace Jirga held at the beginning of this month, the 1,600 Afghan delegates adopted a resolution calling on the international community to "expedite the process of equipping, training, and strengthening the ANSF so they can get the capability in taking responsibility to provide security for their own country and people."

But progress towards the goal of Afghans taking the lead in operations has been unsatisfactory. Today, operations in Afghanistan are excessively dependent on coalition forces. The campaign plan for Kandahar, which is underway, anticipates increases in Afghan and ISAF forces in and around Kandahar City to create a "rising tide of security," but at a 1 to 2 ratio, that is one Afghan soldier

or policeman for every two ISAF troops. That's not good enough. Our partnering goal should be at least a ratio of 1 to 1 in Kandahar and Afghan troops should be in the lead in many, if not most, operations.

Having Afghan units in the lead is critical in Kandahar since the likelihood of success there is based on popular support. That support is at the heart of the counterinsurgency strategy which is so well set forth by General Petraeus. The Afghan National Army (ANA) has broad public support and even the Afghan Government has more than twice the support that the United States does. Polling numbers in The New York Times indicate that 90 percent of Afghans support the Kabul Government over the Taliban, but only 40 percent of Afghans have a favorable view of the United States.

The 100 or so elders that we met in a local shura in southern Afghanistan last year, when we asked what they wanted the United States to do, told us that we should train and equip the ANSF to provide for their own security and then depart.

Last week General McChrystal announced that ISAF would slow the expansion of the Afghan and coalition troop presence in Kandahar in order to allow time to secure the support of local tribal leaders for that effort. I trust General McChrystal's judgment on the timing. He's right that "It's more important we get it right than we get it fast," and he's also saying correctly in my judgment that when you go to protect people, the people have to want you to protect them.

So I'd rather delay a few months and have a few more Afghan forces in the lead when the security presence is expanded and operations begin more forcefully than to have an ISAF-dominated force attempt to secure Kandahar a few months earlier. Our top priority then must be training, mentoring, and partnering in the field with Afghan troops and placing them in the lead in operations against insurgents, backed by U.S. and coalition support.

Currently, according to ISAF, the growth of the ANSF is on track. The NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) under Lieutenant General Bill Caldwell reports that recruitment for ANA and Afghan National Police (ANP) now actually exceeds monthly recruitment goals. These forces are above where they need to be to meet the end strength goals for October 2010 of 134,000 army and 109,000 police personnel.

What is disturbing and hard to comprehend, however, is that the training mission still does not have enough trainers to process all the Afghan recruits who are signing up to join in the security forces. The most recent available figures show that, of the more than 5,200 trainers that we need, only about 2,600 are on the ground.

Secretary Gates has deployed 850 U.S. soldiers and marines to Afghanistan to serve as a stopgap. According to a May 29 report from Lieutenant General Caldwell, the training mission has yet to receive 750 trainers pledged by NATO members. Furthermore, last week NATO Secretary General Rasmussen announced that NATO members have yet to pledge an additional 450 trainers needed to meet training requirements.

It's totally unacceptable that this shortfall persists. NATO members who, for whatever reason, do not send additional combat

troops or who intend to reduce their combat troop presence in the near future, should at least be willing to provide trainers who operate away from the heavy fighting.

The question remains, why are more Afghan forces not in the lead in Kandahar, using forces that are trained and ready? According to figures provided by the ISAF Joint Command, 25 Afghan battalions, or kandaks, are able to operate independently, 42 Afghan kandaks can operate with coalition support. Now, that's 67 of 113 total ANA kandaks. More recent ISAF data on Afghan forces' capability casts some doubt on the accuracy of that assessment of the ANA's capabilities, but they do not explain why it is U.S. or coalition forces that are usually leading operations instead of the other way around.

The ANA has about 125,000 troops available, more than we do. But it is our troops that are concentrated in the areas where the fighting is heaviest and where Afghanistan's future may well hang in the balance.

So many questions regarding the ANA remain unanswered and perhaps we will hear answers today. Why aren't more ANA troops leading security operations in the south? How many Afghan combat battalions and how many Afghan combat troops are there in Kandahar? When will the Afghan units take the lead there? Why aren't large numbers of ANA troops from other areas moving to Kandahar in preparation for the push? Why isn't the ratio of coalition to Afghan troops in Kandahar at least 1 to 1, instead of two coalition troops to one Afghan?

I know American troops are better equipped and trained than Afghan troops. But the issue isn't force-on-force. If it were I would accept our taking the lead most often in Kandahar operations. The issue is who can best connect with and protect the population of Kandahar. As Afghanistan Defense Minister Wardak recently and aptly described the situation in Kandahar, "It is a different type operation. It is not like Marjah. It is not going to be that kinetic."

The ANA can handle the population protection mission adequately and is equipped to do so. It is the hearts and minds of Afghans, particularly the Pashtun population in Kandahar, that must be won over. That population wants security and it wants that security provided by Afghans. Having Afghan troops among the Afghan people is more acceptable to them, with coalition forces in the background providing support for those Afghan troops. Success in Kandahar will be more likely with Afghan troops in the lead.

I'm going to put the balance of my statement now in the record and simply conclude by saying that the Afghan Government and people need to demonstrate a sense of urgency and commitment to succeed in building a lasting peace in Afghanistan. If the Afghan Government and people demonstrate a willingness to fight and assume increasing responsibility for their security and affairs, then the American people will be steadfast partners in that endeavor.

[The prepared statement by Senator Levin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Today the committee receives testimony on the progress in Afghanistan from Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michèle Flournoy and General David Petraeus, Commander, U.S. Central Command. General Petraeus, please extend the thanks of all of us on this committee to the men and women serving in Afghanistan,

Iraq, and throughout the area of responsibility you command, for their valor, dedication, and service to the country. They deserve our support and I know this committee will do everything necessary to give them that support.

Last month a milestone was reached when it was announced that for the first time, more U.S. troops are serving in Afghanistan than Iraq. This month marks 1 year since General Stanley McChrystal took command of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The news from Afghanistan in recent weeks has been largely negative: the increase in casualties among U.S., coalition, and Afghan security forces; the mixed results in Marja and the apparent return of Taliban intimidation and assassinations of local officials there; the failure of Afghan Government officials to deliver much-needed services to win local allegiances; the delay in the Kandahar campaign; the resignation of two senior Afghan security officials who seemingly were among the most competent members of the cabinet and had strong coalition support; the role of local powerbrokers, including members of the Karzai family, in Kandahar; the growth of militias and the counterproductive activities of some U.S.-hired private security contractors; and apparent differences with the Karzai regime over approaches to reconciliation with the Taliban. At a press conference last week, General McChrystal acknowledged these press reports, but emphasized that “you also have to step back and see the trend in direction.” We want to hear from our witnesses this morning on how they see these trends.

My focus is, and always has been, on getting the Afghan National Security Forces trained and equipped to take over the responsibility for their country’s security. Doing so is the key to success in Afghanistan. As General McChrystal said at a press briefing last week, the Afghan security forces are “the strategic main effort, and they’re key to the long-term stability in” Afghanistan.

General McChrystal has repeatedly set out the goal of putting Afghans in the lead and making them responsible for their future, and Afghan leaders have said they want to be responsible for their own security and affairs. At the Consultative Peace Jirga held at the beginning of this month, the 1,600 Afghan delegates adopted a resolution calling on the international community “to expedite the process of equipping, training, and strengthening the Afghan national security forces, so they can get the capability in taking responsibility to provide security for their own country and people.” But progress toward the goal of Afghans taking the lead in operations has been unsatisfactory.

Today, operations in Afghanistan are excessively dependent on coalition forces. The campaign plan for Kandahar, which is under way, anticipates increases in Afghan and ISAF forces in and around Kandahar city to create a “rising tide” of security, but at a 1 to 2 ratio that is, one Afghan soldier or policeman for every two ISAF troops. That is not good enough. Our partnering goal should be a ratio of at least 1 to 1 in Kandahar, and Afghan troops should be in the lead in many if not most operations.

Having Afghan units in the lead is critical in Kandahar since the likelihood of success there is based on popular support. That support is at the heart of the counterinsurgency strategy. The Afghan Army has broad public support, and even the Afghan Government has more than twice the support that the United States does. Polling numbers from the New York Times indicate 90 percent of Afghans support the Kabul Government over the Taliban, while only 40 percent have a favorable view of the United States. The 100 or so elders we met at a local shura in southern Afghanistan last year, when asked what they wanted the United States to do, told us that we should train and equip the Afghan security forces to provide for their country’s security, and then depart.

Last week, General McChrystal announced that ISAF would slow the expansion of the Afghan and coalition troop presence in Kandahar in order to allow time to secure the support of local tribal leaders for that effort. I trust General McChrystal’s judgment on the timing. He’s right that “It’s more important we get it right than we get it fast,” and that, “when you go to protect people, the people have to want you to protect them.” I’d rather delay a few months and have more Afghan forces in the lead when the security presence is expanded and operations begin more forcefully, than have an ISAF-dominated force attempt to secure Kandahar a few months earlier.

Our top priority, then, must be the training, mentoring, and partnering in the field with Afghan troops and placing them in the lead in operations against insurgents, backed by U.S. and coalition support. Currently, according to ISAF, the growth of the Afghan security forces is on track. The NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) under Lieutenant General Bill Caldwell, reports that recruitment for the Afghan army and police now actually exceeds monthly recruitment

goals. These forces are above where they need to be to meet the end strength goals for October 2010 of 134,000 Army and 109,000 police personnel.

What is disturbing and hard to comprehend, however, is that the training mission still does not have enough trainers to process all the Afghan recruits who are signing up to join the security forces. The most recent available figures show that of the more than 5,200 trainers we need, only about 2,600 are on the ground. Secretary Gates has deployed 850 U.S. soldiers and marines to Afghanistan to serve as a stopgap. According to a May 29th report from Lieutenant General Caldwell, the training mission has yet to receive 750 trainers pledged by NATO members. Further, last week NATO Secretary General Rasmussen announced that NATO members have yet to pledge an additional 450 trainers needed to meet training requirements. It's totally unacceptable that this shortfall persists. NATO members who, for whatever reason, do not send additional combat troops, or who intend to reduce their combat troop presence in the near future, should at least be willing to provide trainers, who operate away from the heavy fighting.

The question remains: Why are more Afghan forces not in the lead in Kandahar, using forces that are trained and ready? According to figures provided by the ISAF Joint Command, 25 Afghan battalions, or kandaks, are able to operate independently, and 42 Afghan kandaks can operate with coalition support. That is 67 of 113 total Afghan army kandaks. More recent ISAF data on Afghan forces' capability casts some doubt on the accuracy of that assessment of the Afghan army's capabilities, but they do not explain why it is U.S. or coalition forces that are usually leading operations, instead of the other way around. The Afghan army has about 125,000 troops available, more than we do. But it is our troops who are concentrated in the areas where the fighting is heaviest and where Afghanistan's future may well hang in the balance.

So, many questions regarding the Afghan National Army remain unanswered. Perhaps we will hear answers today: Why aren't more Afghan army troops leading security operations in the south? How many Afghan combat battalions, and how many Afghan combat troops, are there in Kandahar? When will the Afghan units take the lead there? Why aren't large numbers of Afghan army troops from other areas moving to Kandahar in preparation for the push? And why isn't the ratio of coalition to Afghan troops in Kandahar at least 1 to 1, instead of two coalition troops to one Afghan?

I know American troops are better equipped and trained than Afghan troops. But the issue isn't force-on-force—if it were, I would accept our taking the lead most often in Kandahar operations. The issue is who can best connect with and protect the population of Kandahar. As Afghan Defense Minister Wardak aptly described the situation in Kandahar, "It is a different type operation, it is not like Marja, it is not going to be that kinetic." The Afghan army can handle the population protection mission adequately and is equipped to do so. It is the hearts and minds of Afghans, particularly the Pashtun population in Kandahar, that must be won over. That population wants security, and it wants that security provided by Afghans. Having Afghan troops among the Afghan people is more accepted by them, with coalition forces in the background providing support for those Afghan troops.

I am also concerned by evidence that our own contracting practices may be harming the counterinsurgency effort. Our reliance on private security contractors—who often draw on militia forces—is empowering local powerbrokers and warlords who operate outside the government's control. As stated in one recent military analysis of Kandahar, "what used to be called warlord militias are now private security contractors."

The widespread hiring of private security contractors undermines the Afghan security forces' ability to recruit and retain personnel. Some private security contractors working under Defense Department contracts, actively recruit those with ANA or ANP experience. Our committee's investigation into private security contractors in Afghanistan has revealed that they are frequently paid more than Afghan security forces. A Department official recently testified that one reason for high attrition rates among Afghan National Civil Order Police officers, for example, is that "many of them are recruited by higher paying private security firms."

The threat that security contractors pose to mission success is not insignificant. In May 2010 the U.S. Central Command's Armed Contractor Oversight Directorate reported that there were more than 26,000 private security contractor personnel operating in Afghanistan. Last week, General McChrystal acknowledged the problems arising from our contracting practices, specifically private security companies, and said that ISAF will be looking at what needs to be done. I hope that review will lay out a path to phase out the use of private security contractors in Afghanistan and to integrate those personnel into the Afghan National Security Forces. In his November 2009 inaugural statement, President Karzai stated that within the next

2 years, he wanted “operations by all private, national, and international security firms to be ended and their duties delegated to Afghan security entities.” We and the Afghan Government need to take concrete steps to achieve that goal.

General McChrystal has emphasized repeatedly that the campaign in Afghanistan “is a process that takes time.” The patience of the American people is not infinite, and their sacrifices have already been great. As Secretary Gates said ahead of a NATO defense ministerial meeting last week, all NATO members, for the sake of their publics, need to show by the end of this year that “our strategy is on track, making some headway.” He added that “if we are making progress and it’s clear that we have the right strategy, then the people will be patient.”

I agree with that assessment, but would add one thing. That is, that the Afghan Government and people need to demonstrate a sense of urgency and commitment to succeed in building a lasting peace in Afghanistan. If the Afghan Government and people demonstrate a willingness to fight and assume increasing responsibility for their security and affairs, then the American people will be steadfast partners in that endeavor.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank our distinguished witnesses for joining us this morning to discuss events in Afghanistan. Let me thank you for your leadership of our men and women in uniform, especially those in harm’s way.

As is well known, I believe that winning the war in Afghanistan is a vital national security interest. I’ve said for years that the best way to achieve a success is through a properly resourced counter-insurgency strategy backed by strong civil, military, and U.S.-Afghan partnerships. For this reason, I have supported and still do support strongly the President’s decision to increase our commitment in Afghanistan.

I’ll be brief, Mr. Chairman, and come right to the point. As I gauge the progress of any war effort, I look at the broader trend lines, and it is for this reason that I am deeply concerned about our campaign in Afghanistan. Many of the key trends seem to be heading in a bad direction, perhaps even signaling a mounting crisis.

As an example, 10,000 additional NATO troops are supposed to deploy along with our surge forces. But we presently have just over half that number and, more importantly, it’s not clear when or from where the rest of them will arrive. At the same time, the Dutch and Canadian Governments continue to plan for an imminent withdrawal of their forces, while just yesterday the Government of Poland, which has been a major troop contributor, called on NATO to draw up a timetable to end the alliance’s mission in Afghanistan and withdraw our forces.

In Marjah our troops are performing exceptionally, but it appears that we and our Afghan partners have not been able to provide durable, consistent security to the population. Not surprisingly, governance and development seem to be lagging. General McChrystal recently referred to Marjah as a “bleeding ulcer” and questioned whether we have enough troops there.

Rather than serving as proof that NATO and the Afghan Government will succeed, which was the intention, I fear that Marjah at the moment is sending a much more troubling signal. In Kandahar, where the success of the war itself could be determined, I agree with General McChrystal’s recent comment that “It’s more important we get it right than we get it fast.” That said, the delay in our operation is not projecting an air of confidence and success.

To get Kandahar right, we all know that we need an integrated political-military strategy. But as far as I can tell, the political part of that strategy still isn't there. I hear a lot about the number of civilians who will deploy in Kandahar, but I still haven't heard a convincing explanation for how we will begin to change the complex balance of power within the province, the troubling behavior of key local power brokers, the performance of the ANP in the city, and the counterproductive contracting practices that we are dependent on.

Meanwhile, it's very troubling that President Karzai has decided to remove his minister of interior and his head of intelligence, two of our most important partners in his government and two men I know to be upstanding and effective. I don't know why President Karzai made this decision, but the explanation given by his former intelligence chief which we read in the newspaper this weekend seems to have a ring of truth to it: that President Karzai no longer believes the United States will succeed and that he is shifting as a result to a policy of accommodation with the Taliban and the Pakistani military. If true, this could be very dangerous.

That's the larger trend that underlies all the others, the mounting loss of confidence in America's commitment to succeed that seems to be shared by both our friends and enemies in Afghanistan as well as its neighbors. As our witnesses know, especially General Petraeus, a counterinsurgency is a battle for the thoughts and allegiance of people. It's about demonstrating to those sitting on the fence that they should throw their lot in with our partners and us because we're going to win.

No matter how much it's been explained and fixed with caveats, the decision to begin withdrawing our forces from Afghanistan, arbitrarily, in July 2011 seems to be having exactly the effect that many of us predicted it would. It's convincing the key actors inside and outside of Afghanistan that the United States is more interested in leaving than succeeding in this conflict. As a result, they're all making the necessary accommodations for a post-American Afghanistan.

This is not to say that we cannot succeed. I think we can and we must. But it is to say that, with ongoing difficulties in Marjah, a delayed offensive in Kandahar, growing concerns about the Afghan Government, troop commitments still lagging from NATO, and the final units of our own surge not set to reach Afghanistan until the 1st of September, it now seems increasingly clear that hoping for success on the arbitrary timeline set by the administration is simply unrealistic.

Again, I'd echo General McChrystal: "It's more important we get it right than we get it fast." That goes for Kandahar and for the war itself. It's time for the President to state unequivocally that we will stay in Afghanistan until we succeed. We need to begin a realistic debate about what it will take and how long it will take to achieve our goals. I look forward to having that discussion with our witnesses.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.
Secretary Flournoy.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MICHÈLE A. FLOURNOY, UNDER
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY**

Secretary FLOURNOY. Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you very much for inviting us here to testify today. I'd like to give you an update on recent progress and remaining challenges in Afghanistan. President Obama announced a number of key refinements to our strategy last December, including the deployment of an additional 30,000 U.S. service men and women. Today over 18,000 of these additional troops have deployed and the remainder will be in place by the end of the summer.

Our own troops will be joined by over 9,000 international troops. Approximately 60 percent of NATO and partner troops are currently in place in Afghanistan and more will come in the coming months.

Currently the main operational effort for ISAF and our Afghan partners continues to be in the Central Helmand River Valley and Kandahar. Our focus in these operations is on protecting the population and fostering Afghan security and governance capacity. So far, we believe we have been making gradual but important progress. The coalition is contesting the insurgency more effectively, in more places, and with more forces.

But this insurgency is both resilient and resourceful. In both April and May, we saw insurgent activity resume in Marjah and much of Central Helmand Province. Nonetheless, the nature of recent insurgent attacks is beginning to indicate a possible reduction in some of their operational capacity. For example, the percentage of complex attacks, those employing more than one means of attack, has steadily dropped since its peak in February, and the average number of casualties per attack is below 2009 levels.

Local Afghans in the region have also shown an increased willingness to report suspected improvised explosive devices and insurgent weapons caches, which suggests growing pockets of confidence among ordinary people and a willingness to support ISAF and Afghan efforts to establish security and governance.

In Kandahar Province, we are taking a deliberate approach, gradually expanding our efforts to improve local governance in key districts as coalition and ANSF operations improve the security situation gradually.

Some in Congress have expressed concern about the impact of local power brokers on our efforts in Kandahar. We share this concern and we recognize that there are ways in which our own contracting practices have actually had unintended consequences, concentrating wealth among a relatively small number of Afghans who control companies large enough to procure contracts. General Petraeus and Admiral Mullen have created a two-star task force to examine our contracting practices with a view to reducing these unintended consequences. When we have evidence of corruption, we will also work with the Afghan Government to prosecute those who have violated the law.

Let me turn now to our efforts to build the capability and capacity of the ANSF. Building an effective ANSF capacity remains key both to the long-term security and stability of Afghanistan and to our ability to transition security responsibility and draw down our

forces as conditions allow. While we are still short about 450 institutional trainers, we have reduced the instructor-to-trainee ratio from about 1 to 80 to now 1 to 30.

The ANA is on schedule to meet our goal of 134,000 troops for fiscal year 2010, and nearly 85 percent of the ANA is now fully partnered with ISAF forces as they operate in the field. The ANP is on track to reach its goal of 109,000 police by the end of the fiscal year and we have increased the capacity to conduct ANP training by 400 percent over the last 12 months, and follow-on training has been provided to both ANP in 83 key districts as well as the Afghan Border Police (ABP).

Recent salary and benefit initiatives have addressed pay disparities between the ANA and the ANP and these initiatives appear to be improving retention and attrition. Literacy programs have also proven to be a positive incentive. Further, we believe that rising end strength numbers and newly instituted rotation schedules will further reduce attrition. Consequently, we believe the ANSF end strength goals for 2011 are achievable.

Needless to say, the purpose of these efforts is to ensure a gradual transition of security responsibility to the Afghan Government. I want to emphasize here that transition does not mean abandonment or withdrawal. We are committed to supporting the people of Afghanistan over the long term and we will not walk away from this commitment. Nonetheless, we cannot and should not remain in the lead combat role indefinitely. As the international military presence begins to shift from a combat role to an advise and assist role, it will be absolutely vital to ensure a more robust and long-term international civilian assistance effort focused on capacity-building, governance, and development.

We are working closely with the Afghan Government to plan for the transition process. In May, President Karzai and 14 members of his cabinet were here in Washington for just about a week for a strategic dialogue. At the Kabul conference in July, the Afghan Government will present further plans for achieving progress in governance and development across four ministerial clusters. We also expect to hear more from President Karzai regarding actions taken to address corruption as well as plans for reconciliation and reintegration.

Let me say a few words about reconciliation and reintegration since I know it's an issue that has generated a great deal of interest. All parties to the conflict in Afghanistan recognize that in the end some political resolution will be required to bring this conflict to a close. This recognition has driven the Afghan Government to begin to develop plans to reconcile insurgent leaders and reintegrate low-level fighters. In early April, President Karzai presented his interim plans for reintegration. In May, a Consultative Peace Jirga gave President Karzai a conditional mandate to move forward in this area.

The United States supports an Afghan-led process that seeks to bring back into society those who cease violence, break ties with al Qaeda, and live under the Afghan constitution and all of its requirements.

Let me conclude by underscoring that our overall assessment is that we are heading in the right direction in Afghanistan. Of the

121 key terrain districts identified by ISAF in December of last year, 70 were assessed at that time to be sympathetic or neutral to the Afghan Government. By March of this year, that number had climbed to 73 districts. This and other indicators suggest that we are beginning to regain the initiative and the insurgency is beginning to lose momentum.

That said, the outcome is far from determined, and these are still early days for the administration's new strategy. It's only a matter of months since the President's announcement. When I briefed this committee in February, I said: "Inevitably, we will face setbacks, even as we achieve progress." None of what we are doing in Afghanistan involves quick fixes. These are long-term problems and their solutions will require patience, persistence, and flexibility. But we are making progress, sometimes slow, but we believe steady. We are confident that General McChrystal will be able to show more progress by the end of the year.

We greatly appreciate this committee's continued support for our efforts, from the Operation Enduring Freedom budget to our supplemental request. Particularly, we appreciate your support for full funding for the Afghan security forces, for coalition support funds, and for the Commanders' Emergency Response Program authority, which we believe is an absolutely critical tool in the counter-insurgency fight.

Thank you again for inviting us here today for this discussion and for your support, your continued support to the men and women who serve in uniform, and your support to enable progress in Afghanistan. Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Flournoy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY HON. MICHÈLE P. FLOURNOY

Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, and members of the committee: thank you for inviting us here to testify today, and for reporting out S. 3454, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011. I greatly appreciate this committee's support for authorities that assist our warfighters in stability, counterterrorism, and counterinsurgency operations. The Commanders' Emergency Response Program and the authority to reimburse coalition partners are critical to field commanders, and we're grateful for your ongoing support.

My testimony today will address our efforts to improve the capacity of the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF), support the Afghan Government in improving governance and security, and plan for reconstruction and economic development. I will also outline the progress being made in Helmand and Kandahar provinces, and discuss issues of reconciliation and reintegration.

Let me start by recapping some of the key events and decisions of the past year and a half. As I noted when I last briefed you in February, the United States and our Afghan and international partners were confronted by a bleak situation when President Obama took office. Early gains against the Taliban had eroded, the Taliban and associated insurgent groups had reconstituted in safehavens along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Afghan confidence in the coalition was in decline.

President Obama ordered an immediate strategy review, and in the course of that preliminary review we made a number of key changes. We grew our force by 38,000 troops, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) appointed General McChrystal as Commander of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) (COMISAF). Perhaps most importantly, General McChrystal quickly implemented a counter-insurgency strategy that prioritizes protecting the Afghan people over killing the enemy.

In December of last year, after an extensive strategic review, the President announced a number of key refinements to our strategy, including the deployment of 30,000 additional U.S. service men and women. As of June 2, over 18,000 of these additional troops had already deployed, and the remainder will be in place by the

end of the summer. Our own troops will be joined by over 9,000 additional NATO and partner nation troops—some 2,000 more troops than were pledged by our allies and partners in January 2010. Approximately 60 percent of the NATO and partner troops are currently in place in Afghanistan, and more will arrive in the coming months. We are concerned about the possible loss or reduction of the Dutch contingent in Uruzgan Province, as well as by the Canadian plan to end their military mission in Afghanistan in 2011. We continue to work with both nations to find ways through which they can demonstrate their continued commitment to our shared goals in Afghanistan.

COUNTERINSURGENCY IN HELMAND AND KANDAHAR PROVINCES

Currently, the main operational effort for ISAF and our Afghan partners continues to be in the Central Helmand River Valley and Kandahar. For ISAF and our Afghan partners, the Helmand operations have been the first large-scale effort to fundamentally change how we do business. Our focus in these operations is on protecting the population and fostering security and governance capacity, and our preparations for the Helmand operation included extraordinary levels of civil-military planning and engagement with the Afghans—from our ANSF partners, to Afghan ministries, to local tribes and populations. Ultimately, the operation was approved and ordered by President Karzai.

We have made significant progress in establishing security, which is a precondition for enhancing governance and expanding development. Today, our coalition forces are contesting the insurgency more effectively, in more places, and with more forces.

But even as we make progress, we face continued challenges. In both April and May, we saw resumed insurgent activity in Marjah, and an expansion of insurgent capacity throughout Central Helmand. Insurgents carried out numerous high profile attacks in Kandahar City. This renewed insurgent activity has disrupted governance efforts and prompted several nongovernmental organizations to plan withdrawal from the area. The insurgency is both resilient and resourceful, and the upsurge in violence demonstrates this.

Nonetheless, the nature of recent insurgent attacks is beginning to show trends consistent with a reduction in the insurgents' operational capability. For example, the percentage of complex attacks (those employing more than one means of attack) has steadily dropped since a peak in February and the average number of casualties per attack is below 2009 levels. As nascent security, governance and development initiatives begin to unfold, we are also seeing increased signs of popular resistance to insurgent demands. Insurgents continue to seek to influence the population through assassination and other intimidation tactics, but local Afghans in the region have shown an increased willingness to report suspected improvised explosive devices and insurgent weapons caches, another indicator that the insurgent attacks are becoming less effective. These incidents suggest growing pockets of confidence among ordinary people, and a willingness to support ISAF and Afghan efforts to establish security and governance in the region.

Let me also say a bit about Kandahar. Kandahar is the heart of the Pashtun-dominated south, and it is a key population center that serves as a hub of several major trade routes. It is also the spiritual center of the Taliban. In Kandahar, we are taking an incremental approach, gradually expanding efforts to improve local governance in key districts as Coalition and ANSF operations improve the security situation.

You have expressed concern about the impact local powerbrokers have on our efforts in Kandahar. We share this concern. Our goal is to foster transparent, effective, and accountable democratic governance in Afghanistan—yet we recognize that there are ways in which our own contracting practices have had unintended consequences. The large sums of money spent by the U.S. and other coalition partners to support operational requirements—including trucking, personal security contractors, and construction—have concentrated wealth among the relatively small number of Afghans who control those companies able to execute the required support operations.

General Petraeus and Admiral Mullen have created a two-star task force (in coordination with Under Secretary Carter's Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics office) to examine our contracting practices. Our goal is to find ways to reduce these unintended consequences of our contracting practices. When we have evidence of corruption, we will also work with the Afghan Government to prosecute those who have violated the law.

GROWING THE CAPACITY OF THE ANSF AND IMPROVING SECURITY

Our efforts to increase the strength and capability of the ANSF remain key both to the long-term security and stability of Afghanistan, and to our ability to draw our own forces down, in accordance with the timeline President Obama has laid out.

These efforts are showing progress, though here too, significant challenges remain. We continue to work to improve retention and decrease attrition in the ANSF, and to improve the quality of the force. We are also partnering ISAF with the ANSF at all levels, from the Ministries of Defense and Interior down to the small unit level, with the aim of intensively mentoring the ANSF and growing the next generation of leaders.

In the face of continued shortfalls, we are engaging in aggressive diplomatic efforts to encourage our international partners to provide additional institutional trainers and mentoring teams for the ANSF. A series of NATO meetings over the last 6 months—including last week’s Defense Ministerial—focused heavily on addressing these shortfalls.

Currently, the Afghan National Army (ANA) stands at 125,694 soldiers, which is well above our target of 116,500 for this time period, and is on schedule to meet our goal of 134,000 for fiscal year 2010. The Afghan National Police (ANP) numbered 105,873 as of early June, and the Ministry of the Interior is on track to reach its goal of 109,000 police by the end of the fiscal year. Beginning in fiscal year 2011, the security ministries’ goals are to build the ANA to 171,600 troops, and the ANP to 134,000 officers. We think these goals are achievable.

Formed in November 2009 and led by LTG William Caldwell, the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) is working closely with the MoD and MoI on several initiatives to improve recruiting, training, retention, and attrition. Recent salary and benefit initiatives have addressed pay disparities between ANA and ANP forces, and our initial assessment suggests these initiatives have led to improved retention and attrition rates. Literacy programs have also proven to be a positive incentive for recruitment and retention.

Further, we believe that rising end-strength numbers will also have a positive impact on retention and attrition rates. The Afghan Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior are also instituting ANA and ANP unit rotation schedules, to reduce the strains associated with indefinite deployments and to provide greater opportunity for security personnel to be home with their families. We believe that this effort will also reduce attrition rates.

Training the police remains our greatest challenge, but we have taken important steps to ensure that the Afghan police we put into the field are better trained and more capable. The MoI has implemented a revised ANP development model so that all recruits receive adequate training before they are deployed. We have raised the capacity to conduct ANP training by 400 percent over the course of the past 12 months. Additionally, the MoI has sought to institutionalize best practices, in part by creating institutions such as the new Recruiting and Training Commands.

Through the Focused District Development program, we and our Coalition partners have provided follow-on training for Afghan Uniformed Police in 83 districts, and the Focused Border Development program is accomplishing the same for the Afghan Border Police. In coordination with NTM-A, the MoI has also initiated planning to address leadership and professional development issues and to identify ways to counter corruption. The NTM-A/Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) is working with the MoI to institute a competitive officer selection and promotion process that is transparent and merit based. COMISAF has directed that the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) partnering program be expanded to provide direct mentoring, and today, nearly 85 percent of the ANA are fully partnered with ISAF forces as they operate in the field.

TRANSITION

We are also working on several other fronts to ensure a gradual transition of responsibility to the Afghan Government. At NATO’s Tallinn Foreign Ministerial in April, the ministers approved a framework for transition. Based on this decision, NATO Senior Civilian Representative Mark Sedwill and General McChrystal are now engaging more formally and intensively with the Afghan Government to develop a joint Afghan-international community transition plan. This plan is expected to be presented during the Kabul Conference in July.

I want to emphasize that “transition” does not mean abandonment or withdrawal. We are committed to supporting the people of Afghanistan over the long-term, and we will not walk away from this commitment. Nonetheless, we cannot and should not remain in a combat role indefinitely. The transition to Afghan responsibility will be a conditions-based process, one through which the Afghan Government, over

time, assumes increasing responsibility for security and other government functions throughout the country, with continued ISAF support.

The scope and pace of that transition will depend on circumstances on the ground. But as the international military presence begins to shift from a combat role to an advise-and-assist role, it will be absolutely vital to ensure a more robust and long-term international civilian assistance effort focused on capacity building, governance and development.

U.S. AND AFGHAN GOVERNMENT LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP

In January 2010, at the London Conference, President Karzai reaffirmed his government's commitment to establish security and good governance, fight corruption, increase economic development, and improve regional cooperation, among other issues. In May, President Karzai and 14 members of his cabinet visited Washington for a Strategic Dialogue to follow up on the London conference. Their meetings with President Obama and U.S. cabinet officials reinforced the long-term and vital partnership between our two countries, in areas ranging from security to governance and economic development.

Senior Department of Defense (DOD) officials met with a large cadre of capable Afghan officials who are implementing programs that meet our shared objectives. President Karzai's visit underscored international cooperation and support for the mission in Afghanistan, and also highlighted the continuing support among Afghans for U.S. Government involvement in Afghanistan. President Karzai visited Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where he met with our wounded warriors, and Fort Campbell, KY, where he thanked soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division as they departed for Afghanistan. We do feel that our Afghan partners appreciate the sacrifices being made by U.S. soldiers and civilians.

The discussions held in May on governance, security, economic and social development, and regional issues built on past sessions of the United States-Afghanistan Strategic Dialogue. During these discussions, President Obama and President Karzai reaffirmed their growing cooperation and their commitment to the solid, broad, and enduring strategic partnership between the Governments and peoples of the United States and Afghanistan. This partnership is based on shared interests and objectives, as well as mutual respect. The two sides declared that a sovereign, stable, secure, peaceful, and economically viable Afghanistan that has friendly relations with all its neighbors and countries in the region is vital to regional stability and global security.

President Obama and President Karzai's joint statement of May 12 highlighted several key points in the area of security. The two Presidents recognized the importance of the Afghan Government to assuming increasing responsibility for security. They further recognized that developing ANSF capabilities is necessary to facilitate an orderly, conditions-based security transition process. Additionally, the United States reaffirmed its commitment to transitioning responsibility for detention facilities to the Afghan Government. Finally, President Obama and President Karzai recognized the importance of Afghan-led peace and reconciliation efforts.

The Afghan Government's next opportunity to demonstrate progress toward meeting the commitments made in London will be the Kabul Conference in July. Eighty international delegations will be on hand for the Kabul conference, at which the Afghans will present plans for integrated progress in governance and development across four ministerial clusters. We also expect to hear from President Karzai regarding actions taken to address corruption. Finally, we expect to hear President Karzai's plans for reconciliation and reintegration, based on the mandate he received from the Consultative Peace Jirga.

AFGHAN ATTITUDES

As a result of General McChrystal's shift to a counterinsurgency approach, the percentage of Afghan civilian casualties caused by Coalition actions has dropped substantially. This improvement has produced significant shifts in Afghan attitudes towards ISAF and Afghan forces. Compared to a year ago, polling suggests that Afghans are now more optimistic about the future and have greater confidence in the ability of the Afghan Government and their Coalition partners to prevail over the insurgency.

We have seen other positive indicators in the last year, as well. Of the 121 key terrain districts identified by ISAF in December 2009, 60 were assessed as sympathetic or neutral to the Afghan Government. By March of this year, that number had climbed to 73 districts.

Nonetheless, the Afghan public still considers government corruption a serious problem, and extends the blame to ISAF and the rest of the international commu-

nity. Corruption in Afghanistan remains a widespread problem. As stated in DOD's April 2010, Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan, Afghanistan has achieved some progress in its anti-corruption efforts. But substantive change remains elusive.

Despite this and other serious problems that remain unaddressed, there are reasons for optimism. A national survey completed in March indicates that 59 percent of Afghans believe their government is headed in the right direction, an increase of 8 percent over September 2009.

REINTEGRATION AND RECONCILIATION

All parties to the conflict in Afghanistan recognize that there is a limit to what military activities alone can accomplish. In the end, some political resolution will be required to bring the conflict to a close. This recognition has driven the Afghan Government's efforts to reconcile insurgent leaders and reintegrate low-level fighters.

This effort must be Afghan-led. In early April, President Karzai presented his interim plans for reintegrating lower-level insurgents who renounce violence and disassociate themselves from terrorists back into Afghan society. In May, a Consultative Peace Jirga, a traditional Afghan method of gaining national consensus, was held to address reconciliation. The Jirga's final report gave President Karzai a conditional mandate to pursue talks with the Taliban.

In recognition of this progress, the Department has released Afghan Reintegration Program Authority funding (authorized under the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010) to fund DOD reintegration activities in support of this Afghan Government initiative. Along with contributions from the international reintegration trust fund, co-managed by the British and Japanese Governments, the Afghan Reintegration Program Authority will play an important role in supporting reintegration opportunities as they emerge on the battlefield.

LOOKING FORWARD

Last week, Secretary Gates attended the informal NATO Defense Ministerial in Brussels. General McChrystal and Ambassador Sedwill have been charged with coordinating with the Afghan Government to develop a joint assessment process and a plan to begin a conditions-based transition process, and in Brussels last week, Ambassador Sedwill, the NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Afghanistan, presented a concept for Afghanistan transition that was accepted by the NATO Ministers.

Following the July Kabul Conference, the Afghan Government will prepare for September Parliamentary elections. The international community will insist on transparency during this round of elections. The leadership and membership of the election commission has changed since the 2009 Presidential elections, and we believe that the Afghan Government understands the importance of demonstrating real progress in terms of holding free, fair, and transparent elections.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by underscoring our assessment that we are heading in the right direction in Afghanistan. We are regaining the initiative and the insurgency is beginning to lose momentum. That said, the outcome is far from determined. Approximately 54 percent of additional planned coalition forces are now in place, but those troops still to come are critical to achieving success.

I want to repeat something I know I have said before: none of what we are doing in Afghanistan involves quick fixes. These are long-term problems, and their solutions will require patience, persistence and flexibility. At this point, though, I remain cautiously optimistic because the elements key to success are being put in place. As we move forward, we will continue to adjust—and I believe that we will continue to make progress. I share Secretary Gates' confidence that General McChrystal will be able to show demonstrable progress by the end of this year.

We very much appreciate this committee's continued support for our efforts. Congress is currently considering the Department of Defense's fiscal year 2011 budget request, including \$110.3 billion for Operation Enduring Freedom, as well as a supplemental request of \$28.8 billion for fiscal year 2010, and we believe that these funds are critical to our success in Afghanistan. I appreciate the support this committee has given, in its mark-up of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011, for full funding of the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund, and for the extension of Coalition Support Funds to reimburse Pakistan and other key nations that cooperate in contingency operations in Afghanistan. I would also encourage full funding of our Commanders' Emergency Response Program request as we see this

authority as a key nonkinetic weapon in the counterinsurgency fight. I also appreciate the Senate's passage of the Supplemental Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2010 last month.

With your help, we have accomplished a great deal over the past year, but there is a great deal still to do.

Thank you once again for inviting us here today. I look forward to continuing to work together, and I welcome your questions and comments.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Secretary Flournoy.
General Petraeus.

**STATEMENT OF GEN DAVID H. PETRAEUS, USA, COMMANDER,
U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND**

General PETRAEUS. Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the situation in Afghanistan and our execution of the comprehensive civil-military counterinsurgency campaign that is being conducted there. I note that it's a pleasure to do this with Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michèle Flournoy, who I might note was a contributor to the conference at Fort Leavenworth in January 2006 that launched the effort to develop and draft the Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Manual.

I'll begin with some brief context. As you'll recall, soon after the September 11 attacks an international coalition led by the United States conducted an impressive campaign to defeat the Taliban, al Qaeda, and other associated extremist groups in Afghanistan. In the years that followed, however, members of the Taliban and other extremist elements gradually reconnected in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border regions and rebuilt the structures necessary to plan and execute insurgent operations.

In recent years, these groups have engaged in an increasingly violent campaign against the Afghan people, their government, and ISAF forces. They have demonstrated symbiotic relationships, ambitions, and capabilities that pose threats not just to Afghanistan and the region, but to countries throughout the world.

In response to the threat posed by these extremists, ISAF forces and our Afghan partners are engaged in a campaign intended above all to prevent reestablishment of transnational extremist sanctuaries in Afghanistan like the ones al Qaeda enjoyed there when the Taliban ruled Afghanistan prior to September 11.

To achieve our objectives, we are working with our ISAF and Afghan partners to wrest the initiative from the Taliban and other insurgent elements, to improve security for the Afghan people, to increase the quantity and quality of the ANSF, and to support establishment of Afghan governance that is seen as legitimate in the eyes of the people.

Over the past 18 months we and our ISAF partners have worked hard to get the inputs right in Afghanistan. We have worked to build the organizations needed to carry out a comprehensive civil-military counterinsurgency campaign. We've put the best military and civilian leaders in charge of those organizations. We've refined and, where necessary, developed the plans and concepts needed to guide the conduct of a comprehensive effort. We have deployed the substantial additional resources, military, civilian, funding, and so on, needed to implement the plans that have been developed.

I note here that the deployment of the 30,000 additional U.S. forces announced by President Obama last December and their equipment is slightly ahead of schedule. Nearly 18,300 of the additional 30,000 as of the latest numbers are now in Afghanistan, and by the end of August all the additional U.S. forces will be on the ground except for a headquarters that is not required until a month or so later.

Meanwhile, the efforts to increase the size and capability of the ANA and ANP are also now on track, though there clearly is considerable work to be done in that critical area and to sustain the gains that have been made recently in recruiting and attrition.

Even as we continue the effort to complete getting the inputs right, the actions taken over the last 18 months, which include tripling the U.S. force contribution and increasing similarly the U.S. civilian component, have enabled the initiation of new efforts in key areas in Afghanistan. The initial main effort has of course been in the Central Helmand River Valley, and U.S. and U.K. forces have made progress there, though, predictably, the enemy has fought back as we have taken away important sanctuaries in Marjah, Nad-i-Ali, and elsewhere.

The focus is now shifting to Kandahar Province, where the effort features an integrated civil-military approach to security, governance, and development. In the months ahead, we'll see an additional U.S. brigade from the great 101st Airborne Division deploy into the districts around Kandahar City together with an additional ANA brigade. We'll see the introduction of additional ANP and U.S. military police to secure the city itself, along with other U.S. forces and civilians who will work together with the impressive Canadian provincial reconstruction team that has been operating in the city.

As you have heard General McChrystal explain, the concept is to provide the people of Kandahar a rising tide of security, one that will expand over time and establish the foundation of improved security on which local Afghan governance can be built and that will enable improvements in the provision of basic services and other areas as well.

There will be nothing easy about any of this. Indeed, I noted several months ago during my annual posture hearing that the going was likely to get harder before it got easier. That has already been the case, as we have seen recently. But it is essential that we make progress in the critical southern part of the country, the part where in fact the September 11 attacks were planned by al Qaeda during the period when the Taliban controlled it and much of the rest of the country.

Central to achieving progress in Afghanistan and to setting the conditions necessary to transition security tasks from the international coalition to the Afghan Government is increasing the size and capability of the ANSF. To that end, with the assistance of the Afghan Security Forces Fund, Afghan security forces are now on track to meet their targeted end strength objectives by the end of the year, as the Under Secretary explained.

In 2009, the ANSF numbered 156,000. Today, there are over 231,000 ANSF members. To help achieve greater quality as well as greater quantity, General McChrystal has directed much greater

partnering with the ANSF, an emphasis that is on display daily in operations throughout Afghanistan. Considerable progress has been made in getting the concepts right for developing the ANSF and also in developing the structures needed to implement those concepts.

Improving the ANSF has been facilitated considerably, for example, by the establishment last November of the NTM-A, the organization created to help the ANSF expand and professionalize. It's worth noting that the NTM-A commander, Lieutenant General Bill Caldwell, assessed that in NTM-A's first 6 months NATO and Afghan security leadership have made progress in reversing adverse trends in the growth and professionalization of the ANSF.

Nevertheless, as General Caldwell has also observed, there is much work remaining to reduce its attrition further and to develop effective leaders through considerably augmented partnering, training, education, and recruiting, and initiatives are being pursued in each of these areas.

In all of our efforts, we and President Karzai continue to emphasize the importance of inclusivity and transparency on the part of the Afghan Government and its leadership, especially in linking nascent local governing structures to the decisionmaking and financial resources in Kabul.

Needless to say, innumerable challenges exist in all areas of government and much more needs to be done to help the Afghan Government assume full responsibility for addressing the concerns and needs of Afghan citizens. The National Consultative Peace Jirga held in Kabul earlier this month was a constructive step in this effort, providing an opportunity for President Karzai to build consensus, to address some of the political tensions that fuel the insurgency, and, appropriately, to promote reconciliation and local reintegration as means that can contribute to a political resolution of some of the issues that exist. The shura council that he conducted on Sunday in Kandahar furthered this process and the effort to set the political conditions for progress in Kandahar.

Another critically important part of our joint civil-military campaign in Afghanistan is promoting broad-based economic and infrastructure development. We've seen that improvements in the Afghan Government's ability to deliver basic services, such as electricity, education, and basic health care, provide positive effects in other areas, including security and economic development. We've worked closely with the international community and the Afghan Government to support robust strategies for these areas; again water, governance, energy, education, health, and road programs. We're now embarking on a project jointly developed by the Government of Afghanistan and various U.S. Government agencies to dramatically increase production of electricity for the Kandahar area and parts of southern and eastern Afghanistan. To complement this effort, we also promote agriculture and economic programs to help Afghans bring licit products to market rather than continuing to grow the poppy.

Again, none of this is easy or without considerable challenges. However, the mission is, as the members of this committee clearly recognize, hugely important to the security of the region and of our country. In view of that, we are obviously doing all that we can to

achieve progress toward accomplishment of our important objectives in Afghanistan and we are seeing early progress as we get the inputs right in that country.

In closing, I want to thank the members of this committee once again for your unwavering support and abiding concern for the more than 215,000 troops deployed throughout the CENTCOM area of responsibility, and for their families as well. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of General Petraeus follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY GEN DAVID H. PETRAEUS, USA

Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the situation in Afghanistan. Today, I will describe our ongoing efforts in support of the comprehensive civil-military campaign that is being conducted in Afghanistan.

I'll begin by setting my remarks in context. As you will recall, soon after the September 11 attacks, an international coalition led by the United States conducted an impressive campaign to defeat the Taliban, al Qaeda, and other associated extremist groups in Afghanistan. In the years that followed, however, members of the Taliban and the other extremist elements gradually reconnected in Afghanistan's and Pakistan's border regions and rebuilt the structures necessary to communicate, plan, and carry out operations.

In recent years, these groups have engaged in an increasingly violent campaign against the Afghan people, their government, and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) forces, and they have developed symbiotic, relationships that pose threats not just to Afghanistan and the region, but to countries throughout the world.

In response to the threat posed by these extremists, coalition forces and their Afghan partners are now engaged in a comprehensive civil-military campaign intended, above all, to prevent reestablishment of transnational extremist sanctuaries in Afghanistan like the ones al Qaeda enjoyed there when the Taliban ruled Afghanistan prior to September 11.

To achieve our objectives, we are working with our ISAF and Afghan partners to wrest the initiative from the Taliban and other insurgent elements, to improve security for the Afghan people, to increase the quantity and quality of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and to support establishment of Afghan governance that is seen as legitimate in the eyes of the people.

Over the past year or so, we and our ISAF partners have worked hard to get the "inputs" right in Afghanistan: to build organizations, command and control structures, and relationships needed to carry out a comprehensive civil-military campaign. We and our international partners have put the best possible civilian and military leaders in charge of those organizations. We have refined and, where necessary, developed the civil-military plans and concepts needed to guide the conduct of a comprehensive counterinsurgency effort. We have deployed the substantial additional resources—military, civilian, funding, and so on—needed to implement the plans that have been developed. I note here that the deployment of the 30,000 additional U.S. troopers announced by President Obama last December and their equipment is slightly ahead of schedule. By the end of August, all the additional U.S. forces will be on the ground except for a division headquarters that is not required until a month or so later. Meanwhile, the efforts to increase the size and capability of the Afghan National Army and Police are also on track, though there clearly is considerable work to be done in that critical area.

Even as we continue the effort to get all the inputs in place, the actions taken over the last 18 months, which include tripling the U.S. force contribution and increasing similarly the U.S. civilian component, have enabled the initiation of comprehensive civil-military counterinsurgency operations in key districts in Afghanistan.

The initial main operational effort has been in the Central Helmand River Valley, and progress has been made there, though, predictably, the enemy has fought back as we have taken away his sanctuaries in Marjah, Nad-i-Ali, and elsewhere.

The focus is now shifting to Kandahar Province, and the effort there features an integrated civil-military approach to security, governance, and development. Over the course of the month ahead, we will see an additional U.S. brigade—from the great 101st Airborne Division—deploy into the districts around Kandahar City, together with an additional Afghan Army brigade. There will also be the introduction

of additional Afghan police and U.S. military police into the city, together with other U.S. forces and civilians who will work together with the impressive Canadian PRT that has been working in the city. As you've heard General McChrystal explain, the concept is to provide the Kandaharis "a rising tide of security" that will expand incrementally over time and establish the foundation of improved security on which local Afghan governance can be built, that will enable improvements in the provision of basic services, and so on. There will be nothing easy about any of this, to be sure, and as I noted during my annual posture hearing, the going is likely to get harder before it gets easier. But it is essential to make progress in the critical southern part of the country, the part where, in fact, the September 11 attacks were planned by al Qaeda during the period when the Taliban controlled it and much of the rest of the country.

Central to achieving progress in Afghanistan—and to setting the conditions necessary to transition security tasks from the international community to the Afghan Government—is increasing the size and capability of ANSF. To that end, with the assistance of the Afghan Security Forces Fund, the security forces are on track to meet their targeted end strength objectives by the end of this year. In January 2009, the ANSF numbered 156,000; today, there are over 231,000 ANSF members. Additionally, General Stan McChrystal has placed a premium on comprehensive partnering with the ANSF, an emphasis that is on display daily in operations throughout Afghanistan. Clearly, there is need for improvement in quality, not just quantity. Considerable progress has been made in getting the concepts right for developing the ANSF and also in developing the structures needed to implement the concepts.

Improving the ANSF is facilitated considerably by the establishment last November of the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A), the organization created to help the ANSF expand and professionalize so that they can answer their country's security needs. It is worth noting that the NTM-A Commander, LTG Bill Caldwell, assessed that in NTM-A's first 6 months, NATO and Afghan security leadership have made "progress in reversing adverse trends in the growth and professionalization of the ANSF." Nevertheless, as LTG Caldwell has also observed, there is much work remaining to reduce attrition and to develop effective leaders through considerably augmented partnering, training, and recruiting.

In all of our efforts, we continue to emphasize the importance of inclusivity and transparency on the part of the Afghan Government and leadership, especially in linking nascent local governing institutions to the decisionmaking and financial resources in Kabul. Needless to say, innumerable challenges exist in all areas of governance, and much more needs to be done to help the Afghan Government assume full responsibility for addressing the concerns of ordinary Afghan citizens. The National Consultative Peace Jirga held in Kabul earlier this month represents a constructive first step in this effort, providing an opportunity for President Karzai to build consensus, to address some of the political tensions that fuel the insurgency, and to promote reconciliation and local reintegration as means that can contribute to a political resolution of some of the issues that exist.

Another critically important part of our joint civil-military campaign in Afghanistan is promoting broad-based economic and infrastructure development. We have seen that improvements in the Afghan Government's ability to deliver basic services such as electricity and water have positive effects in other areas, including public perception, security, and economic well-being. We have worked closely with the international community and the Afghan Government to develop robust overarching strategies for water, governance, energy, and road programs. We are now embarking on a project jointly developed by the Government of Afghanistan and various U.S. Government agencies to dramatically increase production of electricity to the Kandahar area. To complement this effort, we support and promote viable agricultural and economic alternatives to help Afghans bring licit products to market, rather than continuing to grow the poppy.

Again, none of this is easy or without considerable challenges. However, the mission is, as the members of this committee clearly recognize, hugely important to the security of the region and our country. We are obviously doing all that we can to achieve progress toward achieving our important objectives in Afghanistan.

In closing, I thank the members of this committee for your unwavering support and abiding concern for the more than 215,000 troops deployed throughout the Central Command area of responsibility—and for their families, as well. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, General Petraeus.

I think we'll try a 7-minute first round. General, let me start with you relative to the issue which I raised about the ANA not

being adequately in the lead down in the south, where the major fighting is taking place and where it's going to take place in the months ahead. As I understand it, we have approximately 94,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan. About half of them are deployed in Helmand and Kandahar, down in the south. That's the main focus of our counterinsurgency effort.

How many Afghan troops are there currently in Kandahar and Helmand and about how many Afghan troops do we expect will be there in September?

General PETRAEUS. Mr. Chairman, I'll be happy to get that for you for the record. If I could just provide the overview of what it is that we're trying to accomplish in that area, and you certainly touched on the importance of, obviously, getting the Afghans in the lead.

[The information referred to follows:]

There are a total of 10,913 Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) currently deployed throughout all of Helmand Province—7,280 in the Afghan Army (ANA), 3,663 in the Afghan National Police (ANP), 2,727 in the Afghan Uniform Police, 311 in the Afghan Border Police, 625 in the Afghan Civil Order Police (ANCOP), and 28,907 coalition forces (CF).

In Hamkari, the ratio of ANSF to coalition forces operating in support of Hamkari is approximately 1 to 1 and will remain so throughout the summer as Afghan and coalition forces continue to flow. As of 1 July 2010, there were a total of about 10,750 (6,050 in the ANSF and 4,700 coalition forces) for a ratio of 1.29 to 1.

- ANA ~3,000 Infantry, 850 Support
- ANP ~1,500 AUP, 700 ANCOP
- CF ~2,600 Infantry, 300 Military Police, 1,800 Combat Enablers

As of 1 August 2010, there were a total of about 14,550 (7,550 in the ANSF and 7,000 coalition forces) for a ratio 1.08 to 1.

- ANA ~3,500 Infantry, 850 Support
- ANP ~1,800 AUP, 1,400 ANCOP
- CF ~4,200 Infantry, 300 Military Police, 2,500 Combat Enablers

General PETRAEUS. We had a video teleconference with General McChrystal this morning, in fact, the normal weekly one that the Secretary does. The Chairman, Under Secretary Flournoy, and I participate in that. In that he described, for example, how he will use some of the elements of the additional brigade going into the Kandahar belts, the districts around Kandahar City, to work with their Afghan partners, so that they can do what President Karzai also wants them to do, as he announced in the shura council on Sunday to the 500 or so local leaders there in discussing what is coming to Kandahar Province. That is that Afghan forces lead wherever that is possible.

Chairman LEVIN. What percentage of the time do you figure they're going to be in the lead in this Kandahar operation? Will it be most of the time? Will it be less than half the time? Roughly how often in these operations that are going to take place will it be Afghan troops in the lead? Can you give us some estimate?

General PETRAEUS. It will depend on which component it is, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Not the special forces. Other than the special forces.

General PETRAEUS. With respect to the police, for example, the police are in the lead in Kandahar.

Chairman LEVIN. Other than the police. I'm talking about troops.

General PETRAEUS. The Afghan National Civil Order Police will be in the lead. With partners, but not by any means full numbers, alongside them, they will be conducting the operations and they will be leading in those.

Chairman LEVIN. Just for the regular army kandaks, give us an idea? Do we expect that most of the time that the operations will be led by Afghan troops or not?

General PETRAEUS. I would think that the presence patrols, if you will, will be the ones that are led by the Afghan forces, and that the more high-end operations that require the integration of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) systems, and so forth, that are an important component of this overall effort, would still be led by U.S. forces.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. Now, the numbers that we have, the ISAF numbers, are that more than half of those Afghan battalions are capable of operating either independently or independently with coalition support. Even if you reduce that number down to 30 percent, which is what I think ISAF is going to be doing, there's a lot more kandaks or battalions of the ANA that are able to operate independently than we are using down in the south.

Why are we not and why are the Afghans not moving more of their troops down to the south for this upcoming campaign?

General PETRAEUS. First of all, they have moved more of their troops to the south, Mr. Chairman. Second, they are going to move more of their troops to the south. Third, there are other missions in Afghanistan that require Afghan troops.

Chairman LEVIN. Are they capable, General, of leading most of these operations where you call high end operations? Are there enough Afghan troops capable of leading those high end operations?

General PETRAEUS. The very high end operations, we have Afghan partners on those and we are developing. Now I'm talking the very high end operations.

Chairman LEVIN. I say leading.

General PETRAEUS. Not the very high end. Again, those are dependent on U.S. ISR assets that they don't have the ability to pull down, nor does virtually any other force in the world, for that matter.

What I think is probably more relevant would be more of the standard activities. The standard patrols I think they have the capability to do and are doing. They do secure large numbers of convoys of various movements, again the presence patrols, the framework activities, as it's termed. But when you get into the more challenging scenarios, certainly in the difficult operations in Marjah, U.S. forces ended up leading the bulk of those.

Chairman LEVIN. General, let me ask you whether or not you continue to support the strategy of the President which has the additional forces coming in, but, more specifically, do you continue to support that July 2011 date for the start of reduction in U.S. forces from Afghanistan?

General PETRAEUS. I support the policy of the President, Mr. Chairman. As I have noted on a number of occasions, my sense of what the President was seeking to convey at West Point in December were two messages. One is a message of enormous additional

commitment, again culminating in the more than tripling the number of U.S. forces, triple the number of civilians, substantial additional funds that you have authorized for the ANSF, et cetera, and also a message of urgency. The urgency was the July 2011 piece, noting that what happens in July 2011 is a beginning of a process for transition, that it's conditions-based, and the beginning of a process of responsible drawdown of U.S. forces.

Chairman LEVIN. When you say that you continue to support the President's policy both in terms of the additional troops, but also the setting of that date to begin the reduction for the reasons that you just gave in terms of laying out the urgency for the Afghans to take responsibility, does that represent your best personal professional judgment?

General PETRAEUS. In a perfect world, Mr. Chairman, we have to be very careful with timelines. We went through this in Iraq, as you will recall, and I did set a timeline ultimately in Iraq. In fact, testifying before this body in September 2007 I said we would start the drawdown of our surge forces in December, based on a projection of conditions that would be established.

We are assuming that we will have those kinds of conditions that will enable that by that time in July 2011. That's the projection and that is what again we have supported.

Chairman LEVIN. Do I take that to be a qualified yes, a qualified no, or just a non-answer?

General PETRAEUS. A qualified yes, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

General PETRAEUS. Again, I think there was a nuance to what the President said that was very important, that did not imply a race for the exits, a search for the light to turn off, or anything like that. It did imply the need for greater urgency. That target was—I think a number of targets that was aimed at. It included the leaders in Afghanistan. It undoubtedly included some of our partners around the world. It may have included some of us in uniform.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. General, just to follow up here, there's a great deal of confusion about this. You just said that beginning withdrawal, and it would be conditions-based and contingent upon certain factors. Yet there's a recent book by Jonathan Alter—and it has quotes:

“Inside the Oval Office, Obama asked Petraeus: ‘David, tell me now. I want you to be honest with me. You can do this in 18 months?’

‘Sir, I’m confident we can train and hand over to the ANA in that timeframe,’ Petraeus replied.

‘Good, no problem,’ the President said. ‘If you can’t do the things you say in 18 months, then no one is going to suggest we stay, right?’

‘Yes, sir, in agreement.’

‘Yes, sir,’ Mullen.”

Then Mr. Alter goes on to say:

“Obama was trying to turn the tables on the military, to box them in after they had spent most of the year boxing

him in. If after 18 months the situation in Afghanistan had stabilized as he expected, then troops could begin to come home. If conditions didn't stabilize enough to begin an orderly withdrawal of U.S. forces or if they deteriorated further, that would undermine the Pentagon's belief in the effectiveness of more troops."

Then at the end:

"At the conclusion of an interview in his West Wing office"—referring to the Vice President—"Biden was adamant: 'In July 2011, you're going to see a whole lot of people moving out. Bet on it.'"

Now, I don't know if that book is accurate. It has quotes in it. But honestly, General, there's a disconnect between the comment that you just made in response to the chairman and what is being depicted here and the President's repeated statements that in July 2011 that we will begin withdrawal. This obviously sends a message to our enemies that we are leaving and our friends that we are leaving, and then there is accommodation in the region.

So I guess maybe could you clarify the difference between what you just said and what is quoted in the book:

"I am confident that we can train and hand over to the ANA in that timeframe."

"Good, no problem."

"If we can't do the things you say you can in 18 months, then no one is going to suggest we stay, right?"

That's a quote, apparently a direct quote from the President of the United States.

General PETRAEUS. Senator, I'm not sure it's productive to comment on conversations that took place in the Oval Office.

Senator MCCAIN. I understand that.

General PETRAEUS. What I would come back to is what the President said at West Point, and that is something that I support, as I just told the chairman. That is that July 2011 is not the date where we race for the exits; it is the date where, having done an assessment, we begin a process of transition of tasks to Afghan security forces based on conditions and begin a process of a responsible drawdown of our forces.

Senator MCCAIN. Do you believe that we will begin a drawdown of forces in July 2011, given the situation as it exists today?

General PETRAEUS. It's not given as the situation exists today. Obviously, it is given as projections are for that time. I do believe that that will be the case.

Senator MCCAIN. Do you believe we can begin a drawdown in July 2011 under the projected plans that we have?

General PETRAEUS. That is the policy and I support it, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. I understand you support the policy. Will conditions on the ground indicate that we will begin a withdrawal, in the words of the Vice President: "July 2011, you're going to see a whole lot of people moving out. Bet on it."

Do you agree with the comment of President Karzai's former intelligence chief that Karzai has lost confidence in the ability of the United States and NATO to succeed in Afghanistan, General?

General PETRAEUS. I do not, Senator. Again, as I mentioned earlier, in fact we just did a video teleconference, a weekly video teleconference with General McChrystal. He spent the bulk of Sunday with President Karzai in the process of conducting the shura council in Kandahar, going to and from with him as well, and in that process there was certainly no sense on General McChrystal's part, nor on those of the others who were with him, that there was a lack of confidence in the U.S. commitment to Afghanistan.

As I mentioned earlier, the fact that we will have more than tripled our forces from January 2009 to the end of August 2010 is of enormous significance. The same with the civilian force structure, the same with the funding, and the same with others.

Senator MCCAIN. Let me reiterate my admiration and respect, General, for you and our military leaders in the task, in the difficulty of the task before them. I think you are one of America's great heroes.

But I continue to worry a great deal about the message we are sending in the region about whether we're actually going to stay or not and whether we're going to do what's necessary to succeed, rather than set an arbitrary timeline. The best way to—[Pause.]

Chairman LEVIN. We're going to recess. We're going to recess now for a few moments. We'll recess until the call of the chair.

[Recess from 10:23 a.m. to 10:33 a.m.]

Chairman LEVIN. General Petraeus appears to be doing very well, and we will make a decision as to whether to proceed in, hopefully, a few minutes. He's eating. He probably didn't have enough water to drink coming in here this morning. But he appears to be doing very much better.

Again, we will make a decision hopefully in a few minutes as to whether we're going to proceed this morning or not.

Until then, we'll stand in recess.

[Recess from 10:34 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.]

[Applause.]

General PETRAEUS. Senator, my apologies.

Chairman LEVIN. Are you kidding?

General PETRAEUS. I got a little bit light-headed there. It wasn't Senator McCain's questions, I assure you. [Laughter.]

Chairman LEVIN. I know, it was mine. [Laughter.]

General PETRAEUS. No, it's just that—

Chairman LEVIN. Clear me too, would you, with the same breath, if you would? Just kidding.

General PETRAEUS. I just got dehydrated, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. General, you've told us that you're more than ready to go.

General PETRAEUS. I am.

Chairman LEVIN. You always are. You're that kind of an incredible person.

I have consulted with colleagues and we're going to overrule you, and we're just not going to continue—

General PETRAEUS. Civilian control of the military action here?

Chairman LEVIN. Yes, proving it again, right—[Laughter.]

We just would feel better about it. We're going to try to continue tomorrow morning. We think at 9 o'clock is fine. But you look great, and we just would feel better.

Secretary Flournoy, I don't know if you've checked your schedule or not, but if you could also do that.

We thank both of you.

Senator MCCAIN. Mr. Chairman, could I just mention, I would finish the thought that I had when General Petraeus felt a little ill. You are one of America's greatest heroes and we're glad you're recovered and we look forward to seeing you again tomorrow.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

We all feel better. I know you feel better, but we all feel better doing it this way. So we will stand adjourned until tomorrow morning, tentatively at 9 o'clock. [Applause.]

[Whereupon, at 10:52 a.m., the committee adjourned.]

**TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON
THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN**

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 2010

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:07 a.m. in room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Akaka, E. Benjamin Nelson, Webb, McCaskill, Udall, Hagan, Kaufman, McCain, Inhofe, Sessions, Graham, Thune, Wicker, LeMieux, Brown, and Collins.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Joseph M. Bryan, professional staff member; Ilona R. Cohen, counsel; Jessica L. Kingston, research assistant; Jason W. Maroney, counsel; William G.P. Monahan, counsel; Michael J. Noblet, professional staff member; and William K. Sutey, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Adam J. Barker, professional staff member; Christian D. Brose, professional staff member; Michael V. Kostiw, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, minority counsel; and Dana W. White, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Jennifer R. Knowles, Christine G. Lang, and Hannah I. Lloyd.

Committee members' assistants present: James Tuite, assistant to Senator Byrd; Christopher Griffin and Vance Serchuk, assistants to Senator Lieberman; Greta Lundeberg, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Ann Premer, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Patrick Hayes, assistant to Senator Bayh; Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Tressa Guenov, assistant to Senator McCaskill; Jennifer Barrett, assistant to Senator Udall; Roger Pena, assistant to Senator Hagan; Lindsay Kavanaugh, assistant to Senator Begich; Halie Soifer, assistant to Senator Kaufman; Sandra Luff, assistant to Senator Sessions; Andy Olson, assistant to Senator Graham; Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune; Erskine Wells III, assistant to Senator Wicker; Brian Walsh, assistant to Senator LeMieux; Kevin Kane, assistant to Senator Burr; Kyle Ruckert, assistant to Senator Vitter; and Ryan Kaldahl, assistant to Senator Collins.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. We're glad to welcome back our witnesses this morning, as the committee resumes its hearing on the progress in Afghanistan. Under Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, let me reiterate this committee's great appreciation for your service, the sacrifices that you and your families make along the way. The demands of your positions are great. You carry out your duties professionally and with excellence, so thanks to you both.

General Petraeus, you were more than willing and more than able to proceed yesterday morning. It was my abundance of caution that led me to adjourn the proceedings until this morning.

Before I turn to Senator McCain, who still has a bit of his time remaining, I understand that General Petraeus has a short statement.

**STATEMENT OF GEN DAVID H. PETRAEUS, USA, COMMANDER,
U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND**

General PETRAEUS. Thanks, Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the committee. Again, thank you for the opportunity for a redo hearing after I demonstrated yesterday the importance of following my first platoon sergeant's order 35 years ago, to always stay hydrated. I'll try to remember that in the future. In fact, my team provided me this nifty camelback to help me remember it. [Laughter.]

I pointed out that the committee provides water, and I do thank the committee as well for the chocolate chip cookies that were in the anteroom before this session.

If I could, Mr. Chairman, before the questioning resumes, I'd like to ensure that my answers to questions by you and Senator McCain on the July 2011 date are very clear. As I noted yesterday, I did support and agree, at the end of the President's decision-making process last fall, with the July 2011 date described by the President as the point at which a process begins to transition security tasks to Afghan forces at a rate to be determined by conditions at the time.

I also agreed with July 2011 as the date at which a responsible drawdown of the surge forces is scheduled to begin at a rate, again, to be determined by the conditions at the time.

As I noted yesterday, I did believe there was value in sending a message of urgency, July 2011, as well as the message that the President was sending of commitment, the additional substantial numbers of forces. But it is important that July 2011 be seen for what it is, the date when a process begins, based on conditions, not the date, when the U.S. heads for the exits.

Moreover, my agreement with the President's decisions was based on projections of conditions in July 2011 and, needless to say, we're doing all that is humanly possible to achieve those conditions and we appreciate the resources provided by Congress to enable us to do that.

Of course, we will also conduct rigorous assessments throughout the year and as we get closer to next summer, as we do periodically in any event, to determine where adjustments in our strategy are needed. As July 2011 approaches, I will provide my best military advice to the Secretary and to the President on how I believe we

should proceed based on the conditions at that time, and I will then support the President's decision.

Providing one's forthright advice is a sacred obligation military leaders have to our men and women in uniform, and I know that that is what the President expects and wants his military leaders to provide as well.

Beyond that, Mr. Chairman, in response to some of your questions yesterday, I want to be very clear as well that I fully recognize the importance of Afghan security forces leading in operations. Indeed, the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A), the many initiatives it is pursuing, and the vastly increased partnering ordered by General McChrystal are intended to help the Afghan forces achieve the capability to take the lead in operations.

To that end, I think we should note that Afghan forces are in the lead in Kabul and in a number of other areas and missions, and they are very much in the fight throughout the country, so much so that their losses are typically several times that of U.S. losses.

In short, our Afghan comrades on the ground are indeed sacrificing enormously for their country, as are of course our troopers and those of our International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) partner nations.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, General. I am glad to hear of your support for July 2011 beginning of U.S. troop reduction decision, since I continue to strongly believe that it is essential for success in Afghanistan for everyone to understand the urgency for the Afghans to take responsibility for their own security.

Now, this morning, after calling upon Senator McCain to complete his questions, I'm going to be calling on Senators for questions in the early bird order that was established yesterday morning, as I believe that we notified all of our members' offices yesterday afternoon.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We were interrupted probably at the most important point of my comments yesterday, General Petraeus, when I said I considered you one of America's greatest heroes. In case you missed that, I'll repeat it.

Chairman LEVIN. I don't think you missed that.

General PETRAEUS. It was overwhelming, sir. [Laughter.]

Senator MCCAIN. I still believe that with all my heart.

I appreciate the statement you just made, General Petraeus, and I think it's very helpful. I hope that it's heard in the Oval Office and in the Vice President's office, because your statement seems to contradict what the President of the United States continues to say, what his spokesperson said, that July 2011 was "etched in stone," administration officials continue to say that July 2011 will begin the withdrawal. According to what is probably trash journalism, Vice President Biden said: "In July 2011, you're going to see a whole lot of people moving out. Bet on it."

So it would be very helpful if your sentiments were shared by the President, the Vice President, the President's National Security Advisor, and others. Right now, General, we are sounding an uncer-

tain trumpet to our friends and our enemies. They believe that we are leaving as of July 2011. I could relate to you anecdotes all the way down to the tribal chieftain level in Afghanistan.

It seems to me that organizations, countries, and leaders in the region are accommodating to that eventuality, and that does not bode well for success in Afghanistan. So to elaborate on the comment I made yesterday, if we sound an uncertain trumpet, not many will follow, and that's what's being sounded now. That's one of the reasons why we see some of the events taking place that are in the region, not just confined to Afghanistan.

I know that I've used up most of my time, Mr. Chairman. Maybe General Petraeus would like to respond.

General PETRAEUS. Senator, first of all, I think July 2011 is etched in stone, but as I tried to explain it, as a date at which a process begins that is based on conditions, and that I think was explained clearly at the speech at West Point by the President, which I was privileged to attend.

Beyond that, as I said yesterday, I don't think it's productive, obviously, to discuss journalistic accounts of Oval Office conversations based on second- and third-hand sources, other than to say that I think it is important that folks should know that those are not a complete account. I will leave it right there.

What I have tried to explain today is my understanding of what July 2011 means and how it is important again that people do realize, especially our partners and our comrades-in-arms in Afghanistan and in the region, that that is not the date when we look for the door and try to turn off the light, but rather a date at which a process begins.

If I could, I'd like to ask the Under Secretary perhaps if she wanted to provide some insights, having participated in the process as well.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Thank you very much.

I think General Petraeus has characterized the date accurately. It is an inflection point. It is a point at which the end of the surge will be marked and a process of transition that is conditions-based will begin. The President was very careful not to set a detailed timeline of how many troops will come out at what point in time, because he believes in a conditions-based process, and he's said that over and over again.

On the issue of whether or not Afghans understand our commitment, I think one of the things that we did in the strategic dialogue we had recently with President Karzai and 14 members of his cabinet was to focus on the long-term commitment of this country to the Afghan people and to Afghanistan's development. We talked about long-term security assistance, long-term commitment to build capacity, governance, development.

I think that everyone walked away from that with no questions in their mind about the depth and enduring nature of the U.S. commitment to Afghanistan. So I think that that has to be important context in which this conversation happens.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Madam Secretary. We don't live in a vacuum here. I've had conversations with him as well. I've had conversations with leaders throughout Afghanistan and the region, and that's not what they're telling me.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCain.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome back, General. It's great to see you looking good again. Your recovery time was very impressive yesterday. I thought it was at World Cup levels, and the coach may want to add you to the team roster before Slovenia later in the week. [Laughter.]

I thank you both for your service and your leadership. I want to say at the outset that, as you both said yesterday in your opening statements, in previous appearances before our committee you've made clear that things would get worse before they got better in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, that's exactly where we are now.

But to me the important point here—and I want to go back to that December 1 speech by President Obama at West Point. We're talking about the deadline parts of it. I want to come back to that in a minute. But the President made a very strong case there, expressing his decision that the outcome of the war in Afghanistan was of vital national security interest to the United States, and if it went badly the consequences for our security, American security, were disastrous.

To me that's the most important point. We know from previous experience that counterinsurgencies take time. I think the key now is to make sure that we have the right strategy, that it's sufficiently resourced to execute it with decisive force, and, as important as anything else, that we give our warfighters and the Department of State (DOS) personnel on the ground the time and patience to achieve the strategic national goal that we have in succeeding in Afghanistan. I say that to us here in Congress as well as to the American people.

General Petraeus, I think an important part of that is the clarification you made just now about what the July 2011 date means. It's not a deadline for withdrawal. It's not a deadline by which we're going to pick up and go out. It's a goal. I want to stress, as you did very clearly today, notwithstanding anything that we may have read and what my dear friend and colleague from Arizona has described as trash journalism, or it may be trash journalism, the fact is that what happens on the ground at that time, will determine whether we withdraw any troops from Afghanistan in July 2011.

Obviously, we hope we'll be able to. I believe that it's important for the President to make that clear at some point soon, because, notwithstanding all the clarifications that followed from him, Secretary Gates, Secretary Clinton, and the two of you, in our conversations with people in the region that date is being read as a date at which the United States is going to begin to pull out regardless of what's happening on the ground.

So thank you for your clarification this morning.

Second, I want to ask this question. Some of us on the committee were talking about it afterward. There's been a run of bad reporting from Afghanistan over the last couple of weeks. The marines took Marjah, but the Taliban is fighting back. There's been beheadings and targeted assassinations of people who worked with us.

General McChrystal announced last Friday that the offensive in Kandahar is now being delayed.

Yet the reports that you gave in your opening statements yesterday were quite upbeat about what's happening in Afghanistan. I fear there's a gap between the tone and the message that you gave us yesterday and what we are reading in the media about what's happening. I wanted to ask you to address yourself to that gap, because that gap can begin to erode the support that you need from Members of Congress and the American people in the months ahead.

General PETRAEUS. Senator, I think you've raised a very important point, and that is the importance of having measured expectations. The conduct of a counterinsurgency operation is a roller-coaster experience. There are setbacks as well as areas of progress or successes. It is truly an up and down when you're living it, when you're doing it, even from afar, frankly.

But the trajectory in my view has generally been upward, despite the tough losses, despite the setbacks. When I appeared before you some months ago for the posture hearing, a coalition soldier could not have set foot in Marjah. I did that just, I guess it was, a month and a half ago with the district governor. There wasn't a district governor at that time. There is gradually the expansion of government activities in the form of schools, of assistance to revive markets, and of nascent judicial systems certainly that are tied into local organizing structures as well, which is very important.

We did the same in Nad-i-Ali, in Kandahar. I bought bread in the market down there. Yes, I had security around me, but, I had hundreds of Afghans right around me as well, and bought the bread directly from them, sat there, chatted with them while we ate it.

This is an up and down process, and that defines the experience of counterinsurgency, where there's no hill that you can take and plant the flag and then go home to a victory parade. Rather, progress is almost the absence of something. I remember in Iraq when all of a sudden I realized we were making progress. We were hearing less about a certain activity, say a car bomb or a suicide attack, and all of a sudden we had expanded our forces into an area. The Iraqi forces were starting to stand up in certain areas, as is the case again in certain areas of Afghanistan.

So I think it is essential that we realize the challenges in this kind of endeavor. It is also essential that, as both the Under Secretary and I noted, that people do realize there has been progress, but there clearly have also been setbacks.

Beyond that, if I could just underscore what you said about the designation as a vital national security interest. For one who taught international relations for a period, that is a code word. That is a sign of commitment. That's a rhetorical statement that means an enormous amount, and again I appreciate your mentioning that because it does highlight what I was discussing earlier.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, General.

Did you want to add something, Madam Secretary?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Sir, I would agree with what General Petraeus said about counterinsurgency campaigns being a roller-

coaster ride. But the overall trajectory is moving in the right direction. It's going to be hard. There are going to be times when we take one step back and then we'll take two steps forward.

The one thing I wanted to give as an example is I do think that the reporting on the delay in the Kandahar campaign has been overplayed. We talked a lot yesterday about the importance of Afghans taking the lead. We owe General McChrystal a great degree of operational flexibility. What's happening in Kandahar is he's taking more time to shape the operation. The campaign's already begun. The shaping is happening now.

The shura that President Karzai conducted on Sunday was very important for him to step up and take the lead, the ownership, of what's going to happen in Kandahar. So if that means delaying some aspects by a little bit of time to make sure that that Afghan ownership and leadership is in place, then we should all be supporting that. That is not any sign of failure at all. It's a sign of good counterinsurgency strategy.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you both.

General PETRAEUS. If I could, Senator, we probably should distribute what was published as President Karzai's talking points for the Kandahar shura, because it really makes a number of these points. This is a president who is acting as a commander in chief. [The information referred to follows:]

PRESIDENT KARZAI'S TALKING POINTS FOR KANDAHAR SHURA

FUTURE OF AFGHANISTAN

"Hamkari Baraye Kandahar" is essential to the expansion of the exercise of Afghan sovereignty in governance, development and security. This is the way forward for Afghanistan—increasing our capacity to guide our own future.

I intend to underscore this growing capacity during the Kabul Conference—as demonstrated by the performance of government at all levels in "Hamkari." At both the Kabul Conference and the NATO Summit in Lisbon, I will encourage the international community to take note of our growing exercise of sovereignty.

PRIORITY OF KANDAHAR

Stability in Kandahar is essential for stability and success in Afghanistan as a whole. Kandahar faces two big challenges: an insurgency that threatens our peaceful way of life; and our own history of ineffectiveness in responding to the people's needs for governance and security. We must resolve both of these challenges.

We will ensure success in Kandahar without losing sight of the needs of all the Afghan people.

MY INTENT

To provide a firm commitment to the people of Kandahar Province. In coordination with the Afghan National Security Forces and numerous Government Officials we have conducted a series of meetings to synchronize our efforts. As a result, I have directed the following:

(1) Minister Spanta: Provides oversight and direction of Hamkari through the National Security Council on my behalf.

(2) Director Popal and the IDLG: He will act as the lead coordinator of all ministries to improve governance and development in Kandahar. They will ensure that appointments are expedited and Tashkils are manned not later than the beginning of Ramadan. Staffs will be provided with appropriate incentives which encourage them to work in Kandahar Province.

(3) Service and Investments: Ministers will give a high priority to the delivery of services and investments in Kandahar Province.

(4) Public Service: An essential aspect of this effort is for the people of Kandahar Province join the Government of Afghanistan and become public servants. We encourage families and members of the community to join the Army, the Police, and our civil service ranks.

(5) Provincial and District Officials: Ensure councils are inclusive and representative of all constituencies.

(6) Economic Development—

(a) Electrical power for Kandahar Province is an extremely high priority and we will work to deliver this basic service as soon as possible.

(b) A bypass route for Kandahar City will be constructed this year so that large vehicles do not need to travel directly thru the center of Kandahar City.

(7) Private Security Companies and Militias: I have directed that Private Security Companies and Militias must be registered and regulated. It is my long term goal that security is only provided by elements of the Afghanistan Central Government.

(8) Insurgents in the Surrounding Districts: It is unacceptable for Insurgents to control large swaths of Arghandab, Zharay, and Panjwa'i. I ask that you, the citizens of Kandahar Province, confirm your approval of operations to remove these Insurgents from these districts to protect the Afghan People.

(9) Peace and Reintegration Program: I have directed Governor Wesa to develop and execute the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program in Kandahar Province. Execution will be at the local level.

(10) Land Commission: The Kandahar City Mayor will establish a Land Commission to address important land disputes and specifically land disputes related to the misappropriation of properties.

RESPONSIBILITY/ ACCOUNTABILITY

As your Commander in Chief, I bear the ultimate responsibility for the success of our effort in Kandahar. Yet all of us are responsible for continuously and rigorously holding each other accountable.

The principle of mutual accountability extends to our relationships with the international community, who are supporting us in these efforts.

We will:

- Convene periodically to share updates on progress; to confirm and update our strategic direction; and to resolve any issues that require senior leadership attention.
- Mobilize the emerging capacity of this government to prosecute and hold legally accountable officials who have broken the law.

TIMELINE

Our efforts in Kandahar are already underway, and will continue aggressively for the rest of the year. We will not see the results all at once. Our efforts this year will improve security conditions, and lay a foundation for stronger governance. It will take some time for better security and governance to earn the trust and confidence of the people of Kandahar. As trust grows, local communities will increasingly stand up against insurgent presence and corrupt practices, former fighters will choose to rejoin peaceful society, violence levels will go down, and opportunities for more effective governance and development will continue to grow.

UNITY OF EFFORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Our success in Kandahar requires, immediately, the closest possible integration among ourselves. It also requires that we are clear and unified in articulating our intent and our progress to the people of Afghanistan, our 'upset brothers', and the international community.

FOCUS ON SERVING THE AFGHAN PEOPLE

The Afghan people will hold us responsible for making their present and future lives better. Success for Afghanistan means that the government is representative of all the people and is responsive to their needs. In turn, the people support their government and hold it accountable. In effect, this is a contract between us and our people, and the basis for Afghanistan's lasting stability.

Stability in Kandahar will require the people's direct involvement. The invitation to participate in various councils and shuras is open to all Kandaharis who want to be part of peaceful Afghan society.

Senator LIEBERMAN. That would be very important.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, just as a suggestion, I share the concern of both of the previous questioners about the exit strategy, a certain date. I was relieved when the President made his speech, when he said: "Just as we have done in Iraq, we will execute this transition responsibly, taking into account conditions on the ground."

That's the position that I wanted him to take and I was relieved to hear that. The problem is I've only heard it once. I asked staff after the meeting yesterday to go back and check and see if they've seen any emphasis on that by the President. I would recommend that that be done, that he keep saying that, and that the administration does it, and certainly General Petraeus and others, because that clarifies it and makes it clearer. But without that, only having said it once, I think there's a little bit of a problem there.

Let me ask you a question, General Petraeus. You've heard me talk about this before and you know that I have a very strong feeling about the Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP). You talked about it in your opening comments yesterday. We had the CERP from the defense budget that came from the President; it was at \$1.3 billion, and this was comprised of \$200 million in Iraq and \$1.1 billion in CERP in Afghanistan.

Now, this committee, and I respect them for doing what they felt was the right thing. I disagreed with it, has lowered CERP so that it takes the amount to Afghanistan from \$1.1 billion down to \$800 million.

Now, I'd like to ask you your feeling about how valuable the program is and how would you use it? Then the second part of that question is, you had said this, Madam Secretary, that General McChrystal needs more operational flexibility. I think maybe we need that in the CERP, because during talks on my last trip over there as to what needs are there that could come from the CERP, something that could be done fast would be power stations, electric grids, and dam projects. However, the CERP has restrictions due to the statute so that money can't necessarily be spent on these types of projects.

So the second part of the question would be, do we need to change the language, either one of you, particularly you, General Petraeus, to be able to accomplish these two things that people in the field told me we should be spending it on?

General PETRAEUS. Senator, thanks for that. First of all, the President actually has described what you've quoted him on in a number of different occasions. I'd come back to the West Point speech in particular, where the very important words, "responsible drawdown," were used. Just like vital national interest, that has been a code word for those of us who went through the Iraq Policy Review, at the end of which the President announced the responsible drawdown and, as you'll recall, lengthened the time over that which was expected earlier. We are in the process of doing that and, touch wood, we think that it is on track and it will be at the 50,000 number by the end of August, by the way.

With respect to the CERP for Afghanistan, we do need the full amount, Senator. It is very valuable. You asked about that. As I mentioned in my opening statement yesterday, we now have the in-

puts just about right, certainly another 9,000 troopers to get on the ground and some of our NATO partners as well.

But as we get everybody in position, as we get them out performing their tasks and trying to wrest the initiative from the Taliban, take away their sanctuaries, and then capitalize on that, CERP is critical to that process.

Now, someone may ask, “how come the execution rate, the obligation rate, this year so far is low?” In part because we’re just building up still. Again, we actually are doing many more projects that are actually lower cost, is another issue. But beyond that, we do indeed have projects that are stacked up right now. We just have submitted them in fact, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) is working on this, and I’ll let the Secretary talk about these projects, for electrification in particular, in the Kandahar, Greater Regional Command (RC)-South and RC-East areas.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Senator, let me just echo. We think that CERP is an absolutely critical and flexible counterinsurgency tool. We would urge the committee to consider restoring the funding that was removed.

In the specific case of the electrical projects in Kandahar, again it’s a very critical element of the fight. We think it directly impacts the population that we’re trying to protect and win over to support the ISAF and the Afghan Government. The projects have been developed in close coordination with U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), with a bridging strategy that would eventually hand off to longer-term development efforts. U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) has submitted these proposals. They’re being reviewed quickly in OSD and we’ll be making a recommendation to the Secretary very shortly.

We do not judge at this point that the language needs to be changed. Our reading of the language, and those of our trusty lawyers, suggests that the flexibility is there to do this kind of thing.

Senator INHOFE. We’re running out of time here, but I would only suggest this, that this is information I got from the field, that there are things that we could use that we are restricted from using. So perhaps for the record you could elaborate a little bit on that and send us something.

[The information referred to follows:]

In response to Senator Inhofe’s questions about: (1) the value of the Commanders’ Emergency Response Program (CERP); (2) how it is used; and (3) whether it requires less restrictive legislative language:

As stated during the hearing, the CERP is an “absolutely critical and flexible counterinsurgency tool” and “[we] do not judge at this point that the language needs to be changed.”

The CERP’s overall impact has been immediate and of significant tactical, operational, and strategic benefit. Commanders use CERP to provide a rapid response capability that complements civilian development and reconstruction efforts, particularly in non-permissive areas. Commanders use CERP to bridge the gap until civilian agencies and traditional long-term development programs can provide assistance or the local government can resource requirements. In the dynamic counterinsurgency environment, flexibility enables commanders to employ CERP funding in the most effective manner. Effective use requires different approaches be taken during each distinct stage of the counterinsurgency campaign, and requires attention to the significant differences between Afghanistan and Iraq.

Afghanistan requires an array of relief and reconstruction assistance—small projects and complementary larger-scale projects. The emphasis is on supporting small-scale projects immediately following kinetic operations, although CERP fund-

ing is also required for larger projects that can provide a near-term counterinsurgency impact.

In Iraq, the CERP has been and will continue to be a critical enabler for commanders to carry out the U.S. Government's strategy to maintain security gains that are not yet enduring. CERP-funded projects focus on the drivers of instability, and in so doing help sustain security, and advance Iraqi-led counterinsurgency objectives.

Senator INHOFE. I'm running out of time here. Let me just mention one of the things that I have a hard time answering. When I talk to people, they talk about, "the surge was successful in Iraq." The surge, however, in Iraq, we ended up with close to 165,000 troops in a period of time of 18 months. Now we're looking at a surge that might be about 100,000 troops and talking about 9 months.

Now, considering that Afghanistan is about twice the size of Iraq, this disparity is—it's hard for me to describe to people why this number will work in Afghanistan when it took so much more in Iraq. General Petraeus, do you have any thoughts that I could share with these people?

General PETRAEUS. I do, Senator. Thank you. First of all, with respect on the timing of the actual surge in Iraq, we had all of the surge forces on the ground by end of June, July-ish, in there, and we actually began the drawdown of the first brigade in December. We then did lengthen it out over the course of the next spring.

But in this case, we will actually have all of our U.S. surge forces, all of our tactical units certainly, again less the one headquarters that's not required until a month after August, but on the ground by the end of August. Again, the July 2011 date is the date at which the process again begins that would embark on the "responsible drawdown" of the surge forces. So that's a pretty considerable period.

Now, with respect to the density of forces, you have a situation in Afghanistan where there are a number of places that really don't require substantial numbers of coalition forces and areas where in fact the Afghans again are very much in the lead. So this is about counterinsurgency math. We think we'll have the density once we get the additional forces on the ground, our additional U.S. forces, NATO forces, and then as we're able to ramp up the Afghan forces by about 100,000 between the period of earlier this year and the fall of 2011.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, General.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much.

Senator Inhofe's comment about the importance of the CERP, I think, reflects the views of every member of this committee. The reason why both the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) and the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) reduced the \$1.1 billion to \$800 million in Afghanistan was because you're on track in Afghanistan to spend only \$200 million for this entire year of the billion that we appropriated last year.

So, for the record, would you also then explain to us why the request is for \$1.1 billion and why the reduction to \$800 million would have a negative impact, given the spending rate is only \$200 million for the entire year? I think I can say that what Senator Inhofe says is reflective of this committee's very, very strong sup-

port for the CERP and your answer to that question for the record would be helpful to us as we proceed during this budget.

[The information referred to follows:]

The requested \$1.3 billion in fiscal year 2011 total Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP) reflects program maturation in Afghanistan and a continuing full fiscal year requirement in Iraq.

In Afghanistan, CERP will be used in the clear and hold phases by decentralized local commanders during operations extending into previously unchallenged areas. Concurrently, the Department of Defense is working with the Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to develop larger infrastructure projects in support of the Afghan National Development Strategy at the national, regional, and local government levels. These projects will focus on power, water, transportation, and governance to build Afghan capacity to provide basic services, demonstrate effective governance, and promote economic development. As of 21 June, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A) has obligated \$95 million of an \$805 million fiscal year 2010 allocation (12 percent). Several factors have influenced a low execution rate to include clean-up of fiscal year 2009 projects and lower average cost per project over previous years. Execution rates are increasing and larger projects are being proposed. USFOR-A expects to fully obligate the entire \$805 million fiscal year 2010 allocation prior to the end of the fiscal year.

In Iraq, CERP will be used to continue the fiscal year 2010 momentum to strengthen achievements necessary for supporting the new central government, improving employment and vital services growth, and complementing the USF-I Responsible Drawdown of Forces. As of 21 June, USF-I has obligated \$159 million of a \$245 million fiscal year 2010 allocation (65 percent). USF-I's planned fiscal year 2011 CERP allocation is \$100 million.

Fiscal year 2011 CERP funding could also be affected by the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2011 bill, which would authorize transfer of CERP funds for both the Reintegration and the National Solidarity programs. These transfers could total as much as \$150 million-\$200 million, or 15 percent of the total \$1.3 billion CERP budget request. Transfers of \$200 million coupled with the proposed \$400 million cut, which appears in both the House Armed Services Committee and SASC NDAA bills, would equate to an overall 46 percent reduction of the original \$1.3 billion fiscal year 2011 CERP request.

Chairman LEVIN. I want to thank you, Senator Inhofe, for your leadership on that CERP.

Senator Udall.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that clarification about CERP. I think everybody on the committee does fully support it.

Good morning to both of you. General, we all on the committee understand this is an important time in Afghanistan. I think it would be useful to be able to consider President Karzai a reliable partner. It's sometimes hard to understand what he says versus what he does, and vice versa. I have a couple of questions in that regard.

How do you best explain what seemingly is his mercurial personality? One day he talks about making common cause with the Taliban and then another day he goes down to Kandahar and gives an impassioned plea to the residents there to cooperate in the upcoming fight.

Second, I have had a chance to get to know Minister Atmar and had great respect for his talent and his vision. What do you think his departure might mean for the important, maybe even crucial, police training effort?

General PETRAEUS. Thanks, Senator. On the first question, I think there are a number of explanations, if you will. First of all, perhaps political leaders occasionally differentiate their message a

tiny bit depending on who the audience might be. I know that would never happen in our own country, but—

Senator UDALL. Fair enough.

General PETRAEUS.—I think over there that occasionally happens.

The second thing is, this is a tough fight and leaders are under enormous pressure. I can tell you that, having dealt with leaders throughout our region and having dealt with leaders in Iraq at various times who were similarly under enormous, perhaps even greater, pressure with just staggering levels of violence in Iraq over the years that we were there prior to the downturn. Again, this can lead individuals at times to have outbursts or to express frustrations. I think there's a bit of that that is understandable.

Now with respect to the president accepting the resignation of Hanif Atmar, the former minister of interior, someone indeed that we all really knew quite well, have worked with, not just as the minister of interior, but in two previous ministry positions as well, and one who again has impressed all of us. I think the impact of the departure cannot be determined, needless to say, until we know who the replacement is.

There are discussions going on. You should know that coalition leaders are certainly included in those discussions, which I think is a positive feature of the process. But at the end of the day, certainly this will be the decision of the president of a sovereign country. But if the candidates that we think are under consideration provide the ultimate next minister, then I think that the ministry will continue forward on a positive trajectory.

Senator UDALL. So I sense you're guardedly optimistic that there will be a replacement with whom we can work with and who would bring the same sort of focus and expertise?

General PETRAEUS. That's correct, Senator. I would not rule out again seeing Minister Atmar at some point back in another capacity, either.

Senator UDALL. That's heartening to hear.

If I might, let me move to the very fascinating report over the weekend that Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Paul Brinkley issued on the mineral and natural resource wealth of Afghanistan. It's tied to a military task force, the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations. You may know, the chairman and I teamed up to offer an amendment in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that authorizes that task force's work in Afghanistan.

The amendment also, General, will ask for a report from the Department of Defense (DOD) and DOS to look at the promising sectors in Afghanistan's economy, assess the capabilities of the government to generate additional revenue, to work on infrastructure needs, and so on. We're hopeful this report will provide important information that will enable Afghanistan to attract investment and pursue new economic opportunities.

I'd be interested to hear your thoughts on the task force work and, more generally, about these economic development opportunities. Madam Secretary, you may want to respond as well.

General PETRAEUS. First of all, if I could just say that Deputy Under Secretary Paul Brinkley and the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations did phenomenal work in Iraq. It was real-

ly created initially in fact to our request at that time that someone try to get some business leaders back into Iraq. It was a land of extraordinary opportunity, but also at that time a land of extraordinary violence.

But you had to look out over the horizon. You had to envision a world where the violence was reduced and business could begin to flourish again, given the extraordinary potential that Iraq has in terms of its energy resources, natural water, agriculture, sulphur, and a variety of other blessings, including human capital.

He was able to bring in business leaders at a time when no business leader in his right mind would come in on his own. We flew them around, secured them, housed them, fed them, and everything else. Over time this led to some very big deals, actually, for American business, but also in some cases for some other businesses as well. We did indeed open it more widely than that, with some very, very big transactions that Iraq needed.

In fact, this was at a time when Prime Minister Maliki specifically was asking me as a military commander if I could get a certain corporation to reengage after their earlier disappointing experience there and get another one in. These are in the electrical sector, the oil sector, gas, and so forth. Again, Deputy Under Secretary Brinkley did great work there.

In fact, I encouraged and we have helped to get him into Afghanistan. We might even look a bit more broadly than that, but in fact it was during his process of getting acquainted with the situation on the ground in Afghanistan that these geological surveys and other documents were all pulled together, and I think people realized the magnitude of the mineral resources that exist in Afghanistan, recognizing the enormous challenges to actually turning those into wealth and income and so forth for the people, revenue, but nonetheless recognizing the extraordinary potential that is there.

It has some of the world's last remaining super-deposits, or some other terms, certainly for iron, lithium, tin, timber, and gemstones. It has some coal. It has some natural gas and oil. So again, they're not super-deposits, but it has extraordinary potential.

Again, helping business find its way to that, in partnership with the military that is trying to create the security foundation on which they can build and operate, I think is a very important initiative, and I appreciate the committee's support for that particular initiative. That's one of the areas in which we have learned huge lessons in the conduct of counterinsurgency operations in the last 5 years or so.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Let me just add that I think that what the picture that's painted from the U.S. Geological Survey that was done, which is only a partial survey, under Mr. Brinkley's sponsorship really paints a brighter economic picture for Afghanistan mid-term and long-term. It creates at least the prospect of a much more sustainable economy that can actually support some of the capabilities that we are putting in place today, like the armed forces and other government and economic capacity.

It also shines a spotlight on the importance of some of our capacity-building efforts, particularly with the ministry of mines, which is under new leadership, that seems very capable and competent. We are working very closely with them to try to build their capac-

ity so that this information informs their planning and they get off on the right foot in terms of pursuing some of these opportunities, working with businesses and private sector companies from around the world.

We think this is a bright spot on the horizon. As General Petraeus said, it's going to take a lot of time and effort to build the capacity and the legal structures and so forth to really take full advantage of this. But we're working along those lines.

Senator UDALL. Thank you for that elaboration.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Udall. Thank you for your leadership on this very, very important part of the Afghan picture. It's essential that the leadership be there and we're all grateful to you for it.

Senator Brown.

Senator BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, it's good to see you in such chipper shape today. I think there are a lot of cookies back there, which I hope you partake in a couple.

When we met in Afghanistan, actually, we were briefed, in fact, of the mineral, oil, and other deposits. It became apparent to me that, number one, they have a problem in how to get everything out of the Earth. Number two, how to secure it and get it from point A to point B. Number three, then, how to ensure that the corruption that we've seen in Afghanistan actually keeps the money in country and has it flow down to the individual citizens.

So the challenges, Madam Secretary and General, obviously seem great. Yes, there is a bright spot, but it also appears to be how do we get from point A to point B. Do you see a role with the military in anything, aside from security? Or what do you think, General, in that regard?

General PETRAEUS. Again, the security foundation is the essential component to all of this. Without that you can't build the legal regime that's required, you can't combat the corruption that creeps into these kinds of activities. So it is essential in that regard.

We do indeed provide an important supporting role to those, like the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations, USAID, some international and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), that are also trying to help Afghanistan. So in that sense, we are an enabler for them in certain respects as well.

Senator BROWN. Mr. Chairman, I have a couple other hearings, but I'm going to just ask two more questions and then turn back the remainder of any time I have.

Sir, one of the things we also noted, and I'm the subcommittee chair on contracting issues with the Afghan National Police (ANP) and the like, what's your involvement or the military's involvement in curtailing the level of corruption of the security forces in Afghanistan? Any news to report on that?

General PETRAEUS. There is, Senator, actually. In fact, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and I have pushed, at General McChrystal's request, the establishment of a task force, led by a two-star Navy admiral, who in fact—she was the Joint Contracting Command-Iraq commander when I was the commander in Iraq. Now she has one more star. She is going to head a task force that will go in and augment the contracting command that helps

in Iraq, that oversees this effort in Afghanistan, and then gets at who are not only the subcontractors, but the subcontractors to the subcontractors, literally where is the money going and is it all above board? That's a hugely important component of dealing with corruption issues, dealing with warlordism and a variety of other challenges that cause issues for Afghanistan.

Senator BROWN. Because it's \$6 billion and counting, with many more billions forthcoming.

Then on the final note, Mr. Chairman, what type of cooperation are we getting from Pakistan regarding some of the terrorist activities, the Taliban and the like, that we're experiencing on the cross-border situations?

General PETRAEUS. Pakistan has over the course of the last year, Senator, conducted impressive counterinsurgency operations against the Tariq-i-Taliban Pakistani (TTP), the Pakistani Taliban, and some of its affiliates in the former Northwest Frontier Province, in eastern South Waziristan, Bajur, and currently in Orizi.

There is no question that this is an organization that primarily threatens them, although it is also linked to the would-be Time Square bomber. So there is an external component to this that has emerged.

There clearly are other extremist elements that TTP has symbiotic relationships with, among them certainly al Qaeda, the Haqqani Network, the Afghan Taliban, and a number of others that have sanctuaries in various parts of the border region of Afghanistan. In some cases the Pakistani military has dealt with them as part of securing lines of communication for us and for themselves, in their fight against the extremists that are threatening their writ of governance. In some cases there is clearly more work that needs to be done.

General McChrystal, Admiral Mullen, and I have met with General Qiyani. In a recent meeting, we have shared information with him about links of the leadership of the Haqqani Network, located in North Waziristan, that clearly commanded and controlled the operation against Bagram Air Base and the attack in Kabul, among others.

Again, the challenge for the Pakistani military, because I think it is important again to note what they have done over the course of the last year because it is significant, the challenge is a situation in which they have a lot of short sticks and a lot of hornet's nests, and they have to figure out how to consolidate some of those to get through—they've done good clearance operations. They're in the hold, build, and they have to get further along in the hold and build phases, and then into the transition phases as well, so that they can deal with more and more.

They do realize, I believe, Senator, that you cannot allow poisonous snakes to build a nest in your back yard with the understanding that those snakes will only bite the neighbor's kids, because sooner or later they turn around and bite your kids. I think that realization has grown during this whole period of their experience with the TTP and its affiliates, and as they recognize again what Secretary Gates terms the symbiotic relationships with the other extremist elements. They're all related.

Senator BROWN. Thank you for that very thorough answer, General. I appreciate it. I'm glad to see you well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Brown, and thank you for raising the issue of the security contractors. The committee is in the middle of a year-long investigation into these activities with the private contractors, not only because of some of the problems that have been created by them, but also because of the corruption issue which you raised, and we're grateful for your bringing this to this committee's attention again, but also because they're a drain on the armed forces and the police. There's competition for those particular personnel and it creates a real issue as well.

Senator Kaufman.

Senator KAUFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Flournoy, General Petraeus, it's always weak when we say we thank you for your service. I just don't know what else to say, but it's incredible that the two of you do what you do, and the country is blessed for your doing it.

I've been one of the people that's supported counterinsurgency. I've spent a lot of time looking into everything about it and what we're doing here. But I just want to ask some questions because sometimes time passes and things change, people's perceptions of things change.

But I think it was pretty clear after our last set of hearings, and I was on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in addition to the SASC, what everybody agreed to was the deal back then. I don't think that's important, because what does cause problems overseas is if it looks like we're changing where we are. So I'd just like to ask a few questions just to get clear.

In December we're going to evaluate where we are, isn't that right? So in December—and no one should be at the point of prejudging where we are. Now, in December we're going to sit down and figure out where we are. Then in June 2011, we're going to begin to draw down troops.

The question on conditions on the ground is just how many troops we draw down, is that correct?

General PETRAEUS. That is correct. Again, that's the point, actually July 2011, that's the point at which again the term "responsible drawdown of the surge forces" begins, at a rate to be determined by the conditions.

Senator KAUFMAN. Exactly. So it's not whether we're going to draw down. It's the rate that is determined by conditions on the ground?

General PETRAEUS. That's the policy, that's correct.

Senator KAUFMAN. There will be no more new introduction of troops?

General PETRAEUS. That is not the intention right now.

Senator KAUFMAN. Right, but I think Chairman Mullen, Secretary Gates, and Secretary Clinton said in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that this would preclude any drawdown of troops. Secretary Gates said there may be the 3,000 troops we may need for guards and things like that, but essentially this is not a situation where we're going to be increasing the troops in Afghanistan.

General PETRAEUS. Senator, as a commander, as a military commander who owes the Commander in Chief and our troops in the field my best and I owe the President my best professional military advice, that's something that's a sacred obligation with our troopers, I would never rule out coming back and asking for something more. I think that would be irresponsible. The intention right now is, our consideration right now, our view is that with the additional forces ordered by the President with the flex that you mentioned that Secretary Gates, and General McChrystal has stated this in a letter to the ranking member of the HASC, that we will have the forces required to execute the strategy.

Senator KAUFMAN. I guess I should have directed this to Secretary Flournoy, because it was the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State who said we would not introduce new troops. General, I respect the fact, and it goes without saying that you would ask for more troops if you think we need more troops to provide our military objective.

But in terms of the official position of the President of the United States, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, we've put all the troops we're going to be putting into Afghanistan; is that fair to say, Secretary Flournoy?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think at this point in time that is the policy. There is no expectation of introducing any additional troops. We are all talking about a period of time in the future, so I don't think anybody would want to tie the President's hands either way. But as a matter of policy, our expectation is that in July 2011 the end of the surge will occur and we will begin a responsible draw-down, the pace and scope of which will be determined by conditions on the ground.

Senator KAUFMAN. General, to try to get at where we do have potential problems, the U.S. troops in Afghanistan are performing magnificently; is that a fair statement?

General PETRAEUS. That is correct. In fact, I have said, Senator, that this is the new greatest generation of Americans, our young men and women who are performing these tough tasks under very difficult conditions against a very difficult enemy.

Senator KAUFMAN. I think they're behavior, I think from top to bottom when I go over there, I am incredibly impressed with the fact that you have been able to inculcate in troops from the bottom to the top that we're in a counterinsurgency strategy and we move in a counterinsurgency. Just the fact that you were able to do it in such a short period of time and the performance of our troops is magnificent at all levels.

So if it was up to our troops, I have no doubt about how this would turn out, none, zero. I think it's really incredible when you see our partnering—and it's true in Iraq, too. But the thing that makes it all work in terms of the partnering is they want to be on our team. The Afghan National Army (ANA) and ANP, when they see our troops and they spend time with our troops, they realize this is it, these are the big guys, these are the guys that know what they're doing, these are the guys I want to grow up and be like.

So I don't see anything, anything, in the performance of our troops, that is anything except on mark, doing great, we're doing fine.

General PETRAEUS. Senator, in fact I used to somewhat jokingly say, except the truth is it was serious, when I would talk to the transition team members in Iraq before they would join their Iraqi counterpart units, that our troopers should know that the Iraqis—and this is true for the Afghans and really for many other countries' forces as well—they see our troopers as the Michael Jordans—

Senator KAUFMAN. Exactly.

General PETRAEUS.—of military operations. I realized that that was really the case when I saw them look exactly like our troopers, even to the point of wearing their kneepads around their ankles rather than on their knees, as they're designed to do.

Senator KAUFMAN. I think the key is seeing. You literally watch them and see them look at our troopers, and you could just see it in their eyes. It's like, "that's what I want to be when I grow up."

So really the problem here, to the extent we have a problem, I think I would say, and we have to evaluate going forward, and I think most of the people on the committee have recognized from the beginning, is the fact that counterinsurgency is not just about our troopers.

General PETRAEUS. At the end of the day, it has to be a comprehensive civil-military, really we term it "whole of governments" with an "s" on the end, endeavor.

Senator KAUFMAN. Before I leave the troops, I went to Dahlgren and saw the non-lethal weapons down there. I understand you were there, too. When you go over there and see what the troopers are faced with if there's a bus coming up behind your convoy at a high rate of speed and doesn't stop and the only choice you have is to fire into the bus or take the chance that it's going to blow up the convoy, that's a tough decision for any trooper to make. Or at a forward operating base, when you have a car coming for you at a high rate of speed and you have two choices, you can fire into the car or let it crash into the barricade.

So I am obsessed with nonlethal weapons in terms of ways to give our troopers a third choice at all times between deadly force and no action at all and putting themselves into danger. Can you talk a little about that?

General PETRAEUS. I can, Senator. In fact, if I could, I'd offer even a fourth alternative, I guess. The third alternative is the various tools that are employed in escalation of force circumstances. As you note, some of these are nonlethal weapons. There are a variety of different signaling devices, disabling devices, and others.

We have to be very careful with this. We have to realize that there are points, obviously, when that vehicle is really coming at you, you really have to shoot at it to stop it.

But there is another option as well, and that same group is examining this also, as are other organizations. That is equipment to shape the conditions so that you're not in a position where you have to shoot at the vehicle at all, that if the vehicle keeps coming forward it runs into a cement block or something else, there's another alternative altogether.

That's difficult, but we're working hard. That's a leadership, training, and doctrinal challenge as much as it is an equipment solution. But the equipment is wrapped into that. So we're looking at that as well as a way of just avoiding escalation of force situations altogether and not having to use either nonlethal or lethal force.

But that's all caught up in this, and we've been working it really very hard, I think since the very early days of Iraq, which is where we first had to encounter the suicide bomber threat in particular, is where you're most concerned.

Senator KAUFMAN. Thank you very much.

General PETRAEUS. Thank you, sir.

Senator KAUFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Kaufman.

Senator WICKER.

Senator WICKER. Thank you.

Thank you, General, for being here and for your great work. I want to call to your attention an article which I'm sure you read in the June 12 New York Times. The headline is: "Karzai is said to doubt West can defeat Taliban." This article talks about the firing of two of President Karzai's top aides, Mr. Saleh and Mr. Atmar. They were said to have quit because Mr. Karzai had made it clear he no longer considered them loyal.

The article goes on to say that Mr. Karzai has lost faith in the Americans and NATO to prevail in Afghanistan. One of the fired individuals, Mr. Saleh, has spoken at length, saying that President Karzai has been pressing to strike his own deal with the Taliban and the country's arch-rival Pakistan, the Taliban's long-time supporter. "According to a former senior Afghan official, Mr. Karzai's maneuverings involve secret negotiations with the Taliban outside the purview of American and NATO officials."

What do you say to that? I know Senator McCain was pressing on this yesterday. Is this happening at all, in your judgment, and if it is, is it happening because the Americans are giving an uncertain sound about being a long-term strategic partner with Mr. Karzai and his government?

General PETRAEUS. With respect to the very last point of that, Senator, having talked with President Karzai about the meaning of July 2011, just as I started out today's session by explaining as precisely as I could what that means, that it's a message of urgency that went along with the huge additional message of commitment. Senator Lieberman reminded us of the words "vital national interest" used by the President with respect to Afghanistan, and again July 2011, the point at which a process begins that is based on conditions, to begin the responsible drawdown of the surge forces at a rate to be determined by those conditions at that time, based on advice, and so forth. It is also a process to begin transitioning some tasks to Afghan forces and officials.

But I am not sure that I share the characterization of the headline, at least, about President Karzai's feelings. I base that on conversations with President Karzai, a number of them in the past month and a half or so, in Kabul, from Kandahar and Washington.

Senator WICKER. How often do you speak to him?

General PETRAEUS. It's probably at least every couple weeks. Again, it depends on the travel schedule. There was a period where we saw him several times in a period of just about 2 weeks, and then it may go a couple weeks otherwise. What we also do, of course, is at the very least weekly videoteleconferences with the Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary, Chairman Mullen, and I with General McChrystal, and then lots of other conversations with him and exchanges.

He certainly does not share that sense. He just accompanied President Karzai, for example, all day on Sunday when President Karzai flew to and from Kandahar and held the shura council down there. As I mentioned earlier to the committee, I think it would be important that the committee see the talking points that he used for that. Because this is a very clear statement by a president who is the commander in chief of his country, committing to taking the actions that are necessary and is rallying the people behind him. Then at the end of this, tells the ISAF Commander, also U.S. Forces Commander: "You now have my full support for the conduct of these operations and the support of the people in this area."

Now, with respect to meetings and so forth, President Karzai of course just hosted the National Consultative Jirga, Peace Jirga, which indeed addressed reconciliation and reintegration. I believe that we are aware of the meetings that he has and that his representatives have. He typically either includes our elements or at the very least will back-brief us.

I would not characterize these as something that will culminate in reconciliation coming soon to a theater near us, reconciliation again being high-level Taliban leaders coming in to accept the conditions that President Karzai has established, accepting the constitution, laying down weapons, participating in the process, and so forth.

On the other hand, there very clearly is scope for reintegration, and that is the term used for the reintegration into society of reconcilable members of the Taliban. Now we're talking low and mid-level Taliban. There are a number of cases in which that is ongoing. I was just reading in the morning book this morning the case in Shindand out in the western part of the country. There's 80 or so Taliban that have come in with their hands up, put their weapons down, want to be reintegrated.

It's very important now, in fact, that the interim guidance that President Karzai has provided then is promulgated as formal guidance and does move forward to provide what our troopers need in terms of legal structures, if you will, and what the Afghan Government elements need to work together to take advantage of those kinds of opportunities.

Senator WICKER. How likely is it, General, that secret negotiations could have been held with the Taliban outside the purview of American and NATO officials?

General PETRAEUS. I think it's very unlikely, in part because we are told about what goes on, and we also have good insights, as they say in the Intelligence Community, into what's going on on top of that. The insights tend to correlate with what we are told.

Senator WICKER. Let me touch on one other thing in my remaining time. That's interpreters. Of course, we need interpreters. But

I'm told that in securing the services of talented linguists, they're being paid by the coalition anywhere from \$50,000 to \$200,000 a year, which is considered by some a distortion of the Afghan economy.

Are you concerned that we're taking some of the best human capital that could be used in the Afghan Government, in Afghan civil society, in Afghan business, and taking them away so that they can be interpreters for the coalition?

General PETRAEUS. The short answer is yes, Senator. In fact, Ambassador Holbrooke and I discussed this with President Karzai after we completed the 2-day civil-military review of concept drill in Kabul about 2 months or so ago, and then went to back-brief President Karzai.

Very clearly there is an issue—by the way, I don't think the salaries you quoted are correct for Afghans. I think those may be for U.S. citizens or Afghan-Americans or something. But again, we might want to verify for you.

[The information referred to follows:]

The average salary for Afghan interpreters is \$600/month. Only AFG local nationals are employed under the interpreter contracts issued by Central Command (CENTCOM) Contracting Command in AFG. This information is only for interpreter contracts issued by CENTCOM Contracting Command. There are other organizations with interpreter contracts in AFG.

General PETRAEUS. But the fact is your point, which is more important, the substance of your point is exactly correct. What happens in some cases is the Afghan Government, other countries, contributing nations, help build Afghan human capital by investing in them with education, to go back and work in Afghan ministries and so forth, and then in some cases the NGOs hire them away and we hire them away.

So we're competing with our own efforts, and we have to figure out how to come to grips with this. This is another of the tasks that this contracting task force is going to take a hard look at. In fact, the Afghan Government really needs either laws or regulations on this. When the U.S. Government sent me to graduate school, for example, I believe I had to give back 3 years for each year that I was in graduate school. They need something like that. President Karzai is actually keenly aware of it, as are we.

Senator WICKER. Plan to be announced later?

General PETRAEUS. Correct.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Senator AKAKA.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me add my welcome to Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus. I want to thank each of you for your leadership and also for your distinguished service. I also thank the men and women that you lead, both of you lead. Their service and commitment to our country are honored and really appreciated.

General Petraeus, you recently told members of the HASC that training of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) is being overhauled. I understand that training procedures for ANP and ANSF were being overhauled to avoid some of the mistakes made in Iraq.

General, can you give us an update on training efforts in Afghanistan and any lessons learned since implementing those changes?

General PETRAEUS. With respect, Senator, training's being overhauled to avoid mistakes being made in Afghanistan or shortcomings in Afghanistan. That's not to say that there weren't plenty of shortcomings in our effort in Iraq. In fact, we tried to share those with our Afghan counterparts at various times during my different tours in Iraq.

After the conclusion of one of those tours, after standing up the train-and-equip mission in Iraq, Secretary Rumsfeld asked me to go to Afghanistan on the way home from Iraq. We did. We spent time over there, and indeed shared what we had learned, but also, frankly, identified a number of areas in which improvements could be made there at that time. Some of those were made. Some still, frankly, are being addressed now that General Caldwell is in command.

He's been in command about 6 months now. Literally, the establishment of the NTM-A itself, which is an input, not an output, but that is a hugely significant development for all of this.

But there are a number of initiatives that have been already started now. Just to give you one example, instead of a 3-year ANP officers training program, they now have an officer candidate school to complement this, because there's a war going on out there and we need officers in the interim as well. It's a 6-month program which we think will be good and will provide leadership on a more immediate basis, to enable the kind of progress that we know we need urgently and not just have this very long process.

There used to be a procedure with the police in a number of different areas where they were recruited, assigned, and then trained when they got to it. Now the process is very much to recruit, train, and then assign. Just the recruiting itself, there is the creation of a recruiting component, and that has significantly improved, for the ANA as well, recruiting. Then there have been measures taken to improve retention, to reduce attrition, as well various incentive packages, policies, and so forth. Those, on the basis of 3 months at least, we don't want to declare that a true trend just yet, but those have enabled the building of the additional ANA and ANP elements to be on track for now, after a period in which they were not on track.

So that's just a few of the areas. There are enormous changes made in the institutional training business. It used to be there was one trainer for every 80 trainees, obviously inadequate. Now it's closer to 1 to 29 or 30. I could give you again chapter and verse across the board on this.

For those who are traveling there, I know that the chairman and the ranking member both are going to Afghanistan in the weeks ahead, General Caldwell looks forward to briefing your groups as you come over and describing to you in some detail the various programs that have been implemented and others that are under development.

Senator AKAKA. Secretary Flournoy, the ISAF and ANSF are acting in partnership during operations in Helmand Province. It is the first large-scale effort to fundamentally change how we are operating together. Madam Secretary, can you give us specific examples

of how coalition and ANSF have partnered together during the Helmand Province operations?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think the Marjah operation really was the beginning of a very different way of doing business together. I would say it was not only about the partnership between ISAF and ANSF, but between ISAF and the broader coalition, whole-of-government capabilities, and the Afghan Government as a whole.

So beginning from the planning stages, you had a combined Afghan-ISAF team that was planning not only for the military dimensions of the campaign, but also for elements of different Afghan ministries to come in and immediately establish a government presence in Marjah and the surrounding areas. So that has really created a different way of doing business together that has now carried into other areas. As the planning and preparation and the early stages of shaping in Kandahar unfold, that same kind of in-depth and multifaceted partnership is happening again.

I would just say that it's not only partnership. It's really putting Afghans in the lead in helping to design the operation, in helping to determine the timing of the operation and setting the conditions for ultimate success in the operation. So that is a very different way of doing business than we've done in the past, and I think it's an approach that General McChrystal has pioneered with his Afghan partners, and I think it bodes well for the future.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you.

Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Akaka.

Senator COLLINS.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Petraeus, let me begin by echoing the comments of my colleagues that we're very relieved to see you looking so well today. I was quite confident that it wasn't the probing questions of this committee which caused your problem yesterday, and today you've shown for certain that that is the case.

Ultimately, our success in Afghanistan depends on the ability of the ANSF to take over the fight and to provide security for the country. You've just had an exchange with my colleague, Senator Akaka, about the training and you indicated that we've gone from having trainers in a ratio of 1 to 80 to 1 to 29 or 30. But the 12-31 report indicates that NATO overall has a requirement for more than 2,300 trainers and that there is a shortfall of almost a third, of 32 percent.

Similarly, General Casey recently noted that the lack of trained Afghans was a major concern among U.S. troops in Afghanistan. There are also stories where our troops have expressed doubts about the willingness of the Afghans to fully engage in the fight as long as we're there doing the work.

What are we doing to fix the shortage of trainers internationally and what is the status of the requirement versus the actual numbers now? Madam Secretary, if that's a more appropriate question for you, you can also answer.

General PETRAEUS. Actually, we can both do that, I think, Senator.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Right.

General PETRAEUS. First, Senator, because I just wanted to add that the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander in Europe literally just sent out a message that I got word on this morning, asking for additional trainers.

The latest numbers that we have, these do fluctuate as trainers come and trainers go, pledges are made and filled, and indeed trainer requirements grow, because as the forces grow as we try to increase capacity for training, needless to say, the demand for trainers increases. But the latest that we have is a 450 shortage.

We are trying to bridge the gap in certain areas. Soldiers and marines are doing some of that. As I mentioned, the Deputy Commander for the NATO operational element has just asked for more of them.

Then if I could also add before handing off, as I mentioned up front, Senator, the Afghan forces are very much in the fight. They are in the lead, indeed, in some areas, limited areas, but Kabul is one of them, and other areas and other mission sets. There are some functional missions, convoy escort and some other tasks, for which they're in the lead.

But they are very much in the fight throughout the country. There is no better or perhaps more tragic metric that shows that than the fact that their losses are typically several multiples of our U.S. losses on average.

Secretary FLOURNOY. Senator, we do have an institutional trainer shortfall of about 450. We continue to press our NATO allies to step up and fill those gaps. That said, the Secretary has made clear that he intends to deploy additional U.S. personnel to bridge the gap as necessary, because this is such a critical mission. It is a long pole in the tent of what we're trying to do in Afghanistan.

In addition, there are some continued shortfalls, although we've made a lot of progress here, in what we call Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLT) and Police Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (POMLT), the mentoring teams that are embedded with ANA and ANP units. We started out with a requirement of about 180 OMLTs. We're now at a shortfall of 14 of those teams. We started out with a requirement of 475 POMLTs. We're now at about 140 shortfall.

In that case, we are taking two kinds of mitigation measures. One is with this much more intensive partnering between ISAF and ANSF units in some cases that partnering can make up for the fact that you don't have an OMLT or a POMLT with a given unit. In other cases, we've taken a train-the-trainer approach and there are ANP training teams that are now prepared to embed to train ANP units.

So there are a number of mitigation measures in place. We are leaning forward on this very hard because it is such an important part of the mission.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Counterinsurgency strategy, as we've all learned over the past few years, depends on a unity of effort by both the military and the civilian side. In an after-action report in December of last year, retired General Barry McCaffrey predicted that: "The international civilian agency surge will essentially not happen. Although the DOS officers, USAID, Central Intelligence Agency, and other Amer-

ican agencies will make vital contributions, Afghanistan over the next 2 or 3 years will simply be too dangerous for most civilian agencies.”

Madam Secretary, what is the status of the international civilian surge? It's so essential that we not just rely on the military side and that's why General McCaffrey's prediction is alarming to me.

Secretary FLOURNOY. I think I would agree with your premise that the civilian surge is absolutely critical as part of this broader campaign. On the U.S. side, we have more than tripled our civilian personnel and that is likely to increase further as the campaign unfolds. We have developed very cooperative concepts of operations so our civilians are partnered with and protected by military forces as well as their own DOS security forces.

Internationally, as we've gone out to allies we have pressed them not only to increase their troop contributions, but also their civilian contributions, and many have stepped up, whether it's growing the civilian contributions to their Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), which historically they've been more military, or in cases like countries like Malaysia where they're actually sending a whole new contingent of civilian medical personnel and so forth.

So that is part of the effort. I think one of the challenges here on our side is that we have never resourced our own—or at least not recently, not since the Vietnam era, civilian agencies, DOS and USAID, to actually rapidly deploy civilian expeditionary people and capabilities with any frequency or with any sustainability.

If we want to be able to do that as a nation, that's something we need to look at in the future, because we've put DOS and USAID in the position of having to throw together an ad hoc solution to a problem. They've done exceedingly well, but we haven't fully resourced them in the way they need to be resourced for this mission.

Senator COLLINS. General?

General PETRAEUS. Senator, if I could just add to what the Under Secretary said as well, and that is when I've talked about the inputs piece, that we're trying to get the right organizations led by the right people with the right concepts and the levels of resources necessary to implement those concepts, among the right people since in fact General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry going in have been the addition of a NATO senior civilian representative, a very talented United Kingdom (U.K.) Ambassador Mark Sedwill. The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) is now Stefan de Mastura, whom we will remember from Iraq when he was the United Nations (U.N.) SRSG there. Then most recently there's an European Union (EU) representative there as well. In fact, when I was in the U.K. this past week I talked to the EU foreign secretary, if you will, and she described her strong commitment to the mission there as well. All of them were involved in our civil-military review or concept drill that Ambassador Holbrooke and I hosted in Kabul now about 2 months or so ago.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. I'm going to take a minute to clarify some of the numbers which Senator Collins elicited, because there has been

some confusion about it and it's a very critical number when it comes to the trainers, the OMLTs, the POMLTs. This is a critical mission to get them ready to take responsibility for their own security, and I'm going to take a minute to go through those numbers with you.

You said there's a shortfall of 450 what you call institutional, I think, trainers essentially. These are what I call the basic training. But that's 450 shortfall. There's also, I believe not included in that number, a pledged number which has not yet been forthcoming. Is that correct? What is that number?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I have there are 574 pledged, 235 pending, meaning they're still getting confirmation in capitals.

Chairman LEVIN. Is that on top of the 450?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Yes, that would be in addition to.

Chairman LEVIN. That's a lot of additional. Go on.

Secretary FLOURNOY. But I think generally we can count on those.

Chairman LEVIN. Maybe you can count on them, but they're not there yet.

574 plus 234 plus 450, is that correct?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Correct.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, on OMLTs and POMLTs, about how many in each of those units? First on the OMLTs, if we're 14 short—how many are there? 5, 10, 20?

Secretary FLOURNOY. OMLTs are between 11 and 28 personnel per OMLT. It depends on the—

Chairman LEVIN. That's fine.

Secretary FLOURNOY. They're tailored to the conditions.

POMLTs, it's between 15 and 20 persons.

Chairman LEVIN. We can do the multiplication, and that, I think, is going to get us up to about 2,000 to 2,500 personnel that are short. That's the number that was given to us.

Does that look right, General?

General PETRAEUS. It does, Senator. In fact, that is down considerably since we devoted substantial numbers of marines and soldiers to these tasks, diverted literally a battalion for this, and then also have used a brigade combat team from the 82nd Airborne, for example, to help with the partnering effort, i.e., the OMLTs and POMLTs, in the RC-South area.

Chairman LEVIN. Right, and I think very appropriately done, and it's a critical mission, so we're very supportive of it. Thank you.

Thank you, Senator Collins, very much.

Senator Hagan.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks again to Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus for being here again today with us. I wanted to talk for a couple of minutes about President Karzai's reconciliation and reintegration program. I know it's important that reconciliation and reintegration efforts operate within the context of a broader counter-insurgency strategy. It's not possible for the Afghan Government to reconcile with senior level Taliban or reintegrate low level Taliban fighters as long as the Taliban remains militarily strong and convinced that they are winning the war.

I believe that we need to avoid a situation where warlords and power brokers retain their militias. It's certainly too high a price to pay for reconciliation.

Financial incentives alone are not sufficient to reconcile with low-level Taliban fighters because they will be subject to brutal retaliation against themselves and their families, and if the government of Afghanistan cannot protect them from retribution it would be suicidal for them to shift sides. However, improved security conditions throughout Afghanistan, coupled with financial incentives and job opportunities, can lead to effective reconciliation.

I know that U.S. officials have expressed support for the inclusion of the Taliban in a future Afghan Government so long as any former militants joining the government break with al Qaeda and Taliban, lay down their arms, and accept the Afghan constitution.

My question is, outside of the jirga on June 4, has President Karzai started translating his reconciliation and reintegration initiatives into programs and policies?

General PETRAEUS. First of all, Senator, if I could just say, that's a very accurate and quite a nuanced description of the situation and of the basic concepts behind all of this. It's exactly right.

With respect to reintegration, there is interim guidance that our forces and Afghan officials are using. But as I mentioned earlier, it's important that President Karzai now promulgate this formally, and that we believe will happen quite soon, according to General McChrystal in the videoteleconference yesterday morning.

With respect to reconciliation, an outcome of the National Consultative Peace Jirga is indeed direction to develop further reconciliation programs, while noting that there are criteria that do exist. It's very clear, and you just stated those as well, what has to take place for groups, former insurgent factions, indeed to be eligible for reconciliation.

But again, the promulgating instructions to provide the real governmental guidance and policies for that are still under development, noting that again that is quite high level and, even though there may be talks going on periodically among emissaries or what have you, I think, as you pointed out, that it is unlikely to see true reconciliation while the Taliban still feels that it is in the ascendant or at least can wait us out.

Senator HAGAN. Secretary Flournoy.

Secretary FLOURNOY. If I could just add, Senator, on reintegration for low- and mid-level fighters, based on President Karzai's interim guidance, we have, thanks to this committee for making this possible, used the authority that you helped to give us to use up to \$100 million of CERP in support of reintegration efforts. We've actually released those funds now, so those are now available for commanders working with their Afghan partners at the district and local level to start taking advantage of some of these reintegration opportunities.

On the reconciliation side, coming out of the jirga one of the conclusions was to establish what's called a high peace council or commission, which will be the Afghan mechanism that will really begin to try to start thinking through reconciliation in a programmatic sort of level.

We have also made very clear how we're going to organize ourselves on the U.S. side so that we are joined at the hip. We want to make sure that this is obviously an Afghan-led process, but it is very important that we stay partnered with them as they consider how to move forward on this and that this is fully integrated with the broader counterinsurgency campaign.

Senator HAGAN. Has the low-level reintegration actually started and is it successful?

General PETRAEUS. It has started. It would be premature, I think, to describe it as successful yet. But it is certainly a work in progress in several different locations of Afghanistan. There are as many as in one case 80 fighters/insurgents/militants that I read about this morning in an intelligence book, for example, in the RC-West area that came in literally with their hands up, laid their weapons down, wanted to be reintegrated.

Their incentives are very much in line with what you laid out. In that particular area, a combination of Afghan Government security forces and coalition forces, I think non-U.S., although I'd have to check that, brought about security conditions, just put enough pressure on the Taliban that they decided, this is not what we want to continue doing for the rest of our lives, and if there is an alternative that allows us back into society, then the security arrangement does have some incentives as well, then that's a course that they're willing to take.

That's basically where they are right now. But the follow-on piece of that, which is very important, as you'll recall, in Iraq ultimately we ended up hiring on our payroll, using CERP or fixed site security contracts, 103,000 Iraqis, largely Iraqi men. By the way, about 20,000 or more were Shia, just so the record understands there was a Shia awakening as well as a Sunni awakening.

We do not envision doing the same thing here, in part because there's not the prospect, even despite the great mineral wealth that's found—that is not going to be exploited in substantial form, we wouldn't think, for some years. So that we don't want to saddle Afghanistan with a very costly program. Rather, we want to enable much more local programs, with the amount of CERP that the Under Secretary talked about being part of that.

Senator HAGAN. You mentioned the new-found wealth of the minerals. I know that on June 14 the New York Times reported this discovery of nearly a trillion dollars in untapped mineral deposits. Does this new mineral wealth have the ability to fundamentally alter the Afghan economy, but does it also have the ability to amplify the existing problems of government corruption, as well as provide greater incentive for the Taliban to actually fight for control of the government?

I was just wondering, does Afghanistan's new-found wealth in any way alter the coalition's counterinsurgency approach, governance support plan, development plan? I know this would be years in the making, but on the ground now how does this play into our strategy?

General PETRAEUS. First, to answer your first question, I think an all of the above potential is present. Potentially, it could be an incredible boon to Afghanistan. It could enable them to pay for their own governmental officials, forces, programs, and so forth, in

a way that I think prior to this there was not that same expectation, but again being very careful about how difficult this will be.

Beyond that, we have been engaged—again, this was not a revelation to a lot of us who have been working this. Again, there was a keen awareness of the different copper deposits. China is already in trying to extract that and to build the infrastructure necessary and to get it out and so forth.

But there is an awareness of these different opportunities that are out there. Some of them are being exploited in small ways by either local strongmen—I don't know if I'd quite go to warlords, but different power brokers and so forth, or officials. It's very important that there be a legal regime that governs this as well. This is something that we're quite keenly aware and the civilian elements have been working. I'll just give you one example, the timber. There's enormous timber resources in eastern Afghanistan in particular. There is a law. They haven't been able to implement it, and that's the effort that has to go forward if it's to become something that serves the state, rather than just some interests within it.

Secretary FLOURNOY. I would just add, when we became aware when the survey results came in last year, I think what it has done, even though it's a very long-term project, it has helped to inform some prioritization, for example putting more priority on capacity-building in the ministry of mines, the ministry of finance, putting more emphasis on looking at this particular area of law and regulation so that we try to—if you're going to start with a sector, let's start with this sector.

We're trying now to work with USAID and others to make sure that the knowledge of some of these deposits and so forth actually informs some of our near-term projects in communities where these are located, so you start creating the foundations that will eventually position those communities to take full advantage of the wealth that's literally right underneath them.

So I think it has informed some reprioritization of our efforts on the development side.

I see my time is up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Hagan.

Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, General, thank you for your outstanding service to our country. General, I also want to welcome you back today. I know we're very pleased to have you back. I'm not sure I would have been anxious if I were you to come back in front of this committee. But nevertheless, thank you for your great service.

General, about a year ago, General McChrystal restricted close air support (CAS) operations in Afghanistan in an effort to reduce civilian casualties and damage. I fully understand the efforts by you and General McChrystal to employ counterinsurgency tactics and strategy in this war, and that General McChrystal's CAS directive is an effort to restrain the use of firepower, which is crucial to fighting an insurgency.

However, it seems to me that the directive can also elevate the risk to troops who are under fire and require the kind of assistance that CAS can provide. After a year or so of this directive being in

place, what is your evaluation of the results of this directive and what kind of effect do you think that it's had on the war?

General PETRAEUS. First, Senator, in fact General McKiernan was the first one to promulgate the so-called tactical directive, and he did that with the intent of reducing to an absolute minimum the loss of innocent civilian life in the conduct of military operations. He did it in the wake of some instances in which substantial numbers of civilians were killed in the course of military operations and almost undermined the entire strategic effort there in Afghanistan. It had a very serious impact.

General McChrystal did refine the tactical directive, and issued counterinsurgency guidance as well. Again, same intent. Let me state up front, though, that we will drop a bomb or use attack helicopters or any other enabler at any time, at any place, if our troopers' lives are in jeopardy, if their safety and wellbeing is in jeopardy. If they're pinned down and can't get out, we will do what is necessary.

But there are a number of cases in which that is not necessarily, where you're being engaged from a house—just to give you one example, and there are many of these—you're being engaged from a house, let's say. It may not be completely effective fire. You can break contact. Our predisposition is to close with and destroy the enemy. That's the motto of the infantry, to press the fight, to take the fight to the enemy.

But there are cases in which you have to balance that with the recognition that if you don't know who's in that house and taking the fight to the enemy ultimately means blowing up the house, which is sometimes what has to result if you're going to take out those bad guys that are shooting at you, but in the course of doing that you kill a substantial number of civilians, that tactical success then becomes a strategic setback of considerable proportions.

Now, as we have evaluated this and looked at it, and we have done after-action reviews throughout the course of the year, there are clearly cases in which we need to continue to educate our leaders. Again, we want on the one hand to be absolutely responsive when that is necessary. As I said, we will never restrict the use of our firepower or our enablers if our troopers are in jeopardy on the ground. But also, you need a sufficient very rapid review process so that folks really do look at this and examine and make sure that, again, we are not going to create a strategic setback in the quest for a tactical victory or advantage.

That's how we have come at that. We have worked very hard to educate our troopers, to train our troopers in the predeployment process during the road to war, if you will, the road to deployment. We've incorporated this in our combat training center mission rehearsal exercises, in doctrine, in various tactics, techniques, and procedures. We'll continue to do that.

We get feedback periodically that troopers feel that they are being held back. We don't want that to be the case. That is not the intent. The intent is very clearly just to reduce to an absolute minimum the loss of innocent civilian life, which in a counterinsurgency operation in particular can unhinge you.

Senator THUNE. Yes?

Chairman LEVIN. Let me interrupt you, if I could.

A vote has just begun in the Senate. I would suggest the following: that after Senator Thune's questions that we take a 10-minute recess; that the rest of us that want to and are able to come back, go vote, come back immediately, so that after that 10-minute recess we will have some people here to question you, so there won't be too long a gap. We'd want there to be about a 10-minute recess.

Thank you very much.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, is there any indication, though, that the Taliban are engaging in direct or indirect fire attacks more often and with greater effect, now that they know that there is potentially a diminished threat from the air? Do you see any evidence to that effect?

General PETRAEUS. First of all, insurgents historically have always tried to use our rules of engagement against us. We know that. They did that in Iraq periodically. We had people in Iraq literally pushing through crowds shooting at us. This happened in a number of other cases in recent decades as well in these kinds of situations.

But we are about living our values, and every time we have taken expedient measures not only has it been wrong, we have also paid a price for it in terms of it biting us in the back side in the long run. So that's again—we have to be aware that they will use our reluctance to kill innocent civilians or to risk the lives of innocent civilians in the course of these operations.

Having said that, frankly, they generally are not engaging us directly as much as they are coming at us indirectly. They realized some years ago, certainly last year, that if they engage our troopers in a direct fire fight that they will lose. So they are using improvised explosive devices in much larger numbers than they have in the past, and that's where we see the increase in the incidents of violence.

Senator THUNE. It's my understanding that B-1 bomber aircraft are being used quite frequently in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) roles, rather than in an on-call fire support role. I don't know if you know the answer to this or not, but could you provide us with an idea of how frequently that Afghan and Navy crews are being utilized by ground troops in Afghanistan in ISR roles?

General PETRAEUS. We do that all the time, Senator. Again, a B-1 bomber—we have combat air patrols (CAP), so we always have CAPs over Afghanistan. While they're waiting to be called on for a bombing mission, because again that's the only way we can have responsive bombing. In fact, we want it to be available within 10 minutes, is the metric. I review these metrics periodically for responsiveness of CAS and also, by the way, for responsiveness of medevac, which is the golden hour. Generally, the average on medevac responsiveness has been to get from point of injury to the first treatment facility, lately it's in the range of 45 to 50 minutes, which is where we want to keep it.

But as they are waiting for missions, we'll use the lightning pod or the other capabilities that B-1s, F-16s, F/A-18s, whatever aircraft we have. They're very, very good in this role. We've all seen

the downloads. We've all used this, frankly, and they are superb in this role.

Now, we'd rather use unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) or something like that, which are both more persistent, cheaper, greater dwell time, and so forth. But we have these platforms overhead anyway and so we do put them to use while we're waiting to use them in a CAS role, if they are indeed used in that role on their mission.

Senator THUNE. How many manned aircraft are there typically in the air above Afghanistan at any moment in time, any point in time?

General PETRAEUS. Let me provide that to you for the record. In fact, we can show you the unmanned as well. But it's certainly in the dozens at the very least when you start talking about tankers, command and control aircraft, jammers in some cases, in addition to those that are providing on-call CAS in a variety of different locations around the country, you have to be in the south, in the east, in the center or what have you and then dozens of UAVs as well.

[The information referred to follows:]

On average, there are approximately 86 aircraft up at any given time in Afghanistan. For example, a recent snapshot of actual aircraft airborne in Afghanistan at 0930Z (1400 Afghanistan) on Saturday, 19 June 2010, showed 20 Close Air Support fighters and bombers, 1 electronic warfare aircraft, 4 C2 platforms, 3 reconnaissance aircraft, 25 unmanned aircraft, 7 tankers, 1 airdrop, and approximately 25 helicopters (rotary wing do not appear on the ATO). This is indicative of an average day's sorties.

Senator THUNE. As the number of CAPs increase, my assumption is that the manned missions over there will be reduced. Is that a fair statement?

General PETRAEUS. No, I'm not sure I would—let me lay that out for you. In fact, we have put more CAPs, tried to put more CAPs, over Afghanistan as we have spread out our forces. Again, they're somewhat different missions, needless to say, as well. Obviously, some of our UAVs are armed, the Predator and the Reaper, but not the rest.

So a substantial number of those are doing only full-motion video or various intelligence tasks, not responsive with weapons. Of course, the weapons on those that are armed are not as large as those that are carried by, say, a B-1 or some of the other bombers.

Senator THUNE. We do have a vote. My colleague from Florida may want to say something here. But just a final editorial comment if I will, because you have answered this question, I think, many times in response to the questions that have been posed by other members of the committee. But I share a concern, too, with respect to the date next summer for withdrawal. There was a report last week of a wedding party in Argendab District, which we visited in January, that the Taliban killed at least 39 people. There are reports that the Taliban executed a 7-year-old child in Helmand Province for cooperating with the Afghan Government. Notwithstanding the Taliban's so-called code of conduct, there's still a lot of evidence of brutality.

The question I guess would be a lot of these folks in these areas, critical areas to us, who are cooperating with and helping the government, what happens when we leave? Then there was this report

yesterday in the Washington Post, which is being disputed and denied by the Pakistan Government, but I want to read you just one paragraph in this news story: "U.S. officials say"—and these were releases of Taliban leaders from Pakistan—"that the releases reflected Pakistan's strategy of working closely with the United States on key fronts while also maintaining relationships with militant groups capable of serving Pakistan's interests in Afghanistan when U.S. forces are gone."

I'm concerned that the notion that we're going to be pulling down here in the not too distant future does shape the relationships, not only between the people of Afghanistan and the Taliban and the people of Afghanistan and our U.S. forces and efforts there, but also the neighbors in the region. So for what that's worth, I would just add that and echo a concern that's been raised by other members of the committee previously.

Thank you, sir. I guess with that we're on break. So thank you all.

[Recess from 10:53 a.m. to 11:06 a.m.]

Chairman LEVIN. I believe that Senator—let me check. I think Senator Ben Nelson is next. That is correct. Senator Nelson.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me add my appreciation to the two of you and all the men and women in uniform that are so valiantly protecting our freedoms. We appreciate your leadership in that effort.

General Petraeus, one of the things that I thought was so important and I'm pleased that we're seeing that happen now is the establishment of benchmarks to be able to judge progress. We achieved that same goal with Iraq and I'm very happy that we're approaching this same way with benchmarks in Afghanistan.

Two of your major objectives that were submitted in the benchmark progress reports to the committee in April were to: one, develop a self-reliant Afghan security force; and two, a more capable, accountable government in Afghanistan. I certainly agree with these and that they're critical to our success.

If you were to use a metric at the present time to measure our current progress, would you think, with respect to the self-reliant Afghan security force, that we're 10 percent, 20 percent? Is there some calculation in your mind as to where we are, what we've achieved, and yet what remains as the goal? The same thing when it comes to a reliable government? This could apply to Secretary Flournoy as well.

General PETRAEUS. With respect to the ANSFs, Senator, obviously lots of different types of forces, different rates of progress among them, not only between the different components, but also throughout the country, to be sure. I think the important point to make is that we've really made progress in getting the inputs right in this area as well, in terms of getting the right organization, the NTM-A and its various component elements, and then on the Afghan side their various component elements as well, and in some cases adding, as an example, a recruiting element, which was not present before on the police side in particular.

Then getting the right people in charge of them, and General Caldwell and his team of all-star coalition and U.S. leaders, I think, is again another important step forward. The concept's right.

I mentioned, for example, with the training of the police that it used to be recruit, assign, then train when you get to it.

Senator BEN NELSON. Ready, fire, aim.

General PETRAEUS. That's about right.

Then have the resources to do it. Of course, you provided, at the request of the President, the resources to add an additional 100,000 ANSF by the fall of 2011.

So all of those, again very important, added to the additional trainers in terms of resources, we've been able to go from again 1 to 80 ratio of trainer to trainee, to now a 1 to 30 training ratio. The addition of trainers, while still a significant shortfall exists; additional OMLTs and POMLTs, although still again more are needed and General McChrystal's directive to have units partner has made a difference in that regard.

If you want to characterize all of that and say where are you and a certain percentage, I don't know that we're quite at the 50 percentile mark, certainly. I think again there has been important progress in this regard. I think there are some foundations now on which we can build much more effectively than we have been able to in the past.

But we are still at the point of, having gotten the inputs right now, to see how the outputs come out. Not to say that all that has been done in the past to build institution, infrastructure, unit, trainees, and so forth is by any means without enormous value, because it is. We went through the same thing like this within Iraq as well, and you're constantly adjusting, and then you have to adjust to the enemy as well.

Do you want to talk governance?

Secretary FLOURNOY. On the governance side, again I can't give you a set percentage, but I can tell you the kinds of things we're looking at and trying to measure. One is a general sense of the population as to the responsiveness of government to their basic needs, and there's everything from polling to participation in shuras and council meetings and so forth.

At the ministry level, we're very focused on making sure that ministries can actually receive and disburse monies in an accountable manner. We're in the process of working with the various Afghan ministries to actually certify them in terms of financial management, and I think we've certified three or four and there are a number, an additional three or four in the pipeline, and we'll keep working through those, looking at their capacity to perform core functions.

At the local government level, it really has to do with, have we actually created a connection with the local people, is the local government becoming the sort of focal point of community decision-making, do they have the capacity to actually oversee and execute projects, and so forth.

So there are a number of different metrics that we're looking at. As General Petraeus has been saying, we're putting a lot of the right inputs in place, a lot of the right foundational pieces, and now we're going to start measuring progress over time. But it will take some time.

Senator BEN NELSON. With respect to the surveys or the polling—

[Audio system feedback.]

Senator BEN NELSON.—and I don't know why it's doing this.

Chairman LEVIN. I wonder if somebody could check out the sound system here, because we have this hum or feedback.

Senator BEN NELSON. In connection with the polling, I know that the Afghan acceptance of ISAF has not necessarily been increasing. It's been decreasing. From March 2010, with 29 percent of Afghans having a good or very good opinion of ISAF; in comparison, 34 percent now have a bad or a very bad opinion of ISAF, which is the lowest it's been since the surveys were started in 2008.

Is there comparable polling or are there comparable surveys on the support or the attitude of the Afghans towards their government?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I can cite at least one that I'm familiar with, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. You need to talk louder.

Secretary FLOURNOY. I'm sorry.

Chairman LEVIN. Is your mike on?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I don't think it's on.

Chairman LEVIN. A lot louder.

Secretary FLOURNOY. There is a recent poll that was done that shows about 59 percent of the Afghan population believes that the combination of their government and ISAF is moving the country in the right direction, sort of a general, are we heading in the right direction question. That was an improvement since last fall. But frankly, I think we need to get better data from the polls. Right now we get somewhat contradictory information out of the polls.

Senator BEN NELSON. Do you have any polling information on their local governments versus where the overall direction of the country is going?

General PETRAEUS. Interestingly, in the south just recently a poll indicates greater optimism about the future than it did just a few months ago.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. The sound I think is now off. I think they're trying to fix it. So we're all going to have to talk much louder during this interim period.

Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Good morning. Thank you both.

General Petraeus, what would happen if in the future the Taliban took over part or all of Afghanistan from our national security perspective? What would be the consequence?

General PETRAEUS. I think, Senator, given what's happening in other areas, with pressure on extremist groups in other locations, that some of those will make their way back into Afghanistan and enjoy sanctuary, as they did prior to September 11, recalling that the September 11 attacks were planned in the Kandahar area and the initial training of the attackers took place in training camps in Afghanistan.

Senator GRAHAM. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being not so significant and 10 being very significant, what would Taliban control of part or all of Afghanistan mean to us, national security-wise?

General PETRAEUS. The President has said that—

Senator GRAHAM. Closer to 10 than 1?

General PETRAEUS. Yes.

Senator GRAHAM. If we were not there now, what would happen?

General PETRAEUS. I think the Taliban certainly would take control of certain areas of the country. Others might devolve into warlordism and you might end up with a couple of different civil wars going on between different ethnic groups, even sectarian groups, and some warlords overlaid on top of that.

Senator GRAHAM. This is June 2010. Are we winning?

General PETRAEUS. Winning to a counterinsurgent, Senator, means making progress. In that regard, I think that we are winning, but I think that it is a slow process. As I explained, we have just about got the inputs right in terms of getting the organizations in place, the right people in charge of them, the right concepts and the right level of resources to enable implementation of those concepts under those leaders in charge of the right organizations.

Senator GRAHAM. What percentage of Afghanistan is under central government control?

General PETRAEUS. What's that, sir?

Senator GRAHAM. What percentage of the country, Afghanistan, is under effective central government control?

General PETRAEUS. Certainly more, much more than what is not. Again, we have to talk about how do you want to define central government control.

Senator GRAHAM. Central government control means being an effective police force, a responsible army, a functioning, non-corrupt local and national government.

General PETRAEUS. We have a ways to go in that regard, obviously. Again, there are areas of the country that have those characteristics, but they're certainly in the minority.

Senator GRAHAM. Would you agree with me that in June 2010 most of Afghanistan is not governed in an effective manner, where you have an honest police force and a non-corrupt, functioning government, that most of the country doesn't fall under that model?

General PETRAEUS. I think that's a fair assessment. Again, I'd want to sit with you with a map. I'd want to talk a little bit in a more nuanced fashion.

Senator GRAHAM. I'm just trying to get a baseline of where we're at in June 2010.

How many al Qaeda members do we think reside in Afghanistan today?

General PETRAEUS. Probably a very small number, certainly perhaps in the double digit numbers, that small, if any. Again, the nexus of al Qaeda we still believe is very much in the certain agencies of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan.

Senator GRAHAM. How many are over there?

General PETRAEUS. Now we're into the hundreds. This is a question of how do you talk about the symbiotic relationships between these, because it can very easily extend into the thousands. There are trainees moving through there. Then there are relationships. How do you count the support crew, the family members? As you'll recall, a number of these individuals literally married into tribes over there, and it becomes a very difficult accounting drill in a region where people survive by being chameleons at times.

Senator GRAHAM. Is it fair to say that al Qaeda has moved next door?

General PETRAEUS. That is correct.

Senator GRAHAM. What is the number of big “T” Taliban that we’re fighting in Afghanistan, give or minus?

General PETRAEUS. In the thousands, and I can provide you the whole laydown, because again it depends on how you define not just—what is the Afghan Taliban? Do you want to include the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan? Do you include the Hakkani Network? Do you include Commander Nazir? Do you include—

Senator GRAHAM. Let’s include them all.

General PETRAEUS. Then you’re well into the thousands, and then you have to start talking about the tiers of these different operatives. Again, the leadership, of course, at the very top, that matters greatly, and then you get all the way down through the mid-level to the low-level, the \$5- or \$10-a-day Taliban, as they say, that clearly can be broken off. You could argue whether it’s not unlike Iraq. You had a hard-core al Qaeda in Iraq, you had various strands of insurgent elements.

Senator GRAHAM. So, long story short, into the thousands probably?

General PETRAEUS. Certainly.

Senator GRAHAM. Our policy of withdrawing in July 2011, as I understand it, is that we’re going to begin to withdraw in July 2011. The only thing in question is the pace of withdrawal. Is that fair?

General PETRAEUS. Indeed, Senator, as I described—and I want to get you a copy of the statement that I made this morning because I tried to provide a very precise description of that.

Senator GRAHAM. Is generally what I said fair?

General PETRAEUS. July 2011 is when a process begins that includes the beginning of a responsible drawdown of the surge forces and includes the beginning of a process of transition of some tasks to Afghan officials and forces, based on conditions. All of this based on conditions.

Senator GRAHAM. I want to make sure I do understand, because you told Senator Kaufman it’s not a matter of if we’re going to leave, it’s just how quick we’re going to leave. Is that not true?

General PETRAEUS. Based on conditions.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay.

General PETRAEUS. Given current projections as well. Senator, I’d like you to read the statement that I gave at the outset.

Senator GRAHAM. I will.

In June 2012, do you anticipate us having more or less than 50,000 American soldiers in Afghanistan?

General PETRAEUS. Senator, I wouldn’t hazard a projection. I think that would be speculative. Again, we’re a year from the beginning of the process, which is a year from the date that you just stated. I think that it’s just not productive. In fact, it could be unproductive.

Senator GRAHAM. One last question. How does the Taliban view this policy? What intelligence do we have? Has this policy, that we’re going to begin to withdraw in July 2011, given any indication

that the enemy is encouraged by that plus the fact that NATO forces are beginning to withdraw?

General PETRAEUS. The enemy has a number of different emotions right now, Senator. One is that the enemy is under greater pressure than at any time before, and they are feeling this. We have insights into this, as they say. We have put some pretty big dents into elements of the Afghan Taliban in Afghanistan and there have been some pretty big dents in the extremist ranks, the senior leader ranks, in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas as well.

Having said that, there is an awareness of the July 2011 date and there is some sense among some of them. They are watching NATO allies as well. They have specifically, with their information operations campaigns and their tactical campaigns at times we think, targeted certain elements of the coalition, certain countries. Their strategy certainly is to do what they have done in the past, which is outlast whoever it is that is confronting them.

I tried to be very precise this morning with what July 2011 means. That's why your colleague, Senator Lieberman, I believe, mentioned the words vital national security interest, which again say something to all of us, that were featured in the President's speech at West Point, and why again we should come back to the fact as well that that was a message of urgency that complemented the message of enormous commitment.

Let's not forget that by the end of August this year, Senator, the number of forces on the ground, U.S. forces on the ground, will be well more than three times, triple, what was on the ground at the beginning of 2009. That is vastly more than the surge in Iraq. The number of civilians has tripled as well, and the authorization that you have provided for the ANSF is a very substantial one also, 100,000 more ANSF. That is a symbol and a reflection of commitment as well.

That's what we have tried to convey in the region, by the way. We have sat down with all the regional leaders to ensure that there is not—and that's what—in my statement today I said let's be clear what July 2011 is and what it is not. It is not when we race for the exits and reach for the light switch.

Senator GRAHAM. I think what they are probably more certain of is that on the July 2011 date there will be less Americans to fight and less NATO troops to fight, and that's the policy. I think it's a huge mistake.

So thank you.

Secretary FLOURNOY. May I? If I could just add, one of the reasons we've entered into a very public and high profile strategic dialogue with our partners in Afghanistan and, frankly, in Pakistan as well. We are issuing declarations out of that, that we are trying to both flesh out and communicate the nature of an enduring commitment to this region and what that's going to look like, and the fact that we are not leaving any time soon, even though the nature and complexion of the commitment may change over time.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Just in time. Senator McCaskill.

Senator MCCASKILL. Let me first start briefly on some contracting issues. I know we've had a number of members talk about

the private security contracting and I'd like to touch on that and the police training. On the private security contracting, I take it, General Petraeus, that you are perfectly willing to say on the record that we need to get back to this being more of an inherently governmental function, as opposed to something that we're contracting out?

General PETRAEUS. If I could just talk a little bit about the private security contractors, because there's obviously a reason that they're there and that is because they augment what our troops do, just as they did in Iraq. What we learned in Iraq we're trying to apply now in Afghanistan and have been for some time, and that is to make sure that we get them under the authorities, that they understand the rules, if you will, that you helped us with the NDAA. We use those in Iraq, as you'll recall, and at least two cases where we actually brought cases to court based on those authorities under the military commander because we had the jurisdiction over them.

We are doing that in Afghanistan as well, and also applying the efforts to coordinate their activities, to ensure they are very clear on what their rules of engagement or self-defense are, and that they are fully integrated into our battlefield awareness, our situational awareness, and command and control systems as well.

Now, General McChrystal has also said he would like to get rid of private security contractors, because in a perfect world again that would be an inherently governmental function. But the fact is that to do that requires—there's a reason they are securing convoys, logistics, and others. I contracted out my own security in Iraq when I was a three-star general because we didn't have enough military police in this one-off organization, the train-and-equip mission, to secure all those that were lower in rank than I was, and I had enough clout to be able to contract it out. They couldn't do that for themselves, so we gave them the military police unit that was designed for me.

That's the situation that leads to this, and again it's a reality out there, and of course it's a reality on the DOS front as well.

Senator MCCASKILL. I just think it's something that we need to continue to underline.

General PETRAEUS. Correct.

Senator MCCASKILL. If we're going to give our incredibly strong leaders missions to accomplish on behalf of the United States of America, we have to continually bang the drum that we have to have the resources there that are necessary to perform inherently governmental functions.

I have to tell you, General Petraeus, it doesn't surprise me that you gave up your military police unit to contract out your security. But I think a whole lot of Americans wouldn't be comfortable with that. You're an incredible resource for our Nation.

General PETRAEUS. It was when I was a three-star, not a four-star.

Senator MCCASKILL. Three-stars—the reason you became a four-star is because you were an above-average three-star. I think that it would be important for us to acknowledge that having—and I do want to get on the record an acknowledgment that we are pulling people out of the workforce in Afghanistan that we need in our

army and in our local police departments, at higher pay, and sometimes they're not good guys.

General PETRAEUS. Right. Not only are we doing that there, and President Karzai and I had a conversation with Ambassador Holbrooke as well on the fact that in some cases we are investing in Afghanistan's human capital, helping train, educate, provide skills to people, they return to their inherently governmental function, and then we compete with the Afghan Government and in some cases take them away and put them on a contract to us as you name it, a doctor who's now an interpreter, a great governmental official who now becomes again, who knows, human terrain team or whatever.

So that is a conflict and it's something that Afghanistan has to address in terms they need some rules and regulation and policies, and we have to be sensitive. I don't know if you heard our mention of the task force that we have formed.

Senator MCCASKILL. General Caldwell.

General PETRAEUS. This is one actually with Rear Admiral Kathleen Dussault, who you will remember as a one-star, Joint Contracting Command-Iraq commander. She is now a two-star and is going to go out and lead a task force that will complement what the contracting command in Afghanistan is doing to really get into the details of this and to look at some of these issues that are out there, also to get down to the subcontractors to the subcontractors, to follow the money, to find out how is it being doled out, who really is benefiting from this.

Senator MCCASKILL. That's great. I know, Secretary Flournoy, you are aware that we've also asked you to put in the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) contracting plans, that in the NDAA we're asking that the QDR include contracting. I think if we've learned anything over the last 5 years, we've learned that if we are going to be fighting a counterinsurgency far away, contracting is an essential piece of that mission, and if we haven't learned that lesson, then we're in real trouble.

Let me briefly talk on the ANP. I would certainly want there to be an acknowledgment somewhere that we may need to hold on to training local police as part of our fundamental core competency in going against a counterinsurgency. This notion that the DOS had it and then we give it back to DOD and then the DOS takes it back and now it's back with DOD, and now we have a problem with the contract and we're struggling with whether or not we compete it. Here we are in the crucial months of a strategy that has been adopted by our Commander in Chief and by the military in Afghanistan and we frankly are flatfooted as it relates to our ability to contract with the ANP trainers.

General PETRAEUS. I could not agree with you more, Senator. We see this wherever there is what we call an industrial strength mission. Again, this is to take nothing away from DOS or international narcotics and law enforcement affairs. There are fantastic armies of one in those organizations, but they are not structured, they don't have the deployability, they don't have the personnel protection, all the rest of these that in a counterinsurgency situation—they're terrific for the normal type of mission that has been performed in the past. But I lived through this in Iraq. I watched us

try to do it with the traditional structures and organizations, and then ended up being the guy that had to take it over and pull it together. We just ended up taking more and more and more tasks. Ultimately, even the overall ministry adviser missions ended up all being under the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq organization there after we tried to do it the normal way and it didn't work.

I think it's very important, and there's an issue of interagency doctrine there that is important, or interagency roles and missions. Again, I am one who, like Under Secretary Flournoy and Secretary Gates, has argued for more resources for DOS and these different elements that are trying to perform these missions as well.

If I could, there is one we have in fact formed. We formed it a couple years ago, in fact when I was at Fort Leavenworth. Another hat was added for the commander at Fort Leavenworth, the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance. This is designed for the military to capture what it is we have learned about the industrial strength efforts here, too, because again we have learned. Traditionally we did this with Green Berets, with Special Forces, who would go out and they'd train a couple battalions, maybe even a brigade or two, in some country in Africa or Latin America or something like this.

Now we are doing again bulk industrial strength efforts, and we're having to use conventional forces in very significant ways. They dwarf the numbers of our Green Berets and have taken over the bulk of these missions. We have sought to capture the lessons from that as well, and I think we've done a reasonably good job in terms of doing that and then developing doctrine, the preparation of these forces for deployment and the rest of that as well.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you. I'm out of time, but I do want to let you know, I will submit for the record—I'm very concerned about the situation in Kyrgyzstan and the stability of that government, our relationship with that government as it relates to our airfield there. I know they've arrested the former president's son in the U.K. and I know there's allegations of serious skimming in terms of fuel contracts with that air base. I know we have a backup of trains with fuel.

That northern supply route, we've taken a long time to get it in place and it looks precarious to me right now, and that is of great concern. So I will address some questions to the record and will look forward to learning where you think we are as it relates to the ethnic strife that we're now seeing in Central Asia and how that impacts on our mission in Afghanistan.

General PETRAEUS. Could I very quickly just reassure that the northern distribution network, the bulk of which on the ground, virtually all of it, runs through Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, is functioning very smoothly. There are no issues with it. In fact, we continue to increase. I think we're almost at the point of 70 percent now of our supplies, not all of the other military equipment, run through the northern distribution network. This has helped enormously to take the pressures off the routes that come through Karachi, through the Khyber Pass and the Chaman Gate. Also, the prices went down in Pakistan as a result of having competition. What a surprise.

Beyond that, the Kyrgyzstan issue, Transit Center at Manas is quite a distance from Osh. We have had no security issues whatsoever up there. We are responding to and working hand-in-glove with the DOS to be prepared if there is a determination of humanitarian assistance or to help in any other way, as we did in the wake of the riots that resulted in the displacement of the government.

There's an OSD team that is working on replacing the contract. In the mean time, we have been able to keep the fuel, we have all of our tankers back up there flying again, and again touch wood that that can just continue as we are sorting out the way ahead on the contract front.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCaskill.

Senator SESSIONS.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you both for your service to your country.

I'd like to go back to the fundamental question that the American people have at the time of this hearing, is that they're picking up information that things are not going well in Afghanistan. They are concerned about it. Members of Congress are picking that up. We're seeing it in the media, rightly or wrongly.

I guess first of all, Secretary Flournoy, I understood you to say that you believe the overall trajectory of our efforts there is in the right direction since I guess that we are making progress toward the goal that we'd like to see for Afghanistan. Is that a fair statement?

Secretary FLOURNOY. It is, Senator. I think we are moving in the right direction. The nature of the counterinsurgency work is, there are going to be setbacks along the way. It's very difficult. But we are moving in the right direction.

Senator SESSIONS. The reports from your perspective are pointing out problems, and some are very real, still don't dissuade you in that view that overall we're still on the right trajectory?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Yes, especially because we are still having the resources that the President ordered coming into theater, still getting in place, and not fully engaged yet in the fight. As they come on line, I think that will add to our ability to create some momentum.

Senator SESSIONS. General Petraeus, I remember still so vividly the decision to execute the surge. The President had to ask our soldiers who expected to come home to extend for 3 months, one of the most bitter things that I remember having to go through. It's still emotional to me. I remember asking you, did you think we can be successful in Iraq. At the time that was a matter of doubt. I guess we can say that the trajectory of drawing the troops down so rapidly indicates that you were at least right, at least at this point in time.

Do you think we can be successful in Afghanistan, given the current state of affairs there?

General PETRAEUS. I do. Again, it will not be easy, nor was it in any way, shape, or form easy in Iraq. It was very, very hard in Iraq. We took very tough losses in Iraq, as you well know from visiting many different times. There were significant ups and downs.

I still remember, for example, way past the September hearings, well at the end of that year, for example, as various government leaders came to very senior U.S. officials and called for a very significant change in governmental leadership there. This is way beyond the point that anyone was disputing that there were significant security gains. This is a tough, tough business and it is, as I described earlier, very much a roller-coaster ride. Those who are living it have to try to keep their eye on the horizon to ensure that the trajectory is generally upward. I agree with the Under Secretary that it is.

Senator SESSIONS. You talk about DOS and their contributions, which are very valuable. But you also pointed out that the NGOs and our other government entities don't carry security with them and it's difficult for them to fulfill their responsibilities. In an insurgency situation in which the very safety of American personnel are still at stake, doesn't it make sense—or I'll just say it this way and I'll let you comment. It's my opinion that the people who are in these PRTs, the people who are out there, are mostly military and we need to understand that they have the ability and can effectively dispense aid for local projects and so forth, that can save lives. I think the military has really such an intensity of interest in this because their soldiers' lives are at stake.

So would you comment on that fundamental balance between where the reconstruction monies should be allocated?

General PETRAEUS. First of all, I think your point is very well taken. Second, in fact PRTs by and large are significantly military.

Senator SESSIONS. These are the PRTs.

General PETRAEUS. PRTs are a mix of civilian and military. Typically you'll have civilian leadership and you'll have a number of very good civilian experts that bring skills that are hard to find at least within the military, although sometimes in our Reserve components we even have those skills.

But what we want to do is partner. By the way, we do have significant skills in uniforms, folks who pack weapons and everything else and are prepared to go downrange, many of them again from our Reserve components, who perform civilian functions when not in uniform that lend themselves very well to these kinds of tasks.

Then on top of that, of course, we have the National Guard Agricultural Development Teams that have been superb. These are individuals who are farming experts. In some cases they're the leaders in the agriculture departments of their States or counties, and they have been very valuable over there. They come as an entire self-contained unit, so you have a unit that can move itself, feed itself, secure itself, and communicate and provide the expertise in the agricultural arena on top of that.

So this is a mix. That's the way it ought to be. We can dispense some of the money, and indeed the CERP funds are substantial when you talk about \$1.1 billion in CERP or whatever. That's a significant amount of money to dispense. Certainly we coordinate then very carefully with USAID and the other elements that are doing reconstruction and development work to make sure that we're not double-tapping a particular target or project.

Senator SESSIONS. Two things. First, I do believe often 90 percent of the PRTs are military personnel operating them. Second, I

guess the chairman asked you about why we aren't moving more on utilizing that money that's being asked for.

General PETRAEUS. In fact, we have a plan, as the Under Secretary explained, that will actually obligate a very substantial amount of this on top of what has been obligated already this year. As our footprint expands, as the inputs are completed, then the obligation rate will pick up as well.

Senator SESSIONS. Just briefly, there's been a slowdown in Kandahar. I saw an Associated Press article; according to General McChrystal, he was going to slow down a bit. President Karzai did go there recently, very recently, Sunday, and he hasn't done that enough in my opinion. But he went, had a meeting with the Kandahar leaders, as Senator Levin and I did a couple of years ago, met with serious individuals, respected in their local areas. He called on them for support and a majority of the audience stood and raised their hands when he asked for their support.

I think General McChrystal saw that as a strong clear call for unity and that Karzai displayed extraordinary ownership of the operation.

How would you evaluate that, and does that indicate that we're not doomed in Kandahar, but actually may be laying the groundwork for a successful operation?

General PETRAEUS. That was indeed one of the most important of the political shaping operations. There was also another shura council that President Karzai held, about probably 2½ months ago now, even larger. It was from 1,500 to 2,000 local elders, notables, and leaders. It was so inclusive in fact that a number of them felt no reluctance in standing up with the TV cameras rolling and criticizing the Afghan Government, in some cases President Karzai himself, who turned and pointed the finger at himself as well.

But this latest one, I've read the statement, the talking points, if you will, that President Karzai used that were translated. They're very good, and in fact I told the chairman I would get copies of them to the committee.

We had a videoteleconference in fact coincidentally with General McChrystal yesterday morning, the weekly that's done with the Secretary of Defense and the rest of us. He felt quite encouraged by it also.

The fact is I always felt that Kandahar was going to take months and months and months. It's not a revelation to me that this will go into the winter. That's what I have always expected it would, having been on the ground in Kandahar and done it so very recently, I think a month and a half, 2 months ago most recently, and walked around and talked to the governor and talked to other leaders there as well.

General McChrystal's changing slightly how he's going to start by doing more focused training and partnering with some Afghan forces before they launch their portion of the tactical operation. That's very sensible to me. Again, I don't see that as extending the overall timeline necessarily. That's a component of the plan that I think a tactical commander has every reason to adjust as he sees fit.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Sessions.

Senator LeMieux.

Senator LEMIEUX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Secretary Flournoy, General Petraeus. Thank you for your service. Good to see you again. About a month ago you were kind enough to host me and Senator Nelson at CENTCOM and we talked about a variety of issues. I want to follow on what my colleague from Alabama was just discussing in talking about President Karzai.

When we had that meeting, we talked about your confidence in President Karzai as a partner for our country in this effort to fight the Taliban and fight al Qaeda. These recent comments that President Karzai made in Kandahar are welcomed, but they follow his comments that were reported around the 10th of this month that he had lost faith in the U.S.'s ability to defeat the Taliban.

I wanted to get an update from you about your confidence level in our partnership and in his leadership in fighting this war.

General PETRAEUS. Senator, thanks and great to see you again as well.

If I could just start off by saying that I think that the statement that President Karzai's lost faith in the United States is a newspaper account, not certainly a quote directly from him, and it is more a characterization from some second- and third-hand sources. It does not square with what my contacts with him in recent months would have predicted, nor what General McChrystal reports, nor the others who have very frequent contact with him in Kabul.

Again, the example of the shura that was held in Kandahar is very significant. That is, that's the next important milestone in setting the political conditions for the conduct of the military operations, recognizing that many of the security challenges in Kandahar are related to political or economic disputes, tensions, friction, and so forth. So that's a very significant step forward.

It doesn't mean the Taliban's all going to turn around and bow in his direction by any means. They will continue their campaign of trying to intimidate, in some cases assassinate and attack our soldiers and our Afghan partners. But this is very important in getting the people on the side of the government, knowing what is going to happen, understanding. He also didn't hold out rosy futures. He said this will be difficult, we're going to need to fight the Taliban together, et cetera.

At the end of the day, his success is our success. So working and very clearly following the President's guidance a couple months ago, that we indeed have to support the leader of the sovereign country that we're trying to help.

Senator LEMIEUX. So you're still as confident in the partnership as you were when we last met?

General PETRAEUS. Yes, yes. Clearly there is an issue with the resignation of the minister of interior and their intelligence service, the National Directorate of Security. We know those individuals. We've all worked with them. We all regard them as competent. But I think again before we start judging what that will do to those ministries, to the overall effort, we have to see who the replacements are, judge their competence, their ethnicity, because again President Karzai is very sensitive that they can't both be Pashtu.

For what it's worth, the discussions that we're aware of, some of which Americans have participated in, as various candidates have been considered, indicate that the replacements will be competent individuals and individuals certainly that we have confidence in and can work with.

Secretary FLOURNOY. If I could, Senator, we had President Karzai and 14 of his cabinet members here in May for a strategic dialogue. They left with a very clear sense of a longer-term U.S. commitment. We were talking about activities that will extend over the next 5 to 10 years in security assistance, in governance, in education, in economics, and the full range of a longer-term strategic relationship. They left with no question, I think, about understanding that we see that as a vital interest for the United States.

Senator LEMIEUX. That goes to the question of the timeline. I know that some of my other colleagues have already questioned you about that. How many of the troops now are deployed of this surging effort?

General PETRAEUS. Of the final 30,000 that will take us up to that 98,000 figure—and again keeping in mind that we started in January 2009 with 30,000 to 31,000, so this will be a more than tripling of the force on the ground. The Secretary of Defense, as has been discussed in here, has some flex factor as required for emerging force protection needs and other critical requirements. We're about almost at the 21,000 of the additional 30,000 on the ground. This is actually slightly ahead of schedule in terms of personnel and in terms of equipment, which is somewhat remarkable given the Icelandic volcanic eruptions, the Haiti emergency relief operation, and some other challenges, including the issues with the Transit Center at Manas with fuel a month or so ago.

Yet it has all stayed on track. What we call Transportation Nation, the U.S. Transportation Command led by General Duncan McNabb, the Logistics Nation led by a host of different individuals, and so forth, they have performed miracles, and in fact we're issuing equipment early to the brigade that is moving into the Kandahar area now.

Senator LEMIEUX. When do you expect the full deployment to be accomplished?

General PETRAEUS. All of the 30,000 required by the end of August will be on the ground by the end of August. There is one element, a headquarters, that is not required by that time, so we obviously won't put it in. It goes in about a month later, although we could get it in there. But it doesn't rotate until after that, although it is part of the 30,000.

Senator LEMIEUX. Do you expect that the amount of troops fully deployed by August will be a sufficient complement to what you need to accomplish the mission?

General PETRAEUS. That's correct. In fact, General McChrystal has in a letter to the ranking member of the HASC stated that this will enable us to be what's required to carry out the strategy. Recognizing that, as I said, if there are emergent needs we will always ask for those. That's our obligation to our troopers. In fact, Secretary Gates has this flex factor that could enable him to satisfy some of that at his level.

Senator LEMIEUX. I would expect that as we come into the summer of 2011, if you also felt that you needed to keep that level of troops on the ground, that you would make that recommendation to the President?

General PETRAEUS. In fact, that's correct, Senator. In the statement that I made upfront, and we'll make sure that you get a copy of that, I stated that we'll look at the conditions on the ground at that time, I and I'm sure General McChrystal, Admiral Mullen, and all the other military leaders involved, will provide our most forthright and best professional military advice. Then at the end of the day also support the ultimate policy decision made by the President.

Senator LEMIEUX. Thank you. Thank you again for your service. My time is up. I wanted to also talk to you about Iran and what their influence is currently in Afghanistan, so I will submit some questions for the record to you.

General PETRAEUS. Thank you, sir.

Senator LEMIEUX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator LeMieux.

I'm just going to end with a final comment about a point which has been, I think, fairly made here by Senator Graham, that the Taliban knows that we're going to have fewer U.S. troops in Afghanistan starting in July 2011. Your answer, I think, is also fair and accurate, that how many fewer and the speed of the reductions will, as the President has directed, be based on conditions at that time.

It's also true that the Taliban knows that the ANA, which is an army that the people support, is going to be far, far bigger in July 2011 than it is now. I think it's also true that the Afghan Government understands that those reductions will begin in 2011. One of the points is that that will give the Afghan Government a greater sense of urgency about their responsibility to take their own security on as their obligation more than it is ours. Is that something you would agree with, General?

General PETRAEUS. Absolutely, yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Madam Secretary?

Secretary FLOURNOY. They want to fully exercise their sovereignty, including providing security for their own people.

Chairman LEVIN. We've done well. If there's a quick comment by either of my colleagues?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Mr. Chairman, if I might, just to follow up in terms of messages we might send to the Taliban. I don't expect this to happen, but am I correct that General McChrystal understands that if for some reason between now and July 2011 he feels he actually needs additional American troops, that he is free to request that?

General PETRAEUS. Absolutely.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Then the final question. There has been some discussion about different ways in which as we head toward July 2011 we can reassure both the Afghans, their enemies, and the region of our longer-term commitment. I know that the last time President Karzai was here some of us talked to him and there's some interest, it seems to me, I'm sure, in the Afghans in seeking a longer-term security relationship with us, including po-

tentially becoming designated as a major non-NATO ally, and that would go beyond July 2011, might obligate us to some longer-term funding of the ANSF, for instance.

Secretary Flournoy, is that on the table?

Secretary FLOURNOY. That is on the table. We are working together with our Afghan partners on a strategic framework for the relationship mid- to long-term. As we develop that, we will certainly be consulting with you here. We would also like to make that framework a public framework, our intention is very clear for an enduring and substantial relationship to Afghans and Taliban and others in the region.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

Are you supportive of that, General?

General PETRAEUS. Yes. In fact, that has been discussed and really is being worked. I don't want to prejudge the policy, but certainly discussions have been made.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Sure. That's very encouraging. I think that's a very constructive way to go. If I might just draw the parallel, as new countries have come into NATO, the understanding has been that this is an exchange, that you get the value of NATO or being a major non-NATO ally, for instance—and one of the things that you do in response is to improve your own military and indeed to reform your government. There might be a very constructive quid pro quo here. But I thank you for that and I look forward to hearing more about it.

Thanks for an excellent morning of testimony, really very helpful and ultimately realistically encouraging. I think, as we said earlier, if you accept the goal and accept the principle that we have a vital national security interest in succeeding in Afghanistan, as President Obama has decided, then we just have to figure out how to achieve that goal.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Lieberman.

Let me support something that Senator Lieberman was driving at. I have put huge emphasis on the importance of getting the ANA trained, equipped, enlarged, and taking the lead in operations, including in Kandahar. That's been my focus from the beginning of this effort in Afghanistan. I have felt that that decision to set a date for beginning of reductions in July 2011 is essential in order to energize the Afghan Government to do what only they can do, which is to take responsibility for their own security.

I believe that deeply. I think that's an inherent part of counterinsurgency that that happen, and the support of the ANA by the Afghan people is there and it is going to make a huge difference in terms of success.

I also very much support a long-term relationship with Afghanistan, both security relationship and economic and political relationship. I don't view that as being in any way inconsistent with my belief that the Afghan Government must get a message of urgency, of taking responsibility security-wise and politically for their own country.

I again am very comfortable in supporting both of those positions. In fact, I think they're not only consistent, but dependent on each other. I think success in Afghanistan is going to depend on

the willingness of the Afghan Government not only to take responsibility for their own security, but to take responsibility for decent governance inside of Afghanistan that will win the respect of the Afghan people.

I wanted to add that because, with all my emphasis on the ANA taking the lead and taking responsibility, I do believe at the same time that they should understand that we have a long-term commitment and those of us that even want to place greater responsibility on them share that belief in a long-term commitment, security-wise, economically, politically, between us and the Afghans.

We thank you both. It's been a long couple of days and it's been very, very helpful and constructive. We appreciate it. Thanks so much.

We stand adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CLAIRE McCASKILL

UNITED STATES AND KYRGYZSTAN

1. Senator McCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, central Asia is more unstable than it has been in several years with the recent overthrow of the Bakiyev government and the ethnic tensions in Kyrgyzstan. These events are disconcerting because we are so dependent on these countries for transit of key supplies into Afghanistan. These countries are also critical to our long-term success strategy in Afghanistan, especially to building north-south economic ties and fighting the flow of drugs through the country. Within the last 2 weeks, there has been violent ethnic unrest in southern Kyrgyzstan's Ferghana Valley near the city of Osh, which is the second largest city in the country. According to most sources, hundreds of people have been confirmed dead, a further 1,500 as injured, and tens of thousands of ethnic Uzbeks have fled to neighboring Uzbekistan. Although the Transit Center at Manas has not been directly affected by the ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan so far, the worry persists about how this instability will affect the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) in general (air, land, and rail routes), which is so critical to supplying our plus-up of troops. What is the state of our relationship with the new provisional government in Kyrgyzstan?

Secretary FLOURNOY. We have, as part of the U.S. Government's overall engagement with Kyrgyzstan, worked closely with the provisional government since early April, and our relationship continues to develop in a productive, cooperative direction. The Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of State (DOS), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and international partners have worked with the provisional government to provide humanitarian assistance in response to both the unrest in April and the ethnic conflicts in June. We have also worked to ensure Kyrgyzstan's continued support for the struggle against violent extremism, and the provisional government has provided public and private assurances that it will honor the Manas Transit Center (MTC) Agreement through the current renewal period, which runs through July 13, 2011 (the MTC Agreement provides that the U.S. Government could exercise three additional 1-year renewal options), as well as the bilateral Agreement for Cooperation, which has no expiration date. We will continue to engage the provisional government on these and other issues of interest to DOD.

General PETRAEUS. Our relationship with the provisional government has been generally positive. Interim President Roza Otunbayeva and other government officials have expressed openly they will uphold their international commitments, including the current MTC agreement. We see no indication that they will not continue to do so. Our military-to-military relationship with Kyrgyz Security Forces has also been positive. Kyrgyz units that have received U.S. assistance have performed admirably under difficult circumstances. Kyrgyz security ministries have been cooperative in evacuating American citizens from areas currently affected by the unrest in the southern part of the country, in coordination with our team at MTC. There has been no significant disruption to the NDN.

2. Senator McCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, can the new government leadership be counted on to honor our agreement with respect to Manas?

Secretary FLOURNOY. The provisional government has provided public and private assurances that it will honor the MTC Agreement through the current renewal period, which runs through July 13, 2011 (the MTC Agreement provides that the U.S. Government could exercise three additional 1-year renewal options), as well as the bilateral Agreement for Cooperation, which has no expiration date.

General PETRAEUS. I believe they can and see no indication to the contrary. Interim President Roza Otunbayeva and other Government officials have expressed openly their continued commitment to uphold the current MTC agreement until it expires in July 2011.

3. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, is it possible that the latest attacks were coordinated and meant to cause ethnic clashes, as we are now hearing that United Nations (U.N.) aid workers are speculating?

Secretary FLOURNOY. We lack the necessary information to understand fully the origins of the violence. The provisional government has asked the international community for assistance with investigating the violence that occurred in June, and the U.S. Government has provided the provisional government with recommendations for international involvement in a Commission of Inquiry. DOD will support U.S. efforts to support a transparent, objective investigation into these events.

General PETRAEUS. The current situation in Kyrgyzstan is characterized by a widespread distrust of the government, security forces, and fellow citizens. In the wake of this violence, bad actors such as criminals and extremists may attempt to assert themselves. We should make every effort to encourage and support the Kyrgyz government as it works toward national reconciliation.

I recommend we continue to support the Kyrgyz government in its efforts to investigate the causes of the violence and encourage it to host an external investigation by an international body, such as the U.N.

4. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, will DOD be investigating this possibility?

Secretary FLOURNOY. DOD does not intend to conduct its own investigation. The provisional government has asked the international community for assistance with investigating the unrest that occurred in June, and the U.S. Government has provided the provisional government with recommendations for international involvement in a Commission of Inquiry. DOD will support U.S. efforts to support a transparent, objective investigation into these events.

General PETRAEUS. The Kyrgyz Provisional Government's decision to ask for assistance from the international community in investigating the recent unrest is the best approach. As Secretary Flournoy stated, while DOD does not intend to conduct its own investigation, it will assist, as will U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), with any investigations as appropriate.

5. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, reports suggest that the Uzbek Government estimates that perhaps hundreds of thousands of people have already crossed into the country and are living in tent camps. Do you feel the Uzbeks will be able to handle the crisis from their side and, more long-term, will the Uzbeks be in a position to honor their transit agreements with us?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Roughly 100,000 primarily ethnic Uzbek refugees from Kyrgyzstan crossed the border into Uzbekistan as a result of the violence in neighboring Kyrgyzstan. The Government of Uzbekistan has been widely commended by the United States and the international community for its role in providing shelter for the refugees between June 11–25, 2010. Virtually all of the Kyrgyz refugees crossed back into Kyrgyzstan in advance of the June 27 vote on the constitutional referendum. In the long term, we believe that the Government of Uzbekistan will honor its transit arrangement with the United States.

General PETRAEUS. We continue to closely monitor the situation through our friends in DOS as they update their reporting on this crisis. The Uzbekistan refugee crisis is mostly resolved due to a mass return of refugees to Kyrgyzstan on 25 June 2010. Based on reports, the Uzbek Government acted quickly and effectively to care for the refugees by providing basic shelter, food, and medical care. The U.S. Embassy in Tashkent reports there are between 250–400 hospitalized refugees remaining in Uzbek after the crisis that will be sent to Kyrgyz hospitals when medical conditions permit.

Due to the limited duration and return of refugees to their homeland, we believe it will not impact the Government of Uzbekistan's long-term ability to honor the transit agreements.

6. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, in your estimation, is the NDN currently stable?

Secretary FLOURNOY. The NDN is currently exceeding our expectations in facilitating the transit of sustainment cargo for U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan. Since its inception in April 2009, more than 16,000 containers have been shipped across the NDN in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Countries along the NDN fully support this network and continue to work with the United States to improve its performance and increase its capacity.

Virtually no disruptions in transits across the NDN occurred due to the recent instability in Kyrgyzstan, and we continue to work with all participating countries to ensure uninterrupted, stable operations. Publicly supporting the United States through the provision of access is often politically unpopular and could result in increased security threats to the country, and so consistent, continual effort to maintain political support with all participating countries is necessary.

General PETRAEUS. Yes, the NDN is very stable. Over the course of its 18 month existence, the NDN has developed into a robust network of routes which transit the Caucasus, Central Asian States, and Russia. Pilferage and attack-free, the NDN provides additive capability to the Pakistan-Afghanistan routes and provides flexibility in how we sustain operations in Afghanistan.

7. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, can we expect any adverse effects at the Transit Center at Manas (MTC) in Uzbekistan, or in Tajikistan as a result of the recent violence in Osh?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Thus far, we have not seen any adverse effects to U.S. interests at the MTC, in Uzbekistan, or in Tajikistan as a result of the violence in southern Kyrgyzstan.

General PETRAEUS. The greatest danger to the region lies in the potential demographic stress placed on Kyrgyzstan and its neighbors by displaced persons. Uzbekistan has taken the brunt of this with no reports of refugees in Tajikistan. However, the DOS and the USAID have worked quickly to provide aid to Kyrgyzstan and its neighbors. This will be key to mitigating this humanitarian disaster.

The current situation in Kyrgyzstan is characterized by a widespread distrust of the government, security forces, and fellow citizens. In the wake of this violence, bad actors such as criminals and extremists may attempt to assert themselves into a vacuum. We should make every effort to encourage and support the Kyrgyz Government as it works toward national reconciliation. The potential rise in extremist activity is also a concern for Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; as bordering countries they likely share a concern that extremist activity could spill into their territory. The risk is real, but we do not see indicators of spill-over violence at this time.

8. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, what is CENTCOM doing to safeguard our interests and supply networks there?

Secretary FLOURNOY. I defer to the Commander of CENTCOM.

General PETRAEUS. NDN allows goods to reach Afghanistan through several central asian states. We are not dependent on Kyrgyzstan for this support, but value it as a contributor in making the NDN a robust network with multiple redundancies. Similarly, the MTC serves as a basing location for refueler aircraft and a passenger transit location for deploying and redeploying troops. Although we have demonstrated the ability to relocate our aircraft and passenger transit operation, most recently due to the disruption caused by volcanic activity in Iceland, the MTC is very valuable to us and we want to ensure it remains a location from which we can operate.

Safeguarding our interests and supply networks at key transit centers remains a top priority. In this effort, we continue to work with the current provisional Government of Kyrgyzstan and have received assurances of their support until parliamentary elections are held in October and the newly-elected government is in place. The military units in Kyrgyzstan will continue to play an important role interacting with communities in Kyrgyzstan and providing support and aid when appropriately authorized.

9. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, if we lose access to any of the central asian states currently participating in the NDN, is CENTCOM prepared with alternative routes capable of picking up that loss?

Secretary FLOURNOY. The NDN was conceived as part of a flexible, multi-modal logistics network, with multiple redundancies to offset, at least in part, a loss of access anywhere in the network. DOD, in cooperation with DOS, works closely with partner nations participating in the NDN and in Pakistan to continue to enhance

and expand the capacity of the logistics network so that support for OEF will not be put at risk by disruptions on any single route.

General PETRAEUS. Yes, CENTCOM is prepared. The NDN was established over 18 months ago to provide flexibility to the Pakistan Ground Line of Communication. Additionally, the NDN consists of a network of routes which enter the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) from the north, originating in northern Europe, as well as the south, originating in either Turkey or Georgia. The routes are purely commercial, with the carriers utilizing the same established ports of entry for U.S. Government cargo as they utilize for commercial customers. Due to the commercial nature of the NDN and the types of cargo, we believe the routes are less vulnerable. Within the CENTCOM AOR, the NDN routes transit Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, making it important to maintain strong host nation support from these two countries.

10. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, do you see the potential for terrorist groups, such as the Independent Movement for Uzbekistan, or Islamic extremists that have grown up in and around the Ferghana Valley to exploit the chaos?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan has abated, and the provisional government has reestablished control in Kyrgyzstan. The constitutional referendum held in June was successful, with a government-reported 90 percent of voters agreeing to a new parliamentary form of government in Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyzstan is currently stable. Should unrest recur, exploitation of instability by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan or other extremist groups is one of several scenarios that could result from renewed violence in the region.

General PETRAEUS. [Deleted.]

11. Senator MCCASKILL. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, in your assessment, is it a fair conclusion to say that many or most contracts, especially related to fuel, in Central Asia have some kind of connection to corruption, in some cases the ruling families of the country, such as the Bakiyevs?

Secretary FLOURNOY. All DOD contracts in Central Asia are subject to the same legal and regulatory standards as contracts into which DOD enters worldwide. DOD takes allegations of corruption seriously and conducts regular reviews of its contracts to ensure that they are properly solicited and executed. If DOD finds or receives credible evidence of corruption, it conducts a full investigation and will, if appropriate, terminate a contract or take appropriate legal action.

General PETRAEUS. CENTCOM contracting organizations, such as the Joint Theater Support Contracting Command, do not contract for bulk petroleum. In most cases, this is a function of the Defense Logistics Agency's Defense Energy Support Center. It would be inappropriate for CENTCOM to comment on contracts outside our purview.

AFGHANISTAN NATIONAL POLICE

12. Senator MCCASKILL. General Petraeus, I am interested in the way that DOS and DOD have been managing the police training mission and have yet to see a full, one-stop-shop accounting of what CENTCOM is spending on the police training mission per annum (in Afghanistan and Iraq). Looking further at the police training missions that you have been managing in Afghanistan and in Iraq, would you please provide a breakdown of:

- The costs associated with the police training mission in each country for each of the last 3 years;
- The quantity of personnel involved in police training (DOD civilians, contractors, and military); and
- The total support costs to carry out police training (including security, housing, logistics/life support, et cetera).

General PETRAEUS. Under the DOD Reorganization Act of 1986, the Military Services, which support CENTCOM in the Afghanistan and Iraq theaters, budget and account for their costs and manpower, rather than the combatant command.

The Army is the resource sponsor for both Afghanistan and Iraq. The Army's OEF and Operation Iraqi Freedom costs are captured in the Department's monthly Cost of War Report. This report and DOD's official accounting reports include the direct Afghanistan Security Forces Fund and Iraq Security Forces Fund amounts that are executed for the DOD police training mission, as shown in the table below.

[In Millions of Dollars]

	Fiscal Year			Total
	2008	2009	2010 (as of 6/16/10)	
Iraq Security Forces Fund	312	527	103	942
Afghanistan Security Forces Fund	408	392	413	1,213

The approximate number of DOD personnel that support the police training missions (DOD civilians, contractors, and military) in Iraq and Afghanistan are listed below as reported by U.S. Forces-Iraq and NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan.

~Personnel	Fiscal Year		
	2008	2009	2010
Iraq:			
DOD (Military and Civilian)	5,500	5,500	7,000
Contractor	800	800	400
Afghanistan:			
DOD (Military and Civilian)	0	0	237
Contractor	721	1,205	1,404

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROLAND W. BURRIS

U.S. TROOP DRAWDOWN

13. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, what concerns do you have with the directed drawdown date of July 2011?

Secretary FLOURNOY. We have confidence that the progress we are making jointly with our Afghan partners and other allies will allow us to initiate transition to Afghan security lead beginning within the next year. My overall concern is that any drawdown in July 2011 is consistent with the President's vision of a responsible, conditions-based reduction.

General PETRAEUS. In order to ensure that Afghanistan can build the capacity to take full responsibility for its own security, the pace of the drawdown of our forces in Afghanistan should, as the President has stated, be the beginning of a process for transition to the Afghan Government, and the beginning of a responsible drawdown of U.S. forces based on conditions on the ground in July 2011.

14. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, are you concerned that the insurgency is just bidding their time until our withdrawal?

Secretary FLOURNOY. We do not assess that the Taliban are "bidding their time," although we do assess that the Taliban may not understand the U.S. enduring commitment to Afghanistan as a strategic partnership in the region. The Taliban continue to conduct operations in support of their strategic goals: the removal of foreign forces from Afghanistan and the return of Mullah Omar as the leader of Afghanistan. The increase in our forces and operations in Afghanistan has put pressure on the Taliban and their pursuit of those goals. This is a resilient insurgency and a tough fight, but we are making progress on the ground.

General PETRAEUS. We do not assess the Taliban are "bidding their time." We assess the Taliban consider the announced July 2011 U.S. withdrawal to be an indication of waning U.S. and international support for the conflict. However, we assess the Taliban do not intend on ceding any ground to International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) or the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) between now and July 2011 pending the announced withdrawal. The Taliban continue to conduct operations in support of their strategic goals; the removal of foreign forces from Afghanistan and reinstatement of Mullah Omar as the leader of Afghanistan. They have increased violence in response to increased ISAF and ANSF operations, and continue efforts to expand their influence in key areas of Afghanistan. I feel they will continue attempting to do so regardless of our withdrawal timeframe or policy.

15. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, based on progress in Marja and concerns with Kandahar, is a July 2011 drawdown still realistic?

Secretary FLOURNOY. A July 2011 conditions-based drawdown is still realistic. I want to ensure that the meaning of July 2011 is well understood. As President

Obama has previously indicated, July 2011 will mark the beginning of a transition of our forces out of Afghanistan and a period in which the Afghan Government will take on more responsibility. He did not say that after July 2011 there would be no forces from the United States or allied countries in Afghanistan. He did not say that we will switch off the lights and close the door behind us. The pace at which the transition occurs will depend on conditions on the ground.

General PETRAEUS. Yes, the July 2011 drawdown is realistic. However, it is important that July 2011 be seen for what it is; the date when a process begins. It is a process in which the reduction of U.S. forces must be based on the conditions at the time, not a date when the U.S. heads for the exits.

CONTRACTORS IN AFGHANISTAN

16. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, what steps are being taken to reduce our overreliance on contractors in the Afghanistan theater?

Secretary FLOURNOY. We could not support the operations in Afghanistan without the use of contractors. We do not have the military force structure to meet the requirements of base operating support and other services. Contractors are a vital operational enabler, which allow our military forces to focus on other functions. The use of contractors provides us an instant, scalable capacity that can expand and contract with greater agility. Although the costs for contracted services to DOD are substantial, developing and maintaining a military structure to perform these same functions would be much more costly.

We are conscious of the number of contractors in Afghanistan and continue to take measures to minimize the number necessary to accomplish the mission. One such measure is increasing the use of firm fixed-price contracts, giving contractors the incentive to accomplish a task with the least amount of personnel. Also, we are transitioning from a quarterly contractor census to a monthly census, utilizing data from the Synchronized Predeployment Operational Tracker (SPOT). This will provide us greater visibility into contractors and their activities. Lastly, we conduct routine Joint Logistics Procurement Support Boards (JLPSB) to synchronize contracting requirements to maximize efficiency and ensure that existing contracts are being executed most effectively.

Contracted support plays an important part in our strategy. Employing local nationals promotes economic vitality and supports the strategy of "Winning the Afghan People." Currently, 70 percent of the funds executed within Afghanistan go to companies that consist of local nationals.

General PETRAEUS. We could not support the operations in Afghanistan without the use of contractors. We do not have the military force structure to meet the requirements of base operating support and other services. Contractors, especially private security contractors (PSC), are a vital operational enabler, which allow our military forces to focus on other functions. The use of contractors provides us an instant, scalable capacity which can expand and contract with greater agility. Although DOD is paying a substantial price for contracted services, developing and maintaining a military structure to perform these same functions would be expensive as well.

Contracted support plays an important part in our strategy. Employing local Afghan nationals promotes economic vitality and supports "Winning the Afghan People." Currently, 70 percent of the funds executed within Afghanistan go to companies that consist of local nationals.

We are conscious of the number of contractors in Afghanistan and continue to take measures to minimize the number necessary to accomplish the mission. One such measure is increasing the use of firm fixed-price contracts, giving contractors the incentive to accomplish the task with the least amount of personnel. We are also transitioning from a quarterly contractor census to a monthly census utilizing data from the SPOT which will provide greater visibility of contractors. Lastly, we conduct routine JLPSBs to synchronize contracting requirements to ensure that existing contracts are leveraged and produce efficiencies whenever possible.

17. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, how is contractor oversight being improved?

Secretary FLOURNOY. DOD is working diligently to improve contractor oversight. The emphasis has been on strengthening the skills of military and DOD civilian personnel who observe operations and review contractors' performance. The Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) is one of many partner organizations working to provide and improve contractor oversight in Afghanistan. DCMA provides oversight, as delegated by the Rock Island Contracting Center, of the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program IV, Air Force Civil Augmentation Program, and Theater

Wide Contract Administration. DCMA also provides contractor administration for various other types of contracts, as delegated through the Theater Business Clearance process.

DCMA has resident personnel (military and civilian) in three Afghanistan locations for better access to contract activities and alignment with customers. Additional DCMA personnel are assigned as the oversight workload grows in Afghanistan.

Improvement has been made to the requirements determination process and use of Contracting Officer Representatives (CORs) and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) within the theater through the use of risk analysis and mitigation. The CORs are critical to adequate surveillance of contract execution. Their work enables DCMA to perform more in-depth contract administration and analyze issues from information obtained by the CORs performing quality assurance oversight functions. Deploying units are identifying and training CORs prior to deployment. DCMA provides orientation and training on how to perform the oversight functions.

Contract oversight improvement actions include:

- Increased emphasis on the use of CORs and SMEs.
- Unit assignment and training CORs prior to deployment.
- Extensive use of risk analysis to ensure best use of available DCMA and COR resources.
- Management Internal Control Reviews are conducted at DCMA Contract Management Office locations to highlight and reinforce best practices, while also identifying areas where oversight efforts can be strengthened.

General PETRAEUS. We have implemented several changes over the last few years to improve contractor oversight in the CENTCOM Area of Operations (AOR). To expand centralized management and oversight of contracting, the most prominent change is the transition of the Joint Contracting Command-Iraq/Afghanistan to a Joint Theater Support Contracting Command (JTSCC). The JTSCC is a subordinate functional command aligned under the command/control of CENTCOM to facilitate a balanced focus across the AOR. Initially, we have expanded the JTSCC's responsibility to Kuwait and Pakistan. In the future, we may expand it further to include other key areas such as the central and south asian states. The JTSCC is responsible for providing oversight on contracts written in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Kuwait and is also responsible for coordinating with other DOD organizations that write contracts executed in the CENTCOM AOR.

Task Force 2010 was recently established under two-star leadership to track contract funding and identify any malign actors and power brokers in Afghanistan. This is critical to ensure the billions of dollars spent to support the counter-insurgency campaign do not have unintended consequences. Task Force 2010 will increase the transparency of money flow, ensuring it gets in the right hands and supports our strategy in Afghanistan.

Task Force Spotlight was implemented under one-star leadership to enforce PSCs' adherence to established guidance. PSCs must report detailed census data on all employees in the synchronized pre-deployment and operational tracker system and the biometric registration system, comply with requirements for individual arming, and record serious incidents. Accurate and detailed information of this nature is paramount for effective oversight.

Contractor Operations Cells and the Armed Contractor Oversight Division were established to provide visibility of armed contractors' movements throughout the battle space in order to synchronize efforts and avoid fratricide.

CORs numbers have increased in Afghanistan to over 90 percent fill rate. CORs provide the direct interface with contractors and oversee the services they are providing.

18. Senator BURRIS. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, could Reserve and Guard personnel better perform the services assigned to contractors, specifically with regard to PSCs?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Reservists and National Guard personnel are already contributing essential skill sets to the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Although our Guard and Reserve Forces are exceptionally well-trained and capable, a contract work force allows us to increase and decrease capacity in non-warfighting areas very quickly. It takes years to build military personnel capacity with the requisite experience level. Contractors bring to the table the required experience at the required time without the commitment to growing the end strength of the force.

General PETRAEUS. While our military forces are exceptionally well-trained and capable, a contract work force allows us to increase and decrease capacity very quickly. It takes years to build military personnel capacity with the requisite experi-

ence level. Contractors bring to the table the required experience at the required time without the commitment to growing end strength.

AFGHANISTAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES

19. Senator BURRIS. General Petraeus, are you satisfied with the progress of the ANSF?

General PETRAEUS. I am satisfied we are taking action to solve the problem, but I recognize there is much work to be done until there are sufficient ANSF and that we have many challenges to overcome.

Six months ago we were faced with the following challenges: (1) recruiting was insufficient to cover attrition and we had at least one month of negative growth in the ANSF; (2) the number of NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) institutional trainers could not handle the number of recruits required to meet growth objectives; (3) NTM-A manning was about 25 percent of requirements; (4) Afghan National Police (ANP) training focused on reform of the existing police, not initial training of new police; (5) fewer than 13,000 soldiers and police were enrolled in voluntary literacy training; and (6) NTM-A instructor ratios averaged 1:79 with high of 1:466.

Today, there are areas of improvement. NTM-A institutional trainers and Afghan trainers have doubled from 6 months ago. NTM-A manning has increased to 58 percent from 25 percent. Our instructor ratio has increased to 1:29 from 1:79. Although the number of NTM-A institutional instructors have increased, we still require more NTM-A trainers to assist in the generation of ANSF that we hope to see grow to 305,000 by November 2011.

20. Senator BURRIS. General Petraeus, what are your expectations of where the ANSF will be over the next year?

General PETRAEUS. By this time next year, I expect the growth of the ANSF to remain steady, reaching 305,000 (171,000 Afghan National Army (ANA) and 134,000 ANP). I also expect that, with the deployment of our additional maneuver forces as part of the President's force expansion, more of our forces will partner with the ANSF to conduct combined operations. Increasingly, the ANSF will take the lead in combined operations. ANSF lead will be driven by capabilities development, not by time.

MINERAL RESOURCES IN AFGHANISTAN

21. Senator BURRIS. General Petraeus, with the recent announcement of Afghanistan's potential mineral wealth, what are your concerns about the impact this could have on violence and security?

General PETRAEUS. The announcement of the potential mineral wealth in Afghanistan is sure to generate a sense of hope and prosperity for the Afghan people. It is also sure to catch the attention of nefarious groups, including insurgents, who already engage in gem smuggling and extort "taxes" from legal mining companies in return for security. As legitimate mining increases, so does the potential for increased criminal and/or insurgent related activity.

To realize the full revenue potential of the country's resources, the Afghan Government needs to install additional regulatory and enforcement measures. While this will further strain already overtaxed governance elements and security forces, the Afghan Government should encourage continued exploration and discovery of these resources. It can only do this through a deliberate, controlled process under the umbrella of an effective government and stable security environment.

22. Senator BURRIS. General Petraeus, do you foresee a role that American troops would play with regard to the mineral issue?

General PETRAEUS. I responded to some questions in an interview on Saturday that were quoted in the New York Times on Sunday, 13 June, in a story by James Risen on this subject. I think he covered the issue and challenges very well. While such wealth is potentially game changing, it is not an easy feat to explore and mine for these things, particularly in Afghanistan. One must also be mindful of the paradox what natural resource wealth can pose to poor countries with weak governments. And, those interested in extracting the mineral wealth are not always unanimous in their methods.

Additionally, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Business Transformation, Paul Brinkley, has taken an interest in this matter, and in generating economic life in Afghanistan. He did some great work in Iraq with his Task Force for Business

and Stability Operations. This task force will work along with the USAID, DOS, and the U.S. Geological Service to build capacity within the Ministry of Minerals and Mines to enable the Afghan Government to better manage their resource wealth. I refer you to those organizations for more about this effort. Nevertheless, as we did in Iraq, we will support his team's efforts as directed by the Secretary of Defense in developing business and economic interests in Afghanistan.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROGER F. WICKER

AFGHANISTAN INTERPRETERS

23. Senator WICKER. General Petraeus, we are often at the mercy of interpreters to provide an accurate description of the conversations between U.S. forces and local Afghans. However, I am concerned we are distorting the economy in Afghanistan by paying interpreters so much money. It is my understanding a low level Category 1 interpreter can earn between \$50,000 and \$60,000. Those trusted with classified information can earn over \$200,000. At the same time, I have heard pay to Afghan officials is just over \$500 per month. These individuals working as translators are likely very intelligent and capable Afghans who probably possess other skill sets important to the rebuilding of Afghanistan. Please describe in detail the pay and category level for local Afghan interpreters.

General PETRAEUS. CENTCOM interpreter contracts in Afghanistan are issued by the Senior Contracting Official-Afghanistan and awarded through the Regional Contracting Center (RCC) Kabul, RCC Kandahar, and RCC Bagram. They employ only local national Afghan interpreters and the average pay is approximately \$600 per month. This information is CENTCOM specific and does not apply to other agencies or commands that issue interpreter contracts in Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN CONTRACTOR PAY RATES

24. Senator WICKER. General Petraeus, if there are disparities in the pay between Afghan officials and the Afghans we are contracting, what are we doing to alleviate this disparity and to encourage the most capable Afghans to work toward the betterment of their country? If you have started programs in this area, what are the results thus far?

General PETRAEUS. I am aware that some disparities in pay exist, particularly with PSCs, which may be affecting recruitment and retention within the ANSF and the ANP. ISAF and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) are working together to develop courses of action to reduce the reliance on PSCs. I understand and support the GIROA's intent to eventually end the use of PSCs and transfer that function to the ANP; however the ANP and ANSF are not yet able to assume this role. ISAF and GIROA are developing a phased program to work toward that goal, and will continue efforts that support the build-up of the ANP and ANSF.

Task Force Spotlight and Task Force 2010 will recommend ways to mitigate consequences of pay disparity. These task forces facilitate the capability for greater oversight, regulation, operational transparency, and visibility of the flow of contracting funds and goods below the prime contractor level. Their efforts will eventually minimize malign actor influence, improve PSC accountability, and ensure an improved distribution of funds to the Afghan people.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR GEORGE S. LEMIEUX

IRAN

25. Senator LEMIEUX. General Petraeus, I am concerned that as Iran continues to export Islamic extremism and terror throughout the world they will develop relations that undermine our operations in Afghanistan. What is your current assessment of Iranian influence or attempted influence in Afghanistan?

General PETRAEUS. Iran hopes to increase its influence in the Afghan Government (and with the Afghan populace) and decrease U.S. presence and influence. Iran supports multiple Afghan political entities and government officials to create and pass legislation that will limit or remove U.S./coalition forces presence. Iran continues an effective "hearts and minds" campaign through economic and educational endeavors that highlight Iran's aid and positively influence the local populace. Iran also aims to maximize intra-ISAF fissures via measured support to the Taliban to hasten foreign combat forces withdrawal. Iran's focus is not to destabilize the Karzai Govern-

ment and create a Taliban-led Afghanistan, but rather use the Taliban as an integral part of a comprehensive plan to expedite the removal of U.S./Coalition Forces from Afghanistan.

26. Senator LEMIEUX. General Petraeus, Iran's nuclear program and developing ties with other rogue nations like Venezuela is an extremely destabilizing force. This week the Saudi Government granted permission for the Israelis to use their airspace in the event they would choose to conduct an air strike against Iranian nuclear facilities. Could you please comment on the internal situation of the regime and the regional implications if Israel were forced to respond militarily to Iranian nuclear program?

General PETRAEUS. [Deleted.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DAVID VITTER

COOPERATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

27. Senator VITTER. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, in Iraq and now in Afghanistan we've seen unprecedented integration of DOD, DOS, and USAID action. This integration is unquestionably crucial to success in each theater. Even more crucial is the DOS and USAID ability to assume agency primacy in these theaters as military and security roles subside. What do you need to further streamline this integration and ensure a successful transition between DOD and DOS and how can Congress assist in this effort?

Secretary FLOURNOY. Ensuring that the necessary security exists for development and civilian-led efforts to succeed is a key focus of our efforts. DOD has an excellent working relationship with DOS.

There is a need for increased spending on the civilian instruments of national security: diplomacy, strategic communications, foreign assistance, civic action, and economic reconstruction and development. Civilian efforts are necessary to facilitate successful military operations to relieve stress on the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces and to achieve our strategic objectives in places like Afghanistan. The availability of more robust civilian capabilities could also make it less likely that military forces would have to be used in the first place, as local problems might be dealt with before crises arise.

Over the past several years, Congress has provided additional resources for DOS and DOD, but the resources for civilian support have proven inadequate. It is critically important that the civilian agencies receive additional resources needed for effective whole-of-government efforts to address the problems we face.

Regarding Iraq, U.S. departments and agencies are working together at the senior and working levels—in Iraq and Washington, DC—to ensure that DOS is appropriately resourced when U.S. forces complete their drawdown from Iraq. As one would expect with a transition of this scope and complexity, there are significant challenges. Congress could assist in this effort by continuing to provide the resources and authorities necessary to ensure a successful transition in Iraq from military to civilian lead.

General PETRAEUS. Congress can assist in this effort to ensure a successful transition between DOD and DOS by providing a consistent level of and flexible access to resources to support operations in the joint operational areas. This is especially critical during the period of primacy shift from DOD to DOS and USAID in Iraq.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS IN IRAQ

28. Senator VITTER. Secretary Flournoy and General Petraeus, a recent Associated Press news article has reported that "The State Department is quietly forming a small army to protect diplomatic personnel in Iraq after U.S. military forces leave the country at the end of 2011." It goes on to say that "Patrick Kennedy, DOD's Under Secretary for Management, has asked that 50 bomb-resistant vehicles, 24 Black Hawk helicopters, heavy cargo trucks, fuel trailers, and high-tech surveillance systems be transferred from military stocks to the State Department."

Under the assumption that this same capability gap will exist when a military drawdown in Afghanistan does occur, what are your comments/views on the transfer of military capability to DOS and does this development fit with the concept of a responsible drawdown?

Secretary FLOURNOY. DOD received a letter from Under Secretary of State for Management Patrick Kennedy requesting military equipment, continuation of life support services and logistics contracts, and transportation and logistics support.

DOS's request has received high-level attention in DOD, and DOD is working to provide a response to DOS. DOD believes our coordination and close working relationship with DOS in Washington, DC, and Baghdad underscore the U.S. commitment to a responsible drawdown in Iraq. Efforts continue to ensure that DOS and DOD are likewise partnered to provide the necessary resources and security for civilian-led efforts in Afghanistan.

General PETRAEUS. A list of potential recipients of military equipment was created during the initial stages of planning for the responsible drawdown in Iraq to enable a prioritized redistribution of equipment deemed to be surplus. DOS is on the list as a potential recipient, but only after other DOD requirements within the AOR are fulfilled; and that single service readiness requirements are not jeopardized. DOS has identified that hardened vehicle and helicopter assets will be required for personnel continuing the U.S. mission in Iraq post 2011. Although military equipment is not the only way to achieve this level of self-protection, it is a cost-effective solution that meets both DOS needs, as well as reducing the cost to DOD to extract its forces from Iraq. It is conceivable that the same situation will be faced in Afghanistan when combat forces are redeployed, yet appropriate self-protection measures are still required to counter threats to U.S. personnel.

[Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

