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AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN: TRANSITION AND THE WAY FORWARD

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AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN: TRANSITION AND THE WAY FORWARD

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2011

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 o'clock a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. The committee will come to order.

After recognizing myself and the ranking member, Mr. Berman, for 7 minutes each for our opening statements, I will recognize the chairman and the ranking member of the Middle East and South Asia Subcommittee for 3 minutes each for their statements.

We will then hear from our witness, the distinguished Secretary of State—welcome home and happy belated birthday—who will summarize her prepared statement before we move to the questions and answers with members under the 5-minute rule.

Without objection, the witness' prepared statement will be made a part of the record. Members may have 5 days to insert statements and questions for the record subject to the length limitation in the rules. And we are getting started right away because we will have votes and we like to be interrupted because of the democratic process.

Madam Secretary, welcome to our committee. We are pleased to have you here to assess U.S. policy and progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In 2009, President Obama initiated a surge in Afghanistan, resulting in approximately 90,000 U.S. troops there now. The President underscored the fundamental connection between our war effort in Afghanistan and the extremist safe havens in Pakistan and defined the goals as disrupting, dismantling, and defeating al-Qaeda and its extremist allies.

In the 2010 review, the President noted that, ultimately, it is the Afghans who must secure their country and it is Afghans who must build their nation. It will take time to ultimately defeat al-Qaeda, and it remains a ruthless and resilient enemy bent on attacking our country. But make no mistake, we are going to remain relentless in disrupting and dismantling that terrorist organization.

However, President Obama announced the withdrawal of 10,000 U.S. troops from Afghanistan by this year's end, with another 23,000 to be withdrawn by the rather curious date of September, 2012. Therefore, Madam Secretary, we must ask, where are we in achieving the strategic objectives outlined by the President?

Progress in the fight is undeniable, but our gains remain fragile. On the one hand, the U.S. is negotiating with the Haqqani network; and yet, on the other, we are attempting to destroy the Haqqani network.

There have been some unwelcome developments since the President's announcement 4 months ago, such as the multiple high-profile assassination of major leaders in Afghanistan. Turnover to the Afghan national security forces remains a significant challenge in some of the key contested areas. And on the counternarcotics front the United Nation's Office on Drugs and Crime reported a 7 percent increase in opium poppy crop cultivation, citing the link between insecurity and opium cultivation.

This leads us to the broader question: What are the priorities for advancing our national security interests in Afghanistan and Pakistan?

I remain troubled by Iran's threatening and unhelpful role in Afghanistan. So I ask, what additional pressure are we bringing to bear to offset the Iranian influence in Afghanistan?

The most important long-term aspect of the American relationship with Afghanistan today is the strategic partnership declaration under negotiation with Kabul. During the negotiations over the strategic framework agreement and the status of forces agreement with Iraq, the previous administration extensively engaged and consulted the Congress in a bipartisan manner. We are disappointed that a similar level of outreach, engagement, consultation, transparency on this critical issue has been decidedly absent on the current Afghanistan negotiations.

So I am capitalizing on your appearance today, Madam Secretary, to secure information on the agreement being negotiated. What are our priority components of this? What are the primary components of this negotiation? Do you anticipate a total withdrawal like we are about to do in Iraq, or will we remain until we train and perhaps have a modest counterterrorism presence?

How will it address critical weaknesses within the political system such as too much power concentrated in the presidency and overdependence on foreign aid. What reforms are we requesting to fix these flaws? Are we insisting on the right to pursue insurgents who threaten us and our interests? Are we preserving our tactical and operational flexibility?

The Afghan Government must be pushed to make the necessary steps to become a reliable partner for the U.S. over the long term, and I know that you know that as well. Too much American blood and treasure have been invested in Afghanistan for us to walk away or to have a government that threatens American interests.

And turning to Pakistan, our relations continue to suffer from a cascading series of crises.

First, there was the bitter Raymond Davis affair involving the U.S. Embassy worker who shot and killed two Pakistani men he believed was robbing him. Davis was correctly released to U.S. custody. The ultimate disgrace was the discovery of Osama bin Laden inside Pakistan and living adjacent to a Pakistani military facility. And now we see the brazen attacks by Islamabad's armed proxies against the U.S. Embassy and other U.S. targets in Afghanistan.

Our two countries are at a crossroads. We cannot sustain a partnership with Islamabad if it pursues policies that are hostile to U.S. interests and jeopardize American lives. Legislation developed in our committee and carried by the Appropriations Committee puts tough conditions on U.S. assistance to Pakistan funded through State Department accounts. The Pakistan security establishment must work more closely with us to eliminate al-Qaeda and its affiliates, while cooperating more fully with our goals to help stabilize Afghanistan.

Can the relationship be salvaged? Can our strategic objectives in Afghanistan and Pakistan be brought into better alignment? It is hard to be optimistic. All of the options on the table appear deeply unappetizing. All run the risk of being ineffectual, counterproductive, or both.

Madam Secretary, we look to you to help clarify for us the strategic choices that we, Pakistan, and Afghanistan face at this profoundly challenging time for the future of peace and stability in South Asia. We are especially interested in hearing about your very recent trip to the region.

I thank you for appearing before our committee today. I look forward to working with you to advance our critical national security interests in this increasingly pivotal region.

I yield back the balance of my time; and I am pleased to yield to my friend, Mr. Berman, the ranking member, for his opening statement.

Mr. BERMAN. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

Before I start on my opening statement, I would like to just let the committee know that our former colleague, Howard Wolpe, passed away on Tuesday. He served seven terms in Congress. Most of that time, he chaired the Africa Subcommittee of this committee, and we will remember his dedication to Africa. He authored the sanctions legislation against South Africa's apartheid government, led the effort to override President Reagan's veto of that legislation.

He retired from Congress in 1992, but, as we all know, he stayed deeply engaged in African affairs, serving as President Clinton's Special Envoy to Africa's Great Lakes Region and President Obama's special advisor for that region as well. We have not only lost a man who made a difference in public policy but a friend with a profound mind and an engaging and charming wit. So thank you, Madam Chairman.

Thank you, also, Madam Chairman, for calling this important hearing on the administration's strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

I would like to begin by commending Secretary Clinton for the leadership that she and the President exhibited on Libya. As a result of your efforts, we were able to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe of unimaginable proportions and ultimately create the conditions for the Libyan people to oust one of the world's most brutal dictators.

Secretary Clinton, you have just returned from a trip to Afghanistan and Pakistan, so this is a particularly good time to explore what remains one of the most important and complex foreign policy challenges of our time.

In 2009, when the Obama administration took office, I was very encouraged by the President's commitment to providing sufficient resources to our military forces, diplomats, and aid workers in Afghanistan and to renewing our partnership with the civilian leadership of Pakistan. However, as I have communicated to you in recent months, I am deeply concerned about our rapidly deteriorating relationship with Islamabad and how that impacts our efforts in Afghanistan.

Soon after the bin Laden raid, news reports indicated that Pakistani intelligence tipped off militants operating IED factories on Pakistani soil, factories that are making bombs to kill U.S. troops. More recently, Admiral Mullen asserted that the Haqqani network, a group believed to be responsible for the September 10 truck bomb that wounded 77 American soldiers and the September 13 attack against the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, is a "veritable arm of Pakistan's ISI." These events raise very serious questions about Pakistan's commitment to work with us to defeat the terrorists that threaten Pakistan and the U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan. This behavior must stop.

In 1957, President Eisenhower remarked that the United States was "doing practically nothing for Pakistan except in the form of military aid." He voiced concern that the "American commitment to Pakistan's military was perhaps the worst kind of plan and decision we could have made. It was a terrible error, but we now seem hopelessly involved in it."

Sadly, these words remain true today.

Given the current climate, I support the administration's decision to pause security assistance to Islamabad until Pakistan shows real progress in combating terrorist groups. I believe we should reevaluate all military aid to Islamabad to ensure that it is meeting its intended purpose. But, at the same time, I think it would be a terrible mistake to slash our economic assistance to Pakistan. It is in our long-term interest to support the continued development of Pakistan's civil society and nascent democratic institutions. These are the critical building blocks of a peaceful and prosperous Pakistan and, ultimately, a stable Afghanistan and South Asia.

We must continue to find ways to partner with the people of Pakistan, who have become a casualty of misguided policies pursued by Pakistan's military and by civilian leaders seemingly unwilling to lead. Pakistanis are reminded of these failings every day by constant energy shortages, a never-ending financial crisis, political turmoil, and rising extremism.

The United States can't solve all of Pakistan's many problems, but we can make a difference. The recently completed renovation of the Tarbela Dam funded by the United States means that 1 million more Pakistanis will have access to electricity.

We should also take steps to strengthen Pakistan's private sector by creating an American-Pakistan enterprise fund which won't cost the American taxpayers a single dime. Madam Secretary, I know you have expressed support for this concept.

In these difficult economic times, it is critical that any assistance that we provide be sustainable and completely transparent both to the Pakistanis and to the American people who pay for it. This is true not just in Pakistan but with all of our international pro-

grams. To those who suggest that foreign assistance is a luxury we can no longer afford, I say America cannot afford a course of isolation and retreat. Rather than making indiscriminate cuts, we need to modernize and reform our assistance to make it more efficient, more effective, and better at serving our national interests.

Let me just touch briefly on transition and reconciliation in Afghanistan.

I support the President's decision to withdraw all combat troops by 2014, but we must ensure that the gains made after 10 years of fighting will not be lost. The strategic partnership declaration, which I look forward to learning more about, will serve as an important symbol of our long-term commitment to the Government and people of Afghanistan, and it is critical to regional security and to a successful transition.

While I appreciate the progress being made to cement our relationship with Kabul, I continue to have reservations about efforts to reconcile with the Taliban and al-Qaeda-affiliated groups such as the Haqqani network. As much as we all want the war to end and to bring our troops home, I am concerned that allowing these extremist groups to assume leadership positions in the government would threaten the gains we have made on counterterrorism, women's rights, and counternarcotics. Even if these groups were sincere in their desire to reconcile—and I am skeptical that they are—Pakistan remains the spoiler.

Islamabad may share our general goal of a stable and secure Afghanistan, but I think we have very different definitions of stability. Ultimately, we will not be successful in Afghanistan, militarily or politically, unless Pakistan plays a constructive role in allowing Afghans to determine the future of Afghanistan for themselves. Madam Secretary, how will we ever succeed in Afghanistan as long as Pakistan provides sanctuary for Afghan insurgents?

Once again, I thank you for being here today and I look forward to your testimony. And I do, just in closing, have to say that, because a bill of mine is in a Transportation and Infrastructure Aviation Subcommittee roundtable today, there will be times when I may have to leave, but I will certainly come back and read your testimony as well.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank the gentleman for his opening statement.

Mr. Chabot is recognized for 3 minutes. He is the chair of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Madam Chair, for calling this important hearing; and we welcome you here, Ms. Secretary of State.

Although it is not the expressed topic of our hearing, I would like to say a word on Iraq.

I am very concerned by the President's recent announcement of a complete withdrawal by the end of the year. Fulfilling a campaign promise at the expense of American national security interests is, at best, strategic neglect and, at worst, downright irresponsible. It seems painfully clear to me and to many analysts that the Iraqi Army is not yet prepared to defend Iraq from the threat posed by its nefarious neighbor to the east.

The administration's current policy appears to focus on normalizing our relationship with Iraq, but the situation in Iraq is not

normal. Indeed, I fear that our objective is no longer to ensure Iraq is stable but merely to withdraw our forces by the end of this year in order to meet a political time line.

Saying that Iraq is secure, stable, and self-reliant, as Deputy National Security Advisor Denis McDonough recently did, does not make it so. And to borrow a quote from you, Madam Secretary, when you were serving in the other body, it requires "the willing suspension of disbelief" to accept that withdrawing our forces from Iraq at a time when Iranian agents seek to harm at every turn our country and its allies advances our strategic interest.

Although I understand that Iraq is a sovereign country, I believe that there is much more that this administration could have done to secure a more realistic troop presence beyond the end of this year.

Accordingly, I would like to echo Senator Lieberman's recent call to reopen negotiations with the Iraqis. It would be a failure of colossal proportions to withdraw our forces before Iraq is ready to stand on its own.

This decision also offers a disturbing insight into the administration's definition of "conditions-based withdrawal" which is, of course, its policy in Afghanistan. When asked recently whether not leaving a residual force in Iraq endangers hard-fought gains, he responded, and I quote, "I think that they should have raised those issues when President Bush agreed to the agreement to withdraw troops by the end of this year."

Is this what we should expect of an Obama administration in 2014 if conditions in Afghanistan do not justify withdrawal?

I hope you will address exactly what conditions we would like to see before we withdraw and what contingency planning the administration is conducting should indeed we get to 2014 and discover the conditions in Afghanistan have not progressed as quickly as we had hoped that we would.

As one reporter recently observed, it used to be that American withdrawal was conditioned on success. Now it seems withdrawal has become the definition of success. If that is the case, success in Afghanistan will feel a lot like failure.

I yield back.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chabot.

We will now welcome our witness. It is an honor to welcome the Secretary to the committee today.

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton has served as the 67th Secretary of State for the United States since January 21, 2009, the latest chapter in her four-decade career in public service. She has served previously, as all of us know, as a United States Senator from the State of New York, as First Lady of the United States and of the State of Arkansas, and as an attorney and law professor.

Madam Secretary, without objection, your full statement will be made a part of the record. If you could be so kind as to summarize your written remarks, we can then move directly to the question-and-answer discussion under the 5-minute rule in hopes that we can get as many members as possible before you have to depart.

Madam Secretary, welcome back; and the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you very much, Madam Chairwoman; and to Ranking Member Berman and to the members of the committee, I appreciate this opportunity once again to appear before you.

I want to start by recognizing the concerns that many of you have about Afghanistan and Pakistan policy. You and the American people are right to ask questions. But I think it is also important, as the chairwoman alluded to in her opening statement, to recognize the significant results that our policy has already produced.

Osama bin Laden and many of his top lieutenants are dead. The threat remains real and urgent, especially from al-Qaeda's affiliates, but the group's senior leadership has been devastated and its ability to conduct operations greatly diminished. Many of our successes against al-Qaeda would not have been possible without our presence in Afghanistan and close cooperation with Pakistan.

Now, in Afghanistan, we still face a difficult fight, but coalition and Afghan forces have reversed the Taliban momentum in key areas. Afghan security forces have a long way to go, but they are taking more responsibility every day. And while the country still faces enormous challenges from poverty and corruption, our development efforts have bolstered the economy and improved lives.

You know the statistics. Ten years ago, fewer than 1 million students enrolled in Afghan schools, all of them boys. Now more than 7 million, nearly 40 percent of them girls. Afghans are better positioned to chart their own future.

I offer these very brief examples as a reminder that, as President Obama has said, we are meeting our commitments and we are making progress toward our goals and we cannot let up. We should build on our momentum, not undercut our progress.

Now, I will be the first to admit that working with our Afghan and Pakistani partners is not always easy, but these relationships are advancing America's national security interests and walking away from them would undermine those interests.

With that as context, let me report I have just completed a productive visit to both countries. In Kabul and Islamabad, I emphasized our three-track strategy of fight, talk, and build, pursuing all three tracks at once as they are mutually reinforcing, and the chance of success for all three are greatly increased by strong cooperation from the Afghan and Pakistani Governments. Let me briefly discuss each track.

First, the fight. Coalition and Afghan forces have increased pressure on the Taliban, the Haqqani network, and other insurgents, including with a new operation in eastern Afghanistan launched within recent days. But our commanders on the ground are increasingly concerned, as they have been for some time, that we have to go after the safe havens across the border in Pakistan.

Now, I will be quick to add that the Pakistanis also have reason to be concerned about attacks coming at them from across the border in Afghanistan. So, in Islamabad last week, General Dempsey, Director Patraeus, and I delivered a single, unified message. Pakistan's civilian and military leadership must join us in squeezing

the Haqqani network from both sides of the border and in closing save havens.

We underscored to our Pakistani counterparts the urgency of the task at hand, and we had detailed and frank conversations about the concrete steps both sides need to a take. I explained that trying to distinguish between so-called good terrorists and bad terrorists is ultimately self-defeating and dangerous. No one who targets innocent civilians of any nationality should be tolerated or protected.

Now, we are not suggesting that Pakistan sacrifice its own security. Quite the opposite. We respect the sacrifices that Pakistan has already made, and it is important for Americans to be reminded over the past decade more than 5,000 Pakistani soldiers have been lost and tens of thousands Pakistani citizens have been killed or injured. That is why we are pursuing a vision of shared security that benefits us all.

The second track is talking. And here, too, we are taking concrete steps with our partners. So in both Kabul and Islamabad I reaffirmed America's strong support for an inclusive Afghan-led peace process. And we have been very clear about the necessary outcomes of any negotiation. Insurgents must renounce violence, abandon al-Qaeda, and abide by the laws and constitution of Afghanistan, including its protections for women and minorities. If insurgents cannot or will not meet those red lines, they will face continued and unrelenting assault.

And I want to stress, as I did in Kabul, that the hard-won rights of women and all Afghans cannot be rolled back and the growth of civil society must not be quashed.

Now, there is no doubt that the murder of former President Rabani was a setback. But the Afghans strongly believe reconciliation is still possible, and we support that as the best hope for peace and stability in the region.

Pakistan has a critical role to play and a big stake in the outcome. So we look to Pakistan to encourage the Taliban and other insurgents to participate in an Afghan peace process in good faith both through unequivocal public statements and by closing off the safe havens.

We are working with the Afghan Government to help them secure commitments from all of their neighbors to respect Afghan sovereignty and territorial integrity and to support Afghan reconciliation. This will be a key focus when I go to Istanbul next week to meet with regional Foreign Ministers.

For our part, the United States is working with the Afghan Government to conclude a new strategic partnership.

And let me add, in response to the chairwoman's question, in 2011, we had three Washington-led rounds of discussions with the State Department leading an interagency team, including DOD, USAID, and the NSC. These discussions resulted in a text that is about 90 percent agreed to, including strong commitments on economic social development, democratic institution building, human rights, anti-corruption, and other important long-term reforms.

Among other things, we envision establishing an Afghanistan-United States bilateral commission and associated implementation mechanisms to help our focus remain on what needs to be done during the transition process.

Ambassador Crocker and General Allen are still working through some of these security cooperation issues with President Karzai. The negotiation is ongoing, but I want to assure the Congress that, although we do not expect this to take the form of a treaty or to require advice and consent of the Senate, we will consult with you on where we are in this process and I will ensure that any one who wishes to get a full briefing will get one and we will very much welcome your views.

And in response to Congressman Chabot's point, we anticipate having a transition that does include security components, not only from the United States but also from NATO, commitments that were made at the Lisbon Summit. And, again, we look forward to consulting with you on that.

And, finally, the third track is building. Building what? Building capacity and opportunity in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and across the region. Now, this is part of a clear-eyed strategy rooted in a lesson we have learned over and over again around the world. Lasting stability and security go hand in hand with greater economic opportunity. People need a realistic hope for a better life, for a job, for a chance to provide for their families. So it is critical to our broader effort that civilian assistance continue in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. And I thank Congressman Berman for raising that.

Yet I will also be very clear that we have had to move rapidly and deeply to strengthen oversight and improve effectiveness, and I will be happy to answer questions about that.

Early next week, I will be sending you a comprehensive status update on our civilian assistance, detailing our plans to shift from short-term stabilization to long-term development.

Now, as the transition proceeds and coalition combat forces leave Afghanistan, there need to be realistic hopes for development. So we are working to achieve greater agricultural productivity, greater exploitation in a way that benefits the Afghan people of natural resources, increasing exports, and strengthening the financial sector.

I really want to underscore the point that Congressman Berman made, which is really that we want to move from aid to trade. We cannot do that if we don't get reconstruction opportunity zone legislation which will lower tariffs on Pakistani and Afghan products and the enterprise fund, which will not require taxpayer dollars. This is what we did in Central and Eastern Europe, and it was a big help in convincing people that the free market was the way to go.

And, finally, we are pursuing a broader long-term vision for regional economic integration that we call the New Silk Road. It is not just an economic plan. It talks about how we can get these countries that have so many problems with each other to begin cooperating. And to that end, I am very pleased by the progress that both India and Pakistan are making on the commercial front and the progress in implementing the transit trade agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

So those are our three tracks: Fight, talk, and build; and we are on all of them simultaneously. We believe this is the best place that we can be in moving forward, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Clinton follows:]

SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
WASHINGTON, DC
OCTOBER, 27, 2011

Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member Berman, members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to update you on my recent trip to Afghanistan and Pakistan and to discuss the road ahead.

I want to start by recognizing the concerns that many of you have expressed. These are complex relationships and we face serious challenges. So you and the American people are right to ask questions.

But I also want to highlight what sometimes gets lost in the public debate: Our work in Afghanistan and Pakistan has yielded significant results.

Osama bin Laden and many of his top lieutenants are dead. The threat remains real and urgent – especially from al Qaeda's affiliates. But the group's senior leadership has been devastated and its ability to conduct operations is greatly diminished. Many of our successes against al Qaeda would not have been possible without close cooperation between the United States and Pakistan.

In Afghanistan we still face a difficult fight, but coalition and Afghan forces have reversed the Taliban's momentum in key areas. Afghan security forces have a long way to go, but they are taking more responsibility every day. And while the country still faces enormous challenges from poverty and corruption, our development efforts have bolstered the economy and improved lives.

Ten years ago, for example, fewer than a million students were enrolled in Afghan schools, all of them boys. Now there are more than 7 million, and nearly 40 percent of them are girls. Afghans today are better prepared to chart their own future and ensure that their country never again becomes a safe haven for terrorists.

I offer these examples as a reminder that, as President Obama has said, we are meeting our commitments and making progress toward our goals. And we can't let up. We should build on our momentum, not undercut our progress.

Working with our Afghan and Pakistani partners is not always easy, but these relationships <u>are</u> advancing America's national security interests. And walking away would undermine those interests.

With that as the context, let me report to you that I have just completed a productive visit to both countries. In both Kabul and Islamabad, I emphasized our three-track strategy of fight, talk, build. We are pursuing all three tracks at once, as they are mutually reinforcing. And the chances of success for all three are greatly increased by strong cooperation from the Afghan and Pakistani governments.

Let me briefly discuss each track and explain where we are and where we need to go.

First, the fight. As I noted, coalition and Afghan forces have increased pressure on the Taliban, the Haqqani Network and other insurgents, including with a new operation in eastern Afghanistan launched in recent days.

But our commanders on the ground are increasingly concerned about the ability of insurgents to conduct attacks from safe havens across the border in Pakistan.

So in Islamabad last week, General Dempsey, Director Petraeus and I delivered a single, unified message. We urged Pakistan's civilian and military leadership to join us in squeezing the Haqqani Network from both sides of the border and in closing the safe havens.

We underscored to our Pakistani counterparts the urgency of the task at hand, and we had detailed and frank conversations about the concrete steps both sides need to take to advance what we believe are shared interests.

I explained that trying to distinguish between so-called good terrorists and bad terrorists is ultimately self-defeating and dangerous. No one who targets innocent civilians of any nationality should be tolerated or protected.

We're not suggesting that Pakistan sacrifice its own security. Quite the opposite. We respect the sacrifices Pakistan has already made. Over the past decade, more than five thousand Pakistani soldiers have been lost and tens of thousands of Pakistani citizens have been killed or injured. That is why we are pursuing a vision of shared security that will benefit us all.

The second track is the talking, and here too we are working with our partners to take concrete steps.

In both Kabul and Islamabad, I reaffirmed America's strong support for an inclusive Afghan-led peace process. We have been clear about the necessary outcomes of any negotiation: Insurgents must renounce violence, abandon al Qaeda, and abide by the constitution of Afghanistan, including its protections for women and minorities. If insurgents cannot meet those red-lines, they will face continued and unrelenting assault.

And I want to stress, as I did in Kabul, that the hard-won rights of women and all Afghans must not be rolled back. And the growth of civil society must be not be quashed.

There is no doubt that the murder of former President Rabbani was a set-back, but reconciliation is still possible. Indeed, it represents the best hope for peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region.

Pakistan has a crucial role to play in this process and a big stake in its outcome. And we look to Pakistan to encourage the Taliban and other insurgents to participate in an Afghan peace process in good faith – both through unequivocal public statements and by closing off the safe havens.

We are also working with the Afghan Government to help them secure commitments from all of their neighbors to respect Afghan sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to support Afghan reconciliation. This will be a key focus when regional foreign ministers meet in Istanbul next week.

For our part, the United States is working with the Afghan government to conclude a new Strategic Partnership that will provide a framework for cooperation long after the transition is concluded in 2014. It will send a strong signal about our enduring commitment to the people of Afghanistan and the future of the region.

Finally, the third track is building – building capacity and opportunity in Afghanistan, Pakistan and across the region. This is part of a clear-eyed strategy rooted in a lesson we have learned over and over again, all over the world – lasting stability and security go hand in hand with economic opportunity. People need a realistic hope for a better life, a job and a chance to provide for their family. So it is critical to our broader effort that civilian assistance continues in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The Obama administration is working hard to strengthen oversight and improve effectiveness of all our programs. Early next week, I will be sending you a comprehensive status update on our civilian assistance to Afghanistan and Pakistan, and it will detail our plans to shift from short-term stabilization to long-term development programs.

As the transition proceeds and coalition combat forces leave Afghanistan, the Afghan economy will face new challenges and it will need new sources of growth. So we are working with our partners to support an achievable, Afghan-led economic strategy to improve agricultural productivity, develop Afghanistan's natural resources in a way that benefits the Afghan people, increase exports and strengthen the financial sector, among other steps.

In both Afghanistan and Pakistan, we share the goal of moving from aid to trade. So we want to work with you and your colleagues to move forward on Reconstruction Opportunity Zones, which would lower tariff rates on Pakistani and Afghan products, and on an Enterprise Fund for Pakistan.

We are also pursuing our economic work with an eye towards supporting a broader, long-term vision for regional economic integration that we call the New Silk Road. This is a plan for increasing cross-border trade and investment that will create jobs and opportunities across the region.

Since announcing the New Silk Road in India this summer, I have led an aggressive diplomatic campaign to get buy-in from all the countries in the region. We had a productive conference on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York last month. On this recent trip, leaders from government and civil society offered their ideas on how to move forward. The effort will continue at the conference in Istanbul next week and in Bonn on December 5.

Again, this is not just an economic plan – it is directly tied to our strategic goals of increasing stability and supporting reconciliation.

So those are our three tracks: fight, talk, build.

I will not sit here and tell you that we have all the answers. Or that there will not be hard days ahead. There will be. But we believe that this strategy offers the best way forward.

As we move ahead, your advice and counsel will be crucial. The administration looks to this Committee and to the Congress as a whole to be a full and active partner.

This strategy requires resources. I can't sugar coat that fact. But the future of this region is vital to the national security of the United States. And we will continue to have significant interests there long after our combat troops come home.

America paid a heavy price for disengaging after the Soviets left in 1989. We cannot afford to make that mistake again. We have to be smart and strategic. And we have to work together to protect our interests.

So thank you again for this opportunity. I look forward to answering your questions.

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Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Madam Secretary. I will yield myself the time for the question.

First to say that, Madam Secretary, I am gravely concerned about the safety of the residents of Camp Ashraf in Iraq. Many members, including the ranking member and I, have sought the administration's commitment to securing their protection, given the Iraqi Government's repeated failure to comply with its international human rights obligations to the Camp Ashraf residents. And in light of President Obama's announcements of the final withdrawal of American troops from Iraq we need to be confident that our administration is engaged with the Government of Iraq, the U.N. High Commission of Refugees, and others to ensure the welfare of Camp Ashraf residents and to resolve their long-term security goals.

And my question, Madam Secretary, deals with my native homeland of Cuba, although in recent weeks I feel the need to carry my papers with me to find out when it is that I actually got to the United States.

But, Madam Secretary, your administration has remained in opposition to many of the world's tyrants, to your credit, yet the U.S. continues to engage the Cuban regime. In March, you stated that Qadhafi should leave power. In June, you said that Salay should move out of the way. In July, you stated that Assad is not indispensable and we have absolutely nothing invested in him remaining in power.

Yet, in stark contrast, this administration continues to engage the Cuban regime and provide the Castro brothers economic lifelines in the form of allowing increased travel opportunities, supporting their offshore oil drilling aspirations.

Two weeks ago, in front of our committee, Under Secretary Wendy Sherman confirmed that the Department had recently met with Cuban regime officials to discuss the sad case of Alan Gross. Media reports have stated that State Department officials were willing to offer concessions such as allowing convicted Cuban spies to return to Cuba or taking Cuba off the state sponsor of terrorism list in order to obtain the release of Mr. Gross. The United States should not be negotiating with a state sponsor of terrorism. So I ask you, Madam Secretary, why is there a double standard with the Castro regime?

Thank you.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you so much for those two questions. Let me start on Cuba, and then I will go back to Camp Ashraf and our concerns about it.

You know, our position has been the same for more than 50 years. We think Fidel Castro should go. I mean, that is the unfortunate commitment that we have put forth over many years. Unfortunately, he doesn't seem to be going anywhere.

We do worry greatly about the activities of the Cuban Government, and we have strongly supported the desire of the Cuban people to freely determine their own future, and it is our view that we should help those who are trying to work toward positive change. So we do support a wide variety of activities on the island. We interact with a broad cross-section of individuals and groups in

Cuban society; and we provide humanitarian assistance, including food, over-the-counter medicines, and so much more.

We think that that is a necessary kind of double approach. We want democracy for Cuba. We have always supported democracy for Cuba. We have tried to encourage changes and reform, but, at the same time, we are going to keep working with individuals.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Have we met with U.S. officials about Alan Gross or the convicted spy?

Secretary CLINTON. U.S. officials regularly meet with their Cuban counterparts, as I know you're aware, because we have a lot of areas of mutual concern. We have drug trafficking, we have immigration, we have all kinds of issues. And our main objective for the last 2 years has been to ensure Alan Gross' unconditional release. So at no point has the U.S. Government been willing to give unilateral concessions to the Castro regime or to ease sanctions as a means to secure Mr. Gross' release.

But I will underscore we think it is a gross violation of his human rights and a humanitarian abuse that he has not been returned to his family, and we would like to see that happen as soon as possible.

With respect to Camp Ashraf, which we are deeply concerned about, we know that there is an ongoing and very legitimate expression of concern. We have elicited written assurances from the Government of Iraq that it will treat Ashraf residents humanely, that it will not transfer residents to a country that they may have reason to fear, and we are pushing very hard to get the United Nations High Commission on Refugees to work with the residents of Camp Ashraf to get them into a safe place.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. We appreciate that.

Mr. Payne is recognized, ranking member on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Let me commend you, Madam Secretary, for the outstanding job that you are doing. The recent five-country trip—they only talk about two, but I know you touched down in three others—is amazing. Your trip to Libya where the President had really asked the Europeans and NATO to lead and that we would come in and help out I think was a very successful strategy. I certainly commend the administration for living up to the agreement that President Bush made when he said that our troops should be out of Iraq at the end of this year, and I congratulate our Government for living up to that promise to have our troops back in America by the holidays. The Iraqi people want them out, the American people want them out, and I think they should be out.

I certainly support what the administration has done in south Sudan. I happened to be in Juba at the celebration of the new country. But I would hope that we will give them all the support with President Salva Kiir and the south Sudanese people, and that we continue to watch Darfur and continue to support the TFG government in Somalia. We need to make that work and also to urge the Kenyans to assist, as they are doing now, to try to eradicate terrorists who are coming into Kenya and destabilizing the area.

I also commend the President for the 100 troops that are going to the Central African Republic and to Uganda to train the Ugan-

dans in trying to finally eliminate Joseph Kony who this House passed bipartisan legislation saying that he should go out. Many of my colleagues on the other side have been just as passionate about the fact that Joseph Kony needs to be eliminated, needs to be captured or taken out. For 25 years he has wreaked havoc on people. The horrendous acts that he has done are just unconscionable. Time is past that he should be taken off the face of this Earth.

Let me just quickly get to what you are here about, Afghanistan and Pakistan. I almost forgot that.

The U.S. strategy in Afghanistan has been based on the belief that developing Afghanistan's economy and institutions will win over the population to support the Afghan Government even after international forces draw down. Some analysts are concerned that the Afghan economy may enter a steep depression as international military involvement in Afghanistan winds down over the next 3 years. What steps has the U.S. taken to ensure that this depression does not happen? And I know you did mention the New Silk Road, the new Central Asia-South Asia trading hub that we are trying to create in Afghanistan. Will there be job training programs and community development so that that can overtake the military action?

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you very much, Congressman; and thanks, as always, for highlighting the important issues and security concerns coming out of Africa. I thank you for that.

And I join with Congressman Berman in saluting the life of former Congressman Howard Wolpe, who I also had the privilege of working with both in the 1990s and as Secretary of State.

With respect to the sustainability of the Afghan economy, you are right to raise the issue that when this enormous amount of international money that has been used inside Afghanistan begins to diminish that raises questions about sustainability.

There are three quick answers I would give you.

One, we are working to strengthen the capacity of the Afghan Government itself at both the national and the local level, because we think it is important to try to help them understand fundamentals like planning and budgeting. USAID is currently developing a set of measurements about sustainability and applying them to all of our programs.

And, secondly, we are working on necessary reforms right now. I will give you a quick example. The Afghan power company, they have to learn to effectively collect revenue. They have to learn how to cover the costs of their operations.

And we are also working with the Ministry of Public Works on the roads authority. Because the international community has built roads, but they have to learn how to maintain them, and that means collecting tolls or other tariffs.

We are also working to make sure that we are coordinating with other donors. There are many big donations that come for infrastructure and training, and we are going to make sure that we are all on the same page.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Madam Secretary. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

Mr. Burton, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Europe and Eurasia.

Mr. BURTON. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Let me start by making a little statement.

There are a lot of congressmen and congresswoman who are very concerned about unilateral action being taken by the administration in military fashion. Nobody mourns Qadhafi's leaving the scene, but we believe that Congress should be involved in the decision making process before we go to war. And that was of long duration. It cost $3 billion of taxpayer money. And I think the administration ought to be aware that there is a lot of concern among Democrats and Republicans that unilateral action is being taken without any consultation with Congress.

Now, let me just talk about a couple of things and ask a question.

In 1979, we supported, either tacitly or directly, the removal of the Shah, and the Ayatollah Khomeini came back and imposed Sharia law. He lined up 3,000 political prisoners at a wall and shot them and killed them, and 20,000 people who were sympathetic to the West were lined up against a wall and shot and killed. That is Sharia law.

Now Tunisia has said they are going to have Sharia law. The interim Government of Libya has indicated they are going to have Sharia law. Under Sharia law, one of the things that really bothers a lot of people is, if you are an enemy combatant and you are defeated, your wife can be raped and it is all right. And I understand there are women who are being raped right now by the people that won the war because the people who supported Qadhafi had wives and they thought that was proper punishment. Sharia law is something that is anathema to most Americans.

We have in Egypt the Muslim Brotherhood that is taking on a larger and larger responsibility, and some believe they are going to end up running that country. The entire northern tier of Africa may very well be under Sharia law, as well as Iran. And I am concerned and I hope my colleagues are concerned that we could be facing another Iran not only in Iran, but also in Libya, in Tunisia, in Egypt, and who knows about Syria.

So I would like to know what the administration plans to do to make sure that we don't have a radical government taking over those places. I know you were just there in Libya. I watched on television your remarks, and I understand the position of the administration.

But I will tell you. It really worries me not only from a security standpoint. We still get almost a third of our energy from that part of the world. And if we don't make sure that we don't have radical Islamist governments in that region, we could have a big, big problem like we have with Iran.

And, with that, I will be happy to hear your comments.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I think that you have raised many different aspects of a question that is yet to be answered; and that is, what does democracy mean? What is the likely outcome of these changes?

And we know from our very long history, far back beyond 1979, that revolutions are unpredictable phenomena. Sometimes it works out well, as it did for us. Many times, it goes through really messy transitions, as it did for France, for example. And sometimes it

ends up in a place that we certainly don't think reflects democracy as we define it.

The United States is deeply engaged in and committed to working with these new leaders, many of whom have never been involved in politics before, to make it absolutely clear that there must be a renouncing of violence and military capacity if you are to be part of a democratically elected government, that there needs to be a respect for human rights, for women's rights, for the fundamental freedoms of speech and religion and all of the rest that we hold so dear.

Sitting here today, I think a lot of the leaders are saying the right things, and some are saying things that do give pause to us. But I will assure you we are going to do all that we can within our power to basically try to influence outcomes.

But the historic winds sweeping the Middle East and North Africa were not of our making. They were, in many instances, not even predicted. But they are going to have consequences, first and foremost, for the people of those countries and then for the rest of the world.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Mr. Burton.

Mr. Faleomavaega is recognized.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I certainly want to personally welcome you, Madam Secretary, and want to commend you for the outstanding leadership that you have demonstrated not only in your capacity as the President's chief negotiator in just about anything and everything that goes on in the world but to certainly thank you for the services that you have given to our country. I deeply appreciate the opportunities that I have had in dialoguing with you one some of the issues that are important for the needs of our country.

Just one question, Madam Secretary. Maybe I am being simplistic in trying to unravel—to understand a little further about the challenges that are before us as far as Pakistan and Afghanistan is concerned.

There are 12 million Pashtuns living in Afghanistan, a couple of million Uzbeks, a couple of million Tajeks. It seems to me there is really no such thing as an Afghan, because there are so many different tribes that make up the country in Afghanistan.

And right on the borderline of Pakistan there are 27 million Pashtuns. And within those confines we end up with some 27,000 Talibans that we are going after, hopefully, and trying to get them to straighten out in their ways and hopefully by the current process of trying to negotiate with them. We have got 100,000 troops right now in Afghanistan, I guess, with the purpose of going after the 27,000 Talibans and costing us about $120 billion a year. Are we still committed to 2014, Madam Secretary, for withdrawal from Afghanistan, given the tremendous amount of resource and problems that we are faced with in dealing with this?

Secretary CLINTON. Yes, Congressman, that is the commitment. It is a mutually agreed upon commitment by NATO ISAF and the Afghan Government and, of course, the United States. So that is our commitment.

And, as you know, we have begun to transition security responsibility to the Afghan forces in a number of areas. There will be more announced shortly by the Afghan Government. And we have a plan

that our military leadership is implementing to continue to advise and support as Afghans take the lead but to move away from any kind of ongoing combat responsibility by American or NATO ISAF troops.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

The second question, like my colleague, our chairwoman, I am deeply concerned about the recent events that transpired in West Papua and Indonesia whereby the Indonesian military and police forces have arrested hundreds of unarmed and harmless civilians who apparently had a meeting in Jayapura. The Papuan People's Congress said that they met.

And among those arrested is a dear friend, a traditional leader by the name of Forkorus Yoboisembut. This gentleman, Madam Secretary, wouldn't even hurt a fly. He's a traditional leader.

Out of sheer frustration, 2.2 million West Papuans have been waiting with the Indonesian Government for well over 10 years and was supposed to be given the special autonomy status, and the Indonesian Government hasn't done anything really to pursue and promote this. And I suspect out of frustration the West Papuans simply wanted to declare independence, and for this now the Indonesia Government is now accusing Mr. Forkorus of treason.

And I met the gentleman. He is an elderly person, a traditional leader, wouldn't even hurt a fly; and I would really appreciate, Madam Secretary, that the administration would pursue this earnestly with the Indonesian Government.

I realize always the answer has been this is an internal matter within the province of the Indonesian Government, but it does have a lot of serious international implications in terms of the military forces and how the Indonesian Government is pursuing this; and I just wanted to ask for your assistance and if we could work together in making sure that this traditional leader and others who have been arrested are properly given their due process in law.

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, we will certainly follow up on that and consult with you about it.

Mr. Faleomavaega. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Turner is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

I recently returned from Afghanistan and met with military and State people. There is a contrast between the optimism, at least that the military expressed, in achieving their goal in the next 30 months, which I think minimally is to thwart a base of operations. The State Department seemed less optimistic in establishing a legal system and a rule of law; and I would be interested in hearing what you think of this, whether the cultural divide between what we expect from the Afghanis and what is really practical that can be closed within at least a reasonable period of time. Certainly 30 months is going to be very difficult.

Thank you.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you very much, Congressman. And thank you for going on that trip, because I think it is important, and I hope you agree to see the situations first hand and meet and talk with people, and so we appreciate your trip.

I think that the civilian presence in Afghanistan, which has been tripled in the last 2 years in response to what were clear deficiencies of attention in the prior years, has made a lot of progress. But it is a complicated undertaking, and I think that those with whom you spoke were being very candid with you, that it is something that is quite challenging.

As I said in the beginning, we have made a lot of progress. We think that progress has made a difference. But you have got to remember that Afghans had a lot of experience fighting but not a lot of experience in putting together what we would consider a modern government and certainly very little experience in what we are hoping to see them move toward, which is a sustainable democratic government.

So the progress is challenging, but it is continuing, and that is why it is important that we negotiate the strategic partnership documents so that we have an ongoing relationship.

You know, there is no sensible way to compare any two nations, because they are each unique. But we do have some experience. You know, after the fall of the Soviet Union, the people living in those totalitarian states had little or no experience, unless they were quite elderly, in what a functioning democratic government even looked like, what a trade union looked like, what kinds of human rights should be respected. And I think it is quite an accomplishment for the people of those countries over the last 20-plus years to have made the progress that they have made.

Well, we are starting on a very different level in Afghanistan. There is no real experience. They went from a monarchy that was a very loosely governing presence in much of the country to a succession of, first, invasion by the Soviet Union and the installation of a puppet regime, to the war lordism, the rise of the Taliban, in part as a reaction against what was not happening the people in the country thought was in their interest. This is a country that has been through so much.

And I would add that, yes, even though there are different ethnic groups or different tribal and clan groups, they do consider themselves Afghans. They don't have any doubt in their minds about that. But how they work out the modes of cooperation are still to be determined.

So we are entering this with I think the right dose of humility. I think in the beginning maybe we didn't have enough of that. We didn't know how difficult it would be to make that transition. But we are making progress, and we are going to stay with it. And on the civilian side will be with it after 2014.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Well played, Mr. Turner. The junior man on the totem pole stuck around and got to ask the Secretary a question.

Mr. Berman, the old guy, is recognized.

Mr. BERMAN. Young at heart.

Madam Secretary, the administration has made it clear that the war in Afghanistan can only end through a political settlement. You have been quite candid that you will not support any agreement that gives up the hard-won rights of the Afghan people. The redlines you have previously mentioned aside, given the Taliban's

brutal history and that the movement is so ideologically driven what makes you think, for example, they would agree to change course on ideology? How do we get them to change the way they see the world.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I am not sure that all of them would, and I am very realistic about that. We have had somewhere in the order of 2,500 fighters officially reintegrate. In other words, we have registration of them, we know that they have done it. Of those, there seems to be both a weariness with fighting and a recognition that the path that the Taliban had been on was not the right path.

So this is part of the testing process that we have to be engaged in. And I think that the hard reality is that until we really put it to them in some kind of Afghan-led negotiations, nobody will be able to gauge that. We have followed some intelligence threads which suggest that there is a debate going on within the Quetta Shura about, for example, about letting girls go to school which is something that would seem to be to be absolutely a condition.

So I think you are asking the right question, I am just not yet at the stage of how this is unfolding to be able to tell you are our chances 50/50, are they 40/60. We just don't know yet, Mr. Berman.

Mr. BERMAN. Well, I understand. I want to get into an issue that has concerned me. It is a sensitive issue. And I had to miss your testimony because, all politics is local, and there is an issue in the Aviation Subcommittee of Transportation and Infrastructure. But last March, in accordance with Section 203 of the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act, you certified that Pakistan was continuing to cooperate with the United States in efforts to dismantle supplier networks, that it has demonstrated a sustained commitment and is making significant efforts toward combating terrorist groups.

Given Admiral Mullen's recent statement, the discovery of Bin Laden in Pakistan, recent reports in the Indian press that the mastermind of the Mumbai attacks remains a key player in the affairs of LeT, despite being in custody for over 2 years. I am wondering do you have any regrets about making that certification. And is there anything on your recent trip, or anything else that has gone on in the last few weeks that makes you feel optimistic that the purposes we were trying to achieve in that certification requirement we can move forward on.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, the certification that I signed with regard to Pakistan's role in combating terrorist groups, as you know, was mandated by legislation from the preceding fiscal year. And at the time I made the certification, I closely considered the requirements set forth in the statute, and I determined that on balance, Pakistan met the legal threshold. Now, one of the challenges is that there are a number of factors here. There was no doubt that Pakistan had entered the fight against terrorists and had made sacrifices for that fight. There was certainly a continuing intelligence cooperation particularly focused on the al-Qaeda operative that was proving to be helpful.

Mr. BERMAN. Could I ask unanimous consent that the Secretary have an additional minute just to finish the answer to this question?

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. No, I am sorry. All animals are equal.

Secretary CLINTON. I would be happy to provide additional written material about that, Mr. Berman, because I know what a serious question it is, and I have to do this on an annual basis. And I also would point out that in the last 6 months from the operation in Abbottabad, we have had great success in taking out al-Qaeda leadership, and we have to weigh all of these factors.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Madam Secretary. Mr. Smith is recognized. He is the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights chairman.

Mr. SMITH. I thank my distinguished chairman for recognizing me. Welcome, Madam Secretary. Let me ask a couple of questions. Ten years after the Taliban, not a single public Christian church remains in Afghanistan. As you know, two Christian Afghan citizens most certainly would have lost their lives had there not been a huge intervention. And we were part of that. You, I know, were part of that. But my question would be what are we doing to ensure that Christians and other minority religions are not subjected to increased repression? The U.S. Commission for International Religious Freedom said that the situation for Christians "worsened in the past year."

In like manner, we are seeing the same thing in Pakistan. We all know that Pakistan's Minister for Minority Affairs Shahbaz Bhatti was assassinated. A terrible, terrible loss. He was opposing the blasphemy laws in Pakistan. And we know about other faiths, including the Hindus, it has been reported by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan that 20 to 25 Hindu girls are abducted and converted to Islam every month. I just chaired a hearing about Coptic Christian girls, a 3-hour hearing, and the distinguished chairwoman was at that hearing. It was riveting that we now see in Egypt that young girls who happen to be Coptic Christians are abducted in their teenage years, 12, 13, 14 years old, and then they are forced into Islam and then they are sold or given in marriage at age 18 to an Islamic man.

There is even a very pathetic expression that they are Islamacizing the womb. In other words, they get a woman and they get any children she subsequently bears to be a member of the Islamic faith, all by coercion, all by kidnapping. And I haven't heard anything, frankly, from the administration on that, but that is Egypt, and perhaps you want to speak to that. But this deteriorating situation on religious freedom, that as we all know a fundamental tenet of human rights, is getting worse.

And finally, to piggyback, I want to associate my remarks about the dual standard, or double standard, with regards to Cuba. You know, Fidel Castro is really given, I think, a large pass for his egregious human rights abuses in a way that is similar to what happens with Hu Jintao. Hu Jintao got a state dinner. Nobody has repressed human rights more than the President of China, Hu Jintao, and yet he was feted and treated with great honors where he should have been held to account for his egregious violations.

I would ask, before yielding to your answer, please pick up the phone and call the Foreign Minister of China, and ask: "Where is Chen Guangcheng?" Next Wednesday, I am chairing an emergency hearing of the China Commission. There have been rumors, re-

ports, we don't know they are true, that he may have been beaten to death. As you recall, he is the blind activist lawyer, I know you know all about him, who has stood up for women who were being coerced into forced abortions and forced sterilizations in Linyi province.

He took on their case and has come against the full fist, the iron fist of the Chinese dictatorship and has ever since, spent years in prison and house arrest. Now we hear he may even have been beaten to death. We don't know. But please call the Foreign Minister on that if you would, Madam Secretary.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I share not only your concerns, but your outrage over what we are seeing happening. We will follow up on your request to China. And specifically on the question of persecution, obviously what we are seeing is deeply distressing. And it is not only against Christians or against Hindus, it is also against different sects of Muslims. I mean, there are Islamic sects in Afghanistan and Pakistan and elsewhere that are also discriminated against, persecuted and their adherence brutally treated.

This is one of our biggest problems in the world right now, is there needs to be a greater acceptance of religious tolerance, and in so many places, there is no history of religious tolerance. And I am searching for ways to be effective. You know, one of the things that we tried very hard to do is to work with a number of countries, including Muslim majority countries, the Organization of Islamic Conference, to begin to change the dialogue from something they wanted to call religious defamation, which would be a legal rationale for persecuting people who spoke out about their own religion or criticized someone else's to a broad acceptance that there needs to be an equation between freedom of speech and freedom of religion.

I mean, we are trying many different approaches and will continue to do so.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Madam Secretary. And I thank Mr. Smith. Mr. Sherman is recognized.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Madam Secretary, for coming before us. I hear you have a busy schedule. And I missed your opening statement for the same reason as the ranking member, all politics is local, and our districts are co-located. My first questioner matter relates to the Sindh province of Pakistan. You may just want to respond for the record because that isn't one of the hot issues. But the Sindhis have been influenced by the Sufi strain of Islam, they have moderate values harmonious with American ideals.

And I would hope that we would do all we could for rural Sindh that is suffering from this year's floods, which are on top of last year's floods, and that you would speak to the Pakistanis. You have so many issues to cover with them. But one is the disappearances of Sindhi activists in southern Pakistan. In this committee room, we dealt with the authorization bill. It may never become law, but it does reflect whatever wisdom there is on this side of the room. And we took a look at the Voice of America which has a budget of $750 million.

And I believe it was unanimous to direct the Voice of America to spend at least 1.5 million of that, and we are talking about a

small amount of money, broadcasting in the Sindhi language. Further research indicates that the best way to reach the people of Sindh would be on AM or medium wave broadcast originating from the UAE.

Now, we already broadcast in Urdu into Pakistan, but the Sindhi language is spoken by far more people than the Urdu language. And while the Urdu language may be the language of preference by Islamabad, the language spoken in the homes in southern Pakistan is Sindhi. So I don't know if you have a comment on that or would just want to take that under advisement.

Secretary CLINTON. No, I think that is a very useful suggestion, and I will get back to you for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Sherman:

During Secretary Clinton's October 27 testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, you asked for more information relating to the Sindh province in Pakistan. As you noted, the United States rushed in to save lives and help communities recover in the wake of devastating floods last year, providing more than $1 billion toward this effort. This year, while the scale of the flooding is less extensive, we continue to support the people of Pakistan through these tough times, contributing more than $25 million in response to the most recent flooding in Sindh.

With respect to our outreach to the people of Pakistan, I can assure you that engaging with the population directly, as well as through the Pakistani media, remains a high priority. Over the last few years, we have increased the amount of resources for public diplomacy in Pakistan, adding personnel to our public affairs sections at the Embassy and consulates, and growing our people-to-people initiatives with Pakistan into the largest bilateral educational and cultural exchange program in the United States. In addition to the Department of State's expanded efforts to engage the Pakistani media, Voice of America (VOA) continues to keep Pakistan amongst its highest programming priorities.

We are aware of the language in the authorization bill regarding VOA broadcasting in Sindhi and have discussed this issue with both the Director of the VOA and our public affairs experts serving in Pakistan. All agree that engaging the people of Sindh is important, and to this end, our public affairs sections continue to increase their engagement with Sindhi media. For example, the Consulate in Karachi regularly conducts press interviews and backgrounders and includes Sindhi press outlets in their daily media outreach. The Director of VOA recently discussed this issue with the Country Public Affairs Officer for Pakistan

The Honorable
Brad Sherman,
Committee on Foreign Affairs,
House of Representatives.

and stressed, as you noted in your question to Secretary Clinton, that the best way for VOA to broadcast to Sindh would be via medium wave transmissions from the UAE. However, it is unclear how many listeners such a broadcast would receive.

The Embassy in Islamabad has asked VOA to submit a proposal for a one-year pilot project for a Sindhi radio broadcast. The Public Affairs section at the Embassy in Islamabad will then make a determination of whether such a pilot program would be cost-effective, and whether it would support our strategic objectives.

Currently there is no funding at either VOA or the Department of State for such an initiative. The established VOA programs in Pakistan broadcast in Urdu, Pashto and English to reach target audiences within Pakistan that are vital to achieving U.S. interests. While everyone would like to increase our engagement with Sindhi media, we anticipate that budgets for VOA and public diplomacy in Pakistan will decrease in the years ahead. It is imperative that we prioritize our public affairs initiatives to ensure that we are getting the most benefit possible for the taxpayer in our public diplomacy investments in Pakistan. Additionally, we cannot justify beginning new initiatives at this time without any potential for sustaining funds going forward.

Please let us know if we can be of further assistance to you on this matter.

Sincerely,

David S. Adams
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Mr. SHERMAN. I appreciate that. I think we, or many of us saw this ad about Camp Ashraf featuring a 14-year-old girl who fears extermination. We face a tough circumstance in that we are withdrawing from Iraq. In the past, there have been, some would say, massacres, at least terrible instances in which tens of people have been killed.

And there are press reports that the Iraqi officials say, well, don't worry about it too much, after all, these folks are on the U.S. terrorist list. What are we doing to assure that when we leave Iraq we will not see the massacre of 3,400 people at Camp Ashraf and how is it going on the court ordered review of whether the MEK should be on the terrorist list.

Secretary CLINTON. On those points in particular, Congressman, in accordance with the D.C. Circuit's 2010 ruling, the State Department is reviewing the designation. There will be a decision. It has to be done expeditiously but thoroughly, and we hope to have such a decision in the future. I would add that the current designation does not pose a bar to the resettlement of Ashraf residents in Europe. And the humanitarian situation at Ashraf, in our opinion, is also not related to the MEK's designation.

And I think it is also important to recognize that we need to do as much as we can to move as many people out of the camp before the end of the year, and we are trying to do that. We are working primarily through the United Nations, and certainly with both the residents of Ashraf and the Government of Iraq to try to put in place a very rapid assessment of individuals. And we have urged the EU and other countries to favorably consider the resettling of any Ashraf resident granted refugee status because we want to shrink the numbers as best we can.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thank you, Mr. Sherman. Mr. Rohrabacher is recognized.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much. Welcome, Madam Secretary. And let me just note for the record that the chairwoman is not the only person who is deeply concerned about the Castro regime and the brutality and the horrible repercussions that we have suffered because we have prevented this gangster to ally himself with all the hostile elements of the world and the hemisphere, so we shouldn't take that lightly, and don't think of it just as the chairman's cause, but our cause.

Second of all, you stated that we are going to do as much as we can in terms of Camp Ashraf. You are not doing as much as you can. It has been 500 days since the court ordered us to reconsider this terrorist designation, and that should be plenty of time to understand what the issues are. And other people around the world now have determined that they don't put them on the terrorist list, so we are not doing as much as we can, and I would hope that you take that up and do as much as you can to ensure there is not another massacre of people there that we could have prevented.

Let us note that we have officially requested the State Department for information about the Camp Ashraf massacre. Do you intend to comply with that request as we have been told the State Department will, or are you backtracking from that commitment?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, we will provide what information we can to you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Oh-oh. "We can" sounds like the operative words of how to get out of answering a question. You obviously have the records of your own department; are you going to provide them? You have a request from Congress, you have agreed to do it, and will you comply with that request?

Secretary CLINTON. We certainly will comply with the request.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. Thank you.

Secretary CLINTON. But I cannot tell you what will be in the reply. So that is the qualification of my answer.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. All right. There are Libyan funds that are frozen in the United States right now. How much did we spend to help the Libyans defeat their tyrant? I don't think it would be at all inappropriate for us to, at this time of economic crisis in the United States, to free some of those funds, or some of those funds that are frozen, put our request in to be repaid for what we did to help the Libyans win their freedom. Are we planning anything like that?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, I think, Congressman, the latest figures that I had is about $1 billion was spent. And I am sure the Defense Department would, that is really their money, so I will wait to see what their final figures are. But we—you know, we are in discussions with the Libyans about a number of issues that they have requested help from us. And it is a little challenging until they get a government, which, as you know, they don't officially have. And we are going to look to see how we can best coordinate and organize any kind of reimbursement for certain functions that we have performed. But there have been no decisions because there is no government yet to negotiate with.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me suggest that it would be, I think, a very defendable policy, if not an admirable policy in terms of what the people of the United States might think, for us to ask for compensation at a time when we are borrowing money, $1.5 trillion a year, it is not right for us to borrow money from somebody else in order to help a group of people free themselves and put our people in debt for that. We should, if possible, the Libyans have enormous assets, require people like this to be able to repay us if we expect the American people to continue to support the cause of freedom throughout the world.

With that said, let me just note, and I know there has been a lot of talk about this lately, I do not blame the President at all, and I am not here to talk about the job you are doing in terms of trying to pull them back from the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The call for extending our deployment in Iraq I do not believe reflects the desires of the American people, who are war weary right now. We cannot expend resources we don't have and we cannot keep sending our troops over to do the fighting for somebody else, when it is up to them at a certain point to defend themselves. Thank you very much, Madam Secretary.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you, sir.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thank you, Mr. Rohrabacher. Mr. Cicilline.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Madam Chairman. Thank you, Madam Secretary. It is a great pleasure to have you before our committee. And thank you for the spectacular work you are doing

on behalf of our country. I think, like many Members of Congress, am very concerned about the capability and the capacity and really the corruption, and those two things have been cited as really major obstacles to improving the rule of law in Afghanistan.

So my question really is how do we ensure that the billions of dollars of U.S. taxpayer funds that are being spent in this country are being used for the intended purpose and used effectively when corruption and a lack of governmental capacity and capability remain two big obstacles? I am interested to know what your thoughts on how long it will take before these factors are no longer a major obstacle. And just to use an example, in the State Department CBO justification there is a call for $4.35 billion in funding, which includes a request of $1.1 billion for economic support funds. I mean, you take that investment and economic development in Afghanistan and compare it to our own: Sort of the two largest loan programs administered by the United States Small Business Administration, which total about $574 million, which is roughly one-third of the amount we are sending to Afghanistan for economic support, it is a very hard thing for my constituents to understand in this difficult economy that we are investing those kinds of resources to rebuild the economy in Afghanistan when we have such urgent needs here.

And in the context of this lack of capacity and this pervasive corruption, it makes it even more difficult for people to understand. So I would love to know how you think we are proceeding on those fronts and when we can expect the Afghan people to have the ability to do this work on their own so that we can direct those resources back here to our own country and to the urgent needs facing our constituents in Rhode Island and in my district?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, thank you very much, Congressman. And I certainly understand and sympathize with the legitimate questions of your constituents and of Americans everywhere. I think that the drawdown of troops in Iraq represents a very large net savings to the American taxpayers. The withdrawal on a very measured basis from Afghanistan similarly provides, because our civilian assistance is frankly such a small percentage of the overall money that is spent, the vast majority of which comes from our DOD security forces.

So I think that we are aware of that. We think we are on the right track. But specifically with respect to capacity and corruption, corruption remains a fundamental challenge, not only in Afghanistan, but frankly, around the world. And I find it one of our biggest problems. It is a cancer in so many countries whose leaders care more about enriching themselves and their families and their associates as opposed to making investments that will provide a better future for their own people.

And so the key is to build institutional capacity, create systems. And that is exactly what we are doing in Afghanistan. We are taking an integrated civilian military approach, because again, the largest sums of money that people have worried about feeding corruption have come from the enormous amount of money coming in associated with our military activity. So both State and DOD, and of course USAID, are absolutely committed. We are promoting the enforcement of anticorruption laws and regulations; we are doing

ethics trainings; we are including civil servants and judiciary personnel in that; we support the Major Crimes Task Force, which is intended to prosecute cases in the Afghan justice system; the FBI, Department of Justice and others are working with their counterpart agencies; we continue to go after the poppy trade and the corruption that comes from drug trafficking; we have improved our accountability by increasing vetting for those people who have anything to do with American funding; we have worked with our partners to do the same.

So we are very much committed to transparency and accountability, to the rule of law, to monitoring and all of the steps that we are taking toward those ends. But we know it remains a problem as it does in so many of the other parts of the world where we do business.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you. I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. Judge Poe is recognized.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thank you, Madam Chair. I will try to make this to the point. Last time you and I talked in this very room we talked about the safety of Camp Ashraf. That was in March. And then later in April the Iraqi soldiers came in and killed people in Camp Ashraf. People disagree on how that occurred, but people did die. Right now, the 31st United States is leaving. I am not discussing that. But also in the 31st, Maliki has made it clear that the camp is going to close. When we were in Iraq this summer, Chairman Rohrabacher, myself and others on this committee, we met with Maliki on the issue of Camp Ashraf. It got very heated. We wanted to go see the Camp. He refused to let us see it. And later we learned when we were flying around in a Black Hawk that we had been invited to leave the country based upon that discussion with him. But the number one thing he said about the way Iraq treated Camp Ashraf was the U.S. designation of the MEK. He spent all of his time saying this is the reason they are treated the way they are, because you, United States, have designated them as a foreign terrorist organization.

My concern, first of all, is the safety of the people in Camp Ashraf when that 31st comes. They are in fear. 85 of those people, some are Americans and the others of that 85 that are there among the 2,000 are permanent residents of the U.S.

So my question is what are we doing through the U.N. to make sure they extend the deadline so that people can do what is necessary through the U.N. to get out of Iraq and go somewhere in the world? And second, the long-term issue of the MEK designation? I am encouraged by your words last night that you made regarding that. So those are my two issues and my two questions to you, Madam Secretary.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I can assure you that I am personally very focused on trying to make sure that we protect the safety of the residents of the Camp. I and our Department and our administration strongly condemned the violence that led to the deaths. Regardless of how it happened, the fact is, you are right, 36 residents died because of the violence on April 8th. We are monitoring the situation as closely as we can. We see no evidence sug-

gesting that there is any other attack, imminent attack on Ashraf, and we continue to urge the Government of Iraq to show restraint.

As I said earlier, we do have written assurances from the Government of Iraq to treat the Ashraf residents humanely, to follow their international obligations which they have as long as the residents remain in the country, not to transfer anyone to any country where that person could be persecuted as a result of their political or religious beliefs, and so we are trying to nail down as much as we can to provide some protective screen for the residents.

Now, we know that they have approached—that we have also pushed the UNHCR to have even more of a presence, to do more, to try to move as many of the status determinations as they can. So this is an area of deep concern to us, and we are moving on many fronts, and we are also going to move as expeditiously as possible to a final resolution on the designation.

Mr. POE. And do we have any timeframe on the designation?

Secretary CLINTON. I cannot be more specific than that, Congressman. As expeditiously as possible.

Mr. POE. Well, I will just want to re-urge you and the administration to make sure that when December 31st comes, bad things don't happen to those good folks in Camp Ashraf. And all of the politics, we need to set it aside, fulfill our obligation, since they put their weapons down as the MEK that they get refugee and asylum status somewhere in the world, but their safety is paramount. So I would just re-urge that, Madam Secretary.

Secretary CLINTON. I appreciate your urging, I appreciate the concerns and I take them very seriously, sir.

Mr. POE. I yield back, Madam Chair.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. And the Chair will recognize herself because there is no other member right now. Madam Secretary, if I could ask you to clarify the comments that you made last week that the U.S. has met with the Haqqani network, but also urge the Government of Pakistan to get tough on that very same Haqqani network which has directly killed scores of U.S. troops. And one of your senior officials said in an authorized news conference last week we were asked by ISI to give this a try. So which is it, Madam Secretary, crackdown or negotiate with the Haqqani network or a little bit of both?

Secretary CLINTON. It is both.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. If you could elaborate.

Secretary CLINTON. It is both, Madam Chair. As I said, we want to fight, talk and build all at the same time. Part of the reason for that is to test whether these organizations have any willingness to negotiate in good faith. There is evidence going both ways, to be clear. Sometimes we hear that they will, that there are elements within each that wish to pursue that, and then other times that it is off the table. So I think that with respect to the Haqqani network, it illustrates this point. There was a major military operation that was held in Afghanistan just in the past week that rounded up and eliminated more than 100 Haqqani network operatives. And we are taking action to target the Haqqani leadership on both sides of the border.

We are increasing our international efforts to squeeze them operationally and financially. We are already working with the Paki-

stanis to target those who are behind a lot of the attacks against Afghans and Americans. And I made it very clear to the Pakistanis that the attack on our Embassy was an outrage and the attack on our forward operating base that injured 77 of our soldiers was a similar outrage. And it was in both instances terrible, but the fact is we avoided having dozens and dozens of wounded or killed.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you. And if I could ask a question related to the statement that President Karzai made. Just less than 48 hours after you and he held a press conference, President Karzai said, God forbid if there ever is a war between Pakistan and America then we will side with Pakistan. I wanted to ask you, is this something that he told you in your meetings? How do you interpret his comments? And a broader question, are Afghanistan and Pakistan reliable allies?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, first of all, President Karzai and I had a very productive meeting when I was in Kabul last week. We are making progress on a lot of issues and we are coordinating closely on both fighting the insurgents and trying to test out this Afghan-led reconciliation. So frankly, when I heard about the comment we immediately asked Ambassador Crocker to go in and figure out what it meant, you know, what the point of it was. And Ambassador Crocker, who you know, is one of our most distinguished experienced diplomats, reported back that he really believed that what Karzai was talking about was the long history of cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan, in particular the refuge that Pakistan provided to millions of Afghans who were crossing the border seeking safety during the Soviet invasion, during the warlordism, during the Taliban period, and not at all about a war that anybody was predicting, and that it was both taken out of context and misunderstood. So I think Ambassador Crocker is a pretty good guide to that.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. He sure is. Thank you very much, Madam Secretary. Mr. Faleomavaega.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Madam Chair. I get the good luck of being here for the second round. Madam Secretary, I think going back to—I wasn't very clear when Mr. Berman had raised a question again when the former chiefs or the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mullen, as well as Secretary Panetta, are pretty scathing in terms of their attacks, I don't know if you want to call it attack, but to say that our partnership with Pakistan is something a lot to be said in terms of what had happened here with Haqqani. Is that—and I realize too that the Pakistan Government was very irritated by the comments it made. Where are we now exactly with the charges made by Mr. Mullen as well as Secretary Panetta in that regard?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I think everyone agrees that the Haqqani network has safe havens inside Pakistan, that those safe havens give them a place to plan and direct operations that kill Afghans and Americans. And we also agree, however, with what Admiral Mullen also said, is that there is no solution in the region without Pakistan and no stable future in the region without a partnership. So if you look at everything that Admiral Mullen said in his testimony he raised serious questions which our Government has repeatedly raised publicly and privately about the safe

havens, but he also said that the bilateral relationship was critical and consequential and that we do have a lot of shared interests particularly in the fight against terrorism. So it is important to recognize that we are all balancing these two realities.

I mean, it would be great if we could get rid of one, namely the safe havens or the difficulties that the Pakistanis themselves feel they have in taking the fight to the terrorists because they believe that they have already paid a grievous price and worry about how they can sustain that, but we operate on both those channels at one time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I wanted to raise the question too that I realize that for a good part of over 10 years now, it seems that our countries seem to be bogged down, just these three countries, Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan. That seems to be our—our whole foreign policy seems to be centralized just on these three countries. And I noticed with interest as Secretary Panetta now in his recent visit to Asia, does there seem to be a shift in paradigm in terms of what exactly are some of the priorities on how we look at the situation? Why are we so focused, or bogged down just on this one issue or dealing with these three countries when we have the rest of the world to deal with? Am I wrong in looking in terms of the recent statements that Secretary Panetta has made about the fact that our interests in Asia is just as critical and just as important as we are in other regions of the world?

Secretary CLINTON. No, you are absolutely right. As you recall, I have made a number of trips to Asia, my first trip to Asia. I just recently wrote an article for foreign policy pointing out we are making a pivot toward Asia. We think that it is very important to begin to focus on the challenges and the opportunities that Asia presents. I had a wonderful visit, as you recall, to one of our favorite Pacific islands. So this administration certainly is focused on Asia. We are looking at how we maintain our vigilance about terrorism, because we cannot forget that it is from the border regions in Afghanistan and Pakistan that we were attacked, and that was an immensely costly event in our history in terms of lives lost and dollars spent to recover from. So we did not choose where we had to focus in the last 10 years. But now we are in a position to begin to make that pivot. And there are many who believe, as I do, that much of the future of the 21st century is going to be written in Asia and the United States must be a resident power militarily, politically and economically if we expect to maintain our global leadership. So this is a very important commitment that I hope is a bipartisan commitment because we feel strongly it is in America's best interest.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. And darn it, the gang is back. Mr. Royce is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you. Welcome back, Madam Secretary.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. I have a question for you on the LeT, the organization that carried out the attacks on Mumbai. My terrorism subcommittee recently held a hearing on U.S.-India counterterrorism cooperation and a recommendation that came out of that hearing was that we should condition our assistance to Pakistan on their

inclusion of LeT in terms of their engagement, in terms of their attempt to shut down this organization. It has got a campus that continues to recruit. It is an oddity because it has morphed from an organization focused on Kashmir, but now it has got global aspirations. We have made arrests here in the United States and so forth. So I was going to ask you, would you consider making that a condition in terms of that scorecard that reportedly we keep with Pakistan?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, as you referenced in the beginning of your remarks, we have had intensive discussions with our Indian counterparts. On my last trip to India, DNI Director Clapper went with me and had many in-depth conversations. So I do not want to commit at this time to taking such a path because I think it is important that there be further consideration of all of the implications. Certainly, every time we meet with the Pakistanis, we press them on LeT about the continuing failure in our view to fulfill all of the requirements necessary for prosecution related to the Mumbai attacks, and we will continue to do so.

Mr. ROYCE. Well, one of the concerns I have if we don't elevate this issue, Madam Secretary, if we don't drive this point home now, it seems to me that some of the ISI in their assistance to the LeT in orchestrating these attacks are setting in motion the types of policies that could lead to conflict between India and Pakistan. And I almost wonder, when you look at the Mumbai attacks, when you look at the attacks in Delhi and then you find the connection to ISI or former ISI officials who are involved in the operation; when you look at some of the other operations where you find out ISI was involved in the training, it leads you to question what is the intention from an intelligence perspective of sending in a force, allowing them sanctuary, allowing them to base on your home territory and then carrying out civilian terrorist attacks on a neighboring country.

It would seem to me that the potential for conflict created by this type of tripwire is very, very great. And that is why I think this has to be elevated in terms of the discussion with Pakistan. I think it has to be conditional. It can't be the case where Pakistan says, well, we are helping with any terrorist organization that is targeting the leadership in Pakistan, but we are going to allow ISI agents to assist other terrorist organizations that are targeting neighboring states or, as Admiral Mullen said, targeting U.S. troops, that they get this kind of cooperation. It has to be broadened to include, in my view, the LeT. And I would ask you, do you think there is a potential for this to spin out of control in terms of the types of attacks that have been carried out on the capital and the major financial centers of India by the LeT?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, of course, we worry about that very, very much and we discuss it in great depth with our Indian counterparts because it is, first and foremost, a concern of theirs. It is obviously also concerning to us, but we have designated them, we are certainly raising their continuing presence and activities on a regular basis. But I think that our policy has to be carefully coordinated with the Indian concerns. As you know, India is trying to improve relations with Pakistan right now, and there are actually some very productive discussions going on.

Mr. ROYCE. But perhaps Admiral Mike Mullen's words will allow us to carry this conversation on with Pakistan rather than India. I yield back.

Mr. BURTON [presiding]. The Chair will now recognize the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Mr. Engel of New York.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, since you were my Senator for 8 years in New York, I know a lot of things about you, so first of all, I want to wish you a happy birthday.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you.

Mr. ENGEL. And second of all, I should ask you for your comments on this article from Time Magazine, Hillary Rodham Clinton and The Rise of Smart Power. So I don't know if you have any comment on that, but I want to comment on it.

Secretary CLINTON. I am speechless, Congressman.

Mr. ENGEL. I think the country realizes the wonderful job you are doing and I really want to thank you. You know, we are talking about Pakistan and Afghanistan and we focus on the Middle East. I just want to throw in something about something you and I have spoken about a great deal, and that is the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians because it does impact on other countries in the Middle East. The Israeli prime minister has just said that he will negotiate with the Palestinians any place, any time, anywhere, and he is even talking about potential freezes on expansion of neighborhoods and things like that. Meanwhile, the Palestinians refuse to speak to the Israelis and instead still persistent going to the United Nations trying to get a unilateral Declaration of Independence instead of negotiating face-to-face. This Congress is going to anticipate that we will have legislation cutting off aid to the Palestinians if they are not serious about the peace process. I am wondering if you could comment on that. And then I have an Afghanistan question for you.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, as you know, we are deeply focused on trying to move the parties to negotiations that would result in resolution of issues and the eventual two-state outcome that is American policy and which I know you and I support. We have a quartet process that is currently operating. There were meetings held yesterday. And now the quartet envoys have met with both Israeli and Palestinian representatives. There has certainly been an emphasis on trying to get specific proposals made by both sides on territory and security in line with President Obama's comments last May. And we are pushing very hard for that to occur.

Now, you are right, that there remain difficulties in getting the parties to sit down with each other, so we are pursuing these goals through what are called proximity talks which are not the preference, as you know. But we think that keeping this moving, keeping it alive as a possibility is very much in the interest of both, because one thing we have learned over now 20, 30 years of these negotiations is that a vacuum is not good for Israel, it is not good for the region, and so we want to keep some momentum going.

With respect to aid for the Palestinians, I will certainly underscore publicly again our strong preference that aid not be cut, par-

ticularly aid for the security forces. And the maintenance of security in the Palestinian territories is very much in Israel's interest. Just last week, the Israeli general in charge of West Bank security publicly said do not cut resources to Palestinian security.

So I would hope as the Congress considers these issues that we will consult closely and that there be a real recognition that we don't want unintended consequences, and we certainly don't want either a collapse of the Palestinian authority in a vacuum that could then be filled by radicals like Hamas and we don't want there to be a collapse of the security cooperation between the Palestinians and Israel.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. Let me ask you a quick question about Afghanistan. I know there has been some criticism from my friends on the other side of the aisle about withdrawing from Iraq at the end of the year. I think the President got that one right. And I think my constituents are concerned that we don't remain bogged down in a ground war in Afghanistan forever and ever. We have been successful using drones and others to get at terrorists. And there, it seems to me, can be more efficient means in keeping us in Afghanistan forever and ever. I think we should speed up our withdrawal from Afghanistan. I would like to hear what your thoughts are.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, there has been an agreement with our NATO allies that 2014 is the year.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thank you, Mr. Engel. Mr. Chabot is recognized.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Secretary, in a recent interview when asked about negotiations with insurgents, you spoke of universal redlines specifically renouncing violence, renouncing ties to al-Qaeda and committing to abide by the Afghan constitution. Are these redlines preconditions to talks, and if so how is engaging with them in negotiations a coherent strategy when they reject our redlines in principle. And you mentioned in your opening statement and several times during your testimony here today the importance of protecting women's rights. And I happen to agree with you on that point. But can these rights be reconciled with the potential implementation of Sharia-based law, which is a stated objective of the insurgents that you are potentially offering a place in the Afghan Government.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, first, Congressman, they are outcomes that would have to be satisfied. You don't make peace with your friends and you rarely sit down to negotiate any peace with someone who has already agreed with you. It is through the process of negotiation that you test and determine whether the outcomes that you seek can be satisfied. So that is our intention and it is certainly a long, is part of a long line of how one negotiates to end conflicts like this. Secondly, with respect to the constitution and the laws of Afghanistan, which do protect the rights of ethnic minorities and of women, there is an absolute condition that we have said the outcome must be to meet that.

I know that there is a lot of discussion about Sharia law and I think there is a lot of information about it and what it means and how it is applied that is difficult to assume. There are different countries with different kinds of applications of what they consider

to be Sharia which is the law that arises out of the Koran in their interpretation. So I don't want to prejudge, but I think the rule of law is our guide and the constitution and the laws of Afghanistan, which do give respect to, and in some cases, adherence to Islamic principles is what we are demanding be respected.

So I think that it might be useful to take a look at all the different meanings of that phrase and how it is applied because from time to time, I think it is not clear what the implications would be.

Mr. CHABOT. That is one area I would suggest and encourage the administration to take particular care in because the presence of Sharia law, in any form, in any government, could have potentially devastating effects on the rights of women, and I am sure you are aware of that.

Madam Secretary, recent comments by Haqqani network leaders have suggested that we have been attempting bilateral negotiations with them in order to split them off from the Quetta Shura Taliban. The Haqqani network, however, has said that it will only negotiate with the Quetta Shura approval and participation. Are we prepared to, in effect, negotiate with Mullah Omar, and if so, under what circumstances and what would our conditions be? What is your assessment of the Haqqani network, and given the administration's intentions of negotiating with it, what role might it have in a future Afghanistan?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, the negotiations that would be part of any Afghan-led peace process would have to include the Quetta Shura, and would have to include some recognition by the Quetta Shura, which based on everything we know is still led by Mullah Omar, that they wish to participate in such a process. That is what I meant when I said you don't make peace with your friends. We are pursuing every thread of any kind of interest expressed. You might have been voting when I said that the ISI asked us to meet with a representative of the Haqqani network. There was such a meeting. There was nothing, there was not a negotiation, there was no follow-up meeting. This was done, in part, because I think the Pakistanis hope to be able to move the Haqqani network toward some kind of peace negotiation, and the answer was an attack on our Embassy.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN [presiding]. Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thank you, Mr. Chabot. Mr. Meeks is recognized.

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Madam Chair. And Madam Secretary, let me also congratulate you and the Obama administration for the supreme work that you have been doing. And I think that the article that is talking about smart power is talking about how we are doing things differently. And it seems to me as we travel now I feel that when I talk to other nations, other countries, that they again feel included. And so that is leadership, but not leadership where it is my way or the highway, basic leadership where we are bringing the world back together or closer together to work to resolve problems in the world together.

We have seen that with the fact that when we have civilian lives at risk, and that is what Libya was really all about, that is what Tunisia is all about. And the President kept his word and we worked it out and we saved hundreds of thousands of lives, but we did it not just by ourselves, we did it in a multilateral way, which

is a very, very positive thing in my estimation, and that is what I think smart power is all about. Then talking about Afghanistan and Pakistan. So my first question is though Turkey seems to be a little bit removed geographically, but I know you are going to Turkey next week, and Turkey, I understand, have asserted themselves as keepers of the peace and they will be hosting this conference about building blocks in the Afghan reconstruction process next week.

So my question to you, first, is has Turkey been otherwise engaged in the region? Have they been helpful or not helpful? Because that could be another partner that we could have in helping us in this crucial area of the world.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, they have been both involved and helpful. Of course, Turkish groups serve in NATO ISAF. I remember my first trip to Afghanistan, Turkish troops were responsible for the airport in Kabul, and I remember meeting the Turkish general who was in charge. But Turkey also has a great ability to communicate with a lot of the leaders in Afghanistan, Pakistan and elsewhere, because, of course, it is a Muslim majority country. And it has a history of democracy and now an Islamic-based party, the AKP, that is leading the country. So Turkey has a great deal of credibility with a number of the countries, and therefore, its involvement is a very helpful assistance to us.

Mr. MEEKS. Likewise, I think that we need to move into a post Cold War conversation and dialogue with other countries. Russia, we had a reset agreement. So I was just wondering whether or not Russia has been involved in any of the Afghanistan-Pakistan issues at all in that region?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, for a long time Russia wasn't particularly involved, nor was it welcome because of the invasion by the Soviet Union and the many years of brutal conflict that ensued. In recent years, however, and in part because of our reset, Russia has been helpful. They have cooperated with us on the northern distribution network, which is our alternative route to get troops and equipment into Afghanistan when the Pakistani route is either unavailable or under pressure.

Russia is also now participating in many of the discussions about the path forward. Because remember, Afghanistan has been a crossroads for conflict between and among all of its big neighbors, Pakistan, Iran, India, China, Russia. And so Russia very much wants to see a stable Afghanistan. It worries greatly about the heroin trade that comes out of Afghanistan, and that is a big domestic problem for Russia. So we are appreciative of the role that they are now playing.

Mr. MEEKS. Finally, Madam Secretary, as we pull out of Iraq, and I know the agreement about 2014 is Afghanistan, I am wondering what is the response of NATO and ISAF and the Euro-Atlantic partnership Council, the Istanbul Initiative and the contact countries? Do these organizations still remain as a cohesive command, and what role will they be playing in the region generally? I just thought staying together in that regard is tremendously important.

Secretary CLINTON. I think, Congressman, the commitment that was made last year, or earlier this year, I guess, at the Lisbon

NATO Summit to remain involved to have an enduring partnership with Afghanistan, was a very strong signal that NATO countries understand that the stability of Afghanistan affects their national security as well.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Madam Secretary. Mr. Wilson is recognized.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thank you for being here today.

I was really very impressed by your visit to Pakistan. I have had the privilege of visiting there, and I was so impressed by their military. We were there to encourage the Pakistani military and the U.S. Marines for their earthquake recovery several years ago in Muzaffarabad. The organization was professional, the military itself was very, very positive. In particular, I was very pleased. There was a young U.S. Marine who was of Pakistani-American heritage that had been trained at Parris Island in South Carolina, and to see our working together because we can and we should.

With that in mind, the foreign assistance programs that we have in Pakistan that you have helped initiate, do you believe they are making sufficient progress, and by what metrics are you judging the level of progress.

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, first, thank you for traveling there, and I share your very strong endorsement of the positive work that was done between the Pakistani military and United States military in earthquake relief, and it was a real model and we are very proud of that.

With respect to the civilian assistance, we actually do think that we are making a difference, but it sometimes gets overwhelmed by all of the other activities that go on in our relationship. We will be sending you the latest status report on what we have done next week, I think. And we have built roads, we have increased their energy production, we have the world's largest Fulbright exchange. The assistance we give to civil society.

I did a town hall meeting in Islamabad and several people, both publicly and privately, thanked us for the programs that had made a difference in their understanding of how to put together voluntary organizations, how to engage with their government.

None of this is easy and none of it, frankly, is without challenge, but I really believe we have to stay the course on this.

Mr. WILSON. Also I have been very encouraged that with India, that Pakistan is developing a most favored nation trade status with India. I have been the co-chairman twice of the India caucus, and I have a deep interest and actually the biggest beneficiary of a level of stability in Pakistan is India. And why do you think this is moving at this time and what can be done to promote a level of trade and positive contact between India and Pakistan?

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, I agree with you that the real game changer in the region is not so much our bilateral relationship as the relationship between Pakistan and India. And the more that there can be progress, the more likely there can be even more progress.

So we have, in Pakistan today, a leadership, both civilian and military, that wants to see progress with India, and we have the same on the Indian side. There have been successful visits just in

the last several months at the Foreign Minister level, the commerce minister level, announcements have been made to try to streamline visas for businesses, do more to accelerate movement across borders. And then the most favored Nation status is a really important development.

So we encourage it. We try to tell both sides how much it will change their relationship. And when I was in Chennai last summer, I spoke about a new silk road where goods could go from Chennai up to Kazakhstan and it would go through Pakistan, it would go through Afghanistan.

I firmly believe greater regional economic integration would revolutionize the economy in Pakistan. You know, India is a huge market. And Pakistan produces things that India needs, but they don't get into India in any direct and cost-effective way. So the more we can do that, the better.

Mr. WILSON. I share your enthusiasm, and indeed all of Central Asia could benefit so much even into western Siberia. I appreciate your enthusiasm for that recognition of it, promotion of it, and every effort to reduce and eliminate cross-border terrorism which has been such a tragedy for the people of India.

I yield the balance of my time.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Wilson. Mr. Carnahan is recognized.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you. Welcome back, Madam Secretary. I want to try to get at least one comment in and a couple of questions in here with my allotted time.

First, as you know with Chris Smith, my colleague and co-chair of the Bosnian Caucus, so I am taking an opportunity to make an off-topic comment like others have done today, and I represent one of the largest populations of Bosnians in the country in St. Louis. But as we all know, reforms are stalled, progress is in question, and there is increasing risk to the region from inaction.

My comment is that we need a solution, but first we really need a vehicle that can bring together the Bosnian people, their leaders, neighboring countries, the EU and of course U.S. leadership is essential. So I would hope that we could work with you and the appropriate folks in the Department to look for such a vehicle to move that process forward so it doesn't backslide and create what I think could be a big problem.

Back on topic here, as you know, I have long supported active U.S. engagement around the world. I believe the Obama administration has shifted, and certainly your leadership to a policy of smart power and responsible participation in international organizations has been in our great interest, our security interest, our economic interest and our values around the world. The United Nations assistance in Afghanistan has been essential in developing that country, also engages 80 percent of the cost with our partners that are helping share that burden.

My question is to ensure that UNAMA has the ability to take on an even bigger role as the U.S. prepares to draw down its troop presence in the future and also what effect would the cuts proposed by this committee have on the U.N.'s ability to pursue that important work?

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, first, we would be delighted to work with you and Congressman Smith on Bosnia because we share your concerns and we would love to consult with you. So I will reach out and we will set up a time to do that.

On UNAMA, I think their activities in Afghanistan are essential to the safety and security of our troops, our civilian employees and the success of the transition. And as I wrote to the chair earlier this month, I am deeply concerned that the proposed U.N. reform bill mandates actions which would severely limit U.S. participation in the U.N., and therefore, greatly harm our interests, put aside anybody else's interest. I am focused first and foremost on ours.

The bill's requirement that the U.S. withhold 50 percent of its contribution until the U.N. shifts to a voluntary funding scheme for most of its programs would undermine our leadership at a time when we really have to be at the very forefront, and we are being asked now to do more with less anyway. We get a lot for our investments out of UNAMA because as you say, the bulk of the funding is carried by others. And they are an absolutely critical partner in building Afghan civilian capacity, monitoring human rights, supporting Afghan elections. Everything we talked about today we partner closely on a literally hour-by-hour basis with UNAMA. And if we can't depend on UNAMA, we will have to pay for and invent some other entity because we don't have another partner that has the credibility or the reach that UNAMA has.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you. Finally, I want to get your brief comment. You have been a great champion for including minorities, and especially women in transition to Afghan control. Just give us a brief synopsis on what the administration is doing to prepare for the upcoming Bonn Conference and beyond to ensure that that happens.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, I thank you again, Congressman, because you have been a great champion for the women of Afghanistan as well.

We are requiring a lot of emphasis by the United States and our partners on what is happening with women in Afghanistan. I met with a group of women leaders when I was there. And we expect there to be a process where women are involved at all levels in the peace and reconciliation effort, which they then can speak for themselves and have their own say about their own rights.

And so I will give you further information about that. But we have made specific requests to the Government of Afghanistan that they be included.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much.

And before I recognize Mr. Mack, I would like to tell the members of our committee that per a request from the Secretary that Mr. Berman and I had agreed to, she would be departing after Mr. Mack's questions because that will bring her to her other duties.

Mr. Mack is recognized, the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere chair.

Mr. MACK. Thank you, Madam Chair. It is great to see you again, Secretary Clinton.

I am going to switch gears a little bit as well. As you know, I serve as the chair of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, so there is a lot to talk about.

But I wanted to talk a little bit about Fast and Furious. And specifically, at what point did the State Department learn of Operation Fast and Furious?

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, I don't know the exact time. I can tell you that based on our information from the part of the State Department that would deal with this kind of issue, we have no record of any request for coordination. We have no record of any kind of notice or heads up. And my recollection is that I learned about it from the press. That is my recollection.

Mr. MACK. So I think then I know the answer to this question but I will ask anyway. Did the State Department issue the Justice Department a license or a written waiver in order to allow for the transfer of thousands of weapons across the U.S.-Mexico border?

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, this is the first time I have been asked this, and I can tell you that based on the record of any activity by the bureau that would have been responsible, we see no evidence. But let me do a thorough request to make sure that what I am telling you reflects everything we know.

Mr. MACK. Thank you. That would be greatly appreciated. I wrote a letter to you yesterday. I am sure you got it and you have read it.

Secretary CLINTON. I thought it was for my birthday.

Mr. MACK. Happy birthday.

Under the Arms Export Control Act, the Justice Department was required to receive a written waiver from the State Department to account for their intent to cause arms to be exported to drug cartels in Mexico. If no such waiver was received, Justice Department officials have violated the law and you would agree with that, correct?

Secretary CLINTON. I cannot offer an opinion. I don't know. I mean, this is the first time I am being asked.

Mr. MACK. I am not asking you if there was such a written request, but if they hadn't asked and received, by law, the Justice Department would be violating U.S. law.

Secretary CLINTON. I cannot offer you any opinion on that. I don't have the information or any analysis. I can only tell you the facts as we know them in the State Department.

Mr. MACK. I will submit then and say that if the law says that they have to get a written, if the State Department is required to give a written waiver for the cause of arms to be exported to drug cartels in Mexico, and they didn't do that and that didn't happen, then they are in violation of the law. So the question here is, who do we hold responsible?

I think there is a lot of frustration, at least for myself, that when we hear Mexico and President Calderon complain so much about guns moving south across the border to learn that our Government was involved in the delivery of those guns is quite concerning, and I am sure that you feel the same way. But we are looking for answers as to who knew what, when, and why and how this happened.

So I look forward if you would get back to me and the committee about the waiver and whether or not the State Department issued that waiver.

Second, I wanted—do you agree with Ambassador Brownfield that there is an insurgency in Mexico that are using terrorists tactics in Mexico.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I have expressed my concern about that in the past. We are sensitive to the characteristics that some of these drug traffickers have adopted that certainly resemble terrorist activities. And we are also aware of the concern by the Mexican Government that we, in their view, not mix apples and oranges, so to speak. Let's focus on criminality, let's not mix it with something else. So this is an ongoing discussion that we have with our friends in Mexico.

Mr. MACK. She is going to gavel me down. But you in the past have identified it as an insurgency?

Secretary CLINTON. I have said that it has characteristics of an insurgency, but I am very sensitive to the legitimate questions that the Mexican Government raises about really whether those characteristics are such that it should be defined as that.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Madam Secretary, Mr. Mack.

Madam Secretary, I want you to know that the preparations for this oversight hearing were done by our Afghan war vets, two full committee majority staff members, Matt Zweig and Greg McCarthy, and our wonderful Defense Department fellow, Emiliano Tellado.

Thank you so much. Pleasure having you here, and the committee is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Hearing Record

FULL COMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515-0128

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Chairman

October 27, 2011

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held in **Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live, via the WEBCAST link on the Committee website at http://www.hcfa.house.gov):**

DATE: Thursday, October 27, 2011

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

SUBJECT: Afghanistan and Pakistan: Transition and the Way Forward

WITNESSES: The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day *Thursday* **Date** *10/27/11* **Room** *2170 RHOB*

Starting Time *10:04 A.M.* **Ending Time** *12:15 P.M.*

Recesses [ ] (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Rep. Dan Burton

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session [✓]
Executive (closed) Session [ ]
Televised [✓]
Electronically Recorded (taped) [✓]
Stenographic Record [✓]

TITLE OF HEARING:

Afghanistan and Pakistan: Transition and the Way Forward

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Attendance sheet attached.

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. S. Jackson-Lee (TX)

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes [✓] **No** [ ]
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

Rep. Sherman QFR
Rep. Connolly SFR
Rep. Buerkle SFR and 4 QFR's
Rep. Bass QFR

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *12:15 P.M.*

Jean Carroll, Director of Committee Operations

Hearing/Briefing Title: Afghanistan and Pakistan: transition and the Way Forward

Date: October 27, 2011

Present	Member
X	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FL
X	Christopher Smith, NJ
X	Dan Burton, IN
X	Elton Gallegly, CA
X	Dana Rohrabacher, CA
X	Donald Manzullo, IL
X	Edward R. Royce, CA
X	Steve Chabot, OH
	Ron Paul, TX
	Mike Pence, IN
X	Joe Wilson, SC
X	Connie Mack, FL
X	Jeff Fortenberry, NE
X	Michael McCaul, TX
X	Ted Poe, TX
X	Gus M. Bilirakis, FL
X	Jean Schmidt, OH
X	Bill Johnson, OH
X	David Rivera, FL
	Mike Kelly, PA
	Tim Griffin, AK
	Tom Marino, PA
	Jeff Duncan, SC
	Ann Marie Buerkle, NY
	Renee Ellmers, NC
X	Robert Turner, NY

Present	Member
X	Howard L. Berman, CA
	Gary L. Ackerman, NY
X	Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, AS
X	Donald M. Payne, NJ
X	Brad Sherman, CA
X	Eliot Engel, NY
X	Gregory Meeks, NY
X	Russ Carnahan, MO
X	Albio Sires, NJ
X	Gerry Connolly, VA
X	Ted Deutch, FL
	Dennis Cardoza, CA
X	Ben Chandler, KY
X	Brian Higgins, NY
X	Allyson Schwartz, PA
X	Chris Murphy, CT
	Frederica Wilson, FL
X	Karen Bass, CA
X	William Keating, MA
X	David Cicilline, RI

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)

HCFA Full Committee Hearing
Afghanistan and Pakistan: Transition and the Way Forward
Thursday, Oct. 27, 2011
10am

The revelation that the world's most wanted terrorist was hiding out in a $1 million compound in Abbottabad led Americans to question why the United States continues to engage with Pakistan. Islamabad's checkered history includes waging three wars with India, serving as the base of operations for infamous nuclear proliferator Abdul Qadeer (A.Q.) Khan, and colluding with militants. Pakistan's Directorate for Interservices Intelligence (ISI) in particular has been tied to particularly damning acts, including the widely reported murder of Saleem Shahzad, a journalist who was investigating the ties between the ISI and militants. These and other developments beg the question—why do we continue to engage with the Government of Pakistan? Well, Secretary Clinton said it best:

> *Pakistan is a nuclear-armed state sitting at the crossroads of a strategic region. And we have seen the cost of disengaging from this region before.*[1]

Simply put, it is in the United States' national security interest to maintain the bilateral relationship. The presence of several competing actors in South and Central Asia necessitates ongoing U.S. engagement in the region. As countless entities try to gain a foothold in the region and guide its future, the U.S. must redouble its efforts to engage with friendly actors whose interests align with ours.

Recent events once again show us the complex nature of the U.S. relationship with Afghanistan and Pakistan. Last week a high-level delegation traveled to Afghanistan and Pakistan to hammer home the message that terrorist safehavens are unacceptable. The individuals in the delegation—Secretary Clinton, CIA director Gen. David Petraeus, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey—lent gravitas to the message that the U.S. has no patience for terrorist safehavens. Their visit followed an Afghan/NATO offensive in eastern Afghanistan which captured 200 insurgents. The operation targeted the Haqqani network[2]—a group based in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan. Moreover, it is important to note that shortly after the Abbottabad raid, the U.S. froze about $800 million in military assistance to Pakistan to reevaluate the level of cooperation between the two countries.

The Haqqani network in particular deserves closer scrutiny. During the U.S. delegation trip, the State Department revealed that last summer, U.S. officials met with representatives from the Haqqani network at the request of Pakistan's ISI. This meeting once again raises questions about the precise level of cooperation and coordination between the Haqqani network and

[1] Secretary Clinton, *Testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee*, June 23, 2011, p. 5.
[2] The group has perpetrated several violent attacks against U.S. and coalition targets in Afghanistan and its founder is Jalaludin Haqqani, a former mujahideen leader and Taliban official. Haqqani served as Minister of Tribal Affairs under the Taliban from 1996-2001.

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)

official Pakistani entities. On Tuesday, a senior commander of the network laid out two conditions regarding any future peace negotiations. The first is that the Haqqanis will not negotiate individually with the United States; the second is that the Taliban must lead any future talks.[3] This contrasts with the "red lines" for negotiation that the Afghans have laid out with support from the United States.[4] The issue of the Haqqanis shows the need for the U.S. to have clear expectations regarding negotiations with any party.

A key requirement for a successful transition to a post-Taliban Afghanistan is a deep and nuanced understanding of all the players in the region and their roles. This includes each actor's desired endgame and its willingness to work toward a peaceful Afghanistan ruled by the Afghans. Equivocal statements and doublespeak by any party impedes progress. As the United States prepares to complete the transition, it behooves us to clearly outline our mission, identify our allies, and specify our expectations.

[3] Jibran Ahmad, "Haqqanis will not talk Afghan peace alone: commander," *Reuters*, October 25, 2011.
[4] Specifically: the people who are prepared to renounce violence; break ties with al Qaida; support the Afghan constitution in all of its elements, including full support for universal human rights, rights of women, rule of law.

Congresswoman Ann Marie Buerkle (NY-25)

Opening Statement

Thank you, Madam Chairman. Thank you also to Secretary of State Clinton for appearing here today.

As the United States mission to Afghanistan has evolved, focus has begun to shift toward the drawdown of troops in 2014. There is reason to be positive considering the prospect of our troops no longer being in battle. I fear, however, that growing instability in neighboring Pakistan will put our men and women in Afghanistan at an even greater risk.

As we draw down our troops, we must be able to provide a level of security that does not jeopardize our mission in Afghanistan or the safety of our last forces leaving. It has become all too clear in the past few months that we can no longer call on Pakistan as an ally in our fight for freedom, which endangers both our intelligence and strategic capabilities.

Looking ahead, I am eager to see how the Administration plans to work with the Department of Defense to tackle this issue. Our men and women in Afghanistan have sacrificed greatly and done an outstanding job of combatting the Taliban and protecting the people of Afghanistan. The prospects for stability in Afghanistan are now real.

At the same time, we have seen Pakistan devolve. Terrorist attacks along the border went unchecked by Pakistani authorities, putting countless American lives at risk. And the realization that Osama bin Laden was being harbored in Pakistan drastically undermined a once strong partnership.

Secretary Clinton, we are faced with a vital imperative of finding the balance between securing Afghanistan and meeting our 2014 deadline for withdrawal. Now we are forced to do this without credible support from Pakistan. I look forward to your remarks and hope that you are able to comment on how the Administration plans to address this problem.

Thank you, Madam Chairman. I yield back my time.

Question for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ann Marie Buerkle (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
October 27, 2011

Question:

Secretary Clinton, with the drawdown of American troops in Afghanistan, what will be America's policy going forward to prevent a Taliban resurgence?

Answer:

We are working to achieve our objectives in Afghanistan through our continued strategy of "Fight, Talk, and Build." In fighting, we have broken the Taliban's momentum and we are beginning the troop drawdown from a position of strength. We will continue to fight while building the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces so that they can transition to the lead for security responsibility across Afghanistan. In talking, we are committed to supporting Afghanistan as it works toward a broadly-inclusive reconciliation process that builds a consensus for ending the fighting and allows fighters to return to society. We have been clear about the necessary outcomes of any negotiation: Insurgents must renounce violence, abandon al-Qaida, and abide by the constitution of Afghanistan, including its

protections for women and minorities. If insurgents cannot meet those red-lines, they will face continued and unrelenting assault. And, third, we are building capacity and opportunity in Afghanistan, Pakistan and across the region as part of a strategy rooted in the idea that lasting stability and security go hand in hand with economic opportunity. People need a realistic hope for a better life, a job and a chance to provide for their family.

Through the Fight, Talk, Build strategy, our goal is to support a sustainable Afghan security force that can defend Afghanistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity across the country, capable of protecting the country's borders and quelling internal threats, and through a strong and enduring partnership with the United States and NATO. That is why the enduring commitment of the United States and our partners will be critical beyond the end of transition in 2014. Even after our combat troops come home, we will remain committed to preserving their hard fought gains with continued support to Afghan National Security Forces. Throughout, our civilians will also remain engaged and continue to help build Afghan capacity.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ann Marie Buerkle (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
October 27, 2011

Question:

Pakistan has consistently demonstrated a lack of faithfulness, and even hostility at times, to America's goals in the Middle East. After your recent visit to Pakistan, what evidence can you offer, aside from verbal commitments, to suggest that Pakistan may be willing to be more loyal to American interests? At [what] point should America begin to consider a more aggressive and less conciliatory approach to dealing with Pakistan?

Answer:

Our relationship with Pakistan is not always easy, but it is vital to our national security and regional interests. Individual opinions may diverge on particular aspects of the relationship, but we must remain committed to a long-term relationship with Pakistan.

Our core goal in Pakistan and in the region remains to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaida and other violent extremist groups who pose a threat to the United States, our interests, and our allies. Close cooperation with Pakistan has increased pressure on terrorist groups; continued cooperation between our governments, militaries, and law enforcement agencies will be just as important going forward as we work to confront

groups threatening international security and regional stability while ensuring respect for human rights.

As the President has said, "We have killed more terrorists on Pakistani soil than anywhere else, and that could not have been done without their cooperation." That cooperation has put unprecedented pressure on al-Qaida; several key leaders have been killed in Pakistan since June, including Atiyah Abd al-Rahman, al-Qaida's second-in-command in Pakistan after bin Laden's death; Abu Hafs al-Shahri, chief of Pakistan operations; and Ilyas Kashmiri, a senior al-Qaida member and leader of the Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami (HUJI). A top Haqqani Network leader, Janbaz Zadran, was killed in Pakistan on October 13.

We are also making modest progress in our cooperation with the government of Pakistan on efforts to counter the threat posed by improvised explosive devices (IEDs). As a result of our continuing dialogue on the issue, including on the threat IEDs pose to Pakistani civilian and security personnel as well as the unacceptable threat they pose to American and other forces in Afghanistan, the government of Pakistan has committed to implement its National Counter-IED Strategy, which it approved in June. We have facilitated meetings between the government of Pakistan and its Afghan counterparts to improve coordination along the border to enforce the

Afghan ban on fertilizer imports and seize Afghan-bound shipments of calcium ammonium nitrate (CAN), the main ingredient in the manufacture of many IEDs and explosives.

Pakistan also participates in Operation Global Shield, a multi-national effort led by the World Customs Organization, INTERPOL, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, aimed at enabling customs and police to combat the illicit trafficking and diversion of precursor chemicals such as CAN fertilizer. There is clearly more that the government of Pakistan can do to address the threat posed by IEDs; as I did on my recent visit to Islamabad, we will continue to press for specific, meaningful actions.

I have repeatedly emphasized to my Pakistani counterparts that both Congress and the Administration want to see Pakistan do more to deny material and safe havens to the terrorists who put our troops at risk in Afghanistan, and I can assure you we are using our diplomatic and assistance tools to press that point. During my recent trip to Pakistan, I made very clear that we are expecting the government of Pakistan to take action in the near future – over the next few days and weeks, not months from now. During my visit, Pakistan officials discussed ways of squeezing the Haqqani Network to limit their operating space, control their

movements, and cut into their financing. We will work with government of Pakistan to help them take these actions.

We continue to recognize the importance of a strong relationship with our Pakistani counterparts, and we work through issues when they arise. I think we have been up front about challenges in the relationship, but we have also been consistent in saying that Pakistan and the United States need to collaborate in order to attain our mutual interests, particularly in the security realm. Reducing our engagement with Pakistan would seriously undermine our long-term national security interests.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ann Marie Buerkle (#3)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
October 27, 2011

Question:

Secretary Clinton, what are the implications of the drawdown of troops in Iraq and Afghanistan on our relations with Iran? How do you believe the lack of military presence in the Middle East will affect Iran's policy and actions in the region?

Answer:

Iran should not misjudge our continuing commitment to Iraq, Afghanistan, and the entire region. Unilaterally, and in cooperation with partners, we will maintain the ability to project force into the region to protect our friends, advance our interests, and deter any threats. If Iran continues on its current track of terrorism and nefarious activities, including providing lethal aid to groups operating in Iraq and Afghanistan and other countries, we will continue to deepen the regime's isolation.

As we transition to a new and normalized relationship with Iraq, and bring our combat troops home, we will continue to have a significant diplomatic presence that includes a robust Office of Security Cooperation, which will serve as the primary implementer of our continued partnership with Iraq's Security Forces. Over the past eight years, through tremendous

effort from our military, Iraq has developed capable security forces and is ready to handle its own internal security.

In Afghanistan, transition to Afghan-led security responsibility began this year and we expect the process to be complete by the end of 2014. Additionally, we are negotiating a Strategic Partnership document (SPD) with the Afghan government that will frame our long-term cooperation on security issues, social and economic development, and institution building.

We have made clear that we do not seek permanent bases in Afghanistan or a presence that would be a threat to Afghanistan's neighbors. Our Strategic Partnership is focused on helping the Afghan people, and helping to ensure that Afghanistan will never again become a safe haven for terrorists or an arena for competing foreign interests. We anticipate that any U.S. forces in Afghanistan beyond 2014 would be present at the invitation of the Afghan Government; that they would have access to Afghan facilities; and that their mission would be focused on training Afghan National Security Forces, counter-terrorism, and counter-narcotics.

We will also continue to maintain a significant security presence throughout the Middle East at the request of our partners; that is why we are deepening our cooperation, for example, with our Gulf Cooperation Council

partners. Moreover, we are working with partners, both in the region and beyond, to build our combined military capacity to ensure regional security.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ann Marie Buerkle (#4)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
October 27, 2011

Question:

Secretary Clinton, undoubtedly many of our enemies in the Middle East will view our withdrawal from Iraq and then Afghanistan as defeat. Do you believe these actions will embolden our enemies? How will America, in retreat, maintain the perception of "carrying a big stick" as it were?

Answer:

It is important to note that America is not in retreat. Our military withdrawal from Iraq completes the successful and honorable end to combat operations to which both the Iraqi and American governments agreed in 2008. The end of combat operations will now give way to a new phase of our close partnership. This new phase will be led by the Department of State, which will continue a strong partnership on security issues with Iraq to ensure stability and security in this vital region.

Our ties with other states in the region are based in a similar way on shared interests across a range of fields, while maintaining and strengthening our military ties. Alongside our military withdrawal from Iraq, we will maintain a significant military presence in the Gulf.

In Afghanistan, we are using the "Fight, Talk, Build" strategy to cement transition to Afghan lead and demonstrate long-term U.S. and international commitment to the future of Afghanistan that will defeat rather than embolden our enemies.

In fighting, we have broken the Taliban's momentum and we are beginning the troop drawdown from a position of strength. We will continue to fight while building the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces so that they can transition to the lead for security responsibility across Afghanistan. In talking, we are committed to supporting Afghanistan as it works toward a broadly-inclusive reconciliation process that builds a consensus for ending the fighting and removes the impetus for our enemies. And, third, we are building capacity and opportunity in Afghanistan and across the region in the belief that lasting stability and security go hand in hand with economic opportunity. Through the Fight, Talk, Build strategy, our goal is to support a sustainable Afghan security force that can defend Afghanistan, negotiate a settlement to the conflict, and ensure that the region is never again a home for our enemies.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Karen Bass (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
October 27, 2011

Question:

Secretary Clinton, do you see this situation improving in the near future?

Answer:

We are very concerned by ongoing societal intolerance and violence against religious minorities in Pakistan as well as the country's blasphemy laws and other legal constraints on religious freedom. We remain vigilant, though in recent months we have seen some modest signs that the Government of Pakistan seems to be paying increased attention to the country's serious religious freedom challenges. President Zardari created a new federal Ministry of National Harmony, with national oversight for protection of religious minorities. We hope this attention by the Government of Pakistan will yield concrete steps forward on legal reforms, justice for attacks against religious minorities or those who have defended them, and other measures to improve the climate for religious expression in the country. We continue to press for religious freedom.

Question:

And what is the State Department's intended course of action to alleviate the dire human rights situations faced by minority groups in Pakistan?

Answer:

We have stressed to Pakistani government interlocutors at all levels that ensuring full respect for human rights—including fundamental freedoms of expression and religion, and accountability for abuses by security forces—is critical for the country's stability and prosperity, and will continue to do so. Senior U.S. officials regularly raise human rights and religious freedom concerns with government officials and press for reforms. U.S. officials also meet regularly with members of Pakistan's minority communities. We are encouraging the Government of Pakistan to ensure that the new Ministry of National Harmony addresses and remedies Pakistan's most serious challenges to religious freedom. We have a grant designed to help foster interfaith understanding and provide tolerance training for religious leaders to increase respect for Pakistan's religious diversity. We are also increasing our interagency and multilateral efforts to address this critical issue. In the multilateral setting, for example, the United States will follow up on Human Rights Council resolution 16/18 and host the first implementation meeting of experts, which will focus on concrete, positive measures outlined in resolution 16/18 that states should take to combat religious intolerance, rather than counterproductive measures, like legal restrictions on speech.

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