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TERRORIST ATTACK IN BENGHAZI: THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VIEW

HEARING

BEFORE THE

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

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TERRORIST ATTACK IN BENGHAZI: THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VIEW

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2013

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:02 p.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ed Royce (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman ROYCE. This hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs will come to order.

Welcome, Madam Secretary.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Madam Secretary, on behalf of the entire committee, let me say how glad we are to see you healthy, and how much we appreciate your desire to testify about Benghazi before you leave office.

And let me also say that our appreciation extends to the work that you have performed on behalf of our country.

This is our committee's opening hearing of this Congress. It is my initial hearing as its chairman. Examining the first murder of a U.S. Ambassador in nearly 35 years and the killing of three other brave Americans, is not a welcome place to start, but it is necessary.

The State Department must learn from its mistakes to better protect its employees, many of whom serve in hostile environments. Unfortunately, threats to Americans abroad are growing. Particularly, those threats are growing in North Africa. The attacks last week in Algeria again show the nature of the danger.

I support having a wide diplomatic presence. We can't retreat, as you recognized in your testimony, but it has to be done with the safety of our personnel foremost in mind.

This committee intends to work with your department in a bipartisan way and to work to improve security. Every organization has its shortcomings; few welcome them being highlighted. But it is this committee's job to get answers to the tough questions. Our goal is to identify where State Department management broke down, thus failing to protect our people in Benghazi. It is clear that the problem was not confined to a few individuals.

The Accountability Review Board, convened by you, Madam Secretary, found "systemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State De-

partment." According to the board, these systemic failures led to the "grossly inadequate security in Libya."

The Benghazi compound was facing a storm of militancy, a flood of weapons, and a deteriorating security environment. Attacks were escalating on the compound, yet the compound was inexplicably forced to rely on unarmed Libyan guards and a militia that included extremist elements. No wonder the board found a pervasive realization among those in Benghazi that security was not a high priority for Washington. According to the report, the board found that responsibility stopped at the Assistant Secretary level, below the department's most senior management. This seems to contrast with the recommendation of the 1999 Accountability Review Board on the East Africa bombings, which said that, "The Secretary of State should take a personal and active role in security issues."

This committee is concerned that the department's most senior officials either should have known about the worsening security situation in Benghazi or did know something about that security situation. Either way, the point is that security requests were denied. I am not sure the board saw the full picture. And if not, its report is not a complete blueprint for fixing things.

The State Department must get this right. Al-Qaeda and its affiliates will very likely be targeting other diplomats for years to come.

Madam Secretary, the committee stands ready to help.

I learned this morning that you and the administration have proposed legislation to fix the review board, which the committee looks forward to considering.

Today's discussion may turn to funding. But when reading the conclusions of the board, one must ask how more money would have made a difference in a bureaucracy plagued by what the board called systemic failures. After all, as the security situation in Libya worsened, the State Department turned away free security assets from the Department of Defense.

State Department officials have testified that funding was not an issue. More resources may have been needed in some areas, but the tragedy of Benghazi was rooted in bad decisions.

Finally, the Benghazi perpetrators must be apprehended, or they must be killed. It is troubling that Tunisia recently released a key suspect. Poor Libyan cooperation has hampered the FBI's investigation. Success here is a matter of justice. And it is also a matter of signaling to militants that there is no place for them to hide if they attack U.S. personnel.

I will now turn to the distinguished ranking member, Mr. Engel, for his opening remarks.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for holding this important meeting. I hope we can use this as an opportunity to seriously examine the steps we need to take to prevent a repeat of the tragedy in Benghazi, rather than engaging in gotcha politics that make it more difficult to achieve this bipartisan goal.

Madam Secretary, as the new ranking member on the Foreign Affairs Committee, let me say on behalf of the Democratic members of this committee, we would like to welcome you back to our committee, and we are glad that you are feeling better. This will likely be your final appearance before our committee. And I want to take

this opportunity to let you know how much we appreciate your outstanding and tireless efforts to represent our country in the international community. I have no doubt that you will continue to serve our Nation in some capacity, as you have for so many years, and I look forward to working with you in the future.

And might I add, as a New Yorker, I feel especially proud of the wonderful and outstanding job you have done as Secretary of State. I think that when we look at the outstanding Secretary of States in our history of our country, you will be right up there at the very, very top. The way you have worked; the tireless effort you have made crisscrossing the globe so many times. You have just been indispensable to all of us as Americans. I want to thank you personally on behalf of all the Democrats, and on behalf of all Americans, Democrats and Republicans. We really want to thank you.

Mr. Chairman, the committee has no greater responsibility than making sure that the men and women of the State Department and USAID, and other public servants who work abroad, are provided the security they deserve. We must do what we can to minimize the threats faced by our diplomats and aid workers, but we also must recognize that some risk is inherent in the practice of effective diplomacy. We cannot advance America's interests around the world if we isolate behind Embassy walls or limit the deployment of our diplomats to low-risk environments. Let's not learn the wrong lesson from today's hearing.

The Accountability Review Board, or ARB, convened by Secretary Clinton, found a number of failures that resulted from a lack of leadership in two State Department bureaus, as well as woefully inadequate local security in Benghazi. Clearly, mistakes were made. But let's be absolutely clear. Barack Obama was not responsible for the Benghazi attack any more than George W. Bush was responsible for the 9/11 attacks, or Ronald Reagan was responsible for the attacks on our Marine barracks in Beirut, which killed over 200 Marines.

And frankly, whether it was called a terrorist attack or not in the immediate aftermath, as far as I am concerned, is irrelevant. We just have to make sure that it never happens again so that in the future our people are protected. That is what I want to get out of all of this.

So, Madam Secretary, we commend you for accepting all of the ARB recommendations, and welcome your commitment to begin implementing them by the time you leave the department. Even before the ARB submitted its conclusions, the department moved to address certain shortcomings through its increased security proposal. The vast majority of the funding for this proposal would come from funds previously appropriated for lower priority programs. I hope Congress will move without delay to give the department the transfer authority it needs to start applying these changes. It is important to remember that security is not a one-off endeavor. Indeed, it is a long-term responsibility and investment.

In that context, the members of the ARB, led by Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen, highlighted the State Department's struggle to get the resources it needs. The ongoing problem had led to a culture at the department in which some senior managers appear to be more interested in conserving resources than in achiev-

ing specific goals. The ARB report says, "The solution requires a more serious and sustained commitment from Congress to support State Department needs."

Regrettably, it is clear that Congress is still failing to meet this commitment. In the most recent State Department funding bill approved by the House Appropriations Committee, the administration's request for Embassy security, construction, and maintenance was cut by $112 million, and worldwide security protection reduced by $149 million. The Senate, by comparison, did not cut either account.

So let me again reiterate what I just said about Congress' responsibility. Over the past 2 years alone, the administration's requests for diplomatic security funding has been slashed by more than $0.5 billion in Congress. This makes it impossible for the State Department to build enough new secure diplomatic facilities or improve those that already exist.

The current appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2013 continues this negative trend. The measure reported out of the House Appropriations Committee hacked base funding for worldwide security protection and Embassy security, construction and maintenance by more than $260 million. The Senate Appropriations Committee fully funded both requests.

So what I am saying here is that we have much work to do for ourselves. If we truly want to maintain a global reach, then we need to make the necessary investments in safeguarding our personnel who serve in dangerous environments.

So, Mr. Chairman, you have indicated your intention to work on a State Department authorization bill. And I would like to work with you in a bipartisan manner to craft legislation that improves the department's ability to manage its resources and provide the funding necessary to secure our people and facilities globally.

So I thank you, and I look forward to the Secretary's testimony.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Engel.

To help us understand the State Department's response to the Benghazi attack, we are joined today by Hillary Rodham Clinton, the 67th Secretary of State. She has had a long career in public service, and for the past 4 years, Secretary Clinton has served as President Obama's Secretary of State. She will soon move on to the next chapter in her distinguished career.

Madam Secretary, without objection, your full statement will be made part of the record.

And all members here will have 5 days to submit statements and questions for the record, subject to the limitations of the committee rules.

Madam Secretary, please begin.

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

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And I thank you and the ranking member and members of the committee, both of longstanding tenure and brand new members.

And I appreciate your patience for me to be able to come to fulfill my commitment to you, actually to the former chairwoman, that I would be here to discuss the attack in Benghazi.

I appreciate this opportunity. I will submit my full testimony for the record.

I want to make just a few points. First, the terrorist attacks in Benghazi that claimed the lives of four brave Americans, Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty, are part of a broader strategic challenge to the United States and our partners in North Africa. I think it is important we understand the context for this challenge as we work together to protect our people and honor our fallen colleagues.

Any clear-eyed examination of this matter must begin with this sobering fact: Since 1988, there have been 19 Accountability Review Boards investigating attacks on American diplomats and their facilities. Since 1977, 65 American diplomatic personnel have been killed by terrorists. In addition to those who have been killed, we know what happened in Tehran with hostages being taken in 1979; our Embassy and Marine barracks bombed in Beirut in 1983; Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia 1996; our Embassies in East Africa in 1998; consulate staff murdered in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in 2004; the Khost attack in Afghanistan in 2009; and too many others.

But I also want to stress the list of attacks that were foiled, crises averted, and lives saved is even longer. We should never forget that the security professionals get it right more than 99 percent of the time, against difficult odds, because the terrorists only need to get it right once.

That is why, like all my predecessors, I trust the Diplomatic Security professionals with my life. Let's also remember that, as the chairman and the ranking member pointed out, administrations of both parties, in partnership with Congress, have made concerted and good-faith efforts to learn from the tragedies that have occurred to implement recommendations from the review boards, to seek the necessary resources to better protect our people in a constantly evolving threat environment.

In fact, Mr. Chairman, of the 19 Accountability Review Boards that have been held since 1988, only two have been made public. I want to stress that, because the two that have been made public, coming out of the East Africa Embassy bombings and this one, are attempts, honest attempts by the State Department, by the Secretary, Secretary Albright and myself, to be as transparent and open as possible.

We wanted to be sure that whatever these independent, nonpartisan boards found would be made available to the Congress and to the American people, because as I have said many times since September 11, I take responsibility, and nobody is more committed to getting this right. I am determined to leave the State Department and our country safer, stronger, and more secure.

Now, taking responsibility meant not only moving quickly in those first uncertain hours and days to respond to the immediate crisis, but also to make sure we were protecting our people and posts in high-threat areas across the region and the world. It also meant launching an independent investigation to determine exactly what happened in Benghazi, and to recommend steps for improvement. And it also meant intensifying our efforts to combat terrorism and support emerging democracies in North Africa and beyond.

Let me share briefly the lessons we have learned up until now. First, let's start on the night of September 11 itself and those difficult early days. I directed our response from the State Department and stayed in close contact with officials from across our Government and the Libyan Government. So I did see firsthand what Ambassador Pickering and Chairman Mullen called timely and exceptional coordination. No delays in decision-making. No denials of support from Washington or from our military. And I want to echo the review board's praise for the valor and courage of our people on the ground, especially our security professionals in Benghazi and Tripoli. The board said our response saved American lives in real time, and it did.

The very next morning I told the American people, and I quote, "Heavily armed militants assaulted our compound," and vowed to bring them to justice. And I stood later that day with President Obama as he spoke of an act of terror. Now, you may recall, at the same time period, we were also seeing violent attacks on our Embassies in Cairo, Sana'a, Tunis, and Khartoum, as well as large protests outside many other posts, from India to Indonesia, where thousands of our diplomats serve. So I immediately ordered a review of our security posture around the world, with particular scrutiny for high-threat posts. And I asked the Department of Defense to join Interagency Security Assessment Teams and to dispatch hundreds of additional Marine security guards. I named the first Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for High Threat Posts so that missions in dangerous places get the attention they need. And we reached out to Congress to help address physical vulnerabilities, including risks from fire and to hire additional Diplomatic Security personnel and Marine security guards.

Second, even as I took these steps, I quickly moved to appoint the Accountability Review Board because I wanted them to come forward with their report before I left, because I felt the responsibility, and I wanted to be sure that I was putting in motion the response to whatever they found. What was wrong? How do we fix it? I have accepted every one of their recommendations. Our Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, Deputy Tom Nides, who appeared before this committee last month, is leading a task force to ensure all 29 are implemented quickly and completely, as well as pursuing additional steps above and beyond the board.

I pledged in my letter to you last month that implementation has now begun on all 29 recommendations. We have translated them into 64 specific action items. They were all assigned to specific bureaus and offices, with clear timelines for completion. Fully 85 percent are on track to be completed by the end of March, with a number completed already. But we are also taking a top to bottom look to rethink how we make decisions on where, when, and whether our people should operate in high-threat areas and how we respond. We are initiating an annual high-threat post review, chaired for the first time in American history, I suppose, by the Secretary of State, and ongoing reviews by the deputy secretaries to ensure that pivotal questions about security reach the highest level. And we will regularize protocols for sharing information with Congress.

Now, in addition to the immediate action we took, and the review board process, we are moving on a third front, addressing the

broader strategic challenge in North Africa and the wider region. Benghazi did not happen in a vacuum. The Arab revolutions have scrambled power dynamics and shattered security forces across the region. Instability in Mali has created an expanding safe haven for terrorists who look to extend their influence and plot further attacks of the kind we just saw last week in Algeria. And let me offer our deepest condolences to the families of the Americans and all the people from many nations killed and injured in the Algerian hostage crisis. We remain in close touch with the Government of Algeria, ready to provide assistance if needed, and also seeking to gain a fuller understanding of what took place so we can work together to prevent such terrorist attacks in the future.

Now, concerns about terrorism and instability in North Africa are not new, of course. Indeed, they have been a top priority for this entire national security team. But we need to work together to accelerate a diplomatic campaign to increase pressure on al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and other terrorist groups in the region. I have conferred with the President of Libya, the Foreign Ministers and Prime Ministers of Tunisia and Morocco. Two weeks later, after the attack, I met with a very large group of regional leaders at the U.N. and was part of a special meeting focused on Mali and the Sahel. In October, I flew to Algeria to discuss the fight against AQIM. In November, I sent Deputy Secretary Bill Burns on an interagency group to Algiers to continue that conversation. And then, in my stead, he co-chaired the Global Counterterrorism Forum that was held in Abu Dhabi and a meeting in Tunis, working not only on building new democracies but reforming security services.

These are just a few of the constant diplomatic engagements that we are having focused on targeting al-Qaeda's syndicate of terror, closing safe havens, cutting off finances, countering their extremist ideology, slowing the flow of new recruits. We continue to hunt the terrorists responsible for the attacks in Benghazi, and are determined to bring them to justice. And we are using our diplomatic and economic tools to support the emerging democracies, including Libya, in order to give them the strength to provide a path away from extremism.

But finally, the United States must continue to lead in the Middle East, in North Africa, and around the globe. We have come a long way in the past 4 years, and we cannot afford to retreat now. When America is absent, especially from unstable environments, there are consequences: Extremism takes root; our interests suffer; and our security at home is threatened.

That is why Chris Stevens went to Benghazi in the first place. I asked him to go. During the beginning of the revolution against Ghadafi, we needed somebody in Benghazi who could begin to build bridges with the insurgents and to begin to demonstrate that America would stand against Ghadafi. Nobody knew the dangers or the opportunities better than Chris, first, during the revolution, then during the transition: A weak Libyan Government, marauding militias, even terrorist groups, a bomb exploded in the parking lot of his hotel. He never wavered. He never asked to come home. He never said, let's shut it down, quit, and go somewhere else, because

he understood it was critical for America to be represented in that place at that pivotal time.

So, Mr. Chairman, we do have to work harder and better to balance the risks and the opportunities. Our men and women who serve overseas understand that we do accept a level of risk to represent and protect the country we love. They represent the best traditions of a bold and generous Nation. They cannot work in bunkers and do their jobs. But it is our responsibility to make sure they have the resources they need to do those jobs and to do everything we can to reduce the risks they face.

For me, this is not just a matter of policy; it is personal, because I have had the great honor to lead the men and women of the State Department and USAID, nearly 70,000 serving here in Washington and at more than 275 posts around the world. They get up and go to work every day, often in difficult and dangerous circumstances, thousands of miles from home, because they believe the United States is the most extraordinary force for peace and progress the Earth has ever known.

And when we suffer tragedies overseas, the number of Americans applying to the Foreign Service actually increases. That tells us everything we need to know about the kind of patriots I am talking about. They do ask what they can do for their country. And America is stronger for it. So today, after 4 years in this job, traveling nearly 1 million miles and visiting 112 countries, my faith in our country and our future is stronger than ever. Every time that blue and white airplane carrying the words "United States of America" touches down in some far off capital, I feel again the honor it is to represent the world's indispensable Nation, and I am confident that with your help, we will continue to keep the United States safe, strong, and exceptional. And I would be very happy to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Clinton follows:]

SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY
WASHINGTON, DC
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2013

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity.

The terrorist attacks in Benghazi on September 11, 2012 that claimed the lives of four brave Americans -- Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty -- are part of a broader strategic challenge to the United States and our partners in North Africa. Today, I want to offer some context for this challenge and share what we've learned, how we are protecting our people, and where we can work together to honor our fallen colleagues and continue to champion America's interests and values.

Any clear-eyed examination of this matter must begin with this sobering fact: Since 1988, there have been 19 Accountability Review Boards investigating attacks on American diplomats and their facilities. Benghazi joins a long list of tragedies, for our Department and for other agencies: hostages taken in Tehran in 1979, our embassy and Marine barracks bombed in Beirut in 1983, Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia in 1996, our embassies in East Africa in 1998, consulate staff murdered in Jeddah in 2004, the Khost attack in 2009, and too many others.

Of course, the list of attacks foiled, crises averted, and lives saved is even longer. We should never forget that our security professionals get it right 99 percent of the time, against difficult odds all over the world. That's why, like my predecessors, I trust them with my life.

Let's also remember that administrations of both parties, in partnership with Congress, have made concerted and good faith efforts to learn from the tragedies that have occurred, to implement recommendations from the Review Boards, to seek necessary resources, and to better protect our people from constantly evolving threats. That's what the men and women who serve our country deserve. And it's what we are doing again now, with your help. As Secretary, I have had no higher priority, and no greater responsibility.

As I have said many times since September 11, I take responsibility. Nobody is more committed to getting this right. I am determined to leave the State Department and our country safer, stronger, and more secure.

Taking responsibility meant moving quickly in those first uncertain hours and days to respond to the immediate crisis and further protect our people and posts in high-threat areas across the region and the world. It meant launching an independent investigation to determine exactly what happened in Benghazi and to recommend steps for improvement. And it meant intensifying our efforts to combat terrorism and support emerging democracies in North Africa and beyond.

Let me share some of the lessons we have learned, the steps we have taken, and the work we continue to do.

First, let's start on the night of September 11 itself and those difficult early days. I directed our response from the State Department and stayed in close contact with officials from across our government and the Libyan government. So I saw first-hand what Ambassador Thomas Pickering and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen called "timely" and "exceptional" coordination. No delays in decision-making. No denials of

support from Washington or from the military. And I want to echo the Review Board's praise for the valor and courage of our people on the ground – especially the security professionals in Benghazi and Tripoli. The Board said our response saved American lives in real time – and it did.

The very next morning, I told the American people that "heavily armed militants assaulted our compound" and vowed to bring them to justice. And I stood with President Obama as he spoke of "an act of terror."

You may recall that in that same period, we also saw violent attacks on our embassies in Cairo, Sanaa, Tunis, and Khartoum, as well as large protests outside many other posts where thousands of our diplomats serve.

So I immediately ordered a review of our security posture around the world, with particular scrutiny for high-threat posts. We asked the Department of Defense to join Interagency Security Assessment Teams and to dispatch hundreds of additional Marine Security Guards. I named the first Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for High Threat Posts, so Missions in dangerous places get the attention they need. And we reached out to Congress to help address physical vulnerabilities, including risks from fire, and to hire additional Diplomatic Security personnel.

Second, even as we took these steps, I also appointed the Accountability Review Board led by Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen so that we could more fully understand what went wrong and how to fix it.

I have accepted every one of their recommendations -- and I asked the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources to lead a task force to ensure that all 29 of them are implemented quickly and completely... as well as to pursue additional steps above and beyond those in the Board's report.

Because of the effort we began in the days after the attacks, work is already well underway. And, as I pledged in my letter to you last month, implementation has now begun on all 29 recommendations. Our task force started by translating the recommendations into 64 specific action items. All of these action items were assigned to specific bureaus and offices, with clear timelines for completion. Fully 85 percent are on track to be completed by the end of March, with a number completed already.

We are taking a top-to-bottom look, and rethinking how we make decisions on where, when, and how our people operate in high threat areas, and how we respond to threats and crises.

As part of our effort to go above and beyond the Review Board's recommendations, we are initiating an annual High Threat Post Review chaired by the Secretary of State, and ongoing reviews by the Deputy Secretaries, to ensure pivotal questions about security reach the highest levels. And we will regularize protocols for sharing information with Congress.

All of these actions are designed to increase the safety of our diplomats and development experts and reduce the chances of another Benghazi happening again.

Now, in addition to the immediate action we took and the Review Board process, we have been moving forward on a third front: addressing the broader strategic challenge in North Africa and the wider region.

Because Benghazi didn't happen in a vacuum. The Arab revolutions have scrambled power dynamics and shattered security forces across the region. And instability in Mali has created an expanding safe haven for terrorists who look to extend their influence and plot further attacks of the kind we saw just last week in Algeria.

And let me offer my deepest condolences to the families of the Americans and all the people from many nations who were killed and injured in the recent hostage crisis. We remain in close touch with the Government of Algeria and stand ready to provide assistance if needed. We are seeking to gain a fuller understanding of what took place so that we can work together to prevent terrorist attacks like this in the future.

Concerns about terrorism and instability in North Africa are not new. Indeed they have been a top priority for our entire national security team. But after Benghazi, we accelerated a diplomatic campaign to increase pressure on al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and other terrorist groups across the region.

In the first hours and days, I conferred with the President of Libya and the Foreign Ministers of Tunisia and Morocco. Two weeks later, I met with regional leaders at the United Nations General Assembly and held a special meeting focused on Mali and the Sahel. In October, I flew to Algeria to discuss the fight against AQIM. In November, I sent Deputy Secretary Bill Burns to follow up in Algiers. And then in December, he co-chaired the Global Counterterrorism Forum in Abu Dhabi and a meeting in Tunis of leaders working to build new democracies and reform security services.

In all these diplomatic engagements, and in near-constant contacts at every level, we have focused on targeting al Qaeda's syndicate of terror – closing safe havens, cutting off finances, countering extremist ideology, and slowing the flow of new recruits. We continue to hunt the terrorists responsible for the attacks in Benghazi and are determined to bring them to justice. And we're also using all our diplomatic and economic tools to support the emerging democracies of the region, including Libya, to strengthen security forces and provide a path away from extremism.

The United States must continue to lead… in the Middle East and all around the globe. We have come a long way in the past four years. We cannot afford to retreat now. When America is absent, especially from unstable environments, there are consequences. Extremism takes root, our interests suffer, and our security at home is threatened.

That's why Chris Stevens went to Benghazi in the first place. Nobody knew the dangers better than Chris, first during the revolution and then during the transition. A weak Libyan government, marauding militias, even terrorist groups… a bomb exploded in the parking lot of his hotel, but he didn't waver. Because he understood that it was critical for America to be represented in that pivotal place at that pivotal time.

Our men and women who serve overseas understand that we accept a level of risk to protect this country we love. They represent the best traditions of a bold and generous nation. And they cannot work in bunkers and do their jobs.

It is our responsibility to make sure they have the resources they need to do their jobs and to do everything we can to reduce the risks they face.

For me, this is not just a matter of policy… it's personal.

I stood next to President Obama as the Marines carried those flag-draped caskets off the plane at Andrews. I put my arms around the mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters.

It has been one of the greatest honors of my life to lead the men and women of the State Department and USAID. Nearly 70,000 serving here in Washington and at more than 275 posts around the world. They get up and go to work every day – often in difficult and dangerous circumstances thousands of miles from home – because they believe the United States is the most extraordinary force for peace and progress the earth has ever known.

And when we suffer tragedies overseas, the number of Americans applying to the Foreign Service actually increases. That tells us everything we need to know about what kind of patriots I'm talking about. They ask what they can do for their country. And America is stronger for it.

Today, after four years in this job, after traveling nearly 1 million miles and visiting 112 countries around the world, my faith in our country and our future is stronger than ever. Every time that blue and white airplane carrying the words "United States of America" touches down in some far-off capital, I feel again the honor it is to represent the world's indispensible nation. And I am confident that, with your help, we will continue to keep the United States safe, strong, and exceptional.

So I want to thank this committee for your partnership and your support of our diplomats and development experts around the world. You know the importance of the work they do day-in and day-out, and that America's values and vital national security interests are at stake. It is absolutely critical that we work together to ensure they have the resources and support they need to face increasingly complex threats.

I know that you share our sense of responsibility and urgency. And while we all may not agree on everything, let's stay focused on what really matters: protecting our people and the country we all love.

Now I am now happy to answer your questions.

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Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Our State Department personnel do certainly accept a level of risk. And they do so in order, as you have said quite properly, to continue to lead. And we recognize that hindsight is 20/20.

But with regard to the Benghazi attacks, what is probably most disturbing, as the question comes before the committee and as the media looks at the situation, is that the dots here were connected ahead of time. The State Department saw this risk coming. And the State Department didn't act in order to prevent what could have been handled by answering the requests by our personnel.

If we look at the State Department e-mail exchange on top officials in the bureau, written right after the assassination attempt on the British Ambassador in June 2012, here is the exchange,

> "This is very concerning when you start putting the events together, the anti-American demonstration, the attack on our compound, and now the U.K. Motorcade attack. If the tide is turning and they are now looking for Americans and westerners to attack, that is a game changer. We are not staffed or resourced adequately to protect our people in that type of environment. We are a soft target."

Here is the point. Senior officials fully appreciated the grave threats in Benghazi. They knew that al-Qaeda was there. They knew that our security was insufficient. But instead of adding security, in this case, they took it away. They withdrew mobile security detachment teams. They sent packing a special team that the Defense Department provided at no cost. If senior officials knew that our diplomats weren't safe and weren't adequately staffed, then why did they continue to withdraw security? I think that is the first question.

In testimony this morning, you said you never saw those requests, and I understand that. Last month, though, Deputy Secretary Burns testified that memos regarding the deteriorating security situation did make their way to the seventh floor, to top management. So which senior official was he referring to when he talks about top management there? Who in the senior management was responsible for responding to those requests that were coming from the field? That would be my question.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, there are a lot of important questions in that, Mr. Chairman.

And let me begin by saying that I was aware of certain incidents at our facility, and the attack on the British diplomat. I was briefed on steps taken to repair the breach in the perimeter wall after the June bombing, steps taken to reduce off-compound movements. Our team, led by security professionals, but also including intelligence professionals and others, did not recommend, based on those incidents, abandoning Benghazi, in part because over the last years, we have become accustomed to operating in dangerous places in Pakistan, in Iraq, and Afghanistan, and Yemen, and elsewhere. And we do, as by necessity, rely on security professionals to implement the protocols and procedures necessary to keep our people safe. And as I said in my opening statements, I have a lot of confidence in them because, you know, most of the time, they get it right.

But I was also engaged, and I think this is what Deputy Secretary Burns was referring to, in the issues related to the deteriorating threat environment, particularly in Libya—there were other places across the region we were also watching—to try to see what we could do to support the Libyan Government to improve the overall stability of their country, to deal with the many militias. We have many programs and actions that we were working on. I had a number of conversations with leading Libyan officials. I went to Libya in October 2011. In fact, shortly before the attack on Benghazi, we approved Libya for substantial funding from a joint State-DoD account for border security, CT capabilities, and WMD efforts.

Chairman ROYCE. I understand that, Madam Secretary.

Secretary CLINTON. So I want to just clarify that there were specific instances and assessments going on primarily by the security professionals related to individual posts, including Benghazi.

Chairman ROYCE. But what I saw was a communiqué, which indicated that those assets, like the security site team, were in fact pulled. You had free of cost here, from the Department of Defense, a team in place. And on about August 15, some weeks before the attack, the question was, can we extend that security team? And the answer is no, it would be embarrassing to our agency if that agency is providing the protection. That struck me as a little bit of the problem that we had before between the CIA and the FBI, between, you know, two agencies that were more focused perhaps on the rivalry than they were on providing the security. And we are full circle now, based on the reading, literal reading of those memos. Here you had the requests.

So that is my question. They didn't come to the conclusion that we should increase security, but what about the question of having security actually withdrawn August 15 in terms of the security site team provided by the Department of Defense?

Secretary CLINTON. Again, I am glad you raised that. The ARB looked into this, as it looked into everything. It does not even discuss the SST or recommend that our personnel on the ground should have asked for its continued deployment. And I think that is in part because the SST was based in Tripoli.

Chairman ROYCE. Right.

Secretary CLINTON. It hardly ever, less than 2 percent of the entire time it was in Libya, did it even go to Benghazi. Its responsibilities, which were about the siting of and security of the Embassy, were focused on Tripoli. And it was not an open-ended arrangement, as it has been understood. It was intended as an interim measure. And the experts who were there played vital roles. They were communications specialists, airfield specialists, trained medics. They helped to stand up our Embassy in Tripoli when we reopened it. And I think it is important that they were very helpful with the Embassy. But at the end of the day, they really were not focused on, nor did they pay much attention to, Benghazi. And I think since their primary mission was at the Embassy, the Embassy did acquire a lot of assets. And that was the decision that they should not be extended for a third time.

Chairman ROYCE. Madam Secretary, thank you.

We are going to go Mr. Engel from New York.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, you and the State Department have rightfully taken responsibility for what happened, convening the ARB and implementing its recommendations. But as I said in my opening statement, we need to be clear-eyed that there is blame to share right here in Congress. Over the past 2 years alone, the administration's requests for diplomatic security funding has been slashed by more than $0.5 billion in Congress. And the current appropriations bill for fiscal 2013 continues this negative trend by slashing funding for worldwide security protection, Embassy security, construction and maintenance by more than $260 million.

So I would like to ask you, Madam Secretary, do you think that Congress has provided adequate resources for diplomatic security in recent years? Can you talk about security priorities you have not been able to complete due to an inadequate budget? And what advice would you give the committee as it considers funding to protect our diplomats? And I want to also ask what would happen to the security of our diplomats and our diplomatic facilities if there is a sequester, or worse, a government shut down? Has the State Department begun planning for the dangers of Congress not agreeing to a budget?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman Engel, this is a bipartisan problem. Since 2007, the Department has consistently requested greater funding for Embassy construction and diplomatic security. But with the exception of 2010, the Congress has consistently enacted less than requested.

Most notably, in 2012, the department received $340 million less than requested, close to 10 percent less. Now, over the last 2 years cuts to the Embassy construction, security and maintenance budget was almost 10 percent of that as well. Now, the ARB, and I would refer to them, because, you know, they had an independent view of this, has recommended an increase in facilities funding to $2.2 billion per year to restore the construction levels that were called for in the 1998 ARB report.

But I think it is also fair to make the point the ARB made. Consistent shortfalls have required the government to try to prioritize. And the department has attempted to do that. But I do think that there became a culture of reaction, you know, as the ARB report says, husbanding resources, and trying to figure out how to do as much with as little as possible. And so although our prioritization was certainly imperfect, the funds provided by Congress were inadequate. So somehow we have to work on both ends of that equation. Now, what can you do?

Well, first of all, we came up with a request to the legislative and budget staffs for transfer authority language, namely taking money we already had in this budget and letting us move it quickly to do what the ARB told us to do. More Marine security guards, more Diplomatic Security guards, more construction and upgrades. We were able to get that included in the Senate version of the Sandy supplemental, which passed on December 28, but we were unable to get the language included in the House version. This is not new money. So, first and foremost, I would greatly appreciate this committee weighing in, working with your counterpart in the Senate,

to give us this transfer authority. Otherwise, we are going to be behind the curve again.

Secondly, I think it is very important to change the laws about best value contracting versus lowest price technically qualified. By statute, the State Department local guard contracts in dangerous places like Libya, and everywhere else, except Iraq and Afghanistan, must be awarded using a lowest price technically acceptable selection process. We have requested a change in the legislation that would allow us to use some discretion to try to deal with the varieties and vagaries of these local guard forces. We currently have it, as I said, in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan. But it is going to expire. So that is something else that I would respectfully ask this committee to look into.

And finally, the point that the chairman made and that you echoed, Congressman, an authorization. You know, working on an authorization. I was on the Armed Services Committee in the Senate. We did an authorization every year no matter what was going on in the world. It was a great organizing tool. It made sure that our defense needs were going to be met. I believe that in the world in which we are living, our diplomacy and development needs are very important. But we don't have the same focus. And so working with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on an authorization where you can look at everything and you can have subcommittees really delving into all of these different issues, coming up with an authorization, I think would be a great step forward.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Chairman ROYCE. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen from New York—from Florida.

They retire from New York to Florida. From Florida.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. We will take them either way. New Jersey, New York, come on down. Madam Secretary——

Secretary CLINTON. There are a lot of New Yorkers already down there, I think, aren't there?

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. But you can only vote once. We are very picky about that.

Madam Secretary, thank you for the positive working relationship that we have had during your tenure at the State Department. I request that I get written responses for the questions that I am going to ask.

First, why were you not interviewed for the review board by the review board investigators? How can this review be considered thorough when the person at the top, the Secretary of State, was not part of the investigation? That is what was said in our open hearing when it was confirmed that you were never questioned for this report, and I think that is outrageous.

Also, the State Department was clearly allowing the false narrative that Department officials were being held accountable for what went wrong in Benghazi, for ignoring the threat, and it was perceived as fact. Look at these headlines: The New York Times, "Four are out at State Department after scathing report on Benghazi attack," not true. "Heads roll at the State Department," not true. Yet State did nothing to correct the record. Here we are 130 days after the terrorist attack, why did you not take steps pub-

licly to correct this false narrative, even up to and including today? Even when your deputies, Burns and Nides, testified before us, they both said that steps were being taken to discipline those State Department officials, when in fact no significant action had or has occurred. There has just been a shuffling of the deck chairs.

Do you find it acceptable that the State officials responsible for this lack of leadership and mismanagement, and for ignoring security requests during the Benghazi attack and before, remain employed within the State Department?

Also, the accountability report cites several systemic failures at the department that cannot be overlooked or ignored. Given that State was aware of the dangerously declining security situation in Benghazi—as pointed out by our chairman—the assassination attempt on the British Ambassador, and other attacks on Western interests, why did State not immediately revamp our security protocols prior to the September 11 attacks? Did State fail to act preemptively because it ignored the threat, or did it fail to act because it was unable to recognize this growing pattern of violence? Either way, State did fail to act.

These failures highlighted by the ARB report serve as a blueprint for terrorists on where our weaknesses lie, where we are vulnerable. So what actions have been taken to ensure that when another Embassy, another consulate sounds the alarm on security threats, as it happened in Benghazi, that those requests are not yet again ignored? As we examine the willingness and capacity of host countries in the region, we must condition aid to countries with these high-threat posts based on their cooperation with the United States. I hope that we do that.

Further, regarding the State's request for more money, it is worth pointing out that some State Department officials have stated that budget constraints are not to blame for the loss of lives in Benghazi. However, the State Department is notorious for wasteful spending and continues to have misplaced funding priorities. Between the State Department, Treasury, and USAID, the Fiscal Year 2012 request for global climate change initiative is over $1.3 billion. Now, what do we think or what do you think is a higher priority and a better use of taxpayers' money, national security or global climate change? This money could have been used for Embassy construction, for hiring more diplomacy security agents, for providing our posts and personnel overseas with adequate equipment and training.

There is more that I can't get to, but certainly I would appreciate your written answers, including the 64 specific action items that you will be taking on the task force recommendation. Also, we look forward to getting a detailed report here in Congress on explaining their justification, their itemized funding layout, et cetera.

So thank you, Madam Secretary, for the time.

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, obviously, we will answer all of your questions. Let me just comment on two of them even though my time has run out. First, I was not asked to speak with the Accountability Review Board during their investigation. The specific issues they were looking at regarding the attack on Benghazi were handled by security professionals in the department. And that is where the ARB focused. Obviously, if they had

thought that I was relevant or had information that would have helped the investigation, I would have gladly discussed that with them at their request.

Secondly, on the personnel, this is another area where I need your help. First, all four individuals have been removed from their jobs. Second, they have been placed on administrative leave. Thirdly, Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen specifically highlighted the reason why this has been so complicated. Under Federal statute and regulations, unsatisfactory leadership is not grounds for finding a breach of duty. And the ARB did not find that these four individuals breached their duty. So, fourthly, I have submitted legislation to this committee and to the Senate committee to fix this problem so future ARBs will not face this situation, because I agree with you, there ought to be more leeway given to the ARBs. But under current law, they were limited.

Chairman ROYCE. Madam Secretary, we will be working to fix that problem.

Mr. Faleomavaega from American Samoa.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and our ranking member for calling this important hearing.

Madam Secretary, thank you for your most eloquent statement. Your service to our Nation has been exemplary and outstanding. And any suggestion otherwise during today's hearing I would consider unfair and unwarranted.

We meet today under difficult circumstances. I am sure that when you, as Secretary of State, stood at Andrews Air Force Base for the transfer of the remains of Ambassador Christopher Stevens, Mr. Sean Smith, Mr. Tyrone Woods, and Mr. Glen Doherty, you must have had tremendous, or felt tremendous pain and suffering. As we express in our Samoan proverb, "Ua tagi le fatu ma le eleele," meaning, "the stones and the Earth wept."

Madam Secretary, please know that we were not—you were not alone. We wept with you and with the families of our fallen heroes. It is true that the Benghazi attack is the first time since 1979 that an American Ambassador has been killed in the line of duty. But it is also true that the world has changed significantly since 1979, and consequently the Department of State is increasingly operating in high-threat locations throughout the world. This is why the Accountability Review Board rightly observed that Congress needs to make a serious and sustained commitment to supporting State Department needs.

But in the Fiscal Year 2013 fiscal year budget, the House cut the administration's request by about $200 million. However, having been provided $2.6 billion of security funding, I wonder if the Congress had done its part and fulfilled its responsibility in providing the State Department with the necessary resources and funding to meet its needs, especially to provide security for our Embassies and consulates throughout the world. I agree with the ARB's recommendations that we should restore the capital security cost-sharing program, which pulls money from different agencies in order to accelerate construction of new Embassies and consulates.

Madam Secretary, in honor of the lives of Ambassador Christopher Stevens, Mr. Sean Smith, Mr. Tyrone Woods, and Mr. Glen Doherty, we need answers so that we can prevent this kind of trag-

edy from happening again. It is no good for any of us to use this tragedy for political gain. This was a terrorist attack first and foremost.

And we must not lose sight of this brutal fact. Instead, we must hold together in our commitment to defeat those who would do us harm. So, Madam Secretary, I commend you for convening the ARB in accordance with the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Anti-Terrorism Act of 1986, and for accepting all 29 of the recommendations of the ARB commission. For the past 20 years, you have served our Nation well. You have done all you could do to deliver freedom safely to future generations. I salute you, and I look ahead to 2016, wishing you much success and extending to you my highest regards.

I do have one question, or a couple if I have the time. Madam Secretary, I note with interest one of your quotes, or a statement here that this is why Ambassador Chris Stevens went to Benghazi. I want to get the sense that the commitment of our Foreign Service Officers throughout the world is second to none, even at the risk of their lives. And I wish that my colleagues would understand, yes, we have logistical problems, yes, we have funding, but the fact that these people willingly did this, not only because of his love for the leaders and the people of Libya, but because he was so proud to represent this great Nation of ours.

And I would like to ask if you could elaborate just a little further what you meant by this, that Ambassador Stevens went to Benghazi in the first place, knowing the dangers, knowing the dangers were there, he went still; could you please comment on that?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I think it is absolutely the case that we have a Foreign Service that is composed of men and women who take on these responsibilities because they love our country. They go in with their eyes wide open. They learn languages. They immerse themselves in cultures. They go out to the Foreign Service Institute and hone their skills.

And Chris Stevens was one of our very best. He started off in the Peace Corps in Morocco, was a fluent Arabic speaker, had served with distinction throughout the Arab world. And when I asked if he would be interested in going to Benghazi, where we had nothing when he first went, where he, you know, bunked up in a hotel, we didn't have any support to speak of, he was thrilled. And he understood immediately what it would mean.

In the wake of this tragedy, this terrible terrorist attack, I think one of the most poignant events has been overlooked. And that is what happened after the Libyan people, from Benghazi to Tripoli, learned that Chris Stevens, someone whom they had gotten to know, whom they trusted and admired, had been murdered. They went out into the streets. They protested themselves, thousands, tens of thousands, far more than the dozens of highly armed, you know, invaders of our compound and our annex. And they made it clear that that was not the kind of country they were trying to build. So, in some ways, Chris' faith after his death was certainly validated.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Smith of New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Madam Secretary. You know, we all deeply mourn the tragic loss of four extraordinarily brave Americans, including our distinguished Ambassador, Christopher Stevens. But one of my top concerns is that we seem to be relearning the same lessons again and again and again.

Madam Secretary, after the August 1998 bombings of U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, Admiral Crowe sat exactly where you sit, that was 13 years ago, and told the subcommittee that I chaired at the time that, "In our investigations of the bombings, the Boards were shocked how similar the lessons learned were to those drawn by the Inman Commission some 14 years ago." In other words, in 1985. In direct response, I authored a bipartisan law, the Admiral James W. Nance and Meg Donovan Foreign Relations Authorization Act. In it, we had a title, the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999, to upgrade diplomatic security and residences, to improve threat assessments and facilities, emergency action plans, security threat lists, perimeter distances, setbacks, for example, crisis management training, Diplomatic Security training, rapid response procedures, storage and emergency equipment, like fire suppressant capabilities, and increased antiterrorism training in Africa. Before 1998, there were 1,000 security specialists. Today, there are over 3,100. I agree we need more. But how present-day security personnel and assets are deployed are above all a leadership issue. And clearly, we have and had the Diplomatic Security assets that could have been deployed to Benghazi.

When it comes to what you knew, Madam Secretary, and what requests were made of you and the department to beef up security in Benghazi, there are disturbing parallels to Kenya and Tanzania. Prior to the East Africa terrorist bombings, U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Prudence Bushnell repeatedly asked Secretary Madeleine Albright for more security upgrades. And the Ambassador's request was rejected. And the loss of life, as we all know, was horrific.

There are numerous press reports that U.S. Ambassador to Libya Chris Stevens and his team made repeated requests for security assistance. So my questions are these: One, you defined taking responsibility for Benghazi in your testimony a few moments ago in terms and only in terms of during and after the terrorist attacks. What about before the attack on September 11, 2012? What did you personally and your staff know? When did you become aware of Ambassador Stevens' and his team's requests for security upgrades? What exactly did you do in response? You obviously were very close to him. Did he ask you personally at any time?

When you said a moment ago that Ambassador Pickering's ARB perhaps didn't think you relevant to be interviewed, you are the most relevant person of all. You are the leader. You are on top of it all. So I would join with my colleague Ileana Ros-Lehtinen; you should have been interviewed, and very important questions asked. And were you personally in any way at fault?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, first, Congressman, I am well aware of the work that you did after the 1998 bombings. And I think that work and the legislation that you championed has been very important in protecting our people around the world. We have been not

only reviewing but continuing to implement the recommendations of all the former ARBs. And the 18 previous ARBs resulted in 164 recommendations. And we have been very clear that the overwhelming majority have been implemented. A handful of such recommendations were by their very nature requiring continuous implementation, like what kind of security upgrades or radio communication was necessary. And there were a few that were only partially implemented because of some separate security concerns that that would have raised.

But there was a need for ongoing funding. You remember that Admiral Crowe said, we wanted $2.2 billion for building Embassies. We had a number of Embassies that were built in those early years, thanks to your legislation. Then it petered off. You know, we put so much time and attention into Iraq and Afghanistan, trying to make sure that we secured our people there. We sent a lot of our Diplomatic Security personnel there. And so we had a slowdown over a number of years in our ability to build new Inman facilities. And now the latest ARB is saying, let's get back and do this again because there is no substitute for it.

Mr. SMITH. I am almost out of time, Madam Secretary. When did you become aware of Ambassador Stevens' request, and how did you respond to it? And did he ever personally ask you to be involved?

Secretary CLINTON. No, no and——

Mr. SMITH. You didn't get——

Secretary CLINTON. No. That any of the requests, any of the cables having to do with security did not come to my attention.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Sherman from California.

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Secretary, it is a shame that this is your last appearance before our committee. And I would have thought that your last appearance would have been a chance for us to review your outstanding record as one of our great Secretaries of State, whether it be leading efforts to enforce sanctions on Iran, your work supporting women's rights around the world, engaging with civil society and restoring and maintaining American influence in a very difficult era. I would have thought that your last hearing would be your chance to give us some advice for what to do over the next 4 years and beyond.

I take seriously your very strong advice, because I happen to agree with it, that it is about time we pass an authorization bill through both Houses of Congress. But instead, we are here on, I guess, our third hearing to deal with the tragic events in Benghazi because it is a chance for each political party to beat up on the other. We can talk about how Republicans did not provide you with resources. We can talk about the administration inside the State Department.

So I would hope that maybe we get you to come back again—I realize that would be gratis; you wouldn't even be on the government payroll at that time—and do the hearing that I would like to have, which is getting your input on the bigger issues of foreign policy.

Ultimately, the security of our diplomats depends on the host country. This is all the discussion is about, well, there might have been five security people on the ground and if only there had been

more funding, more deployment, this cable, that cable, maybe there would have been eight or nine security people on the ground, which might have led to more protection, might have led to more casualties.

And here in Washington, the decision was made to provide well more than 16 security people to Libya, and nobody that I know of in Washington was involved in the issue of how many of those were in Benghazi, either going with the Ambassador or there in advance. So the decision that all 16 weren't with him was a decision that you can't blame either political party or anyone in Washington for.

Ultimately, all we can have at our Embassies is enough to stave off a militant attack for a few hours. And after that, if the host country doesn't come to the rescue, it doesn't matter whether we have 3, 6, 12, 16 or 36 armed guards and Marines at the location.

One aspect of protecting our diplomats in the future is bringing to justice the criminals who did this this time. We did a lot for the people of Libya. We did a lot for those who are now ruling Libya. How would you appraise their efforts to cooperate with us in the investigation? And does this Libyan Government have the will and the capacity to arrest the suspects involved? And of course, will and capacity tend to go with each other. I think they would have to, at minimum, strain their capacity to try to arrest powerful armed elements in the eastern part of the country, and I don't know if they have the will to use that capacity. So can you tell us after the attack and now that we are trying to bring these culprits to justice, what do you think of the Libyan Government?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, I think, Congressman, you drew exactly the right description; is it will or is it capacity, when obviously what you need is both? I have found the Libyan officials to be willing but without capacity. And part of our challenge is to help them build greater capacity, because now it is about them. It is not only about what happened to us in Benghazi, which every official in the Libyan Government was deeply upset about, but they have their own problems now. They are having leaders attacked and assassinated on a regular basis.

So we have to do more to help them build up their security capacity. And again, I would ask this committee to work with us; there are holds on a lot of security funding that would go to Libya to assist them in building capacity.

There are those I know in the Congress who say, look, Libya is a wealthy nation, we don't need to give them any money. Well, until they get up and going, it is in our great interest to give them the resources, like we have with other countries over the past 40 years.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Mr. Rohrabacher of California.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you for being with us today and putting yourself through this.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me just note that fixing responsibility, which we are trying to do today, and identifying bad policy and mistakes is the way that democracies fix problems. It is not all politics. It is how we do things here to make it better. So none of us have—should at all apologize for trying to get to the nitty gritty.

Let me just note that Assistant Secretary of State Lamb testified here in Congress that budget considerations played absolutely no role in her decision—it was her decision, not yours, but you approved them—but her decision as to what the level of security would be there at Benghazi. So any suggestion that this is a budget issue is off base or political.

Madam Secretary, you told the Senate this morning that you learned of the attack around 4 o'clock p.m. on that day and you were involved widely in the coordinated response, which included the Department of Defense and the White House, but did not speak to the President until later that evening. When did you talk to the President?

Secretary CLINTON. Two things, on the first point you made, Congressman, the ARB disagreed and did find that budget issues were at stake.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, she testified under oath and——

Secretary CLINTON. Well, you know, that is why you have an independent group like an ARB. That is why it was created, to look at everything.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Everybody has their own——

Secretary CLINTON. Right. I think it is important, though, and I would urge——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. What about when you saw the President, when did you see the President?

Secretary CLINTON. I talked to the President at the end of the day, but I had been in constant communication with the National Security Advisor. I had been on secure video conferences with high level officials in the White House and the Defense Department.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Secretary Lamb, the lady we are talking about, did—testified that she had actually witnessed this in real time, the attack, in real time on a monitor. At any time, did you see the initial attack on a monitor or the President?

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, there was no monitor. There was no real time. We got the surveillance videos some weeks later. That was the first time we saw any video of the attack. I think there was a misunderstanding. I think that, perhaps, I am just trying to clarify this—I may be going beyond my brief here, but I think perhaps what she meant was——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Was there audio?

Secretary CLINTON. She was on an open—she was talking to DS people, who were trying to understand what was going on.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right. Well, I would have to say that Admiral Mullen in briefing us suggested that they had seen some kind of video and that, within a few moments, it was very clear that this was a very coordinated terrorist attack and not some demonstration that had gone awry.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, I think surveillance video, which some of you may have seen in a classified setting, does demonstrate what happened that night.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. As you were dealing with the crisis as it went on, did you think or act on the basis that this was a film protest gone out of control, and when you briefed the President, did you tell him that? Or did you tell him, which Admiral Mullen suggests

you knew by then, that this was a well planned and executed terrorist attack? Which was the President told?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, first of all, I said the very next morning that it was an attack by heavily armed militants. The President said that morning it was an act of terror. At the same time, however, I was dealing with protests against our facilities that were clearly connected to that video. So we were managing a number of such events.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let's say that you noted, and it can be—people do that so you can say that you said it, but the emphasis we all remember what the emphasis was, over and over and over again, it was repeated that we had enraged the Islamic terrorists, which by the way, what—when you say we enraged the Islamic terrorists, that means we are at fault. They are not at fault. And then to look and see that the only people I know are in jail right now is the filmmaker. Isn't this a little disconcerting?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, first, Congressman, I want to be clear that, of course, it was the terrorist attack. The very next day I called it an attack by heavily armed militants on our compound. I think there are still, however, questions about exactly what caused it, who the attackers were. The ARB, after months of research, said the picture is still very complicated.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well——

Secretary CLINTON. I think it is worth members looking a both the both unclassified and classified ARB with that in mind.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Meeks of New York.

Mr. MEEKS. I thank the chair.

Madam Secretary, let me first thank you. First of all, I want to thank you for an extraordinary daughter who came to the Rockaways after Sandy, just helping people, unannounced, without fanfare, just getting down and helping people because they needed help after that terrible storm. And so just extraordinary public service.

And then I want to also say, Madam Secretary, that you have been Secretary of State at an extraordinary time in the history of the United States of America and the world, and you have managed the challenge in an equally extraordinary manner.

When you took the job, America had a tarnished image abroad. You have revised our brand, traveled over 1 million miles to the furthest reaches of the world, to the most challenging areas, and touched the lives of the most vulnerable. With your leadership of initiatives like the QDDR, you have deepened our confidence that foreign aid can be responsibly spent. On behalf of a grateful Nation and definitely the people of the Fifth Congressional District, I want to thank you for a job well done.

The attacks on our mission in Benghazi were a painful reminder to all of us that our diplomats of course are in harm's way. And they are in some of the same unstable and even hostile environments as our military. Yet they don't have the same means of protecting themselves. And sadly, we go back, and we have talked, and I know at this committee I heard Admiral Mullen and Ambassador Pickering saying that money was and the budget is very important and makes a difference. Yet, sadly, this House has failed to do its

part in addressing the challenges they face, even after the tragedy of the Benghazi attacks.

You, however have been responsible and accepted the recommendations of the ARB and put measures in place immediately after the September attacks that demonstrate that you are serious about changing the status quo. But, of course, again, it is a two-way street. Congress failed to act in a meaningful way. And I believe it is a shame on the leadership for its failure to give the State Department the authority to transfer already appropriated funds, not new money, already money that you have toward bolstering security for our diplomats to give you that discretion. And shame on the House for its failing to adequately fund the administration's request for diplomatic security funding.

Now, I hope that this Congress will act swiftly to fix these critical funding matters.

It is also my hope, as you have said, that we finally have a State authorization bill that the President can sign into law.

But let me ask you this question, at the time of the Benghazi attacks, you indicated, there were risings going on in Egypt and in Yemen and in Tunisia. It seems as though a lot, because no one could have imagined and I am sure you did not when you initially took office, that we would have the Arab Spring and the nature of what was going on in these various countries would have happened.

I want to ask you a question, somewhat what Mr. Sherman was asking, just to get your thoughts, on what we might do as Members of Congress and how we might move forward with the nations of the Arab Spring so that maybe that is a way we can prevent these kinds of things from happening in the future.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, it is an excellent question, Congressman, and deserves a very thoughtful answer, longer than the time I have.

But let me just make three quick points: First, we cannot retreat from, give up on, turn our backs on these new Arab Spring revolutionary countries and new regimes. They are very new. Most of them have leaders that have never run anything. They have come from backgrounds where they are suspicious of security, because security was a dirty word; it through them in jail. It harassed themselves and their families. So we have to do some work, and that work requires that we stay engaged.

Secondly, we have to do a much better job in helping rebuild security apparatus that can be used. Quick example, we had a terrible assault on our Embassy in Tunis, and I called the President of Tunisia; I said, you have got to send reinforcements right now. Our Embassy is going to be overrun. He sent it. It stopped. The government really has been responsive, understanding that, you know, these terrorists, these extremists, don't just threaten us in Western countries. They threaten the stability and the future of these governments. So we have to help them the way we helped Colombia years ago.

And finally, we need do a better job conveying a counter narrative to the extremist jihadist narrative. You know, I have said this to this committee before, a lot of new members on it, we have abdicated the broadcasting arena. Yes, we have private stations,

CNN, FOX, NBC, all of that. They are out there. They convey information. But we are not doing what we did during the Cold War, our Broadcasting Board of Governors is practically defunct in terms of its capacity to be able to tell a message around the world. So we are abdicating the ideological arena, and we need to get back into it.

We have the best values. We have the best narrative. Most people in the world just want to have a good decent life that is supported by a good decent job and raise their families. And we are letting the jihadist narrative fill a void. We need to get in there and compete, and we can do it successfully.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Chabot of Ohio.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, first, let me thank you for your service, and I wish you the best in your future endeavors, mostly.

I have a couple of questions, but I do want to take a moment or two to say a couple of words about our late Ambassador Chris Stevens. Many members and staff on our committee have had the opportunity to know and to work with him, even before he was named our U.S. Ambassador to Libya. I think all would agree that he was one of our most able diplomats. I had the opportunity to meet with him in Tripoli a little less than a month before he and three other outstanding Americans were murdered in Benghazi. His enthusiasm for the job was really something to behold. He was excited about the opportunity to help a nation newly freed from decades of brutal dictatorship.

My first night in country, I had the opportunity to join the Ambassador for an IFTAR dinner with a number of newly elected Libyan parliamentarians. They were optimistic about building a democracy, creating a vibrant economy, and restoring fundamental human rights for the Libyan people. He was as enthusiastic as they were about the prospects. There is no question that he will be missed by all who knew him and worked with him.

One of the things that really troubles me, Madam Secretary, is the hoops that we on this committee have had to jump through to get to the facts surrounding the deaths of these public servants. The State Department has delayed and delayed coming forth with information. When this committee was finally presented with relevant data, it amounted often times to what might be called a document dump—hundreds of pages of paper in wide disarray, in no particular order, either in terms of relevance or in chronology, often duplicates in different binders, making it very difficult to locate documents that were of any help.

Our public servants in Libya were murdered on September 11. It is now January 23, more than 4 months later. It is unacceptable that the State Department has made it so difficult for Congress to exercise its oversight responsibility.

Now a couple of questions. Within a couple of months of the attack, during the July-August period, Ambassador Stevens expressed concern about militia activity, particularly in Benghazi, and the need for additional security assistance. We have seen the cables where security officers on the ground expressed considerable frustration at the difficulty in getting the personnel they believed were needed to protect American diplomats and property. And we

now know that management of security personal, especially the assignment of State Department agents on very short-term duty, virtually guaranteeing very limited institutional knowledge was grossly inadequate. Why was the department hierarchy so obstinate, and why would the department deny a personal plea from Ambassador Stevens? Given his expertise on Libyan affairs, why did the department and senior leadership not take into consideration the approaching September 11 anniversary, particularly in light of direct requests from our mission in Libya?

And finally, Madam Secretary, we heard numerous times over the last several months that more funding is needed for diplomatic security, including in your testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and to some extent this afternoon. I don't believe there is anybody in this room who doesn't want to protect our diplomats stationed abroad, often in very dangerous regions.

Since 2000, Congress has provided funding in the neighborhood of $10 billion for Embassy security construction and maintenance. We will no doubt continue to provide significant funding in the future. Given that our Nation now faces a mountain of debt, sadly I might add, given short shrift, I have to say, by the President in his Inaugural address, of course means that we cannot fund every single program that every Federal agency requests. So when we increase funding in one area, we have to consider cuts in others, at least that is the way it should work. Is the State Department currently conducting any internal reviews, for example, to determine what offsets in current program funding might be considered?

Finally, I know that some have been pedaling this story that it's Congress' fault for not providing sufficient funding for security. I would just note that Robert Baldre, your chief financial officer for diplomatic security stated, and I quote, "I do not feel that we have ever been at a point where we have sacrificed security due to lack of funding."

I know that I have used my 5 minutes, so I would appreciate your remarks.

Chairman ROYCE. The gentleman from Ohio has used his 5 minutes, and if we want to get through the members, we are going to have to hold to those 5 minutes.

So I will just ask for a response in writing, and we will go down to Mr. Deutch from Florida.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We won't have to wait long, because those are some good questions that I will take up in a moment.

Secretary Clinton, first, I would like to thank you for the truly remarkable job that you have done as Secretary of State. You have represented the interests of this Nation magnificently. And I, for one, hope that after a bit of rest, you will consider a return to public service, and should that return bring to you Florida, I would look forward to welcoming you there.

I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to once again thank you for your efforts on behalf of my constituent Robert Levinson, who went missing in Iran in 2007, now 2,147 days ago. And I ask that the department continue to do everything that it can to return Robert to his family.

I also want to thank you for the ways that you have handled the tragic events in Benghazi. Your personal commitment to ensuring that those Americans who serve American interests overseas, often at great risk to themselves, is a testament to the commitment that you have shown throughout your tenure at State to strengthen our diplomatic efforts around the world.

And I would like to return to Mr. Chabot's question. There is an awful a lot of debate here on the Hill about how we spend our dollars. We all recognize that we have budgetary concerns; we also recognize that we have an obligation to provide security and to protect American personnel abroad. As we have ended our military operations in Iraq, as we wind down in Afghanistan, what kind of—I would like to ask, what kind of strain will the presence of less military personnel in the region put on diplomatic security? Let's start with that.

Secretary CLINTON. That is a very important question that we are really going to have to grapple with together I would hope. We saw, for example, that when our troops withdrew from Iraq, it dramatically altered what our civilians were capable of being able to do, because there had been, over the course of the war in Iraq, a very good working relationship between DoD, State and USAID. We are going to face the same kind of questions in Afghanistan as our troops draw down from Afghanistan, and in a lot of these places, we don't have military resources. The Department of Defense was a very good partner to us in responding to Benghazi, but their assets were too far away to make much difference in any timely fashion.

AFRICOM was stood up 10 years ago. I think that is going to look quite prescient because we are going to need to figure out how to work more effectively together between our civilian and military assets in Africa, and I think that would be a worthy subject of this committee, perhaps working with the Armed Services Committee, because it is often difficult.

In my 4 years, we tried to work out more cooperative relationship, more funding streams between State and DoD, in order to be able to maximize the cooperation between us.

Mr. DEUTCH. When you talk about the need to prioritize, because of shortfalls, more Marine security guards, talk about construction budgets and upgrades, what does that mean? What are the decisions that have to be made, and how do they actually impact our diplomatic personnel?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, first and foremost, we have to do the right job prioritizing, based on the resources we do have. And I would be the first to say, it is not all about money, but it is also not without budgetary consequences. And so we have to figure out what is the right balance.

Secondly, immediately after this happened, I spoke with Secretary Panetta, Chairman Dempsey and asked the Defense Department to work with us in putting together Interagency Security Assessment Teams to go out and look at our high-threat posts because our military brings a different perspective, and that was a very important process, which we are going to continue.

We are also looking to see how we can better cooperate on the security aid that we give to other countries. It has got to be a com-

bination of both military assets and expertise, but also development, rule of law, democracy building. It can't be one or the other. They have to be married together.

Mr. DEUTCH. And if you could, in the few seconds we have left, Madam Secretary, could you speak more broadly about the important role that that would play? In this budget debate that is going to take place, why is it so important for us to continue to fund this?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, let me just give you an example, Colombia. Colombia, 15, 20 years ago, was in a very difficult state. It had an insurgency. It had a drug cartel that was basically controlling territory. The United States stepped in, worked with the Colombians, and the progress, I think, is evident for all to see. There was a front page article in the travel section about go to Medellin. That is what America can do. We don't do it ourselves. We partner with willing governments to help them acquire the capacity to protect their own citizens.

Chairman ROYCE. We will go to Mr. Joe Wilson of South Carolina.

Mr. WILSON OF SOUTH CAROLINA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Madam Secretary, thank you for being here today, and I particularly appreciate your recognition of AFRICOM, and Plan Colombia. Indeed, these have been extraordinary success stories promoting peace throughout the world.

The American people will always appreciate as American heroes, Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty.

As we begin, I do want to point out, though, for the record, I believe that Congressman Rohrabacher is correct; there was an e-mail from the Chief Financial Officer for Diplomatic Security following the Benghazi attack, specifically, "Although diplomatic security has been fiscally prudent, I do not feel that we have ever been at a point where we sacrificed security due to a lack of funding." That actually is an attribute to you, and I have faith in the chief financial officer that it is a correct statement.

As we begin, it has been reported that since you managed the response to Benghazi attack, why weren't you the person to appear on the Sunday shows immediately following the attack? Ambassador Susan Rice said that you declined. Was that correct?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, I have to confess here in public, going on the Sunday shows is not my favorite thing to do. There are other things that I would prefer to do on Sunday mornings. And, you know, I haven't been on a Sunday show in way over year. So it just isn't something that I normally jump to do. And I did feel strongly that we had a lot that we had to manage, that I had to respond to, and I thought that is what should be my priority.

Mr. WILSON OF SOUTH CAROLINA. And I believe that part of the priority is telling correct information. And you could have done that, and I think it was very unfortunate—the multiple appearances by Ambassador Rice with information that has been discovered not to be correct.

In the November 21, 2012, edition of the Charleston Post and Courier a letter was published by William J. Boudreau, a retired Foreign Service Officer of Seabrook Island. He wrote,

> "Within the U.S. State Department, there is an office known as Op Center. It is located in the Office of the Secretary of

State. It is staffed around the clock, 24/7, by seasoned Foreign Service Officers. Its function is to be sensitive to any threat to American interests wherever they might arise. The Op Center has direct secure communication lines to the White House Situation Room, the National Military Command Center at the Pentagon and, the CIA's Op Center. Having worked as a watch officer at the Op Center, I know that any information that indicates a threat to the safety of American citizens overseas is passed to other agencies mentioned above. If it is of significant message concerning American interest is received, it is the watch officer's job to ensure that these other agencies are informed."

He goes on, there are many questions that need to be answered, and I would like to present these questions on his behalf. First and foremost, what was going on at the Op Center at the State Department in Washington while our consulate was under attack for 7 hours?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, we can certainly give you greater detail, but the Op Center is, as you have described, the place where communications go in and out. They were placing calls. They were receiving calls. They were deeply engaged in trying to help us. They don't reach out on their own, but to help us acquire information so that we could respond in real time.

Mr. WILSON OF SOUTH CAROLINA. And 7 hours, I mean, goodness gracious, there should have been a response. Why the delay in labeling the attack as terrorism when it was immediately known that it was.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, you know, again, I would say, Congressman, that we described the attack, I described the attack the next morning; the President called it an act of terror. There with a, as you will find in reading both the unclassified and classified version of the ARB, there was a lot of questions about who was behind it, what motivated it, and the ARB says those questions are still not fully answered today.

Mr. WILSON OF SOUTH CAROLINA. And he continues, why weren't Marine guards posted in Benghazi in the first place?

Secretary CLINTON. Because historically Marine guards are at posts where there is classified information. Marine guards have not historically had the responsibility for protecting personnel. Their job is to protect and, if necessary, destroy classified material. At our compound, there was no classified material.

Mr. WILSON OF SOUTH CAROLINA. He continues in line with everybody else pointing out that there were requests to enhance security that were denied. We weren't able to reach all the questions, but I appreciate your responding to Mr. Boudreau's questions. I will submit them for the record to your office for a written response.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you, Congressman.

Chairman ROYCE. Karen Bass of California.

Ms. BASS. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Chairman Royce and Ranking Member Engel, for convening this hearing.

Secretary Clinton, I want to take the time to thank you for your willingness to come before this committee for the final time. And

I want to offer my sincere and deep gratitude for your remarkable service to our Nation. I am also very glad to know that you are feeling much better.

For the past 4 years and well before, you have put country first, and for that, our Nation is indebted to you. With confidence and careful consideration, you have shown extraordinary leadership on countless issues, ensuring that diplomacy is an essential part of our country's foreign policy. And your tireless effort to elevate women and girls' rights is without comparison. You have strengthened our State Department, made it better today than when you arrived.

As the ranking member on the Africa Subcommittee, I am especially appreciative of the attention you have given to the 54 nations of Africa. While Africa may lose one of its most steadfast and dedicated champions at the State Department, I trust Africa will not be far from your thoughts and will remain a top priority in your future work.

I also want to associate my comments with Congressman Sherman, who said that it is unfortunate that it is the last time we will hear from you, so I want to focus my time on moving us forward and asking your advice. You made reference in your testimony about best-value contracts and you mentioned, I believe, several nations where best-value contracts are not used. And in thinking about Africa and the instability in a number of nations in Northern Africa, Central Africa, Mali, what we are dealing with now, I want to know whether or not those nations are subject to those types of contracts and whether or not exemptions or waivers should be made, what should we do?

Secretary CLINTON. Congresswoman, thank you very much for your emphasis on Africa, which I think is going to be increasingly important. There are only three nations where the State Department has an exemption by Congress for using different contracting rules in order to get the best value for our country. Those are Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, so every other country in the world we are under the kind of contracting rules that I think do interfere with our capacity to get the best deal, particularly when it comes to security, that we should in these countries where the threats, unfortunately, are going to always be with us.

Ms. BASS. Should we look to extend that to Mali, to the DRC, to Somalia?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, I would certainly recommend—there was an article in I think one of the newspapers today that went into some detail—basically, here is how it started, for more than two decades, Federal laws required the State Department to select the cheapest rather than the best contractor to provide local guard services at its Embassies abroad. And you know, there is that old saying, you get what you pay for. And this lowest-price provision started off in 1990, but it has just stayed with us, and I would respectfully request that this committee take a hard look at it.

You can't do a total lifting of it for everybody, at least look at the high-threat posts, where, obviously, we did it for Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the countries you are naming are countries that I think would fall into that category.

Ms. BASS. Well, thank you very much.

Among the various Islamic extremist groups operating in Africa today AQIM, al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, to name a few, in your view, which pose the greatest threats, direct threat to the United States? And then, given the limited capacity and, in some cases, the limited political will of the countries in which these groups operate, are U.S. military, intelligence and security assistance resources devoted to these threats adequately or appropriately balanced? And what recommendations would you have for us?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, I think if you are focusing just on North Africa, al-Qaeda is a brand name, as much as an organization, people wake up, they form these jihadist groups, they then claim to be associated with, somehow affiliated with al-Qaeda in order to gain some credibility with local people, as well as beyond.

I think that we have to take seriously all of these terrorist groups, whatever they call themselves. Now, at the moment, they don't necessarily have either the interest or the ability to attack our homeland, but we have a lot of facilities. We have lot of assets in North Africa. We just saw Americans killed and held hostage at a gas facility because we do business all over that continent. So I think we have to take a hard look at all of them and constantly be upping our military and intelligence and diplomatic assets to deal with them.

Ms. BASS. Thank you very much.

Chairman ROYCE. I would like to just take a moment and explain to the gentlelady, we passed last year the best-value contract language that you are speaking of in the House appropriations measure. We are going to try to get our colleagues in the Senate to take that measure up.

We go down to Mr. McCaul from Texas.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Madam Secretary. Thank you for your service.

Similar to September 11, 2001, there were warning signs prior to Benghazi September 11. There was an April 6, 2012, crude IED thrown over the wall of the U.S. Facility in Benghazi. On May 22, 2012, Red Cross building in Benghazi hit by two RPGs. The brigades of the imprisoned Blind Sheikh took responsibility for that attack. On June 6, 2012, U.S. consulate in Benghazi was targeted by an IED, an attack that blew a hole in the perimeter wall. Again, the Blind Sheikh brigade took credit. And then, on August 16, we had this cable that has been widely reported, a classified State Department cable warning that the Benghazi consulate could not withstand a coordinated attack. And the regional security officer believed our consulate could not be protected at an emergency meeting less than 1 month before the attack on 9/11. A contingency plan was supposedly drafted to move the operations to the CIA annex about a mile away from the compound. This cable was presumed to have been shared by senior staff. It was sent to your office. It was sent to the NSC. And even on September 11, the day that Ambassador Stevens was killed, he personally warned about "growing problems with security in Benghazi and growing frustration with security forces and the Libyan police." Were you aware of this cable, this August 16 cable?

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, that cable did not come to my attention. I have made it very clear that the security cables did not

come to my attention or above the assistant Secretary level where the ARB placed responsibility; whereas I think Ambassador Pickering said, the rubber hit the road. Now I think——

Mr. MCCAUL. Can I ask, when were you aware of this cable?

Secretary CLINTON. After the ARB began to gather information and material.

Mr. MCCAUL. Who within your office did see this cable?

Secretary CLINTON. I am not aware of anyone within my office, within the Secretary's Office having seen the cable.

Mr. MCCAUL. Within the National Security Council.

Secretary CLINTON. I have no information or awareness of anyone in the National Security Council having seen that cable.

Mr. MCCAUL. Was this cable a surprise to you?

Secretary CLINTON. You know, Congressman, it was very disappointing to me that the ARB concluded there were inadequacies and problems in the responsiveness of our team here in Washington to the security requests that were made by our team in Libya. And I was not aware of that going on. It was not brought to my attention, but obviously, it is something we are fixing and intend to put into place protocols and systems to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Mr. MCCAUL. I certainly hope so. I think when you have a United States Ambassador personally warning about the situation over there, sending this cable to your office——

Secretary CLINTON. If I could, 1.43 million cables a year come to the State Department. They are all addressed to me. They do not all come to me. They are sorted through the bureaucracy.

Mr. MCCAUL. Certainly somebody within your office should have seen this cable, in my judgment. Could I ask one last question?

Secretary CLINTON. Also, I just want to clarify, you know, with regard to the security requests subsequent to the August 16 cable, our personnel in Libya had not submitted any additional security requests to Washington at the time of the September 11 attack. Now there was an ongoing dialogue, as you know, between Libya and Washington.

Mr. MCCAUL. Reclaiming my time, it is very limited. An emergency meeting was held and a cable sent out on August 16 by the Ambassador himself, warning what could happen. And this cable went unnoticed by your office. That is the bottom line.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, the facts as we have them, Congressman, and I will be happy to have people give you this in detail, the August 16 cable stated that security requests for Benghazi would be forthcoming. The RSO in Benghazi submitted to Tripoli a preliminary list of proposed security recommendations on August 23, but no requests were submitted to Washington before the attacks. Now this sounds very complicated, and to some extent, it is. We are trying to simplify it and avoid the kind of problems that are identified.

Mr. MCCAUL. One last question, why was he in Benghazi on September 11?

Chairman ROYCE. Go down to——

Mr. MCCAUL. I will submit that in writing.

Chairman ROYCE. That will be fine.

We are going to go now to Mr. William Keating of Massachusetts.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, I must say that after the tragedy last September, one of the things that just moved me so much were the comments of the family members of one of the heroes who lost their lives, Glen Doherty in Massachusetts. Paraphrasing them, but they told people they shouldn't lose sight over who was ultimately responsible for these deaths and made a statement putting things into perspective here. And the other thing they mentioned was, do not lose sight of the causes that these men gave their lives for.

And as a person who has advanced those causes, I want to thank you for your incredible service as Secretary of State.

Now, one of the parts of the ARB report that is of great concern to me dealt with what they described as a culture of austerity in the State Department.

Madam Secretary, can you take a few moments an expand on the ARB's finding on that subject and how it affects the State Department's ability to carry out crucial tasks, not just security but all crucial tasks?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, that is what the ARB found. They found that there was a culture of husbanding resources, of being quite concerned about responding, even on security, as important as security is, because one never knows what the budget is going to be going forward.

And we have had some ups and downs budgetary wise going back, as I said, into prior administrations, but it is fair to say that many of the professionals in the State Department have really gotten used to worrying greatly that they will give something to somebody, and that will become an expectation that will then have to be taken away. And it did affect the security professional's decisions according to the ARB.

Mr. KEATING. These prioritizations, in my opinion, in this culture has to change, not just for security reasons but our overall mission. Just quickly, with the crisis in Mali and the insurgency there and spreading jihadist threat in Northern Africa, Maghreb, and the Arabian Peninsula. In that area, they are relatively technologically advanced, and there are threats that go along those lines that I am concerned about in terms of cultural austerity there as well.

Cyber threats and other security upgrades that are going to be vitally necessary, and I hope those things are not lost as we review this situation. Can you just comment on what we need in that regard going forward and how much of a threat that may pose to us?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, you mention a word that is rarely mentioned in these hearings but I predict will be a major threat to us and that is "cyber" because it is not only going to be nation states, where we already are seeing cyber intrusions, both against our Government and against our private sector. But increasingly, nonstate actors will have more capacity to disrupt, to hack into, to put out false information, to accuse the United States of things that can light fires before we can put them out.

So I think it is important we have a really thoughtful comprehensive review about the threats of today and the threats of tomorrow, and that will help guide the committee. It will help guide

the Senate and certainly the administration in working together to answer them.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you and—thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think I am going to do something that hasn't been done yet; I am going to yield back the rest of my time.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Mr. Poe of Texas.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, thank you, once again, for your service to our country.

Gordon Rowan from Oregon; Frederick Buttaccio from Katy, Texas; and Victor Lovelady from my district of Atascocita, Texas. Three Americans, overseas killed, not in Benghazi, but killed at a remote gas facility in Algeria. Killed, in my opinion, because they were Americans. Over the last weekend, myself and others have tried to get information. I will just say that there is too much, in my opinion, red tape while trying to get just basic information to the families as to what happened in a situation like that. I would hope that the State Department would look at that protocol and try to streamline it, because people died.

The Algerian Government now reports, after they have captured some of the terrorists alive, some claiming to be from Egypt. One says that, after interrogation by the Algerian Government, whatever that interrogation may entail, that there were Egyptians involved in the Benghazi attack that were at the attack on the gas plant in Algeria. At the time of the Benghazi attack, Ansar al Sharia the next day—a terrorist group, as you know—they claimed responsibility for the attack. We probably don't know if the statements made by the Algeria or, excuse me, Egyptian terrorist that was captured are true, if Egyptians were followed or were involved in that attack or not. It does seem to show that the whole region is very fluid with different groups getting together, causing mischief throughout the entire region.

As of today, several months later after the attack in Benghazi, has, to your knowledge, any person been put currently in custody anywhere, by any government, for the responsibility or as a suspect involved in the Benghazi attack?

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, there is one potential suspect, who has been placed under monitoring by the Tunisian Government. There are other suspects that the FBI are both closely following and consulting with partner governments.

I think, based on my last conversation with Director Muller, which was just a few days ago, he went to Libya. He went to Tunisia. He believes that the investigation is proceeding. I know that the FBI has been up on the Hill doing classified briefings with certain committees; I don't know about this committee. But I certainly hope that the FBI is able to investigate, identify and hold responsible those who waged this attack against us. And I think that, based on their work, they feel that they are pursuing some very positive leads.

Mr. POE. Okay. My understanding is the Tunisian—the person that was held in Tunisia was held by a judge there, and that person has been released. So, basically, we don't really know at this point who did it.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I confirmed with Director Muller, who was just in Tunisia meeting with their high officials, that this person is basically under law enforcement surveillance and forbidden to leave Tunis. Director Muller told me that that had been confirmed to him by the Tunisians.

Mr. POE. Just very briefly, we don't know who—no one has been held accountable, charged with this event. Before Ghadafi was taken out, my understanding is the nation of Qatar shipped in 18 shipments, 20,000 tons of weapons, machine guns, RPGs into the region to help different groups overthrow Omar Ghadafi. Did the United States give a wink and a nod to this?

And I would like a written answer to that, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. We will go now to Mr. Cicilline from Rhode Island.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for your extraordinary service to our country, that has earned you the deep respect and admiration of people all over the world and has enhanced America's standing all over the globe.

Your leadership on women's issues, LGBT equality, supporting emerging democracies and enhancing American national security are too numerous to list. But I want to begin by thanking you for all of your hard work in everything you have done in service of our country.

Thank you also for your testimony today. The terrorist attacks on September 11 in Benghazi, Libya resulted in the tragic deaths of Ambassador Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty. And these are constant reminders of the dangerous work that our diplomats engage in every single day all throughout the world. And while we cannot eliminate all risks, it is our duty to enact protocols and policies that will reduce these risks and to provide all the resources and support necessary to help mitigate and manage those risks.

With that in mind, I hope my colleagues will consider the Accountability Review Board, which you, Madam Secretary, convened, and it calls for, and I quote, "A more serious and sustained commitment from Congress to support State Department needs." This is particularly important, given the implications that the looming sequester as well as potential government shutdown would have on our diplomatic security, especially in high-risk posts.

I also want to take a moment to commend and thank Admiral Mullen and Ambassador Pickering for the comprehensive and prompt review that they conducted and, of course, applaud you, Madam Secretary, for the adoption of all 29 ARB recommendations and for promptly undertaking that implementation and providing guidance on the status of that implementation here today.

And just to say, there has been some discuss about the importance of getting to the nitty gritty and fixing problems, and I hope that we will rely on the security professionals and the expert advice and recommendations of the ARB. I think they are much more likely to produce the best response to what needs to be undertaken.

And so I want to ask you, Madam Secretary, one of the things that you did, in anticipation of some of the recommendations, you created for the first time ever a Diplomatic Security Deputy Assist-

ant Secretary, and I think, with respect to the ARB report, the importance of examining the State Department's organization and management as it relates to security planning, my expectation is that that would be one of the responsibilities of this new position. I am wondering if you would just tell us a little bit about the role of this new Secretary within the bureau, what responsibilities the position will have, and will this individual in particular have the authority to reallocate resources in order to fill potential resource gaps if that is one of the challenges they will face?

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you, Congressman, this is a Deputy Assistant Secretary for High-Threat Posts. I want one person held accountable, looking at high-threat posts talking to our military and intelligence partners, being a voice at the table, not just for all 275 posts but really zeroing in on a real-time constant evaluation about what our high-threat posts need.

But in addition to that, we are going to continue our work with the Defense Department and Interagency Security Assessment to threats. I am also for the first time elevating a lot of these security issues for high-threat posts to the Secretary level because it hasn't been there before, and I think, given what we have experienced, it needs to be. We are also looking for the transfer authority to add to our Marine security guards, our construction, and our diplomatic security. We are enhancing the training for everyone.

And we are taking a hard look at another problem that it the ARB pointed out and that was other temporary duty assignments. You know, very often, given especially the experiences we have had in Iraq and Afghanistan and to a lesser extent in some other large posts, we have a lot of our most experienced diplomatic security people going there. I mean, you know, in the—two times we have had serious assaults on our Embassy in Kabul. Kabul is fortified. Kabul has ISAF troops across the street. As they draw down, we have to recognize that the danger is not going to leave with our ISAF military. So we have to take a hard look at all of this and we have to embed that responsibility in this new experienced Deputy Assistant Secretary to do that.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Matt Salmon of Arizona.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you.

Madam Secretary, I appreciate your desire to come before our committee today to testify and answer questions to help us make the changes necessary to ensure the safety of all of our Foreign Service Officers, but particularly those who are making heavy sacrifices serving in high-threat regions.

But I have to say that I am troubled by what seems to be this administration's pattern of misleading the American people and failing to hold decision-makers accountable. From Operation Fast and Furious, where Attorney General Eric Holder has repeatedly misled the American people and Congress about an intentional international gun-walking scheme, to U.N. Secretary Susan Rice, who on five separate occasions went before the American people days after the attacks on Benghazi talking about a demonstration at a facility that never happened. It was not even suggested in any of the reports and information coming from Benghazi.

And I know the purpose of this hearing is to find out how to ensure another Benghazi never happens again. I would hope that we would all include the aftermath of the tragedy, as well. How can we make sure that such gross misrepresentations of attacks on Americans never happen again?

A couple of other questions. I know you have put the four individuals identified as culpable by the Accountability Review Board on administrative leave. What do you anticipate the final resolution of their status with the Department will be?

And the Accountability Review Board did not identify any individuals above the Assistant Secretary level as accountable for the security failures at the Benghazi mission. Now, you have said that the numerous cables requesting and begging for additional security resources sent by Ambassador Chris Stevens were never seen by State officials above Assistant Secretary Eric Boswell or Deputy Assistant Secretary Charlene Lamb.

I know you care very deeply about the people that work with you in the Department. So, given the fact that your testimony is that you never saw any of these multiple requests and nobody above Assistant Secretary level saw these requests, does not that give you some concerns about the flow of information within the Department, and maybe some of your underlings' ability to prioritize and bring serious issues to your attention?

You said that you get hundreds of thousands of cables all the time. And these cables sent directly to you, I understand that you do not read them all, nor do you have the time to do that. But I would think that within the Department you would have people who work for you who are able to prioritize and get to you the ones that are more serious in nature, and especially when somebody's security is on the line.

Finally, President Truman had a placard on his desk that said, "The buck stops here." I know that you have taken responsibility, and I applaud you for that. But I really hope that this isn't just an exercise, another exercise in finding lower-level bureaucrats who we can kind of throw under the bus, and actually get somewhere with this. This is not about a game of "gotcha," but how we can fix this for the future.

And I yield back the balance, and I would love your answers.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, that is exactly what I am intent on doing. And I think the ARB, not I, has made its findings. The reason ARBs were created is to try to take a dispassionate, independent view of what happened and then come up with recommendations that are the responsibility of the Department to implement.

You know, the ARB makes very clear that Chris Stevens, who probably knew more about Libya than anybody else in our Government, did not see a direct threat of an attack of this nature and scale, despite the overall trend of security problems that we faced. And I have to add, neither did the intelligence community. The ARB makes that very clear, that the intelligence community also did not really zero in on the connection between the deteriorating threat environment in eastern Libya and in Benghazi and a direct threat on our compound.

So we have work to do. We have work to do inside the Department, we have work to do with our partners in the DoD and the intelligence community to constantly be taking in information, making sure it does get to the right people, that it isn't somehow stove piped or stalled but that it does rise to decision-makers. And I am committed to improving every way that I can on what the ARB told us to do, on assessing our intelligence.

And I think that it is fair to say, Congressman, that we have to do this now because I predict we are going to be, as we saw in Algeria, seeing all kinds of asymmetric threats, not just to our Government facilities but to private-sector facilities. In Tunisia, although we protected our Embassy, our school was badly damaged. So we have to take a broader view. And I think that the ARB gives us a start, but it is not the whole story.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Grayson from Florida.

Mr. GRAYSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you very much, Secretary Clinton, for your contributions to securing America's place in the world for the past 4 years and for your contributions toward world peace.

The first question I would like to ask you has to do with the Accountability Review Board's report. The report does identify specifically people who were found to have engaged in the Department in systematic failures and deficiencies. I want to be clear about this: You were not one of those people; is that correct?

Secretary CLINTON. That is correct.

Mr. GRAYSON. All right.

Now, it was identified earlier that a report dating from the 1990s had said that the Secretary should take a personal and active role in security. Have you done that during your 4 years at the State Department?

Secretary CLINTON. I have been very attuned to the environment in which threats are occurring, the intelligence that is available; certainly not the specific requests and decision-making, which rests with the security professionals.

Mr. GRAYSON. All right.

Regarding the security professionals, is there anybody now in existence in the Department who is responsible for reviewing the itineraries of Ambassadors in advance in order to determine whether there is an undue threat to their safety?

Secretary CLINTON. The general answer to that is no. Ambassadors are given what is called "chief of mission authority." Ambassadors, especially those who we ask to go to dangerous posts, are pretty independent folks. Some them might say, well, what do you think about this or that? But most of them make their own decisions.

Chris Stevens did not ask anyone for permission to go to Benghazi; I don't think it would have crossed his mind. Robert Ford, who served as our Ambassador to Syria, went out on numerous occasions to talk to the opposition before we pulled him out of Damascus. We had, you know, very brave Ambassadors like Ryan Crocker, one of our very best, who it would be very difficult to say, Ryan, you can't go do this even though you have decided that you should do it.

But what we are trying to do is to create a more ongoing discussion between our Ambassadors, our bureaus back in the State Department who are regional experts, and our security people so that, at the very least, no Ambassador is taking an unnecessary risk, however that is defined.

Mr. GRAYSON. Well, with regard to Ambassador Stevens, certainly it was brave of him to go to Benghazi on the date that he did. I have to ask you honestly, though, was there anything in his itinerary on the 10th or the 11th that actually specifically required his personal presence?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, he certainly thought so, Congressman. And he did, of course, discuss this with his own security people. Remember, we do have regional security officers in these posts. They are the ones that an Ambassador will turn to.

He believed that it was important for him to go to Benghazi. There were a number of meetings that he was holding and some public events that he had on his schedule. And, you know, he was someone who really believed strongly he had to get out there. And I think, as the ARB has pointed out, he was given great deference by the rest of the government.

Mr. GRAYSON. Do you have any concept of the number of American troops it might have taken to actually create a totally secure environment for him in Benghazi on September 10 and 11?

Secretary CLINTON. No. The number of Diplomatic Security personnel requested in the cables was five. There were five there that night with him. Plus, there was a mutual understanding with the annex that had a much more heavily armed presence because of the work that they were doing in the region.

It is very difficult to, in retrospect, really anticipate what might have been. One of the RSOs who had served in Libya said the kind of attack that the compound suffered had not been anticipated. We had gotten used to, you know, preparing for car bombs and suicide bombers and things like that, but this was of a different nature.

And we even saw that, at the annex, which was much more heavily fortified, had much more heavy military equipment, we lost two of our best and had one of our Diplomatic Security officers badly injured. He is still at Walter Reed. So even the annex, which had more assets in the face of the attack, was suffering losses that night.

Mr. GRAYSON. Thank you very much.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Marino of Pennsylvania.

Mr. MARINO. Good afternoon, Madam Secretary.

In August 2012, prior to the Benghazi attack, the Library of Congress published a report on behalf of a division of DoD called "Al-Qaeda in Libya: A Profile." This report outlined al-Qaeda's growing presence in Libya, particularly in east Libya, where Benghazi is located. Something that was especially alarming to me in this DoD report was the mention that Ansar al-Sharia and other al-Qaeda groups in Libya have adopted the black flag, which symbolizes commitment to violent jihad, promoted by al-Qaeda's senior leaders.

In my hand, I hold a picture of the flag that the Department of State identified to be a prominent issuance of this flag and on the rise in Libya. I also hold a picture of the same flag, same type of flag, in Tunisia, where the protesters were outside the Embassy

there. In addition, I have a flag—a picture that was taken in Cairo at the U.S. Embassy, where demonstrations took place. Another picture in Jordan at the U.S. Embassy, where protests took place. In Bahrain, over 2,000 protesters who burned numerous U.S. and Israeli flags, again at the Embassy. In Kuwait, U.S. Embassy, 500 demonstrators chanting, "Obama, we are all Osama," the flag again. And finally in Libya, the U.S. compound, the flag was flown there and carried through the streets, as well.

My question, Madam Secretary, is, were you aware of this DoD report prior to the terrorist attack in Benghazi?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, I was certainly aware of a number of reports from throughout our Government. I don't know of the specific one that you are referring to. There were DoD reports, intelligence community reports, State Department reports talking about the decreasing—or the increasing threat environment in eastern Libya. That was what we were trying to address with the Libyans.

And remember, the election in July in Libya brought to victory what we would consider moderates, people who had a very different view of the kind of future than, certainly, al-Qaeda or any of these militants have.

But there is going to be a struggle, there is going to be a struggle in this region. And the United States has to be as effective in partnering with the non-jihadists, whether they fly a black flag or any other color flag——

Mr. MARINO. I clearly understand that——

Secretary CLINTON [continuing]. To be successful.

Mr. MARINO [continuing]. Madam Secretary.

Secretary CLINTON. What?

Mr. MARINO. I clearly understand that. However, this flag was pointed out to be affiliated with al-Qaeda terrorists who attack and kill United States citizens and other individuals around the world.

Did anyone in your department below you, were they aware of this report and these photos prior to? And don't you think they should have brought this to your attention?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, what I am trying to say, Congressman, is I am well aware that there were people claiming to be associated with al-Qaeda that were attempting to influence militias, attempting to exercise more authority, along with a number of other groups that didn't necessarily work under that flag but had the same militant jihadist mentality.

So, yes, I was certainly aware of that. And so was Chris Stevens.

Mr. MARINO. But my point——

Secretary CLINTON. And so was our team in Libya.

Mr. MARINO. But my point is this flag kept coming up, and you did not think that that was important enough to increase security, when, after how many Embassies where this flag was shown in demonstrations? I personally think that it would demand an increase in security. And those below you that might have known this should have brought that to your attention.

Secretary CLINTON. Well——

Mr. MARINO. I come from industry. I come from government. And there are individuals that just have to be cut loose when they are not performing their tasks. Are these three people that are on leave, are they still being paid?

Secretary CLINTON. They are on administrative leave, and under Federal law and regulations, they are still being paid.

Mr. MARINO. What is the holdup?

Secretary CLINTON. Because there are regulations and law that have to be followed.

Mr. MARINO. No, no. Well, what is the holdup from a management perspective of saying, you three let me down, this should have been brought to my attention, I no longer need your services?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I would be happy to give you an answer, because personnel discussions are not appropriate for public settings. But we have taken every step that was available, and we will continue to do so, and we are looking for additional authority.

But to just finish up on the point you made, we had good security at all of those Embassies, other than in Tunisia because of the newness of the government. And then when they were asked to respond, they did.

Because I go back to the point that was made on the other side of the aisle: We are dependent on host-government support. And where it doesn't exist, unless we invade and unless we have a big military presence in a country, we are doing the best we can with our Diplomatic Security and private security guards and any other help we can get.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Vargas of California.

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity.

And thank you very much, Madam Secretary, for being here. I also want to thank you for the excellent work that you have done not only here in the United States but across the world. I have to say that because it is true, one, and, secondly, I don't think that my wife, my 16-year-old daughter or my 9-year-old daughter, she would probably even turn on me and wouldn't let me in the house if I didn't say that. You are a hero to many, especially women. And you seem to bring out these deep aspirations that they have in ways that I have never seen anyone do before. So, again, thank you for your service.

When I was reading the information here, it brought back to mind another assassination, murder. I was a Jesuit for 5 years, and I spent some time in El Salvador. And in 1989, there was an assassination of Father Ignacio Ellacuria, Father Segundo Montes, Father Ignacio Martin-Baro, Father Juan Ramon Moreno, Father Armando Lopez, Father Joaquin Lopez y Lopez, and also the housekeeper, Mrs. Elba Ramos, and her young daughter—she was 15-years-old—Celina Ramos. I knew them because I worked with them. Segundo Montes was my superior. And I know the pain that I felt when I heard that they died. I had left the Jesuits by then. And so I know that, as you being the superior of the people who died, I am sure felt the same way.

And that is why I am glad that we brought up the names here today. I think it is important to mention the names: Ambassador Christopher Stevens, Mr. Sean Smith, Mr. Tyrone Woods, Mr. Glen Doherty. Because many of us who have faith believe that they didn't die in vain. And that is why I am very proud that you are here bravely standing before us, trying to figure out what to do.

And one of the things that did trouble me as I read this was the reliance that we have on local security. That is the part that didn't make sense to me. I come from San Diego. We have the Marine Corps there. We have the Navy. We have incredibly good security and service people. Why don't we rely more on them?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, that is an excellent question. And you brought back some very sad memories in talking about the losses that occurred in El Salvador.

You know, we do rely primarily on host-nation support, but we have to take a harder look at the commitment and the capacity of these host nations. And, therefore, in places all over the world, we also have private security guards, some armed, some unarmed. We have Marine guards at many places, about 150, who at least are demonstrating a line of defense. But we have to do more.

And when you ask, why do we rely on these? Well, in part because we don't have military assets everywhere. If you look at the statements particularly by Admiral Mullen, who was our Chairman of our Joint Chiefs, he basically said, look, we have to work together more closely between State and DoD, but it is unrealistic, in his words, to tether our military to every high-risk post.

So part of what we are trying to struggle through with is, how do we make our facilities as secure as possible without turning them into fortresses? Because our diplomats are not soldiers. How do we have reliable private security? The February 17th Brigade was a Libyan Government-supported militia that started defending Chris Stevens when he showed up before Ghadafi fell. They had been reliable, they had been responsive. But they were not particularly available during those first minutes and hours of the attack on our compound.

So we also had contracted with a private security company that had a permit to operate in Libya. Because, you know, the United States, unless we go into a country with massive military force, we, you know, go in and we follow the rules of the country. And we had to get a security force that had a permit from the Libyan Government.

So these are all issues that are being looked at so that we try to fill the gaps that have been identified.

Mr. VARGAS. Well, thank you.

And the last thing I would just correct that you said earlier, that we haven't done enough about promoting ourselves around the world, I think you have. I think you have done a fantastic job. And other than President Kennedy, I don't know of anyone that has had a better image in Latin America. So we thank you.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you very much, Congressman.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Mr. Duncan of South Carolina.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Madam Secretary, let me just tell you, Americans are frustrated. They are frustrated over the handling of Benghazi, what happened when four Americans died there. They are frustrated and sometimes they are downright angry about being, what they think, being misled about what really happened there, being told that this was a protest over a video not just for a couple of days but for weeks on in.

And then they are frustrated when they see comments from you this morning when you said, what difference at this point does it make? I will tell you what difference it makes. It makes a difference when Americans think they were misled about something for political reasons.

In the hearing this morning, you mentioned that we were clear-eyed about the threats and dangers as they were developing in eastern Libya. Madam Secretary, if you were really, in your words, clear-eyed about the levels of threat to our consulate in Benghazi, or our special mission in Benghazi, then you should have known about Chris Stevens' memo, I believe of 16 August, that said our consulate could not be defended from a coordinated attack.

The question Americans have is, did he expect an attack? If you were clear-eyed, then why did your department reject the request, I believe on 7 June, for 16 additional security agents, the site security team that would have been funded by DoD, not a State expenditure?

If you were clear-eyed, shouldn't you have known that there was no real Libyan Government to turn to for security assistance? You answered that question from Mr. Meeks earlier, when you said you were unsure about the Libyan Government and their ability to provide that assistance.

If you were clear-eyed, were you clear-eyed about al-Qaeda's displeasure with whom we seemed to be supporting during the summer elections, the moderate that was elected?

If you were clear-eyed, shouldn't you have known that al-Qaeda roamed freely in and around Benghazi? As my friend from Pennsylvania pointed out, there were al-Qaeda flags not just at the protest, there were al-Qaeda flags flying all over Benghazi.

If you were clear-eyed, were you clear-eyed when the Brits left Benghazi because they had the attack? Why did four Americans die? What was so important that Ambassador Stevens, if he knew there was a security threat in Benghazi—and he went there on September 10 and 11 and gave his life for our country—what was so important for him to go to eastern Libya, knowing all these threats, knowing the memos are clear?

And I think you misspoke earlier when you said that you didn't know of any requests that were denied for more security. June 7 e-mail exchange between Ambassador Stevens and John Moretti, when he requested for one MSD team, or, actually, an additional MSD team. And the reply from John Moretti said, unfortunately, MSD cannot support the request. There was a request made for more security, and it was denied on June 7.

And so, Madam Secretary, you let the consulate become a death trap, and that is national security malpractice. You said you take responsibility. What does responsibility mean, Madam Secretary? You are still in your job, and there are four people at the Department of State that have culpability in this that are still in their jobs.

I heard the answer about firing or removing personnel. I get that. But this was gross negligence. At what point in time can our administration and can our Government fire someone whose gross negligence left four Americans dead in Benghazi?

What does the word "responsibility" mean to you, Madam Secretary?

Secretary CLINTON. I think I have made that very clear, Congressman.

And let me say that we have come here and made a very open, transparent presentation. I did not have to declassify the ARB. I could have joined 18 of the other ARBs, under both Democratic and Republican administrations, kept it classified, and then, you know, just said "goodbye." That is not who I am; that is not what I do.

And I have great confidence that the Accountability Review Board did the job they were asked to do, made the recommendations that they thought were based on evidence, not on emotion, not on——

Mr. DUNCAN. There was a lot of evidence——

Secretary CLINTON. Well——

Mr. DUNCAN. Reclaiming my time, there was a lot of evidence that led up to the security situation.

Secretary CLINTON. Well, I am sorry, Congressman——

Mr. DUNCAN. You mentioned transparency? You haven't provided the call logs of the messages, instant messages, during the attack between the post and the operations center. In an air of transparency, will you release these communications between Benghazi, Tripoli, and Washington?

Secretary CLINTON. I will get an answer to you on that. But I will tell you once more, the reason we have Accountability Review Boards is so that we take out of politics, we take out of emotion what happened, and we try to get to the truth. I think this very distinguished panel did just that. And we are working diligently overtime to implement their recommendations. That is my responsibility. I am going to do everything I can before I finish my tenure.

And I would also, going back to your first point about the concerns that people you represented have expressed about statements that were made, I would refer you both to the unclassified version of the ARB, where, after months of research and talking to more than 100 witnesses, the picture is still very complicated about what happened that night. "There are key questions"—I am quoting—"surrounding the identity, actions, and motivations of the perpetrators that remain to be determined." And I recommend that every member read the classified version, which goes into greater detail that I cannot speak to here today.

Mr. DUNCAN. It was a terrorist attack. It is pretty clear what the motivation was.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Schneider.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Madam Secretary, let me again thank you for joining us.

Thank you for opening up the ARB report. We are grateful.

And let me also echo the words of my colleagues and extend my own personal gratitude for your service. You did our Nation well and made our people proud. You have done an extraordinary job as our Nation's top diplomat, and you will be sorely missed.

The Benghazi attack claimed the lives of four brave Americans, including Ambassador Chris Stevens, who had done so much to liberate the Libyan people. Despite the risk involved, he returned to

that country as our Ambassador because he knew the important work of building a new Libya remained unfinished.

America's diplomatic corps dedicate their lives to promoting Americans' interests abroad and knowingly put themselves in danger to serve their country. While we know that these jobs are not without risk, we must do more to support our diplomats.

I am pleased that the State Department conducted a serious investigation, and I appreciate that you have already stated that you will accept every one of the 29 review board's recommendations.

The State Department is increasingly operating in high-threat locations throughout the world, requiring our diplomats to be stationed further afield and closer to dangers on the ground. This not only raises the security risks faced by our diplomats and development experts but also places a strain on existing resources.

As we move forward, how will the State Department evaluate the benefits to U.S. interests from having an official presence in a given location versus the security risks faced by that diplomatic mission? How do you expect the Department will weigh the physical and technical personnel and political costs as opposed to the gains of operating in frontline states? And, last, what changes do you think these demands will require vis-à-vis people and other resources at the State Department?

Secretary CLINTON. Those are very important questions, and I can't do justice to them in the time left, but we will certainly get you additional written information.

But let me briefly say, Congressman, that, you know, I ordered the first ever Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review because, as I said, I served on the Armed Services Committee, where we get every 4 years a Quadrennial Defense Review, which really does help the Armed Services Committees in both houses plan for their authorization, and I wanted to lay the groundwork for us to do the same with the State Department.

In that document, we began what is a very difficult analysis about how to balance and mitigate risk versus presence. It was one of the most challenging aspects of the QDDR process, and we have an ongoing effort under way. Because if you talk to many of our Ambassadors, especially the experienced ones, they really don't want to be told by Washington or anybody where they can go, when they can go, what they can do. They have been in the Foreign Service 10, 20, 30 years or more, and they believe in their missions, and they believe they have a better sense of how to evaluate risk.

At the same time, we do have to be conscious of and make difficult decisions about how to protect not just Ambassadors but all of our personnel and their families in these high-risk posts. It is a constant debate, Congressman.

You know, we have authorized departure, we have ordered departure, and it is something that we take very seriously when we do it. You know, when we left Benghazi on the night of 11th–12th, there were others still there. The Italians were there; the Turks were there. The Italians had just left.

I mean, people evaluate risk over time, and I think it is important to do what we can to minimize it. Some of that will be done by technology, some of that will be done by hard security, and some

of that will be done by what we call soft power. But trying to get the balance right is very difficult.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. As we look forward to the steps taken, we will be in new places, we are going to face new challenges. How do we make sure that we are able to provide the resources to these high-threat, high-risk posts?

Secretary CLINTON. It is very, very difficult. You know, that is going to be a question of new streamlined processes and protocols; sufficient security, both hard and soft; and resources. And we just have to—we have to ask you, based on our best assessment, about what we need to do our jobs.

And sometimes, you know, you have a budget process, and nobody has predicted that you are going to have a revolution against Ghadafi, and then you have to scramble. How do you get somebody into Benghazi? How do you figure out what to do in Tripoli? And I could go down the line and tell you 10 or 20 of those examples that we live with every day.

So it is more of an art than a science, to be honest, because, as of now, we don't have, you know, hard parameters, but we are trying to develop the best we can.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Madam Secretary, I understand that you have a meeting at the White House but have agreed to stay so that members can have a few more questions. We will end by 5 o'clock. And we really appreciate that.

We go to Mr. Kinzinger of Illinois.

Mr. KINZINGER. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, thank you for staying. I really appreciate it. I appreciate your service to your country. And, you know, as was mentioned earlier, we look forward to your next steps. We will see what happens.

Let me just say, I am actually an Air Force pilot. And I have a few concerns I want to lay out here. One of the first things I was told as a pilot in the military is that your country will never leave you behind. If you find yourself down in enemy lines, rest assured your country will move heaven and earth to come get you. If you find yourself in armed conflict, rest assured your country will do everything in its power to come save you from that armed conflict.

Now, as a representative of the administration here, I have to ask you this: From the initial attack to the second attack, there was a lull of 7 hours.

Now, I am going to say this; I was one of a handful of Republicans to vote to support the President's position in Libya. I think we did the right thing there. But I did it with the knowledge that we would have the military forces in place to be able to rescue any personnel in a tough situation.

In that intervening 7 hours, military assets, to what we know, what we can talk about, were not put in place. Aviano Air Base is 1,044 miles from Benghazi. Aviano Air Base is an F–16 base. Airplanes could have been put in the air, after being fueled, even if they didn't have missiles on them. And there can be nonviolent things that F–16s can do to disperse crowds that I know of well. So that is a concern.

Originally, also, when you briefed us, I remember—and this has been, I know, hammered a little bit—but when you briefed us, you said unequivocally this was a result of the video. And I remember, in fact, you got pretty upset about it when somebody suggested that this was a terrorist attack. This was our briefing that we had. But we find out now it wasn't. We find out now that it wasn't the video, it was this terrorist attack.

When we come to talk about the issue of the drone and the surveillance overhead, if there was, in fact, a drone overhead, I would assume that there would be a link in which you could watch what is going on live, or else maybe somebody under you was able to see what was going on live, or else that link was down.

And another question I have, when it comes to—I watched your testimony in the Senate, and you said, you know, part of the reason we had a little bit of delay in understanding what was going on, we did not have immediate access to the security cameras, the security footage. But yet, at the same time, you had mortars being reported as being fired on security personnel. If I would hear that mortars are being fired, I would immediately assume, regardless of whether I could see what is going on overhead, regardless of if I could see the security footage, that this is more than a spontaneous demonstration.

The other question I have, too—I am laying a few out for you—the FEST team, the foreign response team, was that your decision not to deploy that right away? Was that an issue of logistics? Where does that come from?

And the final thing I want to say is this. As, again, a believer, which I think you believe, that we are in a time where it is very important for American leadership to be out in front to prevent a resurgence of jihadist activity, of al-Qaeda activity, I am worried about the strategy of leading from behind.

If the United States Ambassador in Libya—and I say this respectfully—can't get a message forward to the Secretary of State about his concern about security in one of the most hot zones in the world, I worry about a lead-from-behind strategy.

And if we have no assets on alert that can respond in a 7-hour lull in two different attacks in the most hot spot, one of the most hot spots in the world, on 9/11, on the anniversary, is the lead-from-behind strategy failing?

Because I really want American leadership to be strong. I believe in freedom, and I believe we are the people that are going to be able to take freedom around the globe.

With that, I will give you the remaining minute, and I thank you for your generosity.

Secretary CLINTON. And I thank you for your service, Congressman, both in the Air Force and here.

There was a lot packed into that. Let me see what I can cover quickly, and then we will get the rest to you in writing. DoD took every action it could take, starting from the time that the President directed Secretary Panetta and Chairman Dempsey to do so.

Again, I turn to the ARB because that is, to me, a much more factually based finding. The board found no evidence of any undue delays in decision-making or denial of support from Washington or from military combatant commanders. Quite the contrary, the safe

evacuation of all U.S. Government personnel from Benghazi 12 hours after the initial attack, and subsequently to Ramstein, was the result of exceptional U.S. Government coordination and military response and helped save the lives of two severely wounded Americans.

Now, having said that, I think it is very important we do more to coordinate with DoD along the lines of what you are talking about, because who knows what is going to be facing us in the next months and years?

With respect to the video, I did not say that it was about the video for Libya. It certainly was for many of the other places where we were watching these disturbances.

Now, with respect to Predator feed or video of the attack, we could not see that at the State Department. There was no access to that. At no time did I have a live feed of the attack, not from any system in our compound and not from the annex, nor from any UAV. There has been confusion, understandably, because we did talk a lot about the surveillance camera video that eventually got to us.

I will give you more information about that because I think it is important to understand how this happened. And, as you know, Congressman, the annex was not under my authority. So information was flowing into another agency, more than one other agency. And those people were incredibly brave, but overwhelmed as well.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Kennedy of Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member.

And, Madam Secretary, thank you for what I can only describe as a truly exemplary career in public service and a dedication to public service.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you.

Mr. KENNEDY. And I look forward to what the future holds for you, as well.

I have two broad-based questions for you, if I can, Madam Secretary.

You now have obviously held this office for 4 years at an extraordinarily challenging time in our history. We recently passed the 2-year anniversary of the Arab Awakening. We are seeing in the recent headlines, emerging threats from Algeria and Mali across Northern Africa, spreading out through the Middle East—Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

As you close on your tenure, I was wondering if you might be willing to share some important lessons learned from the time that you have spent in this post and enlighten us as to what Congress can do to help respond and even get in front of these threats as you move forward.

And related to that, if I may, assuming that you are going to say what you have said a couple of times about increased engagement at the ground level, how do we do that in areas that are unstable, where we need to depend on local governments or local security forces that, quite frankly, we have seen don't have the ability to provide the type of security that our diplomats are going to demand?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, it is wonderful to see you here. And I thank you for your interest in looking, sort of, into the future.

Let me just make a couple of points.

First, we have a lot of tools that we don't use as well as we should. I think we have abdicated the broadcasting arena, where both in TV and radio, which are considered kind of old-fashioned media, are still very important in a lot of these ungoverned areas, a lot of these difficult places where we are trying to do business. And I think we have to get our act together. I would hope that this committee would pay attention to the Broadcasting Board of Governors, which is in desperate need of assistance, intervention, and change.

I think, too, social media is a great tool. We have begun trying to use it much more in the State Department, and not to communicate with just, you know, leaders and officials, but really, as you say, get down into the grass roots.

We have also—I started two organizations to deal with countering violent extremism: One, a new operation inside the State Department that is staffed with interagency experts so that—you know, I am not saying anything that is classified, but it is beginning to try to respond to al-Qaeda and other jihadist propaganda. So if they put up a video which talks about how terrible Americans are, we put up a video which talks about, you know, how terrible they are. We are trying to meet them in the media channels that they are communicating with people.

We are also at the beginning of an organization I helped to stand up, the Global Counterterrorism Forum. Because if we don't work with partners and understand more effectively how to counter violent extremism, how to stop recruiters, how to turn families and communities against these jihadists, there will be a constant flow of them. So we have to be smarter about that.

And there are other things that I would, you know, like to share with you and others on the committee who are interested.

You know, it is not a perfect analogy, but I would say that our fight against international communism, against the Soviet Union, during the cold war, we did a lot of things really well. I mean, we kept people's hopes alive, we communicated with freedom lovers and advocates behind the Iron Curtain. We did it through media, we did through our values. Well, I think we have a similar challenge, even though it is a very different world. And let's get smart about it, and let's figure out how we are going to put some points on the board, so to speak, in dealing with both governments and populations.

And if I could, just very—I know that Representative Duncan has left, but his question took me a little by surprise because our ops center does not do instant messaging. So the reason you haven't gotten instant messaging is we don't do instant messaging. So I wanted to put that into the record and hope that his staff or someone will convey that to him.

Thank you.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you.

We will go to Mr. Brooks of Alabama.

Mr. BROOKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Secretary Clinton. It is an honor to be here today. And I want to thank you for the time that you have spent with us and with the Senate, for that matter. I am sure it has been a long day.

It has been my experience that truth without credibility is meaningless, and credibility, once lost, is difficult to reacquire. My concern is the degree to which false statements about Benghazi have damaged America's credibility not only here but also abroad.

I don't focus on any of your statements in that regard; rather, I focus on some others. On September 16, 2012, on Meet the Press, Ambassador Susan Rice stated, and I quote,

> "What happened in Benghazi was, in fact, initially a spontaneous reaction to what had just transpired hours before in Cairo. Almost a copycat of the demonstrations against our facility in Cairo, which were prompted, of course, by the video."

Now, let me break this statement down to three parts, if I might. And I would ask you to confirm, based on the data we now have, whether her comments were true or false.

Secretary Clinton, is Ambassador Rice's statement that Benghazi was a spontaneous reaction to the Cairo protests factually accurate?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, I think if you look at the ARB finding, Congressman, there is still question about what caused it. So I don't want to mislead you in any way. That is not the weight of the evidence right now. But I think until the FBI completes its investigation, we are not going to know all the reasons why these people showed up with weapons and stormed our compound.

Mr. BROOKS. Well, Secretary Clinton, is Ambassador Rice's statement that Benghazi was a copycat of the Cairo demonstrations factually accurate?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, it turned out not to be because the Cairo demonstrations were not heavily armed, and we did eventually get host-nation security support. So there were differences.

But, again, I would say that Secretary Rice conveyed information that had been provided by the intelligence community and the interagency process.

Mr. BROOKS. I am not trying to go into the process right now. I am just trying to determine what the truth is as best we know at this time.

Secretary Clinton, is Ambassador Rice's statement that Benghazi was "prompted, of course, by an anti-Muslim video" put on the Internet in the United States factually accurate?

Secretary CLINTON. I would have to go back to my first answer, Congressman, and just say that we don't know all the motivations, so I don't want to give a sweeping answer as to what prompted those men to come out that night and attack our compound.

Mr. BROOKS. Okay. Well, on September 16, the very same day U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice made her statements to the American people and the world, Libyan President Mohammed Magariaf said on NPR that the idea that this criminal and cowardly act was a spontaneous protest, that it just spun out of control, is completely unfounded and preposterous. We firmly believe that this was a

precalculated, preplanned attack that was carried out specifically to attack the United States consulate.

As we now know, from everything I have read at least, the Libyan President told the truth. Contrast that with the statements by Ambassador Rice, to the United Nations. It forces one to wonder whether Libya's intelligence was that much better than America's on September the 16th or whether Libyan leaders were that much more willing to be candid or to avoid misstatements.

Secretary Clinton, what evidence was there that was so compelling that it caused the White House, through Ambassador Susan Rice, to make these representations about spontaneous protests, anti-Muslim videos, and the like, despite evidence and statements of Libya's own President to the contrary? You know, if she is going to make these statements, an affirmative act on her part, where was the compelling evidence, and what was it?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I was not involved in the so-called talking points process. My understanding is it was a typical process trying to get to the best information available. It was an intelligence product. They are, as I again understand it, working with their committees of jurisdiction to try to unpack that.

But I will say that all of the senior administration officials, including Ambassador Rice, who spoke publicly to this terrible incident, had the same information from the intelligence community.

Mr. BROOKS. If I might interject. I appreciate your response so far. But if you are not familiar with any compelling evidence that would support the statements made by Ambassador Rice, who would know?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, there was evidence, and the evidence was being sifted and analyzed by the intelligence community, which is why the intelligence community was the principal decider about what went into talking points.

And there was also the added problem of nobody wanting to say things that would undermine the investigation. So it was much more complex than I think we are giving it credit for, sir.

Mr. BROOKS. Thank you for your candor, and thank you for your time.

Chairman ROYCE. The ranking member and I have discussed going to 3 minutes for questions from here on out. And, without objection, that is what we will do.

Let's go to Mr. Bera from California.

Mr. BERA. Secretary Clinton, thank you for appearing before the committee today.

You know, as a new Member of Congress, I think I speak for all the freshmen that we are not going to get much time to serve with you, but we hope in a few years we will get that chance to serve again.

You know, from my perspective, the tragedy in Benghazi was the loss of four American patriots. That loss was felt pretty deeply in northern California, particularly around Ambassador Chris Stevens. You know, his family had deep roots in our community.

The best way for us to honor their memory and their service is to do our utmost to make sure the lessons of Benghazi—and do everything that we can to honor and protect our men and women around the world, you know, in an increasingly dangerous situa-

tion. You have been very forthright today and forthcoming with information, and we truly appreciate that.

You know, much has been made today about the flow of information, but I want to quote former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, who said after the ARB was issued, "As someone who has run large organizations—and the Secretary of State has been very clear about taking responsibility here—it was, from my perspective, not reasonable, in terms of having a specific level of knowledge that was very specifically resident in her staff, and over time certainly didn't bring that to her attention." That was Admiral Mike Mullen.

Secretary, how many cables did you say arrive every year to the State Department? One-point-four million? Can you tell me how long it takes you to read 1.4 million cables?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, if I had ever tried to read 1.4 million cables, I don't think I would be sitting here today. I would probably be, you know, collapsed somewhere.

You know, I appreciated what Admiral Mullen said because when you do sit on top of large organizations—in his case the United States military, which is huge, and in my case the State Department and USAID—you put into place processes. And you have to trust the judgment, the good sense of the people in your organization.

So those 1.43 million cables, they come into the State Department. You know, the tradition is they are all addressed to me, but, you know, the vast, vast majority are funneled through these processes to get to the right people, who are expected to take the right actions. And 99.9 percent of the time people do.

I want to reiterate that. It is an incredible organization, with dedicated people, particularly our security professionals, who have stopped so many attacks, protected so many people. But occasionally we see a serious problem like we have seen here, and that is what we are trying to fix.

Mr. BERA. Well, thank you for your candor.

Secretary CLINTON. Thank you, sir.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Tom Cotton of Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Good afternoon, Madam Secretary. Thank you for coming. We are all here very happy to have you here, very happy for your recovery. I know I bring greetings from many of our mutual friends in Arkansas.

Some of our peers on the other side have expressed their ambitions for your future. I would like to say that I just wish you had won the Democratic primary in 2008.

Secretary CLINTON. I did pretty well in Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. You did.

You said on September 21 that we will not rest until we have tracked down and brought to justice the terrorists who murdered the four Americans at Benghazi.

Secretary CLINTON. Yes, sir.

Mr. COTTON. Earlier today, you said, I certainly hope the FBI is able to investigate, identify, and hold those responsible.

Does the difference in those two statements reflect any concern on your part of the progress of that investigation?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, Congressman, first, congratulations. It is good to see you here.

Mr. COTTON. Thank you.

Secretary CLINTON. No, it does not. But I am conscious of the fact that talking about FBI investigations is something you have to be extremely careful about, for obvious reasons.

I think it is clear, or I hope it is clear, that President Obama, when he says we are going to bring people to justice even if it takes some time, he means what he says. Obviously, the FBI is conducting an investigation. What actions are taken will be determined in the future.

Mr. COTTON. What is the United States Government's position on the role of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the attacks at Benghazi?

Secretary CLINTON. Again, I am not going to prejudge what the FBI determines. We know that there are al-Qaeda related organizations, as we saw from the pictures that were held up, throughout the region, including in eastern Libya. We know that people, like we saw with the recent attacks in Algeria, like to associate themselves with al-Qaeda.

But we have to be careful about what that means. Core al-Qaeda has been severely depleted coming out of Afghanistan and Pakistan. What we are dealing with now are the jihadists who have been associated with al-Qaeda, who have gained, unfortunately, very serious combat experience, coming back to the countries that they left in order to go wage jihad in Central Asia.

So whether they call themselves al-Qaeda or Boko Haram or Ansar al-Sharia, they are all part of the same global jihadist movement. And there may be differences between them, but their goals are unfortunately similar and pose threats to us and our partners.

Mr. COTTON. Both the chairman and Mr. Poe have referenced a Tunisian suspect who has been released. I believe that is Mr. Ali Harzi.

Secretary CLINTON. Right.

Mr. COTTON. On January 8, it was reported in The New York Times.

Do you find it distressing that the Tunisian Government has released that gentleman in light of the hundreds of millions of dollars of aid we have given them over the last 2 years?

Secretary CLINTON. At this point, Congressman, I do not, for two reasons.

First, I had a long conversation with high-ranking Tunisian officials about this, as did Director Mueller of the FBI when he was there in person. We have been assured that there was an effort to have rule of law, judicial process, sufficient evidence not yet available to be presented, but a very clear commitment made to us that they will be monitoring the whereabouts of Harzi. And we are going to hold them to that and watch carefully.

Mr. COTTON. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Lowenthal of California.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you, Madam Secretary. First, I also want to compliment you on your exemplary service. But more than that, I really want to say how much I have appreciated your openness, your thoughtfulness today, your transparency.

And what I am struck with in this hearing is a greater appreciation of the courage of State Department personnel. I think we are left with that understanding of just how courageous the personnel have been in taking on assignments that in the past never had been taken on before. And you have ably, I think, presented to us why that is important, why it is important for emerging democracies that we be there.

My question is very similar to the one of Congressman Schneider's, and that was: How do you make that analysis between risk and presence? What are some of the obstacles in making that? How do we move forward with that? And how does the Congress understand some of that kind of balance?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, this is my ongoing hope: That we can get it more right than wrong. Let me just make a few points because it is an issue that I hope this committee takes very seriously.

First of all, you have to remember that when we talk about the State Department and diplomatic facilities, that covers—we are the umbrella for so many other agencies in our Government. If we were not there, many of those agencies' representatives would have a difficult time being there. I mean, we are the diplomatic presence that permits us to pursue law enforcement objectives, intelligence objectives, military objectives, and so much more.

So it is not just about us sitting around and saying, you know, do we really want our diplomats at risk? It is, okay, what are the equities of the rest of the government that would be affected if we decided we had to close shop because the risk was too great? I want to stress that because I don't think you can understand, at least from my perspective, how difficult the calculation is without knowing that it is not just about the State Department and USAID.

Secondly, I don't think we can retreat from these hard places. We have to harden our security presence, but we can't retreat. We have to be there. We have to be picking up intelligence, information, building relationships. And if we had a whole table of some of our most experienced Ambassadors sitting here today, they would be speaking with a loud chorus, like, you know, "Yes, help us be secure, but don't shut us down. Don't keep us behind high walls in bunkers so we can't get out and figure out what is going on."

So that is the balance I have been trying to make for 4 years.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. We will only have time for two more questions. We will end at 5 o'clock.

We will go now to Mr. Cook from California.

Mr. COOK. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

First of all, I want to compliment you. It has been a long, long day. And to survive all these questions and everything, it has been tough.

I want to talk to you about the Marine security guards.

Secretary CLINTON. Yes.

Mr. COOK. And this is from somebody who spent a long time in the Marine Corps but not under the cognizance part of DoD, not under the State Department.

And you had some things in here about additional Marine security guard detachments.

Secretary CLINTON. Yes, sir.

Mr. COOK. And the question is about whether it is prudent to task-organize those assets that are organic to you and perhaps put them in those areas that have the high-threat level. And if you could answer that, I would appreciate that.

Secretary CLINTON. Congressman, that is a very astute observation. I mean, we believe that we need to increase both our Marine security guard detachments as well as our Diplomatic Security and create more synergy and cooperation in these high-threat posts.

The Marine security guards, as you know, are very much a presence on more than 150 of our posts. And in order to give them the facilities and support they need, they need a Marine house, they need to be very close to the Embassy. Because if you saw the recent movie "Argo," you saw the Marines in there, you know, destroying the classified material when the mob was outside in Tehran. They are experts at that; they are people that are totally relied on by the entire mission.

But as I said earlier, historically their job has not been personal security. So we have to figure out, working with DoD and particularly with the Marines, you know—and most of them are very young. You know, I take pictures with them everywhere I go, and usually the sergeants, you know, are older, more experienced, but most of the Marines on duty are quite young.

We have to figure out how we really take advantage of their presence. And that is a conversation we are in the midst of with our DoD colleagues. And with your experience, I would welcome any insight or ideas you have about how we really do use our Marine security detachments better.

Mr. COOK. Thank you very much.

I yield my time.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you.

We will go to Grace Meng from New York.

Secretary CLINTON. Congratulations, too, Grace.

Ms. MENG. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member.

Madam Secretary, it is wonderful to see you here again. And if you have any advice for a fellow New Yorker finding her way around this town, please let me know.

As a woman and as a mom, thank you so much for being a role model for women not only in the United States but all throughout the world. Thank you for your compassion and leadership always.

I am curious, in the past weeks we have seen the French respond decisively to the situation in Mali. The African Union has fought well in Somalia. Do you see this as an advancement of multilateralism in combating Islamic extremism in the Middle East, in Africa? And what more can we ask from allies in that area?

Secretary CLINTON. Well, congratulations, Grace.

And that is an excellent question because I think that is exactly what we are coping with right now. I am very proud of the work we did with African nations to stand up, financially support, and train the AMISOM force that has driven al-Shabaab out of the dominant position that it had. That meant putting American trainers, working with troops from Uganda, Burundi, Djibouti, eventu-

ally Kenya, advising some other countries that were willing to put in assets. It took money, it took time. But we just recognized the new Somali Government, which could never have been possible without American support and multilateralism because the U.N. was strongly behind it, we got other nations to invest.

What we are looking at now in West Africa is to try to help support an African, AU-blessed, ECOWAS-supported troop combination from a number of countries to really take the lead against the terrorists in northern Mali.

Again, this is hard. If the United States comes in and does something on our own—and I appreciated what Congressman Kinzinger said—you know, nobody can match us in military assets and prowess. But a lot of the challenges we face are not immediately or sustainably solved by military action alone. Therefore, we have to get countries in the region to increase their border security, to increase their antiterrorist, counterterrorist efforts inside their own borders. We have a lot to do now in West Africa.

So I think you are right to point out the United States has to play a role, but it needs to be part of a multilateral effort in order to have a chance at success.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

We have discussed many important issues. I remain concerned about whether the Accountability Review Board captured the full picture of what happened. But I think we can agree to work together moving ahead to improve security in a number of different areas.

This hearing now stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:02 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. 20515-6128

Edward R. Royce (R-CA), Chairman

January 23, 2013

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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 Committee website at **http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov**):

DATE: Wednesday, January 23, 2013

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Terrorist Attack in Benghazi: The Secretary of State's View

WITNESS: 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 *Wednesday* **Date** *January 23, 2013* **Room** *2172*

Starting Time *2:02 p.m.* **Ending Time** *5:03 p.m.*

Recesses *0* (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Edward R. Royce

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☑
Executive (closed) Session ☐
Televised ☑
Electronically Recorded (taped) ☑
Stenographic Record ☑

TITLE OF HEARING:

Terrorist Attack in Benghazi: The Secretary of State's View

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

See Attached Sheet

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Sheila Jackson-Lee

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.)*

Statements for the Record: Connolly, Higgins, Marino, Messer, Wolf

Questions for the Record: Chabot, Collins, Duncan, Holding, Kinzinger, Marino, McCaul, Meadows, Messer, Radel, Rohrabacher, Royce, Wilson, and Yoho.

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *5:03 p.m.*

Jean Marter, Director of Committee Operations

"TERRORIST ATTACK IN BENGHAZI: THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VIEW"

JANUARY 23, 2013

Present	*Member*
X	Edward R. Royce, CA
X	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
X	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FL
X	Dana Rohrabacher, CA
X	Steve Chabot, OH
X	Joe Wilson, SC
X	Michael T. McCaul, TX
X	Ted Poe, TX
X	Matt Salmon, AZ
X	Tom Marino, PA
X	Jeff Duncan, SC
X	Adam Kinzinger, IL
X	Mo Brooks, AL
X	Tom Cotton, AR
X	Paul Cook, CA
X	George Holding, NC
X	Randy K. Weber, Sr., TX
X	Scott Perry, PA
	Steve Stockman, TX
X	Ron DeSantis, FL
X	Trey Radel, FL
X	Doug Collins, GA
X	Mark Meadows, NC
X	Ted S. Yoho, FL
X	Luke Messer, IN

Present	*Member*
X	Eliot L. Engel, NY
X	Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, AS
X	Brad Sherman, CA
X	Gregory W. Meeks, NY
	Albio Sires, NJ
X	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
X	Theodore E. Deutch, FL
	Brian Higgins, NY
X	Karen Bass, CA
X	William Keating, MA
X	David Cicilline, RI
X	Alan Grayson, FL
X	Juan Vargas, CA
X	Bradley S. Schneider, IL
X	Joseph P. Kennedy III, MA
X	Ami Bera, CA
X	Alan S. Lowenthal, CA
X	Grace Meng, NY
X	Lois Frankel, FL
X	Tulsi Gabbard, HI
X	Joaquin Castro, TX

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD OF THE HONORABLE TOM MARINO

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
"TERRORIST ATTACK IN BENGHAZI: THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VIEW"
January 23, 2013

The deliberate terrorist attacks against U.S. embassies and American values on September 11, 2012 are a firm reminder that we must take threats from terrorist organizations, like al Qaeda, very seriously. Unfortunately, these attacks also highlight the fact that the Obama Administration's wishful thinking that the United States can negotiate with terrorists and see positive outcomes fails to recognize the totality of the danger in underestimating the enemy.

In August 2012, the Library of Congress and the Department of Defense issued an eye-opening report *Al Qaeda in Libya: A Profile*. Just weeks before the attacks in Benghazi, this report noted the growing presence of the al Qaeda-affiliated group Ansar al Sharia, which is based in Benghazi, and al Qaeda training groups in east Libya, within a few hours of Benghazi.

This report also mentioned that Ansar al Sharia has adopted a black flag similar to al Qaeda's, which we saw protestors waving in anti-American demonstrations on September 11, 2012 in Benghazi, Bahrain, Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, Tunisia and elsewhere. The State Department knew this flag had been adopted by al-Qaeda affiliated jihadist groups and it had access to the DOD report highlighting the increased presence of such groups in the area. This flag was clearly attributed to people who attack and kill Americans and it is unfathomable that it took State Department officials two weeks to connect the dots and confirm that these were all terrorist attacks committed by al-Qaeda.

The American people deserve answers as to not only why State Department officials failed to take the growing threat of al Qaeda in Libya seriously, but also why officials were either incapable or unwilling to announce that al Qaeda orchestrated these attacks.

Flag of Ansar al Sharia included in *Al Qaeda in Libya: A Profile*

Protestors in Bahrain

Protestors in Cairo, Egypt

Protestors in Jordan

Protestors in Kuwait

Protestors in Benghazi

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)

HCFA Full Committee Hearing: Terrorist Attack in Benghazi: The Secretary of State's View
Wednesday, January 23, 2013
2pm

Today's hearing on the attack at the American embassy in Benghazi is the fourth House inquiry on this subject in as many months. Hopefully it will be the first to actually address the substance of how this tragedy that resulted in the deaths of four Americans, including Ambassador Chris Stevens, occurred and how we can improve security to prevent such attacks in the future.

The reaction to the Benghazi attack differs from the reaction to past attacks on our people and soil. For example, I recall the sorrowful events of October 1983, when a truck filled with 2,500 pounds of TNT slammed into the United States Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, killing 241 U.S. servicemembers. I was a staffer on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at the time and had just visited the barracks in Beirut, and I recall President Reagan and his Cabinet responding to substantive questions about the security of our foreign service personnel rather than to partisan attacks that should stop at the water's edge.

The partisan tenor over Benghazi, however, reached a fever pitch in which some chose to launch a barrage of personal attacks against Ambassador Rice, Secretary Clinton and others. This begs the question—why are the partisans leading this charge so averse to addressing the very real concerns about the security of our personnel and posts overseas? Consider that immediately after the attack, the State Department asked Congress for the authority to reassign $1.1 billion in already appropriated funds to cover the costs of security upgrades at high-risk posts. But that request was not even considered by the House. The transfer authority was included in the Senate's supplemental bill for Superstorm Sandy relief, but that bill died in the 112th Congress after the House leadership refused to bring it up for a vote.

Even more troubling, the House majority actually has led the charge to cut embassy security funding by $886 million compared to the Administration's requests since FY2010.[1] The majority has continued to push for these cuts despite repeated warnings of the risks from career State Department officials. For example, Ambassador Ronald Neumann, Ambassador to Afghanistan during the George W. Bush Administration, told a Senate subcommittee in 2009 that "it is time to stop flinching from the requirement to pay for the mitigation of the dangers we ask our personnel to accept."[2] The philosophy of a meat-ax, indiscriminate approach to spending cuts carries real consequences, and it rings hollow to have some members now ask, "How could this happen?" Moreover, a paucity of resources ingrains a specific culture within any organization, in this case the State Department—namely that every purchase, every expense, must be justified in a time when the threat of even more cuts loom beyond the horizon. State Department officials testifying on the record before this Committee confirmed the resource-conscious mentality that permeated multiple levels of decision-making. This is not surprising,

[1] There are two accounts: the Worldwide Security Protection (WSP) account, and the Embassy Security, Construction, & Maintenance (ESCM) account. Including enduring and overseas contingency operations funding, the House numbers compared to the President's request were (numbers in thousands): -161,473 (FY2010), -97,438 (FY2011), -411,251 (FY2012), -215,810 (FY2013).
[2] Hon. Ronald E. Neumann, *Testimony Before the Senate Homeland Security Subcommittee on Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia,*(transcript), 22, http://psm.du.edu/media/documents/congressional_comm/senate_homeland_security/us_senate_homeland_security_hearing_dec_9_2009.pdf.

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)

as the State Department was operating in a time of austerity and a constant refrain of "more cuts." Is it fair to hold budget-conscious individuals' feet to the fire with one hand while we continually threaten to cut their budgets with the other?

A thoughtful discussion of the Benghazi situation ought to focus on the sequence of events that led to the attacks and the context in which they occurred. The Pickering-Mullen Accountability Review Board's (ARB) report provides a solid basis from which to examine the attacks, which were a tragedy that resulted in the death of four Americans[3] who showed "selfless courage."[4] The release of this report obviates the need for baseless attacks on members of the Administration or the perpetuation of conspiracy theories.

In a letter accompanying the ARB report, Secretary Clinton did not eschew responsibility. Of the almost 70,000 employees of the State Department worldwide, she said, "I am responsible for every one of them, and I am enormously proud to be a part of their team."[5]Immediately after the attack, Secretary Clinton directed the State Department to further protect State Department staff worldwide, ordered an investigation to determine exactly what happened in Benghazi, and intensified a diplomatic campaign aimed at combating the threat of terrorism across North Africa. Secretary Clinton said the ARB report "provides a clear-eyed look at serious, systemic challenges that we have already begun to fix."[6] She accepted each of the report's recommendations and said that "there is no higher priority for me or my Department" than undertaking the implementation of "every recommendation...by the time the next Secretary of State takes office."[7]

As the ARB was investigating the September 11 attacks in Benghazi, the State Department was making its request to reassign already appropriated funds to pursue the following:

- Conducting a worldwide review of its overall security posture.
- Partnering with the Pentagon to dispatch hundreds of additional Marine Security Guards to bolster U.S. posts abroad.
- Realigning resources in its 2013 budget to address physical vulnerabilities and reinforce structures where needed, including with the goal of reducing the risks from fire.
- Hiring additional Diplomatic Security personnel and providing them with the equipment and training they need to face today's security challenges.
- Examining how the Department makes decisions on when, where, and how its people operate, including ensuring that regional Assistant Secretaries assume greater responsibility and accountability for their people and posts.

The ARB report clearly states, "Responsibility for the tragic loss of life, injuries, and damage to U.S. facilities and property rests solely and completely with the terrorists who perpetrated the attacks."[8] The report also paints a clearer picture of the context of post-Revolution Libya and the enemy that our

[3] The four were: Ambassador Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, Glen Doherty.
[4] Ambassador Thomas Pickering and Admiral Michael Mullen, *Accountability Review Board* Report, p.3.
[5] Letter from Secretary Clinton to Senators Kerry, Senator Lugar, Rep. Ros-Lehtinen, Rep. Berman. December 18, 2012.
[6] ARB report., 2.
[7] Ibid., 3.
[8] Ibid., 4.

people are facing in the region—a "growing, diffuse range of terrorist and hostile actors" who "[pose] an additional challenge to American security officers, diplomats, development professionals and decision-makers seeking to mitigate risk and remain active in high threat environments without resorting to an unacceptable total fortress and stay-at-home approach to U.S. diplomacy."[9] Such an enemy would be challenging to face under normal circumstances, and a post-Revolution environment exacerbates the situation. In Libya, the day-to-day situation was characterized by the "security vacuum left by Qaddafi's departure"[10] and a "general backdrop of political violence, assassinations...., lawlessness, and an overarching absence of central government authority in eastern Libya."[11]

With the benefit of hindsight, the ARB report pinpoints management and system failures that resulted in inadequate security on the ground in Benghazi, but it also details growing challenges State has faced "to obtain the resources necessary to carry out its work."[12] Based on this finding, it is clear the availability of resources was and continues to be a major issue for our missions abroad, but you wouldn't know that based on the rhetoric surrounding this subject up to now.

Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen also were brutally honest about the sacrifice that our personnel knowingly face when serving overseas in hostile environments:

> "No diplomatic presence is without risk... And the total elimination of risk is a non-starter for U.S. diplomacy, given the need for the U.S. government to be present in places where stability and security are often most profoundly lacking and host government support is sometimes minimal to non-existent."[13]

Let's not lose sight of the fact that America's foreign aid and diplomatic posts are not just nice things to do. They are important and sometimes dangerous jobs and critical components of our national security policy. These public servants put themselves on the line every single day to advance America's economic and humanitarian interests across the globe, and it is up to us to ensure they have the tools and security they need to achieve that mission.

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[9] Ibid., 2.
[10] Ibid., 15.
[11] Ibid., 16.
[12] Ibid., 3.
[13] Ibid., 2.

January 23, 2013

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HEARING
"TERRORIST ATTACK IN BENGHAZI: THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VIEW"

STATEMENT OF REP. LUKE MESSER

Mr. Chairman, thank you for scheduling this important hearing today. Madam Secretary, I want to thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to appear before this Committee. I know that your tenure as our Nation's Secretary of State is coming to an end and you are looking forward to your next venture. I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

I am a new member to this Committee representing the 6th Congressional District of Indiana, and as I was campaigning over the course of last year, I traveled all over my district, which covers 19 counties, and spoke with thousands of Hoosiers about the issues that concerned them most.

In the days and weeks following the September 11th attack on our compound in Benghazi, I encountered some of the most intense feelings of distrust and anger at Washington. The individuals I met with could not understand how President Obama and his most senior advisers were incapable of grasping what seemed to be obvious to the American public. When something explodes at any U.S. facility on any given day, but especially on September 11th, the American collective mind instinctively thinks terrorism. Instead, the Administration offered up one inconsistent statement after another, and in general, expressed reluctance to characterize the attack as terrorism. Among the excuses was the now discredited home video as the cause for the attack.

This hearing is so important because we are examining the findings of the Accountability Review Board's report not with the purpose of casting blame but rather with the purpose of providing a framework to avoid such tragedies in the future to assist this Committee in providing the necessary legislative remedies. Today, however, we must look back and examine what happened.

Mistakes of judgment were made. Madam Secretary, they were mistakes made by your Department - and your Department alone - and that is why your testimony today is so vital to this Committee's oversight work. I want to know, as leader of the State Department, what responsibility do you believe lies with you. More importantly, what advice would you give to your successor to help ensure the safety of our loyal U.S. employees throughout world?

It was obvious to the world, at the outset, that the attack on our compound in Benghazi was an act of terrorism; however, the narrative coming out of the Administration blamed faulty intelligence reports. Both the Accountability Review Board's report and the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs report acknowledge that there was growing evidence that Benghazi was becoming an increasingly dangerous place.

A United States compound located in a war-torn country is attacked, four of our fellow Americans lie dead and this all happens on September 11th. How could there have been any doubt that this was not an act of terrorism?

Requests from the field for additional security were denied by Washington-based officials. The Accountability Review Board report found that Ambassador Stevens made the decision to travel to Benghazi independently of Washington, per standard practice and that his status as the leading U.S. government advocate on Libya policy, and his expertise on Benghazi, cause Washington to give unusual deference to his judgments. I would like to know why then wouldn't Washington extend the same level of deference to the judgment of the Regional Security Officer based in Libya? Instead, it appears that the Department defaulted to a "Washington knows best" approach and resisted his requests for additional security personnel.

We know from testimony that the refusals were not due to a lack of resources. On October 10th, Charlene Lamb, who was then the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security, was asked "Was there any budget consideration and lack of budget which led you to not increase the number of people in the security forces there? Ms. Lamb responded, "No, sir."

As I read the Accountability Review Board's findings, I am troubled at the extent to which our people in the field had to rely on a Libyan militia for their security. I am also hoping that you can address Libya's responsiveness – or lack thereof - on the night of the attack and in our ongoing investigation. These questions cannot go unanswered.

Let me finish by honoring our fellow Americans who gave their lives - J. Christopher Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty. These Americans exemplify what it means to be a public servant.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you Madam Secretary.

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD OF THE HONORABLE BRIAN HIGGINS

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
"TERRORIST ATTACK IN BENGHAZI: THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VIEW"
January 23, 2013

In previous hearings this Committee has discussed the additional resources needed to shore up physical security in embassies and consulates in high threat areas. We received testimony, for example, that the Department of State has requested an additional 225 marines and 155 new Diplomatic Security agents. I would like to explore the issue further today.

The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations forms the basis for our security arrangements with host countries in which we have diplomatic facilities. The personnel used to secure our facilities is presently comprised of contractors, local militias, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and U.S. Marine detachments.

But the attack in Benghazi demonstrates that in high threat environments the protection from local militias is no substitute for the U.S. military. I believe there needs to be a fundamental shift in U.S. policy regarding who is responsible for providing security for American personnel at all of our diplomatic posts.

I believe a rethinking of our policy is in order to clarify that the U.S. military and Bureau of Diplomatic Security are the parties primarily responsible for the safety and security of our personnel.. If they need additional resources to assume this responsibility, as I am sure they do, that is a discussion that we should have and I hope that will be the basis for a future hearing of the Committee. But we should not ask our brave diplomatic corps to trust their security to host militia whose loyalties may be, depending on the country, divided at best

With this in policy mind I ask that the Department of State consider, investigate and provide an analysis on the benefits and detriments of transferring this responsibility from local militias and private contractors to U.S. security personnel.

Obviously and regrettably it is impossible to eliminate all threats to our personnel; diplomacy is often inherently dangerous work. But the loyalties and capabilities of those guarding our diplomats abroad should never be in question. I look forward to receiving your analysis and thoughts on this issue.

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

The Hon. Frank R. Wolf
Special Order on the Terrorist Attack in Benghazi
January 23, 2013

Mr. Speaker, more than four months have passed since the terrorist attacks in Benghazi -- which killed four Americans, including our ambassador, injured many others and destroyed two U.S. facilities. Yet despite the months that have passed, we're hardly closer to bringing those responsible to justice than we were in the weeks immediately following the attack. Put bluntly: the lack of progress in identifying and hunting down the terrorists responsible is stunning.

Consider the current state of the Obama Administration's investigation and response to the attack:

- Four months later, the administration still cannot – or will not – name the terrorist groups responsible for the attacks, or the names of these groups' leaders.
- Four months later, despite consular video footage and many eyewitnesses, not a single Benghazi terror suspect is in custody.
- Four months later, the FBI has had access to only one suspect, Ali Harzi, for just three hours – and the Tunisian government kept the FBI team waiting for more than five weeks before they were finally granted access.
- Four months later, the administration still hasn't disclosed the serious connections between the groups behind the Benghazi attack and the leaders of the attacks on the U.S. embassies in Cairo, Tunis and Sana'a that same week of September 11.
- Four months later, and following the release of the Pickering Report on State Department failures leading up to the attack, not a single State Department employee has been fired and held responsible for their role in denying adequate security for the consulate in Benghazi.
- Four months later, despite Secretary Clinton's September 21 declaration that, "What happened was a terrorist attack, and we will not rest until we have tracked down and brought to justice the terrorists who murdered four Americans," this administration seems to not only have rested, but have moved on - and apparently hopes that the Congress and the American people will too.

And today, the *New York Times* is reporting "several Egyptian members of the squad of militants that lay bloody siege to an Algerian gas complex last week also took part in the deadly attack on the United States Mission in Libya in September."

Mr. Speaker, four months later, this is an unacceptable state of affairs.

Quite frankly, the Obama Administration has failed. They have failed to prioritize this investigation. They have failed to bring the necessary pressure to bear on the Libyan, Tunisian and Egyptian governments.

But more fundamentally, the administration has failed to respond to a terrorist attack appropriately; treating it as a law enforcement and diplomatic issue rather than as a security issue.

At its core, this is yet another reflection of President Obama's schizophrenic counterterrorism policy. The same administration that unapologetically reigns down lethal drone strikes on some al-Qaeda-affiliated terrorists in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia will not use other counterterrorism resources to identify, locate and detain the terrorists involved in the death of our ambassador in Libya.

This inconsistent policy may stem from the president's hasty campaign promise to shut down Gitmo and prematurely transfer detention facilities in Iraq and Afghanistan. In doing so, the president effectively ended America's ability to detain and interrogate terrorists; depriving the FBI, CIA and other agencies of critical opportunities to obtain information on al-Qaeda networks.

Today, as the case of Benghazi suspect Ali Harzi has demonstrated, the United States is completely reliant on the cooperation of host countries to detain on our behalf and selectively allow access to suspects. And as the case of Harzi has demonstrated, this approach is fraught with diplomatic roadblocks – costing critical time in getting information from suspects to track terrorist networks.

Perhaps that is why President Obama so often opts to use lethal drone strikes to kill terrorists, knowing that the U.S. would be unable to get access to interrogate these terror suspects by working through the host government, or because he no longer has a way to detain them in U.S. custody, short of providing them the full privileges of an Article III court.

In short, the president has tied his own hands, compromised U.S. national security, put the FBI in an impossible position and laid the groundwork for the administration's inept response in the wake of the terrorist attack in Benghazi.

To make matters worse, the administration is not even seeing any significant success from its diplomatic-focused response. When Tunisia refused to allow the FBI access to Harzi for more than five weeks, the administration took no public steps to use diplomatic tools, like U.S. foreign assistance, to pressure the Tunisians to make Harzi available. In fact, the FBI only gained access after members of Congress threatened amendments to cut off or restrict Tunisia's future foreign aid if they continued to obstruct the FBI investigation.

I was among those Members of Congress. In the interim I urged the administration to act immediately to suspend foreign assistant if the Tunisian government persisted in obstructing the investigation. On January 4 I received a tepid response from the acting deputy assistant administrator for legislative and public affairs at USAID, which I submit for the record, with

bland assurances that the Tunisian government was cooperating. Days later Ali Harzi was released. Today, I again wrote USAID, expressing my disappointment that the administrator himself could not respond directly to a Member of Congress who serves on the committee of jurisdiction. And further, pointing out what should be obvious the Tunisian government did not cooperate. The Tunisian government never seriously thought the aid, precious taxpayer money, was in jeopardy. The Tunisian government has not faced a single consequence for undermining U.S. national security. I submit my letter for the Record.

Sadly, the failure to respond forcefully and appropriately to the Benghazi attack will undoubtedly encourage our enemies, and make the world a more dangerous place for Americans working in hostile environments. This failure to respond has endangered future embassy staff and ambassadors the federal employees who serve our country at great risk.

Rather than demonstrating that there will be no quarter, no respite and no safe haven for a terrorist who threatens American officials abroad, the message the administration has sent is that there is no apparent consequence for these actions. This will only embolden our enemy to plan the next Benghazi, knowing that under this administration, there is less consequence than ever for their involvement in such an attack.

In this context, perhaps it is not surprising that the al-Qaeda-affiliated terrorist group Ansar al-Sharia brazenly took pictures of the FBI agents interviewing Harzi and posted the pictures on their Web sites. And when the Tunisian government released Harzi, Ansar al-Sharia was there to welcome him and post a video of their celebration of his release. Again, these antagonistic actions have been met by silence from this administration.

As Steve Hayes and Thomas Joscelyn reported in *The Weekly Standard* this week, "U.S. officials tell *The Weekly Standard* that the release of the photos was a clear attempt to intimidate the Americans and show that the FBI could not act with impunity. In its posting, Ansar al Sharia Tunisia warned the Tunisian people that their government had allowed the FBI 'to begin investigating your sons under post-revolutionary protection.'"

Consider that the same week of the Benghazi attack, our embassies in Cairo, Tunis and Sana'a were also overrun in an increasingly-apparent coordinated plot. In each case, the American flag was ripped down and burnt and a black al Qaeda flag was flown in its place. We are fortunate that none of these incidents resulted in a loss of life; they were nonetheless a public attack on America by hostile groups. As the administration's own State Department Web site states, "any attack on an embassy is considered an attack on the country it represents."

Each embassy and consulate that was overrun the week of September 11 represents, in its own way, a public attack on America. And in the months that have followed, this administration demonstrated that there are no consequences for breaching our embassies or killing our personnel.

I fear that the latest hostage-taking and killing of Americans and other Westerners in Algeria is a manifestation of a newfound confidence by our enemy – knowing that they may face no serious consequences from this administration for their murderous acts. It is telling that

neither President Obama nor any others in his administration have made a public statement on the recent terrorist activities in Algeria.

All the while, the "Arab Spring," which was fanned by this administration to much fanfare, has become an "Arab Winter" for many of the peoples in the Middle East and North Africa. And in this "Arab Winter," a new safe haven for al-Qaeda-affiliated groups is forming – ideologically fueled by the release of terrorists and extremists from prisons and flush with weapons provided to anti-Qaddafi rebels last year.

We are witnessing the potential formation of the next front in the War on Terror, but we increasingly have an administration that no longer considers it a war worth fighting – no matter the cost to American power or the safety of our people abroad.

While some have described the Obama Doctrine as leading from behind, it is increasingly clear that the Obama Doctrine means not leading at all.

While most of the responsibility falls on the president and his administration, the Congress and the media share some blame for failing to adequately investigate and bring attention to the many questions surrounding the administration's response to Benghazi.

Aside from a handful of reporters who have stayed with this story and continued to raise questions about the administration's words and deeds, I can't help but wonder, where are the *New York Times, The Washington Post,* or the network news programs? Why, in the wake of last week's deadly terrorist attack in Algeria, are no reporters investigating the serious links between al-Qaeda's affiliates in North Africa and the connection between the groups?

Equally important, where has the Congress been in investigating both the circumstances of the attack and the administration's response over the last four months? Despite a handful of hearings, many in a classified setting, the American people have not been provided anything close to an adequate answer to the following questions:

- Secretary Panetta, Attorney General Holder and DNI Clapper still haven't testified before Congress – what steps did they take during the attack and in the days that followed?
- What were the President's activities during the seven-hour period of attack?
- Why wasn't the U.S. military deployed to assist? On the anniversary of the worst terrorist attack in American history, and after multiple attacks this year on U.S. and Western interests, why were U.S. military units and assets in the region not ready, alert and positioned to respond? After all, two of the four people killed were murdered *seven hours* after fighting began.
- Why do we still not have clear answers on the internal process that produced the inaccurate, and frankly misleading, talking points on which Ambassador Rice relied several days after the attack?

- Why were the testimonies of the U.S. personnel who were evacuated from Benghazi on September 12 - eyewitnesses who knew there never was a demonstration outside the Consulate - not immediately factored in to the judgments of our intelligence community?

- Why wasn't Sec. Clinton interviewed by the Pickering Commission?

- Was the White House aware of the FBI investigation of Gen. Petraeus? If not, why not?

To date, the Congress has failed to get these answers and has not developed a coordinated or substantial investigative plan to fully explore this critical matter which has a direct bearing on U.S. national security. And in the absence of serious oversight, the media has moved on. And the administration, which has so much to account for to the American people, receives a "carte blanche" from the Legislative Branch to continue its questionable policies.

These matters are too serious to be brushed aside. There are critical legislative decisions the next Congress will have to make based on the answers to these questions. But more importantly, the American people deserve answers to these questions -- including open hearings and an unclassified report.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I remain convinced that a House Select Committee on the Terrorist Attack in Benghazi is needed more than ever. That is why last week I reintroduced my resolution, H. Res. 36, with twenty of our colleagues joining as original cosponsors.

A select committee is essential to combine the myriad existing investigations into a single, comprehensive and exhaustive review. I believe such a combined effort will yield even more information regarding the true nature of these terrorist attacks and the administration's response and will not allow administration officials to offer up siloed accounts to various committees.

The select committee I am proposing should draw from the existing congressional investigations by including the chairman and ranking member of each committee of jurisdiction -- Intelligence, Foreign Affairs, Judiciary, Armed Services, Homeland Security and Oversight and Government Reform -- as well as five additional Republicans appointed by the Speaker and two additional Democrats appointed by the Minority Leader.

I appreciate the support I have received for this resolution from the original cosponsors, as well as the Heritage Foundation, former Senator Fred Thompson, the counsel on the Watergate Select Committee, former Ambassador John Bolton and Gen. Jerry Boykin, a former special operations officer and CIA operative who is widely respected in the intelligence community.

Mr. Speaker, we owe it to the families of the victims, and the American people, to fully investigate this terrorist attack. I urge my colleagues to support my resolution to create a House Select Committee.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#1a)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

In a June 11, 2012, Department email exchange, Deputy Assistant Secretary Charlene Lamb observed the following with respect to Benghazi: "This is very concerning when you start putting the events together: The recent big demonstration that was openly anti-American, the attack on our compound, and now this UK motorcade attack. If the tide is turning and they are now looking for Americans and Westerners to attack that is a gamer changer. We are not staffed or resourced adequately to protect our people in that type of environment. We are a soft target against the resources available to the bad guys there…"

What efforts were made to reevaluate security in Benghazi after this attack on our closest ally?

Answer:

Our personnel both in Libya and in Washington were constantly monitoring the fluid security environment in Benghazi in the months preceding the attack, including the attacks and incidents directed at foreigners. U.S. personnel in both Tripoli and Benghazi convened meetings regularly to review mission security posture, including in response to the incidents that took place over the course of the year.

In response to the deteriorating security situation, a number of steps were taken to enhance physical security at the U.S. Mission in Benghazi, and our personnel on the ground stepped up engagement with Libyan forces, particularly with regard to seeking additional Government of Libya security presence outside the Mission. While it is important to note that the previous attacks were neither of the scope nor the lethality of that of September 11, the ARB found that the response from post, Embassy Tripoli, and Washington was inadequate. We are implementing all of the ARB's recommendations, as well as measures that go above and beyond those steps, to better protect on facilities and personnel.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#1b)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

If senior officials knew our diplomats were not safe and were not adequately staffed, then why did the Department continue to withdraw security personnel such as Mobile Security Deployment (MSD) teams and the Site Security Team (SST)?

Answer:

As I stated in my testimony before the Committee, the State Department was extremely grateful for the responsiveness and support of the Department of Defense in deploying some personnel to provide important services in Libya. The SST was based in Tripoli and was working to help us stand up our Embassy after the fall of Qaddafi. Furthermore, we knew this arrangement was not open ended: the DoD SST was an interim measure, while we identified new personnel and ensured training to meet the evolving needs of our embassy in Tripoli. Approximately 2 percent of SST members' total time in Libya was spent in Benghazi; 1-3 SST members visited Benghazi on four occasions for limited durations. Like the SST, the MSD teams were based in Tripoli, not Benghazi. By the summer of 2012, they had transitioned to training our local guard force and bodyguards in Tripoli in order to get the embassy up and running. Once this training was completed, the MSD teams transitioned out of Libya.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#1c)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Who specifically made the decisions to withdraw the MSD and SST Teams?

Answer:

As I have stated, the DoD SST was an interim measure while we identified new personnel and ensured training to meet the evolving needs of our embassy in Tripoli. By the summer of 2012, the MSD teams had transitioned to training our local guard force and bodyguards in Tripoli in order to get the embassy up and running. Once this mission was completed, the MSD teams transitioned out of Libya. These matters were handled by the security professionals in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Edward R. Royce (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:
Would the Department make these individuals available to the Committee to share their accounts of the events of September 11-12, 2012?

Answer:

The Department appreciates your interest in talking to the five State Department Diplomatic Security agents who survived the attack. At the same time, we have serious concerns about their welfare and want to be careful not to interfere with the FBI's investigation of the attack. One agent is currently recovering at a local military hospital, and the other four have returned to duty. All are security professionals, and we are committed to ensuring their security as they return to the field. Should their identities become public, they may become targets, putting their lives, as well as those of their families and the people they protect, at increased risk.

We have provided Congress with extraordinary access to information related to the attack in Benghazi. We have participated in eight Congressional hearings and more than 20 Congressional briefings, and shared over 25,000 pages of internal records related to the situation in Benghazi, including reporting from the night of the attack. Also, we shared with the Congress the classified and unclassified reports of the independent Benghazi Accountability Review Board, which reflect the input of people on the ground in Benghazi and Tripoli.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#3a)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Multiple e-mails from Benghazi warned that the February 17 Martyrs Brigade was inadequate and could not compensate for a lack of Diplomatic Security Agents. In an April 6, 2012 e-mail, Assistant Regional Security Officer Antonio Zamudia stated that "I can honestly say that I have lost all confidence in their ability or willingness to perform that mission." According to the Accountability Review Board, the February 17 Martyrs Brigades, which provided four armed members as the Special Mission's Libyan security contingent, contained elements with ideologies that are "extremist in nature."

Were you or anyone else within the Department aware of this prior to the attacks?

Answer:

First, it is important to point out that the ARB makes clear after their months of research that the picture remains complicated. The report states that "Key questions surrounding the identity, actions, and motivations of the perpetrators remain to be determined." The FBI and our intelligence community continue to piece this complex picture together.

Second, the email referenced in the question for the record refers to the local guard contract with Blue Mountain, not the February 17 Martyrs Brigade, which Libyan governmental authorities arranged to provide us with security in Benghazi. The constellation of militias in post-Qadhafi Libya is complex, but as the ARB report acknowledges, the February 17 Brigade had been considered to have responded satisfactorily to previous incidents, though its response on September 11 was inadequate.

The Department was aware of the issue with the Blue Mountain guards discussed in the email. Throughout the month of April 2012, Blue Mountain continued to train the guards and to remove those who were not performing to standards. By the first of May, the RSO had reported that guard performance, quality and morale were improved.

Lastly, the issue of host nation security and local guards is of tremendous importance, and that is why when General Dempsey and I deployed Interagency

Security Assessment Teams to high threat posts, and we specifically asked them to assess the capabilities and capacity of these sorts of security assets. As I have stated, we are in the process of reviewing the findings of these assessments, and we will ensure an ongoing conversation with Congress to best address any issues.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#3b)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

If so, then why did the Department use members of the February 17 Martyrs Brigade to guard the Benghazi compound and allow them to live on its premises?

Answer:

The email cited in Question 3A does not refer to the February 17 Brigade but to contract guards from the Blue Mountain group that did not reside at the compound. . As we have stated, host nations generally provide additional protection for diplomatic personnel within their borders, and Libyan governmental authorities arranged for February 17th Brigade personnel to provide us with security in Benghazi. Prior to the September 11 attack on our facilities, the February 17 Brigade had proven effective in responding to incidents at our compound.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#3c)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Were these individuals vetted? If so, when and by whom?

Answer:

The email cited in Question 3A refers to the local guard contract with Blue Mountain, not the February 17 Brigade, which Libyan governmental authorities arranged to provide us with security in Benghazi.

The standard policies and procedures for hiring and vetting local guard force personnel are detailed in the Department of State's Foreign Affairs Manual (12 FAM 321.1) and Foreign Affairs Handbook (12 FAH-6 and 12 FAH-7). The Regional Security Officer (RSO) conducts local security checks as well as interagency database checks in the United States. The vetting of local guards in Benghazi included proof of successful employment during the past three years and recommendations from their respective supervisors, in addition to a police check that includes criminal and/or subversive activities and a check of sources from their neighborhoods.

More broadly, as I stated before the Committee, I believe it is important to change the laws to allow for more use of best value contracting. By statue (Title 22 USC Section 4864), State Department local guard contracts for most locations, including Libya, must be awarded using a lowest price, technically qualified selection process. Since 2009, we have requested a change in legislation that would allow the Department to use some discretion to award local guard contracts under the best value selection process, as we currently are able to do in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan. Evaluating on best value would give the Department the opportunity to select the firm most capable to perform and strengthen security at our missions abroad, which is an absolute necessity at a time of uncertainty around the globe.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#4)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

As you will recall, it took several days to evacuate American personnel from Libya during the upheaval surrounding the February 2011 revolution. Afterwards, were any steps taken to develop contingency plans to better evacuate American personnel from this dangerous country? Were any requests made to the Pentagon to develop contingency plans?

Answer:

The evacuation from Tripoli in 2011 occurred over several days, as the evacuation was planned to occur in three phases: the first involved commercial airlines; the second, a ferry boat; and the third, chartered aircraft.

Because of the tumultuous conditions and natural disasters faced periodically around the world, the Department has robust contingency planning for our posts; this planning involves the interagency, including the Department of Defense. The classified Mission Libya Emergency Action Plan, includes information on evacuation planning for Libya. The Benghazi Evacuation Plan, which was updated in January 2012, provides additional information about Benghazi evacuation and emergency procedures. Both documents have been made available to the Committee.

When the Department is faced with evacuating post personnel, we simultaneously inform private U.S. citizens in that country, under a "no double standard" policy, and urge our citizens to leave the country. Typically, U.S. government employees and citizens first will leave via commercial aircraft; on occasion we have asked airlines to increase seating capacity by adding flights to their schedules or employing larger aircraft. If commercial transportation options are not available or lack capacity, we have a process in place to charter aircraft or other appropriate transports. Our third option, when appropriate, is military aircraft. In such cases, DOD is receptive to any State Department requests, though using military assets carries logistical challenges and financial implications.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#5)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Last month, the *New York Times* reported that, "The Obama Administration secretly gave its blessing to arms shipments to Libyan rebels from Qatar last year, but American officials later grew alarmed as evidence grew that Qatar was turning some of the weapons over to Islamic militants." Other reports suggest that Qatar shipped more than 20,000 tons of weapons to Libyan rebels, many the most militant and anti-democratic forces operating in the country.

- Did the Obama Administration acquiesce to Qatar supplying arms to Libyan rebels during the 2011 uprising?
- If not, how did the Obama Administration attempt to prevent these shipments? How many were halted?
- Has the Obama Administration been able to determine where most of the Qatari weapons have gone?

Answer:

The United States was not involved with any activities to arm the opposition to Qadhafi's regime, either directly or through other countries. We supported a United Nations arms embargo on Libya to limit the movement of weapons to and from Libya, in recognition of the significant proliferation concerns in the region. Following the end of Qadhafi's rule and the establishment of broad Transitional National Council authority, we encouraged all partners, including Qatar, to only provide support to the recognized government of Libya, rather than any outside group. Qatar played an instrumental role in Libya's revolution, providing support to the Benghazi-based rebel movement and to Operation Unified Protector. The UN arms embargo remains in place to prevent the transfer of arms to any entity in Libya outside of the legitimate Libyan government.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#6)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

The ARB refers to "systemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels" in the Bureaus of Diplomatic Security and Near Eastern Affairs. What systems and checks are in place to ensure that the same "deficiencies at senior levels" are not adversely impacting other Bureaus across the Department?

Answer:

Assistant secretaries, deputy assistant secretaries, and special envoys who oversee U.S. missions abroad work with senior Department principals, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to support chiefs of mission in protecting U.S. personnel and facilities, exercising judgment to balance U.S. interests and policy priorities with evolving security threats, and ensuring the mitigation of security risks. Following the tragedy in Benghazi, we are actively examining ways to ensure even closer coordination among these key policymakers, including implementing all of the recommendations of the independent Accountability Review Board.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#7)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

You noted in your testimony that you were not asked to speak with the Accountability Review Board during their investigation. Do you believe that future ARBs should interview senior State Department officials, including the Secretary of State?

Answer:

As I stated in my testimony before the Committee, if the members of the Accountability Review Board thought I had information relevant to their investigation, I would have gladly discussed that with them at their request. I believe that future Accountability Review Boards should continue to have the discretion to interview those State Department officials that they deem appropriate, up to and including the Secretary of State.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ed Royce (#8)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

According to a published report, senior State Department officials decided not to send a Foreign Emergency Support Team (FEST) an interagency rapid response unit designed to respond to terrorist attacks, in response to the terrorist attacks in Benghazi. This team from the State Department and CIA reportedly has a military Joint Special Operations Command element assigned to it and has been routinely deployed to assist in investigations—for instance, after the USS Cole bombing and the bombings at the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Who specifically made this decision and why. What was different about the terrorist attacks in Benghazi from these previous attacks?

Answer:

The FEST is a tool deployed by the interagency – not by the State Department – to bolster the capabilities of our embassies, including communications capabilities, following a significant emergency. It is not a quick reaction security team and would not have arrived in Benghazi before all U.S. government personnel had departed the city; evacuation to Tripoli was complete within 12 hours of the initial attack, with no remaining U.S. presence.

The Accountability Review Board (ARB) found that "Washington-Tripoli-Benghazi communication, cooperation, and coordination on the night of the attacks were effective." The ARB report further stated that "Overall, communication systems on the night of the attacks worked, with a near-constant information flow among Benghazi, Tripoli, and Washington." Functionality at Embassy Tripoli had not been compromised and did not require FEST support.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

On September 11, 2012, in your first public comments on the Benghazi attack, you stated:

Some have sought to justify this vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet.

(a) Who sought to justify this vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material on the Internet?
(b) Who did you consult prior to these remarks?
(c) What evidence did you have that "material posted on the internet" caused the Benghazi attack?
(d) Were your remarks cleared by INR?

Answer:

As I stated before the Committee, the tragedy in Benghazi was a terrorist attack. On September 12, I stated that "heavily armed militants assaulted the compound" the previous day, and the President spoke of an act of terror. We did not know who the attackers were, what their motives were, what the context of the attack was, and other information of that sort. At the same time, we were dealing with protests against our facilities in the region that were clearly connected to the video, and we were focused on keeping our people safe. We had our compounds breached in Cairo, Tunis, Khartoum, and Sana'a, in addition to Benghazi. We had serious disturbances in Pakistan and protests in more than 10 other countries that week. So we were working around the clock on high alert to deal with those threats and to protect our personnel and our facilities.

Throughout, we saw public comments that such violence was justified by – whether or not it was motivated by – inflammatory material posted on the internet, including the video. The Administration made clear that all such violence was unacceptable and unjustified, regardless of the motives. The intelligence community has addressed the fact that it assessed in the immediate aftermath that the attack in Benghazi began spontaneously following protests earlier that day in

Cairo. The senior Administration officials who spoke to this, including me, had the same information from the intelligence community – which reflected the best, most current assessment at the time – and made clear that we were continuing to gather information and our assessment might change. And when additional information was collected, we updated our public posture which is normal in fluid circumstances.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#2a)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

1. Did you meet with the father of former SEAL Tyrone Woods after at the Transfer of Remains?
2. Did you tell him, in effect, "we will make sure that the person who made that film is arrested and prosecuted?"
3. Did you and/or the Department of State take any action to initiate legal proceedings by other agencies against filmmaker Nakoula Basseley Nakoula?
4. Did you or the Department of State play any role in the interview and incarceration of filmmaker Nakoula Basseley Nakoula?
5. What was the legal basis for your actions given that the First Amendment allows freedom of speech?
6. Did you tell Woods' father that the terrorists who actually killed his son would also be hunted down and brought to justice?

Answer:

On September 12, I said we would not "rest until those responsible for these attacks are found and brought to justice." This is something that both the President and I have stated on several occasions and, as I said on January 23, I don't think anybody should doubt this President at his word. At the transfer of remains ceremony I had the opportunity to meet the families of the fallen Americans and to thank them for the service and ultimate sacrifice their loved ones made and to reiterate this promise.

With regard to the filmmaker, it is my understanding that Nakoula Basseley Nakoula was sentenced to one year in jail for violating the terms of probation stemming from an unrelated incident in 2010. Neither the Department of State nor I played a role in the proceedings. I would refer further questions to the office of the U.S. Attorney who handled the case.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#2b)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Did you discuss a proposal to appear on the Sunday Morning Talk shows with President Obama?

Answer:

I did not discuss such a proposal with the President. I do not appear regularly on the Sunday shows and had not since 2011.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#2c)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Did you discuss a proposal to appear on the Sunday Morning Talk shows with Ambassador Rice? What did she say?

Answer:

I did not discuss such a proposal with Ambassador Rice.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#3)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Prior to UN Ambassador Susan Rice's appearance on the five Sunday TV shows on 16 September 2012 did she submit her remarks for policy review by the Department of State? If not, why not?

Did you or the Department of State approve her comments prior to delivery on September 16?

Did the Department of State provide her any guidance or information to prepare her for her appearance on the talk shows?

You said at the January 23 HFAC hearing that you led the State Dept. response the night of the attack, but were not part of the "talking points" process when it came time to explain to the American people what had happened. Why were you not involved in this process?

Answer:

I understand that the talking points used by Ambassador Rice on September 16 were drafted by officials at the CIA and finalized in a typical interagency process in which State Department staff participated. I was not involved in that process. As I have stated in my testimony, all of the senior Administration officials who spoke to this had the same information from the intelligence community -- which reflected the best, most current assessment at the time -- and all of us made clear that the intelligence assessment could change as additional information was collected and analyzed. As our understanding evolved regarding the attacks and the extremists involved, we updated Congress and the American public.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#4a)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Did policies of the Libyan government force State to depend on the February 17th Brigade because no other options were permitted?

Answer:

Host nations generally provide additional protection for diplomatic personnel within their borders. Libyan governmental authorities arranged for February 17th Brigade personnel to provide us with security in Benghazi. In addition to the February 17th brigade, the Mission had security provided by the Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security and local guards contracted from Blue Mountain Libya. As is the case in many countries around the world, the Libyan government does not allow the use of armed foreign national contractors in either a static security or personal security capacity.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#4b)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

You mentioned during the hearing that the State Department regularly employs private security contractors to guard installations around the world. In Benghazi, only a handful of unarmed contractors were deployed. Is this because the Libyan government would not allow a larger contingent of armed contractors to be deployed?

Answer:

As is the case in many countries around the world, including the United States, the Libyan government would not allow the use of armed foreign national contractors in either a static security or personal security capacity.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#4c)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Why does the State Department prefer to hire private contractors rather than expand its own Diplomatic Security force or request more Marines to guard personnel as well as documents?

Answer:

As the Accountability Review Board notes, addressing the needs of diplomatic security "requires a more serious and sustained commitment from Congress to support State Department needs, which, in total, constitute a small percentage both of the full national budget and that spent for national security. One overall conclusion in this report is that Congress must do its part to meet this challenge and provide necessary resources to the State Department to address security risks and meet mission imperatives." In this context, the Department has requested Congressional support to increase the number of Marine Security Guard Detachments worldwide, hire additional Bureau of Diplomatic Security special agents, and build additional secure facilities overseas. Additionally, if we replace all of our local guards with Americans, the cost would be over $18 billion.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#4d)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Reports have surfaced that the private guard force hired to protect our embassy in Kabul is in disarray; that morale is low, training is inadequate and the force is spread thin because of a desire to cut costs. Those who have complained about security problems have been fired. What is happening in Kabul? And why does such a key embassy in a war zone rely on contractors for security rather than on dedicated U.S. personnel?

Answer:

In Afghanistan and Iraq, the Department of State uses a complex security contract mechanism, the Worldwide Protective Services contract, to meet its security needs. The unique security challenges posed by these two environments require a high level of guard forces and protective security details to provide a safe and secure environment at our facilities and while moving around the countries.

This summer, responsibility for Embassy Kabul's private security guard contract transitioned from ArmorGroup North America (AGNA) to Aegis LLC. A small fraction of the guard staff, 43 of approximately 1000 security personnel, signed a petition stating they lost confidence in senior Aegis leadership. .

We were aware of the guards' concerns about senior Aegis personnel on the ground at that time, and we took action. The day after receiving the petition, Embassy Kabul conducted roundtable discussions with those who wanted to voice their concerns. Many personnel participated in those discussions, which centered around administrative, as well as morale, welfare, and recreation issues in conjunction with the contractual transition from AGNA to Aegis.

After the roundtable discussions, the Regional Security Officer reviewed the security program at Embassy Kabul, taking into consideration points that were raised during the discussions and other factors, and determined that security policies and procedures remained sound.

The Department has approximately 32,600 local guards worldwide at our 275 missions. In contrast Diplomatic Security has approximately 800 direct hire Special Agents and Security Protective Specialists assigned to diplomatic missions

abroad. The Department has requested Congressional support to increase the number of Marine Security Guard Detachments worldwide, hire additional Bureau of Diplomatic Security special agents, and build additional secure facilities overseas. Additionally, if we replace all of our local guards with Americans, the cost would be over $18 billion.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#5)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

You mentioned during the hearing about the march by tens of thousands of Libyans protesting the attack on the consulate. This march took place ten days after the attack in Benghazi. What you did not mention was that the marchers descended on militia strongholds, and overran the headquarters of Ansar al-Sharia, a group widely reported to have been involved in the attack that killed Ambassador Stevens.

If people in Benghazi know what groups are responsible for the consulate attack, why don't we?

Answer:

As the Accountability Review Board's report makes clear, after their months of research, there are "key questions surrounding the identity, actions and motivations of the perpetrators that remain to be determined." No one wants clear answers more than I do, but it remains a complex picture, and the FBI and our intelligence community are still piecing it together. As I said during the hearing, the FBI is following some promising leads. I assure you that we are fully committed to bringing those responsible for these attacks to justice.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#6)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

On the day of the hearing (Jan. 23) the *New York Times* quoted an Algerian official as saying that several Egyptian members of the terrorist force that attacked the Algerian gas complex also took part in the Benghazi attack. You told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that morning that weapons from Libya were flowing across the region so it is not unreasonable to suspect people are moving too.

Do you think that if the U.S. had retaliated against those who had attacked the consulate four months ago, the planning for the Algerian attack could have been disrupted?

Answer:

The President and the Administration are fully committed to bringing to justice the perpetrators of the attack on our facilities in Benghazi, and I assure you that every resource of the United States is being brought to bear to ensure exactly that. We are not aware of a direct link between the attack on our facilities in Benghazi and the In Amenas attack. However, we are offering help to the Algerian government to assist their investigation. Further, we are working with countries in the region, including Libya, to bolster border controls and rule of law to disrupt the illicit movement of arms and fighters.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher (#7)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

During the hearing, many questions were not answered because the attack was still being investigated by the FBI and nothing is supposed to interfere with that process.

(a) Whose decision was it to place the FBI in charge of the investigation, rather than the CIA or other departments/agencies with better overseas contingency capabilities?
(b) Do you think it is wise to give the FBI such a leadership role that the State Department could not even talk to its own people who survived the attack?
(c) Was granting the leadership role to the FBI a throwback to the notion that terrorist attacks are a criminal act rather than an act of war?

Answer:

While the details are best discussed in a classified setting, both the FBI and the intelligence community are playing key roles in the effort to identify and bring to justice those responsible for the attacks on our facilities in Benghazi. The FBI has consistently used its unique capabilities and experience to play an important part in investigating terrorist attacks – including those of September 11, 2001, which led to the FBI's largest investigation ever. The President and his Administration are fully committed to bringing the perpetrators to justice, and I assure you that every resource of the United States is being brought to bear to ensure exactly that.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Steve Chabot (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Within a couple of months of the attack, during the July-August time period, Ambassador Stevens expressed concern about militia activity, particularly in Benghazi and the need for additional security assistance. We have seen the cables where security officers on the ground expressed considerable frustration at the difficulty in getting the personnel they believed were needed to protect American diplomats and property. We now know that management of security personnel, especially the assignment of State Department agents on very short-term duty, virtually guaranteeing very limited institutional knowledge, was grossly inadequate.

Why was the department hierarchy so obstinate and why would the department deny a personal plea from Ambassador Stevens, given his expertise on Libyan affairs? Why did the Department senior leadership not take into consideration the approaching September 11th anniversary, particularly in light of direct requests from our mission in Libya?

Answer:

We are constantly assessing and upgrading our security at all of our missions and we take the recommendations of our Ambassadors and security personnel very seriously. Nearly all requests to upgrade the physical security of the mission compound in Benghazi received by Washington through the summer of 2012 were promptly funded and implemented in the field. These security upgrades to the temporary mission facility include: adding Jersey barriers to strengthen the perimeter, emplacing defensive positions with sandbags, installing guard booths for our local security personnel, as well as upgrading, raising, and adding razor wire to the perimeter wall. That said, as the independent ARB noted, "In the weeks and months leading up to the attacks, the response from post, Embassy Tripoli, and Washington to a deteriorating security situation was inadequate." We are implementing the ARB's recommendations – and doing much more – to ensure that our security experts on the ground and in Washington are able to provide our personnel overseas with security that meets the threat environment they face.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Steve Chabot (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

We have heard numerous times over the last several months that more funding is need for diplomatic security, including in your testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I do not believe there is anybody who does not want to protect our diplomats stationed abroad, often in very dangerous regions. Since 2000, Congress has provided funding in the neighborhood of $10 billion for embassy security, construction and maintenance. And we will, no doubt, continue to provide significant funding in the future. Even the Department's Chief Financial Officer for Diplomatic Security stated, "I do not feel that we have ever been at a point where we have sacrificed security due to lack of funding." Given that our nation now faces a mountain of debt means that we cannot fund every single program that every federal agency requests, so when we increase funding in one area, we have to consider cuts in others. Is the State Department currently conducting any internal reviews, for example, to determine what offsets in current program funding might be considered?

Answer:

As the independent Accountability Review Board noted, addressing diplomatic security "requires a more serious and sustained commitment from Congress to support State Department needs, which, in total, constitute a small percentage both of the full national budget and that spent for national security. One overall conclusion in this report is that Congress must do its part to meet this challenge and provide necessary resources to the State Department to address security risks and meet mission imperatives."

To be clear with regard to the budget, as I stated on January 23, since 2007, the department has consistently requested greater funding for embassy construction and diplomatic security. With the exception of 2010, Congress has consistently enacted less than requested. Most notably, in 2012, the department received $340 million less than requested, close to 10 percent less than the request. Over the last two years, cuts to embassy construction, security and maintenance budgets were almost 10 percent off, as well.

We are focused everyday on ensuring we use taxpayer dollars wisely and constantly review our programs and adjust funding levels. The budget of the State Department is less than 1 percent of the federal budget – and with that 1 percent we fund a range of efforts that promote our national security, including our aid to Israel, PEPFAR, and our diplomatic efforts at over 270 posts around the world. We fight every single day to make sure we have the right resources, but as importantly, we make sure there's not a dime wasted. If you have questions about any of our Congressionally-appropriated funds, then we can make available to you the appropriate State Department briefers.

Immediately following the attacks in Benghazi, as well as violent attacks on our embassies in Cairo, Sana'a, Tunis, and Khartoum, we asked the Department of Defense to join Interagency Security Assessment Teams to evaluate security at certain high threat posts and recommend increased security measures. Based on those results, and the recommendations of the independent Accountability Review Board, we are working with Congress to authorize the Department to transfer existing Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds between the Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) and Embassy Security Construction and Maintenance (ESCM) accounts, which would allow us to use already appropriated, prior year funds to cover a substantial amount of these increased security measures. Specifically, we are working on plans to deploy additional Marine Security Guard Detachments, hire and equip additional Diplomatic Security personnel, upgrade embassy facilities and security systems, including compound access controls, bollards, vehicle barriers, emergency sanctuaries, security lighting, and other improvements, as well as expand high-threat training facilities in the United States.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Joe Wilson (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

First and foremost, what was going on in Washington while our consulate was under attack?

Answer:

The interagency worked quickly and collaboratively to respond to the attack in Benghazi on September 11, and as the independent Accountability Review Board stated, "Washington-Tripoli-Benghazi communication, cooperation, and coordination on the night of the attacks were effective." As I have said, upon learning of the attack on September 11, we engaged in continuous conversations within the Department, the inter-agency, and internationally to review options and actions and to ensure all effort was made to assist our personnel. I immediately instructed senior Department officials and Diplomatic Security personnel to consider every option to seek as much security support as possible and to coordinate with Libyan authorities; I called Libyan General National Congress President Magariaf myself to press him for greater support not only in Benghazi but also in Tripoli. The President gave clear directions to Secretary Panetta and Chairman Dempsey to work to mobilize all available assets and move them into the region as rapidly as possible, which the Department of Defense immediately set out to do. I spoke several times with National Security Advisor Tom Donilon to seek all possible support from the White House, which they quickly provided. I also spoke with our Charge d'Affaires in Tripoli to receive updates on the situation and to former CIA Director Petraeus to confer and coordinate. I spoke with President Obama later in the evening to update him on the situation. Early on the morning of September 12, I spoke with General Dempsey and again with Tom Donilon.

The independent Accountability Review Board report found that "The interagency response was timely and appropriate, but there simply was not enough time for armed U.S. military assets to have made a difference." It also stated that "the safe evacuation of all U.S. government personnel from Benghazi twelve hours after the initial attack and subsequently to Ramstein Air Force Base was the result

of exceptional U.S. government coordination and military response and helped save the lives of two severely wounded Americans."

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Joe Wilson (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Why the delay in labeling the attack as terrorism, when it was immediately known that's what it was?

Answer:

As I stated in my testimony before the Committee, I told the American people on the morning of September 12 that "heavily armed militants assaulted the compound," on September11. Later that day, the President spoke of the events of September 11 as an act of terror. The harder question was what caused it. We did not know who the attackers were, what their motives were, what the context of the attack was, and other information of that sort. For that reason, Administration officials – including myself – were careful to indicate that our understanding of the attack could change as additional information was collected and analyzed. As the ARB's report makes clear, after their months of work, there are "key questions surrounding the identity, actions and motivations of the perpetrators that remain to be determined." It is still a complex picture, and the FBI and our intelligence community continue to piece it together.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Joe Wilson (#3)
House Committee on Foreign Relations
January 23, 2013

Question:

September 11 is the anniversary of the disastrous events of 9/11/01. Chris Stevens was ambassador to Libya based at the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli, protected by U.S. Marine guards. What was so important that he needed to be in Benghazi on such an infamous anniversary, with our consulate so inadequately protected?

Answer:

Every year, in advance of the anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001, a notice is sent to all posts to conduct an evaluation on threat streams, to be on heightened alert, and to assess whether they have the assets to meet their needs. This was the case at our facilities in Libya. The Accountability Review Board found that intelligence provided no immediate, specific tactical warning of the September 11, 2012 attacks in Benghazi. The intelligence community has spoken to this as well.

Ambassador Stevens decided to go to Benghazi to meet with Libyan officials and the network of contacts that he had developed during his time there as Special Envoy and to reaffirm that he and the United States recognized the importance of Libya's second city, the cradle of its revolution. Ambassador Stevens understood Benghazi better than anyone else in the U.S. government. He understood that diplomacy, by its nature, must be practiced in dangerous places because our interests suffer and our security is threatened when we are absent.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Joe Wilson (#4)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Why weren't Marine guards posted in Benghazi in the first place?

Answer:

The primary mission of Marine Security Guards (MSGs) is to provide internal security services to designated U.S. diplomatic and consular facilities to prevent the compromise of classified information and equipment vital to our national security. In Benghazi we were not conducting activities that called for Marine support within the compound. I would note that less than 60% of our embassies and consulates have Marine guard presence for this type of security.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Joe Wilson (#5)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

In such a tumultuous environment, why did the State Department refuse requests to enhance security at our consulate?

Answer:

We are constantly assessing and upgrading our security at all of our missions. The security upgrades to the temporary mission facility in Benghazi included: adding Jersey barriers to strengthen the perimeter, emplacing defensive positions with sandbags, installing guard booths for our local security personnel, as well as upgrading, raising, and adding razor wire to the perimeter wall. That said, as the ARB noted, "In the weeks and months leading up to the attacks, the response from post, Embassy Tripoli, and Washington to a deteriorating security situation was inadequate." We are implementing the ARB's recommendations – and doing much more – to ensure that our security experts on the ground and in Washington are able to provide our personnel overseas with security that meets the threat environment they face.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Joe Wilson (#6)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Given prior threats, why did the state department allow Amb. Stevens to proceed to Benghazi at that particular time?

Answer:

The Chief of Mission does not need approval from Washington to travel within the country of his assignment. Ambassador Stevens understood Benghazi better than anyone else in the U.S. government, and he recognized that diplomacy, by its nature, must be practiced in dangerous places because our interests suffer and our security is threatened when we are absent.

The Accountability Review Board found that intelligence provided no immediate, specific tactical warning of the September 11, 2012, attacks in Benghazi. The intelligence community has spoken to this as well.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Michael T. McCaul (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Did Ambassador Stevens ever send you a "roger channel" cable about the security environment in Benghazi?

Answer:

All files have been searched, and there is no roger channel cable responsive to this question.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Michael T. McCaul (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

According to high-ranking intelligence officials, a classified State Department cable marked "SECRET" on August 16th warned that the Benghazi consulate could not withstand a "coordinated attack." The Regional Security Officer believed our consulate could not be protected and at an "emergency meeting" less than a month before the attack on 9/11, a contingency plan was supposedly drafted to move the consulate operations to the CIA annex about a mile away. This cable is presumed to have been shared with senior staff at the State Department and the National Security Council inside the White House.

- Was this a "roger channel" cable?
- If you personally did not receive this cable, then who in the State Department did see this cable and what specific actions were taken in response?

Answer:

There was no such "roger channel" cable sent on August 16, 2012. There was a classified cable sent by Mission Libya on August 16th, which was reviewed by personnel in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. This cable has been shared with the Committee. As I told the Committee, "the August 16th cable stated that security requests for Benghazi would be forthcoming. The RSO in Benghazi submitted to Tripoli a preliminary list of proposed security recommendations on August 23rd, but no requests were submitted to Washington before the attacks."

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Michael T. McCaul (#3)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

I understand that you receive 1.43 million cables per year, but does not a cable alerting you to an emergency meeting over concerns that our consulate could not withstand a coordinated attack warrant strike you as important enough for you or someone from your office to read?

Answer:

Despite the volume of information the State Department processes, the subject matter professionals in each bureau strive to address each and every cable from the field, especially sensitive and urgent messages, and then take action as appropriate, and/or flag appropriate material for review by more senior officials. The referenced classified cable indicates such action was being taken by the U.S. Mission in Benghazi in coordination with Embassy Tripoli.

Regardless, and consistent with the recommendations of the ARB, the Department has taken additional steps to help ensure that officials up the chain of command are properly kept informed of circumstances and questions about security, including through the initiation of an annual High Threat Post Review, chaired for the first time by the Secretary of State, and ongoing reviews by the Deputy Secretaries. I have also named the first Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for High Threat Posts, who is responsible for ensuring that missions in dangerous places get the attention they need.

And as I said at the hearing, it is important to remember the long list of attacks foiled, crises averted, and lives saved as a result of the extraordinary efforts of our security personnel. We should never forget that these dedicated professionals get it right 99 percent of the time, against difficult odds all over the world. That's why, like my predecessors, I trust them with my life.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Michael McCaul (#4)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Given the extremely poor security environment in Eastern Libya, why was Ambassador Stevens in Benghazi on the anniversary of 9/11?

Answer:

Ambassador Stevens was in Benghazi to meet with Libyan officials the network of contacts that he had developed during his time there as Special Envoy, and to reaffirm that he and the United States recognized the importance of Libya's second city, the cradle of its revolution. Specifically, he intended to meet with local political leaders and members of civil society, the business community, and the diplomatic community. He was also scheduled to open an American Space He was also scheduled to open an American Space to promote educational and cultural outreach in Benghazi. Ambassador Stevens understood Benghazi better than anyone else in the U.S. government. He understood that diplomacy, by its nature, must be practiced in dangerous places because our interests suffer and our security is threatened when we are absent.

The Accountability Review Board found that intelligence provided no immediate, specific tactical warning of the September 11, 2012, attacks in Benghazi. The intelligence community has spoken to this as well.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Michael T. McCaul (#5)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Does not State Department's failure to comply with these two statutes prevent Congress—and this committee—from appropriately crafting policy that combats terrorist safe havens?

Being specific, what has the State Department done to comply with these two laws and what impact have those actions had our counter-terrorism and security strategy in North Africa?

Do you view North Africa as the new front in the War on Terror?

Answer:

We have long been concerned about a range of counterterrorism threats across North Africa, and continue to benefit from multiple, longstanding partnerships across the region in order to effectively combat these challenges. The President's 2011 National Strategy for Counterterrorism makes it clear we are at war against al-Qa'ida and its affiliates.

The State Department complies with the reporting requirements of 22 U.S.C. 2656f, as amended by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, in the annual *Country Reports on Terrorism*. These reports provide specific information on terrorist safe havens – including assessments of efforts to prevent the proliferation of and trafficking in weapons of mass destruction in and through the territory of the country – as well as initiatives and programs to address them, specifically in Chapter 5 of the report, "Terrorist Safe Havens (Update to the 7120 report)." Additional information is found in other Congressionally mandated reports that are referenced in the *Country Reports on Terrorism*, such as the "Annual Report on Assistance Related to International Terrorism." While we provide these reports, we note that statutory reporting requirements and reports that detail past activities are not the basis for determining the development of executive branch policy or counterterrorism strategies. Denying safe havens and strengthening the capabilities of at-risk states are ongoing, active, and critical elements of our counterterrorism strategy in North Africa, and elsewhere.

We note that the reporting requirement in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2010, which requires the administration to produce a list of U.S. counterterrorism efforts relating to the denial of terrorist safe havens, was not directed to the State Department.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Michael T. McCaul (#6)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Only days—if not hours—after the terrorist attack in Benghazi, analysts and the media focused their attention almost exclusively on Ansar al-Sharia as the group responsible for the deaths of Ambassador Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty. A series of internal State Department emails obtained by the media shows that just hours after the attack State Department officials had reported that Ansar al-Sharia claimed responsibility for the attack.

- Why did it take your Department until October 4, 2012, nearly a month after the terrorist attack in Benghazi, to designate Ansar al-Sharia as a Foreign Terrorist Organization?
- Is there any dispute over whether Asnar al-Sharia claimed responsibility for the attack?
- If not, was there ever any doubt in your mind that the events in Benghazi were in no way "spontaneous"?
- Was the fact that the assailants carried RPGs and mortars, among other weapons, not an indication to you and the President's national security team that the attack on 9/11 was not a spontaneous mob response to a YouTube video, as you and others in the administration so often indicated?

Answer:

As I stated before the Committee, the tragedy in Benghazi was a terrorist attack. On September 12 I called it an attack by "heavily armed militants" on our compound. The President spoke to an act of terror. In the days after the attack, we did not know who the attackers were, what their motives were, what the context of the attack was, and other details of that sort. At the same time, we were dealing with protests against our facilities that were clearly connected to that video and were focused on keeping our people safe. We had our compounds breached in Cairo, Tunis, Khartoum, and Sana'a, in addition to Benghazi. We had serious disturbances in Pakistan and protests in more than 10 other countries that week. So we were working around the clock on high alert to deal with those threats and to protect our personnel and our facilities.

The intelligence community has addressed the fact that it assessed in the immediate aftermath that the attack in Benghazi began spontaneously following protests earlier that day in Cairo. All of the senior Administration officials who spoke to this had the same information from the intelligence community and made clear that we were continuing to gather information and our assessment might change. And when information did change, we updated our public posture. That is normal in fluid circumstances.

The email alerts sent by the State Department Operations Center reflected the information, which has been widely and publicly reported, that Ansar al-Sharia claimed responsibility online and then sought to retract that claim. As the ARB report makes clear, after their months of research, there are "key questions surrounding the identity, actions and motivations of the perpetrators that remain to be determined." It remains a complex picture, and the FBI and our intelligence community are still piecing it together.

On October 4, 2012, the Department of State designated Ansar al-Sharia in Yemen as an alias of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula, a separate group from Ansar al-Shari'a in Libya. While the two groups share a name, they are wholly separate entities. Ansar al-Shari'a is a general term – literally translated to "supporter of shari'a" – that is increasingly being used by groups across the Middle East. Instead of adopting unique, individual names, many groups are instead using the generalized "Ansar al-Shari'a" to broadcast their desire to establish an Islamic state.

A decision to designate Ansar al-Shari'a as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) would be made in accordance with the statutory criteria found in section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). The INA establishes specific criteria that must be met in order to designate an organization as an FTO. The designation of an FTO is a deliberative and thorough process that typically takes a number of months to complete. As a matter of general practice, the Department does not publicly comment on prospective FTO designations because doing so would risk undermining the effectiveness of the designation by alerting the potential target of the upcoming sanctions. For example, such pre-notification could result in the flight of assets in the financial system before they could be frozen.

The Department will continue to work with other relevant U.S. agencies and international partners in identifying ways we can further erode the capacity of organizations carrying out terrorist attacks in Libya and elsewhere in northern Africa.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Michael T. McCaul (#7)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Only days – if not hours – after the terrorist attack in Benghazi, analysts and the media focused their attention almost exclusively on Ansar-al-Sharia as the group responsible for the deaths of Ambassador Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty. A series of internal State Department emails obtained by the media shows that just hours after the attack State Department Officials had reported that Ansar-al-Sharia claimed responsibility for the attack.

Do you have evidence that Ansar al-Sharia and its supporters knew well in advance of the attack that Ambassador Stevens would be at the Benghazi mission on 9/11?

If so, when did that information become available to you and how did Ansar al-Sharia learn of the Ambassadors whereabouts?

Answer:

The Department has no evidence that Ansar al-Sharia and its supporters knew well in advance that on September 11, 2012, Ambassador Stevens would be in Benghazi. The Accountability Review Board found that "intelligence provided no immediate, specific tactical warning of the September 11 attacks."

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Tom Marino (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Madame Secretary, you have referred to the terrorist attack on our embassy in Benghazi, Libya as a "militant attack," when, in fact, it was a "terrorist attack by al Qaeda." Why did you use the term, "militant attack," on several occasions instead of a "terrorist attack by al Qaeda"?

Answer:

As I stated in my testimony before the Committee, the tragedy in Benghazi was a terrorist attack. I told the American people on the morning of September 12 that "heavily armed militants assaulted the compound" the previous day. However, we did not know who the attackers were, what their motives were, and what the context of the attack was, among other details. For that reason, Administration officials – including myself – were careful to indicate that our understanding of the attack could change as additional information was collected and analyzed. As the ARB's report makes clear, after their months of work, there are "key questions surrounding the identity, actions and motivations of the perpetrators that remain to be determined." I would refer you to the classified version of the report and to the FBI for further information as it is still a complex picture, and the FBI and our intelligence community continue to piece it together.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Tom Marino (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Do the terms "militant attack," and "terrorist attack by al Qaeda" have different meanings to you or, to the best of your knowledge, the Obama Administration?

Answer:

As I have stated, we knew in the days after the attack that our compound had been attacked by heavily armed militants, but we did not know who the attackers were, what their motives were, and many other details. For that reason, Administration officials – including myself – were careful to indicate that our understanding of the attack could change as additional information was collected and analyzed. As the ARB's report makes clear, after their months of work, there are "key questions surrounding the identity, actions and motivations of the perpetrators that remain to be determined." It is still a complex picture, and the FBI and our intelligence community continue to piece it together.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Tom Marino (#3)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Madame Secretary, many have raised the concern that you and senior officials in the Obama Administration are reluctant to use the term, "terrorist attack by al Qaeda." Have you or anyone at the State Department been instructed by President Obama, or personnel from the Obama Administration, not to use the term "terrorist attack," or "al Qaeda?" Or to use the term "militant attack" instead of "terrorist attack?"

Answer:

The President spoke to an act of terror the day after the attack, on September 12. I have repeatedly described the tragedy in Benghazi as a terrorist attack, including in my testimony before the Committee on January 23. Again, regarding who conducted the attack, the ARB report states, there are "key questions surrounding the identity, actions, and motivations of the perpetrators that remain to be determined." These questions remain the subject of efforts by the FBI and intelligence community.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Thomas Marino (#4)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Madame Secretary, numerous senior officials in the Obama Administration posited several times that Congress has not allocated enough money to adequately fund the State Department. In fact, the State Department designated in its budget, over the last four years, tens of millions of dollars for expenditures, such as a remodeled kitchens at the Department of State, statues and art work for our embassies around the world, liquor for State Department functions, copies of the book *Dreams of My Father* authored by President Obama, global warming programs, landscape beautification, etc.

I am not debating the merit of these expenditures at this point in time, but I and others do not believe that they and certain other programs are of the same priority level as worldwide embassy security. Furthermore, with a nearly $16.5 trillion federal debt, which Adm. Mike Mullen has named "the single, biggest threat to our national security," we must diligently prioritize taxpayer dollars in order to uphold our constitutional duty to ensure the security of the United States.

Given our fiscal realities, would you support reducing and or eliminating funding for expenditures such those as cited above, among others, in order to offset increased funding towards the desperately needed increase in security at our embassies around the world, especially in the Middle East? If so, please state specific funding sources that could be used to offset security costs. If not, please provide a detailed explanation as to why these programs cited above should take priority over embassy security.

Answer:

The Accountability Review Board made it very clear that resources are a significant constraint to the State Department's progress. In the report's introduction, it states, "One overall conclusion in this report is that Congress must do its part to meet this challenge and provide necessary resources to the State Department to address security risks and meet mission imperatives." Every day we strive to ensure the greatest return on each dollar we spend and on ensuring we use

taxpayer dollars wisely. The nature of diplomacy requires us to invest in a broad range of people-to-people diplomacy. The budget of the State Department is less than 1 percent of the federal budget – and with that 1 percent we fund a range of efforts that advance our foreign policy priorities abroad and strengthen our security at home, including aid to Israel and PEPFAR, and our diplomatic efforts at over 270 posts around the world. We fight every single day to make sure we have the right resources, but as importantly, we make sure there's not a dime wasted. If you have questions about any of our Congressionally-appropriated funds, then we can make available to you the appropriate State Department briefers.

It is important to remember that in addition to Benghazi, our posts in Cairo, Sana'a, Tunis, and Khartoum had also been under attack. Immediately following the attacks, we asked the Department of Defense to join Interagency Security Assessment Teams to evaluate security at certain high threat posts and recommend increased security measures. Based on those results, and the recommendations of the independent Accountability Review Board, we are working with Congress to authorize the Department to transfer existing Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds between the Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP) and Embassy Security Construction and Maintenance (ESCM) accounts, which would allow us to use already appropriated, prior year funds to cover a substantial amount of these increased security measures. Specifically, we are working on plans to deploy additional Marine Security Guard Detachments, hire and equip additional Diplomatic Security personnel, upgrade embassy facilities and security systems, including compound access controls, bollards, vehicle barriers, emergency sanctuaries, security lighting, and other improvements, as well as expand high-threat training facilities in the United States.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Thomas Marino (#5)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

When questioned if the Libyan government is willing and able to bring the culprits of the recent embassy attacks to justice, you said that there are currently numerous holds on appropriations that would be used to assist Libya, indicating that these funds could prevent Libya from helping to capture those responsible. However, it's my understanding that the only hold the House has placed on funds to Libya is a $2 million hold to Libya from the Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related programs account, not directly towards bringing those responsible for the death of Ambassador Steven and three other Americans to justice.

It is also my understanding that this hold was implemented after Congress appropriated over $200 million to Libya since Libya's uprising in 2011. As I'm sure you know, the ARB report stated, "The Board found the Libyan government's response to be profoundly lacking on the night of the attacks, reflecting both weak capacity and near absence government influence and control in Benghazi." When the previous $200 million given to Libya did not amount to positive results in the Benghazi attack, what is the State Department doing differently going forward to ensure that any additional funds to Libya are met with positive results?

Answer:

A large majority, over $130 million, of our assistance to Libya was provided during the revolution to address urgent humanitarian and security needs. This included approximately $90 million in humanitarian assistance to support those suffering from the violence of the Qadhafi regime, both inside Libya and for those who had fled to neighboring countries. The United States committed an additional $40 million to support demining and unexploded ordnance removal throughout Libya, and to account for, secure, or destroy loosely-secured or otherwise-at risk conventional weapons, including over 5,000 man-portable air defense systems and components to date.

After the ouster of Muammar Qadhafi, Libya's security sector institutions were completely gutted, and the new Libyan authorities faced the daunting task of reconstituting these bureaucracies with little capacity or experience. Since these

initial expenditures, the United States has provided the Government of Libya with offers of targeted support and technical assistance in a number of critical areas to help establish security sector institutions; this type of capacity building directly supports our national security interests. These offers of assistance include the $2.1million in FY 12 bilateral NADR assistance for Libya to support weapons abatement and the development of security sector institutions, which is currently under Congressional hold.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Thomas Marino (#6)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Madame Secretary, you previously stated that you accepted full responsibility for the short comings at the State Department concerning the Benghazi terrorist attack. However, accepting responsibility is more than simply accepting the errors of one's way or the errors of those one oversees. It should also be followed immediately by consequences in order to deter such grievous errors from reoccurring. The "Systematic failures and leadership and management deficiencies" in the State Department identified by the ARB particularly warrant consequences.

Why should you or those responsible for the systematic failures and leadership and management deficiencies not be punished? During the hearing, you testified that federal laws and regulations are preventing the State Department from taking any additional action against these individuals at this point in time. Could you please provide a detailed list of the federal laws and regulations to which you referred?

Answer:

The ARB statute, 22 U.S.C. 4834(c), allows the ARB to recommend disciplinary action where it finds reason to believe that an employee has breached a duty of the employee. It directs the ARB to consider "any standard of conduct, law, rule, regulation, contract or order which is pertinent to the performance of the duties of that individual."

As stated in the Boards' report, the Board found that certain senior State Department officials within two bureaus demonstrated a lack of proactive leadership and management ability in their responses to security concerns posed by Special Mission Benghazi, given the deteriorating threat environment and the lack of reliable host government protection. However, the Board did not find reasonable cause to determine that any individual U.S. government employee breached his or her duty. These senior State Department officials have been removed from their positions.

The ARB, in Recommendation 23 of its report, expressed its view that findings of unsatisfactory leadership performance by senior officials in relation to

the security incident under review should be a potential basis for discipline recommendations by future Accountability Review Boards, and would recommend a revision of Department regulations or amendment to the relevant statute to this end. The Department is working with Congress on a legislative proposal to amend the ARB statute to address the Board's recommendation.

The Department's discipline regulations for the Foreign Service are found in 3 FAM 4130 and 3 FAM 4300. 3 FAM 4130 contains the standards of conduct for Foreign Service employees, including a list of broad grounds for disciplining Foreign Service employees in 3 FAM 4138. 3 FAM 4300 sets out the process and procedures for actually disciplining employees.

The discipline regulations for civil service employees are found in the CFR, specifically 5 CFR 752, and in 3 FAM 4500.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Jeff Duncan
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

You haven't provided the call logs of messages, instant messages during that attack between the post and the operations center. Members of Congress would appreciate the opportunity to get a perspective of what was happening in real-time with the personnel on-the-ground in Libya and in Washington. If it is possible to provide an unclassified version for the American people, we would appreciate your consideration. In an air of transparency will you release these communications between Benghazi, Tripoli and Washington?

Answer:

Let me clarify a point I made at the hearing: the Department's Operations Center does not utilize instant messaging to communicate with posts, thus there are no such records.

As I stated during the hearing, I was in the Department on the night of September 11th itself, and directed our response from the State Department. I saw firsthand what Ambassador Pickering and Chairman Mullen called "timely and exceptional coordination." One of the things the ARB looked into was communication as the attack unfolded. The Board reviewed thousands of pages of documents, interviewed more than 100 people and concluded that "Washington-Tripoli-Benghazi communication, cooperation, and coordination on the night of the attacks were effective."

Additionally, as I stated, we engaged in continuous conversations within the Department, the inter-agency, and internationally to ensure all effort was made to assist our personnel in Benghazi. I immediately instructed senior Department officials and Diplomatic Security personnel to consider every option to seek as much security support as possible and to coordinate with Libyan authorities.

I spoke several times with National Security Advisor Tom Donilon to seek all possible support from the White House, which they quickly provided. I also spoke with our Charge d'Affaires in Tripoli to receive updates on the situation and to former CIA Director Petraeus to confer and coordinate. I called Libyan General National Congress President Magariaf to press him for greater support not only in

Benghazi but also in Tripoli. I participated in a secure video conference of senior officials from the intelligence community, the White House, and the Department of Defense, during which we reviewed the options and the actions we were taking. And I spoke with President Obama later in the evening to update him on the situation. Early on the morning of September 12, I spoke with General Dempsey and again with Tom Donilon.

I want to re-iterate that during this period, we were continuing to face protests, demonstrations, and violence across the region. We had our compounds breached in Cairo, Tunis, Khartoum, and Sana'a, in addition to Benghazi. We had serious disturbances in Pakistan and protests in more than 10 other countries that week. So we were working around the clock on high alert to deal with those threats and to protect our personnel and our facilities.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Adam Kinzinger (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Madam Secretary, were you responsible for the decision not to send a Foreign Emergency Support team (FEST) in response to the Benghazi attack? Why wasn't the team activated?

Answer:

The FEST is a tool deployed in coordination with the interagency – not unilaterally by the State Department – to bolster the capabilities of our embassies, including communications capabilities, following a significant emergency. It is not a quick reaction security team and would not have been positioned to save lives that night.

Embassy Tripoli did, however, take quick action and notified Benina Airbase in Benghazi of a potential need for logistic support and aircraft for extraction and received full cooperation. Embassy Tripoli quickly coordinated with the Libyan President and Prime Minister's offices among other Libyan government agencies and organizations to mobilize and support a rescue effort. And within hours, Embassy Tripoli chartered a private airplane and deployed a seven-person security team to Benghazi.

The Accountability Review Board (ARB) report notes that "Washington-Tripoli-Benghazi communication, cooperation, and coordination on the night of the attacks were effective." It goes on to say, "Overall, communication systems on the night of the attacks worked, with a near-constant information flow among Benghazi, Tripoli, and Washington." The safe evacuation of all U.S. government personnel from Benghazi twelve hours after the initial attack and subsequently to Ramstein Air Force Base was the result of exceptional U.S. government coordination and military response and helped save the lives of two severely wounded Americans.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Adam Kinzinger (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Madam Secretary, to your knowledge, did the President or someone in the White House make a decision to stand down any military assets that the Department of State requested?

Answer:

The President has made clear that as soon as he learned the Benghazi facility was under attack, he acted immediately to ensure that our military and security team could secure our Embassies around the globe and reinforce the men and women serving in Tripoli. He directed Secretary Panetta and Chairman Dempsey to work to mobilize all available DoD assets and move them into the region as rapidly as possible, which the Department of Defense immediately set out to do. As the ARB found, "The interagency response was timely and appropriate, but there simply was not enough time for armed U.S. military assets to have made a difference."

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Adam Kinzinger (#3)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Madam Secretary, given our reliance on Bahrain as an ally and host to the Fifth Fleet, what will the Department do to ensure that we hold the Government of Bahrain to its promise to implement political and human rights reforms to ensure our security interests are protected?

Answer:

A major non-NATO ally since 2002, Bahrain is an important U.S. partner in a tense region, partnering with us to pursue joint interests and maintain the safety and security of our naval assets and personnel in the Persian Gulf. It is firmly in the U.S. interest, and that of the wider region, for Bahrain to pursue necessary human rights, reforms, and inclusive political dialogue in order to build a stable political and economic future.

President Obama and I have pressed Bahrain to take steps to forge a more inclusive future that is responsive to all Bahrainis. My colleagues and I have engaged the Bahraini government, political groups, the private sector, and civil society on this vision. The State Department will continue to press for accountability for human rights violations, protection of freedom of expression, and support for meaningful political reform. Meanwhile, the State Department will be vigilant in opposing any efforts by the Iranian government to influence events within Bahrain.

The surest way to maintain stability is to address the legitimate demands of all Bahrainis through a process of meaningful dialogue between the government and political societies. Dialogue and negotiation can help Bahrain build a strong national consensus about its political future, strengthen its economic standing, and make it a more prosperous country and a more stable ally of the United States. The State Department, through its programming, seeks to promote reforms and reconciliation and improve governance in areas such as commercial law, military capabilities, and anti-terrorism capacity.

As I have said publicly, "As a country with many complex interests, we'll always have to walk and chew gum at the same time. That is our challenge in a country like Bahrain, which has been America's close friend and partner for decades."

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Adam Kinzinger (#4)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

During the hearing, in response to a question from Rep. Adam Kinzinger of Illinois concerning previous statements you had made regarding the genesis of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2012 in Benghazi, you stated: "With respect to the—the video, I did not say that it was video from—that it was about the video for Libya. It certainly was for many of the other places where we were watching these disturbances."[1] However, in a statement you released on September 11 condemning the attack on the Temporary Mission, you stated: "Some have sought to justify this vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet." On September 12, 2012, in remarks on the deaths of American personnel in Benghazi, you also stated that "We are working to determine the precise motivations and methods of those who carried out this assault. Some have thought to justify this vicious behavior along with the protests that took place at our embassy in Cairo yesterday as a response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet."[2]

Could you please reconcile your assertion during the hearing with these comments of September 11 and September 12? Please explain how these two statements are not inconsistent with one another.

Answer:

In the days after the Benghazi attack, senior administration officials were focused on keeping our people safe. We had our compounds breached in Cairo, Tunis, Khartoum, and Sana'a, in addition to Benghazi. We had serious disturbances in Pakistan and protests in more than 10 other countries that week. So we were working around the clock on high alert to deal with those threats and to protect our personnel and our facilities. The attack on our facilities in Benghazi was a complex and confusing event that transpired over several hours. In the immediate aftermath of the attack, we were working to determine who the

[1] Testimony of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, January 23, 2013.
[2] Department of State, *Remarks on the Deaths of American Personnel in Benghazi, Libya*, September 12, 2012, http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2012/09/197654.htm.

attackers were, what their motives were, what the context of the attack was, and other details. Administration officials were careful to indicate that our understanding of the attack could change as additional information was collected and analyzed. As the ARB report makes clear, after its months of work, there are "key questions surrounding the identity, actions and motivations of the perpetrators that remain to be determined." With regard to some of the other instances of violence in the region, it was clear that the video was a key motivational factor.

The Administration made clear that violence against U.S. diplomatic missions was unacceptable and unjustified, regardless of the motives, and that we were continuing to gather information and update our assessments. And when information did change, we updated our public posture in an attempt to be as transparent as possible.

I know that people want to get clear answers – no one wants that more than I do. But the motivation behind this terrorist act remains a complex picture and the FBI and our intelligence community continue piecing it together.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative George Holding (#1 & 1b)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

How many additional State Department posts are listed as "non-status" or "temporary status" as Benghazi was?

Please list out what steps have been taken at other temporary status facilities to address any shortfalls in physical security and personnel levels to prevent further tragedies.

Answer:

The Department of State has "temporary facilities" in Goma, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in El Fasher, in the Darfur region of Sudan.

Operations at these facilities are suspended at this time because of civil unrest in both locations.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative George Holding (#1a)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Do you believe that the listing of "non-status/temporary status" for the Mission in Benghazi had a negative impact on the security posture and personnel allotment/placement at the compound?

Answer:

The Accountability Review Board found "Special Mission Benghazi's uncertain future after 2012 and its "non-status" as a temporary, residential facility made allocation of resources for security and personnel more difficult, and left responsibility to meet security standards to the working-level in the field, with very limited resources."

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative George Holding (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

The State Department in conjunction with our intelligence community is continually assessing and reviewing threats to our diplomatic posts. Recently, specifically after the terrorist attack in Benghazi, has it turned up any likely host nations or transnational governments that you feel would be unable to fulfill their duty to provide proper and timely security and assistance to our diplomatic posts?

If so, what has been done to ensure our facilities and personnel are protected?

After the attack in Benghazi and the lack of local resources by the Host provided should we consider taking a stronger line when it comes to determining to pull our personnel out?

Answer:

Diplomacy, by nature, must be practiced in dangerous places. The State Department takes significant measures everyday to protect personnel, their families, and U.S. interests overseas.

In the immediate aftermath of the events in Libya, and the protests in Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan, and other countries, we took a number of swift measures to heighten security at our diplomatic missions, including deploying additional security personnel, intensifying security cooperation with host governments, and making other post-specific adjustments as warranted by the intelligence and threat environment

We then undertook a worldwide review of our overall security posture – which has been informed by the findings of the Accountability Review Board (ARB) – and have partnered with the Department of Defense on targeted assessments of high-threat posts to determine whether additional steps need to be taken to further augment our security profile in these locations

Tripwires are events that *activate, initiate, or set in motion post plans to prevent* harm to the post, its personnel, the U.S. citizen community, or other U.S. national interests. In the course of developing a post's Emergency Action Plan, the

post's Emergency Action Committee (EAC) must review the capabilities and limitations that may impact post's ability to operate, communicate with the private U.S. citizen community, and to carry out post plans in response to a crisis. The EAC also reviews the types of threats faced in the host country, then develops tripwires. Given that a number of factors, such as the host country's ability or willingness to respond to events, are considered in developing tripwires, they vary from post to post.

Pursuant to the Accountability Review Board's recommendation, tripwire guidance is being reviewed. In late December, the Department instructed all posts to perform a review of tripwires and report if any had been breached in the past year. Posts have informed the Department of their results and their plans to update tripwires as necessary. After a thorough review, revised guidance responding to posts' tripwires will be issued via cable to all posts.

As I have said, "We will not retreat ... that is the best way to honor those whom we have lost."

Question for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Trey Radel (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

The ARB said, "Poor performance does not ordinarily constitute a breach of duty that serve as a basis for disciplinary action." Yet, it is clear that senior State Dept. Officials failed in their leadership and management abilities. Are they on administrative leave? Are they on paid leave? Pending what? Pending an investigation? If so, what is the time frame? What are the possible outcomes to hold these individuals responsible for their actions and inaction? Specifically, is job termination an option? When will these individuals be truly held accountable for their negligence?

Answer:

The Board did not find reasonable cause to determine that any individual U.S. government employee breached his or her duty.

The Board did find that certain senior State Department officials within two bureaus demonstrated a lack of proactive leadership and management ability in their responses to security concerns posed by Special Mission Benghazi, given the deteriorating threat environment and the lack of reliable host government protection. These senior State Department officials have been reassigned from their positions.

In Recommendation 23, the Board expressed its view that findings of unsatisfactory leadership performance by senior officials in relation to the security incident under review should be a potential basis for discipline recommendations by future Accountability Review Boards, and would recommend a revision of Department regulations or amendment to the relevant statute to this end. The Department is working with Congress on a legislative proposal to amend the ARB statute to address the Board's recommendation.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Doug Collins
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Complacency is the single largest issue the ARB points to as a problem in the State Dept. The ARB does not specify complacency as a problem but it does suggest it. Towards the beginning of the ARB, it mentions the "tempered reaction" in Washington. It goes on to mention that the longer a post is exposed to continuing high levels of violence, the more it considers those events as normal and raising the threshold for reassessing risk.

While I was deployed to Iraq in the Air Force Reserves, the unit was told that the last three months of a deployment are the worst. Airmen let their guard down; they believe they have seen the worst of the worst and focus on returning home, complacency starts to set in. The threat environment hasn't changed but Airmen's perception has.

Since none of the State Department officials implicated in the ARB employment is being terminated, how do you see, moving forward, a culture of complacency not taking root until another tragic incident occurs?

Answer:

The Department is aware that complacency can be an issue with security awareness. Our Foreign Service Institute (FSI) addresses personal and institutional complacency regularly in our crisis management training. All of our security training (Security Overseas Seminar, Crisis Management Training, and Foreign Affairs Counter-Threat) stresses self awareness and the importance of developing and maintaining good security habits. When staff are sent abroad, the Regional Security Officer (RSO) reemphasizes these points during briefs. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) additionally provides a security self-assessment checklist to staff to enable them to periodically evaluate whether they are being mindful of and carrying out good security practices.

In addition, based on the recommendations of the independent Accountability Review Board, the Department is convening a panel of outside experts to include members from the Overseas Security Advisory Council and the

Overseas Security Policy Board to support DS with security recommendations. DS will also consult with allied governments, the Red Cross, the UN, and other organizations to discuss best practices for dealing with this issue and others.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Relations

Question:

Clinton said Stevens had a "number of meetings that he was holding and some public events" on his schedule in Benghazi on or around 9/11. Exactly what were these meetings and events? When did he arrive in Benghazi, and who were the five people Clinton said were on his security team? What happened to them?

Answer:

Ambassador Stevens was in Benghazi to meet with Libyan officials the network of contacts that he had developed during his time there as Special Envoy, as well as to reaffirm that he and the United States recognized the importance of Libya's second city, the cradle of its revolution. In particular, he planned to meet with local political leaders and members of civil society, the business community, and the diplomatic community. He was also scheduled to open an American Space to promote educational and cultural outreach in Benghazi.

Ambassador Stevens arrived in Benghazi on September 10, 2012. Five Diplomatic Security Special Agents comprised the Ambassador's security team. Two agents accompanied the Ambassador from Tripoli and three were stationed in Benghazi. All five agents responded valiantly during the attack, survived and were evacuated the following morning to Tripoli. One of these agents was critical injured and remains at Walter Reed.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Who are the "more than 100 witnesses" ARB interviewed? Where are the transcripts? Why did they not interview Clinton?

Answer:

Accountability Review Boards have the discretion to interview those State Department officials that they deem appropriate, up to and including the Secretary of State. As I stated in my testimony before the Committee, if the members of the ARB thought I had information relevant to their investigation, I would have gladly discussed that with them at their request. I refer you to the classified version of the ARB report for additional information on who was interviewed.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#3)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Who are the ARB members, and what are their individual qualifications for that mission?

Answer:

The Board members were Ambassador and former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Pickering; Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen (Ret); Richard Shinnick, a retired Senior Foreign Service Officer who served as interim Director for the Department of State's Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations in 2008; Catherine Bertini, a Professor of Public Administration and International Affairs at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs and former Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Program; and Hugh Turner, a former deputy director of the CIA's Directorate of Operations.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#4)
House Committee on Foreign Relations

Question:

You said in your opening remarks that it was you that sent Ambassador Stevens to Benghazi. Further down the line in your response to questioning, you said you didn't know why he went. Why exactly was Ambassador Stevens sent over to Benghazi, and who was it that sent him?

Answer:

I sent Chris Stevens to Benghazi as our Special Representative to the Transitional National Council in April 2011, soon after the popular uprising against Qadhafi's dictatorship began. He left that position in November 2011. Later I nominated him as Ambassador to Libya and he was sworn in to that position in May 2012.

Ambassador Stevens himself decided to travel to Benghazi in September 2012, independent of Washington, which, as the ARB indicated, is standard practice for ambassadors. He wanted to meet with Libyan officials and reengage with the network of contacts that he had developed during his time there as Special Envoy, as well as to reaffirm that he and the United States recognized the importance of Libya's second city, the cradle of its revolution. In particular, he planned to meet with local political leaders and members of civil society, the business community, and the diplomatic community. He was also scheduled to open an American Space to promote educational and cultural outreach in Benghazi.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#5)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Exactly what was happening in real time in the State Department Ops Center during the Benghazi attack?

Answer:

Beginning the afternoon and evening of September 11, 2012, and continuing into the morning of September 12, the State Department Operations Center collected information about the ongoing attacks in Benghazi and provided regular updates to the Secretary and senior Department officials throughout the night. Throughout the attack on the Special Mission and the Annex and the evacuation to Tripoli, the Operations Center received continuous oral updates from the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli, who was receiving regular reports from USG personnel on the ground in Benghazi. The Operations Center also included open-source reporting from media, including social media, in the updates it circulated. Senior Department officials and I were also receiving information from the Diplomatic Security Command Center, which was in direct telephone contact with Diplomatic Security personnel in Benghazi during the attack and throughout the night.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#6)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

In the month before the attacks, why were the requests for extra security denied, especially after the some 12 or 14 preceding attacks?

Answer:

The question of resource allocation and whether the number of security personnel at Benghazi on the day of the attack was adequate has been examined by the Accountability Review Board (ARB) and is addressed in their report.

In the month before the attack, the Department only received one formal request from Embassy Tripoli on August 2, requesting approval to add 11 locally-employed bodyguard positions in Tripoli. This request was approved by the Department on August 3.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#7)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Why were military assets--which were available and within range to be effective--not deployed to rescue the ambassador and others under attack in Benghazi?

Answer:

As I stated in my testimony before the Committee, the President gave clear directions to Secretary Panetta and Chairman Dempsey to work to mobilize all available assets and move them into the region as rapidly as possible, which the Department of Defense immediately set out to do. In its report, the Accountability Review Board – which included Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen (Ret.) – found "the interagency response was timely was timely and appropriate, but there simply was not enough time for armed U.S. military assets to have made a difference." In addition, the report states, "The Board found no evidence of any undue delays in decision making or denial of support from Washington or from the military combatant commanders. Quite the contrary: the safe evacuation of all U.S. government personnel from Benghazi twelve hours after the initial attack and subsequently to Ramstein Air Force Base was the result of exceptional U.S. government coordination and military response and helped save the lives of two severely wounded Americans."

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#8)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Libyan assets were allegedly responsible for guarding the US facilities in Benghazi. What did they do during the attack? Were they in on it?

Answer:

The Accountability Review Board found that the responses by both Blue Mountain Libya (BML) contract guards and the host nation security personnel at the compound were "inadequate." The report states that, "No BML guards were present outside the compound immediately before the attack ensued, although perimeter security was one of their responsibilities, and there is conflicting information as to whether they sounded any alarms prior to fleeing the C1 gate area to other areas of the Special Mission Compound (SMC). Although the unarmed BML guards could not be expected to repel an attack, they had core responsibility for providing early warning and controlling access to the compound, which they had not always performed well in the past." The Board's inquiry "found little evidence that the armed February 17 guards alerted Americans at the SMC to the attack or summoned a February 17 militia presence to assist expeditiously once the attack was in progress – despite the fact that February 17 members were paid to provide interior security and a quick reaction force for the SMC and the fact that February 17 barracks were in the close vicinity, less than 2 km away from the SMC. A small number of February 17 militia members arrived at Villa C nearly an hour after the attack began. Although some February 17 members assisted in efforts to search for Ambassador Stevens in the smoke-filled Villa C building, the Board found little evidence that February 17 contributed meaningfully to the defense of the Special Mission compound, or to the evacuation to the airport that took place on the morning of September 12."

We refer you to the FBI for information regarding the ongoing investigation and the individuals potentially involved in the attack.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#9)
House Committee on Foreign Relations
January 23, 2013

Question:

Is only the FBI investigating this? And why did it take so long for them to arrive on the scene when reporters were in the facility the day after the attack and picked up documents? Is this being treated only as a law enforcement issue?

Answer:

While the details are best discussed in a classified setting, both the FBI and the intelligence community are playing key roles in the effort to identify and bring to justice those responsible for the attacks on our facilities in Benghazi. President Obama and his Administration are fully committed to bringing the perpetrators to justice, and I assure you that every resource of the United States is being brought to bear to ensure exactly that.

The weekend after the attack, we worked with the Libyan Embassy to ensure that the FBI's team received expedited visas and that they were able to travel to Libya as soon as possible, which they did. However, in the days and weeks following the attacks, we understood from Libyan officials that U.S. government officials would have been targets in Benghazi at that time, and U.S. personnel did not travel to Benghazi until it was determined safe to do so. The FBI team conducted its efforts from Tripoli until it was able to visit Benghazi on October 4.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#10)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Who debriefed the survivors, when, and where are the transcripts? Who are the two critically wounded, and where are they now?

Answer:

Once the attack commenced, the Diplomatic Security (DS) agent in the Tactical Operations Center (TOC) located at Benghazi's Temporary Mission Facility (TMF) was in periodic telephone contact with Embassy Tripoli, the Benghazi Annex, and the Diplomatic Security Command Center (DSCC) in Rosslyn, Virginia, until he joined the Annex response force moving from the TOC to the TMF main building to search for the Ambassador. Upon departing the TMF and arriving at the Annex, the DS agents re-established telephone contact with Embassy Tripoli and the DSCC until they departed Benghazi on the morning of September 12. These telephone contacts were not recorded or transcribed.

As Secretary Clinton indicated in her testimony on January 23, the primary concern and focus of the Department immediately following the tragic attacks on our mission in Benghazi was the safety and well-being of our personnel. Our top priorities were the evacuation of personnel to a safe location and the provision of crucial medical treatment and, as such, the Department did not debrief evacuated personnel in the immediate hours after the attacks.

The FBI conducted law enforcement interviews of four of the five evacuated agents, with a DS special agent present to support the FBI, on September 15 and 16. The fifth DS agent was unable to participate at that time for medical reasons; however, that agent was interviewed by the FBI in late September.

DS and other Department of State officials held conversations with the five DS agents in the United States starting in late September, following their initial interviews with the FBI. These conversations were not recorded or transcribed.

One agent is currently recovering at a local military hospital, and the other four have returned to duty.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#11)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Have Panetta and Holder and Generals Ham and Petraeus been interviewed and/or provided sworn statements on Benghazi? Other than Petraeus, have any testified under oath?

Answer:

I refer you to the Department of Justice, the Department of Defense and the CIA for further information on this question.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Mark Meadows (#12)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

What are the reasons for the three hour delay at the airport when the team from Tripoli arrived?

Answer:

U.S. security reinforcements dispatched from Embassy Tripoli arrived at the Benghazi airport at around 1:15 a.m. on September 12. While awaiting secure transportation, they learned of the Ambassador's possible presence at the hospital and prepared to recover him there; however, after receiving word of his death, they subsequently arranged to move to the Annex.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ted Yoho (#1)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Madam Secretary, I respect the fact that you've taken ultimate responsibility for the egregious management failures that occurred at the State Department, but ultimately, what does that mean?

Answer:

As I stated in my testimony before the Committee, taking responsibility meant not only moving quickly in those first uncertain hours and days to respond to the immediate crisis, but also to make sure we were protecting our people and posts in high-threat areas across the region and the world. I immediately ordered a review of our security posture around the world, with particular scrutiny for high-threat posts. I asked the Department of Defense to join Interagency Security Assessment Teams and to dispatch hundreds of additional Marine Security Guards to our posts. I named the first Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for High Threat Posts, who is responsible for ensuring that missions in dangerous places get the attention they need. And we reached out to Congress to provide additional funding and authorities to help address physical vulnerabilities, including risks from fire, and to allow us to hire additional Diplomatic Security personnel and Marine security guards.

Taking responsibility also meant launching an independent investigation to determine exactly what happened in Benghazi and to recommend steps for improvement. I quickly moved to appoint the Accountability Review Board because I wanted them to come forward with their report before I left my position, as I felt the responsibility to put in motion the response to whatever they recommended. I also made the findings of the independent ARB available to the Congress and the American people who deserve to know what happened in Benghazi – the findings of only one previous ARB were made public.

I have accepted every one of the ARB's recommendations. The Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources is leading a task force to ensure all 29 recommendations are implemented quickly and completely, as well as pursuing

additional steps that go above and beyond the Board's recommendations. We are also initiating an annual High Threat Post Review, chaired for the first time by the Secretary of State, and ongoing reviews by the Deputy Secretaries, to ensure that pivotal questions about security reach the highest level.

Finally, taking responsibility also means intensifying our efforts to combat terrorism and to support emerging democracies in North Africa and beyond. I've conferred with the region's leaders, including on September 11 and the following days, and I was part of a special meeting at the UN two weeks after the attack focused on Mali and the Sahel. In October, I flew to Algeria to discuss the fight against AQIM. In November, I sent Deputy Secretary Bill Burns to lead an interagency group to Algiers to continue that conversation, and then in my stead, he co-chaired the Global Counterterrorism Forum that was held in Abu Dhabi and a meeting in Tunis, working not only on building new democracies but simultaneously reforming security services. These are just a few examples of the constant diplomatic engagements that we are having focused on targeting al-Qaida's syndicate of terror – closing safe havens, cutting off finances, countering their extremist ideology, and slowing the flow of new recruits. We continue to hunt the terrorists responsible for the attacks in Benghazi and are determined to bring them to justice. And we are using our diplomatic and economic tools to support the emerging democracies, including Libya, in order to give them the strength to provide a path away from extremism.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ted Yoho (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

You've claimed numerous times that the attack in Benghazi had indications of a planned terrorist attack yet Ambassador Rice was allowed to continue the story that the attack was spontaneous due to an inflammatory video--which we now know to be a falsehood--for weeks. Why did it take you and the President so long to admit it was an organized and planned act of terror even though you called it correctly from the beginning?

Answer:

As I stated in my testimony before the Committee, I told the American people on the morning of September 12 that "heavily armed militants assaulted the compound." The same day, the President spoke of an act of terror. However, in the days after the attack, we did not know who the attackers were, what their motives were, and what the context of the attack was, among other information. For that reason, Administration officials – including myself – were careful to indicate that our understanding of the attack could change as additional information was collected and analyzed. After months of work and research, the ARB's report makes clear that there are "key questions surrounding the identity, actions and motivations of the perpetrators that remain to be determined." As I told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 23, there is evidence that the attacks were deliberate, opportunistic, and pre-coordinated, but not necessarily indicative of extensive planning. It remains a complex picture, and the FBI and our intelligence community continue piecing it together.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ted Yoho (#3)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

And just as important, why were talking points circulated regarding an attack on an embassy without the Secretary of State signing off on them?

Answer:

I understand that the talking points used by Ambassador Rice on September 16 were drafted by officials at CIA and finalized in a typical interagency process in which State Department staff participated. I was not involved in that process. As I have stated in my testimony, the senior Administration officials who spoke to this had the same information from the intelligence community – which reflected the best and most current assessment at the time -- and all of us made clear that the intelligence assessment could change as additional information was collected and analyzed. As our understanding evolved regarding the attacks and the extremists involved, we updated Congress and the American public.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ted Yoho (#4)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

You've also repeatedly said that it was you who asked Ambassador Stevens to go to Benghazi due to his unparalleled knowledge of the area, the situation, and the important players in the region. His expertise was so renowned yet his personal plea for additional resources for security was denied. Why? The very same expertise that prompted you to ask him to go to Benghazi was ignored when it was needed most. Why was that the case?

Answer:

We are constantly assessing and upgrading our security at all of our missions and we take the recommendations of our Ambassadors and security personnel very seriously. Nearly all requests to upgrade the physical security of the mission compound in Benghazi received by Washington through the summer of 2012 were promptly funded and implemented in the field. These security upgrades to the temporary mission facility include: adding Jersey barriers to strengthen the perimeter, emplacing defensive positions with sandbags, installing guard booths for our local security personnel, as well as upgrading, raising, and adding razor wire to the perimeter wall. That said, as the independent Accountability Review Board noted, "In the weeks and months leading up to the attacks, the response from post, Embassy Tripoli, and Washington to a deteriorating security situation was inadequate." We are implementing the independent Board's recommendations – and doing much more – to ensure that our security experts on the ground and in Washington are able to provide our personnel overseas with security that meets the threat environment they face.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Ted S. Yoho (#5)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Related to my previous question, can you talk about the physical security upgrades to the facility and are similar compounds around the world at risk? It has been reported that Ambassador Stevens made multiple requests to bolster security. How are these requests reviewed and who makes the determination? Is the opinion of the diplomats on the ground given proper weight?

Answer:

We are constantly assessing and upgrading our security at all of our missions. These security upgrades to the temporary mission facility in Benghazi included: adding Jersey barriers to strengthen the perimeter, emplacing defensive positions with sandbags, installing guard booths for our local security personnel, as well as upgrading, raising, and adding razor wire to the perimeter wall.

Our security experts on the ground and in Washington always seek to provide security that meets the threat environment they face – and that is what was done in Benghazi. Through our normal process of consultation among our security experts on the ground and in Washington, we strive to meet the requests of post with measures that support the goals our experts on the ground are trying to achieve. That said, as the ARB noted, "In the weeks and months leading up to the attacks, the response from post, Embassy Tripoli, and Washington to a deteriorating security situation was inadequate." We are implementing the ARB's recommendations – and doing much more – to ensure that our people have the security they need.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Luke Messer (#1A)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

What kind of real time communication was available to you and your senior advisors during the attack on our compound in Benghazi?

Answer:

Beginning the afternoon and evening of September 11, 2012, and continuing into the morning of September 12, the State Department Operations Center collected information about the ongoing attacks in Benghazi and provided regular updates to the Secretary and senior Department officials throughout the night. Throughout the attack on the Special Mission, the Annex and the evacuation to Tripoli, the Operations Center received continuous oral updates from the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli, who was receiving regular reports from USG personnel on the ground in Benghazi. The Operations Center also included open-source reporting from media, including social media, in the updates it circulated. We were also receiving information from the Diplomatic Security Command Center, which was in direct telephone contact with Diplomatic Security personnel in Benghazi during the attack and throughout the night. Situation updates circulated over email by both the Operations Center and the Diplomatic Security Command Center on September 11 and 12 have been shared with the Committee.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Luke Messer (#1B, C)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

What led you to believe that an internet video caused a spontaneous demonstration in Benghazi? What led you to believe that a spontaneous demonstration was responsible for the attack on our compound in Benghazi?

Answer:

As I stated before the Committee, I told the American people on the morning of September 12 that "heavily armed militants assaulted the compound" the previous day, and the President also spoke of an act of terror. At the same time, we were dealing with protests against many of our facilities in the region that were clearly connected to that video, and we were focused on keeping our people safe. We had our compounds breached in Cairo, Tunis, Khartoum, and Sana'a, in addition to Benghazi. We had serious disturbances in Pakistan and protests in more than 10 other countries that week. So we were working around the clock on high alert to deal with those threats and to protect our personnel and our facilities.

The intelligence community has addressed the fact that it assessed in the immediate aftermath that the attack in Benghazi began spontaneously following protests earlier that day in Cairo. The senior Administration officials who spoke to this had the same information from the intelligence community -- which reflected the best, most current assessment at the time -- and made clear that we were continuing to gather information and that our assessment might change. And when additional information was collected, we updated our public posture, which is normal in fluid circumstances.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Luke Messer (#2)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

Madam Secretary, I am a new member of this Committee representing the 6th Congressional District of Indiana. I traveled all over my district, which covers 19 counties, and spoke with thousands of Hoosiers about the issues that concerned them most. In the days and weeks following the attack on our compound at Benghazi, I encountered some of the most intense feelings of distrust and anger at Washington that I had not experienced previously in my campaign. Hoosiers that I met with couldn't understand that President Obama and his top advisors were incapable of grasping what seemed to be obvious to the American public. When something explodes at a U.S. facility on any given day, but especially on September 11, the American collective mind instinctively thinks terrorism. However, in the aftermath of Benghazi, President Obama and his senior advisors offered up inconsistent statements and expressed a general reluctance to characterize the attack as terrorism.

Madam Secretary, a United States compound located in a war-torn country is attacked, four of our fellow Americans lie dead and this all happens on September 11th. In light of those facts and with access to real time information about what was happening, was there any doubt in your mind that this was an act of terrorism?

- When did you come to the realization that the attack on our compound in Benghazi was, in fact, terrorism? Was it before or after September 16th , - which was the date that Ambassador Susan Rice appeared on the Sunday news shows stating it was the Administration's assessment that the attacks in Benghazi were a spontaneous reaction to an internet video?
- If you knew, it was an act of terrorism, why as Secretary of State didn't you correct the record?
- Did you advise the rest of the Administration of this knowledge?

Answer:

As I have stated, I told the American people on the morning of September 12 that "heavily armed militants assaulted the compound," and the same day, the President spoke of an act of terror. However, in the days after the attack, we did not know who the attackers were, what their motives were, what the context of the attack was, and other information of that sort. The senior Administration officials who spoke to this had the same information from the intelligence community -- which reflected the best, most current assessment at the time -- and made clear that we were continuing to gather information and that our assessment might change. And when additional information was collected, we updated our public posture, which is normal in fluid circumstances.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Luke Messer (#3)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

The structure of the Department of State does not seem able to accommodate the security funding requests of the Department's Regional Security Officers in a timely manner, particularly in high threat areas. Based on events over the course of the last few decades focus is attained only after disasters occur such as the East Africa bombings a decade ago and the Benghazi Consulate attack last year. What needs to happen to ensure that adequate security for our citizens and ambassadors is achieved before these tragedies occur?

What level of oversight is provided within the Department and reported?

Answer:

We are undertaking a thorough review of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's organization and management. A panel has been formed to focus on operating overseas, both in the policy and security arenas. This panel will begin its work in February and will be tasked to provide guidance and recommendations on restructuring the organization of Diplomatic Security to ensure effective allocation of resources.

It should also be noted that the ARB report stated, "The solution requires a more serious and sustained commitment from Congress to support State Department needs, which, in total, constitute a small percentage both of the full national budget and that spent for national security. One overall conclusion in this report is that Congress must do its part to meet this challenge and provide necessary resources to the State Department to address security risks and meet mission imperatives."

I established a new Deputy Assistant Secretary position for High Threat Posts and have provided requisite staff. This will focus attention and resources allocation for security at these posts.

Additionally, as a result of the ARB report, we are revising the position descriptions of every assistant secretary, deputy assistant secretary, and special envoy who oversee U.S. missions abroad to reflect their shared responsibility with senior Department principals, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, the Bureau of

Overseas Buildings Operations, and chiefs of mission for the security of U.S. personnel and facilities.

We believe these steps, and others that will be identified as we move forward implementing the ARB recommendations, will make allocating our resources for security more effective, with appropriate scrutiny applied at crucial decision points.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by
Representative Luke Messer (#4)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
January 23, 2013

Question:

The same office that is responsible for procurement of pencils, paper and providing HR administrative functions does not seem to be the correct location for the organization responsible for protecting the lives of our ambassadors and civil servants. Based on the results of the last two decades a reorganization of intelligence and security functions at the Department seems both sensible and necessary.

- What more effective organizations has the Department considered and why have they not been affected?
- Is reorganizing the Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security away from the Under Secretary for Management necessary to provide the autonomy necessary to achieve focus on the security mission?

Answer:

In response to the panel chaired by retired Admiral Bobby Inman, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security was established by an Act of Congress in 1985.

A security program that best protects our personnel overseas is comprised of security personnel and facilities, logistics, medical capabilities, and information technology. The Under Secretary for Management, to whom these offices all report, is best able to ensure coordination and the best results.

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