

**Testimony Before the House Armed Services Committee on Train and
Equip Authority**

**The Honorable Eric Edelman
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
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America faces adaptive enemies. We must also be adaptive and seize emerging opportunities in the Global War on Terrorism. One such opportunity is the building of the capacity of partner nations to fight the Global War on Terrorism: Although the United States possesses the finest military force in the world, this war will not be won without the help of partner nations.

The recently released National Security Strategy calls for a transformation of America's national security institutions and for strengthened alliances to defeat global terrorism and to prevent attacks against the U.S. and our friends. The National Security Strategy further states that effective international cooperation is dependent on capable partners.

The recent Quadrennial Defense Review, or QDR, points out that the ability of the United States to work with capable partners to influence the global

environment is fundamental to defeating terrorist networks. Wherever possible, the United States must enable allied and partner capabilities, building their capacity and developing mechanisms to share the risks and responsibilities of today's complex challenges. The QDR recommends that the United States continue to work with its allies to develop approaches, consistent with their domestic laws and applicable international law, to disrupt and defeat transnational threats before they mature.

The U.S. strategy in the Global War on Terrorism has three key elements:

1. Protecting the homeland.
2. Disrupting and attacking terrorist networks.
3. Countering ideological support for terrorism.

Building partner nation capabilities contributes to all three elements, and is the Global War on Terrorism's counterpart to FDR's "Arsenal of Democracy." During World War II, the United States shipped large amounts of supplies to allies such as England and Russia, taking advantage of the fact that these allies were often far better positioned to fight the Axis enemy. These supplies ensured that the Allies maintained the means and

morale to stay in the fight, and helped to reduce the number of U.S. casualties.

Today, enabling our partners to share the burden of the Global War on Terrorism produces many of the same results. Sending our troops into harm's way without competent partner military and security forces significantly increases the risks they face. The existence of capable, competent partners reduces stress on our military, as many Global War on Terrorism tasks are best accomplished by and with partner nations who know the local geography, language, and culture. For example, the Secretary of Defense recently stated: "It costs approximately \$90,000 per year to sustain a U.S. service member in theater, as opposed to about \$11,000 to sustain an Afghan soldier, or \$40,000 for an Iraqi soldier."

Additionally, helping our partners gain security capabilities helps us reduce ungoverned areas, thereby depriving terrorist organizations of potential safe havens, and allowing our partners to secure their national borders, restore legitimate authority, and establish the rule of law.

It is clear that building partnership capacity is essential. However, the train and equip authorities created during the Cold War are ill-suited to the adaptive, asymmetric, non-state threats we face today. They cannot be relied upon to help us defeat the forces of global terrorism. We need new, more responsive authorities enabling us to expedite the training and equipping of partner nations.

For instance, in October 2001, the President announced support for training Georgian forces to close terrorist safe havens along its borders. Because we were using outdated, Cold War-era authorities, the U.S. Government struggled to meet this pledge, cobbling together funds from seven different U.S. sources and two different agencies, and employing allied contributions, as well. It took seven months to begin staff-level training, and tactical training did not begin until September 2002. Training four battalions took two and a half years – until May 2004.

However, once trained and equipped, the Georgian forces made significant contributions to the Global War on Terrorism. These troops took on terrorist networks in the Pankisi Gorge that we had a common interest in disrupting. Then, as an unanticipated benefit, many of these forces redeployed to Iraq.

Today, Georgia has roughly 850 soldiers deployed to Iraq in support of Coalition operations, which makes it the highest per capita contributor among our Coalition partners in Operation Iraqi Freedom. We need authorities to help us build the capacity of partners like Georgia in a more effective, timely manner.

The sections 1206 building partnership capacity (global train and equip) authority granted in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 was a good start, and reflects vision on the part of Congress. It allows DoD and State to work together and to leverage the core competencies of each. We're in the early stages of 1206 implementation, and the two Departments are working together in an unprecedented way.

While section 1206 was a start, it needs improvement. In general, some of the key challenges with the 1206 authority are the following:

- The legislation is limited to national military forces, when in actuality a variety of security forces (gendarmerie, constabulary, internal defense, border security, etc.) and military forces are on the front lines

in the Global War On Terrorism. We must expand the authority to include these forces.

- The authority must draw on “defense-wide” operation and maintenance funds, a fraction of overall DoD operations and maintenance funds, severely limiting our ability to use the authority. The authority needs to allow for all available DoD operations and maintenance funds.
- The authority is bound by numerous foreign assistance restrictions, and includes no waiver option for critical national security issues. We need a waiver – to be exercised by the President or the Secretary of State as appropriate – in order to build critical partnership capacity and use the authority in the way it was intended.
- The amount of the authority is \$200 million. We need to increase this amount to \$750 million to meet the needs of our embassies and Combatant Commands. We need to strengthen current preventive activities and also have some amount in reserve should a major contingency arise.

- The current language speaks about joint State-DoD formulation and implementation of programs – and the two Departments are in fact doing this in practice. We are working with State to develop mutually agreeable proposals aimed at states in South East Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. However, the current authority requires Presidential certification for each specific country which is a time consuming process we are still undergoing, thus detracting from our ability to rapidly use this authority as it was intended. We would prefer a formulation that places the authority at the Secretary level and which makes the Secretary of State’s concurrence explicit.

The Departments of State and Defense have developed changes to the 1206 authority addressing these challenges. The Office of Management and Budget has cleared the proposal for transmittal and the Department of Defense submitted it to Congress for consideration.

Section 1206 requires a review of the Foreign Assistance Act, the Arms Export Control Act, and other similar provisions to determine to what extent these laws interfere with our ability to build partnership capacity in a post-

9/11 environment. We welcome the opportunity to provide you this report, which is due in January 2007.

However, renovating our foreign assistance system will be an enormous, lengthy task; we need to make the necessary changes to the section 1206 authority now. If we cannot use this authority in the way intended by the Secretaries of State and Defense, then our ability to enlist partners to assist in the Global War on Terrorism will be greatly diminished, as will our ability to reduce the stress on our forces and the danger to our servicemen and women.

The section 1206 authority is an excellent vehicle for enhancing State-DoD cooperation in both counterterrorism and stability operations. Building partnership security capacity is both a Title 10 *and* a Title 22 task, and this authority provides the right mechanism for unity of effort between the Defense and State Departments. Components from both Departments are displaying unprecedented cooperation in developing and shaping proposals.

The strategic environment has changed significantly. Throughout most of the 20th century, our primary threats came from strong, aggressive nation

states. In the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse, fragile states were viewed primarily as a humanitarian issue. However, we now recognize fragile states and ungoverned areas as potential breeding grounds for terrorism and safe havens for global terrorist organizations. 1206 authority helps us address this reality by leveraging and coordinating the strengths of the Departments of State and Defense to build partnership capacity, win the Global War on Terrorism, and protect the lives of our active duty, reserve, and National Guard servicemen and women.

I thank you for the opportunity to speak about this critical legislation, and I now welcome your questions.