

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION

STATEMENT OF

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COMMANDER

U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION

ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION IN U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

17 APRIL 2007

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INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the men and women of the United States Central Command (CENTCOM), I appreciate the opportunity to testify about military construction (MILCON) needs and initiatives affecting quality of life for our people in the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR).

Our MILCON program is critical to continued combat operations and posturing forces for the future. Although current operations require MILCON investment in Iraq and Afghanistan, we also need to build for the future in the Gulf States, Central Asia and the Horn of Africa. As such, I ask you to support our \$720 million FY08 Regional War on Terror request for 33 construction operations, and the \$166 million requested in the FY08 baseline for an additional 12 projects submitted by the Services for the CENTCOM AOR. These initiatives provide critical operational, safety, health, and quality of life support to our service members serving in Operations IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) in Iraq and ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) in Afghanistan. They help our field commanders pursue their operational priorities, and are needed to assure the successful consolidation of our footprint in Iraq. They also close the gaps in the four most critical combat infrastructure categories, which we call the “Four Rs”: Runways; Ramps; Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSOI); and Roll-on Roll-off (RORO) expeditionary ship offload. We prioritized these competing demands by asking for our Quality of Life projects in the FY07 Supplemental, enabling these projects to be constructed as soon as possible. Finally, we require these projects to be designed and built to CENTCOM’s lean and expeditionary “Sandbook” construction standards. These ensure safe, secure,

sustainable, and affordable working and living environments for personnel in the USCENTCOM AOR.

The FY08 Baseline MILCON request focuses on key infrastructure projects that support our approved Master Plan. They improve our naval capabilities in Bahrain and our Aerial Port of Debarkation (APOD) in Djibouti, and provide needed Special Operations infrastructure in Qatar. In summary, they are essential to CENTCOM's ability to quickly respond to future contingencies and conduct the full spectrum of military operations in our Area of Responsibility.

Unlike prior supplemental requests, the FY08 Regional War on Terror projects you are considering today were identified in October of 2006, one year in advance of prior timelines. As you know, our commanders operate in a dynamic contingency and combat environment. As such, much can change tactically between now and when these projects will be constructed in FY08. Therefore I request this committee consider ways to increase the flexibility of the MILCON process and thereby minimize potential reprogramming actions. We further support the Department's Fiscal Year 2008 Defense Authorization Bill proposal to raise Unspecified Minor Military Construction limits for Operations and Maintenance funding to \$3 million.

QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM

The Quality of Life of our deployed men and women is of the utmost importance to the command. These service members live and work in some of the most austere conditions imaginable and are proudly doing their duty. We have addressed these needs in our FY07 Supplemental submission with essential requests that enhance the limited Quality of Life infrastructure in theater. The majority of our service members live and work in

expeditionary facilities. Our FY07 Supplemental submission asked for \$17 million to build hardened, permanent barracks for 1000 personnel in Bagram, Afghanistan. These barracks replace aging, temporary squad huts. The new barracks are needed now for our current operations as well as to fulfill our long term requirements at Bagram, the key Forward Operating Site in the Central Asian States. In Iraq many of the temporary Life Support Areas (LSAs) have reached the end of their useful lives. We requested \$96 million to replace the housing and admin structures in these LSAs with new temporary facilities, to ensure our service men and women have adequate living and working conditions while deployed. I ask you for your continued support of these extremely important projects.

FISCAL YEAR (FY) 08 RWOT MILCON

For FY 08, CENTCOM requests \$103 million for construction projects in Afghanistan and \$616 million for Iraq. These initiatives will improve force protection, save long-term contract costs, and facilitate turnover of facilities to the Government of Iraq.

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN

CENTCOM requests 2 projects totaling \$103 million for Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, to augment the infrastructure projects that were submitted for the FY07 Supplemental. The first is \$62 million to relocate the Ammunition Supply Point (ASP), which is necessary to improve safety of personnel and to increase capacity to meet current requirements. The second is a \$41 million power generation project, which will meet future demands even during peak power surges, while reducing the \$20 million per year we are spending to lease generators for electrical power. Bagram serves as the hub for

U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and as a Forward Operating Site is expected to provide for long term steady state presence and meet theater contingency surge requirements.

IRAQ

Consolidating U.S. forces into Operational Overwatch Contingency Operation Bases (COBs) and Locations (COLs) in Iraq will require 31 supporting projects, totaling \$616 million.

Force Protection: CENTCOM requests 8 projects totaling \$217 million to further reduce our vulnerability to attack. These include installing e-glass overhead protection at dining facilities and other locations where service members gather, building three entry control points per base to reduce dangerous congestion, and constructing four urban bypasses.

The bypasses will allow traffic to go around urban areas, thus reducing the Improvised Explosive Device threat and improving movement between bases and neighboring areas.

Power production: CENTCOM requests five power plant projects totaling \$183 million to provide needed generation capacity at final Contingency Operation Bases and Convoy Support Centers. As smaller Contingency Operating Sites are closed and forces are consolidated on Contingency Operations Bases, the latter will need significantly more electricity. These projects will meet that need, and will also replace smaller and more numerous leased generators, reducing significantly the \$90 million per year we currently spend in leasing costs.

Environmental: CENTCOM requests nine landfill projects totaling \$25 million, and three water treatment plants totaling \$30 million. As we close Camps Fallujah, Marez, Warrior, Taqqadum, and Ramadi and shift to five consolidated locations, we will need to properly dispose of the waste and non-retrogradeable material that cannot be brought out

or handled through contracts. Constructing these sites will ensure we meet Department of Defense environmental, base camp closure, and property disposal procedures. The water treatment plants will support populations at final consolidation sites, and will also remove force protection concerns associated with inspecting sewage pump trucks.

Various: CENTCOM requests six projects totaling \$161 million. Two are to maintain basic quality of life at the final consolidation sites by providing \$72 million to replace expeditionary facilities that are well beyond their useful life. The construction of a level III hospital at the Victory Base Complex is part of our efforts to turn the International Zone in Baghdad over to the Iraqi Government, as it will allow MNF-I to relocate the treatment capability currently located there. Two Logistic facilities and a fuel storage project will allow our forces move into their final consolidation bases.

FISCAL YEAR (FY) 08 BASELINE MILCON

For the FY08 Baseline, CENTCOM supports Service component requests for 12 projects totaling \$166 million to enable current operations and the CENTCOM Master Plan for the AOR.

Army Forces Central Command (ARCENT): The FY08 budget supports one project at \$13.8 million to construct a consolidated compound for administration and base operations at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. These functions are currently housed in a degraded Soviet-era structure that is beyond economical repair. Bagram is the only Forward Operating Site in the Central Asian States. While critical to the conduct of operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, it is also the centerpiece for the CENTCOM Master Plan for future access to and operations in Central Asia.

Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT): CENTCOM supports two projects totaling \$54.5 million in Manama, Bahrain. One will allow the Naval Special Warfare training mission to vacate inadequate temporary structures and move into a training facility designed with the proper levels of Anti Terror and Force Protection measures. The second is for port improvements at Mina Sulman including construction of multistory facilities for Port Control, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Ship Repair, and the Harbor Patrol.

CENTCOM supports three projects totaling \$22.4 million to build fuel storage and taxiways at the airfield at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti. This base has only one runway and no taxiways, greatly reducing its operational capacity, and exposing aircraft to great risk of foreign object damage by forcing them to cross unpaved surfaces. There is also no fuel storage, creating a significant force protection concern as delivery trucks must drive from off base right up to the aircraft. The new fuel storage facility provides a tanker truck offload capability that feeds the storage tanks, thus keeping civilian fuelers off the flight line.

U. S. Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT): CENTCOM supports five projects totaling \$52.9 million for a separate Special Operations Forces (SOF) air operations compound at al-Udeid. This will allow a contingency response element to be located in Qatar, so it can perform the full spectrum of missions.

U. S. Central Command Air Forces (CENTAF): CENTCOM supports a \$22.3 million request to build a new multi-aircraft hangar at al-Udeid, Qatar. Currently, major cycle maintenance cannot be performed in theater, which requires aircraft to redeploy to Ramstein AB. The associated costs in flying time and reduced mission-capable rates

affect the Combined Force Air Component Commander's ability to perform his assigned mission, to include providing logistic support throughout the theater. There are also no hangar facilities for newly deployed B-1B bombers. This multi-aircraft facility will protect personnel and aircraft from exposure to the harsh desert climate during routine maintenance, will allow heavy maintenance repairs to be performed in the AOR, and will accommodate B-1B aircraft.

CONCLUSION

We have made significant strides in the command MILCON program since last year. We now have an OSD-approved Master Plan that heavily leverages and relies on Host Nation construction contributions in support of U.S. regional stability efforts. We've made significant progress on previously funded MILCON projects dating back to FY03. We are putting them to good use every day, just as we will those requests that you are now considering. Our FY07 Supplemental combined with these FY08 MILCON submissions focus on the areas needed by our Commanders in the field. It is composed of key enablers that allow us to project forces in the region, to continue our current fight and to be ready for the future while addressing our most pressing Quality of Life issues. I am honored to represent the men, women, and supporting families of USCENTCOM, and thank you again for your strong support.