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Chairman Biden, Ranking Member Lugar, Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the “New Strategy for an Enhanced Relationship with Pakistan.” This morning I would like to discuss our United States security assistance relationship with Pakistan and, as requested, provide the public with an understanding of why the Department of Defense considers the United States’ effective, long-term constructive engagement with this important ally so essential to U.S. interests.

First, Pakistan is the second most populous Muslim state, the sixth most populous country in the world, and is located at the geopolitical crossroads of South and Central Asia. Second, Pakistan possesses nuclear weapons and has already fought three conventional wars with another nuclear nation next door, India. Third, Pakistan has a large, growing moderate middle class striving for democracy. Fourth, elements of extremism and terrorism are at work within Pakistan. Fifth, the whole-hearted assistance of the Pakistani people and their government will help the United States achieve its national security objectives in Afghanistan. Sixth, and most importantly, militants and terrorists within the border region of Pakistan constitute a direct threat to the United States Homeland. More than ever, U.S. national security is linked to the success, security, and stability of a democratic Pakistan. Pakistan has made important strides towards democracy and stability in the past several months, though much remains to be done. Pakistan’s elections in February 2008 were an important step for Pakistan; we applaud the return of civilian leadership and remain committed to helping the people of Pakistan achieve their democratic goals. But Pakistan is now facing severe budgetary and economic issues at the very time when

the government must act decisively to eliminate the Al Qaeda and Taliban safe havens in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and North West Frontier Province (NWFP). The new coalition government has a difficult road to navigate, and requires the United States' steadfast support.

Importance of Pakistan to U.S. National Security Interests

Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Pakistan became a member of the coalition formed to defeat Al Qaeda and the Taliban Government of Afghanistan. At the request of the United States, during the early phases of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Pakistan offered the use of its airspace, four airfields and a seaport; and fuel, water, and utilities at those locations; deployed large numbers of its armed forces to protect deployed U.S. personnel; and later permitted the establishment of air and ground lines of communication through Pakistan into Afghanistan. Today, much of the fuel and dry cargo required to support U.S. and NATO military operations in Afghanistan transit Pakistan, and because of our cooperative relationship with Pakistan's armed forces, coalition forces lose very little of the supplies to insurgent activity, despite the close proximity of these lines of communication to areas Al Qaeda and the Taliban frequent.

At the request of the United States in 2001, Pakistan deployed its Army for the first time in its history into the tribal agencies of the FATA along the border with Afghanistan to assist U.S. operations in Afghanistan by capturing Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters fleeing Tora Bora. The Pakistan Army captured and turned over to U.S. custody several hundred of these fighters. For example, Pakistani forces captured Abu Zubaydah, a senior Al Qaeda operative and Osama Bin Laden confidant. During a raid on a residence in Rawalpindi, Pakistani forces arrested Al Qaeda

senior leader Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, the alleged mastermind behind the September 11th attacks who was also wanted by the U.S. for his involvement in the 2002 murder of U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl.

Pakistan is a key partner in the War on Terror (WoT) and plays a major role in long-term efforts to build a stable Afghanistan. Without U.S. assistance and support Pakistan could not afford to deploy and maintain 100,000 military and paramilitary forces in the FATA. Since 2001, the Pakistan Army has conducted 91 major and countless small operations in support of the WoT, and it has captured or killed more Al Qaeda and Taliban extremists than any other coalition partner. Following Pakistan's decision in July 2007 to remove by force a group of religious extremists that had seized the Red Mosque in Islamabad, the number of retaliatory suicide bombings and ambushes of Pakistani military and police personnel increased dramatically. This was a watershed moment for Pakistan in some respects. Liberating the Red Mosque occurred at the same time Pakistan abandoned the failed Waziristan peace agreements and moved a substantial amount of new soldiers and paramilitary forces into the FATA, NWFP, and parts of Baluchistan. In the past five years, Pakistani soldiers have sustained more than 1,400 combat deaths—700 just since July 2007—and more than 2,400 wounded in action. Accordingly, the degree to which senior Government of Pakistan and military officials understand that extremism is a domestic threat reached a new high.

The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)

The security of the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan has been the subject of increasing interest and concern to the Administration, Congress, and the international community. The FATA border region with Afghanistan is now and has historically been a largely ungoverned

space. This area—approximately the size of Maryland—was identified in the July 2007 “National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on the Terrorist Threat to the U.S. Homeland” and the “Country Reports on Terrorism 2007” as a safe haven where Taliban and Al Qaeda forces recruit, train and equip fighters and infiltrate them into Afghanistan. The FATA has always had a special constitutional status in Pakistan. Federal and provincial laws do not apply, and the area is governed only loosely under the provisions of the century-old Frontier Crimes Regulations. Operating in the FATA is challenging even for the Pakistanis who are generally considered to be outsiders and interlopers by the fiercely independent Pashtun tribesman. The tribes of the FATA have a long history of military resistance and success in preventing alien armies from entering, conquering or imposing their will on these tribal areas.

These areas along the border with Afghanistan have challenged generations of would-be external governors. Today’s border inhabitants will not meekly yield their strongly embraced customs and traditions to outsiders who seek to alter their way of life. Accordingly, the Government of Pakistan must develop localized engagement strategies that can earn the support of border inhabitants while achieving the government’s aims.

It is only by working with local security elements and the Pakistan military that security is possible in the FATA and NWFP. Neither the Government of Pakistan (GoP) nor a meaningful percentage of Pakistan’s citizens support a U.S. force presence in the country. Of course, the Pakistani people’s support is essential to both our short-term and long-term bi-lateral objectives. Consequently, the U.S. is assisting Pakistan by equipping and training indigenous security forces such as the Frontier Corps along with supporting specialized Pakistan military units, like the Special Services Group (SSG), and by supporting the government’s broader frontier

development strategy. These initiatives will take time to succeed and the United States must, as good allies, have appropriate patience while awaiting the benefits of our current investments.

Helping to ensure Pakistan has capable, professional security forces will better align the security objectives of our two nations. Capable forces, and their leaders, are much more likely to directly confront difficult security challenges – ones like those that occur along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Ridding the mountainous, rugged FATA and NWFP of anti-coalition militants, terrorists and extremists will demand both highly professional troops with specialized counter-insurgency (COIN) skills and reliable indigenous local security forces that can hold territory and earn the support of local tribes. Without effective security forces Pakistan's efforts will fail.

United States Counter-Insurgency Initiative

In response to a request from Pakistan for assistance, the U.S. Government has developed a COIN strategy for Pakistan's western border region. This area encompasses the FATA, parts of NWFP and parts of Baluchistan. One of the assumptions of COIN doctrine is that security is a means to an end, not the end itself. In this instance, the U.S. and Pakistan realize that securing the border with Afghanistan and curtailing safe haven protection for extremists cannot be accomplished with force alone. It will only work if we can change the environment for the resident population and that means an approach that embraces security, infrastructure improvements, overall development, and enhancements to the governance mechanisms of the region.

Our colleagues at the Department of State and USAID are helping the Government of Pakistan implement development and governance projects in the FATA and NWFP. DoD is beginning work to enhance the ability of Pakistan's military to engage in counter-insurgency operations.

United States security assistance efforts are designed to enhance the ability of the Pakistan Army's special operations forces to conduct targeted counter-terrorism raids against extremist targets in the border region. The U.S. is working with Afghan, Pakistani, and ISAF colleagues to establish a network of Border Coordination Centers (BCCs) along the border to enhance the ability of liaison officers from all of the forces to see a common view of the area. Finally, the United States is also working with Pakistan's paramilitary Frontier Corps to train and equip this force and enhance its ability to capitalize on the unique skills, access, and abilities that it has in the border area. The Frontier Corps' status as a locally-raised Pashtun force allows it access and acceptability amongst the indigenous population that even the Pakistani Army does not have.

These efforts will take time to bear fruit. Pakistan has been struggling with the degree to which its writ of governance extends into the FATA since its inception. The U.S. COIN strategy mirrors Pakistan's own FATA Sustainable Development Plan – a 9-year effort focused largely on development and the reform of governance institutions. Security assistance targeted at the FATA is delayed by the availability of funds and the work that must be done to build infrastructure, acquire equipment, and commit trainers.

Let me say a word about Pakistan's current round of peace negotiations. The United States is deeply concerned about reports of ceasefire negotiations and agreements in South Waziristan and other locations in the FATA and NWFP. Previous attempts by the GoP to negotiate ceasefires and other agreements with the tribes in the FATA and NWFP were deeply flawed. After the Government of Pakistan signed similar agreements in 2005 and 2006, cross-border operations by extremist groups against the Afghan, U.S., and NATO forces increased substantially, due in part, we believe, to the provisions of the agreements. The United States recognizes that there is no purely military solution to insurgency, but has made it clear to the GoP that any agreement

should be enforceable and backed up by the credible threat of force. Also, any agreement should include a commitment to deny a safe haven to foreign terrorists and prevent attacks against U.S., Coalition, Afghan, or Pakistani forces in either Afghanistan or Pakistan. Finally, it is equally important that Pakistan's military forces remain in the FATA and NWFP in order to enforce agreements. This message has been delivered to all levels of Pakistan's government over the past two months, and the Government of Pakistan has told us it will not approve any agreement that does not contain all of these conditions.

The Tools Available

DoD appreciates this Committee's consideration of the new possibilities with Pakistan and the tools that will be necessary to yield the desired results. The Department of Defense ambitions are high, but they match the urgency of the situation. The Administration is committed to working with this sovereign nation – a key ally in the WoT – to help Pakistan reorient its military toward the doctrine and capabilities necessary for an effective COIN-focused strategy. DoD is committed to enhancing the Pakistan military's effectiveness via training and equipping programs for their special operations forces and paramilitary personnel. DoD is committed to creating mechanisms – such as the BCCs – that put actionable intelligence into the hands of those who need to use it. We also understand the importance of continuing to build capabilities in the Pakistan military's regular forces, including air mobility (helo) and other key enablers.

But despite our commitment, we are not well armed with regard to funding. The Security Development Plan, which encompasses each of these program elements, is funded using a patchwork of authorities. It does not yet have a dedicated source of funding that is as flexible and adaptable as the enemy. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) is a useful authority and has

played a major role in our effort to enhance and reform Pakistan's military. Section 1206 funding is useful for emergent needs, but not intended for programs that require continuity beyond a given fiscal year. The special \$75M authority Congress created for the Frontier Corps is an effective tool to aid U.S. efforts, but it too has its limitations – specifically, that it cannot be used for any other non-military force (which excludes, for example, the Frontier Constabulary, etc.). Indeed, Defense will provide a staff briefing to this Committee on the Frontier Corps program later this afternoon and hopes that the Committee, after consideration, will release its hold on this funding so it might get the field to support this important initiative. International Military Education and Training (IMET) funds are also an important element of our engagement strategy. While generally requiring the commitment of fewer resources per instance than FMF, IMET funds allow us to connect with Pakistan in a uniquely personal way – establishing relationships with rising career military personnel and exposing them to our practices relating to ethics, civilian oversight, and human rights. The expansion of our IMET program with Pakistan is a priority for DoD.

Both the economy and security situation in Pakistan need U.S. support. The concept of a 'democracy dividend' should not come at the expense of that nation's legitimate defense needs. Pakistan's ability to maintain security and the needs of its population should not be an 'either/or' proposition.

The Department of Defense strongly supports a long-term commitment to Pakistan. But DoD opposes introducing legislated conditional language on the security assistance we give to Pakistan. Doing so undermines the trust relationship with Pakistan at a time when it is most critical. Imposing legislated conditions on our support leaves our ally with a mixed impression of American interests and commitment. The legacy of perceived abandonment after the Soviet

occupation of Afghanistan ended and, later, the imposition of sanctions related to Pakistan's development of a nuclear capability – continue to negatively affect our relations with elements of Pakistan's military, civilian government, and population. Indeed, despite our assistance and engagement, the U.S. is sometimes viewed as an inconsistent ally. While we recognize the Committee's interest in ensuring that our security assistance and reimbursement programs advance U.S. national security interests, we feel that such concerns are best dealt with via the day-to-day interactions between our governments and not as a litmus test of the commitment of either country to the fight against the adversaries we face together.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Department of Defense strongly endorses the Administration's inter-agency efforts to implement a truly comprehensive strategy to ensure our overall relationship with the people of Pakistan succeeds. The American and Pakistani peoples can greatly benefit from a strategic dialogue built upon a foundation of mutual trust and commitment. To do so we must be good allies with long-term perspectives. Of immediate concern, our success in protecting our Homeland and achieving our goals in Afghanistan will require Pakistan's success in addressing the various security-related needs in the FATA and NWFP.

The new civilian government in Islamabad is currently struggling to balance the requirement to alleviate poverty and illiteracy; deal with nationwide shortages of food, fuel, and energy; contain the spread of religious extremism, and maintain large military forces along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Sufficient, flexible, and legislatively unconditioned U.S. security assistance, therefore, is critical to our eventual success in Afghanistan and the WOT. Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

