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COMMANDER

UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Introduction and History

Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to report on the state of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM).

Created by the Congress just over 22 years ago, the Command implemented its original charter and Title 10 authorities primarily as a resourcing headquarters, providing ready and relevant Special Operations Forces (SOF) in episodic engagements against threats to the Nation and its vital interests. Following the attacks of 9/11, USSOCOM quickly became a proactive, global and strategically focused headquarters while the joint special operations forces were employed primarily in decisive direct action missions against terrorists and insurgents. Throughout, we have also taken a long-term approach of engagement in CENTCOM and other regions, designed to forge enduring partnerships contributing to regional stability. This balance of direct and indirect actions, the combination of high-end tactical skills and an understanding of the operational context of their application, is the core of special operations. Success of special operations depends on USSOCOM's dedicated budget and acquisition authorities to meet SOF-peculiar mission requirements, heavily supported by general purpose force capabilities.

Combatant Command Functions

USSOCOM is responsible for synchronizing Department of Defense planning against terrorists and terrorist networks globally. In this role, we receive, analyze and prioritize the Geographic Combatant

Commanders' regional plans, and make recommendations to the joint staff on force and resource allocations. We also serve as an extension of the joint staff in the interagency arena. We have established effective collaborative venues to do this, collectively known as the global synchronization process. Because USSOCOM does not normally have operational authority over deployed forces, the plans and operations themselves are executed by the Geographic Combatant Commanders.

In October 2008, USSOCOM was designated as the Department of Defense proponent for Security Force Assistance (SFA). This designation will cause USSOCOM to perform a synchronization role in global training and assistance planning that is similar to our role in synchronizing planning against terrorist networks. This role will be another collaborative effort that is nested within our existing global synchronization process.

Additionally, USSOCOM is now the Department's designated lead for countering Threat Financing. In this capacity, we advocate the Department's policies in direct coordination with our interagency partners, primarily within the U.S. Treasury and Justice Departments.

Although synchronization is a robust daily activity, a key element is the semi-annual Global Synchronization Conference, coordinated and hosted by USSOCOM, designed to provide a venue for structured determination of roles, missions and priorities among organizations with equities in the outcome.

Military Department-like Functions

Special Operations Forces must be manned, trained and equipped to operate globally with unmatched speed, precision and discipline within a culture that promotes innovation, initiative and tactical level diplomacy. To enable this, USSOCOM has responsibilities and authorities similar to Service Departments and Defense Agencies. The key element of our ability

to assure the readiness of SOF is the Major Force Program (MFP) 11 budget line.

The people of the special operations community are its greatest asset, but we refer to MFP-11 as "the pearl of USSOCOM" because it is the single greatest contributor to our ability to train, equip and sustain our force. We are grateful for the wisdom of the Congress in providing MFP-11, and in its continued strong and knowledgeable support for the peculiar needs of special operations forces.

A manifestation of this support is the recent expansion of USSOCOM's Section 1208 authority for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009.

We pride ourselves on our understanding of the needs of our operational force and continually seek ways to accelerate delivery of essential equipment and systems. To this end, USSOCOM established a new Directorate for Science and Technology (S&T) in early FY09. S&T is responsible for technology discovery, technology developments and demonstrations, and rapid insertions of new capabilities to SOF in concert with our Acquisition Executive.

New to the S&T portfolio is a unique 'rapid exploitation' capability comprising a distributed network of SOF operators, technicians, engineers, and managers tasked to identify timely technical solutions to solve operational problems.

Development of the Three-Dimensional Operator

The complexity of today's and tomorrow's strategic environments requires that our SOF operators maintain not only the highest levels of war fighting expertise but also cultural knowledge and diplomacy skills. We are developing "3-D Operators" - members of a multi-dimensional force prepared to lay the groundwork in the myriad diplomatic, development, and defense activities that contribute to our Government's pursuit of our vital national interests.

Fundamental to this effort is the recognition that humans are more important than hardware and that quality is more important than quantity. Investments in weapons platforms and technologies are sub-optimized if we fail to develop the people upon whom their effective employment depends. Within USSOCOM, we strive first to select and nurture the extraordinary operator and then to provide the most operationally relevant equipment.

SOF Retention and Recruiting

SOF retention remains one of our highest priorities. The factors that most influence retention of the force are the quality of the mission, the quality of individual and family support, operational tempo and monetary compensation. In 2008, Congress granted a two-year extension of current SOF incentives designed to keep our senior operators in billets requiring their special skills and experience. Our retention is good, but long-term sustainability remains a concern.

In November 2008, thanks to a very positive response by the Secretary of the Army and the approval of the Secretary of Defense, we made progress in one of USSOCOM's high priority initiatives: increasing our level of regional expertise through the recruitment of native heritage speakers. As of today, over 100 legal non-permanent residents (LPNR) with special language skills and abilities have joined the Army under a pilot program. This new program, Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI), is something of a phenomenon within certain foreign populations of the United States and attracts highly qualified candidates. Some of these will serve in special operations units.

SOF recruitment and retention programs must be innovative, flexible and open to possibilities previously deemed impractical. We will continue to refine our overall recruitment and retention strategies in coordination with the Department and the Services.

Health of the Force

Special operations forces remain strong and ready despite an unprecedented operational tempo. They are, for the most part, doing what they joined the military to do and feeling that their impact is positive and meaningful. Still, we are asking a lot of them and their families, and we have every indication that they will be in ever-increasing demand.

We must continue to support our personnel and their families to confront the future fragility of the force. We know well that psychological trauma is often observed in the families before it is manifested in the SOF operators themselves.

SOF Care Coalition

USSOCOM recognizes the correlation between supporting our wounded personnel and their families and overall mission readiness. As such, we have continued to develop programs within our award-winning (both the 2006 Armed Forces Foundation's Organization of the Year, and the 2008 Navy SEAL Warrior Fund's "Fire in the Gut" Award), nationally-recognized USSOCOM Care Coalition that looks after our entire SOF family. The Care Coalition is a responsive, low-cost clearinghouse that matches needs with providers and currently supports 2,300 wounded SOF warriors with every benefit of treatment, recovery, and rehabilitation to improve their opportunity to return to duty or to succeed in post-military service. Working closely with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Services, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, the USSOCOM Care Coalition has resolved myriad financial, logistical, social, occupational and other support issues for our wounded Service members and their families.

Service Enabling Capabilities

Demand for special operations forces is on the increase; yet, by their very nature, Special Operations Forces are limited in size and scope.

I am already on record as stating that SOF cannot grow more than three-to-five percent per year in those key units and capabilities that must be developed within our own organizational structures and training pipelines. This growth rate will not meet the already obvious appetite for the effects of SOF in forward operating areas.

The solution, beyond the necessary continued steady and disciplined growth of specific special operations capabilities, is to mitigate the demand on SOF by developing and sustaining supporting capabilities within the Services that are beyond their organic needs, and can therefore be used in direct support of special operations commanders. This will enhance the impact of forward-deployed SOF without placing additional demand on SOF's own limited enabling units.

The enabling capabilities that must be provided in greater number by the Services include mobility, aerial sensors, field medics, remote logistics, engineering planners, construction, intelligence, regional specialists, interpreters/translators, communications, dog teams, close air support specialists, security forces and others that permit SOF operators to focus more directly on their missions. Assigned at the unit or detachment level to support joint SOF commanders away from main bases, the effects of such a combined force can be impressive.

Our goal is balance: first, to have sufficient organic SOF-peculiar enablers to permit rapid response to operational crises; and second, to have enabling capabilities assigned in direct support of SOF for longer term sustainment and expansion of the operation. We are and will be dependent upon our Service partners for key force enablers. The non-availability of these force enablers has become our most vexing issue in the operational environment. Another growing challenge, especially as we begin a responsible general purpose force drawdown in Iraq, is base operating support and

personnel security for SOF remaining in dangerous areas after the larger force departs, as SOF cannot provide for itself.

Personnel Management and Readiness Enhancing Authorities

Combat readiness depends on personnel readiness. Ready and relevant special operations forces can only be sustained with the recognition that our people, both our SOF operators and the full range of supporting personnel, are our top priority.

Although Title 10 holds the Commander, USSOCOM, responsible for the combat readiness of special operations forces, many of decisions and processes that impact SOF's readiness are held within the Services. To address this situation, Section 167 of the 2009 National Defense Authorization Act tasked USSOCOM to submit proposals to enhance SOF personnel management. The USSOCOM plan submitted to the Office of the Secretary of Defense contains initiatives intended to improve coordination of personnel management, including assignment, promotion, compensation, and retention.

Budgetary and Acquisition Authorities

The Department's FY10 base budget submission, along with the Overseas Contingency Operations request, recognizes the increasing role of special operations forces (SOF) across the globe. As the Administration rebalances toward an Irregular Warfare (IW) portfolio, we anticipate the importance of, and Services support for, IW will continue to increase. USSOCOM is actively participating in the Department's Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) with the view that the budget request before you this year will adequately serve as the bridge toward the results of the QDR and the FY11 budget submission.

In addition to an appropriate baseline budget, SOF readiness requires investment in the rapid fielding of both existing solutions and cutting edge technologies, even when the relatively small purchase quantities do not

optimize production costs. USSOCOM's aggressive use of our acquisition authority is a key factor in providing wide-ranging, time-sensitive capabilities to our widely dispersed and often isolated forces. Because our budget authority is limited to SOF-peculiar equipment and modifications, USSOCOM also depends heavily on Service acquisition programs that develop and procure Service-common mobility platforms, weapons, ammunition, and other equipment that we then modify to meet SOF's mission needs.

We are constantly evaluating our acquisition processes and looking for new opportunities to streamline and accelerate our acquisition procedures. An example of this is USSOCOM's Urgent Deployment Acquisition (UDA) process which provides a rapid acquisition and logistics response to critical combat mission needs statements (CMNS) submitted by deployed SOF. Most UDA capabilities are delivered to operational forces within six months after receipt of the requirement. We will continue to sustain and modernize the force by equipping our operators, upgrading our mobility platforms and further developing persistent ISR sensors and systems. Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) platforms and their associated analysis and information distribution systems are now essential to success. Our needs for ISR are still undermet, and we must ensure that our ISR fleet is appropriately balanced for enduring global requirements.

We will continue to rely on service ISR programs as we develop new capabilities to meet the dynamic special operations mission needs. We will continue our tactical focus with high-grade sensors on both manned and unmanned platforms. While some capabilities are truly SOF-peculiar and are within USSOCOM's processes, most special operations capabilities are based upon Service-provided systems. It is therefore important that we immediately and collectively transition from a platform-based acquisition cycle to one that is capabilities-based, wherein capabilities such as ISR collection suites or specific weapons packages can be "rolled on and rolled off" a

variety of ground, air, and maritime platforms to increase our tactical and operational reach. Implementation of such a cycle would allow USSOCOM to buy, try and modify capabilities without being constrained by Service platform considerations, and also would allow USSOCOM to upgrade modular capabilities at the pace of technology advancement.

SOF Mobility

Future SOF will require a robust mobility fleet tailored to global demand and an ever-changing strategic environment. Our intent is to recapitalize our 37 oldest C-130 aircraft with modern C-130J aircraft. The first platforms in this program are already funded. USSOCOM continues to evaluate the modernization options for the remaining aircraft to provide the optimum in force capability to the war fighter.

USSOCOM's Non-Standard Aviation program answers long-standing operational requirements for small team intra-theater movement in politically sensitive areas.

We continue to evaluate the proper aviation capacity tailored to each Geographic Combatant Commander's prioritized needs in order to provide troop and cargo movement, aerial refueling and surveillance or penetration of denied areas through higher readiness rates and increased aircraft availability. We continue to explore emerging technologies that will enable these missions to be performed in a higher threat environment.

The CV-22 remains one of USSOCOM's premier programs. This transformational platform provides sufficient speed for long-range vertical lift missions within a single period of darkness. The CV-22's defensive systems, enhanced situational awareness, and Terrain Following and Terrain Avoidance (TF/TA) capabilities provide greater survivability for SOF aircrews and ground operators. We decommissioned USSOCOM's fleet of venerable MH-53

Pave Low helicopters in October 2008, making accelerated delivery of CV-22 a top priority.

The proliferation of inexpensive and advanced surveillance technologies and capabilities threaten SOF's unique access capabilities, particularly in denied or politically sensitive maritime surface and subsurface environments. To meet both the known and projected threats, we continue to seek designs and technologies that permit special operations forces to go where they are not expected.

In 2007, USSOCOM commissioned an analysis of ways that the US military can clandestinely move special operations forces over strategic distances into and out of littoral, medium-to-high threat environments. This study, combined with several other exhaustive analytical studies, led to the Joint Multi-Mission Submersible (JMMS) program. JMMS will provide longer range transits, through extreme water temperatures, with greater on-station endurance than current SOF undersea mobility platforms; thereby permitting a wider range of options to answer national requirements. Additionally, USSOCOM needs to evaluate the potential to conduct long range, clandestine infiltrations by air.

USSOCOM also commissioned an Analysis of Alternatives (AOA) to address undersea mobility requirements in the 2015-2030 timeframe. The AOA was completed in February 2008 and confirmed the need for a new mobility system, now referred to as the Shallow Water Combat Submersible (SWCS). The SWCS program, initiated in 2008, will replace the legacy SEAL Delivery Vehicle and provide a significant increase in shallow water, clandestine access.

SOF Precision Strike Systems

Special operations forces require a family of precision strike systems to address current and future static and mobile targets. The current inventory and capabilities of AC-130 "gunships" and smaller manned and

unmanned platforms are insufficient to meet our need for guided munitions that minimize unintended deaths and damage. I intend to fill this capacity gap by installing a platform neutral Precision Strike Package on our existing MC-130W aircraft, and to field them as soon as practical. I will accept short term risk in SOF's aerial refueling fleet in order to do this quickly, recognizing that a future program will be required to address the resultant shortfall.

Security Force Assistance

As the designated DoD proponent for Security Force Assistance (SFA), USSOCOM leads a collaborative effort to develop and provide DoD elements to enhance the capabilities of our allies and partners. We will assist the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense by recommending overarching priorities for force and resource allocation. Our product will be informed by several non-DoD government agencies, including the Department of State, and will be fully coordinated with the Services and Joint Forces Command. Our work in this very important area will include development of policy and legislative proposals to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of international military assistance programs.

One method by which USSOCOM is now able to assist in the development of foreign special operations capabilities is through the reallocation of funds under Section 1208 authorities.

USSOCOM also strongly supports the Administration's requests for Section 1206, Section 1207, and International Military Education and Training (IMET) funding.

Language and Culture Program Expansion

Last year we called attention to the importance of language and regional knowledge as essential to strengthening relations and facilitating

more effective operations with foreign partners. We initiated recruiting, training, and personnel management mechanisms, and partnered with OSD and the Services to expand the pools from which the Services recruit. As mentioned earlier, the MAVNI program is a small and growing success in this regard. Historical models, such as the Korean KATUSAs and the Alamo Scouts who operated in the Philippines during WWII, are also being evaluated. To meet more immediate tactical needs, we initiated steps to dedicate in-service translators and interpreters to our Army component for joint use. Individual development aimed at correctly aligning language testing, career management, and incentives remains important to our capability; therefore, we strengthened our institutional programs at the Army, Air Force and Marine Component level and worked closely with the Services and OSD to support our career model. We have a long way to go in recognizing and incentivizing such expertise as an operational necessity before we can truly develop and sustain real experts in specific key regions around the world. I call this "Project Lawrence," after T. E. Lawrence of Arabia.

SOF Personnel Growth

As stated earlier, our assessments indicate that SOF cannot grow more than three-to-five percent per year in those key units and capabilities that must be developed within our own organizational structures and training pipelines. And this growth rate will not meet the appetite for the effects of SOF in forward operating areas.

A partial solution is to mitigate the demand on SOF by developing and sustaining supporting capabilities within the Services that are beyond their organic needs and can be assigned in direct support of special operations commanders. This solution will enhance the impact of forward-deployed SOF without placing additional demand on SOF's own enabling units.

Looking to the Future

Today, USSOCOM is a strategic-level organization that addresses global threats to our national interests. USSOCOM observes trans-regional dynamics from a uniquely cross-organizational perspective. This perspective provides us with a comprehensive appreciation of the strategic environment that suggests that the type, scope, and scale of the security challenges facing our nation have changed significantly in recent years. In light of this knowledge, our approach to the security environment must be increasingly agile and adaptive.

The problems we must be prepared to address include the inability of nation states to deal with increasingly complex challenges or to meet the needs and expectations of their populations. These challenges are exacerbated by the growing number of non-state actors who have strategic effect in a networked and interconnected world. In the vacuum created by weak or failed governments, non-state actors have achieved greater influence over benign populations by addressing their basic needs and grievances, and by intimidating and sometimes brutalizing them into submission. When governments fail to address the needs of the population, they become irrelevant and the people will make choices that are shaped by their own immediate needs for survival.

One such choice is to leave their current situation in the hope of finding greater opportunity. As a result, uncontrolled migration is occurring across the world and the challenges associated with this dynamic are manifesting themselves in numerous ways. A few examples are the accelerating urbanization that is overwhelming many under-developed cities; the burgeoning diasporas that are becoming increasingly difficult to assimilate into host nation societies; and the continuing brain drain that hinders growth in the developing world.

Another choice that people make is to turn to non-state organizations, groups, or "super-empowered individuals" that demonstrate state-like capacities. In the best case, people will turn to a benevolent non-state actor such as a non-governmental organization, a moderate and tolerant religious group, or a local ethnic or traditional institution. However, we also see populations that must turn to extremist or criminal organizations, many of which are sponsored by rogue nation states. Non-state groups such as Al Qa'eda, Taliban, Hamas, Hezbollah, MEND, Jamal Islamiyah, FARC, and MS-13 are growing in influence and shaping the choices of populations as nation states fail to adequately address their needs and grievances. In short, non-state actors effectively compete for sovereignty with the traditional nation state system.

Taken alone, uncontrolled migration, extremism, or crime are significant problems, but in combination the difficulty and complexity of these problems grow exponentially. We see a dangerous convergence of these problems, producing corrosive effects across the entire nation state system. Our perception of what constitutes a threat to our national security ought to consider these non-traditional and persistent threats, and therefore, we need to strike the proper balance within the Department of Defense and across our government to address these threats.

USSOCOM favors a "populace-centric" approach in lieu of a "threat-centric" approach to national security challenges. More specifically, we believe that SOF must focus on the environmental dynamics and root causes that create today's and tomorrow's threats and adversaries. This belief requires an approach that is integrated with the long-term work of civilian agencies, especially the State Department and USAID, to foster US credibility and influence among relevant populations.

USSOCOM, as a strategic headquarters, applies an Irregular Warfare (IW) mindset towards national security. Irregular Warfare is a logical, long-term

framework that focuses on relevant populations and describes the activities that the Department of Defense will perform to support State, USAID and other civilian agencies to address the many complex environmental challenges that are emerging on a global scale. The Irregular Warfare approach seeks a balance between direct and indirect activities that focus on the operational environment within the context of interagency and international collaboration.

It is important to note that Irregular Warfare is not new to SOF. Unconventional Warfare, Counter-Terrorism, Counter-Insurgency, Civil-Affairs, Information Operations, Psychological Operations, and Foreign Internal Defense are traditional Irregular Warfare activities and historic SOF core activities. What is new is that an Irregular Warfare approach requires broader participation on the part of the entire Department of Defense. We must also develop the appropriate mechanisms to effectively mesh DoD Irregular Warfare activities with the diplomatic and development efforts of our interagency partners.

This comprehensive appreciation of the strategic environment is why USSOCOM is committed to developing the "3-D Operator." Understanding the synergy of development, diplomacy and defense, we see the "3-D Operator" as an essential element of a strategy that employs both "hard power" and "soft power" methods.

Conclusion

Thank you again for the opportunity to update you on USSOCOM Headquarters and the Special Operations Forces community. It remains a profound honor to be associated with this extraordinarily capable and uniquely innovative force and to represent them before this esteemed body.

USSOCOM headquarters will continue to lead and to manage the development and sustainment of the worlds most precise and lethal

counterterrorism force. We will provide the world's most effective special operations trainers, advisors and combat partners. We will provide advice and comment on issues of national security.

This great Nation's joint special operations forces will continue to find and kill or capture our irreconcilable enemies, to partner with our global friends and allies, and to pursue the tactics, techniques, procedures and technologies that will keep us ahead of dynamic threats.

You have much cause for deep pride in your special operations forces. They, and I, thank you for your continued service and support.