

**Opening Statement  
of Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz  
Before the House Armed Services Committee  
Tuesday, August 10, 2004**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

- Mr. Chairman, Congressman Skelton, Members of the Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today.
- Joining me are General Peter Pace, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and General Doug Brown, Commander of SOCOM, U.S. Special Operations Command.
- On behalf of all of DoD, I would like to begin by thanking the Committee for your support of our men and women in uniform. They serve our country well, and they derive enormous encouragement from the knowledge that their sacrifices are appreciated by Congress and by the American people. So thank you for that support.

**II. ELIMINATING TERRORIST SANCTUARIES**

- The purpose of today's hearing is to address the subject of denying sanctuary to terrorists, which forms one of the core recommendations of Chapter 12 of the Commission Report. Tomorrow's hearing will address Chapter 13 and its recommendations on intelligence reform.
- The 9/11 Commission's July 2004 report offers an excellent assessment of the threat the United States faces and the actions that must be taken to deal with that threat. I would like to recall four conclusions in particular that I think bear repeating and should inform discussion in both the legislative and executive branches over how to improve our capabilities to deal with the threat.
- Importantly, the Commission found that:
  - "Bin Laden and Islamist terrorists mean exactly what they say: to them America is the font of all evil, the 'head of the snake,' and it must be converted or destroyed. It is not a position with which Americans can bargain or negotiate. With it there is no common ground – not even respect for life – on which to begin a dialogue. It can only be destroyed or utterly isolated." (Commission Report, page 362)

- A second key emphasis in the report that bears repeating is the need to employ all instruments of national power in this war. According to the Commission:
  - “Long-term success demands the use of all elements of national power: diplomacy, intelligence, covert action, law enforcement, economic policy, foreign aid, public diplomacy, and homeland defense. If we favor one tool while neglecting others, we leave ourselves vulnerable and we weaken our national effort.” (Committee Report, pages 363-364)
- Third, the Commission rightly concluded that U.S. borders and the world’s oceans no longer afforded protection at home, and that the conflict we face today is global in its nature, and the struggle will be a long-term one.
  - “We need to design a balanced strategy for the long haul, to attack terrorists and prevent their ranks from swelling while at the same time protecting our country against future attacks.” (Commission Report, Preface, page xvi)
  - “9/11 has taught us that terrorism against American interests ‘over there’ should be regarded just as we regard terrorism against America ‘over here.’ In this same sense, the American homeland is the planet.... In the twentieth century, strategists focused on the world’s great industrial heartlands. In the twenty-first, the focus is in the opposite direction, toward remote regions and failing states. The United States has to find ways to extend its reach, straining the limits of its influence.” (Commission Report, pages 362, 367)
- Fourth, this leads to the conclusion that is the starting point of today’s hearing, that drying up sanctuaries, wherever they may exist, is the lynchpin of a successful strategy.
  - “To find sanctuary, terrorist organizations have fled to some of the least governed, most lawless places in the world.... The U.S. government must identify and prioritize actual or potential terrorist sanctuaries. For each, it should have a realistic strategy to keep possible terrorists insecure and on the run, using all elements of national power. We should reach out, listen to, and work with other countries that can help.” (Commission Report, page 366-367)
- These conclusions lead to the overall observation that success in the struggle requires more than punishing terrorist actions after the fact and more than just a defensive strategy. As the Commission says,

- “Certainly the strategy should include offensive operations to counter terrorism. Terrorists should no longer find safe haven where their organizations can grow and flourish. America’s strategy should be a coalition strategy, that includes Muslim nations as partners in its development and implementation.  
Our effort should be accompanied by a preventive strategy that is as much, or more, political as it is military....  
Our strategy should also include defenses.... No defenses are perfect. But ... [d]efenses also complicate the plans of attackers, increasing their risks of discovery and failure.” (Commission Report, page 364)

### III. THE PRESIDENT’S CONCLUSIONS FOLLOWING 9/11

- In important respects, these conclusions of the Commission reaffirm some of the most important conclusions reached by the President and his Administration in the weeks following 9/11.
- From the very first week of the crisis, the President declared his intention to employ all of the resources at his disposal. In his speech to Congress and the nation on September 20, 2001, he said:
  - “We will direct every resource at our command – every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war – to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network.”
- In the same speech, nine days after the attacks on New York and the Pentagon, the President predicted that the war on terror would be a long one, and it would be global. He said:
  - “Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.... Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen....”
- The President said further that defense against terrorist attacks, while necessary, was not adequate. This would be an offensive war:
  - “We will take defensive measures against terrorism to protect Americans.... These measures are essential. But the only way to defeat terrorism as a threat to our way of life is to stop it, eliminate it, and destroy it where it grows.”

- That meant denying the terrorists sanctuary. In his speech to Congress, the President said:
  - “We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest.”
- Overall, the law enforcement approach which attempts to stop terrorism by punishment or retaliation after a terrorist event has occurred is no longer good enough. We need a strategy of prevention.
  - As the President told the graduating cadets at West Point on June 1, 2002, “If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long... We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge. In the world we have entered, the only path to safety is the path of action.”

#### **IV. A FORWARD STRATEGY OF FREEDOM**

- One draws similar conclusions from the President's early response to the 9/11 attacks and the conclusions of the 9/11 Commission: We cannot afford to continue to rely on a reactive, law enforcement approach to dealing with the threat of another major terrorist attack. That strategy in the post-9/11 world is no longer sufficient. Instead, we must adopt a strategy of prevention.
- But prevention means more than killing or capturing terrorists.
- Victory in the war on terror requires sowing the seeds of hope, particularly in the broader Middle East.
- In his January 2002 State of the Union Address, where he spoke of the “axis of evil,” President Bush also referred to what he called “the forward strategy of freedom,” which would deprive the terrorists and their organizations of the sanctuary they need. He said, “America will take the side of brave men and women who advocate these values around the world, including the Islamic world, because we have a greater objective than eliminating threats and containing resentment. We seek a just and peaceful world beyond the war on terror.”

- The President took this principle much further last fall. In his speech marking the 20th anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy on November 6, 2003, and then again in London, the President said that we must work with our partners in the Greater Middle East and around the world to promote tolerance, rule of law, political and economic openness, and the extension of greater opportunities so that all people – men and women alike, Muslim and non-Muslim – can realize their full potential.
- As he said in his speech in London, “The democratic progress we’ve seen in the Middle East was not imposed from abroad, and neither will the greater progress we hope to see. Freedom, by definition, must be chosen, and defended by those who choose it. Our part, as free nations, is to ally ourselves with reform, wherever it occurs.”
- The 9/11 Commission came to a similar conclusion, referring to “tolerance, the rule of law, political and economic openness, the extension of greater opportunities to women,” adding that “these cures must come from within Muslim societies themselves. The United States must support such developments.” (Commission Report, pages 362-363)
- In short, there is agreement that terrorism must be eradicated and discarded, just as piracy and the slave trade were de-legitimized and driven to the margins of civilized life in the past. The extremist ideology the terrorists espouse must be pushed to the margins of civilized society and replaced by a hopeful vision of freedom. This is an ambitious goal, but the threat we face is also enormous and unprecedented.
- Mr. Chairman, our enemies’ strength is their ability to kill innocent people but that is also their weakness. Theirs is a cult of death, not life. Reducing the grievances that feed terrorism means offering a vision of life and hope to counter the terrorists’ vision of death and despair.

## **V. KINDS OF SANCTUARY**

- The issue of sanctuary was described by former Secretary of State George Shultz in a speech in January, 2002, only a few months after 9/11. He said, “Terrorists can’t exist in any meaningful way unless they have a place where they can train, where they can plan, where they can gather their equipment together, where they can do all the different kinds of things you have to do to make sustained, coordinated attacks.”
- That is the kind of geographical sanctuary that terrorists enjoy when they are harbored by sympathetic regimes like Afghanistan under the Taliban and Iraq under Saddam Hussein.

- Geographical sanctuary is also found in the vast ungoverned regions in the world, areas that are beyond governmental control. Typically they involve notoriously difficult terrain, far removed from population centers, in countries with fragile governments.
- But there are other kinds of sanctuary as well:
  - We know that the 9-11 terrorists themselves were able to create a kind of sanctuary inside the United States and other democratic countries, exploiting the very freedom and openness they were attacking in order to hide their evil plans.
  - There is also “ideological sanctuary,” which our enemies enjoy when extremist clerics provide cover by sanctioning terrorism, by recruiting new adherents, and by intimidating moderate clerics from speaking out against them.
  - Lastly, there is what we might call “cyber sanctuary,” a reference to the “space” that exists through communications networks made possible by modern technology. It is essentially an unregulated medium which is especially attractive to terrorist organizations that exist across international boundaries. This tool -- which enables so much good -- also provides terrorists with the ability to conceal their identities, to move large amounts of money, to encrypt messages, and to plan and even conduct operations remotely.
- Our goal should be to reduce the space in which terrorists find sanctuary to the maximum extent possible. There should be no room in this world for governments that support terrorism, no ungoverned areas where terrorists can operate with impunity, no easy opportunities for terrorists to abuse the freedoms of democratic societies, no ideological sanctuary, and no free pass to exploit the technologies of communications to serve terrorist ends. Approaching this goal will take time, and it will not be easy. It will involve difficult decisions about resources, it will require balancing diplomacy and the use of force, it will require protecting civil liberties while reducing the ability of terrorists to operate in our midst.
- Perhaps above all, success requires expanding the appeal of freedom and democracy to take away terrorism’s ideological sanctuary. That is why the idea of democracy and freedom taking hold in places like Iraq poses such a threat to terrorists. The now-infamous terrorist, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, understood this danger when he wrote: “Democracy is coming, and there will be no excuse thereafter. We pack our bags and search for another land ... because our enemy is growing stronger and his intelligence data are increasing day by day.... [T]his is suffocation.”

## VI. GEOGRAPHIC APPROACH

- The 9/11 Commission Report identified three important countries as “illustrations” of the global nature of the war on terror and the different means for denying sanctuary to terrorists. Those countries are Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. They illustrate how we have used various instruments of national power to dry up our enemies’ sanctuaries.
1. **Afghanistan** began with a stunning military success. Although diplomatic means were tried, the military option is critical when dealing with implacable governments like the Taliban and Saddam Hussein.
    - By taking the war directly to the enemy in Afghanistan, the U.S. military removed the Taliban regime from power in an operation that lasted less than two months, with less than 3 weeks time to plan a military operation 7,000 miles away from our shores and with a force dramatically and intentionally different from the massive occupation force that the Soviet Union deployed. It was an extraordinary achievement that has produced significant results both in Afghanistan and elsewhere.
    - Today, presidential elections are on track in Afghanistan for October 9 and Parliamentary elections for April of 2005. President Karzai set a goal of registering 6 million Afghans, and the United Nations reports that over 9 million have registered across the country. Women account for more than 40 percent of the registered voters.
    - Afghans are developing their own security institutions, capable of responding to internal threats and, with outside assistance, to threats from neighbors.
    - Success in Afghanistan has led to the capture of terrorists elsewhere in the world – first, thanks to evidence that we captured, and second, by forcing al Qaeda terrorists into Pakistan and other places where it has been possible to capture or kill a number of key terrorists.
    - There is still much work to be done in a country that has suffered from 25 years of invasion, civil war, and tyranny. Despite the progress already achieved, Afghanistan’s problems will not be solved overnight. What has been achieved in less than three years is remarkable but it is critical that the effort be sustained. The stakes are too great for us not to do so.

2. Success in Afghanistan has also supported **Pakistan** President Musharraf's bold position as a friend of the U.S. That is critical because no leader has taken greater risks, or faces more daunting challenges from within and without, than President Musharraf. Not only was Pakistan's support crucial for success in Afghanistan, but Pakistan's continuing support has brought other gains:
  - Pakistan has become a more hostile environment for the terrorists who sought refuge there from Afghanistan.
  - Since the autumn of 2001, hundreds of suspected al Qaeda operatives have been apprehended with the help of Pakistani authorities, including more than 10 senior terrorist leaders – among them Abu Zabaydah, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Ramzi bin al-Shib, Tawfiq bin Attash, Ammar al Baluchi, Abu Musab al Baluchi, and Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani.
  - The capture of terrorist operatives in Pakistan has led to the arrests of key associates in places as distant as London and Chicago, and provided significant new information about terrorist plans.
3. **Saudi Arabia** has long been a key front in the war on terror. It is one of the most important targets of the terrorists today.
  - The May 12 attacks in Riyadh were a wake-up call to the Saudis, alerting them to the fact that they have serious problems.
  - Close U.S.-Saudi cooperation in law enforcement and intelligence has resulted in the killing or capturing of more than 600 individuals during counterterrorism operations, including Abu Bakr al Azdi, Abd al Muhsin al Muqrin, Sultan Jubran al Qhatani, Khalid Ali bin Ali Haji, and Rakan Muhsin Muhammad al Saykhan.
  - The Saudis' counter-terrorist efforts have benefited substantially from the ability of the U.S., following the liberation of Iraq, to remove the burden of supporting a large U.S. military presence on Saudi territory, as the Saudis had to do for 12 years as part of the policy of containing Iraq.
  - It is essential that the U.S. continue to do everything we can to support Saudi Arabia's efforts to eliminate terrorism and its support structures within and without the kingdom.
  - However, it is also essential for Saudi Arabia, as it combats terrorism, also to pursue political development, including the rule of law, promotion of democracy, and respect for human rights.

- The integrated use of all instruments of national power in working with Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia demonstrates how these instruments can and should be brought to bear to eliminate sanctuaries for terrorists.
- Yet, as important as these countries are, they represent only a part of the global war on terror. Many different agencies of the U.S. Government are engaged in this effort. Through training and assistance programs, DoD elements are actively engaged in the Philippines, Georgia, Bosnia, Yemen, Somalia and the Horn of Africa, West Africa, and in South America, among other places.
- Terrorists see the world as borderless. A geographical strategy to eliminate terrorist sanctuaries also requires us to work across borders more seamlessly ourselves.

## **VII. THE ROLE OF THE U.S. MILITARY**

### **Direct Military Action**

- Our strategy of prevention and elimination of terrorist sanctuaries calls for ending state support for terrorism by diplomatic means where possible, militarily when necessary.
- But we recognize that sometimes the threat of military force is the very best support for diplomacy. The two elements of national power – diplomacy and military force – are mutually reinforcing.
- Even before the 9/11 attacks in the summer of 2001, the Department of Defense's Quadrennial Defense Review identified denying enemy sanctuary as a key objective.
- In Afghanistan and Iraq, we have seen the revolutionary power that comes through the integration of air and ground power and the near-real time fusion of intelligence to take sanctuaries away from our enemies. Using direct military action, the United States was able to remove two despotic regimes from power with astonishing speed.
- The U.S. has also had diplomatic successes in bringing more countries actively into the fight against terrorism and in ending state support for terrorism – whether that support has been direct or indirect. Libya -- which has renounced weapons of mass destruction in the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of Iraq -- is one example.

- But there are other cases in which diplomacy is not enough. The Taliban and Ba'athist regime in Iraq are examples of governments that rejected diplomatic efforts to deal with threats by peaceful means.
- While our preference is for diplomatic solutions, credible military options can strengthen diplomacy.

### **Strengthening Local Capacity**

- U.S. experience in Iraq and Afghanistan also demonstrates that one key to success in eliminating sanctuaries is building local capacity to shore up U.S. friends and to extend governance and security into ungoverned areas. Unconventional warfare, civil affairs, and foreign internal defense activities are essential to build local capacity – the indirect approach.
- Indeed, our most important allies in the war on terrorism will be Muslims who seek freedom and oppose extremism.
- The U.S. and its allies must work with these partners and potential partners and help to build their capacity to counter terrorism and insurgency within their own borders.
- We encourage Congress to provide new authorities and appropriations to support the Department of Defense in its mission. Some of these authorities have been approved in the recent FY '05 Appropriation Bill, but it is important to include them in the Authorization Bill as well.
  - Our \$500 million request for authority for training and equipping local security forces – not just armies – to counter terrorism and insurgencies, and to provide greater internal security in areas that are or could become sanctuaries for terrorists.
  - Our \$300 million request for authority for Commander's Emergency Response Project funds to help build local capacity of our partners, including helping them to build up their security forces.
  - The President's request for authority to reprogram up to \$100 million from existing funds for the Global Peace Operations Initiative to train and equip foreign militaries to conduct peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. Having more capable forces from other countries means more stability in trouble spots around the world that could provide safe havens for terrorist groups.

- Other roles for the U.S. military:
  - Recruiting immigrant Americans to work in the Department of Defense and other agencies, to deploy and serve as bilingual/bicultural advisors as we work to deny sanctuary to terrorists in unfamiliar areas of the world.
  - Conducting civic action projects that help to win the trust and goodwill of people in lawless areas and turn them into allies.
  - Strengthening critical intelligence support to the warfighter.
  - Dealing effectively with international partners such as Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and Indonesia – all key states in the war on terror, where we need to also encourage internal political and economic reforms, as well as respect for the rule of law and human rights.
  - And employing foreign forces in peace and stability operations, which can lessen the burden on U.S. forces, while helping to reduce environments where terrorists can hide easily.

## **VIII. GOING BEYOND THE MILITARY**

- At the same time, we should do more to eliminate “ideological sanctuary” for international terrorism. This goes beyond military solutions. Specifically, we need to:
  - Amplify Muslim voices that promote freedom and oppose extremist ideologies and ensure adequate resources for those U.S. Government agencies – including State and AID – that have this mission.
  - Develop greater educational opportunities in underdeveloped parts of the world.
  - Encourage private philanthropy and non-governmental organizations to support individuals and organizations that offer genuine alternatives to the extremism which teaches that violent death in jihad is the only option in a life without hope.
  - Continue efforts to help create examples of successful democratic states within the Muslim world. As the President said in his speech to the National Endowment for Democracy, Nov. 6, 2003, “As long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish, it will remain a place of stagnation, resentment, and violence ready for export.”

- Within the United States itself, encourage greater emphasis on the study of the languages, religions, cultures, and the history of the Muslim world, to develop the cultural understanding and insight that will help us promote the U.S.'s image abroad.

## **IX. Conclusion**

- The 9/11 Commission has produced an important and valuable report which points – correctly – to the issue of sanctuary as pivotal in the global war on terrorism.
- This conclusion reinforces the strategy adopted by the President and the Administration in the wake of the attack on America.
- It is worth recalling the words the President spoke in his address to Congress and the nation nine days after 9/11. He said:
  - “[I]n our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom – the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time – now depends on us. Our nation – this generation – will lift a dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail.”
- Support for freedom and democracy is not the imposition of U.S. values on other people. It is giving other people a chance to decide their own futures. It is not utopian idealism that is divorced from the real world. Rather, it involves harnessing one of the most powerful forces in the world -- the desire of people to be free – which is ultimately our strongest weapon for defeating the extremists who offer nothing but tyranny and death. It is the weapon that won the Cold War, and it is the weapon that will win the war on terror.

- An e-mail which I received a few days ago from someone in Iraq illustrates this point. For someone for whom English is not his native language, this Iraqi Arab wrote eloquently, misspellings and all:
  - “Yes sir the things in Mosul are tough, but every day Iraqi polices get more and more power and experience and they have great supporting by U.S, army, just yesterday we had battle between Iraqi police and Iraqi National Guard, supported by U.S. army and in the other hand with ansar islam[terrorism organization] and we can call the battle of yesterday testing of power,because those bad guys tought that Iraqi police and ING will leave their postion when they just hear voice of shotting , but what happen tha IP and ING foughted them in best way and killed 14 of them ... And about your question what we can do to make Iraq better ,the first thing that America and iraqi have be patient and work verey hard ,we have know the freedom is cost too much, for example the freedom which we see it right know in Euorpe and U.S.are not coming from vacuum but they paid rivers of blood ... I hope we will not see any more bloods in IRAQ.... but we will see the freedom in Iraq either the enemies of freedom want that or not.”