

**Advance Questions for General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC**  
**Nominee to be Commander, International Security Assistance Force and**  
**Commander, United States Forces Afghanistan**

**Defense Reforms**

**The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and Special Operations reforms have strengthened the warfighting readiness of our Armed Forces. They have enhanced civilian control and the chain of command by clearly delineating the combatant commanders' responsibilities and authorities and the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These reforms have also improved cooperation between the Services and the combatant commanders, among other things, in joint training and education and in the execution of military operations.**

**Do you see the need for modifications of any Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions?**

The past eleven years of war have demonstrated the importance of Goldwater-Nichols. It has driven the Services toward greater effectiveness and interoperability, which enables our Joint Force to rapidly deploy and operate in remote and austere environments like Afghanistan. Further, this has helped us improve interoperability within the Coalition. I don't see the need for modifications at this time.

**If so, what areas do you believe might be appropriate to address in these modifications?**

I do not see the need for modifications at this time.

**Duties**

**What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)?**

The Commander of ISAF (COMISAF) is the senior NATO uniformed officer in Afghanistan. He is the in-theatre operational commander exercising operational control of all ISAF forces in Afghanistan employing assigned forces in the conduct of population-centric counterinsurgency operations; enabling and evaluating an expanded and effective ANSF capable of fighting their own counterinsurgency; and providing support to governance and development efforts to protect the Afghan people and to provide a secure environment.

ISAF is a NATO-directed operation conducted under UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1386 (2001), which authorizes the establishment of ISAF to assist the Afghan government in maintaining security in Kabul and surrounding areas and to take all necessary measures to fulfill this mandate. Following a UN and NATO/North Atlantic Council agreement, NATO assumed strategic command of ISAF on 11 August 2003 under the authority of UNSCR 1386 and

successor UNSCRs. Subsequently, UNSCR 1510 (2003) geographically expanded the ISAF mandate established in UNSCR 1386 to cover all of Afghanistan.

**What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A) and how do those duties and functions relate to those of the Commander, NATO ISAF?**

The Commander of USFOR-A is the senior U.S. officer in Afghanistan with duties distinct from his duties as Commander, ISAF. The USFOR-A Commander exercises National Command Element and National Support Element authorities and responsibilities for ensuring that U.S. forces have the guidance, equipment, and funding they need to conduct their missions. He ensures unity of effort among all U.S. forces including those under the ISAF command and those forces not under ISAF command, such as those U.S. forces conducting U.S. detention operations and U.S. counter-terrorism operations.

COMISAF employs the forces that troop-contributing nations provide to ISAF of which the United States remains the largest troop-contributing nation. The Commander, USFOR-A, directs and oversees the United States' military contributions within ISAF while COMISAF duties include ensuring the operations of all troop-contributing nations, including those of U.S. forces, are coordinated.

**What background and experience do you possess that you believe qualifies you to perform these duties?**

I have had the opportunity to work very closely on Afghanistan in several of my assignments as a general officer to include duty as the Vice Director of Operation on the Joint Staff and as the Commander, Marine Forces Central Command. In the latter assignment, I had operational command of all Marine Forces serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. As the Commander, Marine Forces Central Command I also had responsibility for the draw down in Iraq and the buildup of Marine forces in Afghanistan. Since 2008, I have traveled to Afghanistan and Pakistan on multiple occasions. In my current assignment and in a previous assignment as the Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Operations, I frequently represented the Commandant in Tank sessions where our Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy and related issues have been addressed and I contributed to the development of best military advice to the Secretary of Defense and the President. I also studied the region in graduate school and dedicated a great deal of time to self-study. As a result, I have experience and an understanding of the region that will be useful if I'm confirmed as COMISAF/COMUSFOR-A.

Finally, I believe my experience as a commander and general officer in Iraq has prepared me to lead our young men and women in Afghanistan and provided me with an understanding of the nature of counterinsurgency operations and the associated challenges.

**Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your expertise to perform the duties of the Commander, NATO ISAF, and/or Commander, USFOR-A?**

A professional military officer should never stop listening or learning. If confirmed, I will continue to deepen my knowledge of the strategic environment and seek input from a wide range of military and civilian experts. If confirmed and before taking command, I will also spend a great deal of time visiting our forces on the ground and leaders from across NATO to enhance my understanding of the fight and to assist me in refining my personal framing of the problem.

## **Relationships**

**Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Commander, NATO ISAF/Commander, USFOR-A, to the following:**

### **The Secretary of Defense**

The USFOR-A Commander reports to the USCENTCOM Commander, who, in turn, reports directly to the Secretary of Defense. This reporting relationship is prescribed in 10 USC Section 164(d)(1). COMISAF does not have a formal relationship with the Secretary of Defense because COMISAF reports to the NATO chain of command through the Commander of Joint Forces Command – Brunssum, who reports to SACEUR.

### **The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

The USFOR-A Commander does not have a formal command relationship with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff but coordinates with him through the USCENTCOM Commander on a regular basis. The Chairman is the principal military advisor to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Council and while he is the nation's senior military officer, he is not in the chain of command. The USFOR-A Commander sends his advice and opinions on military operations to the Chairman through the USCENTCOM Commander.

### **Commander, U.S. Central Command**

The Commander, USFOR-A works very closely with the Commander, USCENTCOM on all aspects of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. By law, the Commander, USFOR-A reports directly to the Commander, USCENTCOM. The Commander, USCENTCOM exercises authoritative direction and control over all U.S. Forces in the CENTCOM area of responsibility, which includes all U.S. Forces in Afghanistan. The Commander, USCENTCOM provides authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics. He has delegated National Command Element and National Support Element authority and responsibilities to the Commander, USFOR-A.

### **NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe**

NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, is the NATO strategic-level commander of all NATO forces, including those assigned to the NATO mission in Afghanistan. He provides the Commander of Joint Forces Command-Brunssum with strategic guidance and direction. Joint Forces Command-Brunssum is NATO's operational level command responsible for the mission

in Afghanistan. In short, SACEUR provides strategic direction and campaign objectives and the Commander of JFC-B directs COMISAF to attain these objectives and perform key military and supporting tasks, as mandated by the North Atlantic Council.

### **Commander, ISAF Joint Command**

IJC is ISAF's operational-level command and is subordinate to HQ ISAF. As such, the commander of ISAF Joint Command (IJC), reports to COMISAF. The IJC Commander is also dual-hatted as the Deputy Commander of USFOR-A, and retains certain U.S. command authorities. IJC was established in November 2009.

### **Commander, NATO Training Mission—Afghanistan/Commander, Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan**

Commander of NTM-A/CSTC-A reports to COMISAF/COMUSFOR-A. NTMA/CSTC-A is a subordinate HQ to both HQ ISAF and HQ USFOR-A. The CSTC-A element retains its U.S.-only character primarily for funding and administrative authorities, and responds to the U.S. chain of command. The NAC established NTM-A in April 2009, and it was merged into CSTC-A in March 2010 under a dual-hatted commander.

### **U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan**

The USFOR-A Commander provides operational assistance and advice, to include U.S. military views and recommendations, to the U.S. Ambassador. He maintains a close working relationship with the Ambassador to ensure that military and civilian efforts are synchronized and mutually supporting. This is particularly important in the Rule of Law arena where the Department of State has the lead for the United States Government. The Commander, Combined Joint-Interagency Task Force 435 (who reports directly to the USFOR-A Commander), provides support to the Coordinating Director for Rule of Law and Law Enforcement, who reports directly to the U.S. Ambassador.

### **U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan**

The USFOR-A Commander maintains open communications channels and a close relationship with the U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan to ensure ongoing diplomatic and assistance efforts in Pakistan are supportive of military and civilian objectives in Afghanistan. He is particularly interested in the security assistance program implemented by the Office of the Defense Representative-Pakistan, who reports directly to the CENTCOM Commander but works under authority of the U.S. Ambassador to build partner capacity in the Pakistan Military's ongoing counter-insurgency efforts. The Embassy is a key partner for advancing our border coordination efforts with the Pakistan Military and the Afghan National Security Forces. The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad was also critical to USFOR-A efforts to re-open the Ground Lines of Communications through Pakistan which supply our forces.

## **U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan**

The USFOR-A Commander provides operational assistance and advice, to include U.S. military views and recommendations, to the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. He maintains a close working relationship with the Special Representative to ensure that military and civilian efforts are synchronized and mutually supporting. This relationship is particularly important to the ongoing security and political transition, as well as re-integration and reconciliation efforts, which will facilitate an inclusive Afghan political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan.

## **The Secretary General of NATO**

The NATO Secretary General chairs the North Atlantic Council, the highest political authority in NATO. The North Atlantic Council is responsible for the overall decisions and direction of NATO policy and operations and is comprised of ambassador-level representatives of all NATO members, including the United States. The Council is advised on military matters and the conduct of operations by the Military Committee, which is also composed of senior military representatives from each member state. The North Atlantic Council, under the Secretary General's leadership, provides overall direction and guidance to the military chain of command. In practical terms, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) leads all NATO military operations and advises NATO's Military Committee. Thus, in the case of the ISAF mission, the Secretary General, following consultations and decisions by the North Atlantic Council, provides guidance and direction to SACEUR through the Military Committee, and the SACEUR communicates those directives and guidance through NATO's military chain of command. COMISAF and the Secretary General confer and consult regularly, including formal updates to the Secretary General and the North Atlantic Council on the progress of military operations in Afghanistan.

## **NATO Senior Civilian Representative for Afghanistan**

The NATO Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) for Afghanistan is the civilian counterpart to COMISAF. As the NATO Secretary General's direct representative in Afghanistan, the SCR is charged with carrying forward the political aspects of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan. Although there is no formal command relationship, the SCR and COMISAF work in close concert and with full transparency in accordance with the North Atlantic Council-approved Terms of Reference for the SCR and SACEUR as well as JFC-B's guidance for COMISAF. In short, this cooperative relationship is critical to underwrite NATO's operational military and political engagement in Afghanistan and can help to improve cooperation between ISAF and international civilian agencies in Afghanistan.

## **United Nations Special Representative in Afghanistan**

UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Afghanistan is an important leader in the international community's efforts in Afghanistan. While no command relationship exists between COMISAF and the UN SRSG, the ISAF mission was authorized by UN Security

Council Resolution to assist the Afghan government in the establishment of a secure and stable environment. Similarly, the UN SRSG has a mandate to lead the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) supporting the Afghan government in its efforts to improve critical areas, including security, governance, economic development, and regional cooperation, as well as to support the full implementation of mutual commitments made on these issues at the London Conference in January 2010 and the subsequent Kabul Conference in July 2010. The SACEUR OPLAN states that COMISAF is expected to work in close coordination with both the NATO SCR and the UN SRSG. These partnerships support efforts to work with the Afghan government to ensure progress towards the goal of a self-sufficient Afghanistan.

### **Afghanistan Transition and Major Challenges**

**At the NATO Summit in Chicago in May, NATO members committed to steps to promote a stable and secure Afghanistan and to the goal of “preventing Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists that threaten Afghanistan, the region and the world.” NATO members also reaffirmed their support for the plan, initially endorsed at the 2010 Lisbon NATO Summit, to transition full security responsibility from ISAF to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by the end of 2014.**

**Do you agree with the objectives and transition plan for the ISAF mission endorsed at the NATO Chicago Summit?**

Yes, I do. At the Chicago Summit, NATO Allies and Coalition partners reaffirmed the Lisbon framework for Transition and agreed to an interim milestone in mid-2013 where, upon the initiation of the final tranche, ANSF would assume the lead for combat operations across the country and ISAF’s primary mission would shift to training, advising, and assisting the ANSF. They pledged roughly \$3.6 billion annually for three years beginning in 2015 toward a sustainable ANSF. This commitment of long-term support will help solidify and sustain the security gains achieved over the previous 13 years.

**What are the major challenges and problems you foresee, if confirmed as the next Commander, NATO ISAF/Commander, USFOR-A, in the implementation of the transition plan in Afghanistan?**

If confirmed, I believe there will be three key challenges in implementing this plan. First is defining how and when provinces will complete the Transition process and how ISAF will operate in those areas within the parameters of the Military Technical Agreement. In addition to security, ensuring the irreversibility of the Transition process also requires sufficient governance, development, and rule of law. A second challenge is the relationship between security and non-security ministries. Cooperation is needed to ensure continued progress in governance, development, and rule of law reinforces the security Transition. Third is ensuring the appropriate disposition of ANSF forces around the country and managing the Afghan government’s desire to assume responsibility for all ISAF bases.

**If confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges and problems?**

If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Government, NATO and Afghan counterparts to develop a mutually-agreed upon framework for completing the Transition process. I will continue to work with the security ministers and other key leaders in aligning the ANSF's disposition with strategic priorities and operational requirements and in carrying out the decisions of the joint ISAF-Afghan basing board.

**Security Situation in Afghanistan**

**What is your assessment of the security situation in Afghanistan, particularly in southern and eastern Afghanistan, and of the nature, size, and scope of the insurgency?**

Although the insurgency remains resilient and determined, Coalition and ANSF operations have degraded insurgent capabilities and freedom of movement in much of the country. The insurgency failed to meet its established goals for the 2012 fighting season and enemy initiated attacks have largely been driven out of key population centers, a central aim of the Campaign. Additionally, security conditions remain relatively stable in areas that have transitioned and, on average, show a decrease in violence. Insurgent groups are most active along the border with Pakistan. The Taliban remains vested in southern Afghanistan, the Pashtun's ideological homeland, and enjoys the support of the Haqqani Network which is focused on the east of the country and Kabul. The insurgency continues to use the same tactics to preserve a diminishing force structure: improvised explosive devices; high-profile attacks; insider attacks; assassinations of influential powerbrokers, tribal elders, ANSF, and Afghan officials; and the avoidance of larger engagements.

**Process of Transitioning Security Responsibility to ANSF**

**In May 2012 President Karzai announced the third round of areas designated for transition to having Afghan forces in the lead for security, which included some areas that remain volatile. ISAF has said that two more rounds of transition will occur between now and mid-2013, at which point Afghan security forces will have lead responsibility for security throughout Afghanistan, though coalition forces will continue to provide substantial support to Afghan forces through 2014.**

**Do you support ISAF's plans for transitioning to an Afghan security lead throughout Afghanistan by mid-2013 with coalition forces continuing to provide support to the ANSF through 2014?**

Yes, I support plans for ANSF assuming the lead for security across all of Afghanistan by mid-2013, as agreed to at the Chicago NATO Summit in May 2012. This process of transferring lead security authority to ANSF from ISAF is at the heart of Transition. This transfer is done over the course of five sequential tranches of geographic areas in order to optimize the chances of

success, and this milestone in the latter part of the summer of 2013, coincides with the implementation of the final Transition tranche. Supported by ISAF partners, advisors, and enablers, the ANSF will have 18 months to fully develop effective forces before full security responsibility is handed over to the Afghan government at the end of 2014. During this time, ISAF will maintain sufficient combat power to respond and conduct operations alongside the ANSF.

**What is your assessment of the capacity and performance of the Afghan security forces assuming the lead for security in areas designated for transition, including in contested areas?**

My assessment of the ANSF is that they are an increasingly capable force which has expanded security gains in many Transitioning areas. Some of Afghanistan's more challenging districts entered Transition in Tranche 3 to better manage associated risk with available forces, and the ANSF has performed well in these areas. If confirmed I will be able to make a more detailed assessment of their capacity and performance, which will be one of my first actions.

**What do you view as the most significant challenges to the Afghan security forces in assuming lead security responsibilities through 2014?**

Adapting to operations without ISAF enablers will be a major challenge as ISAF forces phase out of the battle space over time. Another challenge for the ANSF in ensuring the irreversibility of their hard-fought gains in security will be that governance and development lags far behind ANSF and GIRoA's security capacity. From an operational perspective, effective coordination between the ANA and ANP will continue to be a challenge in transitioning areas.

### **Building and Sustaining the Afghan National Security Forces**

**The ANSF are expected to reach their target end strength of 352,000 in the coming months, consisting of an Afghan National Army (ANA) of 195,000 and Afghan National Police (ANP) of 157,000.**

**In your view, are the target end strength levels for the ANA and ANP sufficient to provide security and stability in Afghanistan?**

Yes, the target end-strength levels for ANA and ANP are sufficient to provide security and stability in Afghanistan which is defined as ANSF's ability to manage violence at an acceptable level to Afghans. The ANSF target goals were set based on US and NATO objectives in Afghanistan, and are evaluated regularly against those objectives. Based on current assessments I have reviewed, the ANSF will require coalition enablers in fixed- and rotary-wing aviation, engineering, counter IED, fires, ISR, intelligence, and CASEVAC through 2014.

**What in your view are the greatest challenges to building the capacity of the ANSF to assume the security lead?**

Based on my initial assessment, there are five key challenges to improving the ANSF's ability to assume responsibility for Afghanistan's security: leadership, logistics, counter-IED, attrition, and literacy. The current ANSF logistics and maintenance systems function, but with some challenges such as a lack of trained logisticians and the slowness of the Ministry of Defense supply request process. Progress in manning, training, and equipping Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Route Clearance units has been steady but uneven due to differing security conditions across the nation. Afghan leadership is working to better implement an operational rotation cycle for the employment of units, enforcement of leave policies, timely payment of salaries, the possibility to learn reading and writing, and improve living conditions to help reduce the attrition rate. Finally, literacy continues to be a challenge in professionalizing and training the Afghan forces. If confirmed, I will focus ISAF's efforts towards these challenges, building on the current signs of progress.

**A key component of efforts to build the capacity of Afghan security forces is partnering ANSF units together with ISAF units in the field.**

**What is your understanding and assessment of the manning, organization, operations, and effectiveness of U.S. forces partnering with the ANA and ANP?**

Our U.S. forces serving in Afghanistan have done a remarkable job partnering with their Afghan counterparts. Within the Security Force Assistance construct, partnered operations are a necessary and natural step to ensure an Afghan unit is ready to operate and progress with an advisor team. Our partnering and advising operations up to this point have been quite effective in getting ANSF units to an initial operating capability and this new construct will enable improved, and in some cases, accelerated development of ANSF capabilities. If confirmed, I will conduct a thorough assessment on this essential aspect of our strategy.

**What is your understanding and assessment, if any, of the role that smaller numbers of U.S. or coalition forces will play in providing Afghan forces assistance with operational integration or providing key enablers, such as aviation, intelligence, logistics, or fire support?**

The Security Force Assistance model provides select enablers to the ANSF, especially the Afghan Air Force. The use of coalition enablers will be based predominately on the mission needs of our advisory teams. For the next two years, ISAF will evaluate ANSF readiness, training, and fielding, including the possibility of accelerating the training and fielding of ANSF enabler capabilities. We will need to revisit the concept of enablers regularly during that period of time to understand the need to adjust risk mitigation, or more specifically, enablers. If confirmed, this is something I will closely monitor and ensure we continue to make steady progress toward our transition goals.

**The 352,000 end strength for the ANSF has been called a surge force. At the NATO Chicago Summit in May, ISAF participating countries called for any reductions in the pace and size of the ANSF after 2014 to be "conditions-based". The ISAF participating**

**countries also discussed a “preliminary model” for the future size of the ANSF of 228,500, with an estimated annual cost of \$4.1 billion, which would be subject to regular review in light of developments in the security situation.**

**Do you agree that any reductions in the ANSF post-2014 from the 352,000 level need to be based on the security conditions in Afghanistan at the time the reductions would occur?**

Yes. The balance between security, long-term stability and development inform force structure projections, and the operational environment and the nature of the insurgency add immediate context. Coalition advisors will work with the ANSF and the Afghan government to develop a managed force reduction path which will be determined by the situation in Afghanistan. The results of Afghan operations between 2014 and 2016 will determine the environment the ANSF will face as they reduce their force structure. Ultimately, governance will determine if ANSF security gains are sustained long term.

**What is your understanding of the basis for the “preliminary model” of a future ANSF of 228,500?**

In developing the ANSF Plan of Record (APoR), the ANSF Objective Force of 228,500 was based primarily on ISAF’s assessment of the potential threat environment in 2017 taking into consideration what size force is sustainable and affordable for Afghanistan, as funding from the international community reduces. The Center for Army Analysis wargamed different ANSF structures in varying threat environments and concluded that a 228,500 offered the best probability of success.

**In your view, what assumptions regarding the overall security environment in Afghanistan underlie the “preliminary model” of a future ANSF of 228,500?**

There were several planning assumptions for the APoR’s preliminary model for the ANSF Objective Force in 2017. One assumption was that NATO and Afghan goals would remain generally congruent regarding the denial of terrorist safe havens in Afghanistan. Another important factor was that ISAF assumed international funding contributions will meet the \$4.1 billion pledge established at the Chicago Summit, and that this funding would be sufficient for Afghanistan to maintain the force. A third important assumption was that GIROA and the ANSF would continue to face threats emanating from external regional actors seeking to expand their influence and undermine GIROA as well as internal threats from a resilient insurgency. It was further assumed that those threats would not detract from the ANSF’s ability to preserve Afghanistan’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. The collective assessment, validated through modeling, was that 228,500 was the proper force structure.

**If confirmed, do you agree to conduct a review of the modeling for future ANSF force levels to assess what size and capabilities are appropriate to address security conditions in Afghanistan post-2014?**

If confirmed, I will continue the process of assessing future ANSF force levels to determine what size and capabilities are appropriate to address evolving security conditions in Afghanistan. Both conditions on the ground and the assumptions used in the initial APoR modeling will change over time and should be reviewed, in partnership with GIROA, to ensure the success of the mission and the success of the ANSF post-2014.

### **Draw Down of U.S. Forces in Afghanistan**

**In June 2011, President Obama announced his decision to draw down the 33,000 U.S. surge force in Afghanistan so that by the summer of 2012 U.S. forces will be at a level of 68,000. The President also announced that after the reduction of surge forces, U.S. forces in Afghanistan would continue to draw down “at a steady pace” through 2014. General Allen has said that once the 68,000 U.S. troop level is reached at the end of September, he intends to assess the situation on the ground in Afghanistan and provide the President his recommendation for future U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan.**

**Do you support the President’s decision to draw down U.S. forces in Afghanistan to a level of 68,000 by the end of September?**

Yes, I support the President’s decision and the reasoning behind that decision to recover 33,000 U.S. surge forces by October 2012. The purpose of the surge was to reverse the Taliban’s momentum and increase the size and capability of the ANSF. The surge accomplished these objectives and created the conditions to initiate the process of Transition.

**Do you agree that following the recovery of the 33,000 U.S. surge force in Afghanistan, further reductions in U.S. forces levels should continue “at a steady pace” through 2014?**

I agree that there will be further troop reductions through 2014 but the pace of withdrawal over the next 25 months will depend on several variables, including progress of the campaign, the state of the insurgency, and the readiness of the ANSF to assume full security leadership and responsibility to the Afghan government by the end of 2014. Decisions on the pace and magnitude of further troop reductions will be made by the President and in accordance with the ISAF mandate which ends on December 31, 2014. If confirmed, I will continuously monitor and assess such elements and advise the chain of command accordingly.

**To what extent, in your view, should further reductions beyond the 68,000 U.S. troop-level in Afghanistan be based on actual security conditions “on the ground” there?**

An assessment of the security conditions on the ground is one of several factors that should be considered as part of a strategic conversation on troop requirements. Other factors include the progress of the campaign, the state of the insurgency, and the readiness of the ANSF to assume full security leadership and responsibility to the Afghan government by the end of 2014.

## **Post-2014 U.S.-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership**

**In May, President Obama and President Karzai signed the U.S.-Afghanistan Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement, which sets out the mutual objectives and goals for a post-2014 bilateral relationship, including on long-term security issues. The Agreement provides for a continuing U.S. military presence in Afghanistan through 2014 and beyond, as may be agreed in a Bilateral Security Agreement to be negotiated.**

**In your view, what should be the primary mission or missions of U.S. forces in Afghanistan after 2014?**

In my view our overall objective in Afghanistan after 2014 will be to sustain our hard-won security gains after 2014 so that Afghanistan never again becomes a safe haven for terrorists. To accomplish this objective, the primary missions of the U.S. military in Afghanistan should be to (1) train, advise, and assist the ANSF; (2) provide support to civilian agencies, and (3) conduct counter-terrorism operations. This mission set will include force protection for our brave young men and women and, as available, the provision of *in extremis* support for our Afghan forces. The training, advisory and assistance mission is largely in line with those of our NATO partners; in October 2012, the NATO Defense Ministerial endorsed the mandate for the post-2014, NATO-led International Training, Advisory, and Assistance Mission.

**What are the key issues that need to be addressed as part of the negotiation and conclusion of a Bilateral Security Agreement?**

The Strategic Partnership Agreement negotiated last spring included the provisions for: continued U.S. access to, and use of, Afghan facilities for the purposes of countering terrorism; continuing to train the Afghan National Security Forces; and other mutually agreed activities to advance shared security interests. The BSA should provide a foundation for enduring defense cooperation between our two countries. The key issues that need to be addressed in the conclusion of the BSA should include the nature and scope of the future presence and operational authorities of U.S. forces in Afghanistan; access to and use of Afghan facilities by U.S. forces beyond 2014; and, securing adequate status protections for U.S. Department of Defense military and civilian personnel in Afghanistan.

## **Insider Threat**

**Recently there has been an increase in the number of so-called “green-on-blue” incidents in which individuals in Afghan uniform have attacked U.S. or coalition soldiers. The rising number of insider attacks has led U.S. and Afghan military leaders to order a number of precautions against such insider threats, including expanding Afghan counterintelligence efforts to identify possible Taliban infiltrators, increasing cultural sensitivity training, and expanding the “Guardian Angel” program to protect against the insider threat in meetings between coalition and Afghan forces.**

**In your view what are the causes of the recent spike in green-on-blue attacks?**

Insider attacks are an insurgent tactic to create a seam between ISAF and the ANSF, sowing mistrust between partners and undermining domestic support for the campaign. Because attackers are often killed during an incident, it is difficult to fully assess the motivations behind insider attacks (sometimes called green-on-blue). We know that insurgents use infiltration, impersonation, co-option as a means to commit an insider attack, and they seek to exploit post-traumatic stress, inter-personal disputes and extremist views through propaganda and messaging. Even though the number of insider attacks is relatively small, each is tragic. I understand the strategic implications of each one of these attacks, and if confirmed, I will personally engage in mitigating the risks of insider attacks and properly responding to each incident.

**What is your assessment of the measures that have been taken by ISAF and Afghan leaders to address the insider threat?**

Because no single definitive countermeasure can prevent insider attacks, ISAF and the ANSF have introduced a program of countermeasures which, when applied collectively, can reduce the threat posed by insider attacks. These measures include strengthening vetting and screening processes for new recruits and those returning from leave; increasing the number and training for counterintelligence agents; and enhancing force protection for ISAF troops operating in small units or in remote areas. Insider attacks have declined substantially providing an early indication that countermeasures are working, but it will take time to see the full effect of these countermeasures. I am encouraged by the joint, integrated ISAF-ANSF approach and level of the Afghan government's commitment to reducing this mutual threat. For example, ISAF and the ANSF established the 3-star Insider Threat Action Group, which they co-chair, and they formed joint assessment teams to study incidents and identify lessons and required actions for the future.

**If confirmed, what additional steps, if any, would you recommend to address this threat?**

If confirmed, I will continue to make countering this threat a top priority. I will continuously monitor and assess the nature of insider threats and potential vulnerabilities and ensure ISAF is properly resourced to counter this threat, particularly as ISAF's organizational profile shifts to a security force assistance model. We are not alone in suffering the effects of insider attacks; our Afghan partners have also suffered considerably from insider attacks. Therefore, I would continue to strengthen and leverage our partnership with the Afghan government in implementing a comprehensive, combined, and integrated approach.

**What is your assessment of the impact of these green-on-blue attacks on the level of trust between coalition and Afghan forces?**

While the recent rise in insider attacks continues to be an area of significant concern for Coalition and Afghan forces, I do not believe it has weakened the bonds between our forces, which remain strong through years of partnership and shared adversity in combat against a common enemy. Furthermore, our forces understand that insider attacks are an insurgent tactic

employed to create a seam between ISAF and the ANSF, sowing mistrust between partners and undermining domestic support for the campaign. If confirmed, I will conduct a thorough assessment of the impact of insider attacks on our forces and our partnering strategy.

**As a result of the insider threat, do you see a need to reconsider our transition plans for embedding small teams of U.S. military personnel with Afghan military units as part of the transition to an Afghan security lead?**

At this time, I believe that the Security Force Assistance model of embedding small teams of U.S. military personnel with Afghan military units continues to provide the best and most effective means of achieving our campaign objectives. Security Force Assistance shifts the ISAF main effort from partnering and combat to training, advising, and assisting the ANSF at the tactical and operational levels until they are able to conduct operations independently. These teams are not uniquely vulnerable to insider threats, and in fact, may be more secure – because of their close proximity to their Afghan partners they develop closer relationships to their partners. However, if confirmed, I will continuously evaluate the organizational assumptions, operational requirements, and potential vulnerabilities of these teams and their basing facilities to determine if the Security Assistance Force model is still valid and ensure the correct force and protective posture is delivered.

**These insider attacks have to date claimed the lives of 53 NATO troops and wounded at least 80 others.**

**What is your assessment of the impact of these insider attacks on morale among U.S. and allied forces in theater?**

Each U.S. and coalition death at the hands of an insider attacker is tragic, and if confirmed, I will conduct a thorough assessment of the impact of insider attacks on our forces and our partnering strategy. At this time, I do not believe these attacks have had the longer-term detrimental effect on morale the insurgents desire. Our dedicated, professional service men and women continue to have a sense of mission accomplishment, and they understand the importance of their endeavors to the future of Afghanistan and to the security of the United States.

### **Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan**

**In April the United States and Afghanistan signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the “Afghanization” of direct action counterterrorism missions in Afghanistan, the so-called night raids. The MOU reflects the shared intention of having Afghan security forces in the lead in the conduct of night raids, with U.S. forces in a support role.**

**In your view, how important is it for the success of the Afghan mission to have Afghan security forces taking the lead on night raids?**

It is my view that Afghan security forces must be in the lead on night raids. Historically, indigenous forces defeat insurgencies; this is no different. Night operations—all of which are 100 percent partnered with the ANSF—provide our partnered teams an unmatched operational advantage. The long-term success of the mission in Afghanistan depends primarily on institutional capacity; however, these partnered night operations provide the ANSF the training and experience required to eventually conduct unilateral operations. The development of the ANA Special Operations Command remains a critical component of the overall force structure and strategy to sustain the transition to Afghan security lead.

**What is your assessment of the progress on the Afghanization of direct action counterterrorism missions in Afghanistan? What additional steps, if any, would you recommend to improve this process?**

In addition to force growth, the ANSF SOF community made significant progress in operational effectiveness. The independence and competency of Afghan special military and police units continues to grow—100 percent of ANA Special Operation Forces missions are Afghan led, and approximately 60 percent of Provincial Response Company (PRCs) police missions are Afghan led. If confirmed, I will seek to sustain and expand their progress by supporting the development of key indigenous capabilities such as intelligence collection and analysis capacities, air mobility capabilities, and an independent logistical architecture, which are important for operational autonomy. In addition, mechanisms to initiate, support, and sustain operations need further development to strengthen existing ground tactical capacity.

**As U.S. forces draw down in Afghanistan, what changes, if any, do you foresee in the role of special operations forces in Afghanistan?**

It is my view that Special Operations Forces (SOF) will continue to play a vital role in Afghanistan by disrupting insurgent networks, building capable Afghan SOF, fostering stability through Village Stability Operations, and advising and training the ANSF. Their efforts mitigate operational risk associated with a drawdown of forces

**Recently, a new command, the Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan (SOJTF-A), has been established to improve coordination among U.S., coalition, and Afghan special forces.**

**Do you believe this new command structure will unify the efforts of the various special operations forces in Afghanistan?**

Absolutely, and from what I understand, it already has. I believe the recent establishment of NATO Special Operations Component Command – Afghanistan and the Special Operations Joint Task Force – Afghanistan into a combined organizational structure provides a robust, properly sized and structured headquarters that avoids duplication and makes the best use of available funding, manpower, and infrastructure. The new command structure has already begun to realize organizational efficiencies and is helping to link various Afghan SOF elements for the first time. Afghan MOD and MOI SOF elements are beginning to operate together in integrated

and mutually supporting operations, a necessity for ANSF to assume full responsibility for security responsibility.

**How does this new command structure impact the ability of U.S. Special Operations Forces to partner effectively with the Afghan Special Forces?**

The establishment of the new NSOCC/SOJTF-A command structure enhances partner development by fostering the establishment of common training objectives, standards and methods. Under this structure, best practices from one element can be applied to instructional methodologies for another. This command structure also leverages the full range of capabilities that the coalition SOF community offers. Additionally, conventional ISAF ANSF commanders benefit from this concentrated support.

**Why is a new command structure for Special Operations Forces necessary now after close to 11 years of war in Afghanistan?**

The establishment of the new SOF command structure was a necessary and natural step toward improving operational efficiency and effectiveness based on current circumstances and anticipated operational conditions. There have been other changes to the SOF structure in the past 11 years to great benefit. For example, in 2010, SOF formally integrated conventional force battalions into their organizational construct again improving operational effectiveness by extending their operational reach and leveraging capabilities that SOF did not possess organically. The combination of SOF and conventional forces enabled SOF to expand VSO/ALP, where force structure limitations had previously prevented expansion.

**Do you believe this new command structure signals a significant and continuing role for U.S. Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan beyond 2014?**

The establishment of NSOCC/SOJTF-A shows that adaptation is required to meet changing operational demands leading to the post-2014 mission set. The authority to change the mission and size of U.S. SOF in Afghanistan after 2014 resides with the President. If confirmed, I will continue to assess the role of our SOF and provide my advice through my chain of command.

**Afghan Local Police/Village Stability Operations**

**The Village Stability Operations and Afghan Local Police (ALP) programs have been called critical to ISAF's counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan.**

**What has been the effect of these programs on rural Afghan populations and what has been the response from the Taliban?**

Successful counterinsurgencies require the involvement of local, indigenous defense forces. The program utilizes US and Coalition SOF to train Afghans in rural areas to defend their communities against threats from insurgents and militant groups. The ALP program continues to

expand and gain popular support with Afghans. Both VSO and ALP have made substantial progress in protecting and mobilizing rural populations, preventing their exploitation by the insurgency, and expanding the influence of the Afghan government. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) released its annual report on the protection of civilians, which noted that ALP had improved security and kept insurgents out of ALP areas. Underscoring the effectiveness of the program, the Taliban increasingly and specifically targeted ALP for direct attacks and infiltration to weaken the program. To mitigate the risk of insider threats, SOJTF-A has taken active measures to re-validate all of the more than 17,000 ALP.

**Do you believe the availability of U.S. special operations teams is a limiting factor in expanding these programs?**

I believe that once we reach the authorized force of 30,000 ALP, an evaluation of SOJTF-A forces and requirements will be required. It is possible, however, that an indigenous force of this size may require additional support from USSOF and conventional force enablers. Several factors can help mitigate this challenge such as conventional forces' helping to build ALP sites. Additionally, once the Afghan government assumes primary responsibility for supporting ALP, this will free up SOF to create other ALP sites. Lastly, in early 2013, NSOCC-A/SOJTF-A expects to transition half the ALP force into "tactical overwatch" thereby allowing SOF teams to establish new VSO sites and generate additional ALP in strategically important regions. Our experience in foreign internal defense shows that measured growth through a deliberate process is needed to ensure success of this important program.

**In your view, given the role that local security forces have played historically in Afghanistan, are there limits to the potential growth of the ALP and can and should these forces expand to a point where they can have a strategic impact in Afghanistan?**

I believe we should approach the growth of the ALP in a deliberate manner employing local elders and shuras for nominating and vetting ALP to avoid the possibility of the scenario which occurred following the Soviet withdrawal. In fact, ALP enjoy a high degree of popularity and support. Local defense forces are a central component of successful counterinsurgencies, and the ALP is having a strategic impact on the counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan through their success in protecting their communities against the threat of insurgents and militant groups. If confirmed I will continue to assess this important program to ensure it supports our broader strategic goals in Afghanistan.

**How do indirect approaches like Village Stability Operations and ALP programs compliment direct action counterterrorism missions within the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan?**

Direct action counterterrorism operations and Village Stability Operations and ALP programs are highly complementary. SOF conduct operations to neutralize insurgent networks, laying the foundation for increased security and future stability operations. CJSOTF-A is then able to implement VSO and ALP programs, which will help maintain the security gains achieved during the operation.

**What is your understanding of the commitment of the Government of Afghanistan to continue its support of these programs through 2014 and beyond?**

The Afghan government has authorized an ALP endstrength (tashkil) of 30,000, which is not part of the total 352,000 ANSF endstrength. The ALP program is currently scheduled to end in September 2014. The Ministry of Interior is considering a proposal to make the ALP a fifth “pillar” of the Afghan National Police on par with the Afghan Uniformed Police, the Afghan National Civil Order Police, the Afghan Border Police, and the Afghan Anti-Crime Police. Institutionalizing the ALP in this way would help ensure the program’s continuation after 2014. If confirmed, I will encourage the program’s transition into the Ministry of Interior

**Special Operations Enablers**

**As you know, special operations forces depend on the general purpose forces for many enabling capabilities, including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR); logistics; and medical evacuation.**

**If confirmed, how would you ensure adequate enabling capabilities for special operations forces as general purpose forces continue to draw down in Afghanistan?**

If confirmed, I would evaluate what enabling capabilities are needed to adequately support the SOF mission set, working collaboratively with NSOCC-A/SOJTF-A and my chain of command.

**Contract Oversight**

**The United States has implemented a number of efforts to reduce the risk that U.S. contracting practices will be subject to corruption, which helps fuel the insurgency and undermines the legitimacy of the Afghan Government. These efforts include the establishment of the Combined Joint Interagency Task Force –Shafafiyat (Transparency) to coordinate ISAF anti-corruption activities.**

**What is your assessment of ISAF’s anti-corruption efforts and understanding of criminal patronage networks, and what additional steps, if any, do you believe should be taken to improve those efforts and to ensure adequate oversight of ISAF and U.S. contracts is in place?**

Corruption poses a strategic threat to the long-term stability of Afghanistan as it undermines security, government legitimacy, and prospects for economic development. Recognizing that Afghan political will is a necessary component of dealing with corruption, I believe ISAF has implemented a number of essential steps for addressing this issue. For example, countering corruption and organized crime is a specific line of operation in the ISAF campaign. ISAF has also recently realigned command and control functions for counter-corruption, counter-narcotics,

counter-threat finance, and strategic targeting under a two-star Combined Joint Interagency Task Force – Afghanistan. This realignment was an important step in streamlining functions and processes to bring greater coherence and enhanced capability during a strategic point in the campaign. It also helps raise awareness and focus on U.S. contract oversight responsibilities, such as those outlined in laws and regulations, DOD guidance, and the ISAF Counterinsurgency Contracting Guidance. If confirmed, I will reinforce a command climate that takes those responsibilities seriously.

**Section 841 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 provided CENTCOM with new tools to avoid contracting with the enemy, as requested by the Department of Defense.**

**What is your understanding of the extent to which the new authorities authorized in section 841 have been implemented?**

The authorities granted in section 841 are an effective tool to prevent U.S. funds from directly or indirectly funding the insurgency. As of 23 October 2012, the Commander of U.S. Central Command has signed three Section 841 packages, designating 21 companies and persons of interest as “actively supporting the insurgency or actively opposing US or coalition forces,” including a sitting Afghan Member of Parliament. As a result, nine contracts have been terminated or voided. Two additional packages are awaiting the CENTCOM Commander’s signature, and four more are in various stages of preparation.

**What role do you expect to play, if confirmed, in carrying out the authorities provided in section 841?**

Section 841 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2012 prohibits contracting with the enemy in the CENTCOM theater of operations. If confirmed, I will uphold my responsibilities required under Section 841, to include fulfilling reporting requirements, and will support the efforts of others, up and down my chain of command, in the execution of their duties.

### **Afghan Public Protection Force**

**President Karzai issued a decree calling for the disbandment of most private security contractors (PSCs) . Instead, responsibility for security is transitioning to a Ministry of Interior guard force, called the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF). Under a plan developed by the Government of Afghanistan and ISAF, in March the APPF assumed security responsibility for development projects and convoys, and by March 2013 responsibility for static security at all ISAF bases is expected to transition to the APPF.**

**What is your assessment of the performance and effectiveness of the APPF in providing convoy and static security?**

The Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) continues to make steady progress. It provides approximately 13,000 guards for various clients throughout Afghanistan and provides static security at approximately 225 sites. At these static security locations, APPF has been very effective and continues to display increased ability and capacity to expand operations. APPF continues to develop its convoy security capabilities recently conducted its first contracted convoy with 40 fuel trucks and 90 security vehicles. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the APPF's performance and effectiveness in both convoy and static security.

**If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you recommend for improving the development and oversight of the APPF?**

If confirmed, I would recommend continued focus on the development of command, control and management functions as well as its interoperability with other Afghan and Coalition security forces. I would also offer that, as a state-owned enterprise, the APPF must continue to develop as a transparent, accountable and legitimate business model.

**Afghanistan Peace and Reconciliation Program**

**The Afghanistan Peace and Reconciliation Program (APRP) has been established to enable former insurgent fighters to renounce violence and reintegrate peacefully into their communities. The APRP is funded in part from funds authorized for the Department of Defense. According to a DOD report, approximately 4,000 insurgents have formally reintegrated under the APRP as of early 2012. The APRP has been criticized, however, for delays in its implementation and for failing to address underlying political grievances and other concerns that may have contributed to causing individuals to join the insurgency in the first place. Some critics have also raised concerns about reintegrated fighters being admitted into the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program without being adequately vetted.**

**What is your assessment of the APRP and the program's potential for reintegrating additional numbers of low- to mid-level insurgent fighters?**

The Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) is an essential program within the Campaign in that it convinces insurgents to join the peace process, accept the Afghan constitution, renounce violence, and rejoin Afghan society. It is a viable alternative to continued fighting or detention. Since the APRP began two years ago, over 5,000 former insurgents have officially reintegrated—exceeding projected numbers from its inception. A number of factors have led to the steady rise in insurgents joining APRP: continued, relentless pressure by Coalition forces and the ANSF resulting in battle fatigue and poor morale among the insurgents; increased outreach by provincial level committees; and better communication and messaging of the benefits of the program. Because of these factors, we anticipate a continued steady increase of fighters reintegrating through both informal and formal reintegration processes.

**If confirmed, would you agree to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the APRP, including whether insurgent fighters reintegrated under the program are being admitted into the ALP without appropriate vetting?**

APRP and the ALP are separate programs and have separate vetting and enrollment processes. The APRP is an Afghan-led program that is supported by ISAF and funded and endorsed by the international community. If confirmed, I will work with the Afghan High Peace Council and Joint Secretariat, which are charged with overseeing and implementing APRP, to assess and resolve the inevitable challenges that arise in implementing this nationwide peace program, to include delays in enrolling reintegrees and approving and funding community recovery projects. Additionally, I will conduct a separate review of the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program to evaluate the rigor and adequacy of the vetting procedures to ensure that all recruits, including reintegrees, are properly vetted.

### **Ammonium Nitrate for Improvised Explosive Devices from Pakistan**

**Ammonium nitrate (AN), a prime component in improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that have killed or wounded thousands of U.S., coalition, and Afghan troops and Afghan civilians, continues to flow into Afghanistan. The vast majority of this AN flows in from fertilizer factories in Pakistan. In 2010, in an effort to stem the flow of this material, the Afghan government banned the use of AN as a fertilizer. Despite this, IED incidents and casualties have continued.**

**If confirmed as Commander, NATO ISAF/Commander, USFOR-A, what tools would you have at your disposal to address the flow of AN into Afghanistan and are there any additional tools that you would seek to have?**

Stemming the flow of ammonium nitrate and other lethal aid into Afghanistan requires a dual-track approach. One approach is diplomatic involving regional actors and would be outside my purview, if confirmed. The other is operational and involves border security and capacity building. ISAF is in the process of developing a borders strategy with the Afghan government to reduce the influx ammonium nitrate, insurgents, and weapons by concentrating efforts at the border. NTM-A is training and equipping Afghan Border Police and Afghan Customs Police, but they face significant challenges in fielding units in remote outposts and keeping them supplied. ISAF also employs layered ISR sensors which aid in the ability to detect homemade explosive materials. Additionally, ISAF is working very closely with the U.S. Embassy Borders Management Task Force which mentors and trains borders and customs police to improve their interdiction of illicit drugs, IED materials and other contraband. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts and focus campaign efforts on the border areas; improved border security and border management is vital to the stability and security of Afghanistan.

**In your view, what role, if any, should Pakistan play in our efforts to stem the flow of AN into Afghanistan?**

Pakistan can play a crucial, indeed leading, role in stemming the flow of ammonium nitrate and other IED precursors into Afghanistan. It has approximately 80,000 paramilitary soldiers stationed in the border region who can assist in the interdiction of Homemade Explosives and other IED precursors.

**Do you believe that Pakistan has been effective in its efforts to stem the flow of AN from its territory into Afghanistan?**

Ammonium nitrate is only one of the home-made explosives that have caused so many coalition, ANSF, and Afghan civilian casualties, and we need to focus on all of the materials, that cross the border in both directions. However, many of these IED precursors and homemade explosives flow into Afghanistan from Pakistan, where their production and use is legal. There are certainly more steps and cooperation that we can pursue to stem the flow of IED precursors. Our recent bilateral and the pending trilateral C-IED working group should help us to enhance our cooperation. Pakistan should have a significant interest in this problem because they, too, suffer significant casualties within Pakistan as a result of IEDs using home-made explosives. In addition to seeking Pakistani action on this issue, ISAF and the Afghan government must focus on strengthening Afghan interdiction capabilities at the border with Pakistan.

### **Afghan Opium Trade**

**According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, drugs from Afghanistan account for more than 90 percent of the world's heroin trade.**

**As it relates to the drug trade in Afghanistan, what is your understanding of the role of the Commander of ISAF and Commander of USFOR-A respectively?**

Under U.S. and NATO authorities, COMISAF/COMUSFOR-A counters the drug trade in Afghanistan by strengthening, developing, and enhancing the institutional capabilities of key Afghan ministries, like the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics. By working across interagency and International Community lines of effort, ISAF/USFOR-A assists GIROA in preventing the Afghan drug trade from funding the insurgency, fuelling corruption, and undermining security, governance and development.

**What is your understanding of the rules of engagement for U.S. forces as it relates to drug labs and the drug network respectively and are you satisfied with the flexibility provided under these rules of engagement?**

In accordance with the Laws of Armed Conflict, U.S. forces may target narcotics facilities, equipment, networks, and personnel with a direct link to insurgent groups. Forces can also destroy drugs, equipment, and chemicals inadvertently discovered during routine operations.

**What is your understanding of the nexus, if any, between the drug trade and the various insurgent groups in Afghanistan?**

The Taliban has been involved in opium and hashish cultivation and trafficking for years in Afghanistan. In many areas of Afghanistan, the insurgency intimidates the farmers to cultivate additional acres. By working and controlling drug trafficking organizations and other criminal elements associated with the Afghan drug trade, the Taliban has profited greatly. We have also seen the inclusion of criminal patronage networks into this narcotics-insurgency nexus.

**How significant a source of funding is the drug trade for insurgent groups in Afghanistan?**

The insurgency depends on domestic poppy cultivation and the narcotics trade as its primary source of internally-derived revenue. Insurgent groups, especially the Taliban, profit at all stages of the narcotics trafficking cycle. The Taliban taxes opium farmers, who often pay their taxes to the Taliban in the form of harvested opium. The Taliban generates cash by selling this opium to narcotics traffickers at opium bazaars and by acting as muscle-for-hire to protect heroin labs and key smuggling routes, or ratlines, used by the traffickers to get illicit narcotics out of Afghanistan. In addition, the Taliban uses like methods to tax and control the hashish market, deriving large amounts of revenue.

**Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan**

**For much of the past decade, DOD has expended approximately \$450 million building the capacity of the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan.**

**What is your current assessment of the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan?**

The Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) is Afghanistan's principal police organization targeting Afghanistan's narcotics industry. Although ISAF continues to partner closely with this organization, it has already demonstrated the capability to operate independently. The current CNPA *tashkil* is authorized at 2,570 positions and executes the full range of CN policing operations and has a robust organic intelligence capability resident within three highly-trained specialized sub-elements: the Intelligence and Investigative Unit (IIU), the Sensitive Investigation Unit (SIU), and the Technical Investigation Unit (TIU). These intelligence organizations are effective with Coalition mentoring and oversight, providing a critical capability within Afghanistan. The SIU carries out complex CN investigations using intelligence developed by the TIU which performs court-authorized judicial wire intercepts. ISAF continues to work closely with the Afghan government to enhance Afghan counternarcotics (CN) capacity and institutions to enable transition by 2014.

**As the Commander, NATO ISAF/Commander, USFOR-A, what would be your relationship to the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan?**

If confirmed, my relationship to CNPA would be through the training, financial, and operational support provided by NTM-A, USFOR-A, and the Interagency Operations and Coordination Center (IOCC). NTM-A is responsible for training and the transition of CNPA personnel,

assigning mentors to the CNPA, and assessing progress. USFOR-A funds CNPA salaries. The IOCC, led by the DEA and the UK's Serious Organized Crime Agency, provides intelligence and operational support to law enforcement CN operations in Afghanistan.

**Are you satisfied with the arrangement?**

Yes, each of these components plays a crucial role in supporting Coalition and Afghan counternarcotics efforts.

**What role, in your view, should the State Department play in managing this aspect of the Afghan security forces?**

In addition to ISAF's efforts listed above, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), which falls under the U.S. Ambassador in Afghanistan, trains, mentors and partners with the CNPA Sensitive Investigative Unit (SIU), Technical Investigative Unit (TIU), and National Interdiction Units (NIU) and provides training to provincial CNPA teams. ISAF and U.S. Central Command have enjoyed a close working relationship with DEA, one that I will continue to build upon if I am confirmed. Further, I will work with U.S. stakeholders in the Departments of State and Defense and the DEA to determine how these responsibilities and relationships will evolve as ISAF's mission draws to a close in 2014.

**Counter Threat Finance Activities in Afghanistan**

**In 2008, the United States created the Afghanistan Threat Finance Cell (ATFC) to disrupt the flow of funding from the Afghan opium trade and other illicit sources to the Taliban, al Qaeda, and other terrorist and insurgent groups in Afghanistan. The ATFC and related organizations have helped Afghan authorities investigate and prosecute individuals connected to the opium trade, identify outside sympathizers who have been supplying funding to those individuals, and take on a variety of corrupt schemes that have filled the coffers of the Taliban-led insurgency and other illicit actors.**

**What is your assessment of the operations of the ATFC?**

The Afghan Threat Finance Cell (ATFC) is a critical tool in the fight against corruption and threat financing in Afghanistan, and I would assess their operations as effective. ATFC has tackled the most significant threat finance networks in Afghanistan, to include Kabul Bank, the New Ansari Network, and the Haji Khairullah and Haji Sattar Money Exchange. Working with their Afghan law enforcement partners, federal investigators and analysts assigned to ATFC uncovered the rampant fraud at Kabul Bank and, two years later, continue to unearth evidence of crimes, including loan book schemes and money laundering activities, committed at that financial institution. If confirmed, I will continue to utilize this important partner.

## **General Purpose Forces used for Security Force Assistance**

**Building the security forces of foreign nations has traditionally been a special operations forces mission. However, in both Iraq and Afghanistan, general purpose forces have been performing this mission for some time.**

**What is your understanding and assessment of the preparation and performance of Army and Marine Corps general purpose forces operating in Afghanistan in a security force assistance role?**

The preparation and performance of the Army's and Marine Corps' general purpose forces has been superb. Our general purpose forces in Afghanistan have been agile and rapidly adapted to evolving requirements. They built, trained, partnered, and mentored the ANSF. Their outstanding performance has enabled independent ANSF operations, established and nurtured institutional and logistical development, and strengthened ANSF enabling capabilities. Based on this success, ISAF's main effort can shift from partnering and combat to training, advising, and assisting the ANSF at the tactical and operational levels until they are able to conduct operations independently.

**How do you envision the use of general purpose forces in the security force assistance role, if at all, as U.S. forces continue to drawdown through 2014?**

While we will continue to adapt to a changing battlefield and operational environment, if confirmed, I envision continuing to employ general purpose forces in a Security Force Assistance role. Security Force Assistance enables ISAF to provide continued and sustainable development of the ANSF as they move into the lead, and general purpose forces will continue to play a critical role in developing Afghan Army and Police forces through 2014. Over the next two years, security force assistance brigades (SFABs) will deploy to train the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) from the battalion (*kandak*) and district through Corps and Zone levels. SFABs are specifically designed to manage risk, oversee force protection, and provide enabler support when necessary for smaller Security Force Assistance Teams (SFAT). Each SFAT is tailored to possess specific skills associated with the ANSF unit to which they are assigned, and each will vary in composition and disposition. As the Afghan Security Force capabilities and capacity improve, coalition forces will provide less frequent training and advice at the lower levels and focus efforts at the higher echelons to better integrate our enabler support.

## **Women in Combat**

**What restrictions, if any, do you believe should be imposed with respect to the assignment of combat-related duties to women in uniform, or the assignment of women to combat units?**

Any decision regarding the assignment of women to combat-related duties or to combat units should be based on our obligation to maintain a high state of mission readiness and should be

approached carefully and deliberately. Our women in uniform are vital to mission readiness. Like the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I am fully committed to removing barriers that prevent service members from rising to their highest potential based on their ability and not constrained by gender-restrictive policies.

### **Health of the Force**

**The Committee is concerned about the stress on military personnel resulting from lengthy and repeated deployments and their access to mental health care in theater to deal with this increased stress, as well as the prevention and care for traumatic brain injury. Increased suicide rates are clear reminders that servicemembers, particularly those who have been deployed multiple times, are under tremendous stress and need access to mental health care.**

#### **What is your assessment of the adequacy of health care and mental health capabilities supporting servicemembers in Afghanistan?**

It is USFOR-A's goal to provide a level of health care that is on par with the care our service members would have received at home, and they are achieving that standard for primary care and specialty care regardless of service members location. In the area of trauma care, USFOR-A has greatly exceeded that standard, having one of the best trauma systems in the world. The speed with which they are able to evacuate patients out of Afghanistan, whether after combat injury or for care beyond what is available in theater, is exceptional. If confirmed, I will endeavor to maintain this high standard.

For deployed service members with behavioral health issues, USFOR-A has made enormous progress over the last 10 years in providing improved resources and availability. For example, they exceed the recommended provider-to-individual ratio and in the last two years have implemented new video technology that allows access to behavioral health specialists for Service Members even in remote locations. USFOR-A has also improved the identification of service members at risk both before and after deployment. I am very confident that we are meeting the mental health needs of our deployed personnel in Afghanistan.

#### **What is your assessment of suicide prevention programs and resources available to support these programs in Afghanistan?**

USFOR-A has made a concerted effort to develop and deploy suicide prevention programs and resources for service members and civilians serving in Afghanistan. These programs are in place, and personnel know where to get help. Command involvement is critical for the successful employment of these programs and the support from commanders has been key to getting the word out. Suicide prevention is something that I take very seriously, and, if confirmed, it will be a high priority for me.

**What is your assessment of the implementation of the Department of Defense policy on management of mild traumatic brain injury throughout Afghanistan?**

USFOR-A has been very aggressive in instituting a comprehensive in-theater evaluation process for mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI) that has shown significant progress in how we screen for and treat this injury. The medical treatment system begins at the point of injury with MACE testing for all suspected mTBI through unit providers who perform extended evaluations. If necessary, they can refer cases to one of nine fully staffed 24/7 concussion care centers located throughout the CJOA-A. These centers can treat service members for up to 21 days and have admitted over 3,418 service members for evaluation. The unit medical providers along with the concussion care centers are supported by two Role III hospitals with state of the art, TBI dedicated MRI machines. The success of the program is supported by a consistent monthly 95% return to duty rate within two weeks.

**What is your assessment of medical evacuation capabilities in theater today from a joint force perspective?**

USFOR-A provides the most robust and responsive medical evacuation system in history. Across Afghanistan, joint and coalition air evacuation platforms link highly capable medical facilities so battlefield casualties can be assured of getting to medical treatment facilities within the timelines established by the Secretary of Defense. Consequently, the likelihood of dying from one's wounds is the lowest in history.

**If confirmed, what standard would you establish for capability and availability of medical evacuation assets, including for forward operating units?**

If confirmed, it will be one of my highest priorities to ensure our ability to maintain the unprecedented survival rates we have achieved.

**Sexual Assault Prevention and Response**

**The Department has in recent years developed comprehensive policies and procedures to improve the prevention of and response to incidents of sexual assaults, including providing appropriate resources and care for victims of sexual assault. However, incidents of sexual assault and misconduct involving military personnel in Afghanistan are still being reported. Victims and their advocates claim that they are victimized twice: first by attackers in their own ranks and then by unresponsive or inadequate treatment for the victim. They assert that their command fails to respond appropriately with basic medical services and with an adequate investigation of their charges followed by a failure to hold assailants accountable.**

**Secretary Panetta has recently announced new initiatives to curb sexual assaults in the military and to provide support to victims of sexual assaults.**

**What is your assessment of the Secretary of Defense’s initiatives, and, if confirmed, how will you implement them in Afghanistan?**

These initiatives reinforce the Department’s commitment to eradicating sexual assault from our ranks. If confirmed, I will promote a leadership climate that encourages reporting without fear and holds perpetrators accountable for their actions. Whether deployed abroad or at home, commanders and leaders at every level must fully understand their authority, responsibilities, and obligations to establish positive command climates that safeguard all members within their units from predatory behavior. Facilitating this climate is an inextricable part of that bond of trust we share with our fellow brothers and sisters in arms. If confirmed, I will ensure commanders have the resources they need to investigate accusations of sexual assault, provide care and support for victims and fairly adjudicate each case.

**Do you consider the current sexual assault policies and procedures, particularly those on restricted reporting, to be effective?**

The Department has put considerable effort into the development of policies and procedures designed to address sexual assault and improve reporting. The Department faces the same challenges that society faces in dealing with incidents of sexual assault – balancing care to victims with prosecuting offenders. The Department’s restricted reporting allows victims who wish to remain anonymous to come forward and obtain the support they need following an allegation of sexual assault.

**What problems, if any, are you aware of in the manner in which restricted reporting procedure has been put into operation?**

I am not aware of any problems with confidential (restricted) reporting.

**What is your view of the steps taken to prevent and respond to sexual assaults in Afghanistan, including assaults against U.S. civilian and contractor personnel?**

Victims of sexual assault need to be protected and receive timely access to appropriate treatment and services, regardless of their location. The current zero-tolerance policy, education, training, and commander involvement at all levels maintain the right course in eradicating this crime from our workforce, including all U.S. personnel in Afghanistan, whether military, government civilian, or contractor. If confirmed, I will ensure that if any deployed service member, civilian or contractor is assaulted, he or she will receive appropriate and responsive support and care. As importantly, I will do all I can to prevent incidents of sexual assault.

**What is your view of the adequacy of the training and resources in place in Afghanistan to investigate and respond to allegations of sexual assault?**

The Services recently enhanced their resources for investigating and responding to allegations of sexual assault. Combat zones and other overseas environments present special challenges that require coordination to ensure we are applying those resources effectively and efficiently. If confirmed, I will review our sexual assault prevention and response program to ensure it meets

the needs of our deployed service members and commanders; that resources are appropriately provided so that commanders are fully capable of investigating and adjudicating allegations of sexual assault; and I will ensure deployed victims have full access to treatment and victim care services.

**What is your view of the willingness and ability of military leaders to hold assailants accountable for their acts?**

Holding assailants accountable is a leader's inherent duty and responsibility, and I believe our military leaders are willing and able to hold assailants accountable for their acts. If confirmed, I will expect nothing less. The Department's policy emphasizes the command's role in an effective response. Special training is provided to commanders, investigators and prosecutors to ensure they are prepared to address incidents of sexual assault. Our policies seek to balance victim care with appropriate command action against offenders in order to build victim confidence in assisting investigations.

**If confirmed, what actions will you take to reassess current policies, procedures and programs and to ensure senior level direction and oversight of efforts to prevent and respond to sexual assaults in Afghanistan?**

If confirmed, as part of my assessment, I will ensure that all commanders in theater evaluate the sexual assault prevention and response capabilities for their areas of responsibility. Further, this assessment will solicit feedback from those below Commander-level to ensure we create an atmosphere which aims to eliminate assault.

**Cultural Awareness Resources**

**To what extent are you aware of DOD research efforts that can be resources to ISAF, such as the Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment activity; the Human, Social, Cultural Behavior modeling program; and the Minerva Initiative?**

I am familiar with several DOD and non-DOD social science resources, and I endeavor to gain a better understanding of how they may be applied to the Afghanistan context, if confirmed. For example, I understand ISAF is sponsoring a Minerva Initiative effort to map civilian perceptions of international troops to understand the variances that cause support or non-support of international troop presence. In addition, ISAF is working with Oak Ridge National Laboratory to gather population data for a Strategic Multi-Layer Analysis activity that could help strategically conceptualize tactical and operational data collected in the field to determine if US objectives are being met. Finally, the Human, Social, Cultural Behavior modeling program is still maturing and is not fully optimized to support ISAF at this time, though it has the potential in the future of providing ISAF a means of understanding social-cultural behavior.

## **Standards for Treatment of Detainees**

**Section 1403 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 provides that no individual in the custody or under the physical control of the United States Government, regardless of nationality or physical location shall be subject to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.**

**If confirmed, will you take steps to ensure that all relevant Department of Defense directives, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures applicable to U.S. forces in Afghanistan fully comply with the requirements of section 1403 and with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?**

Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. Forces in Afghanistan fully comply with all relevant provisions of Department of Defense directives, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures applicable to U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and that they fully comply with the requirements of section 1403 of the Detainee Treatment Act of 2005 and with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions. Conducting detention operations in the most humane manner possible remains a strategic component of our campaign that directly reflects upon our nation's values and the ideals we espouse to our Afghan counterparts.

**Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated September 5, 2006?**

Yes. I understand and support the standards for the treatment of detainees and will adhere to them, if confirmed. All detainees shall be treated humanely, and in accordance with U.S. law, the Law of War, and applicable U.S. policy. Humane treatment entails the following: no violence, no cruelty, no torture, and no humiliating or degrading treatment. Under United States law, humane treatment also consists of providing detainees with adequate food, drinking water, shelter, clothing, medical care, and protection of personal property. I believe these humane treatment policies, as practiced at the Detention Facility in Parwan, have adequately protected detainees, provided for actionable intelligence, contributed to mission success, and enhanced U.S. Forces reputation in the global community.

**How would you ensure a climate that not only discourages the abuse of detainees, but that encourages the reporting of abuse?**

I believe that engaged and active leadership grounded in the requirements of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Convention and DoD Directive 2310.01E is required for the secure and humane care, custody and control of detainees. If confirmed, I will ensure these elements remain the cornerstone of U.S. Law of Armed Conflict detainee operations. I will also reinforce the obligation to prevent abuse and the duty to report abuse as non-negotiable elements in our guard force training and ensure all detainees are informed of their rights upon entry into the detention

facility, to include their right to report any type of abuse free from retribution. The use of medical providers to screen for signs of abuse, and the integration of a robust self-assessment program bolstered by external assessments from the International Committee of the Red Cross further creates an open and transparent command climate fused with timely feedback. Finally, if confirmed, I will ensure my command team has internalized their professional responsibility to track and investigate any allegations of abuse and take swift action when appropriate. Furthermore, we will continue to assist the ANA in developing their detainee abuse reporting systems and sustain the use of U.S. advisors performing overwatch procedures in ANA-controlled facilities.

### **Detention Operations in Afghanistan**

**In March the United States and Afghanistan signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on detention operations. The MOU provides for the transfer of the U.S. detention facility at Parwan to Afghan control within 6 months even as efforts to build the capacity of Afghanistan to conduct detention operations continue.**

**What is your assessment of the process of transferring the Parwan detention facility to Afghan control?**

I believe the elements are in place to sustain this transfer process while continuing to expand Afghan rule of law and sovereignty. Since the March 9, 2012, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between General Allen and Defense Minister Wardak, over 3,000 detainees have been transferred from U.S. Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) to Afghan National Army (ANA) custody. Additionally, we have transferred physical control of a number of detention housing units and are continuing to build Afghan sustainable facilities to meet our agreed upon requirements. This physical transfer of detainees and facilities occurred in a deliberate, organized process with zero lapses in the safe and humane care, custody and control of the detainee population.

Although the transfer of detainees is presently halted, our ongoing partnership with the Afghan Detention Operations Command in Parwan remains robust and synchronized. As a result, the ANA, with U.S. advisory oversight and security force assistance, have proven capable of successfully assuming physical ownership of the facilities and conducting detention operations for the detainees and prisoners in their custody. Looking forward, I foresee the need to retain some capacity at the Parwan site to conduct ongoing U.S. LOAC detainee operations as a critical component to U.S. and coalition force protection.

**What is your assessment of Afghanistan's capacity to conduct detention operations at Parwan?**

Overall, I believe strong leadership with a clear vision that balances sovereign Afghan rule of law with U.S. and coalition force protection requirements will ensure the continued progress and success of this transition. During the transfer of detention operations to Afghan control in

accordance with the March 9, 2012, MOU, the Afghan Army has demonstrated its ability to maintain secure and humane care, custody and control of their detainee population. The ANA continue to source, train and develop the skills and capacities necessary to establish an independent, sustainable detention operations program at Parwan. However, this effort is not complete or without significant challenges.

While the Afghans have already taken control of food services and guard control for their facilities, they are only in the nascent stages of taking ownership and responsibility for other key areas of the detention operation mission such as facility engineering, medical support, sanitation and overall logistics. U.S. support in providing these key enabler mission areas will be critical to a continued successful partnership during the transition. With respect to their guard force, developing a professional guard force with strict adherence to policies and procedures remains a mid-level leadership challenge that poses continued risk to the ability of the ANA guard force to conduct daily operations inside of their housing units. This is mitigated through our continued partnering, advising and assisting within these units.

### **Marine Security Guards in Embassies**

**Due to the attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya, which resulted in the death of of a U.S. ambassador and three other Americans, many are conveying concern about the safety of U.S. diplomatic personnel around the world.**

**Do you share this concern?**

Yes.

**The Marine Security Guard Program was established in 1946, and its mission, to provide internal security at designated embassies of classified information and equipment, remains unchanged to this day.**

**In light of increasing threats to U.S. diplomatic personnel by terrorists throughout the world, do you believe it is time to re-examine the Program's mission and protocols?**

I believe the Marine Security Guard Program, as defined under existing protocols between the Marine Corps and Department of State, functions well and meets the needs of our diplomatic missions around the world. However, based on changing security dynamics we are in the process of taking a look at what changes to the program might be necessary. I fully appreciate the importance of this mission and understand it is important to work closely with the Department of State to ensure our MSG organization, mission and security protocols are responsive to their identified needs.

**If so, should it be broadened to provide additional protection to U.S. diplomatic personnel?**

Broadening the Program's mission and protocols is one of several options available to increase

security to U.S. diplomatic personnel. A holistic approach must be taken toward the security of diplomatic personnel abroad; the Marine Corps is in the process of examining various options regarding the security of diplomatic missions abroad and, in conjunction with the lead agency for Diplomatic Security, the Department of State, will develop various options involving not only personnel solutions but also other physical security methods to protect US diplomatic interests. The Marine Corps has a long history of working with the State Department, and should adjustments be required, will work eagerly to ensure the internal security functions aboard diplomatic premises meet the standards required.

**In your opinion, what additional steps, if any, should be taken to reduce the risk of attacks on U.S. embassies and consulates and diplomatic personnel by terrorist organizations within Afghanistan and throughout the region?**

We must continue to monitor threats to our diplomatic posts in Afghanistan and around the region, and adjust our security posture based on the threats and changing conditions on the ground. External security at our embassies and consulates is, first, the responsibility of the host nation and must remain so. In Afghanistan, we maintain a heightened security posture, and will continue to do so, in order to reduce risks commensurate with local threats and to advance the important work of our diplomatic personnel.

### **Congressional Oversight**

**In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.**

**Do you agree, if confirmed for this position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?**

Yes.

**Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?**

Yes.

**Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the ISAF Commander/Commander, USFOR-A?**

Yes.

**Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?**

Yes.

**Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted Committee, or to consult with the Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?**

Yes.