

Advance Questions for General David H. Petraeus, USA
Nominee for Commander, International Security Assistance Force, and
Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan

Afghanistan-Pakistan Strategy and Major Challenges

What role, if any, did you play in the formulation of the President's strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan?

In my position as Commander, US Central Command, I was part of a group that included the President and his national security team that engaged in an extensive review of our options, mission, and objectives in Afghanistan. The review process involved multiple sessions with the President, in which we discussed and challenged the assumptions underlying the strategy in Afghanistan. Additionally, the process included a review of the situation in Pakistan, which is closely related to the situation in Afghanistan. While participating in each of these sessions, I offered to the President my best professional military advice.

In his speech at West Point in December 2009, the President formulated his strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Do you agree with that strategy?

Yes.

Do you agree with the President's decision to begin reductions of U.S. forces in July 2011?

Yes.

Why or why not?

I support the policy of the President. As the President has stated, July 2011 is the point at which we will begin a transition phase in which the Afghan government will take more and more responsibility for its own security. As the President has also indicated, July 2011 is not a date when we will be rapidly withdrawing our forces and "switching off the lights and closing the door behind us."

The President's speech at West Point was intended to convey two messages, one of enormous additional commitment and one of urgency. I believe there was value in sending a message of urgency -- July 2011 -- as well as the message the President was sending of commitment -- the additional, substantial numbers of forces. But it is important that July 2011 be seen for what it is: the date when a process begins, in which the reduction of US forces must be based on the conditions at the time, and not a date when the U.S. heads for the exits, as the President reiterated on 24 June.

Do you agree with the President's decision that the pace of reductions beginning in July 2011 will be conditions based?

Yes.

Why or why not?

The pace of the drawdown of our forces in Afghanistan should, as the President has stated, be a responsible one, based on conditions on the ground beginning in July 2011, in order to ensure that Afghanistan can build the capacity to take full responsibility for its own security.

Security Situation in Afghanistan

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

The security situation in Afghanistan remains tenuous, with instability fueled by a resilient and still-confident insurgency, tribal tensions, political challenges, and competition for influence in the future. A deeply rooted criminal element, fueled by illicit economic activity and the narcotics industry, further threatens stability and continues to serve as an impediment to creating good governance and effective security forces. The formal governance system in Afghanistan appears weak, but is reinforced by strong power broker networks. The nexus between weak formal structures and strong informal ones is a key driver of support for the opposition and the insurgency, and also fundamentally undermines insurgents' interest in reconciliation and reintegration.

While the Taliban are the dominant Afghan insurgent group, the insurgency is by no means monolithic. Moreover, primary motivations for joining the insurgency have evolved over the past five years from ideological affinity with Mullah Omar's beliefs to disenfranchisement with local and national conditions. While the key goals and values of insurgent leaders remain largely constant, an increasing percentage of insurgents are motivated by intra-Pashtun rivalries, political disenfranchisement, and the perception that the Taliban will eventually emerge as the dominant Pashtun political entity in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, the strategic objectives of the Taliban-dominated insurgency remain expelling foreign forces from Afghanistan, preventing the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) from developing into an effective government, and reinstating the Islamist government headed by Mullah Omar. Insurgent leaders view their tactical and operational losses in 2010 as inevitable and acceptable. The Taliban believe they can outlast the Coalition's will to fight and believe this strategy will be effective despite short-term losses. The Taliban also believe they can sustain momentum and maintain operational capacity. We assess that the Taliban strategy is largely designed to establish influence over the Afghan population, by whatever means necessary. In some cases this will mean exercising brutal, coercive intimidation, and in other cases providing services for the population, such as the application of Sha'ria law to fill the societal need for speedy justice. Nevertheless, polling consistently shows that Afghan public opinion is largely opposed to the Taliban, though public sentiment also reflects dissatisfaction with the GIROA in some areas.

It is difficult to arrive at quantitative estimates of Taliban manpower. Even though the increase in ISAF strength in 2010 caused some concern for insurgent leaders, they continue to show an ability to adapt and respond to ISAF changes, and the size and intensity of the insurgency has increased in proportion to ISAF's expansion. The Taliban's increasing ability to project its influence in Regional Command-South, Regional Command-Southwest and Regional Command-East and to create instability in Regional Command-West and Regional Command-North indicate the Taliban suffer no shortage of manpower. They likely believe they will be able to maintain their current strength and possibly grow.

Central to Taliban themes and messages is their depiction of ISAF forces as occupiers supporting an apostate and corrupt regime. Senior Taliban leaders understand the ISAF strategy and have made adjustments to enhance their own population-centric insurgency in competition with the ISAF counterinsurgency approach. They recognize the need to keep the local population distanced from the GIRoA and ISAF, as exemplified by the recent increase in assassinations, murder, and intimidation tactics focused on Afghans who work with the GIRoA and ISAF. These are traditional insurgent tactics, which the Taliban likely deem sufficient to achieve their goals for the 2010 fighting season. They are unlikely to significantly alter their strategy, except to adapt to local conditions.

Afghans remain optimistic, however, about the direction of their country, despite the many shortcomings of the GIRoA and the tumultuous security environment. Afghans overwhelmingly prefer the GIRoA to the Taliban. Additionally, many Afghans continue to support potential negotiations with the Taliban to end the years-long conflict.

Civilian-Military Cooperation in Afghanistan

What is your assessment of the current level of cooperation and coordination between the military and civilian efforts in Afghanistan to implement the counterinsurgency strategy, both within the U.S. Government and between NATO ISAF and international civilian entities?

My judgment is that the current level of civil-military cooperation and coordination is good and has been strengthened during the past year. Clearly, civil-military partnership is the key to establishing unity of effort in all our activities. It is my intention to take further steps to enhance civil-military planning and coordination as we move ahead in our campaign in Afghanistan.

Much progress has been made in the past year. The Afghanistan-Pakistan Strategic Implementation Plan of July 2009 called for greater civil-military cooperation and directed the development of US Government integrated civil-military campaign plans for both Afghanistan and Pakistan. These plans were cooperatively developed by US Embassy Kabul and USFOR-A/ISAF in conjunction with CENTCOM and the office of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan (SRAP). Indeed, we are currently in the process of reviewing the Afghanistan civil-military campaign plan to take into account the adoption of development clusters by the Afghan government and the transition process which is being jointly developed by ISAF and the Afghan government.

Civil-military cooperation has also been strengthened with the ongoing “civilian surge” of approximately 1,000 additional civilian officials to help build governance and development capacity in Afghanistan. The civilian surge has enabled ISAF and the ISAF Joint Command (IJC) Headquarters, along with each of the regional headquarters staffs, to evolve into fully integrated civil-military teams. The civilian surge has also increased civilian support at the provincial level, where Provincial Reconstruction Teams and District Delivery Teams are the tactical manifestation of our civil-military cooperative efforts. They prioritize our collective efforts and help to enhance unity of effort at the local level.

The appointment of a NATO Senior Civilian Representative, currently Ambassador Mark Sedwill, as a NATO counterpart to COMISAF has greatly improved cooperation between ISAF and international civilian agencies. Likewise, the appointment of Senior Civilian Representatives to each of the regional headquarters has served to improve our overall civil-military cooperation and coordination.

We have also undertaken to synchronize our civil-military activities through periodic civil-military Rehearsal of Concept (ROC) Drills, which have helped identify areas where we can improve our partnership while giving us a shared understanding of future key events and operations. The most recent ROC Drill, which I co-hosted in April in Kabul with Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, brought together the senior leaders of practically every major Afghan, US, NATO, and international agency operating in Afghanistan. The conference yielded invaluable insights about how to better coordinate our collective efforts, and it is our intent to conduct a follow-up ROC Drill in the second half of this year.

Building the Afghan National Security Forces

The current strategy for training and equipping the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) calls for growing the Afghan National Army (ANA) to a level of 171,000 and the Afghan National Police (ANP) to a level of 134,000 by October 2011.

In your view, will the currently-planned end strength levels for the ANA and ANP be sufficient to provide security and stability in Afghanistan, or should these end strength levels be increased? If increased, what levels would you recommend for the ANA and the ANP?

I am aware of ongoing analysis by NTM-A on the need for growth beyond currently approved goals. While the exact numbers needed are still being determined, I am not willing to say that the currently approved strength of 305,600 will prove sufficient. If I am confirmed, within 90-120 days of assuming command, I will make my own assessment of the need for any increase, provide that recommendation to the US and NATO chains of command, and continually assess the appropriate size and structure of the ANSF to ensure that we do all possible to enable transition of security tasks to Afghan forces as soon as is possible.

What in your view are the greatest challenges to building the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces to assume responsibility for Afghanistan's security?

The development of leaders remains our top priority and is essential for building a professional ANSF. Leadership deficiencies within the ANSF—including insufficient numbers of junior officers and NCOs, gaps in the midgrade ranks, and the presence of corruption in some ranks—pose the greatest threat to our Afghan allies. Significant efforts have been made to improve leader development programs, to include adding new and overhauling existing ANA and ANP leader courses.

Attrition in some elements of the ANSF, particularly ANCOP and the southern ANA Corps, also remains a problem. As we have executed our accelerated growth plans, it has become apparent that a complex interaction exists amongst recruiting, retention, and attrition. This interaction affects our efforts to meet quantitative goals while maintaining adequate quality. In order to meet both quantitative and qualitative objectives, training and instructor shortfalls must be filled.

An additional challenge includes balancing current operational requirements with the demands of long-term programs that are focused on growth, quality, and supporting institutions. There is an inherent tension between running long training and education programs, and striving to keep a large percentage of the existing ANSF in near-continuous operations. Our challenge is to find the appropriate balance between the two demands.

NTM-A/CSTC-A manning remains a challenge. Though these organizations have received a significant influx of US personnel since November 2009, there remain unfilled requirements. The Joint Staff, the Services, and SHAPE are working to bring in personnel with the appropriate

skill sets to meet ANSF quantitative goals in a timely manner, while simultaneously improving ANSF quality. If NTM-A/CSTC-A receives all confirmed NATO pledges, it will have approximately 724 additional personnel, bringing us to 91% of our required NTM-A/CSTC-A personnel.

Finally, internal security depends on the three pillars of judiciary, corrections, and policing. While NTM-A/CSTC-A is directly responsible for supporting policing, other organizations are responsible for the development of corrections and the judiciary. The lagging progress of the judiciary is a serious concern, and if corrective measures are not taken soon to accelerate the development of the justice system, the professionalization of the Afghan police will be put at risk. It is for this reason that we have supported the development of a civil-military rule of law task force.

There remains a shortfall in the number of training personnel required for the NATO Training Mission Afghanistan (NTM-A). At a recent hearing, the Committee heard testimony that NTM-A lacks 450 “institutional” trainers. In addition 574 trainers have been pledged by NATO members but have yet to arrive in theater, and another 235 trainers are “pending” confirmation from NATO member capitals. Separately, the training effort is short some 14 Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) for training the Afghan National Army and 140 Police OMLTs for building the capabilities of the Afghan National Police.

What is your assessment of the Afghan National Army (ANA)?

The ANA remains the most respected element of the ANSF. ANA and police forces are now jointly leading security efforts in Kabul. They have recently conducted joint air mobile operations in the North, where Afghan Air Force helicopters transported army forces to support local police. Moreover, ANA commanders are now partnering with Coalition forces during joint operational planning.

In IJC’s most recent assessment of ANSF operational effectiveness, 5 of 19 assessed ANA brigades are capable of planning, executing, and sustaining regional security operations with limited, yet still essential, support from partnered ISAF units. The remaining 14 brigades are assessed as requiring partnered assistance to conduct the majority of their functions. Of the major ANA headquarters assessed, two (205th Corps and 111th Capital Division) are assessed as capable of performing their missions with limited support, while the remaining five major headquarters require comprehensive ISAF support.

The ANA still lacks the combat power to adequately secure terrain, but new ANA growth is helping to ameliorate this shortcoming. The ANA’s logistics efforts need greater emphasis, but the planned fielding of greater logistics assets should improve the Afghans’ ability to adequately sustain themselves.

What in your view should be done to encourage NATO allies to provide more institutional trainers?

Nations are generally resistant to additional contributions for two reasons: money and force caps. With regard to money, we can encourage our NATO allies by allowing the use of Afghanistan Security Forces Funds (ASFF) or Lift and Sustain money, when appropriate, to fund the deployment and life support of trainers. In some cases, especially regarding police trainers, Allied organizations that are potential contributors to NTM-A do not have sufficient funding to support the deployment of their trainers. Under current US policy, we cannot provide funding if nations do not qualify for L&S support or if the organization in question is outside the Ministry of Defense (MoD) structure.

In the case of non-MoD forces, exceptions to policy may be made for nations already approved for L&S funding. However, L&S funds only cover MoD forces, and not police forces that work with the Ministry of the Interior (MoI). To meet this critical gap, NTM-A has sought approval to use ASFF funding for police trainers during the next two fiscal years to ease the issue of funding and provide resources for vital trainers during this critical period of ANSF growth.

In addition, we should continue to coordinate and facilitate countries willing to donate funding for other countries that are willing to deploy but lack the necessary funds. The UAE, for example, recently made a generous offer to help fund deployments to assist in overcoming the shortage of required trainers.

NATO members are also constrained by force cap issues. Several member nations have limitations on the number of forces they can have in theater. Germany, Spain, France, UK, and Italy are all examples of nations that could provide more trainers but are unable to do so because of domestic political reluctance to increase troop numbers. To overcome some of these force cap issues, we should ask our NATO allies to send instructors to teach in ANSF schools on a rotational, temporary duty basis. This would provide the specialized trainers required, while building capacity for the Afghan forces and enhancing the expertise of Coalition partners.

What should be done to encourage NATO allies to provide additional OMLTs and POMLTs?

In addition to the proposals I have already mentioned, the US can encourage our Allies to provide more OMLTs and POMLTs by offering to provide NATO interoperable equipment that would give the OMLTs/POMLTs greater capability to move and communicate. Many nations are unable to equip their forces to meet NATO standards. The US supports many such nations now, although we are constrained by our own resource requirements and the overall shortage of critical assets such as MRAPs (though the MRAP shortage will be eliminated late this fall).

Additionally, many Central and East European nations require US augmentation, often through the State Partnership Program, to fill critical billets within the OMLT/POMLTs. We can continue to provide this augmentation, within the limits of our own force limitations.

Partnering with Afghan Security Forces

The Committee received a briefing on plans for the campaign in Kandahar, which called for the deployment of Afghan and ISAF security forces partnered together to provide a “rising tide” of security in and around Kandahar over a period of months.

How many Afghan troops are there now in Kandahar?

As of 27 June, the Afghan National Army’s 205th Corps has 7,261 soldiers present for duty in Kandahar province. New expansions to the ANA have allowed the 205th Corps to focus its efforts on Kandahar, effectively doubling the number of Afghan troops there, and additional new forces are expected to reach the 205th Corps in the remainder of 2010 and in 2011.

How many Afghan troops are there now in Helmand?

As of 27 June, the Afghan National Army’s newly formed 215th Corps has 6,794 soldiers present for duty in Helmand province. Over the remainder of 2010, the 215th Corps will continue to be fielded towards its authorized strength of 11,000.

If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you recommend to increase the number of operations in which Afghan security forces are in the lead, particularly in RC-South?

The tested concept of embedded partnering remains our most critical tool to increase the effectiveness of Afghan National Security Forces. As we complete the Coalition force flow and concentrate our combined efforts in both Helmand and Kandahar, embedded partnerships will enable us to accelerate the development of the fielded Afghan force and foster stronger leadership. The Afghans’ local knowledge, cultural understanding, and intuitive feel for the operating environment, coupled with our technology, air assets, and logistics support are proving time and time again to be a powerful combination.

Over time, this partnership will result in Afghan units that increasingly operate as the supported force in even more operations, and to a greater degree than they do today. Although Coalition forces are already serving in a supporting role in many areas, we still provide many of the required enabling capabilities, such as access to fires, air assets, and logistics support. Even in a supporting capacity, our role will still be very significant. Embedded partnering will allow us to reduce the scope of our supporting role over time as Afghan forces continue to develop these capabilities for themselves. Afghan soldiers, police, and National Directorate of Security representatives recognize the great value of embedded partnering, appreciate sharing the risk, and want to lead.

Contract Oversight and Private Security Contractors

Q1. If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you recommend to ensure adequate oversight is in place for U.S. and ISAF contracts in Afghanistan?

We will continue to work closely with the Commission on Wartime Contracting to implement their recommendations, while leveraging the newly established Joint Theater Support Contracting Command. This will eliminate duplicative contracts and ensure appropriate clauses are included in contracts. We will also strive to ensure sufficient manning of contracting officer representatives for all critical contracts.

As we continue to refine inputs for Afghanistan, we have determined the need to redesignate Task Force SPOTLIGHT under one-star leadership and to stand up Task Force 2010 to manage contracts below prime contractor level. This will enable us to adequately enforce provisions requiring prime contractors and private security contractors (PSCs) to report detailed census data, 100% synchronized pre-deployment and operational tracker and biometric registration, 100% individual arming authorization, and serious incident reporting. Accurate and detailed information of this nature is paramount for effective oversight to prevent contracts below the prime contractor level from falling into the hands of malign actors.

Q2. The Committee's review of DOD private security contracts found that private security companies actively recruit from the Afghan security forces and frequently pay more than the Afghan security forces. The Department of Defense reported in October 2009 that "private security contractors are, on average, paid more" than the Afghan security forces.

If so, what steps would you envision taking to correct that problem, if confirmed?

Task Force SPOTLIGHT is currently examining the issue to ensure Afghan security forces' wages are competitive with those of PSCs. One solution may be to build comparative salary caps into our contracts to ensure PSCs and ANSF are paid more equitably. However, we must do so without degrading the quality of PSCs recruited, and without subverting the ability of companies to pay the fair market value for services. We are also taking steps to share biometric data collected by the Government of Afghanistan on ANSF personnel to ensure companies do not hire ANSF personnel who are absent without leave.

Q3. There is evidence that DOD security contractors are relying on local warlords and strongmen to provide men to staff their guard forces.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that:

- a. providers of manpower for security contractors are properly vetted; and**
- b. that individuals we rely on for security are not detracting from the counterinsurgency mission?**

To ensure proper vetting of PSCs, we must demand their immediate adherence to existing contractual requirements. We have not adequately enforced current provisions requiring prime contractors and PSCs to report detailed census data, register their employees properly, report serious incidents. Biometric data has been collected on only about 4,500 PSC employees.

To reduce the influence of malign actors and power brokers, we must leverage our intelligence communities and investigative agencies to bring actionable information into the contracting process. We may need legislative flexibility to terminate contracts for bad actors or to award contracts to those who adhere to requirements and are committed to partnering in the counterinsurgency campaign. Task Forces SPOTLIGHT and Task Force 2010 have been charged to examine these issues within USFOR-A.

To ensure that PSCs are not detracting from the counterinsurgency mission, we must require that they adhere to rules for the use of force, guidelines for escalation of force, and the principles of the Law of Armed Conflict. They must use only appropriate and measured force for defensive purposes. To this end, we will work with the Government of Afghanistan to ensure PSC personnel are properly trained, regulated, inspected, and investigated when required.

Our counterinsurgency mission depends heavily on perceptions, and therefore requires a clear distinction between licensed, trained, and restrained PSCs that help us accomplish our mission, and illegally armed groups that must be disbanded and held accountable for their actions. As the security environment in Afghanistan improves, our need for PSCs will diminish, but in the meantime, we will use legal, licensed, and controlled PSCs to accomplish appropriate missions.

Reintegration and Reconciliation

In your assessment, what percentage of low- to mid-level Taliban fighters may be willing to reintegrate with Afghan society and switch to supporting the Afghan Government if provided the right incentives, such as protection from reprisal and employment?

It is difficult to make a reliable estimate of low- to mid-level Taliban fighters willing to reintegrate, given the uncertainty regarding incentives and guarantees of protection and employment. Theoretically, it is possible to reintegrate many insurgent fighters – indeed, all those that are not the ideologically driven, irreconcilable insurgents. Practically, the primary challenge to the reintegration process is that the Afghan Government must identify the right incentives and provide the necessary resources to ensure the effective and sustained reintegration of these fighters – all with coalition support and partnership, to be sure. The government must also develop the reconcilable fighters’ confidence that it can deliver on reintegration promises, and must overcome the issue of corruption by some government and ANSF representatives that erodes trust in local governance. The program must also overcome the potentially corrosive effects of local power brokers who may inhibit its impartial implementation. In addition, overcoming the traditional Pashtunwali concept of revenge and reprisal may take a significant amount of time, as may overcoming the belief of other ethnic groups that the program would unfairly benefit and empower Pashtuns.

Additionally, not every insurgent fighter will need to be reintegrated through a government program. Under the right circumstances, many will simply desire to stop fighting and return home, though we do not have a reliable estimate of this number. We assess that there are fighters who would not need government assistance to transition out of the insurgency, but we would encourage reconciled insurgents identify themselves in case they later decided to take advantage of government assistance in reintegration.

What is your assessment of the reintegration plan that has been developed by the Government of Afghanistan with ISAF assistance?

The Afghan government’s reintegration plan will be of central importance in our efforts to improve Afghanistan’s security and long-term stability. This GIROA program, currently under final review by President Karzai, offers the potential to reduce violence and provide realistic avenues to assimilate Pashtun insurgents back into Afghanistan society.

Afghan officials are still working to provide implementation details in a few key areas of the plan. First, the deliberate process for identification, tracking, execution, and oversight of the reintegration process from start to finish still has to be refined. These formal program processes are critical to ensure accurate reporting, identification of key insurgent candidates for reintegration, adequate protection of citizens and former insurgents, and impartial administration. Additionally, an oversight process will be needed to ensure compliance with standards and provide mechanisms for redress of systemic Afghan societal problems that have helped fuel the insurgency. The success of this program will require substantial support and resources from ISAF at national and local levels, which we will be prepared to provide.

It will be important to ensure that reintegration processes are put into place and made functional speedily, so that GIRoA's invitation for insurgents to formally reintegrate can yield rapid results. Previous reintegration initiatives have failed, in part, because program implementation moved more slowly than policy discussion. Another failure of this sort could well harden insurgents to reject further reintegration overtures, and could risk dramatically eroding public and international trust and confidence in the Afghan government. Finally, reintegration success will depend in part on enduring improvements in security and local governance, and on the perception that malign powerbrokers and corrupt government activities are being addressed and significantly reduced.

Civilian Casualties and Rules of Engagement

A critical objective of the counterinsurgency strategy is to provide protection to the Afghan people, including minimizing the risk of civilian casualties. ISAF has issued revised procedures aimed at reducing the risk to civilians from military operations.

In your view, do the current rules of engagement (ROEs) in Afghanistan, for both NATO and U.S. forces, provide the necessary flexibility to allow forces to engage the enemy, protect themselves, and minimize the risk of civilian casualties?

There is an inherent tension in counterinsurgency operations between engaging the enemy and protecting the population. In fact, in the past few days, I have had a good discussion with President Karzai on this topic, noting that, if confirmed, I would continue the emphasis on reducing loss of civilian life in the course of operations to an absolute minimum, while also ensuring that we provide whatever assets are necessary to ensure the safety of ISAF and Afghan forces when they are in a tough spot. As we have done in numerous after action reports and through other feedback mechanisms in recent months, we will need to continue to educate our leaders on the implementation of the ROE moving forward.

If confirmed, what general changes, if any, would you make to the current ROEs?

One of my highest priorities, should I be confirmed as Commander of USFOR-A, will be to assess the effect of our ROE on the safety of our forces and the successful conduct of our mission.

Health of the Forces

What is your assessment of the adequacy of health and mental health capabilities supporting our expanding force structure in Afghanistan?

I believe that our forces in Afghanistan are properly postured with health professionals and required medical assets. A comprehensive Health Service Support assessment was completed as part of the force expansion planning, and we have worked closely with JFCOM and the Services to completely source all new requirements in medical force structure.

In mental health support, we continue to refine our capabilities and assess this complex concern. We recently responded to recommendations made by Mental Health Advisory Team-6 and we are increasing behavioral health personnel to meet and maintain the recommended 1:700 ratio, while also appointing a theater behavioral health consultant that will proactively manage the provision of behavioral health services throughout Afghanistan.

How do you intend to implement the new Department of Defense Policy on management of mild traumatic brain injury throughout Afghanistan including working with NATO forces?

The DoD policy for mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI) (concussion) gives specific direction to line leaders and medical personnel in their response to mTBI. It also addresses exposures to blast events that are potentially related to mTBI. I will continue to ensure appropriate command emphasis is placed on this crucial effort to identify, evaluate, and manage all personnel exposed to potential concussive events, as defined in the policy. In addition, USCENTCOM continues to develop a joint solution to track all such exposures by utilizing the operational CIDNE system already in use in theater. This will provide us a mechanism to ensure proper evaluation, post-event rest period, and future evaluation based on exposure to multiple events. While this DoD policy will not apply to other NATO forces, we will work to ensure the impact of its requirements on our Coalition partners is minimized.

Will you, if confirmed, assess the adequacy of sexual assault and suicide prevention programs and if necessary request additional resources to support these essential programs?

Yes.

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.