

## COMMISSION ON WARTIME CONTRACTING

1 March 2010

### ORAL STATEMENT FOR AMBASSADOR JOHN E. HERBST

- Co-Chairs Thibault and Shays, and members of the Commission, thank you for the opportunity to speak today.
- I am the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization in the Department of State. This position, which reports directly to the Secretary of State, is responsible for organizing the USG response to crises involving failed or failing states. While incorporating the lessons learned from past operations, S/CRS embodies Secretary Clinton's concept of "smart power," utilizing all USG resources in the right combination to manage complex crises.
- In today's tightly interconnected world, we face a growing danger from failed and failing states and ungoverned spaces. Such areas can become breeding grounds for terrorism, weapons proliferation, trafficking in humans and narcotics, organized crime, and piracy. Failed states also generate refugee flows and promote instability in neighboring countries. Iraq and Afghanistan are the subjects at hand, but they are not the only countries that are unstable or threatened by instability.
- The complex challenge posed by ungoverned spaces requires a comprehensive USG plan and response mechanism. To be effective our response must utilize all of the civilian skills appropriate for the crisis in question and, where our military is engaged, the response must integrate military and civilian activities to form a single operation. To do this, the civilian side of the USG must have the tools and the people that are highly flexible and capable in a range of situations.
- As we have learned from past reconstruction and stabilization crises, particularly Iraq, the USG cannot afford to respond to reconstruction and stabilization crises in an ad hoc manner, but instead needs to be prepared, in the manner of the U.S. military, with a trained, skilled, equipped, and ready civilian force able to immediately respond to US national security interests either with the military or without.
- The Civilian Response Corps (CRC), which is being developed, managed and implemented by S/CRS, is that civilian force. At full capacity, the CRC will consist of a 264 person Active component (CRC-A) of full-time dedicated first responders and a 2,000 person Standby component (CRC-S) of additional USG responders.
- Tapping experts from across the USG, the CRC is a partnership of eight federal agencies: State, USAID, Justice, Homeland Security, Treasury, Agriculture, Commerce and Health and Human Services. Through this partnership, the Corps is able to bring the full spectrum of USG capabilities to bear for a true whole-of-government response to complex crises.

- Since 2006, 70 CRC have deployed to 16 countries. This does not include S/CRS staff that have also deployed nor does it include deployments in support of various military exercises that we have participated in to develop and refine our doctrine and train members of the CRC. In one such exercise, EUROCOM's Austere Challenge, over 40 civilians from across the USG participated in what is the largest civilian-military exercise in history.
- One of the strengths of the CRC is its ability to engage in dedicated planning, conflict assessment and mitigation activities that will reduce the need for future military intervention by helping to stabilize countries at the tipping point of conflict. The goal is to deploy CRC to prevent conflict and instability, not just respond to conflict.
- In addition to its mission to help prevent and respond quickly and in a coordinated manner to conflict, what makes the CRC unique are the robust readiness requirements, which are the closest in the civilian USG to the training the U.S. military requires before a soldier is deployable. Every single CRC member must complete a strict training protocol before deploying and maintain that readiness on an annual basis.
- Although S/CRS was initially established in State in 2004, S/CRS and the CRC were not authorized by Congress until October 2008, when the Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act of 2008 was passed as part of the FY09 National Defense Authorization Act after four years of trying to get one Senator to lift his hold on the stand-alone bill.
- What's more, funding was not available to establish, train and equip the Civilian Response Corps until early FY09 after being appropriated to State and USAID under the FY08 supplemental. To date, a total of \$290 million has been appropriated; of which \$225 million has been provided under the Civilian Stabilization Initiative.
- What this means is that S/CRS has only been operational, in the true sense of the word, for only 18 months.
- Yet in that short time, we have:
  - Built the CRC to a current strength of 86 Active and 558 Standby members;
  - Managed over \$350 million in 1207 funds transferred from DoD for conflict prevention projects , which has funded 25 projects in 23 countries;
  - Developed and implemented the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework, or ICAF, for 14 countries;
  - Provided R&S training to 439 students, including 76 from DoD and 12 representing other countries with civilian response capabilities, and not including training on R&S and civ-mil integration provided to soldiers and civilians deploying to Afghanistan;
  - Deployed 70 CRC and other staff to Afghanistan alone where we led development of the first USG civilian-military integrated campaign plan;

- Deployed CRC to AFRICOM, SOUTHCOM and CENTCOM to work on civilian -military planning and further expand coordination with the military;
  - Deployed CRC to Sudan to assist in contingency planning for the 2011 referendum, including program planning to strengthen the government of Southern Sudan;
  - Deployed CRC to the Democratic Republic of Congo to coordinate and staff the interagency sector assessments on Economic Governance, Anti-Corruption, Food Security, Security Sector Reform, and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence that will influence the USG's assistance strategy;
  - Responded to the earthquake in Haiti by deploying CRC in-country to assist the embassy; providing equipment to support USAID's humanitarian relief effort; activating CRC from across the interagency to staff and manage various DC-based Task Forces planning for the transition from immediate relief to reconstruction; and by deploying CRC to assist SOUTHCOM with integrating into the USG relief effort.
- These are just a few of our accomplishments over the past 18 months. The operational tempo of the CRC will only grow over time, but these past and future engagements and activities, are an indication of the breadth and depth of the value S/CRS and the CRC are bringing to the USG.
  - This is not to say there haven't been challenges. The pace of hiring has been slower than anticipated, which is why the President's FY11 budget request asks that flexible hiring authority, which the Congress has already granted for civilian staffing in Iraq and Afghanistan, also be provided for staffing the CRC.
  - Just as DOD constantly develops its capacity to meet new and evolving threats, we must also continue to support our intensive efforts on the civilian side to strengthen our capacity to be an effective leader, particularly in missions where an early civilian effort may avoid military intervention entirely. That means building on, not abandoning, what has been already been accomplished by the existing structures.
  - I can understand why some are impatient with current efforts to unify the civilian side of the USG for complex operations. But some historical perspective is needed. The integration of the military under Goldwater-Nichols took over ten years. We are barely getting started on the civilian side. And the pace of civilian integration is speeding up.
  - To make substantial changes now in the structure will only slow down our efforts to create this essential new tool. We cannot afford that.
  - Thank you and I am happy to take your questions.

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