

TESTIMONY
OF
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE
JOHN D. NEGROPONTE
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE
SEPTEMBER 26, 2007

Mr. Chairman, Senator Cochran, members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear today in regard to the FY 2008 supplemental request for State and Foreign Operations. I am pleased to be here with Secretary Gates and General Pace. State and Defense work closely together on an extraordinarily wide range of issues affecting the nation's security. And nowhere is this collaboration more intense and seamless than in Iraq and Afghanistan. We therefore are pleased to support the Defense Department's supplemental request and we are grateful for Secretary Gates' support of ours. I would also like to thank the Committee for passing our regular appropriations bill.

As you know, in February, the President sent up a supplemental request of \$3.301 billion for Iraq and Afghanistan, formulated in the December/January time period. Things can and do change in ten months, and we plan to offer both refinements and additions to our original request.

Iraq

Regarding Iraq, our aim is to solidify the gains realized from the surge and other improvements in the security situation.

On the foreign assistance side, we seek additional funding to provide small grants for programs to stabilize areas from which insurgents have been driven.

Second, we seek funds for Iraqi infrastructure to consolidate gains in the delivery of basic services and to improve budget execution. We have had successes in training the Finance Ministry, evidenced by the Iraqi government's improved performance in getting money out into the localities where it is sorely needed. We need to continue ministerial capacity building and training Iraqis to take over the management and operation of their own infrastructure.

We also seek funds to continue much-needed programs in the area of rule of law.

Mr. Chairman, an enduring solution in Iraq – and elsewhere around the world – requires strong diplomacy. To deliver that, we urgently require increased State Operations funding to support the ongoing activities of our mission in Iraq. This includes all personnel, infrastructure, and security programs for U.S. Embassy personnel. There are additional requirements

for armored vehicles and security and communications equipment. Funding is also requested for the Regional Embassy Offices and support units in Jordan and Kuwait, which reduce the number of personnel required to be stationed within Iraq. Funding is necessary to cover the operation and maintenance of the New Embassy Compound as well as the construction of temporary housing, including overhead cover.

The supplemental request also covers costs associated with the dramatic increase in Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) from 10 to 25. The PRTs are at the core of our decentralized strategy in Iraq and have contributed significantly to improvements in Anbar and Baghdad.

Afghanistan

Turning to Afghanistan, where I visited two weeks ago, there are many positive achievements on both the military and reconstruction side. Our counter-insurgency effort is working, but the job is far from complete.

We now must focus on extending the national government's influence. The people of Afghanistan need visible evidence that their own

government can deliver basic services and provide rule of law in all corners of the country.

There is a saying that where the roads end, the insurgency begins. The Taliban has sought to re-assert itself. We have taken the fight to the Taliban, but rooting out insurgents only clears the area temporarily. Without the roads that provide economic opportunities, insurgents reappear.

West Bank/Gaza

In the months since we sent our February supplemental proposal to you, significant events have occurred in the West Bank and Gaza. Gaza is now run de facto by Hamas and we have suspended all but urgent humanitarian assistance delivered through UNWRA. At the same time, new opportunities have arisen to work with President Abbas in the West Bank. We believe that funding for the Palestinian Authority (PA) to improve security performance and meet budget deficits will deliver clear benefits to the Palestinian people and advance a final, two-state settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. U.S. funds would go into a specially designated account to be withdrawn only with U.S. government approval and appropriate vetting of the recipients.

Other issues are still under discussion within the Administration.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, our supplemental request and any amendments represent a serious response to the war on terror and to emergencies and opportunities which have arisen. We have consistently found that the political, economic and diplomatic tools which these programs support are indispensable to the satisfactory, long-term resolution of conflicts which threaten the security of the United States.

We are fully aware that you will require more discussion and justification regarding our additional FY 2008 funding needs. We are committed to briefing you and your staff in detail on these programs as soon as possible.

I would be pleased to respond to your questions.