

**STATEMENT OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT GATES  
SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2007**

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee:

I thank the Committee for all you have done to support our military these many years, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak today about the Fiscal Year 2008 Global War on Terror Request.

With me today is General Pete Pace, in what will be his last appearance before the Congress as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I have come to trust him completely and relied on his advice these past 10 months. I hope you will join me in wishing him well and thanking him for his four decades of extraordinary service to our country.

I urge the Congress to approve the complete Global War on Terror Request as quickly as possible and without excessive and counterproductive restrictions. That will help the Department manage its expenses and people more effectively, and minimize costly reprogramming actions.

While this hearing is focused on the war funding request, I would like to note with concern the Committee's recent report language of the Defense Appropriations Bill concerning Section 1206 Global Train and Equip. This authority is a unique tool that provides commanders a means to fill longstanding gaps in our ability to build the capacity and capabilities of partner nations. It has become a model of interagency cooperation between the Defense and State Departments – both in the field and in Washington, D.C. Secretary Rice and I both fully support this authority. Its benefits will accrue to our successors in future administrations. I urge the Committee to reinstate our full request for \$500 million in the base budget, and continue support in future years.

I would also like to voice my strong support today to the State Department's portion of the War on Terror request. As you know, the challenges we face in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere are fundamentally political, economic and cultural in nature, and are not going to be overcome by military means alone. It will be very difficult for our troops and their commanders to succeed without the key non-military programs and initiatives included in the request for the State Department. The initial FY 2008 War on Terror funding request for the Department of Defense was submitted in February for \$141.7 billion. At the time, the Department stated that this initial request was an estimate based on a straight-line projection of ongoing war costs, and would need to be adjusted given the evolving and dynamic realities on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Major elements of the initial GWOT request included:

- \$70.6 billion for operations, which includes incremental pay, supplies, transportation, maintenance, and logistical support to conduct military operations.
- \$37.6 billion to repair and replace equipment that has been destroyed, damaged, or stressed by the ongoing conflicts.

- \$15.2 billion for force protection, including new technologies and equipment to protect troops from Improvised Explosive Devices and other threats.
- \$4.7 billion to train and equip Afghan and Iraqi security forces.
- \$1 billion for the Commander's Emergency Response Program, funds that can be dispensed quickly and applied directly by U.S. commanders for local needs.

The Department submitted its first adjustment on July 31, 2007, for \$5.3 billion to buy 1,520 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles – bringing the total War on Terror request to \$147 billion.

The second adjustment, to be submitted by the President, seeks approximately \$42 billion, bringing the total FY08 DoD request to nearly \$190 billion. The second adjustment includes:

- \$6 billion to support the Army and Marine combat formations currently in Iraq through FY 2008. This takes into account the President's announced intention to redeploy five Army Brigade Combat Teams by next summer.
- \$14 billion for force protection, \$11 billion of which will go toward fielding approximately 7,000 more MRAP vehicles on top of the 8,000 MRAPs already funded or requested. This also includes funding to better defeat enemy snipers and to modify Army combat vehicles to improve survivability.
- \$9 billion for reconstitution to ensure that we provide our forces the critical equipment and technology they need for future combat operations.
- \$6 billion for training and equipment that will accelerate the deployment readiness of Army units. This includes \$1 billion to support National Guard pre-deployment training.
- \$1 billion to improve U.S. facilities in the region and consolidate our bases in Iraq.
- \$1 billion to train and equip Iraqi Security Forces.

Mr. Chairman, I know that Iraq and other difficult choices America faces in the War on Terror will continue to be a source of friction within the Congress, between the Congress and the President, and in the wider public debate. Considering this, I would like to close with a word about something I know we can all agree on – the honor, courage, and great sense of duty we have witnessed in our troops since September 11<sup>th</sup>.

Under some of the most trying conditions, they have done far more than what was asked of them, and far more than what was expected. Like all of you, I am both humbled and inspired by my trips to Walter Reed and to the frontlines in Iraq and Afghanistan. And, like all of you, I always keep our troops – their safety and their mission – foremost in my mind every day.

Once again, I thank each of you and the rest of the Congress for the support you have given them and their families during this period of great consequence for America.

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