

STATEMENT OF SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE
ARMY BUDGET OVERVIEW HEARING
FEBRUARY 27, 2008

Today, we welcome the Honorable Pete Geren, Secretary of the Army, along with General George Casey, the Army Chief of Staff. Gentlemen, thank you for being with us here today as the Committee reviews the Army's budget request for fiscal year 2009.

The Army's fiscal year 2009 budget request is \$140.7 Billion, an increase of \$12.3 Billion over last year's enacted budget, excluding \$48.7 Billion appropriated to the Army in the fiscal year 2008 Bridge Supplemental. Additionally, the pending fiscal year 2008 Supplemental budget request includes \$66.5 Billion for the Army, and the Committee expects to receive a fiscal year 2009 Supplemental request in the near-term.

As we review these budget requests, we are mindful of the facts that upward of 250,000 Soldiers are deployed in nearly 80 countries overseas, and the Army remains highly engaged in the Global War on Terror. There is no question that the continuous high pace of current operations has taken a toll on both Army personnel and equipment. Yet as we address current, urgent needs, we cannot lose sight of the future. It is imperative that we prepare for the diverse Warfighting demands of the 21st century.

It is critical that we strike the right balance among these sometimes competing priorities, and we must do this with the Army's most powerful weapon in mind: our Soldiers and their families. The challenge is not easy, and we are faced with many

difficult decisions as we address current demands while continuing to prepare the Army for the future.

The Army has embarked on a path towards addressing this challenge in various ways, for instance by rapidly increasing its end-strength; by investing in new weapons and technologies; and by repositioning its forces around the world. The Army's fiscal year 2009 budget request is designed to strike a sensible balance among these priorities.

Yet, there are questions that should not be ignored for the sake of urgency. For instance, the Army proposes to accelerate its Grow the Force initiative, which it began last year and to complete it two years earlier than initially planned. But are we able to achieve this goal without sacrificing the quality of our recruits? Additionally, several high-priced modernization programs, to include the Future Combat System and the Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter, have been beset by repeated cost overruns, schedule delays and program restructures. Are we trying to do too much too fast? Do we have the right personnel to manage and oversee these complex modernization programs? What is the Army doing to address these acquisition challenges? And finally, are we confident that the global repositioning of forces appropriately addresses our current and future needs?

It is our hope that today's hearing will help answer some of these questions and illuminate how the Army's fiscal year 2009 budget request addresses these challenges in a responsible manner.

Gentlemen, we sincerely appreciate your service to our nation, and the dedication and sacrifices made daily by the men and women in our Army. We could not be more grateful for what those who wear our Nation's uniform do for our country each and every day.

Your full statements will be included in the record. I now turn to my Co-Chairman, Senator Stevens, for his opening statement.