STATEMENT OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DONALD H. RUMSFELD
FY 2005 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST
SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 16, 2005

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, good afternoon. I'm here today to discuss the President's supplemental request for ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A few days ago, I returned to Iraq for the first time since the elections on January 30th. The Iraqi people are understandably proud of their accomplishment.

They chose to defy the extremists and cast their lot with the forces of freedom -- as did the people of Afghanistan a few months before.

The great sweep of history is for freedom and it is finding its way to some of the world's most violent regions, giving those most susceptible to extremist recruitment an opportunity to choose a different way of life.

None of this would have been possible were it not for the valor and grit of America's men and women in uniform.

I know you share my gratitude to them and to their families for their service and sacrifices. And I thank the members of this Committee and the American people for providing the resources and support they need to complete their missions.

The President's supplemental appropriations request of $74.9 billion for the Department of Defense will:

- Sustain ongoing U.S. military operations;
- Provide assistance to important allies;
- Help bring greater stability to Iraq and Afghanistan; and
- Ensure that after returning from combat America's armed forces are fully re-set, repaired and re-structured for the future.

The increase in this supplemental from 2004 can be attributed to three war-related priorities added this year:

- Training and equipping Iraqi and Afghan security forces;
- Resetting the Army for the future; and
- Repairing and procuring equipment essential to warfighting.

I would like to spend a few moments talking about each.

<u>First, the Iraqi Security Forces</u>:

This supplemental allots $5.7 billion to assist in the training and equipping of the Iraqi security forces. We are making progress toward that goal.

The military is frequently re-assessing the performance and progress of Iraqi units.
We have gone from no newly trained and equipped Iraqi security personnel in 2003 (police, border officers, military forces, etc.) to 136,000 today.

There are an additional 74,000 site protection forces that are on duty, but not considered part of the 136,000, since they do not report to the Ministers of Defense or Interior.

But capability is every bit as important as numbers. No one should expect that Iraqi security forces are going to come out of their training pipelines and be battle-hardened veterans like the fine men and women of the U.S. military.

Ultimately, it is the Iraqi people -- not the Coalition -- who will defeat Iraqi extremists. And the bravery of Iraqi security forces in safeguarding the January 30th elections demonstrates their growing commitment and capability to do just that.

Afghan Security Forces:

The President is requesting $1.3 billion for the Department of Defense to assist Afghan security forces.

The Afghan army continues to grow in both size and capability, working closely with U.S. and International Security Assistance Force troops to secure the country and battle Taliban and Al Qaeda remnants. The Afghan Ministry of Defense forces now number some 19,000 soldiers, and the Ministry of Interior forces number approximately 33,000.

Supplemental funding will continue to strengthen Afghan forces with new training and equipment that will move them towards a larger role in defending their own country. It is worth noting that last week the Afghan National Military Academy accepted its first class of cadets -- soldiers who represent that country's next generation of professional military officers.

The DoD portion of the supplemental request also includes $1.4 billion for payments to Pakistan, Jordan and other key cooperating countries for logistical and other support for the U.S. military.

Repairing and Replacing Equipment:

As one would expect in war, the high pace of operations is causing military hardware to wear out at a faster rate.

On average, combat vehicles in war are experiencing four and a half years of peacetime wear in a single year. For example, Bradley Fighting Vehicles that usually run about 800 miles per year in peacetime training are now sometimes driven over 4,000 miles in Iraq.

This supplemental request provides $5.4 billion to replace military items destroyed or expended during combat, and $3.2 billion for depot maintenance, to overhaul and repair equipment to restore it to mission capable standards.

Force Re-Structuring:

The President is requesting $5 billion to help the Army provide more deployable combat power by reconfiguring its forces to be more agile, flexible and responsive. The new "modular" Brigade Combat Teams can deploy quickly to trouble spots, but, unlike today's light Airborne, or Air Assault units, will have greater firepower, armor and administrative and logistics support "built in" to operate over a sustained period of time.

In the next two years, the active duty Army will increase its deployable combat power by expanding from 33 maneuver brigades to 43 more capable modular Brigade Combat Teams by the end of FY 2007, a nearly 30% increase in available combat power. The plan also provides the Army with modern weapons, equipment, and communications.

In FY 2005 and FY 2006, the Department proposes to fund Army restructuring primarily through supplemental appropriations, as this program has been accelerated as a result of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Beginning in FY 2007, the plan is for the modularization program to be funded in the base budget. This request also includes approximately $300 million to support restructuring of Marine Corps to add more combat and support units.

GROWING AND SUSTAINING AN ARMY AT WAR

I would also like to touch briefly on other funding priorities that reflect the military's commitment to ensuring that U.S. troops deployed in the field are given the support they need to complete their missions.

Force Protection:

The President is requesting $3.3 billion for force protection equipment to assist the military in ensuring that our forces have the latest equipment to fight and protect themselves from roadside bombs and rocket attacks, including armor plating for vehicles, improved night vision equipment, and new systems that help helicopters evade and survive insurgent attacks.

Our enemies have brains. They watch what we do, they look for our vulnerabilities, and they adapt their tactics frequently. And we must.

For example, since U.S. forces first began to face the improvised explosive device threat in Iraq, the Army has ramped up production of armored Humvees by more than 1,000 percent.

At that time, according to Army Chief of Staff General Pete Schoomaker, there were some 500 tactical wheeled vehicles with armor in the Army inventory. Today, there are about 26,000.

This funding and previous funding from Congress should keep the Army on track to meet Central Command's current fiscal year request of 8,275 up-armored Humvees by next month.

The Army also is working towards a further increase in production to 550 per month (from 450 at present), which it expects to achieve next month.

In addition, since March 2003, the military has produced in excess of 400,000 sets of body armor -- from a rate of 1,200 sets per month to a rate of over 25,000 per month.

I am told that by this week, with few exceptions, U.S. military vehicles in Iraq carrying American troops outside of protected areas will have an appropriate level of armor to protect against the most likely threats.

Note that not every vehicle requires armor at all times, such as those confined to military bases.

Further, U.S. forces are finding and destroying bomb-making production facilities, developing technical counter-measures which either reveal IEDs or disable them, and changing their tactics to minimize the effectiveness of such bombs -- including the fielding of robots and a technology developed in a matter of weeks to counter cell-phone activation of these bombs.

U.S. forces are now discovering and destroying more that one third of IEDs before they can detonate. They have every reason to believe that this rate will improve.

Additionally, the U.S. military has made force protection institutionalized across the Services as part of its core capabilities.

Military Personnel:

The President is requesting $16.8 billion to aid military personnel, including salaries for mobilized reservists and guardsmen and special pay for combat and separation. This number includes the added cost of $1.7 billion for paying salaries for the additional 29,400 Army soldiers and about 2,600 Marines -- additional troops needed for ongoing operations above those services' normal end strength.

Even with these increased troop levels, ground forces are stressed. That has produced some calls for increases in so-called "permanent statutory end strength" -- the force strength *required* by law on one day each year. The Army has undertaken a range of initiatives and reforms to stabilize the force and to increase the pool of available troops in high demand specialties.

With these important steps well underway, it would be a mistake to arbitrarily increase our statutory end strength. For the present, we have all the flexibility that is needed under the emergency provisions. In the event the efficiencies now underway prove to be insufficient, or the emergency powers were no longer available, it would be time to discuss the legal end strength issue.

Military Construction:

General Abizaid and his commanders in the field have requested and this supplemental request supports, military construction projects to improve living and working conditions in the U.S. Central Command area of operations. This construction is primarily to move U.S. service members out of tents, trailers and field latrines, and into somewhat more comfortable -- and safer -

- barracks and billeting facilities. The supplemental request includes $1.1 billion for military construction unrelated to force restructuring.

Health Care:

The supplemental provides for quality medical care as is appropriate for U.S. service members both in theater and back home. The request for health care in the supplemental is $176 million, to cover patient transportation and other medical related activities.

Enhanced Survivor Benefits:

The President requests nearly $400 million to fund enhanced benefits for the survivors of service members killed while serving our country in the War on Terror.

As this committee knows well, we have entered an era of great challenge and great opportunity. We are responding to serious threats and also working to reshape our military to better combat them.

Consider the challenge our country faces to not only reorganize the Army, but to better organize all of the military services, plus transform the enormous Defense bureaucracy, and fight two wars at the same time. And, if that were not enough, to be fighting a war for the first time in history in an era with:

- 24 hour worldwide satellite news coverage, including terrorist attacks, disasters and combat operations,
- cell phones,
- digital cameras,
- global internet,
- emails,
- embedded reporters,
- an increasingly casual regard for the protection of classified documents and information, and
- a U.S. government still organized for the industrial age, not the information age.

And, all of this, not in a conventional conflict for which the U.S. military had organized, trained and equipped over the decades, but in an unconventional war, against asymmetric threats from enemies unburdened by bureaucracies or legal constraints. The task is daunting. But consider what is being accomplished.

Across the world, brave men and women wearing America's uniform are doing the hard work of history. I know you share my desire to see that they have all the support they need to complete their missions. We are bringing the hope of freedom to some of the darkest corners of the Earth, and that will render a powerful blow to the forces of extremism who have killed thousands of innocent people in our country and in countries across the globe.

I thank you for all you have done on behalf of our troops, and I look forward to responding to your questions.