

**Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Chairman Richard Lugar
Opening Statement for Hearing on**

**IRAQ: STATUS AND PROSPECTS FOR RECONSTRUCTION – NEXT STEPS
July 23, 2003**

The Committee on Foreign Relations welcomes today Dr. John Hamre, former Deputy Secretary of Defense and currently the President of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Accompanying Dr. Hamre is his team from the Commission on Post-Conflict Reconstruction, Mr. Robert Orr, Mr. Frederick D. Barton, Dr. Johanna Mendelson-Forman, and Ms. Bathsheba Crocker. Also with us today is Anthony Borden, Executive Director of the Institute for War and Peace Reporting. We welcome Mr. Borden's insights on the media situation in Iraq.

Dr. Hamre, we are pleased to have the opportunity to discuss with you the excellent report that you have prepared on Iraqi reconstruction. I commend Secretary Rumsfeld and Ambassador Bremer for commissioning your mission to Iraq. The resulting report entitled, "Field Review and Recommendations on Iraq's Post Conflict Reconstruction," was published last week by the Center for Strategic and International Studies. It carefully outlines the difficult challenges our country faces in Iraq and makes 32 urgent recommendations for improving conditions in that country.

For the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, this hearing provides a marker with which to measure both our hopefulness and our frustration. We are hopeful because the recommendations of your report are being taken seriously. Since the report was released last week, Defense Department officials have praised its conclusions and emphasized that work is already underway to implement many of them. It is a frustrating occasion, however, because many of the issues you raise -- particularly those concerning the need for improved application of resources, for better planning, and for broader international involvement -- are the same issues that we have been raising for months.

I would like to read two paragraphs of a letter that Senator Biden and I wrote to President Bush before the war in Iraq:

"The United States should pursue a policy [in Iraq] that has broad international support. Such support is desirable for both substantive and political reasons. Our allies around the world and our friends in the region have important, and possibly even necessary contributions to make to the effort to disarm Iraq. We may need their support for any initiatives we take at the United Nations. Should we pursue military action, we will want them with us and, at a minimum, require basing and over-flight rights from several countries. If, in the course of disarming Iraq, we end Saddam Hussein's regime, a massive rebuilding effort will be required that the United States will not want to shoulder alone. We also depend on the active and continued cooperation of many allies in the unfinished war against terrorism. In short, building international support for our Iraq policy must be a priority."

Later in the letter, we continue:

“We must be candid with the American people that Iraq represents a long-term commitment by the United States. We urge you to formulate and express a vision for a democratic, unified, post-Saddam Iraq, living in peace with its neighbors. The American people must know the military, financial and human capital the United States would be prepared to commit to help realize that vision. The Iraqi people and their neighbors must be confident that chaos will not follow Saddam Hussein. Moreover, you would help assuage international concerns that the current unsettled situation in Afghanistan may be replicated in Iraq, with far greater strategic consequences.”

Senator Biden and I sent that letter to the President more than 10 months ago on September 10, 2002. I share this historic footnote, not to prove the prescience of this Committee, but rather to underscore that the basic questions and problems surrounding postwar Iraq have been known and discussed for a long time. We must answer those questions and implement solutions to those problems now. The report before us is a good place to begin a review of what will be necessary to achieve our objectives.

We know that the planning for postwar Iraq was inadequate. But we must move beyond simply second-guessing the administration. None of us should pretend that a few adjustments to our reconstruction strategy or an extra month of planning could have prevented all the challenges we now face in Iraq. Even in the best circumstances, reconstructing an unpredictable country after the overthrow of an entrenched and brutal regime was going to stretch our capabilities, resources, and patience to the limit. Moreover, Congress, as an institution, has not fully lived up to its own responsibilities in foreign affairs. We lament that nation-building in Iraq has not progressed as quickly as hoped, but many members of Congress considered that term to be pejorative just a few months ago. We worry about the urgency of Administration initiatives in Iraq, while we allow unrelated domestic obstacles to delay Senate passage of the Foreign Relations Authorization bill.

The findings of Dr. Hamre’s group confirm that we must act with both urgency and patience in Iraq. America must take critical steps now to give nation-building a chance to succeed, and we must be prepared to stay the course in Iraq for years. The report states that “The potential for chaos is becoming more real every day,” and the Coalition Provisional Authority “lacks the personnel, money and flexibility needed to be fully effective.” The report describes the resistance in Iraq as “well-trained, well-financed, and well-organized irregular forces throughout the country.”

We need to ensure that there are adequate resources and the right type of resources to respond to the attacks that are occurring. There must be enough military forces, police, and civilian personnel, and we must not marginalize non-military agencies with expertise in post conflict reconstruction.

I am particularly interested in the recommendation that we mobilize a “new reconstruction coalition.” The broader international community remains the one untapped resource with the potential for completely changing the dynamics on the ground in Iraq. The coalition that won the war is not the same one that can win the peace. The

U.S. needs to involve the international community in Iraq to reassure the Iraqi people that the results of our nation-building efforts are legitimate and accepted by the international community. Building an effective coalition that reduces U.S. burdens and expands the legitimacy of our efforts must be the top priority of American diplomacy with respect to Iraq.

I look forward to your suggestions on how the United States can internationalize this effort. We need to overcome our disagreements with allies over pre-war strategy and move forward on the common objective of ensuring that Iraq emerges as a peaceful and stable nation. The pledging conference in October is an opportunity for all nations to exhibit leadership and engage in stabilizing and rebuilding Iraq.

Having recently visited Iraq with Senator Biden and Senator Hagel, I am confident that the officials and the troops in Iraq understand what is at stake and the urgency of their task. They know that U.S. national security depends on what they do in the coming months. We cannot afford to let Iraq become a failed state that could be an incubator of terrorism and anti-Americanism throughout the Muslim world. Today, the Foreign Relations Committee should focus on how we can help this Administration and our troops and officials in the field succeed. How can our Committee and this Congress expand the tools available to the Coalition Provisional Authority? How can we support efforts to broaden the international coalition engaged in Iraq? How can we strengthen the resolve and understanding of the American people with regard to the realities of this mission?

The situation in Iraq is changing quickly, and the next few months may well determine what type of nation emerges in Iraq. With this in mind, we are thankful for the work that our witnesses have done, and we look forward to their testimony.

After Senator Biden has delivered his opening remarks, we will recognize Dr. Hamre for his opening statement. We will then give the other four members of the Commission, beginning on the Committee's left with Ms. Crocker, an opportunity to add any personal observations they may have. Finally, we will recognize Mr. Borden for his statement concerning the media situation in Iraq.

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