

Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Senator Richard G. Lugar
Opening Statement for Hearing on Civilian National Security Capabilities
March 5, 2008

I join in welcoming General Zinni and Admiral Smith, two distinguished military leaders who advocate strengthening the civilian component of our national security operations.

During the last five years, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has focused much attention on how we can improve our diplomatic and foreign assistance capabilities and integrate them more effectively with the military components of national power. Since 2003, we have been advocating through hearings and legislation the establishment of a civilian counterpart to the military devoted to post-conflict situations. We have argued for a rapidly deployable civilian corps that is trained to work with the military on stabilization and reconstruction missions in hostile environments. I am very pleased that the Bush Administration is requesting \$248.6 million for the Civilian Stabilization Initiative. Creating and sustaining this civilian capacity is precisely the intent of the Lugar-Biden-Hagel legislation that passed the Senate in 2006 and passed this Committee again last March. In addition to meeting contingencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, we must be ready for the next post-conflict mission.

In 2006, I directed the Republican staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to investigate the expanding role of the U.S. military in areas that traditionally were the province of the State Department. The resulting report, entitled "Embassies as Command Posts in the Campaign Against Terror," documented the rise in development and humanitarian assistance that is being funneled through the Pentagon and recommended that all security assistance, including Section 1206 funding administered by the Defense Department, be included under the Secretary of State's authority in the new coordination process for rationalizing and prioritizing foreign assistance.

In 2007, the Committee staff completed a second field-based study that focused more broadly on U.S. foreign assistance efforts. The report examined assistance funded through the State Department, USAID, the Defense Department and other agencies in more than twenty countries in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. It recommended that a comprehensive foreign assistance strategy be linked to our actual foreign aid spending and that the State Department's Director of Foreign Assistance be responsible for all government agencies' foreign aid programs.

We undertook these efforts, in part, because the U.S. government is paying insufficient attention to fundamental questions about whether we are building U.S. national security capabilities that can address the threats and challenges we are likely to encounter. Although our defense, foreign affairs, homeland security, intelligence, and energy budgets are carefully examined from the incremental perspective of where they were in the previous year, it is not apparent that Congress or the Executive Branch is adequately evaluating whether the money flowing to these areas represents the proper mix for the 21st Century. While Congress maintains generous levels of funding to our military, funding for our diplomacy and foreign assistance persistently falls short.

The Bush Administration deserves praise for its International Affairs budgets, which have attempted to reverse the downward spiral in U.S. foreign policy capabilities that was imposed during the 1990s. By 2001, embassy security upgrades were behind schedule, we lacked adequate numbers of diplomats with key language skills, many important overseas posts were filled by junior Foreign Service Officers, and our public diplomacy was completely inadequate for the mission in an era of global terrorism. Our diplomatic capabilities have made progress under President Bush, but much work is left to be done.

Defense agencies increasingly have been granted authority to fill gaps in foreign assistance and public information programs, but the military is ill-suited to run such programs. A far more rational approach would be to give the State Department the resources it should have to achieve what clearly are civilian missions. This view was echoed by Defense Secretary Gates in a speech last month at CSIS. He pointed out that the total foreign affairs budget request was roughly equivalent to what the Pentagon spends on health care alone. He also noted that the planned 7,000-troop increase in the Army expected for 2008 is “equivalent to adding the entire U.S. Foreign Service to the Army in one year.” We must adjust our civilian foreign policy capabilities to deal with a dynamic world where national security threats are increasingly based on non-military factors.

I would underscore that although military and civilian capabilities are severely out of balance, the United States must do more than add funds to the Foreign Affairs Account. We must build our diplomatic capabilities in the areas of greatest consequence – paying particularly attention to international economic and energy policy. It is difficult to overstate the role of energy in contemporary foreign policy calculations. Russian foreign policy is now largely based on maximizing the political leverage and financial earnings of its energy supplies and dominating the transport of energy in Eurasia. This is so critical to Russian strategy that Vladimir Putin has personally negotiated oil and gas deals with Central Asian leaders. In January, French President Nicolas Sarkozy traveled throughout the Middle East promoting French sales of civilian nuclear power plants that could have an enormous impact on proliferation calculations. Meanwhile, the Chinese are pursuing relationships with almost anyone who promises them a reliable supply of oil. States such as Iran, Venezuela, and Sudan have used their energy wealth to support aggressive policies and insulate themselves from outside pressures.

Important rivals are exercising power in ways that circumvent traditional military or diplomatic levers. We have to ask whether the State Department and other Federal agencies have the resources and expertise to effectively function in a world where power is being wielded through energy relationships and other rapidly evolving economic mechanisms like sovereign wealth funds.

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss this broad range of issues today, and I look forward to the insights of our witnesses.

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