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SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE  
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Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide Department of Defense views on NATO enlargement and the qualifications of the seven candidate countries that were tapped at the NATO Prague summit for membership in the Alliance. I would especially like to provide you with our perspective on how their integration into NATO will enhance the Alliance's security and military capability. I would ask that my written statement be placed in the record.

Yesterday, accession protocols for Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia were signed in Brussels. As we pass this important milestone in this round of enlargement, it is useful to review the principles that serve as the foundation for this Administration's perspective on enlargement and more broadly our security relationship with Europe.

First, a Europe that is whole, secure, and at peace is in the interest of the United States. Both America and Europe need each other. An undivided Europe, whole and free, and allied with the United States is America's natural partner in global affairs.

I realize, of course, that differences between the United States and a few of our European Allies regarding Iraq give the impression that Europe and America are not natural partners. These differences are not to be minimized, but they do not define the totality of the relationship between Europe and the United States nor the strategic importance of the North Atlantic Alliance. I am confident that the seven invitees to NATO we will discuss today will stand with those most committed to the Transatlantic relationship.

Second, the United States and Europe are both confronted by the same threats, and they both have the same opportunities in the changing global security environment. The nexus of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), terrorist organizations, and terrorist states present an urgent and lethal danger to North America and Europe. Cooperation with Europe is vital to our efforts to disrupt and destroy terrorist organizations, their leadership, communications, and sources of financial and material support.

Third, NATO is and will remain the anchor of the U.S. security relationship with Europe. It is the central framework for our military cooperation with Europe. NATO promotes among its members common defense policies and doctrines and integrated force structures. This level of integration is found nowhere else in the world. Moreover, Europe remains essential to the maintenance of a forward presence for United States military forces. U.S. forces forward deployed in Europe

were among the first to take up positions in the war against Iraq, ensuring not only America's security, but Europe's as well.

Throughout its history, NATO has repeatedly adapted to changes in the international security environment. By continuing to meet the challenges of the day, NATO has ensured its ongoing relevance and vitality. An example is the historic decision NATO took last year to support German and Dutch forces leading the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF III) in Afghanistan. With this decision, NATO took on not only a new mission, the support of a "coalition of the willing," but one well beyond its traditional geographic domain. For the Alliance, "Out of area or out of business" is no longer an issue.

In this spirit, Allied Heads of State and Government made important and far-reaching decisions at the Prague Summit last November, continuing Alliance efforts to adjust to the profound changes in Europe's strategic landscape and the global security environment. They approved an agenda featuring a new focused capabilities initiative, a streamlined command structure and the extension of NATO membership to seven Central European democracies. Permit me, Mr. Chairman, to touch on some of these initiatives briefly before turning to enlargement.

### *NATO Response Force*

The decision at the Prague Summit to establish a NATO Response Force (NRF) promises to provide the Alliance the ability to quickly deploy a force capable of executing the full range of missions NATO may be called upon to undertake. If implemented to the standards proposed by the U.S., the NRF will be lethal, technically superior to any envisioned threat, and readily deployable on short notice. Our goal for the NRF is an initial operational capability for training by October 2004, and full operational capability by October 2006. We expect the NRF to become the focal point of NATO transformation efforts to meet the new threats that the Alliance faces.

### *Prague Capabilities Commitment*

That said, the future success of the NRF depends on the willingness of our Allies to meet their agreed-upon NATO defense obligations. As you know, many have consistently failed to do so. At the Prague Summit, Heads of State and Government approved the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC) to overcome longstanding shortfalls in such areas as strategic lift, communications, NBC defense equipment, and precision guided munitions (PGMs). Allied contributions to NRF rotations must possess many of the critical military capabilities targeted by the Prague Capabilities Commitment in order to be effective. Allied contributions

to NRF rotations must possess the critical military capabilities targeted by the Prague Capabilities Commitment if the NRF is to evolve from a paper concept to a fighting force.

### *Streamlining NATO's Command Structure*

At Prague, Heads of State and Government also approved the broad outline of a streamlined NATO command structure. Operational commands will be reduced from 23 to 16 commands. This will ensure the more efficient use of financial and manpower resources. More importantly, it will provide NATO commanders headquarters that are more mobile, joint, and interoperable – critical requirements in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. And the establishment of a new functional command, Allied Command Transformation in Norfolk Virginia, will provide a new and needed engine to drive military transformation across the entire Alliance.

Let me now turn to enlargement and a discussion of the seven candidates: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

### *NATO Enlargement*

Our support for the aspirations of the seven invitees has been matched by, if not superceded by, their enthusiasm and willingness to contribute to NATO-led operations in the Balkans, Operation Enduring Freedom, and ISAF. More recently, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, and Slovakia joined our coalition in the war against Iraq.

In short over the last decade, these seven invitees have been acting as de facto Allies. They understand the responsibility of membership and embrace it. There is still much work to be done to further the defense reforms these nations have undertaken to make their militaries interoperable with those of the Allies. Based on our experience at helping these countries with these reforms, we believe these nations are making good progress. We will continue to work closely with the invitees throughout the accession process and beyond to help them accomplish military reform goals and to develop niche capabilities that these nations can bring to the Alliance today to help meet capability requirements needed by NATO.

The ability of the invitees to operate alongside U.S. and Allied forces in the Balkans or in the fight against terrorism is no accident. The U.S. and NATO have been working closely with the invitees through the Partnership for Peace and the Membership Action Plan (MAP) that NATO established after the 1999 round of enlargement. The MAP's primary goal is to aid the preparations of those nations seeking to join the Alliance. Their participation in the MAP and in the Planning and Review Process (PARP) within NATO's Partnership for Peace (PFP) has enabled them to make significant strides in reforming their militaries and in enhancing the interoperability of their armed forces with NATO.

Mr. Chairman, let me provide the Committee with a few remarks about each invitee.

## *Bulgaria*

Bulgaria's defense plans are based on a force structure review that incorporated substantial U.S. and Allied input. Much progress has been achieved in the fundamental reform of the Bulgarian military that should help them develop force structures compatible with those of Allied countries. Sofia is concentrating its resources and military training on developing such niche capabilities as: special forces units; engineer units; logistic support units; and NBC Defense units. The Bulgarian government has agreed on a minimum level of defense expenditures, projected at 2.84 percent of GDP in 2003 and 2004. Bulgaria also hosted U.S. tanker and transport aircraft in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and is hosting US aircraft in support of the war with Iraq, as well as deploying a Bulgarian NBC unit as part of coalition forces.

The illicit Terem arms-dealing scandal, which involved the attempted sale of dual use military equipment to Syria in the fall of 2002, is of great concern of the United States. The Government of Bulgaria cooperated with the US government in investigating this case. Sofia continues to work on reforms that will preclude a repeat of this case. The U.S. Government does not consider the Terem case to be closed and will continue to monitor closely the Terem investigation with the expectation that all individuals involved will be held fully accountable.

### *Estonia*

Estonia has worked hard to make the most of its defense resources, focusing its efforts on one brigade with a deployable battalion plus supporting units. It is also working to develop specialized capabilities for the Alliance, including Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams and military police. Like the U.S., Estonia is outsourcing some of its logistics requirements through commercial contracts. Estonia has committed a minimum of 2 percent of GDP towards defense spending, and will focus efforts to improve the capability of its deployable units while reducing the amount of resources spent on territorial defense. Along with Latvia and Lithuania, Estonia has participated in many cooperative Baltic defense projects. These Baltic efforts include BALTBAT (the Baltic Battalion), BALTNET (the Baltic air surveillance network), BALTRON (the Baltic mine countermeasure squadron), and the Baltic Defense College. An Estonian EOD team deployed to Afghanistan in support of OEF and another is deploying there in support of ISAF.

### *Latvia*

Latvia's National Security Plan, based on its new National Security Concept, was approved by the government in July 2002. Latvia is moving defense resources away from territorial defenses and toward a brigade that will include deployable units. It is also developing specialized formations, including divers, EOD, military

police, medical units, and Special Operations Forces. Formation of a Special Operations Command is also underway. Latvia's Parliament is legally committed to a minimum of 2 percent of GDP towards defense spending through 2008. Along with Estonia and Lithuania, Latvia participates in the cooperative Baltic defense projects described above. Two Latvian medical teams have deployed to Afghanistan to support ISAF.

### *Lithuania*

Lithuania has examined its force structure in light of NATO initiatives agreed upon at the Prague Summit. Lithuania's defense modernization plans focus on a brigade with rapidly deployable units and specialized "niche" capabilities such as: engineers, medics and special forces. Lithuania's defense budget plans for 2002-2007 appear sound and affordable; all 12 major political parties are committed to defense spending of 2 percent of GDP. Along with Estonia and Latvia, Lithuania has partaken in the cooperative Baltic defense projects described above. Lithuania also has a special military relationship with Poland featuring a joint battalion, and a Lithuanian platoon is embedded in the Polish-Ukrainian battalion operating in Kosovo. A Lithuanian Special Operations Forces unit is deployed in Afghanistan to support OEF and a medical team is deployed with ISAF.

### *Romania*

Romania has placed a high priority on development of specialized "niche" forces in preparation for NATO membership: mountain brigades, military police and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Its land force units are to be trained to meet NATO-compatibility requirements by the end of 2003, leading to an increase in the number of interoperational Romanian units. Romania is committed to defense expenditures of at least 2 percent of GDP. Romania has deployed -- and transported with its own airlift -- an infantry battalion and military police to Afghanistan in support of OEF and granted overflight, transit and basing rights for Afghanistan and Iraq operations. For the war on Iraq, Romania has provided an NBC unit, has offered peacekeepers for post-conflict Iraq and is providing basing for U.S. forces.

### *Slovakia*

Slovakia's current defense reforms are solid and follow the "Force 2010" Long Term Plan, which is the product of a comprehensive defense review created with U.S. assistance. Slovakia's specialized "niche" capabilities include: dedicated nuclear-chemical-biological (NBC) reconnaissance and decontamination capability; mobile analysis labs with modern detection and marking systems; and engineering and special operations capabilities. Slovakia's Parliament approved 2 percent of GDP as the minimum for defense outlays, starting in 2003. Slovakia

deployed an engineering unit to Kabul and an NBC unit to support the war with Iraq.

### *Slovenia*

Slovenia's defense reform is based upon the "General Long-Term Development and Equipping Program of the Slovenian Armed Forces, 2002 to 2007." This will encompass a new force structure concept aimed at creating more mobile, capable, and deployable reaction forces, while reducing and modernizing the main defense and reserve forces. Slovenia plans to end conscription in 2004 and implement a fully professional force, based on regular active duty personnel and a voluntary reserve, by 2008. Specialized "niche" capabilities and assets that can be offered to the Alliance include: mountain warfare, special operations forces, military police units, and military field medicine. Its new force structure emphasizes deployability and sustainability. Slovenia is committed to increase defense spending to 2 percent of GDP by 2008. (It is currently 1.6 percent).

### *NATO's Open Door*

For those aspirants not invited at the Prague Summit, the door to NATO membership remains open. The three current NATO aspirants -- Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia -- are continuing to participate in the MAP and to prepare themselves for the responsibilities of NATO membership. Through NATO programs and bilateral efforts, we will work with Kiev on the goal of Ukraine's

integration into Europe – an integration that will not be complete as long as Ukraine remains outside of Europe’s key political, economic, and security institutions.

Mr. Chairman, we believe the candidates selected by Heads of State and Government at the Prague summit hold great promise as Allies, not only because of a common set of values that helped see them through the dark days of totalitarianism and communism, but also because of their eagerness to prove themselves as good Allies. We need to have their energy and enthusiasm at the table in the councils of NATO and we need their ideas and their capability too as we grapple with the issues and challenges yet to come.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I am ready to answer any questions you or the Committee may have.