

[H.A.S.C. No. 112-139]

**THE FUTURE OF U.S. SPECIAL
OPERATIONS FORCES**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS
AND CAPABILITIES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD

JULY 11, 2012



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

75-150

WASHINGTON : 2012

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

MAC THORNBERRY, Texas, *Chairman*

JEFF MILLER, Florida	JAMES R. LANGEVIN, Rhode Island
JOHN KLINE, Minnesota	LORETTA SANCHEZ, California
BILL SHUSTER, Pennsylvania	ROBERT ANDREWS, New Jersey
K. MICHAEL CONAWAY, Texas	SUSAN A. DAVIS, California
CHRIS GIBSON, New York	TIM RYAN, Ohio
BOBBY SCHILLING, Illinois	HANK JOHNSON, Georgia
ALLEN B. WEST, Florida	KATHLEEN C. HOCHUL, New York
TRENT FRANKS, Arizona	RON BARBER, Arizona
DUNCAN HUNTER, California	

PETER VILLANO, *Professional Staff Member*

MARK LEWIS, *Professional Staff Member*

JAMES MAZOL, *Staff Assistant*

CONTENTS

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF HEARINGS

2012

	Page
HEARING:	
Wednesday, July 11, 2012, The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces	1
APPENDIX:	
Wednesday, July 11, 2012	27

WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 2012

THE FUTURE OF U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

STATEMENTS PRESENTED BY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Langevin, Hon. James R., a Representative from Rhode Island, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities	1
Thornberry, Hon. Mac, a Representative from Texas, Chairman, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities	1

WITNESSES

Davis, Dr. Jacquelyn K., Executive Vice President, Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis	8
Lamb, Dr. Christopher J., Distinguished Research Fellow, Center for Strategic Research, Institute for National Security Studies, National Defense University	6
Robinson, Linda, Adjunct Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations	3

APPENDIX

PREPARED STATEMENTS:

Davis, Dr. Jacquelyn K.	74
Lamb, Dr. Christopher J.	41
Langevin, Hon. James R.	32
Robinson, Linda	33
Thornberry, Hon. Mac	31

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

[There were no Documents submitted.]

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING:

[There were no Questions submitted during the hearing.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING:

Mr. Langevin	85
--------------------	----

THE FUTURE OF U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, July 11, 2012.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 4:09 p.m. in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Mac Thornberry (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MAC THORNBERRY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM TEXAS, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. THORNBERRY. The hearing will come to order. We greatly appreciate all your patience. The bad news is we made you wait. The good news is we won't be interrupted any further by votes, but I very much appreciate you bearing with us.

First, I would ask unanimous consent that nonsubcommittee members, if any, be allowed to participate in today's hearing after all subcommittee members have had an opportunity to ask questions.

Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

In the interest of time, I am going to also ask unanimous consent that my opening statement be submitted as part of the record and that the full written testimony of all our witnesses be submitted as part of the record, but let me also say I really appreciate the written statements that each of you prepared. They were very helpful with lots of perspective but also concrete, specific thoughts about what we need to watch for, and that is exactly what we wanted to talk about in this hearing, so I appreciate the excellent written statements that you all have provided.

I would yield to Mr. Langevin for any comments he would like to make.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Thornberry can be found in the Appendix on page 31.]

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM RHODE ISLAND, RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks to our witnesses today for testifying before us today. Our Special Operations Forces are some of the most capable personnel in high demand throughout our military, as we all know. For a fraction of the Department of Defense's total budget, SOF [Special Operations Forces] provides an outsized return on our investment.

For the last decade, the bulk of the capabilities have been greatly absorbed by necessities in Iraq and Afghanistan, but now with our combat troops out of Iraq and our drawdown in Afghanistan well underway, it seems appropriate to consider what the future holds for SOF.

While SOF has been an integral part of conflicts in the CENTCOM [U.S. Central Command] area of responsibility, I think it is fair to say that some of the other combatant commands have had to accept compromises in their SOF support for some time now. As Admiral McRaven at U.S. Special Operations Command and the rest of the Department of Defense goes through a rebalancing process, I believe it is critical for those of us in Congress to make sure SOF is properly manned, trained, and resourced for future demands.

This is particularly important because Special Operations Forces are perhaps best known for their direct action missions, the bin Laden raid being a prime example. But their broad set of missions range from unconventional warfare to foreign internal defense to civil affairs and information operations, among others, and in recent years, some of those skills may have been atrophied. Put another way, our Special Operations Forces are critical to our efforts to build the capacity of our partners around the globe, enabling those partners to apply local solutions to local security problems long before they become a regional or global issue.

So we have many issues to consider to ensure that our Special Operations Forces maintain their historic reputation as agile and highly effective national security assets, and I certainly look forward to hearing our witnesses' views on how to ensure that we continue to populate our Special Operations Forces with superior quality men and women who are highly trained, properly equipped, and granted authorities needed to continue their stellar contributions to our national security, particularly given the highly uncertain threat landscape of the future.

So I agree with the chairman.

I appreciate the statements that each of you have prepared. I look forward to your testimony and look forward to getting to questions.

But, Mr. Chairman, I especially want to thank you for holding this hearing, and I certainly look forward to an interesting discussion.

With that, I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Langevin can be found in the Appendix on page 32.]

Mr. THORNBERRY. I thank the gentleman.

We now turn to our witnesses, Ms. Linda Robinson, Adjunct Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations; Dr. Christopher Lamb, Distinguished Research Fellow at National Defense University; and Dr. Jacqueline Davis, Executive Vice President for the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis.

Again, as I mentioned, your full statement will be made a part of the record. We would invite you all to summarize as you see fit. We will run the clock, you know, we are not going to cut anybody off, but just as a guide for your summary, and then we will turn to questions.

So, Ms. Robinson, thank you for being here. Please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF LINDA ROBINSON, ADJUNCT SENIOR FELLOW,
COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS**

Ms. ROBINSON. Thank you very much, Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Langevin, members of the subcommittee, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before this distinguished panel.

The purpose of my testimony, of course, is to provide my thoughts on the future of Special Operations Forces. You have my full bio, but just to note, I have spent 27 years researching various conflicts, and the last 13, much of that on Special Operations Forces, both in the field and at headquarters. I am currently at the Council on Foreign Relations conducting a study on the future of Special Operations Forces and also writing a book on SOF in Afghanistan. I spent about 22 weeks of the last 2 years in Afghanistan, and the particular focus of my research has been the Village Stability Operations/Afghan Local Police initiative, which is, as you may know, the largest SOF initiative anywhere that is currently under way.

I will address three topics: The balance between the direct and indirect approaches; the needed changes in authorities, resourcing and force structure; and other changes to U.S. Special Operations Command and the interagency process.

As noted, in the past decade, Special Operations Forces have developed a world-class capability in the direct approach or surgical strike capability. I see two areas in which improvement might be considered in terms of balancing the direct and the indirect. At the policy level, consideration could be given for an established standard procedure for balancing the direct and indirect and, in particular, ensuring that all second- and third-order consequences are weighed in the application of the direct approach.

I would note that both the current and former commanders of U.S. Special Operations Command have repeatedly said in testimony before this committee and elsewhere that the direct approach only buys time for the indirect approach to work. So this is a suggestion of actual mechanisms that can be considered to achieve that appropriate balance.

The second consideration that I would offer is that intra-SOF unity of command offers yet another mechanism for achieving that balance between direct and indirect, and I would note that in Afghanistan at this time, there is a Special Operations Joint Task Force, called the SOJTF, that is taking command of all SOF elements for the first time in the war, so we have a very important milestone for this intra-SOF unity of command that I think will yield valuable lessons. And one of the hoped-for outcomes is that there will be more synergy achieved in the efforts of the various SOF, so-called SOF tribes.

I would now like to turn to the indirect approach. I think that is the area in which, that should be the primary area of focus for improvements at this time. In my assessment, the indirect approach is still suboptimized and the forces primarily charged with carrying it out are not properly resourced, organized, or supported, so I will just note briefly that there are five improvements that I

would recommend to optimize the indirect approach. They are detailed at length in my testimony, but I will just outline them briefly here.

First, I think greater clarity is needed as to what the indirect approach is and part of the lack of clarity inherent in the vagueness of the term indirect approach. It also is, at its core, in my opinion, partnered operations. And SOF uses a variety of partners, and it conducts a variety of operations, a variety of activities as part of the indirect approach. So I think a great deal of effort is needed to clarify this rather complex term and what is meant by it. Doctrine, education, and outreach are all components of clarifying what the indirect approach is and how it is applied.

Secondly, there is a need to create first-class Theater Special Operations Commands, which are currently the subunified command of the Geographic Combatant Commands. These commands, in my view, have not been optimized, and they require highly qualified regional expertise. They require human and technical intelligence specialists, expert planners, and SOF operators, who serve extended tours there and receive career incentives for serving at TSOCs [Theater Special Operations Commands]. The TSOCs are by doctrine the C2 [command-and-control] node that is charged with carrying out SOF operations in-theater and advising the Geographic Combatant Commander. That doctrinal role is currently not being fulfilled to its fullest, and in my view, the TSOCs should be the epicenter for SOF operations, should be seen as the most desirable assignment, and it doesn't necessarily mean numbers of personnel, although I have provided you the breakdown for SOF personnel assigned to the TSOCs. It is quite below other headquarter elements at present, but I would like to foot-stomp the idea is the quality; you need the right expertise there and your top quality people there.

Thirdly, and this is very important, I believe that SOCOM needs to reorient to prioritize support for the TSOCs and the indirect approach in general, and this includes making a priority out of resourcing, coordinating, and support for and during SOF campaigns. There is an advocacy role. There is a role for them to assist in the design and implementation of SOF campaigns. SOCOM's [U.S. Special Operations Command] own J-code staff section should prioritize the requirements, planning, and resource support. There may be a call for a dedicated organization within SOCOM headquarters to do this, but I would caution that you don't want it to become an ancillary appendage. I see this as very much a primary role that SOCOM at large should play.

Finally, SOCOM might even consider detailing some of its own personnel, which is now 2,606. It is a very large command. Some of those might be temporarily or permanently assigned to TSOCs.

Fourth, funding authorities for SOF to carry out sustained indirect campaigns. This is a very essential, if complex, area. Indirect campaigns can only be implemented over a number of years if they are supported by predictable funding, and the three hallmarks I think of what is needed in funding authorities is multiyear funding, funding for SOF training beyond just military forces, and assistance that goes beyond counterterrorism to cover a range of security and stabilization missions.

The State Department's role has been embraced by SOCOM. They have the duty to ensure that all security assistance is in line with U.S. foreign policy goals, and of course, in the authorities, their reporting requirements, oversight, and Chief of Mission approval are already provided. What I think is missing is sufficient agility in the review and approval processing. Oftentimes that can take up to 2 years, and that is a very long lead time for the SOF campaign to get under way.

Finally, I think what is needed in the fifth category is more flexible combinations of Special Operations and conventional forces so that they can carry out indirect campaigns both in a small footprint format in more places but also for the occasional large-scale operation that may be needed, and to wit, in Afghanistan now, there are two infantry battalions assigned to SOF to carry out the Village Stability Operations, and that is I think one useful example. But what is needed for some of these small footprint campaigns is even smaller units or even individuals, and that is very difficult under the current force generation models for the Army, in particular, to supply those needed capabilities. I would note, however, that people are at work on trying to provide more flexible combinations and also considering a blended command that may be useful as a standing structure.

Finally, I would like to offer my view of some of the principles that I think should guide assessment of the current SOCOM proposals that are under discussion now. As you can tell, I am a very strong advocate that SOCOM should become much more aggressive about supporting the Theater Special Operations Commands, and I believe that should be one of the guidelines.

The second guideline is that the Geographic Combatant Commands should become more rather than less inclined to use the TSOC, whatever solution is applied. So with those two principles in mind, I note that Admiral McRaven has deemed that having the TSOCs assigned to SOCOM will provide him more authority to build that first-class TSOC. My question is, is COCOM [Combatant Command], is this assignment of COCOM to Special Operations Command necessary in order for them to fill that resourcing function? Admiral McRaven has made clear repeatedly that he intends for operational control to remain with the Geographic Combatant Commander, and if that is acceptable to the Geographic Combatant Commanders and if that is the only way that SOCOM can be permanently oriented to provide that support to TSOCs, then that would be the appropriate course of action.

In regard to the other SOCOM proposals, which are that it be assigned a global area of responsibility, that it be able to initiate requests for forces and that, via a global employment order, it be able to shift assets among theaters, I would like to note in a broad way that any decisionmaking process I think has to be both consultative and agile. And there are such mechanisms that do exist via secure video teleconferences that gather all of the stakeholders around the table and make the decisions. And I think that is one *modus operandi* that has developed over the past years that might be applied more broadly for decisionmaking. But I think that anything that cuts out a key stakeholder is bound to engender frequent conflicts.

Now, as to the operational role of SOCOM, global threats today do have components that are both global and local in nature. The local aspects are under the purview of the Geographic Combatant Commanders, and I think that the task here and a further study is warranted to see how the two commands' purviews could be blended to find a new decision making mechanism. What is clear to me is that SOCOM should do a much better job than it has been on the institutional side. To me that is where long-term strategic impact comes. SOCOM and SOF, they have accomplished amazing things over the past decade, and indeed for much of their history, but there has been something of an operator mentality. The focus has been on tactical proficiency and raising that to the highest level possible. I think it is now time for SOF to rebalance from this largely tactical and operational focus to concern itself with the institutional development of SOF that will become more strategic in its thinking and more strategic in its development of leaderships. So to that end, I think that SOCOM has a full plate and a full charter to do more in developing doctrine and strategy, managing the careers and education of its SOF personnel, and providing strategic leaders not only to the community but who are viable candidates for the interagency and joint community. And I would note to end that SOCOM has formed or is in the process of forming a force management directorate that I think is a very important and welcome step in the direction of that institutional development. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Robinson can be found in the Appendix on page 33.]

Mr. THORBERRY. Thank you.
Dr. Lamb.

STATEMENT OF DR. CHRISTOPHER J. LAMB, DISTINGUISHED RESEARCH FELLOW, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC RESEARCH, INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES, NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

Dr. LAMB. Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee, it is an honor to be here. I appreciate the opportunity to share my views on the future of U.S. Special Operations Forces. I will summarize my written statement with just three observations.

First, concerning SOF resources, SOF have been generously resourced this past decade, and I believe they will likely be protected from the kind of budget cuts affecting the rest of the Department of Defense. That said, I think fiscal austerity will affect SOF. The SOF leadership must make difficult choices about what capabilities it will allow to diminish, which capabilities it will retain and, in some cases, which capabilities need to be reinvigorated. For example, SOF may have to get along with less of the specialized intelligence support that it has grown accustomed to in the past decade, which might require SOF to partner more closely with host nation personnel. That would be a good thing.

In my prepared remarks, I try to identify other areas where hard resource choices must be made by Special Operations Forces.

The second point concerns the division of labor between SOF and General Purpose Forces and within SOF. The key to SOF's strategic value in my estimation is distinguishing between SOF and

General Purpose Forces missions and capabilities and between SOF direct and indirect approaches and capabilities. Put differently, we cannot preserve and properly employ SOF unique capabilities without first identifying them.

Some people believe these distinctions are academic or old news. I disagree. I believe they are the difference between success and failure, and they continue to be issues of major import. For example, when SOF missions are conducted by conventional forces or with units hastily assembled from conventional forces, the risk of failure is much higher.

Of course, we saw this in the iconic case in the 1979 attempt to rescue hostages in Iran, but the problem persists. In 2002, in Afghanistan, and a year later in 2003, in Iraq, we lost momentum and dug a huge hole for ourselves by allowing General Purpose Forces to take the lead on what were really irregular warfare threats. By the time General Purpose Forces recognized the irregular challenges and retrained and retooled for what were inherently SOF missions, the problems had metastasized, and we were on the defensive.

In addition, some forces recently designated as SOF have proven ill-prepared for actual Special Operations.

Similarly, when we use SOF's direct approach to solve problems that would be better addressed indirectly or when SOF is not used to approach it in a complementary fashion, we risk failure. I believe the 1993 SOF operations in Mogadishu, Somalia, illustrate this point, but so do recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For example, SOF Special Mission Units pursuing direct action in Iraq were not able to make a strategic contribution until their efforts were better integrated with those forces conducting counter-insurgency through an indirect approach. As Admiral Olson once commented when he was commander of USSOCOM, SOF direct and indirect approaches, "must be conducted in balance, and that is the challenge." SOF leaders must keep these two compatible but different approaches, skill sets, and cultures equally robust and working in harmony and must prevent either one from dominating or distorting the other.

Thirdly, the SOF interagency collaboration requirement. Most irregular challenges cannot be defeated or managed successfully by military means alone. I think that is well accepted. What this means is that SOF capabilities must be well integrated with other elements of national power. SOF progress on interagency collaboration is one of the great success stories of the past decade, but it is more costly, more fragile, and more evident in SOF direct action than it is in other SOF mission areas. So as a matter of high priority, I think we ought to make such collaboration easier, more routine, and more widely applied.

These three general observations summarize my testimony. In closing, I would just like to note that when Congress institutionalized SOF capabilities in the late 1980s, it recognized that building SOF proficiency was a long-term endeavor. SOF capabilities, like any military capability, are subject to erosion. It takes continued vigilance to ensure their preservation. In that regard, I think it is altogether laudable that this subcommittee is interested in this

topic, and I greatly appreciate the opportunity to offer my views to you on that subject. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Lamb can be found in the Appendix on page 41.]

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you.

Dr. Davis.

**STATEMENT OF DR. JACQUELYN K. DAVIS, EXECUTIVE VICE
PRESIDENT, INSTITUTE FOR FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS**

Dr. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, for allowing me to express my views on the future of SOF and SOCOM. As you know, U.S. SOF has always been deployed for both direct actions and nonkinetic engagement missions, but over the last several years in particular, preventive SOF deployments aimed at building partner capacities and shaping regional environments have emerged as particularly important mission sets for U.S. Special Operations Forces and for SOCOM. Building and nurturing partner security forces is often the price of admission for U.S. access to countries or key regional theaters. Moreover, as more and more nations object to the presence of large American forces deployed in their countries, SOF units with their small footprints are oftentimes a more acceptable option.

For this reason, U.S. SOF indirect action engagements are likely to become even more important going forward as budgets become tighter and the imperative to operate jointly is matched by the growing requirement to work with partners, be they from the United States interagency or from outside the U.S. Government. With this in mind, I would like to offer six specific points for your consideration.

First, SOF's efforts in building global SOF partnerships and global SOF networks will, I believe, facilitate American efforts to build partner capacities and therein our efforts to leverage allied partner SOF and other security forces for common purposes. It will also contribute very importantly to SOF interoperability and provide the United States with an opportunity to address globally network challenges and threats hopefully before a crisis emerges.

Second, the nature of the challenges ahead and the outlines of the emerging security setting require us to be proactive, to anticipate challenges and threats, and to do preventive planning. This demands a new emphasis on indirect action engagements without, however, dulling the spear of U.S. SOF's direct action core competencies. That said, and as has been pointed out earlier in the two previous presentations, many of SOF's direct action core competencies are well suited to support SOF's indirect action taskings, but a better definition of what indirect action engagements means needs to be considered.

Third, with the force slated to grow to about 71,000 troops, USSOCOM will have the resources to implement these two lines of operation, but to do so as effectively as possible, the commander of SOCOM, I believe, will need enhanced authorities, both from the Department of Defense and from Congress to manage his force globally. With respect to the Department of Defense, the SOCOM commander needs to be given authority to move forces in peacetime

across regional Combatant Command areas of responsibility to meet emerging needs or to fulfill indirect action taskings.

Related to this, and this is the fourth point, is the broader need for you in Congress to revisit Goldwater-Nichols. In particular, in my view, what needs to be done is a reassessment in the way that the legislation treated functional versus regional Combatant Commands. In particular, the SOCOM commander, I believe, should have authority over the TSOCs and all U.S. SOF units based in CONUS [Continental United States] and overseas. Right now he does not, and except for individual ad hoc arrangements, he has no role in TSOC resourcing, training, or peacetime planning, and that impinges on his ability to manage his force globally to meet globally networked threats. Giving SOCOM COCOM over the TSOCs and all forward-based U.S. SOF units will address resourcing and training shortfalls, and it will allow the redeployment of SOF units from one theater to another, including from CONUS to forward regions, as needs dictate. Global force management of U.S. SOF is a necessity, not a luxury in the current strategic environment.

Fifth, to support SOCOM indirect action strategies, I also believe that Congress must address funding authorities. Here it seems to me, and as Linda pointed out, that some of the legislation in place is certainly useful, 1206 funding, for example, but much of this funding is tied to specific counterterrorism contingencies or to funding for Department of State-led initiatives which often take time to get into place and contain too many obstacles for timely action. What is needed is multiyear authority, I believe, to support a broader array of indirect action engagement strategies, including minor MILCON [Military Construction] projects with partner SOFs and other security forces.

And finally, SOCOM's vision of regional SOF coordination centers should be encouraged, I believe, and implemented. While SOCOM commands the greatest SOF capabilities in the world, global problems require global partners and constructs. And one approach to achieving U.S. national security objectives in this regard is via the establishment of the regional SOF coordination centers along the lines of the NATO SOF Headquarters that is now, has been stood up since March 2010. Based on a coalition of the willing nations, the NSHQ, the NATO SOF Headquarters, has created a professional education program for NATO SOF. It has reached out to non-NATO partners, including for example Australia and Jordan. And it has developed a collaborative relationship with interagency partners. The DNI [Director of National Intelligence], for example, is one of its biggest supporters, having provided funds to develop an intelligence sharing and fusion capability.

While the establishment of the NSHQ was related to the broader NATO umbrella, it is, as I pointed out a moment ago, a voluntary MOU [Memorandum of Understanding] organization whose construct can be a loose model for RSCC [Regional SOF Coordination Center] development in other regions. The purpose, again, would be to foster the idea of multilateral engagement and to build interoperability among like-minded security partners.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I will close, and I am willing to take questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Davis can be found in the Appendix on page 74.]

Mr. THORNBERRY. Well, thank you.

And again, thank you all.

I was struck as I read your written testimony and again today how much agreement there is on so many points actually among the three of you, which I think is significant, given your different backgrounds and perspectives and so forth, which tells me a lot.

One of the things, it seems, that you all agree on is that the indirect approach needs more attention, and so that leads me—and you have touched on it somewhat, but my question is, what are the key elements that will make for success in the indirect approach as we move ahead? What are the things that we need to keep our eye on to ensure that the indirect approach gets more attention and is successful in moving ahead around the world?

Dr. Robinson.

And I will just go down the line.

Ms. ROBINSON. I did address and I do think my package of five, I would hate to have to choose among the five because I think they are all important, but I would add that in general the U.S. political system shies away from proactive engagement, and this indirect approach requires getting SOF operators out there on the ground to understand the environment and develop the relationships and access. It also requires persistence, and that is another thing the U.S. political system is not good at. We use the examples of Colombia and the Philippines as very important success stories, but they did take a decade. So that kind of strategic patience, I think, is really vital, and for people to begin to see that it is really a very worthwhile investment, and it can happen overall at a much lower cost than the large-scale, large military operations that we have been involved in, in the past. And then also as I say, I would foot-stomp that the Theater Special Operations Command is the primary node through which you are going to be implementing the direct—the indirect approach and achieving balance with the direct approach.

Dr. LAMB. I would just briefly add a couple of points. I would agree with my colleagues that multiyear funding is incredibly important for any security assistance endeavor. In this regard, perhaps USASOC [U.S. Army Special Operations Command] could be given more authority. I am also very intrigued by the possibility of assigning USASOC, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, the responsibility for the Army's Human Terrain Teams, which provide additional insight on social networks and cultural attributes of regions around the world, and it would pair up nicely I think in some respects with our Special Forces.

I think we need to look at a reset of Special Forces. Over the past decade, the expansion of Special Forces and employment in Afghanistan and Iraq arguably has inclined some of the units more toward direct action than their traditional bread and butter competencies and indirect action. I think that is something that the committee should be interested in, and I have the impression that USASOC is interested in this as well.

I think that our long-term interests are well served by improving our psychological operations, now called Military Information Sup-

port capabilities. They dovetail nicely with security assistance and the indirect approach. I think they have long been the least beneficiary of all the SOF elements, if you will. They have been somewhat neglected. The selection and the training criteria are not nearly as rigorous for those forces as they are for the other SOF elements. I think some attention to that would be useful.

Over the long term, I have to say I am on record as one of those people who thinks that if we can't rebalance in this respect, we need to look at the possibility of a separate command. I mean, we have looked at new commands for other functional areas, and this may be something that the committee over the longer term would want to consider as well.

Dr. DAVIS. Much of what I have thought about in this area has already been said, but there are two specific things that I would like to add or three specific things. The first is in terms of the training and SOF education programs, I think we need to start elevating the importance of the indirect approach so that people don't believe it is a second-class set of missions relative to the direct action missions, and I do know that Admiral McRaven is very interested in trying to get a handle on this in his own command. But I think it is a broader issue for the U.S. Government and the interagency.

And one of the issues that I think Congress needs to grapple with is the whole notion of security cooperation, who has the lead? Does State have the lead, or does DOD [Department of Defense] have the lead? And if DOD by default is given the mission because it has the resources, then what does it need for interagency collaboration in a specific key regional theater? These are issues that I believe need further study, and I believe, particularly since SOCOM was given the responsibility in the Department of Defense for security force assistance synchronization, it is something that impacts SOCOM very directly, so I think this is one area that Congress can be very directive and ask for further consideration, both from the Joint Staff, from OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense], from the interagency, and from perhaps even a private assessment from outside of government to do a little red teaming.

Finally, to make the indirect approach I think perceived to be of equal importance with the direct approach in SOCOM planning, I agree with what Chris was just suggesting a moment ago, and that is perhaps the development of another three-star command, a sub-unified command under SOCOM, which is the command for irregular warfare or whatever or unconventional warfare, whatever you want to call it, on a par with JSOC [Joint Special Operations Command] and resourced as JSOC is currently resourced.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Interesting. Thank you.

Mr. Langevin.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

If we could continue discussing the authorities, Dr. Robinson, you have commented on this most directly, but here in the subcommittee, we have heard about SOCOM's desire for additional authorities, and can you elaborate on your opinions? Is it SOCOM or the regional Combatant Commanders who are best positioned to understand the needs of SOF, the capabilities of SOF, and the best way to utilize SOF versus other assets?

Ms. ROBINSON. Well, first, I would like to say there are a plethora of authorities that Congress has granted, and the Theater Special Operations Command routinely combine a number of them to try to put together what they would consider an enduring campaign, not just the 1200 series, but JCETs [Joint Combined Exchange Training], counternarcotics authorities, and in my extensive interviews, a number of people who have wrestled through this feel that there could be some rationalization to cause them to have to go through less of that cobbling together for a campaign, but I think that a touchstone really is to continue with a Chief of Mission approval, consider what the State Department equities are, but ensure that that process works rapidly.

As far as whether SOCOM or the GCC [Geographic Combatant Command] should take the lead, you know, this is I think a very complicated issue, and from my standpoint, I would just like to point out that SOCOM is currently providing, if you take both the regular funding and the OCO [Overseas Contingency Operation] funding, they are providing roughly half of the funding for the TSOC, so they clearly under the current arrangement have some ability to fund and support the TSOCs. The question is, will they become much more aggressive and coherent in their approach to the programming and budgeting process if they are granted the COCOM authority? They have stated, Admiral McRaven has stated that the GCCs would retain the OPCON [Operational Control], but I think that is really the crux of the issue, to ensure that the GCC continues to see the TSOC as its arm and its primary mechanism for conducting SOF operations. If they were to see it as a SOCOM entity, they would be less likely to employ it in the field, and the net outcome would be worse, in my opinion.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Dr. Lamb or Dr. Davis, do you care to comment?

Dr. LAMB. I would just briefly add one point to that. I think that an effective long-term indirect approach in a country, say, like Yemen or any other country with which we want to develop better relations and a commonality of interests in counterterrorism is dependent upon the interagency approach, so without knowing the specific details of Admiral McRaven's proposal, which I understand are still under development, my inclination would be to favor them or look on them with favor if they were going to be implemented through the local embassy special assistance package or a team, an interagency team that was overseeing that process. To me, that would make more sense than trying to manage that effort globally from USSOCOM headquarters.

Dr. DAVIS. I would just add to that point that it is all situation dependent, and it depends on what is going on in the region. For example, if this is something that is really speaking to the counterterrorism set of mission areas that SOCOM is interested in, then it might be appropriate for SOCOM to take the lead, but I believe that Admiral McRaven has always emphasized that what he would do in theater would come under the Chief of Mission's authority. Operationally the regional Combatant Commander would have control. It would all be in consultation. What he is really concerned about is placing the right resources, in the right place, in a timely fashion, and then allowing his TSOCs to exercise with partner forces and not just SOF counterpart forces, but Ministry of

the Interior forces, Drug Enforcement Agency forces, whatever is relevant and specific in a particular theater in a specific context. He wants to have the freedom to be able to develop a program of outreach to those agencies with whom he would be working on the larger global network challenges, and he continues to want to support the regional COCOM's priorities, but oftentimes the regional COCOM's priorities are different priorities than the global functional command's priorities, and he is trying to bridge that gap I believe in some of these proposals he is grappling with.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you. My time has expired. I hope we will get to a second round of questions. With that, I yield back and thank you for your answers.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. West.

Mr. WEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Ranking Member.

And thanks for the panel for being here.

And, you know, maybe I am a little outdated because I did retire 8 years ago, but I am trying to go back and just close my eyes and think about the line and block charts that you all are talking about and the dash—dotted lines all over the place because, you know, one of the key things that they taught us was unity of command and unity of effort, and so as I listen to you talk about TSOCs, and, you know, them getting in the area of operations, area of responsibility for theater commander, you know, how will some of these things that we are talking about, when we start to have a functional commander that is over here, you know, headquartered in Tampa, you know, being involved with the theater operations that let's say that General Allen is specifically tasked with doing, what really is the relationship that we are talking about here because having been a commander in a combat zone, the last thing I wanted was, you know, cowboys in my area of operations operating, you know, independently without my understanding, and I don't want to see us, you know, having that happen, you know.

I hear you talk about interagency and other things with coalitions, so when you talk about this TSOC, I remember we used to have SOCCEs [Special Operations Command and Control Element] and every combatant command had a Special Operations Command and Control Element that was supposed to be that liaison with those Special Operations Forces. Are we bypassing the SOCCEs now with these TSOCs? Or are we making the SOCCEs irrelevant even?

Ms. ROBINSON. I would first answer that the SOCCE is more of an operational and temporary construct, and the TSOC is an enduring subunified command of the Geographic Combatant Command. And I would say that the concern that you have expressed is certainly one that has been heard and has been voiced, and I would underline, I think it is critical that there be, with any such change, a clearly enumerated permanent assignment of operational control to the Geographic Combatant Commander so that that principle of unity of command does continue to be observed, and I think that the confusion—

Mr. WEST. And unity of effort.

Ms. ROBINSON. And unity of effort, yes, and through the Chief of Mission approval that is in many of these authorities that I think recognizes a very critical part of getting interagency unity of effort.

But I would like to add I think that some of these concerns expressed around a global area of responsibility for SOCOM as a functional command has created some concern that there would be SOCOM moves to move forces in and out of Combatant, Geographic Combatant Commanders' areas without their approval, not just their coordination. So it comes down to who has the vote. And in my view, this has got to be a collaborative process or it is not going to work. Any attempt by SOCOM to override or trump the GCC is going to issue an endless bureaucratic battle. So I think the process needs to be very clear. And while I recognize that many of these global threats transcend the geographic combatant command boundaries, you cannot have SOCOM sitting atop the Geographic Combatant Commander system. Thank you.

Dr. DAVIS. Congressman, I don't believe that anything Admiral McRaven is considering would do that. I believe he is really thinking about his peacetime authorities and the flexibility to move forces to meet prospective needs or looming threats on the environment and to do the exercise and training that he believes necessary to keep those units current in terms of capabilities and understanding. I do not believe he is talking about going over a regional COCOM's head. He is talking about doing things together in a cooperative, collaborative fashion.

Mr. WEST. And I will wholeheartedly agree with you because one of the things that you all did bring up, when I was a battalion commander in Iraq, we did four different missions in support of Delta, and I think that, you know, there was a lot of discovery learning on the fly, but we were able to, you know, execute and provide the external cordon for them, but there was rehearsals and, you know, getting down to TTP [tactics, techniques, and procedures], so, you know, that aspect I understand. And I wholeheartedly agree that on this side, we should have more of those, you know, type of operations where we are training together, we are learning, and there should not be this distinction between, you know, the Special Operation type forces to include the PSYOP [Psychological Operations] forces and others and our conventional forces, so, you know, that I support. But, you know, when you start talking about on the ground in the combat zone, you know, we have got to be very careful about the line and block charts.

Dr. DAVIS. And he definitely is not talking about combat zone. He is talking about those ambiguous environments where there is activity.

Mr. WEST. We don't have ambiguous environments.

Dr. DAVIS. Not at all.

Mr. WEST. All right. Thank you very much. I yield back.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Ms. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you all for being here. I guess one of the things I would say about your presentation, and I really appreciate the hard work that you all have been doing for so many years is, you know, we have come a long way. I am not sure I would add baby at the end, but we have come a long way, and I remember, and I know the chairman knows this, sort of kind of the shock and great concern that we had when it was obvious that people were playing at their jobs, particularly as it related to trying to do some interagency collabo-

rative work when people really didn't have the depth or the training to do that, and so we have tried hard to understand that better.

One of the concerns that I remember, though, and you can share with me if this is just not true today, is that one of the reasons that the military obviously had a leg up, if you will, on all of this is that they had a deep bench, and that when we tried to do more cross-training and tried to bring along folks who were involved, whether it was the State Department or USAID [U.S. Agency for International Development] if that was appropriate, whatever it was, Agriculture or Commerce, we didn't have the people to really be available to do the training and to meet together. I know that the Defense University had that problem. There were plenty of individuals in the Services to come forward, but we couldn't spare as many people to do that. Is that still an issue and a problem? Because as you talk about many of these areas, it does depend on having people available to take the time to do that kind of collaborative training together if, in fact, we are talking about far more than theater operations. Has that problem gone away? I doubt it because I don't think the resources are there.

Dr. LAMB. No, I would respond to that by saying that actually particularly the Department of State, some of the smaller elements in the national security system do have a problem meeting inter-agency collaboration requirements, particularly given the way we do it now, which is very labor-intensive. It is a volunteer activity. You have to get all the people in the same room on a sustained basis, so it is labor-intensive. It is not very efficient, frankly, and in that sense, the military definitely has an advantage. It can put manpower on the task when it wants to. It is actually I think a great compliment to past Special Operations commanders over this past decade that they have been willing to allocate even very scarce military talent to effect interagency collaboration. So that is all to the good. But that is an ongoing problem.

However, that said, I think that there are greater problems, greater impediments to interagency collaboration than just not being able to put the manpower forward to work on these small teams. It doesn't take that many people working together in a room to effect interagency collaboration if the conditions are set for success. Typically in the current system, we don't have those conditions set for success. So I can elaborate on that if you like.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Please, if you would. The other question I would like to put into this discussion because my time is so limited is really the women's role in SOF. What is that? I mean, in terms of training and integrating women into that. I know the work of the FETs in Afghanistan, the Female Engagement Teams, and it is a significant role. Unfortunately, they are being pulled out in a lot of areas, not because they are not doing a good job but because their units are leaving. And so how—where does that fit? Because I think that actually we have seen what a difference their role can make, and I am wondering if that is kind of a missing piece when we look at this.

Dr. DAVIS. Well, certainly the current commander and the previous commander of U.S. SOCOM has appreciated the potential contribution that many women in the force are making, can make, and will make into the future to support SOCOM and SOF oper-

ations, and combined SOF and General Purpose Force operations, both in operational settings but much more importantly in this set of indirect action mission areas, where women I think will increasingly be able to bring to bear their capabilities. Certainly in Afghanistan, we have seen how important in the Village Stability Programs that the introduction of women in the forces has been, and the utilization and leveraging of our particular assets as part of the female gender.

Admiral McRaven, I believe, recognizes that and certainly all of the components—Army, Navy, Marine, Air Force of SOF, of building SOF forces—have valued their female operators, whether they are intelligence personnel or whatever, MOS [Military Occupational Speciality] they have. And I think in the future as the numbers go up in SOF to 71,000, around 71,000 people in the force, I think you will see a larger percentage of women in operational settings as well as in the headquarters in the United States as well as in the TSOC organizations.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you.

I hope, Dr. Lamb, you can follow up in another minute about some of those other obstacles. Thank you.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Barber, this may be our first subcommittee meeting since you have joined the subcommittee. We are glad to have you.

Let me ask about a couple of other things. Then absolutely any other member who would like to pursue other things may definitely do that.

Here is what worries me—one of the things that worries me—a tremendous amount of publicity has been given to Special Operations, especially since the Osama bin Laden raid. And that has a danger in and of itself as the enemy learns what we do and how we do it. But the rest of the story is now everybody knows how good these folks are, and the temptation is to have them do everything because they can do whatever they put their mind to so well.

And so the question is: How do we ensure Special Operations stays special? And especially in the situation where it looks like in Afghanistan we are moving towards a situation where Special Operations is going to run the country, from a military standpoint, how does that work? And as we think about the temptation to use Special Operations for everything and giving them a whole country to run, does that threaten some critical capabilities that nobody else can do? That is what is going on in my mind, and I would appreciate your all thoughts on that.

Ms. ROBINSON. I think that is one of the concerns upper most in the mind of the SOF leadership, and the danger of overstretch is real. The way I see it, the mission in Afghanistan, as we go toward a FID/CT [Foreign Internal Defense/Counterterrorism] mission, is one that is appropriate for SOF, but it will not be able to handle it alone. So it is, I think, imperative that the mission be defined with some precision, and then a blended command setup that draws heavily on the conventional forces. And they have many particular skills that do not exist in the Special Forces, Special Operations Forces, including provost marshals, a lot of the enablers, a lot of these special subsets.

So my general view is that blended SOF conventional force combinations extend the reach of SOF and help them avoid overstretch.

Also, I would like to underline what Jacquelyn said regarding SOF partners. This is a very important way of also extending SOF's reach. I think it is very little covered in this country that NATO SOF and other coalition SOF are helping in Afghanistan, particularly with the Provincial Response Company training effort, but there are also Middle East partners there helping, and these are very important force multipliers, if you will.

And I think, looking around the world, a lot of those missions, those indirect missions, are very small, a few teams required per country. But I think it will require a constant evaluation of the priorities. And within Afghanistan, they have to make, I think, some hard decisions about where geographically to focus. And my view is they should focus very clearly on the insurgent belt, the south and the east, rather than trying to make it a countrywide effort.

Thank you.

Dr. LAMB. I would just say that I think historically your concerns are validated by experience. Not long after 9/11, there were cases of Special Operations Forces being used for what I considered inappropriate missions, such as site or personal body protection missions that were not the best use of our Special Operations Forces. Under the circumstances, it was perhaps understandable that they were used for that purpose around this town and elsewhere. But I think that has basically declined.

Another area where I think this might be a problem was the shift after 9/11 from security assistance being a collateral mission to being a core mission. That has an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage is that SOCOM now has the lead responsibility for recommending whether General Purpose Forces or Special Operations Forces conduct a security assistance mission. So that is a good thing in general. But if it invites the Services, the General Purpose Forces, to back away from security assistance and forces SOCOM to carry more of that load itself, I would consider that a poor use of our Special Operations Forces talent.

I must say, though, in this area, there is a problem within SOCOM, I think, and it gets to the question of what is the scale of our direct action missions. I mean, many of these missions can be looked at as elective, if you will. We are doing some of these missions on an industrial scale, if you will. And that has had the effect of pulling in not just our special mission units but pulling in the ODAs [Operational Detachment Alphas] and everybody else to get involved in that to a certain extent.

So there it is kind of a SOCOM management issue as to are we really doing what we need to do with direct action. It is quite possible, in fact, I believe it is probably the case that our direct action missions could be executed with far greater discrimination, taking into account the political effects of those missions. It is an incredible capability. It doesn't have to be used on the scale it is, I think, to achieve the political effects that we would desire from that.

So, in that sense, some rebalancing within SOCOM could limit the workload in that regard and make sure that they are used to good effect.

Dr. DAVIS. Just one final thought along the lines of Afghanistan. I have thought that what came out of the Chicago summit was not precise enough in terms of defining what it is actually that our forces are going to be doing after 2014.

There is the assumption that much of the burden of what will occur after 2014 will fall to Special Operations Forces. And, indeed, we have created a new command and control structure for Afghanistan to facilitate the post-2014 period.

But understanding exactly what the training mission is, in quotes, I think, needs to be spelled out much more precisely. And then, the second part of that, understanding which allies are going to be with us to perform that mission is not at all clear in my mind. We made certain assumptions, for example, about the French. The French have had a change in government. Mr. Hollande made some pretty ambiguous statements in Chicago. I have heard my German friends make statements about 2014. That is just it. My Italian friends have made similar statements. In Poland, they have created a SOCOM-like organization to promote SOCOM and to keep its commitment in Afghanistan. But now, with the government change in Poland and the tensions between the president and the prime minister, they are now reconsidering whether or not those units should be pulled back in under the Army just to perform direct action missions and not do the training and direct engagement missions that would be required in Afghanistan.

So, to my mind, there is a lot of uncertainty, and that uncertainty, called Afghanistan post-2014, impinges quite fully upon the future of SOF and SOCOM planning, I believe.

Mr. THORBERRY. Mr. Langevin.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I don't think it would be at all controversial to assert that modern warfare is extremely complex and growing even more so, and that any future conflicts will have cyber dimensions as the domain continues to grow in importance. So with that, to what extent is SOCOM training and resourcing able to operate both in the cyber domain and in the nexus of the cyber domain and the physical domain?

For example, advanced analytics to identify and exploit networks, counterthreat capabilities and advanced offensive and defensive network tools?

Dr. DAVIS. That is one area that I was going to suggest if I had a question about what should the missions be or are there any missions that SOCOM could shed for fear of getting into a situation where this is a force of first choice that we go to in every instance.

I believe SOCOM and SOF should be playing much more intensively in the cyber area, but we might conflate its activities in the cyber area with computer network operations, information operations, strategic messaging, and even perhaps psychological operations. There might be a way of putting together these disparate pieces of a larger puzzle with a greater emphasis on the cyber piece, which if you are looking at networked global challenges, obviously the cyber piece becomes very, very important.

I think that is one area that SOCOM needs to address much more fully as we go into the future, in both planning, ensuring it

has the correct personnel with the right competencies, and also with respect to operationalizing cyber as a piece of SOCOM planning.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Ms. Robinson, do you have any comments?

Ms. ROBINSON. My view is that some portions of the Special Operations Community have been extremely effective in leveraging other capabilities elsewhere in the Government. And with the stand up of Cyber Command, I would hope that that same kind of synergy could be employed rather than trying to create a wholly new center of excellence, if you will, under the SOCOM umbrella. Of course, there are very proficient tactical units at the field level. For example, SOT-A [Special Operations Team Alpha], is very valuable to those teams out in the field. But I would think at the higher level, it is really a question of increased interagency collaboration and formation of these interagency task forces to get after the combined threat.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you.

Dr. Lamb.

Dr. LAMB. I was thinking about what I can say about this in an unclassified venue, but I would just say that I support SOCOM's involvement in information operations and also in counter proliferation. Those are two missions it has added over the past couple of decades, and I think they do have a very discrete but well-defined role in those missions that they need to be prepared for, and as far as I know are prepared for. So I don't see that as undue expansion on their part.

Just to agree with my colleagues here, one of the big challenges in any complex mission area, including cyber security, but also counterinsurgency, counter proliferation, et cetera, is that we have simply got to learn to work across organizational boundaries. So you are not going to have everything in a nice, neat package. SOCOM won't have the alpha and omega responsibilities for cyber security or information operations, or even for counterinsurgency. Or for very little that it does, actually, which is why we really need to take seriously the requirement to improve our interagency collaboration skills. These missions have to be tackled on that basis. And that goes for collaboration with the Geographic Combatant Commands and SOCOM as well.

The other big challenge we have, in addition to cross-organizational collaboration, I think, is decentralizing to get the problem solvers closer to the problem, which is going back to a point that was made earlier. I would like to see—I agree that the Theater SOCs need to be muscled up, but I don't think the tension should be between the Geographic Combatant Commands and SOCOM for control of those security assistance missions. It should be managed through the embassy and the interagency team on the front lines that are going to work the problem day in and day out on a persistent basis.

So if the decisionmaking is done closer to the problem, as would be the case, for example, on JIATF-South [Joint Interagency Task Force-South], and you just get general supervision by SOUTHCOM [U.S. Southern Command] or the respective combatant commands, I think we would have less of a problem. So decentralization and

working across organizational boundaries, these are two things that we have to get better at.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THORBERRY. Mr. West.

Mr. WEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member.

I wholeheartedly agree with what the chairman just said, because, you know, I remember back when we created the Green Beret, a very specific, a very narrow mission set that we had them do. And even when we created the Special Forces as a branch when I was a young captain, once again, very specific mission set.

But when you sit down and you look at Act of Valor and all of these things, all of a sudden it becomes the shiny little toy. And everyone is running and saying, well, the Special Operations guys can do it; the Special Operations guys can do it. Not only are we overextending them, also we are underutilizing the other aspects of our military.

When I was down at Camp Lejeune, I did a 3-year Joint assignment. What I saw was the MEU [Marine Expeditionary Unit] program. I think that is something that we need to look at how we can develop with our conventional forces because you take a Marine infantry battalion and you separate out to be a Marine Expeditionary Unit, a MEU, but it has to go through specific training and some of that specific training is on a series of Special Operations capable missions, so they get that tag line MEU SOC [Special Operations Capable].

So I think what we need to start looking at, when I look at this list, direct action, special reconnaissance, security force assistance, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, civil operations operations, counterterrorism, military information support operations, counter proliferation and weapons of mass destruction, and information operations, I get exhausted just reading that list.

One thing that we are not talking about here, we still have this thing out there called sequestration. So we really need to start looking at how do we take and narrowly focus these missions? Because one of the things we said in the military, if everything is a priority, nothing is a priority. So how do you properly train people on this litany of 10 or so different tasks? They are not going to do it very well.

And I am very concerned about the fact that we are going to try to turn over Afghanistan to the special operators. That is not what they were intended to be. There is something that you can go back to your think tanks and talk about. Let us look at that MEU SOC model of how we can maybe alleviate some of these missions from the "Special Operations Community" and look at how—you know, we have Rangers out there. I mean, Rangers should be able to do some of these operations, like a direct action mission. They are highly specialized infantry. That is what we need to start looking at. That is my little 2 cents worth.

Dr. DAVIS. Congressman, if I may, if you take that list that you just articulated and you look at it, you realize that some of them are activities and some of them are missions. And some of the activities might be core competencies of SOF, or they might be core competencies of General Purpose Forces, or they both might oper-

ate together. But I think we do need to reassess what it is we want U.S. SOF to do. Absolutely. I couldn't agree with you more.

Ms. ROBINSON. I think that one of the ways to avoid this overstretch problem is to recall that SOF really are supposed to be used in hostile, denied, or sensitive environments. I think that is one way to quickly delimit some of this.

If we are talking about security force assistance in a benign environment, that should be largely seen as a conventional force responsibility, unless it is SOF training SOF or SOF-like forces.

Also the list of nine, I have always had a problem with that because it is kind of a mishmash, and I think the draft Army doctrinal publication forthcoming has a binning of surgical strike and special warfare, which I think provides some intellectual clarity about what we are talking about. I think they get trained on those subset missions really as part of those two categories.

Finally, I would say, in Afghanistan, it is very important to clarify the mission. If it is just behind-the-wire training, yes, I think that can be not only a conventional force mission but probably Afghans will be very quickly able to do much or all of that themselves. But for continued counterterrorism, combat advising and if there is an ongoing effort to support the village stability ops and the Afghan Local Police, I think that is clearly, we have those small teams out in those very wild and woolly places, that is a SOF mission.

Mr. WEST. That fits within their mission statement. That goes back to Vietnam when we had the Strategic Hamlet Program. That is the mission set. But you are right, if it is just to be there to train ANA [Afghanistan National Army], you don't need special operators to train the ANA.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

Mr. THORBERRY. Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Dr. Lamb, just continuing, I think you were talking—really, what gets in the way?

Dr. LAMB. Of interagency collaboration?

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Yes. And we know, we have had those discussions before in terms of people looking only in their own silos, but what is it?

Dr. LAMB. Well, I think the main obstacle to interagency collaboration is the very structure of our system. We have built very powerful, functional departments and agencies. And this makes a lot of sense. It gives us a great reservoir of support and all of the relevant elements of national power. So there is a lot of advantage to that.

But if you compare those strengths against the cross organizational collaborative constructs we have, they are all very weak. So our ability to actually integrate those functional capabilities to good effect is very poor.

And to bring it down to earth and really to my own personal experience, I have had some examples that I can attest to in this regard, but if you are sent to serve on an interagency group, you immediately have a great tension. On the one hand, you are trying to represent your agency correctly and protect its organizational equities and its preferred position; on the other hand, you have the sense that you are suppose to help the whole group accomplish the

mission well. This is a tension that the system does not send clear demand signals on.

Many times those of us who have worked in bureaucracy will be sent to these kind of groups with the overriding mandate to make sure that the organization's preferred position comes out in the end. Or if not, to ensure that it is not sacrificed, which means that the thinking gets watered down, the products get watered down, et cetera; the clarity gets watered down, et cetera.

So my view of this is that, absent some kind of intervention from—I actually believe and have written on this subject—from Congress to give the President the authority to delegate his authority for integrating across the Cabinet level departments and agencies, we are going to continue to find that this capability is very, very fragile.

Again, I think SOF really has to be congratulated as one of the few elements of the national security system that have taken this requirement seriously. I think they backed into it, realizing that they were not going to get actionable intelligence to go after the bad guys without interagency collaboration. And they built that level of collaboration up. They then looked at their operations and said, we are still not getting strategic effect. They started bringing in other things, like political talent and information operations talent, and they started performing at a much higher level, our special mission units. I think that is a great success.

We need to do the same thing on the indirect side. But this is a pocket of expertise and success that is not replicated as a general rule across the system.

There are other big problems. We have a penchant for taking all of our complex national security missions and dividing responsibility up among different entities. So we will have someone work the policies, someone work the planning component. Someone will work the actual operations. Someone will assess it. Nobody manages the mission end-to-end, as a typical rule.

In all of the cases that I have studied where we have had so-called black swans of interagency collaboration, those that have performed really well, they do find a way to manage the mission end-to-end. That is one of their distinguishing characteristics. But typically, our national—

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Do we really study that to understand what leadership is doing that is different in those situations?

Dr. LAMB. Well, I am actually shocked by the lack of serious, rigorous research on this subject. I would have assumed, given all of the attention paid to it, rhetorically, that we would have a lot of dedicated research. But when you think about it, it is not so strange. None of our departments and agencies is inclined to spend a lot of research dollars on this because they are not assigned that responsibility. If you look at the National Security Council, staff is actually relatively small with a relatively limited budget, and they typically have their nose deeply in the inbox. So there is not really anyone with a vested interest in looking at this other than the Congress or the President, I suppose.

But what research we have done on this indicates that there are some overarching requirements for success. There are some things to avoid, et cetera. And to promote our research a little bit at Na-

tional Defense University, we are doing a series of case studies on this designed to find some general lessons learned. And we do have support of some people in the Special Operations Community for that purpose, which I am very grateful for.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. But you seem to be suggesting as well that Congress has a role and perhaps there are some authorities or opportunities to make this easier or to encourage more partnerships?

Dr. LAMB. Yes, we do. We actually have a study and a report on that very subject, and we recommended that Congress pass legislation that would give the President the authority to delegate his presumptive authority, integrate the departments and agencies through what we called mission managers. So we can certainly provide that information to the committee staff, if you would like.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Okay. Thank you very much. My time has expired.

Mr. THORNBERRY. It is an important problem. It is hard for Congress to grapple with as well.

But the gentlelady knows, and I feel strongly, like she does, that we have to grapple with it.

Let me ask a couple of organizational issues. There has been tremendous growth in Special Operations over the last decade. Admiral Olson used to always come and talk about his concern that as we increase the number of people, we maintain the quality of the people that are coming in. But from an organizational standpoint, U.S. Special Operations Command was created by Congress to be agile and given special procurement authorities so they could buy and acquire what was needed right away and get it done. Has SOCOM become too big? Has it lost some of its agility as far as procurement or other hopes when it was created?

Dr. DAVIS. It has not become so big; it is in danger, perhaps, of doing so. But what has happened is, because of its sustained operational tempos over the last several years in particular, it has come to depend much more on the Services to enable many operations. And in many cases, the Services, looking at their own budgets, understanding the environments we are in, are cutting those enablers, for example, that are necessary for SOCOM and SOF to perform its missions in forward areas.

So I think there is a danger of getting too large because you lose your special nature, and you don't have the specialized skill sets and core competencies of people you will need. But more importantly, in this environment that we are in, with each of the Services contracting, force structure and looking at recruiting bases for people in competition with SOCOM now, increasingly, that I think there is a danger as we go forward of finding the right people for the command and certainly having the Services support the commands with the enablers that they need.

Helicopters is an area in particular in which SOCOM really needs the air mobility piece to enhance its forward operations, and the Services just don't have the capabilities to bring forward in this regard.

Dr. LAMB. I would add just a couple of quick points. I think it is a mixed picture. I mean, I would be the first to say that SOF, especially in the direct action area, is much more agile today than

it was 10 or 15 years ago, not only because of the resources that they have been given but because of the experience they developed and because of the interagency collaborative protocols and organizations they have pioneered. They do things routinely today that were very difficult, you couldn't even imagine them. I mean, somebody pointed out to me, a colleague in the Pentagon that I was talking about this testimony with, he pointed out that it took us 13 years to identify the bombers of Pan Am 103. Our forensic capabilities today are much, much, much more refined than that. We have unbelievable agility in some respects in our Special Operations Forces today. It is awe-inspiring.

On the other hand, in the indirect areas, I think we have atrophied a bit. You know, we have with 80 to 90 percent of the force in just two theaters, and so the language and cultural skills in the context there have atrophied. In that sense, we are less agile.

But one other thing that I have heard that I pass on to you is that the abundance of technology that has been made available has perhaps eroded some of the creative SOF problem-solving skills. There was a certain pride—not unlike the Marine Corps in certain respects—but certain pride in SOF about being able to do very creative things with very little resources. Certainly being able to go into a complex situation, assess what resources you have, operate within those boundaries and still solve the problems. Some people in the community think maybe that has atrophied with the sort of direct action capabilities that have been provided.

Ms. ROBINSON. I would like to add a few points. I think SOCOM and its subordinate elements are not too big, but I do think some rebalancing toward the indirect capabilities is needed and perhaps relooking what the headquarters is doing. Some redundant functions are there perhaps.

What is very clear to me is that these enablers are critical for SOF to operate. The distributed operations require a lot of lift and a lot of support. And out there in Afghanistan, as you know, these rigors are working 24–7. All of these people that have to supply the SOF teams out there in the hinterlands, and SOF have been building more support forces. That is the last part of the build for the expansion, and I think it is very critical that they get that but also continue to have access to conventional enablers. And that is part of this SOF Force Generation process that they are working through.

Finally, though, if budgetary requirements come to bear, I think it is very important to remember that SOF truth that says quality is more important than quantity, and I think the command will protect that at all costs. The operatives have to meet that standard in order to be able to perform their assigned missions.

Mr. THORNBERRY. A similar question on the civilian side. We have an Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict. Any changes ought to be made there? Or do you think that kind of counterpart within the Secretary of Defense's Office is okay for now?

Dr. DAVIS. Looking at it from afar, I don't think that that office has been particularly helpful to SOCOM until quite recently. In the building, it has been rather lost in policy debates. The ASD, Assistant Secretary of Defense, for SO/LIC [Special Operation/Low Inten-

sity Conflict] has been able to articulate requirements, but I think going forward, working together, and I know this is certainly the plan of Mike Sheehan and Admiral McRaven, to make sure that they are in sync so that Mike can articulate in policy forums the requirements for SOCOM but also, very importantly, to say no, that is not a SOCOM mission and you don't need SOCOM forces. When considering global force employments, I think that is particularly important. So I think the relationship needs to be much tighter than it has been.

Now I know it was very tight when you were there, Chris.

But I think in the policy world in the Pentagon, the ASD SO/LIC needs to be much more proactive than he traditionally has been in inserting SOF equities, SOF issues into policy debates but also protecting SOF interests.

Dr. LAMB. I would add one quick comment.

We were chuckling because we were talking about this very issue a little earlier. I have not worked in that organization for over 15 years, but I still know people in it, and I would not want to make a—I don't know that there are any structural changes that need to be made there.

But I would say one thing to Members of Congress about the creation of the ASD SO/LIC; I think it was a good move.

Just to give you one example, if you chart some of the issues that are now standard thinking in Special Operations Command, like the distinction between a direct and indirect approach or what are the key elements that make Special Operations special, et cetera, you can track them all of the way back to early 1990s when a group of special operators and people in ASD SO/LIC sat down to create something called the Long-Range Planning Document for SOF. And so I do think the organization has had an effect, and a positive effect.

That said, there have been times when people in the building, and I have worked in other offices in the Pentagon, have asked whether they really need to hear the Assistant Secretary's view because it is not likely to be at all different or interesting compared to U.S. SOCOM's view. And so I think there is something that needs to be looked at there.

If an incoming Assistant Secretary asked my advice, one thing I would say to them is that you need deep Special Operations expertise on your staff, but you also need multifunctional expertise on your staff as well. Just like SOF has to work with other skill sets to be effective against the complex missions that we face, that staff needs to, in its oversight role, needs to have a multifunctional base, and that might be something to look at.

Ms. ROBINSON. May I add two points?

I think that the Office of SO/LIC should focus full time and exclusively on SOF. And I think historically they have been burdened with other additional responsibilities. And to me, this is too critical a portfolio to have other issues also under that ASD. I know there is some concern in the building there if they were to reorganize in that way, they might lose bodies. But I think it is very important that ASD SO/LIC be focused on SOF.

Secondly, I think its oversight role does require some degree of independence. Yes, to support SOCOM, but I think it is very impor-

tant that the USDP, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, be able to turn to ASD and say, be my honest broker here, tell me what you think, give me your own opinion. Thank you.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Any other questions?

I think that is it for now. Thank you all again for your testimony and for answering our questions and for all of the work that you have done in this area. We look forward I am sure to further communication with you as we grapple with what we can do to help make sure that Special Operations is as well positioned as possible in the future to help protect our country.

Again, thank you for being here.

With that, the hearing stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:35 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

JULY 11, 2012

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JULY 11, 2012

Statement of Hon. Mac Thornberry
Chairman, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and
Capabilities
Hearing on
The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces
July 11, 2012

Today we gather to examine the future of Special Operations Forces. The accomplishments of SOF over the past decade in fighting terrorists have been remarkable. While I believe too much information about what they do and how they do it has been publicized, the American people generally and especially those of us charged with more detailed oversight stand in awe of their professionalism and dedication.

But none of us can afford to rest on our past accomplishments. The world changes and threats continue to evolve. The days and years ahead will see new challenges and tight budgets. So it is appropriate to examine how Special Operations should evolve to ensure that our Nation's security is protected. Congress has a key role to play in that evolution, and I know that members of both sides of the aisle are committed to playing a constructive role in shaping those changes.

Statement of Hon. James R. Langevin
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and
Capabilities

Hearing on

The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces

July 11, 2012

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to our witnesses for appearing before us today. Our Special Operations Forces are some of the most capable personnel in high demand throughout our military. For a fraction of the Department of Defense's total budget, SOF provides an outsized return on our investment. For the last decade, the bulk of their capabilities have been rightly absorbed by necessities in Iraq and Afghanistan. But now, with our combat troops out of Iraq and our drawdown in Afghanistan well under way, it seems appropriate to consider what the future holds for SOF.

While SOF have been an integral part of conflicts in the CENTCOM area of responsibility, I think it's fair to say that some of the other combatant commands have had to accept compromises in their SOF support for some time. As Admiral McRaven at U.S. Special Operations Command and the rest of the Department of Defense goes through a rebalancing process, it is critical for those of us in Congress to make sure SOF is properly manned, trained, and resourced for future demands. This is particularly important because special operations forces are perhaps best known for their direct action missions—the bin Laden raid being a prime example. But their broad set of missions range from unconventional warfare and foreign internal defense to civil affairs and information operations, among others, and in recent years some of those skills may have atrophied. Put another way, our special operations forces are critical to our efforts to build the capacity of our partners around the globe, enabling those partners to apply local solutions to local security problems long before they become a regional or global issue.

We have many issues to consider to ensure that our special operations forces maintain their historic reputation as agile and highly effective national security assets. I look forward to hearing our witnesses' views on how to ensure that we continue to populate our Special Operations Forces with superior quality men and women who are highly trained, properly equipped, and granted the authorities needed to continue their stellar contribution to our national security, particularly given the highly uncertain threat landscape of the future. Mr. Chairman, I thank you for holding this hearing, and I look forward to an interesting discussion.

July 11, 2012

Testimony on Special Operations Forces

Prepared statement by

Linda Robinson

*Adjunct Senior Fellow for U.S. National Security and Foreign Policy
Council on Foreign Relations*

Before the

House Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

United States House of Representatives

2nd Session, 112th Congress

Hearing on The Future of Special Operations Forces

Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Langevin, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before this distinguished panel. The purpose of my testimony is to provide thoughts on the future of U.S. Special Operations Forces to include recent initiatives being considered by U.S. Special Operations Command and the Department of Defense.

You have my full bio, but I would like to note that I have spent 27 years reporting on and researching conflicts, and in the past 13 years my research has included a great deal of time in the field and at headquarters with special operations forces at all echelons, much of that in Latin America, Iraq and Afghanistan. I have published numerous articles and books, co-authored a government-sponsored study on SOF command and control since 9/11, and served as the writer for the Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept 2.0. Currently, at the Council on Foreign Relations, I am conducting a study and a roundtable series on the future of special operations forces. As part of that study I have interviewed 50 senior and rising leaders in the SOF community as well as policy officials. The intent of this project is to take a broad look at what is needed to enhance the strategic impact of SOF going forward.

In addition I am researching my next book on special operations forces in Afghanistan. In the past two years I have spent 22 weeks in Afghanistan, much of that time following the implementation of the village stability operations and Afghan Local Police initiative, which as you know is the largest single SOF endeavor under way at this time with its projected expansion to 99 sites. I would also like to note that in the coming weeks the Special Operations Joint Task Force (SOJTF) will assume command and control of all SOF units in Afghanistan for the first time in the war. This is an important milestone in intra-SOF unity of command which should lead to greater synergy among the various "SOF

The Council on Foreign Relations takes no institutional positions on policy issues and has no affiliation with the U.S. government. All statements of fact and expressions of opinion contained herein are the sole responsibility of the author.

tribes." These hearings are devoted to the larger questions about the development and employment of SOF worldwide, but I will refer to the Afghan case to illustrate some of my broader observations.

My remarks address these three topics:

- Is SOF achieving a balance between direct and indirect operational approaches to achieve strategic objectives?
- How should current authorities, resourcing, and force structure change to better enable SOF to deal with emerging challenges and integrate SOF into the Joint Force of 2020?
- What changes should be considered to U.S. Special Operations Command and the interagency to enable SOF to remain agile, globally persistent and aligned with national strategy?

There is no more important issue to national security than making sure that special operations forces are developed and employed in a way that maximizes their full potential because they will very likely continue to play a disproportionately large role relative to their size in ensuring U.S. national security in the years ahead. First, we are in a highly resource-constrained environment and security solutions employing small, scalable and highly skilled units such as SOF are cost effective. Second, the small footprint solution – if employed correctly – is often much more acceptable to friends and allies around the world than large-scale military operations. Third, SOF are designed to address many of the threats that will dominate the landscape, to include terrorists, insurgents, transnational criminal networks and other nonstate actors empowered by technology and other forces of globalization. They also play important niche roles in conventional conflicts, countering weapons of mass destruction and against adversaries that employ unconventional tactics. Indeed, one of the key challenges for the employment of SOF is to prioritize their use and develop innovative ways to extend their impact.

In the past decade, a great deal of attention and resources has been devoted to developing a world-class direct action or surgical strike capability as part of the special operations' suite of capabilities. In particular, the national SOF or national mission force is highly optimized in terms of its organization and the enablers provided to it. I see two areas in regard to the direct approach that may warrant further development. One is a policy issue: I believe that an established standard procedure for systematically weighing the costs and benefits of employing unilateral raids or strikes via unmanned drones could improve the viability of this tactic over the longer run. This procedure and as much of the evidence or justification for such strikes as possible should be shared widely. It may also be advisable to institute a congressional or judicial review mechanism. Finally, outside theaters of war the use of the direct approach should be applied to imminent and dire threats to U.S. citizens, soil or vital interests. Measures such as these could shore up the long-term viability of the direct approach and ensure that potential second and third order consequences are deliberately included in each assessment. At a policy level this would help ensure that the right balance between the direct and indirect approach is struck. As both the current and former commanders of U.S. Special Operations Command have said repeatedly in testimony before Congress and elsewhere, the direct approach only buys time for the indirect approach to work, and such a process would help guard against overreliance on the short-term expedient that may be counterproductive over the longer term.

The second issue involving the direct approach concerns intra-SOF unity of command: such unity of command should be routine, in my view, as the primary mechanism for achieving the proper balance in the direct and indirect use of SOF at the operational level. The SOJTF in Afghanistan should ideally lead to greater synergy and mutual support among the three SOF tribes and their distinct missions: those under CFSOCC-A which are carrying out Village Stability Operations and training and operating alongside the Afghan Commandos and Special Forces, the coalition ISAF SOF which are training and advising the provincial response companies and special police units, and the national mission force, which is focused on high-value terrorist targets. This model could be applied to other theaters with the theater special operations command or an ad hoc command such as the SOJTF serving as the C2 node responsible for ensuring that unity and synergy.

The indirect approach should be the primary area of focus for improvements at this time. It is my assessment that while incremental steps have been taken in recent years, the indirect approach is still suboptimized and the forces primarily charged with carrying it out are not properly resourced, organized or supported to fully maximize their potential. At this stage in my study, I have concluded that five baseline improvements are needed. I have framed these in terms of outcomes, because gaining clarity and consensus as to the desired results will help determine which of several possible pathways is preferable. The five urgently needed improvements are:

- Greater clarity as to what the indirect approach is and an overall vision for employment of SOF, through a greater emphasis on doctrine and ongoing education and outreach to policymakers, combatant commands and the national security community regarding the best uses of SOF;
- First-class theater special operations commands (TSOCs) staffed with sufficient numbers of highly qualified regional experts, human and technical intelligence specialists, expert planners and special operators who serve extended tours and receive career incentives for serving at TSOCs;
- Greater support from USSOCOM for theater special operations command and the indirect approach to include resourcing, coordinating and support for enduring SOF campaigns conducted by the TSOCs and subordinate units;
- Funding authorities that enable SOF to carry out sustained indirect campaigns as part of the theater campaign plan and embassy plans, which in many cases will require multiyear funding, support to non-military forces, and support for stability and security objectives other than counterterrorism;
- More flexible combinations of SOF and conventional forces to enable SOF to operate in more places or at larger scale.

Vague and confusing terminology, lack of emphasis on doctrine and operating concepts, and weak outreach to relevant partners in the government have all hampered the development and employment of SOF for maximum strategic or decisive impact. The indirect approach is an unfortunately vague term; in place of direct and indirect, the draft Army doctrinal publication 3-05 uses surgical strike and special warfare. To me, the distinguishing feature of the indirect approach (or special warfare) is partnered operations. The partner(s) can range widely from various government forces, to informal groups like tribes or community defense groups, or populations, which civil affairs and other units routinely interact with. The range of activities that SOF can engage in as part of the indirect approach is similarly broad (training, combat advising, intelligence and psychological operations, civil affairs projects) depending on the problem, the goals and the rules of engagement. But the key point is that the activities will always be with or through other entities, so that they are empowered and eventually enabled to enact the solutions on their own. To achieve lasting, decisive impact the activities cannot be episodic and unconnected but must be deliberately planned, linked and sustained via a campaign design that is nested in the larger theater and mission plans and overall U.S. policy goals.

Successful employment of the indirect approach requires both proactive involvement and patience for the effort to produce results. It requires placing SOF teams out in troubled regions for extended periods so they can gain familiarity, knowledge and relationships and then begin to execute solutions with the resident partners. This runs counter to a common tendency to wait until crises are full blown and action is imperative. This is not a criticism; Americans shy away from anything that smacks of imperial adventures or meddling in countries or conflicts we do not understand. But if the U.S. government can adopt a proactive approach where U.S. interests warrant and conditions permit, we have found that problems can be resolved primarily by others while they are still small enough to handle with minimal U.S. assistance. However difficult and time-consuming, it is possible for U.S. decisionmakers to reach agreement on the need for proaction and persistence if they understand the problem, carefully evaluate the risks and benefits, and articulate the case alongside host nation partners. Those of you familiar with the case of Colombia know that more than a decade of sustained, small footprint advisory assistance helped that country to greatly weaken the

narcoterrorist insurgency known as the FARC, and that Colombia is today a valued ally helping with security assistance elsewhere. The Colombian government and its ambassador played vital roles in gaining and maintaining the support for this endeavor. The Philippines is another case worthy of study to build a template for successful application of the indirect approach and achievement of enduring results. Depending on the decisions made in the coming years, Afghanistan could join the case study annals for a small-footprint sustained effort that produces results over the middle term.

The most obvious and uncontroversial recommendation of the five is to shore up the theater special operations commands in a major and permanent way, so they are capable of performing the duties assigned to them. TSOCs are by doctrine the command and control entity charged with planning and leading special operations in theater, as well as serving as the geographic combatant commander's adviser on special operations.¹ The TSOCs have chronically lacked adequate staff and resources to perform their doctrinal tasks. The chart below shows the current level of staffing with USSOCOM personnel; much of the staffing is funded by OCO funds that will end.² Some amount of service-provided funding and staff is reportedly used by some geographic commands for other purposes. Second, the quality issue must be addressed. TSOCs need to be a place where top staff go rather than be seen as a career-ending assignment. While the TSOC commanders' rank has been increased in the past decade to one- and two-star positions and many of SOF's best general and flag officers have been assigned to command TSOCs, the overall staffing and resourcing deficits have not been addressed and the commands have not as a rule been fully employed in their intended roles. Top flight talent, including the best planners and a variety of expert enablers, are needed to craft the SOF campaigns and interact with the broader GCC staff and country teams in the region. Under this vision the TSOCs should become the most desirable assignment and the epicenter for SOF operations. It is the place where SOF expertise and regional expertise should come together, as the two key ingredients needed for successful implementation of the indirect approach and its combination as needed with the direct approach.

USSOCOM HQ & Subunified Commands	USSOCOM Manning
U.S. Special Operations Command (Headquarters)	2,606
Joint Special Operations Command	1,519
Theater Special Operations Commands:	
Special Operations Command – Central	400
Special Operations Command – South	213
Special Operations Command – Pacific	301
Special Operations Command – Korea	72
Special Operations Command – Europe	248
Special Operations Command – Africa	193

The current commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, Admiral Bill McRaven, has taken steps to reorient USSOCOM to provide greater support to the TSOCs. He has convened TSOC commander conferences, solicited their requests, and directed them to USSOCOM's Global Mission Support Center. In my view much more can and should be done to ensure that USSOCOM headquarters as an institution prioritizes support for TSOCs. Perhaps the most critical role is to help advocate for and educate the policy community and the geographic combatant commands on the use of SOF and in support of specific SOF proposals and their resource requirements. Second, it can do more

¹ Doctrine for U.S. special operations forces states that the TSOC is "the primary mechanism by which a GCC [geographic combatant command] exercises C2 over SOF. See Joint Publication 3-05 *Special Operations*, 18 April 2011, (III-2, III-4), posted at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_05.pdf.

² Data provided by U.S. Special Operations Command.

to assist in the design and implementation of SOF campaigns in support of the GCCs and their TSOCs in a reachback capacity. Particularly if campaigns need to be coordinated across more than one GCC, USSOCOM's role in this regard can be substantial. Third, the USSOCOM J-code sections in general should reorient to prioritize TSOc and indirect requirements, planning and resource support. Fulfilling all these tasks may require creation of a dedicated organization within USSOCOM, but the risk in doing so is that this mission becomes ancillary rather than one of the central missions of the command. Finally, USSOCOM could support a higher percentage of staffing of the TSOcs in the Joint Manning Document and shift some of its own 2,606 personnel to support TSOcs in temporary or permanent assignments.

The fourth issue, of funding authorities, is complex in its details. Sufficient and predictable funding is absolutely fundamental to the indirect approach, maximizing SOF's potential, and achieving the right balance in the direct and indirect approaches. Currently SOF activities are funded through a variety of authorities and this issue is entwined with a longstanding debate over security sector assistance. However, I believe this issue can be resolved by focusing on the basic outcomes that are desirable and have wide support. Persistent indirect SOF campaigns can only succeed if there is a sound plan implemented over a number of years; if this plan is not supported by predictable funding it cannot hope to succeed. In various instances Congress has approved 1) multiyear funding, 2) funding for SOF training and assistance to non-military forces, and 3) assistance for SOF security and stabilization missions other than counterterrorism. Those are the three key requirements. The State Department has the responsibility to ensure that all security assistance is consistent with U.S. foreign policy goals. That principle has been embraced by the USSOCOM commander, and current authorities include reporting requirements, oversight and chief of mission approval. What is needed is greater agility in the review and approval process, since it can take up to two years in some cases. If these goals are kept in mind, I think that a concerted interagency effort along with Congress can reach agreement on ways to improve the current funding authorities. Due to the patchwork of current authorities and the complexity of the details this may need to be an iterative or at least extended effort.

Regarding the fifth issue, over the past decade I have observed a great deal of progress in deconfliction and integration of SOF and conventional force operations on the battlefield. What is needed now is further progress on the institutional side of the house to provide more flexible combinations of SOF and CF that are tailored to the specific small-footprint missions that are likely to be the stock in trade of the future. As you know, two infantry battalions have been assigned to CFSOCC-A's operational command in Afghanistan to augment the Village Stability Operations, and in other cases infantry battalions have been assigned to special mission unit task forces. In other cases, the requirement is for even smaller units or even individuals, but the conventional forces often find it difficult or unpalatable to provide such scalable assets since their systems are designed to supply units. This is a broad topic involving numerous subissues, and both SOF and conventional forces are devoting attention to it. To provide more predictability regarding the types and numbers of enablers that SOF may need, work is being done on force generation models. And the Army is working on regionally aligned brigades, although for combined SOF missions much smaller elements are required; in addition the brigades may only be available for 8 months. Finally, some discussions have been held about a standing blended formation that could serve as the repository for counterinsurgency knowledge and the core of a large-scale effort should one be needed. The outyears of the U.S. effort in Afghanistan may serve as a test bed for some of these ideas, since it is generally conceded that SOF will play a significant role in the post-2014 assistance effort there.

Guidelines for evaluation of USSOCOM proposals

USSOCOM has proposed that TSOcs become subunified commands of USSOCOM rather than their respective GCCs. Admiral McRaven and his staff have argued that this change would make USSOCOM permanently responsible for the TSOcs and institutionalize the kind of support for them that has been historically lacking. This shift would confer combatant command (COCOM) authority over the TSOcs, but Admiral McRaven has said that

the GCCs would retain operational command of their operations as at present. According to doctrine as set out in Joint Publication 3-0, this operational command could only be shifted by a decision of the secretary of defense.

Two outcomes should be used as guidelines for evaluating this course of action. First, USSOCOM should become permanently more responsive to and supportive of the TSOCs as the primary arm for planning and conducting special operations. Is COCOM necessary to accomplish this? Is SOCOM prepared to take over all the administrative responsibilities involved? Are the budgetary impacts well understood? The second outcome that should be ensured is that GCCs become more rather than less inclined to use the TSOCs in appropriate ways and rely on them as useful entities that they understand and reap maximum benefit from in pursuit of their assigned objectives and overall national security strategy. A change in assignment and COCOM status must be seen as a net plus by GCCs rather than a loss or the desired outcome will not be achieved.

In addition, if GCCs do not at present understand or make maximum use of their TSOCs then reasons for this must be fully understood. Provision of a quality TSOC capability is one requirement; another requirement is that GCCs are educated in the full range of SOF capabilities and are prepared to employ them as part of their theater campaign plans and in support of U.S. national security strategy. Given that GCC staffs rotate on a regular basis, this education on SOF capabilities must be provided on an ongoing basis.

My current view is that an iterative approach may be the best way to proceed. USSOCOM can and should supply the needed support to TSOCs in terms of resources, institutional reachback and policy advocacy as a top priority. It should work with TSOCs and GCCs to create first-class TSOCs and well-conceived proposals for employment of SOF that are designed to achieve enduring results in key areas in a cost-effective way.

A formal review should then be conducted at the two-year mark to determine whether TSOCs and the indirect approach have been optimized by this step and whether USSOCOM as an institution is providing consistent and timely support. If not a decision to shift COCOM status could be made at that time.

I should note that a variety of organizational changes have been bruited over the past decade. Some observers as well as members of the community have recommended that a separate SOF command be created to employ the indirect approach, but it has always been my view that USSOCOM should regard this as a major responsibility to fully maximize SOF's potential impact. Some observers believe that USSOCOM is somehow congenitally resistant to embracing this priority. I would like to believe with the current commander, the support of Congress, and guidance from the Defense Department, this important objective can now be realized. To split USSOCOM components would drive in the opposite direction from greater synergy and optimization of the total force.

The other major proposals tabled by USSOCOM would explicitly give USSOCOM a global area of responsibility, allow it to initiate requests for forces, and via a global employment order allow USSOCOM to shift SOF assets among theaters with the concurrence of the geographic combatant command. (As I understand the proposal, if the gaining or losing GCC objected to the proposed shift, the matter would go to the Pentagon for adjudication.) The proposals have caused some stakeholders, to include geographic combatant commands and some in the Pentagon, to fear that their voice and vote would be overridden or eliminated.

The issue of who has a vote and who decides is straightforward at one level: ultimately the national command authority in the person of the secretary of defense or the president decides. USSOCOM has a legitimate role to play in advocating how its scarce resources are best employed, and it has stated that it does not seek to override the vote or voice of the GCC or the chief of mission. The current approval process for deployment orders is sequential and therefore time consuming; concurrent requests to the force provider would be one way to provide greater agility. (There are currently memoranda of understanding for shifting SOF among combatant commands for urgent

counterterrorism purposes.) There may also be merit in wider use of the mechanism currently used for urgent operational decisions regarding the national mission force, namely, secure video teleconferences in which all stakeholders participate and the national command authorities make the decision.

There are two other fundamental questions underlying these proposals that are worthy of further discussion and study. What is the appropriate operational role for USSOCOM? USSOCOM currently has a limited operational role in regard to global threats that transcend the individual GCC boundaries. It currently tracks global terrorist threats and writes the global counterterrorism plan. A wider operational role for USSOCOM may come into frequent conflict with the GCCs' own operational roles, so this matter must be parsed very deliberately to arrive at the right formulation. The terrorism threat is a blend of local and global phenomena; many threats are deeply rooted in the local cultures and causes, which should be the province of GCCs, country teams and SOF who have spent their careers in those regions. But there are also increasing interconnections among groups that use technology, global facilitation networks and far-flung alliances of convenience. A similar dilemma applies to cyber threats, which are the province of U.S. Strategic Command and its subordinate Cyber Command, although global cyber threats may have more global and technical than local and cultural aspects. It is my understanding that before making major changes, the Joint Staff would like to take time to explore all the implications and potential impact on the system set up under the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act.

The second, related question is what is the proper balance between USSOCOM's operational role and its responsibilities as a force provider charged with selecting, organizing, training, equipping special operators, writing doctrine and strategy, and procuring SOF-peculiar equipment? It is my view that maximizing SOF's potential to have strategic impact and make lasting contributions to national security in the decades ahead rest more on USSOCOM fulfilling the institutional development tasks at a higher level. It can do much better than it has in developing doctrine and strategy and in managing the careers and education of its SOF personnel, and ensuring that they provide leadership to the community and are viable candidates for senior joint and interagency assignments. To that end, USSOCOM's formation of a new force management directorate is an important and welcome step to developing strategic leaders and strategic vision in the SOF community, which has understandably been focused on tactical prowess for its first decades of development.

**Linda Robinson
Adjunct Senior Fellow
Council on Foreign Relations**

Linda Robinson is an adjunct senior fellow for U.S. national security and foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). She is conducting a study and roundtable series on the future of special operations forces and writing a book on special operations forces in Afghanistan. In the past two years she has spent 22 weeks in Afghanistan, including Kandahar, Kunar, Paktika and Uruzgan.

A best-selling author and analyst, Ms. Robinson has reported on conflicts, political transitions, and other foreign policy issues in thirty-five countries over two and a half decades. She has published and lectured widely on special operations forces, counterinsurgency, stability operations, and insurgencies in Latin America, Iraq and Afghanistan. Her books include *Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq*; *Masters of Chaos: The Secret History of the Special Forces*; and *Intervention or Neglect: Central America and Panama Beyond the 1980s*. She was senior writer for national security and terrorism and Latin America bureau chief at *U.S. News & World Report* and senior editor at *Foreign Affairs* magazine.

Ms. Robinson conducted a study on special operations command and control and authored the Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept 2.0 as a consultant to the U.S. government. She was senior adviser to U.S. Central Command's Afghanistan-Pakistan Center. She is serving a three-year appointment to the U.S. Army War College Board of Visitors.

Ms. Robinson was a Nieman fellow at Harvard University, senior consulting fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), and author in residence at John Hopkins SAIS Merrill Center for Strategic Studies. She received the Gerald R. Ford Prize for Reporting on National Defense and other awards. She is a longtime member of CFR and IISS. In fall 2012 she will also be a Public Policy Scholar at the Wilson Center.

41

Statement of

Christopher J. Lamb*

Distinguished Research Fellow

Center for Strategic Research,

Institute for National Strategic Studies,

National Defense University

On

“The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces”

Before the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities,

House Armed Services Committee,

U.S. House of Representatives

July 11, 2012

* The views expressed in this testimony are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Defense Department or the National Defense University.

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and share some observations on the future of United States Special Operations Forces. It is now evident to most observers that Congress acted wisely, boldly, and with great foresight when it passed legislation to create the U.S. Special Operations Command and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict. I believe this subcommittee is just as well-advised to continue following developments in our nation's Special Operations Forces (SOF). These forces are now well-recognized for their major role in safeguarding American security over the past decade. Arguably they can play an even greater role in the future.

To explain why and how that might be the case, I will address the following questions:

- What types of SOF are needed to deal with current and emerging challenges over the next ten years – and what obstacles impede advancement in this area?
- Is SOF achieving a balance between direct and indirect operational approaches to achieve strategic objectives?
- Are our Special Operations Forces properly organized, trained, and equipped to meet future threats?
- How should current authorities, resourcing, and force structure change to better enable SOF to deal with emerging challenges and integrate SOF into the Joint Force of 2020?
- What changes should be considered to U.S. Special Operations Command and the interagency so that Special Operations Forces remain agile, globally persistent, and aligned with national strategy?

In answering these questions, I will draw upon previous research as well as informed opinion from current and former members of the SOF community who have been kind enough to share their insights.

What Kind of SOF are Needed?

The nation needs SOF guided by a strong strategic concept that explains how, when, and where SOF are the best choice to manage or defeat a security threat, and thus how SOF should be trained, equipped and employed.¹ SOF's strategic concept, and the strategic value they offer within that concept, evolves along with the security challenges facing the nation, our strategy for meeting those challenges, and the distinguishing characteristics of SOF. It is now commonplace to note that the security challenges we face are increasingly complex, multidimensional, enduring, irregular and often best met with operations short of war.

One distinguishing feature of such complex missions is that they require a different understanding of the central purpose of tactical combat operations. As we have discovered in the past, but often forget, in complex contingencies "the goal is to gain decisive results with the least application of force and the consequent minimum loss of life" rather than "striving to generate the maximum power with forces available."² An offensive spirit in tactical operations is necessary when operating against irregular threats; however the purpose is not to destroy the irregular forces so much as it is to keep them on the defensive until other elements of the strategy successfully isolate them from popular support and they cease to be a serious threat. Even small terrorists groups intent on using weapons of mass destruction that must be destroyed before they can do so are less of a threat if they do not enjoy popular support. Recognizing the

¹ Much of the argumentation here is taken from David Tucker and Christopher J. Lamb, U.S. Special Operations Forces, Columbia University Press, 2007.

² U.S. Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1940), chapter I, 1-9(f), 1-16(c); Chapter II, 2-5.

cost and complexity of current security challenges, and particularly irregular threats, our national security strategy emphasizes the need to work in collaboration with allies and friendly forces abroad, and to integrate all elements of our national power when doing so. This is true particularly for meeting the threat of catastrophic terrorism, but also for other security challenges such as international piracy, cyber threats, and insurgencies.

These types of security threats, and our strategy for meeting them, engender missions that are well suited for SOF's distinctive characteristics, but also levy requirements for unprecedented levels of political and technical sophistication, including interagency cooperation. Before addressing some of the current challenges SOF must address, it is helpful to briefly summarize the distinctive characteristics of SOF that make them well suited to complex and irregular security challenges. Doing so makes it easier to navigate some of the difficult issues that must be addressed when considering a way forward for the future of SOF.

Some SOF characteristics evolve over time. For example, some of the unconventional capabilities SOF might need to incorporate now could include computer network attack and how to neutralize a weapon of mass destruction in the field. However, there are some core attributes of U.S. SOF that are of enduring importance. The most basic distinguishing characteristic of SOF is that they are special rather than just elite. Elite units are used for the same purpose as general-purpose forces, but receive special designation, training and resources so they may perform at a higher level. In contrast, Special Operations Forces conduct missions that conventional forces cannot perform, either at all or within acceptable levels of risk and costs. Although it can be difficult to distinguish special from elite military forces, making the distinction correctly increases the

chances that SOF will be well prepared and correctly employed for their most important missions.

Whereas the Services are distinguished from one another primarily by their physical operating environment (land, air, sea, amphibious or littoral environments), SOF are distinguished from the Services by their conceptual and physical distance from conventional forces and/or their proximity to indigenous forces and populations. When SOF operate behind enemy lines, in close contact with indigenous forces and populations, or under special political constraints, such as the need to avoid collateral casualties in a close-quarters combat, they are either physically and/or conceptually removed from conventional force operations and their organic mass and firepower. Because they operate in these unique environments, SOF have special requirements:

- Political Sophistication. Special operations are conducted in a politically sensitive context that constrains virtually every aspect of the operation. Local mores may dictate methods, and political considerations may require clandestine, covert or low-visibility techniques as well as oversight at the national level. SOF must be prepared to work closely with political authorities and be capable of using good judgment in a fast-evolving and politically sensitive environment.
- Uncommon Will to Succeed. Special operations often are conducted under extreme duress that requires an uncommon commitment to persevere. Accordingly, SOCOM emphasizes that it takes special individuals to succeed in special operations; individuals who are determined to persist in the face of adversity and without support.
- Unorthodox approaches. SOCOM also stresses creativity as a core value because special operations require creative approaches to problem solving that sometimes defy American norms and military doctrine without violating fundamental American values. For example, in contrast to conventional force operations, surprise achieved by innovative approaches that utilize speed, stealth, audacity, and deception is far more important than mass in special operations. Similarly, creative approaches to working with indigenous populations

and forces are a norm for SOF, whereas conventional forces generally try to minimize such contact. Some techniques pioneered by SOF may be passed along to conventional forces once they are perfected, but others require so much training that they cannot be employed efficiently or effectively by larger conventional forces.

- Unconventional equipment and training. The definition of “unconventional” changes over time. Night-vision devices and body armor pioneered by SOF are no longer considered unconventional and are now used by general purpose forces. However, SOF continue to develop capabilities that are unconventional in comparison with conventional forces in order to help achieve surprise or overcome obstacles in rapidly evolving circumstances.
- Special intelligence requirements. Special operations either take advantage of indigenous forces or exploit enemy weaknesses that are not readily apparent. In either case SOF require special intelligence. SOF need fine-grained intelligence to attack a difficult target with precision. They also need special insights into foreign mores, and local social and political relationships, to work effectively through indigenous forces and populations.

All SOF missions—whether it is direct action, civil affairs, hostage rescue, counterinsurgency training, unconventional warfare or foreign internal defense—require forces with these special attributes, albeit in different degrees. This is often disputed and a point of controversy. For example, sometimes it is asserted that SOF direct action missions only require men with uncommon drive and not political sophistication. This assertion is contradicted by historical experience and scholarship. Conducted incorrectly, direct action missions can cause high civilian casualties or other unwanted side effects that cancel out benefits obtained by the use of force. Similarly, some might argue that Civil Affairs or Psychological Operations only require personnel with political sophistication and not uncommon drive. Although such forces do not require the ability to prevail in physically challenging circumstances, they do require the ability to persist in rapidly evolving circumstances where the definition of success is often not clear and constantly being revised.

These special characteristics are what separate SOF from conventional forces, and explain why conventional forces cannot accomplish SOF missions either at all or within the limits of acceptable costs and risks. These special characteristics explain why SOF interoperability with conventional forces can be quite a good thing—many security threats will require SOF and conventional forces acting in concert. However, these special, distinguishing characteristics also explain why the interchange of SOF and conventional forces is neither helpful nor possible (by which I mean SOF being used to perform general purpose force missions or vice versa). If SOF are used for conventional force missions, their special attributes are wasted; and if conventional forces are used to conduct special operations, they will perform poorly or fail.

One final distinction about SOF special characteristics must be made. All SOF missions and forces share, in greater or lesser amounts, the special characteristics that distinguish them from conventional forces. However, SOF can execute their missions directly themselves or they can conduct their missions working by, with, or through indigenous forces and populations. A number of terms have been used to describe these two approaches to SOF mission accomplishment, but the terms “direct” and “indirect” are now commonplace. SOF can use their direct and indirect approaches separately or in combination, but must be equally proficient at both.

Technically all SOF missions may be conducted directly or indirectly but some tend to align better with the direct or indirect approaches. For example, SOF can train a foreign force to conduct direct action, but when US interests are directly engaged and the results really matter, the tendency is to desire more control over the outcome and therefore to have

U.S. SOF complete the mission directly. Similarly, SOF can conduct foreign internal defense directly, but the need for local intelligence and knowledge of popular sentiments and the political value of allowing local forces to conduct the mission usually argue in favor of the indirect approach. In this respect certain SOF missions tend to align better with the direct or indirect approach, even though all SOF missions can be executed either way.

It is important to distinguish between SOF's direct and indirect approaches because each approach entails different advantages and disadvantages. Often it is assumed that acting directly means employing lethal force and acting indirectly means employing non-lethal capabilities. In fact, both approaches can involve lethal and non-lethal skills. The more important differences involve costs and control. In general, acting indirectly entails lower costs but also offers less control over means employed and outcomes achieved. Acting directly can involve higher costs but provides more control over the means employed and ends achieved. The risks associated with either approach depend on the nature of the security problem and the strategy devised in response.

To elaborate, when SOF directly undertake a mission it is more likely that it will be well-coordinated with other US military operations and activities, carried out with high competence and full commitment, and completed consistent with US objectives and values. Some SOF missions cannot be worked through foreign forces with an acceptable chance of success. Even highly competent foreign special operations forces may fail if their political leadership is not fully in agreement with the United States about the value of the operation. Employing SOF directly also means that the success or failure of the effort will redound primarily to the credit or discredit of the United States. Whether this is advantageous or not depends on the political situation.

There are also advantages and disadvantages to SOF acting indirectly. The obvious advantage to working through foreign forces and populations is that it reduces the resource and political commitment of the United States. Sometimes the scale of the problem precludes a direct approach. When there are not enough SOF or other US forces to meet mission requirements, then SOF must work at least to some extent indirectly through advice and training to foreign forces. The indirect approach also has the advantage of a lower profile. Sometimes, it is better to work through foreign forces and populations because they can provide the necessary intelligence about insurgents, terrorists or other adversaries. In such cases, trying to solve the problem directly with US forces can create resentment and resistance that is counterproductive for U.S. objectives.

Another reason it is important to distinguish between SOF's direct and indirect approaches is that they require differing degrees of emphasis on various SOF skill sets. Conducting missions indirectly requires greater specialization in what some have termed SOF's "warrior-diplomat" or "cross-cultural" skill sets, which require a deeper understanding of indigenous forces and populations. Conducting SOF missions directly requires more refined technical skill sets peculiar to each SOF mission, particularly those highly specialized capabilities involved in direct action behind enemy lines. In short, for SOF to be well prepared for indirect and direct missions, some SOF units must weight their training and equipment toward warrior-diplomat skills. Other units, however, need to concentrate on what some refer to as the SOF "commando" skill sets, which Admiral McRaven recently explained require "technologically-

enabled small-unit precision lethality, focused intelligence, and interagency cooperation integrated on a digitally-networked battlefield.”³

Having made these distinctions it is easier to summarize the kind of SOF the United States needs to meet future security challenges. We need SOF that operate with the benefit of a clear strategic concept, one that emphasizes their value relative to general purposes forces but does not confuse the two. We need SOF that are fully imbued with all the attributes that make SOF special compared to general purpose forces, and that are fully capable of executing their missions either directly or indirectly.

Are We Balancing SOF Direct and Indirect Approaches?

We have done a better job of balancing SOF direct and indirect approaches in the past six years than in the years immediately following the terror attacks on 9/11. However, we still need more attention to the indirect approach. There are multiple reasons why we have not been as successful using SOF indirectly as directly. Following 9/11, national leaders were intent on direct strategies that did not leave much room for SOF indirect approaches. Military leaders also were reluctant to commit to SOF indirect approaches. In some cases, SOF were pushed to the sideline after initial successes; in other cases priority was given to SOF units using the direct approach and direct action in particular. Finally, USSOCOM leaders were slow to recognize the value of SOF’s indirect approach.

In general the balance between SOF direct and indirect approaches has been much better in recent years, roughly since 2006. The debate over their respective value and how they might fit with national strategy is

³ Posture Statement of Admiral William H. McRaven, USN, Commander, United States Special Operations Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee, March, 6, 2012, p. 5

far from over, but national leaders now emphasize the value of the indirect approach more, as do senior military leaders. The past few USSOCOM commanders have emphasized the distinction and merits of both approaches, and have repeatedly testified to Congress that they are committed to building capacity for and using both approaches.⁴

In areas accorded less priority than Afghanistan and Iraq, such as the Philippines, SOF were allowed, or forced by limited resources, to approach their missions indirectly and have done so with great success. In Iraq, after approaching the brink of disaster, U.S. forces were able to turn the war around in part because SOF better balanced its direct and indirect approaches, and did so in close cooperation with conventional forces that had learned why irregular threats require a multidimensional approach that gives priority to population security, interagency cooperation and close collaboration with indigenous forces.⁵ In Afghanistan, we have been less successful in balancing SOF direct and indirect approaches;⁶ although by some accounts we are now moving in this direction.⁷

One enduring reason for the difficulty we have in balancing SOF direct and indirect approaches is lack of respect for how difficult the indirect approach is. Training foreign forces is not difficult. Working with foreign forces to achieve security objectives shared by their government and ours in ways that are consistent with U.S. interests and values is

⁴ See Adm. McRaven testimony in Hearing of the House Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities: *The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces: Ten Years After 9/11 and Twenty-Five Years After Goldwater-Nichols*, September 22, 2011; and Adm. Olson testimony in Hearing of the Senate Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities: *Hearing to Receive Testimony on U.S. Special Operations Command in Review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2010 and the Future Years Defense Program*, June 18, 2009.

⁵ See Christopher J. Lamb and Evan Munsing, *Secret Weapon: High-value Target Teams as an Organizational Innovation*, INSS Strategic Perspectives No. 4 (Washington, DC: NDU Press, 2011).

⁶ Christopher J. Lamb and Martin Cinnamond, "Unity of Effort: Key to Success in Afghanistan." *Strategic Forum* No. 248, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, October, 2009.

⁷ Associated Press, "Wraps Come Off Special Operations Afghan War Plan," April 12, 2012, available through FoxNews.com: <<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2012/04/12/wraps-come-off-special-operations-afghan-war-plan/>>.

extremely hard. There has been a tendency for conventional force commanders to assume their forces can relieve SOF of its indirect activities, particularly training and working with foreign forces. Worse, some SOF commanders have agreed and shunned such missions in favor of direct action. When this happens, both types of forces are saying they do not believe working “by, with and through” host nation forces requires special skills, which is incorrect.

There is nothing inherently wrong with current plans to align Army forces along regional lines.⁸ The Army can and should improve its ability to work with regional partners; however it cannot approach the language training and cultural skills embodied by SOF without unduly sacrificing the proficiency at large scale maneuver combat that makes it the world’s best land force. Competency in these areas requires a great deal of time, effort, and special personnel. Even if conventional forces could be trained to SOF-standards, they would lose their large conventional force-on-force competencies in the process. For this reason it is always best to try to conduct foreign internal defense and other indirect SOF missions without resorting to conventional forces. If the problem is so dire it requires conventional force employment, then the conventional forces should support SOF. In this regard there have been positive developments. SOF have been allowed to take the strategic lead, and even command general purpose forces in Afghanistan.⁹ Conventional force support of SOF engaged in defeating irregular threats is a positive precedent, one that hopefully can be extended in the future to support for SOF employing indirect approaches.

⁸ Paul McLeary, “U.S. Army Will Focus on Training, Partnering With SOF: Odierno,” June 20, 2012, DefenseNews.com, Available at: <<http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120620/DEFREG02/306200008/U-S-Army-Will-Focus-Training-Partnering-SOF-Odierno>>.

⁹ Former Commander, USSOCOM, Adm. Eric T. Olson noted such examples in congressional testimony. See “Posture Statement of Admiral Eric T. Olson, USN Commander United States Special Operations Command,” Senate Armed Services Committee, March 1, 2011, available at <<http://www.dod.mil/dodgc/olc/docs/testOlson03012011.pdf>>.

Looking to the future, the major challenges for USSOCOM leaders interested in balancing SOF direct and indirect approaches and capabilities are two-fold. SOF must maintain the unprecedented direct action capabilities built up and employed directly against terrorists and insurgent organizations over the past decade. At the same time, SOF must reorient, reinforce and build up their indirect skills. Both these challenges must be met during a period of declining Department of Defense budgets, and during a period when the consensus on the need to attack terrorist organizations directly is weakening. In such an environment it will be much more difficult than is generally appreciated to ensure SOF are organized, prepared and supported with a proper balance between SOF direct and indirect approaches.

Are Special Operations Forces properly organized, trained, equipped and supported?

Looking first to the direct approach, SOF leaders understand well that our national mission units and their ability to pursue terrorists directly across the globe are dependent upon a substantial array of combat service and combat service support capabilities. This global infrastructure has been built up over the past decade primarily through supplemental defense funding for overseas contingency operations. SOF depends on conventional force support in logistics, strategic airlift, depot maintenance, and many other areas. These capabilities are not provided for in the core budget and will be difficult to retain merely for the benefit of SOF. As Service budgets contract, the Services naturally will work hard to protect their core competencies and much of the support they have provided for SOF direct action will be placed in reserve or disappear entirely. For just one example, the Air Force will be tempted to trim back its fleet of unmanned aerial vehicles and the processing, exploitation, and dissemination capability that make these platforms so useful in support of SOF operations.

In such circumstances, SOF leaders will be tempted to simply move desired support capabilities into MFP-11 funding accounts. In a few cases doing so will be preferable to losing the capability altogether. However, SOF will have to be careful to avoid enduring budgetary commitments for support operations that it cannot efficiently manage and that likely are unsustainable over the long term except at the expense of eroding SOF primary capabilities. During the 1990s SOF made the mistake of assuming budgetary responsibility for the Coastal Patrol Boat, a great irregular war capability that it could not afford and ultimately had to abandon. SOF faces a similar challenge today in negotiating support capabilities and costs with the Services. During the upcoming period of severe austerity, SOF cannot be independent of Service support. Determining what USSOCOM must have as opposed to what it would be nice to have, and what the Services will provide rather than what SOF will have to obtain and maintain itself, will be a critical challenge that will require close cooperation between USSOCOM and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, and between the Pentagon and Congress more generally.

SOF also will face another challenge in retaining its tremendous counterterrorism direct action capabilities. To its credit, SOF has pioneered unprecedented levels of interagency collaboration in support of its direct action capabilities. It is not possible to attack terrorists without knowing their location, and knowing their location requires the fusion of many intelligence disciplines. Accordingly, SOF has forged a remarkable level of interagency cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Initially SOF invested in interagency collaboration simply to permit better targeting of the enemy, but over time SOF discovered that interagency collaboration also permits a better understanding of the political, information and operational consequences of attacking targets. The level of interagency

collaboration SOF has managed to build up is simply astounding. It is also a much more fragile and transitory capability than most appreciate.

If history is a guide, other departments and agencies that were willing to compromise or subordinate their organizational missions to SOF for the purpose of attacking terrorists and insurgent leaders will become less willing to do so in the future. When large scale military operations are underway overseas, intelligence agencies and the Department of State are more inclined to support the military taking the lead. Even in these circumstances we have discovered just how difficult and erratic interagency collaboration can be. Now, with Osama Bin Laden eliminated, and military operations drawing down from overseas contingencies, first in Iraq and now in Afghanistan, we can expect departments and agencies to retreat from some of the interagency support they have offered for SOF direct action. The Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency will be particularly predisposed to reassert their prerogatives.

In addition to maintaining essential direct action capabilities built up over the past decade, SOF will need to place renewed emphasis on its ability to conduct missions indirectly. SOF indirect approaches and capabilities are every bit as valuable and challenging to build, maintain and employ as SOF direct approaches and capabilities. In the future, SOF indirect capabilities should be valued even more highly by national and SOF leadership because there is now much greater appreciation for our national resource limitations and for the value of working in collaboration with allies and friendly forces. It will be difficult for SOF leaders to deliver indirect SOF capabilities for several reasons.

First, the new generation of SOF that entered the force after 9/11 is accustomed to unprecedented levels of support for SOF direct action. The national imperative to prevent a repeat of 9/11 and the exceptional latitude afforded SOF direct action missions has captured the attention of

our entire nation but also the entire SOF community. Many SOF recruits joined the force specifically in order to participate in such operations. In fact, some SOF experts have argued that the allure of direct action has helped fill depleted SOF ranks and that the recruits are disappointed when assigned to units that traditionally focus more on the indirect approach.¹⁰

Thus even SOF units that traditionally demonstrate greater appreciation for indirect approaches have been inclined to focus more on direct action against terrorists and insurgent leaders. For example, in Iraq it sometimes proved difficult to get Army Special Forces to agree to partner with Iraqi Security Forces. Similarly, many Special Forces units in Afghanistan also have given a priority to working directly against the enemy rather than doing so through indigenous forces. By no means is this trend universal in Special Forces. There are many instances where experienced Special Forces officers had proven the key to a successful indirect use of SOF.¹¹ However, the trend is pronounced enough to indicate that USSOCOM will be challenged to reorient Special Forces and other SOF units that historically specialize in indirect approaches to ensure they are well prepared to actually operate this way. Working by, with and through indigenous forces and populations has not received the priority attention in the field that senior commander expressions of support for the indirect approach would suggest should be the case, and it will be difficult to reverse this trend. According to some experts, it will even require adjusting the SOF selection process. It has been argued

¹⁰ Anna Simons, "SOF 2030: An Naval Postgraduate School Defense Analysis Seminar Report," March 2012, p. 4. The study was conducted by Professor Simons and 13 other SOF experts, including 4 SEALs; 4 Special Forces officers; 1 Special Forces Warrant Officer; 1 Combat Controller; 1 Marine; 1 Air Force pilot (who's flown both B-1s and Predators); and an Electronic Warfare Weapons School graduate.

¹¹ See Lamb and Munsing, "Secret Weapon," p. 23, and Lamb and Cinnamond, "Unity of Effort," p. 7. *Secret Weapon* also notes Special Forces officers who were instrumental in supporting the indirect approach. For other celebrated example of Special Forces using the indirect approach to good effect see Linda Robinson, *Masters of Chaos: The Secret History of the Special Forces*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2004 and William Doyle, *A Soldier's Dream: Captain Travis Patriquin and the Awakening of Iraq*. New York: New American Library, 2011.

recently that SOF “needs to get much more serious about who it needs for its ‘by, with, and through’ forces: namely...highly adaptable thinkers with a depth and breadth of life experience, some of which should probably come from ventures outside the military.”¹²

USSOCOM will also need to rebuild SOF language and cross-cultural skill sets applicable to parts of the world other than Iraq and Afghanistan, which have absorbed more than eight-five percent of SOF personnel over the past decade.¹³ SOF, particularly but not exclusively Army Special Forces, have sacrificed area orientation, language proficiency, and cultural appreciation within their assigned regions since 9/11. The operational demands of the Iraq and Afghan theaters led to a substantial degradation of SOF indirect skills. Reconstituting these critical capabilities will require significant investment and time and will be a leadership and management challenge.

Similarly, USSOCOM needs to improve the ability of its military information support forces (which used to be called psychological operations forces), to support SOF indirect approaches. Like all SOF, military information support forces can make contributions in major combat operations as well as irregular war, but their contribution is more critical to the success of the latter.¹⁴ Success in irregular warfare often depends upon separating irregular enemies from the general population, and SOF can make major contributions toward this end. Making a significant impact in irregular warfare though information management is a demanding enterprise, and historically USSOCOM has not invested sufficient leadership, time and resources to ensure its military information

¹² Anna Simons, “SOF 2030,” p. 4.

¹³ Hearing of the Senate Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities: *Hearing to Receive Testimony on U.S. Special Operations Command in Review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2010 and the Future Years Defense Program*, June 18, 2009.

¹⁴ See Christopher J. Lamb with Paris Genalis, [Review of Psychological Operations Lessons Learned from Recent Operational Experience](#), Occasional Paper, National Defense University Press, September 2005.

support forces are up to the task. Military information operations deal with human attitudes and motivations in a cross-cultural setting. Arguably, such operations are among the most complex work that SOF performs. Yet the selection process for these forces is not nearly as rigorous as it is for other SOF. Also, relative to the work that SOF military information support specialists must do, their training is minimal. Improving their ability to make a consistent impact in operations against irregular threats is another major challenge for SOF leadership.

One way to improve the SOF's indirect skills would be to give USSOCOM additional assets that could specialize in open source socio-cultural knowledge accumulation. It has been argued that our enemies are much more at home in our world than we are in theirs, which gives them a strategic advantage.¹⁵ Terrorists understand our vulnerabilities and how to exploit them better than we do theirs. They also tend to recruit and draw support from among their immediate social circle of trust, and it is difficult for us to disrupt these sources of support if we do not understand the socio-cultural context within which they occur. Learning again the value of deep socio-cultural knowledge, the U.S. Army invested substantial assets in improving its ability to understand "human terrain" over the past decade. It created a Human Terrain System but placed it within the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, which was ill-suited to support the capability.¹⁶ The Human Terrain System program is now being curtailed to save resources and it is an open question whether the knowledge painfully acquired by the program will be retained. It should be, and USSOCOM or its component command, the U.S. Army

¹⁵ David Tucker and Christopher Lamb, "Restructuring Special Operations Forces for Emerging Threats," *Strategic Forum* No. 219, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, January 2006.

¹⁶ This was reported in a congressionally mandated study. See Yvette Clinton, Virginia Foran-Cain, Julia Voelker McQuaid, Catherine E. Norman, and William H. Sims, with Sara M. Russell, *Congressionally Directed Assessment of the Human Terrain System*, CNA Analysis & Solutions, November 2010, p. 3.

Special Operations Command, might be a better organizational fit for the program.¹⁷

The Human Terrain System and its deployable teams could help prepare SOF for their deployments in peacetime as well as war, alerting them to key figures in traditional networks and about local attitudes and relationships that are important to the success of SOF indirect approaches. They could also assist SOF military information support operations, including their support to U.S. embassies. Properly resourced and trained, they could serve as linguistic and social interpreters for other U.S. forces as well, supporting major combat operations when required but focused especially on irregular warfare.

SOF needs interagency collaboration as much or even more for its indirect as its direct approach to securing strategic objectives. Engineering interagency collaboration will be just as challenging for the indirect missions as the direct, albeit for different reasons. Other departments and agencies typically are better disposed to SOF efforts to work with indigenous forces because host nation governments prefer this approach. However, SOF has not exercised or resourced its indirect skills in the interagency context nearly as rigorously as it has its direct approach. Moreover, maintaining Congressional support, and therefore resources, for a sustained indirect strategy may be challenging.

In the distant and near past SOF have conducted major indirect campaigns successfully, but not without complications. Earlier this decade it was briefly popular to refer to SOF's successful indirect approach to counterinsurgency as the "El Salvador" model. Even though Special Forces successfully executed an indirect response to insurgency in

¹⁷ The witness and three other researchers at National Defense University are close to finishing a year long study on the Human Terrain Teams that explains the reasons for their variable performance, why the large majority of commanders found them useful, and why they collectively were unable to make a major contribution to the counterinsurgency effort.

El Salvador, those responsible for managing the effort reported that obtaining interagency collaboration and sustained resources were major problems.¹⁸ More recently, SOF have worked well with indigenous forces in Colombia and the Philippines, but again, not without complications. For example, according to one authoritative source, the mission in the Philippines almost was stillborn because of objections from the Department of Defense. However, the willingness of SOF to work through the U.S. Ambassador's country team and insistence on working with the host nation forces were two indispensable requirements for success that SOF met, and they constitute a sound model for expanding SOF indirect activities in the future.¹⁹

How should SOF authorities, resourcing, and force structure change?

News reports and recent congressional testimony suggest the Commander, USSOCOM is seeking additional authority and resources for two notable initiatives, which may be related.²⁰ The details are obscure, but in the first case, USSOCOM apparently wants to streamline deployment processes so SOF can congregate with greater agility in response to evolving circumstances, and particularly in response to terrorist activities. In briefly describing the initiative, Admiral McRaven emphasized that SOF would not move without concurrence from Geographic Combatant Commanders and the Department of State.²¹ USSOCOM also is interested in increasing the authority and funding for

¹⁸ Corr, Edwin G, and Stephen Sloan. *Low-intensity Conflict: Old Threats in a New World*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1992, pp. 33-35; 230ff.

¹⁹ David S. Maxwell, Statement to the House Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities. *Understanding Future Irregular Warfare Challenges*, March 27, 2012, p. 24; see also David. S. Maxwell, "Foreign Internal Defense: An Indirect Approach to Counter-Insurgency/Counter Terrorism, Lessons from Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines for dealing with Non-Existential Threats to the United States." Proc. of Irregular Warfare Challenges and Opportunities, Conference of the Foreign Policy Research Institute, Washington, DC. December 6, 2011. 8.

²⁰ Eric Schmitt, Mark Mazzetti and Thom Shanker, "Admiral Seeks Freer Hand in Deployment of Elite Forces, The New York Times, February 12, 2012.

²¹ See Adm. McRaven testimony in Hearing of the House Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities: *The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces: Ten Years After 9/11 and Twenty-Five Years After Goldwater-Nichols*, September 22, 2011.

Geographic Combatant Commands' Theater Special Operations Commands. Admiral McRaven testified that he wanted to build up the Theater Special Operations Commands "so that they have the entire spectrum of capability that I think they will need for the future."²² Later reports indicate that Admiral McRaven's proposals included "regional security coordination centers, organized and structured similarly to NATO SOF Headquarters,"²³ and new authority to train and equip foreign security forces. The new authority to train and equip was not approved,²⁴ but the Secretary of State has gone out of her way to make her support for a partnership with USSOCOM known.²⁵

Without knowing the details, and considering that these proposals are still under review, it is hard to comment. I know friends of the SOF community who are worried about expansion of SOF authorities and resources. They believe it might undermine the fragile interagency collaboration SOF has done so much to advance over the past decade, and also are concerned that new authorities and resources would only be used to further imbalance SOF in favor of its direct approach. In this regard, it should be noted that in the past the Theater Special Operations Commands have argued that they are under resourced by USSOCOM for their highly important indirect activities. They often argue that the SOF emphasis on direct action needs to be complemented with the requirement to "understand" the operating environment better and act indirectly. Theater Special Operations Commands can provide better and more current understanding of the local operating environment if properly resourced and supported by USSOCOM.

²² Senate Armed Services Committee: Hearing on the Proposed Fiscal 2013 Defense Authorization as it Relates to the U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command, March 6, 2012.

²³ Barbara Opall-Rome, "U.S. Seeks Global Spec Ops Network," *Defense News*, 12 May 2012, available at <<http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120512/DEFREG02/305120003>>.

²⁴ Eric Schmitt, "Elite Military Forces are Denied in Bid for Expansion," *The New York Times*, June 4, 2012.

²⁵ Paul McLeary, "State, DoD Command Forge Unlikely Partnership," *Federal Times*, June 4, 2012.

Taking Admiral McRaven's initiatives at face value, I believe they deserve attention and support. The USSOCOM initiative to increase resources for Theater Special Operations Commands is long over due. I also consider it a positive development that USSOCOM wants to pursue a trans-regional counterterrorist strategy with greater alacrity and in close cooperation with Geographic Combatant Commands, the Department of State, and presumably other interagency partners. Those charged with responsibility for national policy and strategy must ensure that counterterrorism strategy objectives strike the right balance among competing objectives, including the mix of direct and indirect SOF missions, and that Theater Special Operations Commands work as hard on interagency collaboration as SOF special mission units have.

My note of caution concerns resources. Better resourcing the Theater Special Operations Commands may require difficult tradeoffs. USSOCOM may be over optimistic about the resources available to SOF in the coming decade. It needs to consider some areas for cost-saving reductions. One possible area is the Army Special Forces force structure. As operational tempo recedes and Special Forces reclaim their indirect skills sets for diverse regions around the world, some of the fourth battalions added to Special Forces Groups might be reduced. Through careful management, Special Forces could retain personnel with the greatest indirect skills, and thus build up this scarce capability faster than otherwise would be the case. Reducing force structure would also allow a personnel float that would permit more time with families and allow longer periods of training to regain eroded skill sets.

What USSOCOM and interagency changes should be considered?

Both SOF direct and indirect approaches depend upon high levels of interagency collaboration. As noted, it will be just as challenging to secure and maintain interagency support for indirect missions as it has

been for direct action. SOF facilitated interagency collaboration for its direct approach to counterterrorism with an extensive network of costly SOF personnel placed in other departments and agencies, and by covering much of the cost associated with collaboration in the field. Such resources are typically not available for SOF's indirect efforts, and it will be especially difficult to obtain them in the current resource-constrained environment. In the future, sustaining interagency collaboration this way, for either SOF direct or indirect approaches, may be cost prohibitive. It certainly is not efficient. On the other hand, disengaging from interagency collaboration efforts would have a profoundly negative impact on SOF ability to be successful with either the direct or indirect approach.

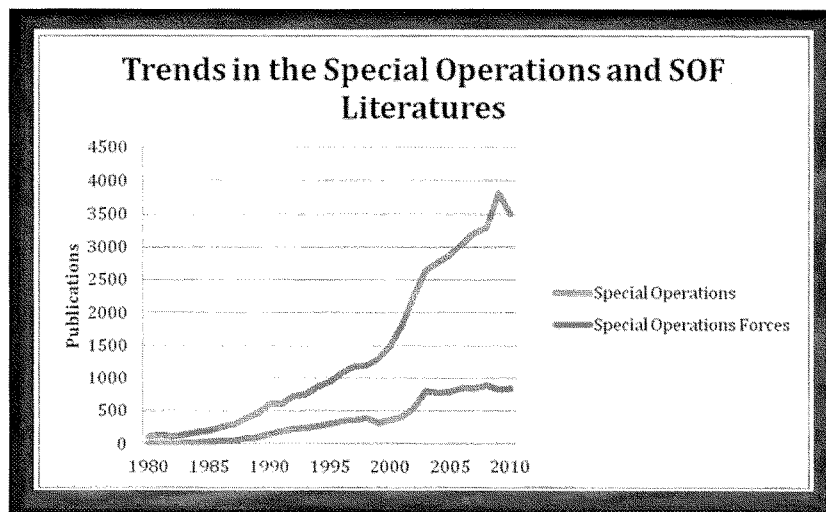
Consequently, finding a more efficient and reliable way to obtain interagency collaboration should be a priority. Many distinguished national security theoreticians and practitioners have gone on record supporting national security reform that would, among other things, provide higher levels of interagency collaboration on a routine basis.²⁶ Even without such general reform, Ambassador Edward Marks and I have argued elsewhere that Congress could collaborate with the President on specific executive branch authorities that would significantly improve our ability to field low cost interagency teams capable of higher levels of collaboration.²⁷ Absent such new authorities, I believe there is still evidence that interagency small groups can perform at higher levels in some circumstances. We need to research small group attributes and conditions that permit better interagency collaboration. Such work is

²⁶ Project on National Security Reform, Forging a New Shield. Arlington, VA: Center for the Study of the Presidency. December 2008. Available at:

<http://www.pnsr.org/data/files/pnsr_forging_a_new_shield_report.pdf>.

²⁷ Christopher Lamb and Edward Marks, "Chief of Mission Authority as a Model for National Security Integration," Strategic Perspectives, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, December 2010.

currently underway at National Defense University with the help and assistance of USSOCOM.²⁸



Finally, given the challenges discussed above, USSOCOM should consider options for strengthening USSOCOM's learning capacity. Admiral McRaven reportedly has said he would like to make SOF the most educated force within the Department of Defense. This might seem like a major challenge given historic trends in SOF operational tempo that militate against extended learning opportunities. However, operational commitments have not prevented USSOCOM from taking advantage of an excellent graduate education program for SOF at the Naval Postgraduate School. Theses by SOF students there constitute some of the best professional literature on SOF. Admiral McRaven published his Naval Postgraduate School thesis on the theory of SOF direct action, and it is widely acknowledged to be a work of enduring value.

²⁸ To date the organizational performance team at the Center for Strategic Studies has produced three in-depth case studies on extraordinary interagency collaboration. A forthcoming book will compare and contrast these and additional case studies for insights on how to achieve higher levels of collaboration despite existing constraints in the current national security system.

Otherwise, good research on SOF is not abundant. The vast majority of literature on SOF is for general audiences and describes the operations SOF conduct (see chart above),²⁹ and often without the benefit of access to all relevant sources of information and insights. It succeeds mostly in revealing a surprising amount of detail on SOF tactics, techniques and procedures, but seldom illuminates major problems and opportunities in a dispassionate and analytic manner. Among the remaining literature that examines SOF, there are few studies that examine SOF from a strategic perspective, as students of SOF have often noted.

SOF cultural temperament may be a greater impediment to SOF learning. The secrecy surrounding special operations and the critical importance SOF place on operational security can engender an insular culture not readily amenable to empirical studies of SOF performance. In addition, SOF are culturally biased toward action, individually extremely intelligent as a general rule, and highly confident of their capabilities. In recent years SOF have proved adept at taking good ideas from diverse sources and solving problems creatively, but they are less inclined to encourage the kind of self-examination that is at the heart of all real learning.

Thus, USSOCOM may want to consider a small in-house USSOCOM capability to conduct independent research and analysis on topics of major importance for senior commanders. USSOCOM could call upon former SOF trained at the Naval Postgraduate School or other first rate institutions. An in-house capability with some longevity and Commander protection would be familiar enough with SOF to avoid elementary observations or inefficient start-up costs, but independent enough to give

²⁹ I am indebted to Shane Bilsborough for this chart and the research it represents. He used Google Scholar to survey the number of publications on special operations versus special operations forces.

USSOCOM leaders candid appraisals of SOF performance and opportunities for innovation. Industry and even other government organizations have made good use of such learning centers to improve performance and promote change. Such units typically require insider status and high-level protection or their activities can be suppressed by those responsible for immediate operations.

Conclusion

SOF are tremendous assets to the nation, well-recognized for their major role in safeguarding our collective security over the past decade. They deserve our profound gratitude, as do all our fellow citizens who have gone in harm's way to protect our country and our way of life. I appreciate the opportunity to share some thoughts on how SOF can best meet the challenges of the future security environment, and again commend the subcommittee for investigating this topic.

**Curriculum Vitae
Christopher Jon Lamb**

Work Experience

Distinguished Research Fellow, Center for Strategic Research, Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS). Conducts research, produces scholarly publications and delivers presentations to the Joint Staff and Office of the Secretary of Defense and other informed audiences on national security policy, strategy and organization, and on U.S. defense strategy, requirements, plans and programs, and strategic military concepts. (2004 - Present)

Interim Director, INSS and Director, Center for Strategic Research. Served as the interim Director of INSS, guiding it through a period of reorganization at the request of the President of National Defense University. Upon completion of the reorganization, served as the director of one of INSS' research centers until a permanent follow-on candidate was identified. The Center for Strategic Research provides advice to the Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and combatant commands, and conducts independent and leading-edge research and analysis in directed areas of strategic and regional importance. (Jan. 2010 – Jan. 2011)

Director, Research & Analysis, Project on National Security Reform (PNSR). Responsible for the Project's ground-breaking, 800 page, 2008 study on how to reform the national security system, "Forging a New Shield." Dr. Lamb managed the work of 10 groups with more than 300 national security professionals, each headed by a senior leader with experience in the national security system and/or organizational reform. Dr. Lamb worked with PNSR's Guiding Coalition, twenty five senior national security leader of four-star rank, including former national security advisors. (2006 - 2008)

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD), Resources and Plans. Responsible for Policy development of defense planning (including resource allocation for the defense program), contingency planning (including development of war plans), and transformation planning guidance. Also responsible for Policy oversight of requirements, acquisition, and resource allocation. From Sept. 2000 through May 2001 responsibilities included oversight of counterproliferation policy, including bilateral and multilateral discussions with allies and potential coalition partners. Acting DASD until confirmed in August 2002 (2000 – 2004).

Director of Requirements and Plans in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Responsible for policy oversight of Department of Defense planning processes used to define requirements for US forces, including development of defense planning scenarios. Executed contingency and war plans review on behalf of the Secretary of Defense. Responsible for defining and overseeing the DoD approach for achieving a transformation of US forces to meet 21st Century challenges. (1998 - 2001)

Deputy Director for Military Development, Interagency Task Force on Stabilization in the

Balkans. Responsible for developing and executing plans to provide for an adequate defense of the Bosnian Federation by training and equipping Bosnian Federation Armed Forces, and for administration of donated US equipment and international funds for that purpose. Administered a half billion-dollar program consisting of U.S. equipment, foreign donations and private sector training contractors. (1995-98)

Director, Policy Planning, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict. Responsible for developing policy and requirements for Special Operations Forces, including an approximately \$3 billion budget, and for Department of Defense policy, roles and capabilities in low-intensity conflict. (1990-95)

Adjunct Professor, Georgetown University. National Security Studies Program. Teaching courses on low-intensity conflict. (1993 – 1997)

Foreign Service Officer, Department of State. Primary responsibility was political and economic analysis and reporting. Also managed consular anti-fraud and immigrant visa sections. Served in Haiti, Ivory Coast and Department of Defense. (1985-92)

Research Fellow and Acting Director, Political Committee, North Atlantic Assembly (Brussels). Managed day-to-day business of the political committee; produced reports on “NATO Manpower Issues” and “The Technology of Military Space Systems.” (1981-82)

Instructor, Ohio University. Taught courses on U.S. Foreign Policy and Introduction to International Relations. (1982)

Education

Doctorate of Philosophy, International Relations, Georgetown University. 1986
Masters of Arts, International Relations, Ohio University. 1980
Bachelor of Arts, Political Science and History, Pittsburg State University. 1978

Publications, Reports and Congressional Testimony

“Deception, Disinformation, and Strategic Communications: How One Interagency Group Made a Major Difference,” with Fletcher Schoen, Strategic Perspectives 11, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, June 2012.

“Expanding Chief of Mission Authority to Produce Unity of Effort,” with Edward Marks, Interagency Essay 11-02, Col. Arthur D. Simons Center for the Study of Interagency Cooperation, May 2011.

“Interagency National Security Teams: Can Social Science Contribute,” with lead author James Douglas Orton, PRISM, Volume 2, No. 2, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, March 2011.

“How to Foster Real Interagency Coordination,” with Edward Marks, Defense News,

February 21, 2011.

“Secret Weapon: High-value Target Teams as an Organizational Innovation,” with Evan Munsing, *Strategic Perspectives*, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, March 2011.

“Chief of Mission Authority as a Model for National Security Integration,” with Edward Marks, *Strategic Perspectives*, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, December 2010.

“Unified Effort: Key to Special Operations and Irregular Warfare in Afghanistan,” with Martin Cinnamond, *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 56, 1st Quarter, 2010.

“Unity of Effort: Key to Success in Afghanistan,” with Martin Cinnamond, *Strategic Forum* No. 248, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, October, 2009.

“Unified Afghan Effort: Multiple Agencies Must Join to Establish Stability,” with Martin Cinnamond, *Defense News*, August 17, 2009.

“Three Pillars of Reform,” in *Global Strategic Assessment 2009: America’s Security Role in a Changing World*, edited by Patrick Cronin, National Defense University Press, 2009.

“MRAPs, Irregular Warfare, and Pentagon Reform,” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 55, 4th Quarter 2009.

“MRAPs, Irregular Warfare, and Pentagon Reform,” with Matthew Schmidt and Berit Fitzsimmons, Occasional Paper, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, June 2009.

Forging a New Shield. Arlington, VA: Center for the Study of the Presidency, Project on National Security Reform, December 2008. Available at:
<http://www.pnsr.org/data/files/pnsr_forging_a_new_shield_report.pdf>.

“Redesigning White House and Interagency Structures,” in *Civilian Surge: Key to Complex Operations*, Center for Technology and National Security Policy, National Defense University, December 2008.

“The *Mayaguez* Crisis Mini Case Study,” with Alexandra A. Singer, in Case Studies, Volume II, Project on National Security Reform, 2008.

“Somalia: Did Leaders or the System Fail?,” with Nicholas Moon, in Case Studies, Volume I, Project on National Security Reform, 2008.

Joint Forces Quarterly, “Reforming Pentagon Decisionmaking with a Decision Support Cell,” with Irving Lachow, 4th Quarter, 2006.

U.S. Special Operations Forces, with David Tucker, Columbia University Press, 2007.

"What the Troops Need: 1947 National Security Act Tangled in Politics, Turf Fights," with COL Michael Bell, *Defense News*, April 9, 2007.

Joint Forces Quarterly, "Reforming Pentagon Decisionmaking with a Decision Support Cell," with Irving Lachow, 4th Quarter, 2006.

"Reforming Pentagon Strategic Decision Making," with Irving Lachow, *Strategic Forum* No. 221, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, July 2006.

With Mike Casey, "Armored Arguments: Tougher U.S. Vehicular Armor Critical to Success," *Defense News*, February 13, 2006.

"Restructuring Special Operations Forces for Emerging Threats," with David Tucker, *Strategic Forum* No. 219, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, January 2006.

With Michael Casey, "Fading Transformation? Reject Any Effort To Close OFT," *Defense News*, November 14, 2005.

With contributions from M. Elaine Bunn, Charles Lutes, and Christopher Cavoli, Transforming Defense, Occasional Paper, National Defense University Press, September 2005.

With a contribution from Paris Genalis, Review of Psychological Operations Lessons Learned from Recent Operational Experience, Occasional Paper, National Defense University Press, September 2005

With James Przystup, "Beigun no Toransufohmehshon to Higashi Ajia no Anzenhoshou (Transformation of the U.S. Military and East Asian Security)," Kokusai Mondai, No.539 (February 2005), pp. 27-43.

"Information Operations as a Core Competency," Joint Forces Quarterly, Issue 36, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, December 2004).

"Give the Troops the Right Armor in Iraq," with Joel Wiegert, commentary in Defense News, May 3, 2004.

"Dealing with a nuclear North Korea," with James J. Przystup, commentary in the Washington Times, February 22, 2004.

"Guerrilla Warfare," in Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Relations, Council on Foreign Relations (American Reference Publishing Co.: Lakeville, CT, 1998).

“Information Age Technology and Operations Other Than War,” in War in the Information Age (Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1997).

“Peacetime Engagements,” with David Tucker, in America’s Armed Forces: A Handbook of Current and Future Capabilities, ed. by Sam Sarkesian (Greenwood Publishing Co.: Westport, CT, 1996).

“Perspectives on Emerging SOF Roles and Missions,” in Special Warfare (July, 1995).

Belief Systems and Decision Making in the Mayaguez Crisis: Gainesville, Florida: The University of Florida Press, 1989. Reviewed favorably in: Perspectives in Political Science (“Deserves to be included on the same shelf as Allison’s “essence of Decision” because of the rigor of analysis”); Choice (“a significant contribution to the literature on crisis behavior, decision-making models and US foreign policy”), and Political Science Quarterly (“an excellent case study...a rich source of both historical information and theoretical insights”).

How to Think About Arms Control, Disarmament and Defense. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1988.

“What Demosthenes Could Whisper to Reagan,” National Review (June 14, 1985).

“Belief Systems and Decision Making in the Mayaguez Crisis,” Political Science Quarterly (Winter 1984-85).

“The Nature of Proxy Warfare,” in The Future of Conflict in the 1980s, ed. by William Taylor (Lexington, Books, 1983).

“The Ambassador in U.S. Foreign Policy: Changing Patterns in Roles, Selection, and Designation.” Committee Print for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: U.S. Congress (GPO: 1981). Reprinted in Martin F. Herz, ed. The Modern Ambassadors: The Challenge and the Search. Washington, Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 1983.

“Public Opinion and Nuclear Weapons in Europe,” NATO Review (December, 1981).

Web Commentaries

“Confused Chickens Come Home to Roost,” Institute for National Strategic Studies blog at: http://ndupress.blogspot.com/2010/07/more-on-miso_20.html, July 20, 2010.

With James Douglas Orton, “Does General Jones Have a Future in National Security Reform?,” June 30, 2009,” commentary in The Project on National Security Reform blog; at: <http://pnsrblog.wordpress.com/>

With James Douglas Orton, “Contra Rothkopf,” commentary in The National Interest

Online, May 5, 2009; at: <http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=21422>

With Lukas Von Krshiwoblozki, "Public Diplomacy Conversations with a European," posted electronically, March 26, 2005, at: http://www.worldsecuritynetwork.com/showArticle3.cfm?Article_ID=11173

Honors

2010: Joint Distinguished Civilian Service Award, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
2003: Presidential Rank Award, Senior Executive Service
2002: Meritorious Civilian Service Award, Department of Defense
1999: Superior Honor Award, Department of State
1997: Meritorious Civilian Service Award, Department of Defense
1993 - 2005: Church Elder and Deacon
1992: Entered Senior Executive Service
1991: Meritorious Honor Award (Group), Department of State
1985: Gerald R. Ford Foundation Research Fellow
1984: National Strategy Information Fellow
1981-2: Research Fellow, North Atlantic Assembly
1980: Foreign Policy and National Defense Research Fellow, Congressional Research Service

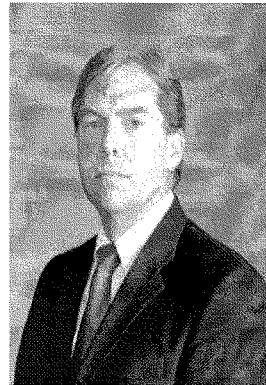
NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Christopher J. Lamb

Director, Center for Strategic Research
Institute for National Strategic Studies

Dr. Christopher J. Lamb currently serves as the Director, Center for Strategic Research in the Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) at National Defense University. He joined the Institute in January 2004 as a Distinguished Research Fellow. He conducts research on national security strategy, policy and organizational reform, and on defense strategy, requirements, plans and programs.

Prior to joining INSS Dr. Lamb served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Resources and Plans where he had oversight of requirements, acquisition, and resource allocation matters for the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy). He was responsible for Strategic Planning Guidance, Transformation Planning Guidance, Contingency Planning Guidance, the Information Operations Roadmap and oversight of Combatant Commander contingency planning.



Dr. Lamb has been Director of Policy Planning in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict; Deputy Director for Military Development on the State Department's Interagency Task Force for Military Stabilization in the Balkans; and as Director for Requirements and Plans in the Office of Secretary of Defense.

From 1985 to 1992 Dr. Lamb was a Foreign Service Officer, serving in Haiti and Ivory Coast. He received his doctorate in International Relations from Georgetown University in 1986. From 1993 through 1998 he was an Adjunct Professor in the National Security Studies program at Georgetown University.

In 2008 Dr. Lamb was assigned to lead the Project for National Security Reform (PNSR) study of the national security system, which led to the 2008 report, "Forging a New Shield." His recent research also includes studies on national security and defense reform, military requirements and transformation, strategic communications, and special operations forces.

Dr. Lamb has received the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Distinguished Civilian Service Award, a Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Senior Executive Service, the Superior Honor award from the Department of State, and Meritorious Civilian Service awards from the Department of Defense.

Statement for the record on U.S. SOCOM and SOF Futures**Offered by Dr. Jacquelyn K. Davis****Before the U.S. Congress****House of Representatives****Committee on Armed Services****Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities****Hearing, July 11, 2012**

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to express my views on the future of U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) and the opportunity to suggest some ideas for utilizing SOF more effectively in the 21st century strategic environment and as crucial tools to enhance preventive planning before a crisis or conflict occurs.

U.S. SOF have always been deployed for both kinetic Direct Action and non-kinetic engagement, or Indirect Action, missions, but over the last several years, in particular, preventive SOF deployments aimed at building partner capacities and shaping regional environments have emerged as particularly important mission-sets for U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and SOF. Building and nurturing partner security forces is often the price of admission for U.S. access to countries or key regional theaters. Moreover, as more and more nations object to the presence of large American forces deployed in their countries, SOF units, with their small "footprint" are oftentimes more acceptable options. For this reason, U.S. SOF Indirect Action engagements are likely to become even more important going forward as budgets become tighter and the imperative to operate jointly is matched by a growing requirement to work with partners, be they from the Interagency, outside of the U.S. government in International Organizations or from Non-Governmental Organizations, or with allied or partner SOFs.

SOCOM and U.S. SOF have emphasized partner relationships in the past, what is new today and what will likely characterize future operations is the extent to which SOF operate in the pre-crisis and post-crises ends of the conflict spectrum, building partner capacities, training and equipping allied and partner nation forces, and supporting the Interagency in the attainment of broader national security objectives. In the current security setting and as we look to the future, preventive action has become fundamental to U.S. strategic and operational planning and essential to gaining the initiative in key regional theaters with respect to counter-terrorism planning, countering illicit networks and trafficking, and for fostering intelligence collaboration and fusion between U.S. and partner nation SOF and national intelligence agencies. This creates a new imperative for U.S. SOCOM and for

the augmentation of Indirect Action engagement missions, which may include civil affairs, stability operations, or humanitarian assistance in areas that terrorists and other bad actors may seek to exploit.

This is not to diminish in any way the importance of Direct Action missions for U.S. SOF; obviously, Direct Action training and deployments are fundamental to SOF's core competencies, which include: Direct Action, Special Reconnaissance, Civil Affairs (CA), Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Information Operations (IO), and Psychological Operations (PsyOps) to support stability operations, Unconventional Warfare (UW), counter-terrorism (CT), counter-insurgency (COIN) and combatting-weapons of mass destruction (C-WMD) mission sets. In this regard, the special mission units under Joint Special Operations Command's (JSOC's) control should, in my view, remain principally postured to implement kinetic Direct Action missions as tasked by our National Command Authority (NCA). The growing importance of Indirect Action, however, arises from the need to prepare and shape the security planning environment in a very deliberate way, as well as from the fact that the SOF soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine has specialized skill sets that are particularly well-suited to the Indirect Mission set. Both factors have led to the increased demand for Joint Combined Exchange and Training (JCET) deployments of U.S. SOF, as well as to the desire by indigenous SOF and national Ministry of Interior forces to work more closely with U.S. SOF units to interdict enemy networks that are threatening national or regional security interests.

Without question, recognition of the need to prepare and shape the planning environment in a very deliberate way, as well as an appreciation of the fact that the U.S. defense budget is coming down and our overseas force and basing presence is changing mandates a broader use of SOF for Indirect Action and engagement activities. Because of its unique force attributes, U.S. SOF have an ability to position themselves in environments that are not conducive to effective general purpose force (GPF) operations or interventions. To a large extent, this means having a capability that is culturally attuned and able to understand and operate in the developing world, especially in the densely-populated, poorly governed, urban environments that are taking shape in key coastal areas, and that will likely pose multiple security challenges for years to come. This is what U.S. SOF are increasingly being trained to do.

For this reason, U.S. SOF quite likely will find themselves deployed forward more frequently and focused on missions that seek to train and equip friendly SOF units, build partner capacities to achieve capabilities that can operate seamlessly with U.S. forces or by themselves, if need be. Indeed, one of the key imperatives for future U.S. SOF deployments and operations is a requirement to operate with indigenous forces, using common tactics, doctrine, and procedures. This emerging reality demands new thinking about security force assistance (SFA) and the amalgamation of tools to facilitate Indirect Action missions, which for U.S. Special Operations Forces might include training and exercising with partner SOFs, information collaboration and fusion, and the development of educational opportunities to

promote common doctrine, tactics, and procedures, synergistic acquisition/material requirements, and a shared awareness of “lessons-learned from operational experiences. Indeed, the objective of this Indirect Action approach is to get to an end-state in which partner capacities can operate seamlessly with U.S. forces and be leveraged to support shared interests. Interoperability is a key objective of partner engagement and it should be the focus of a large percentage of U.S. security cooperation activities.

With a force slated to grow to about 71,000 troops, SOCOM will have the resources to implement these two lines of operation, i.e., Direct Action and the Indirect Approach. To do so as effectively as possible, however, the Commander of U.S. SOCOM must be able to oversee the global management of U.S. SOF forces, to include the deployment of CONUS-based SOF overseas to satisfy presence missions and to meet emerging contingency requirements. This, inevitably, leads to the conclusion that SOCOM needs the authorities and flexibility to posture SOF for Indirect Action and contingency-specific missions. Practically, this means that a larger percentage of U.S. SOF forces deployed in CONUS—around 90% of all U.S. SOF—needs to be deployed overseas, perhaps, at a minimum on a rotational basis, to ensure that they remain culturally attuned, regionally-focused, and strategically positioned to respond to any contingency.

To do this, however, U.S. SOCOM must be given new authorities to manage and resource global contingency deployments and theater SOF forces. In this connection, it seems to me that the Unified Command Plan (UCP) should be adjusted to provide the SOCOM commander with the flexibility to move forces from one theater to another and to increase his responsibility for peacetime planning, training, and exercising of theater SOF units. At the same time, I believe that Congress should take another look at Goldwater-Nichols with respect to DoD’s functional commands—i.e., TRANSCOM, STRATCOM, CYBERCOM and SOCOM—with the objective of addressing the command relationships and responsibilities of these “global” commands in relation to the Regional Combatant Commands (RCCs).

Against many emerging threats, the United States must be able to act quickly and to transcend RCC Areas of Responsibility (AORs). We must be more agile in anticipating and responding to looming security challenges and in positioning U.S. SOF forces to be more proactive in shaping and influencing strategic perspectives and allied/partner decision-making. From my perspective, this necessitates giving U.S. SOCOM combatant command (CoCom) authority, in peacetime, over the Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) and all forward-based U.S. SOF, as it already has for U.S.-based SOF. Right now the RCCs have this authority over the TSOCs and with it comes the responsibility for manning, training and resourcing forward-based SOF units. From my perspective, this has created tensions with other RCC priorities and has resulted in the under-resourcing of the TSOCs. In some instances this has contributed to less focused TSOC training as compared to that of other joint SOF commands, such as JSOC, which is flourishing under SOCOM’s authority. Giving SOCOM CoCom over the TSOCs will address resourcing and training shortfalls and it

will focus the TSOCs on regional priorities in support of broader U.S. national objectives and interests. It will also provide a more effective means for managing global SOF forces and allow the Commander of SOCOM the necessary agility to move forces from theater to theater to address an emergency. Global force management is a necessity, not a luxury, in the current strategic environment.

In addition to revising Goldwater-Nichols, I believe that Congress needs to address SOCOM's resourcing. Specifically, I believe that SOCOM would benefit from multi-year authorities to build partnerships with key SOF units. However, until Congress and the Executive Branch resolve the issue of "who owns" the security assistance and security force assistance mission sets, DoD, by default and in practice because of its resources, will be given the bulk of the Security Force Assistance (SFA) missions. In the SOF arena, if the Command is tasked to take on SFA missions as part of a broader U.S. security assistance and engagement strategy, it ought to emphasize training with MoD and MOI units for persistent presence missions beyond counter-terrorism planning, for which some authorities already exist. I recognize, in this regard, that Congress has set forth a "Global Contingency Authority" in the expectation that SOF might use it to support SOCOM activities overseas, but as presently legislated this "authority" may not work as well for smaller, peacetime engagements and in support of persistent presence deployments in areas where threats may not be immediately apparent but looming on the horizon.

Providing SOCOM with this type of responsibility for the TSOCs in peacetime would in no way undermine the RCC commander's wartime command and control of operations in his theater; it would simply provide SOCOM, as a global and functional command, with greater flexibility over the assignment and utilization of U.S. SOF forces. In other words, in an operational contingency, this would not change the supported/supporting command relationship between a regional theater command and SOCOM, but it would enhance the SOCOM commander's ability to employ U.S. SOF according to their regional expertise and in light of their specific skill sets. Effective resourcing of SOF also requires greater flexibility with regard to acquisition and material financing and with respect to some military construction (MILCON) activities. The intent here would be to provide U.S. SOCOM with the capacity to compress the timelines and expedite R&D and procurement when necessary. These "authorities-related" issues are not well understood outside of SOCOM circles and deserve more study, especially when considering a collaborative approach between State and DoD for SFA funding and activities.

SOCOM's embrace and promotion of the Indirect Approach places it in a unique and fortuitous position relative to other U.S. government entities, especially in light of the administration's ongoing strong support for the Command, as reflected in the FY13 DoD budget request. This is due largely to the fact that SOCOM, as a functional command, is able to transcend COCOM areas of responsibility in working with both traditional and non-traditional partners, a strategic advantage that is especially valuable in the conduct of counter-WMD (C-WMD), counter-insurgency (COIN), and counter-terrorism (CT) operations, SOF's priority mission sets that cross national

boundaries and even traditionally defined “regions.” Security Force Assistance missions, moreover, constitute an “operational space” that has yet to be definitively claimed by any one government agency or military branch, but for which SOCOM is also particularly well suited. Other government agencies, such as the State Department, and the various RCCs, of course, look at issues regionally, but there is no one entity (with the possible exception of National Counter-Terrorism Center on the intelligence side) responsible for examining these broader, networked, transnational issues that go to the very heart of SOCOM’s functional capabilities. For this reason, I believe that SOCOM should move forward and complement its “Global SOF Partnership” concept with the notion of a “Global SOF Network,” which would position U.S. SOCOM to track more effectively and disrupt/interdict cross-regional threats that increasingly have become more problematic for U.S. security planning. Given the current absence of a synchronizing entity to do just that, U.S. interests are not being adequately advanced and defended. In the “ways, means, and ends” equation, SOCOM, therefore, can fill an all-important “means” gap that has thus far plagued whole-of-government strategic planning in the field of transnational threats.

While SOCOM has the greatest SOF capabilities in the world, global problems require global partners and solutions. For SOCOM, this means forging ahead with the Global SOF Network concept noted above, to include securing buy-in from across the Interagency, the RCCs, and key regional allies and partners. This approach to 21st century security planning and SOF engagement will demand new thinking about frameworks for collaboration with allies, partners, and the U.S. Interagency to achieve common and shared national security objectives. One approach to achieving interoperability with key allies and partners and in support of a whole-of-government approach to regional engagement embodies the development of Regional SOF Coordination Centers, or RSCCs. The model for RSCC creation lies in the NATO SOF Headquarters (NSHQ), which began its existence as the NATO SOF Coordination Center, established by NATO at the Riga Summit in 2006. Late in 2009, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) approved the evolution of the NSCC to become the NATO SOF HQs, and in March 2010, this entity became “operational”. As an MOU organization, with the United States as the lead nation, the NSHQ operates as a “coalition of the willing” organization, including in Afghanistan where its intelligence fusion center operates, using Battlefield Information Collection and Exploitation System (BICES) technology, to provide timely information to operational units on the ground. The NSHQ has established a lessons-learned center at Chievres air base outside of Brussels, where it is building a professional military education curriculum for NATO SOF forces and interested Interagency participants, such as members of the intelligence community, and it has reached out to non-NATO European and extra-European partners for participation in NSHQ programs. This may be among the most exciting aspects of the NSHQ—that is, its ability to reach out and to work with non-NATO and Interagency partners, and this is precisely what we should be doing in other theaters, even without the benefit of the broader alliance networked umbrella that NATO provides for the NSHQ.

A similar lead-nation/MOU construct is envisaged for the RSCCs. While differences are evident across regional theaters—the most glaring being the absence of a multilateral, collective defense umbrella that resides at the heart of NATO—the RSCC construct is applicable, with modifications, to other geographical regions in which U.S. SOF are operating. One of the main purposes of the RSCCs would be to engage regional SOF organizations to help them prioritize and harmonize SOF planning and requirements, to extract and apply lessons learned from SOF deployments, and to improve information sharing and fusion, perhaps using the NSHQ's BICES network and technologies. By leveraging lessons learned from the NSHQ's Professional Military Education (PME) programs at Chièvres, the RSCCs can also contribute to SOF PME, training, and development on a wider global scale that is nonetheless tailored to specific regional needs and sensitivities. By focusing on training and education, the RSCC construct aims to achieve interoperability, one key objective of any SOF partnership activities. Enhanced intelligence collaboration and eventually fusion could emerge as a by-product of the RSCCs' training and education activities, as it has in and for the NSHQ. While each region would develop their RSCC in a unique, geographic-specific fashion, the core elements of a SOF coordination center would be constant, with its objectives of promoting interoperability and building partner capacities that can be leveraged by the United States in emergencies.

Creating regional RSCCs and empowering the Theater Special Operation Commands (TSOCs) for both Direct Action and the Indirect Approach is an indispensable part of implementing a Global SOF Network. Re-assessing the role of the functional commands in an updated variant of Goldwater-Nichols and giving the SOCOM commander combatant command authority over the TSOCs, as discussed above, would allow him to allocate resources and deploy forces to priority regions/contingencies in a timely fashion, and to ensure that the right forces (i.e., those with relevant linguistic skills and cultural expertise) are identified, earmarked, and prepared for specific regional deployments/contingencies. Mandating SOCOM combatant command authority over the TSOCs in peacetime would not impede a GCCs' wartime/operational control over SOF forces in his theater, nor would it undermine, on the State Department side, the chief of mission's authority in his or her respective embassy. In country, all U.S. SOF personnel would still operate under the aegis of the ambassador, with full disclosure of TSOC activities in both the Direct Action and the Indirect Action realms. Giving SOCOM combatant command authority over the TSOCs and all forward-based SOF would only facilitate SOCOM's capacity to move forces from one theater to another, leaving operational control of the TSOCs in the hands of the GCC commanders. Indeed, giving SOCOM CoCom authority over the TSOCs is not an attempt to sideline the RCCs, but rather reflective of an effort to develop a streamlined process for providing the regional commanders with the resources they really need, particularly when time is of the utmost importance.

Finally, for U.S. SOCOM, the real wildcard in its planning is Afghanistan. After 2014, it is not clear which allies will remain in theater, or how large the American

contingent will be. However, regardless of the size of American forces left in Afghanistan, it is clear that U.S. SOF will be an essential element of that commitment, and that all of the projected mission-taskings fall within SOF's core competencies. Moreover, U.S. and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) SOF activities in Afghanistan are the clearest illustration to date on the interlocking nature of Direct Action and Indirect Action missions. The NATO/ISAF mission makes it clear that the training and establishment of Afghan national security forces are vital metrics for determining Afghanistan's ability to "stand on its own" and subsequently set the conditions for a drawdown in the ISAF mission. At the same time, U.S. SOF's counterterrorism operations continue to provide the quick, decisive measures to provide the time and space that is necessary for these training and broader village stability operations to succeed. What has become clear after a decade of deployments is that the Direct Action approach was largely successful due to SOF's Indirect Action engagements. Stability after 2014 will depend in no small measure on how well we have succeeded in building our Afghan partners' capacities and on how effective SOF Direct Action operations continue to be, including with respect to interdicting transnational networks and threats.

Dr. Jacquelyn K. Davis



Dr. Davis is executive vice president of the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis. She is an expert on U.S. national security issues, with a focus on military force structure, Allied-coalition planning, defense and deterrence issues, challenges, and concepts, and interagency considerations. Her past work includes assessments written for USG leaders, interagency planners, and Alliance partners. She has lectured widely and has authored numerous publications, including recent assessments of the challenges that an Iran with nuclear weapons would present and the future of deterrence planning. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations ([CFR](#)), where she has participated in several study groups, and a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies ([IISS](#)). Dr. Davis was the chair of the Defense Advisory Committee for Women in the Services ([DACOWITS](#)) for an unprecedented three terms, and served on U.S. Special Operations Command's ([SOCOM's](#)) Futures Study Group.

Currently, she is a member of the Chief of Naval Operations' (CNO's) Executive Panel (CEP), where she has co-chaired several task forces, including one on Iran, an assessment of escalation management, and the Navy and the Global War on Terror. She also serves on U.S. European Command's ([EUCOM's](#)) Senior Advisory Group (SAG), and is working with NATO's SOF Coordination Center (NSCC) on its future evolution. Dr. Davis is working with operational planners responsible for the wider Afghanistan-Pakistan theater of operations, and with interagency officials on U.S. non-, and counter-proliferation planning. In 1987, she received the Defense Department's award for outstanding civilian service.

Dr. Davis speaks French and holds U.S. and NATO security clearances. She is also a member of London's Pilgrims.

She holds an M.A. and a Ph.D. in international relations from the University of Pennsylvania.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

JULY 11, 2012

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. LANGEVIN

Mr. LANGEVIN. 1) How do we deconflict and coordinate such capabilities within SOF from existing or nascent capabilities elsewhere in the Department of Defense and the intelligence community, and ensure proper oversight?

Ms. ROBINSON. There is a pressing need for a classified analysis of the mission, size and expenditure of organizations with overlapping missions to determine whether their roles and missions are clearly delineated, properly coordinated or at least deconflicted, and to some degree redundant. Such an analysis would look at potential redundancies as well as synergies between SOF and the CIA's Special Activities Division and DIA's DCS and CIA's NCS.

As established by law, the intelligence committees conduct oversight of intelligence activities and covert activities for which a presidential finding has been issued under Title 50, while the armed services committees conduct oversight of military activities and activities conducted by the military that are not covered by a Title 50 finding. Because the subject involves both military and intelligence entities, ideally such a study would have joint sponsorship by the HPSCI and HASC. In addition, members who sit on both committees have a unique ability to assess this issue comprehensively on an ongoing basis, and this membership might be harnessed in a more systematic fashion.

Historically, the main body of the CIA has believed its core mission is to collect intelligence rather than to conduct covert action. In practice, there seems to be a need for some resident covert action capability at CIA. The question is whether the missions and needed capability and capacity of the paramilitary SAD should be more clearly delineated. My observation from the field, while limited and anecdotal, is that coordination and unity of effort among the SAD and military units can be improved. While individual tactical units may work well together, there is no mechanism to ensure deconfliction at a minimum, or harmonization of effects, or even synergistic operations in the context of an overall campaign plan or strategy. SOF theater and national mission forces have taken an important step by establishing their first unified SOF command in Afghanistan, but the CIA's counterterrorism mission occurs in close proximity to SOF's without any similar coordinating construct. The CIA, of course, is not in the military chain of command.

On the military side, the armed services committees should and presumably are exercising their oversight responsibilities fully with regard to special access programs that do not fall under Title 50. The intelligence responsibilities of the military under Title 50 are quite extensive and oversight of these activities will presumably increase with the creation and expansion of the DCS at DIA. The degree to which redundancies between DCS and CIA's NCS may be created is an issue that should be examined. Battlefield or military intelligence requirements vice national or strategic intelligence requirements provide a starting point for deconfliction, but in practice this line can be difficult to draw. The past decade has demonstrated the effectiveness of closer collaboration between intelligence collectors and analysts and special operations forces. SOF operators are to some degree collectors, and operational preparation of the environment is a necessary part of special operations. Steps have been taken to deconflict the human source management issue, but this is only one aspect of the increasing overlap between special operations and intelligence activities. A comprehensive independent evaluation would help policymakers and legislators assess the requirements and organizational implications.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 2) Is SOCOM properly resourced to meet its current demands? In what ways will we need to adjust this resourcing as forces draw down in Afghanistan and begin to meet other demand signals for SOF capabilities?

Ms. ROBINSON. The current USSOCOM budget request for FY2013 of \$10.4 billion represented a slight decrease from the FY2012 \$10.4 billion spending level. While some additional savings may be found at the margins, the likely high ongoing demand for SOF to meet irregular threats in a cost-effective manner warrants maintaining the approximate current budget level.

However, a rebalancing of resources within the USSOCOM budget is advisable. My preliminary conclusion from the past 12 months of my Future of SOF study is that a resource shift of at least 25% will be required, as well as organizational reori-

entation, to fully optimize what USSOCOM commanders have called “the indirect approach.” Rebalancing existing USSOCOM resources to achieve this optimization, rather than providing additional resources, is the preferred option given the current fiscal constraints. While overall force levels in Afghanistan are declining, the requirement for SOF in Afghanistan is still unknown, pending specific decisions by U.S. policymakers and the government of Afghanistan pursuant to the Strategic Partnership Agreement announced in May. If SOF are to continue a foreign internal defense mission in addition to a counterterrorism mission, the levels of SOF required in Afghanistan could remain in the 7,000 range for some years. The unified SOF command (SOJTF) should be migrated to lower echelons to eliminate separate SOF commands; in addition the pooling of SOF lift and ISR represents a more cost-effective employment of SOF assets.

The demand signal for unilateral surgical strike missions will likely decline in the years ahead, but is likely to be more than matched by demand for employment of SOF in indirect or special warfare missions. (ADM McRaven has noted in testimony to Congress that there is unmet demand from other AORs as CENTCOM has absorbed up to 85% of deployed SOF in the past decade.) Savings from reduced surgical strike missions are required to address shortfalls in intellectual capital, organizational structure and personnel development to employ SOF in an indirect manner for sustained effect. USSOCOM and TSOC organizations and personnel can be reassembled and/or replaced with quality personnel, enablers, resources, and intellectual capital out of existing resources to fully optimize the indirect approach. In particular, the deputy commander of USSOCOM (who is to be designated as the lead for the indirect approach and TSOC optimization) may require significant organizational structure to provide the needed USSOCOM support and oversight to TSOCs as they grow and enhance their capability to perform their doctrinal duties of planning and conducting special operations and providing effective advice to the geographic combatant commander. Here is a brief list of what DCOM USSOCOM may need: USSOCOM should create a robust structure under the DCOM to support the indirect approach with campaign planning support, resource coordination, and advocacy and interface at the policy and interagency level and with the geographic combatant commands and country teams to ensure SOF are used in sustained campaigns for maximum impact rather than tactical and episodic effect. This should be accomplished by repurposing current manpower and funding. However, since only 28% of USSOCOM have the requisite special operations expertise, the number of active and retired SOF should be increased and key positions coded for SOF experts. Furthermore, additional USSOCOM personnel should be permanently assigned to TSOCs.

Finally, the SOCOM NCR structure would seem to fall most appropriately into this organizational restructuring. As I understand the plan, USSOCOM IATF personnel will be shifted to the SOCOM NCR over time at no net increase in expense or staff. These Washington-based USSOCOM personnel can collaborate with interagency partners in developing proposals and plans and monitoring execution but should not be seen as supplanting the policy deliberation and decisionmaking process, which falls under the purview of the civilian policy structure at OASD SOLIC and the IPC, DC, PC interagency process. Ongoing interagency coordination may be more easily accomplished in Washington than in Tampa, but USSOCOM should scrub its organizational plan to ensure efficiency and eliminate redundancy. The JIATF-NCR and SOCOM-NCR with its SID might be integrated into one streamlined organization tasked to support the full range of special operations missions.

An additional potential redundancy could be the MARSOC plan to develop organic CS/CSS capability. While lift is always in short supply for theater SOF, most of the “enabler” needs should be met by the conventional forces. They have been traditionally reluctant to split off small elements of enablers to support SOF distributed operations, but the fiscal imperatives and the likely future high demand for small-footprint operations makes it essential for all conventional forces to build in the flexibility to produce scalable support for the full range of SOF missions. This is one subset of the larger issue of integrating SOF and conventional force operations that might be a subject of future hearing to provide Congress with greater insight into both the demand for and the difficulties encountered in providing “enablers” such as lift and ISR, “thickeners” such as additional infantry, and blended SOF-conventional commands to conduct large-scale or hybrid irregular campaigns. SOF cannot operate without conventional support, and many of the demands for small-footprint missions can best be met by a combination of SOF and conventional forces. At a minimum, Congress should follow this issue closely to ensure that critically needed advances in SOF-conventional integration occur.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 3) How do we deconflict and coordinate such capabilities within SOF from existing or nascent capabilities elsewhere in the Department of Defense and the intelligence community, and ensure proper oversight?

Dr. LAMB. Complex counterterrorism missions require deconfliction, coordination and oversight, but none of these requirements is easily achieved. Some observers are concerned that military units are conducting classified missions usually carried out by civilian intelligence organizations without the benefit of well-established oversight mechanisms, and also that civilian intelligence organizations are trying to conduct paramilitary operations without the clear chain of command and support necessary for success. Operating under current system constraints, a case-by-case approach is the best way to deconflict defense and intelligence capabilities. We need a collaborative interagency process for mission analysis that accurately identifies the capabilities required for mission success. If both the intelligence and defense communities share information and decisionmaking processes for this purpose it should be possible to determine whether the mission is best pursued using covert tradecraft that is the specialty of the intelligence community, or direct action capabilities (i.e. traveling quickly to and from a target and neutralizing all opposition to that effort) that are the specialty of the defense community, or some combination of both. Once it is clear whether mission requirements are predominantly intelligence or defense-based, a lead organization can be assigned responsibility and other organizations can support the effort. Congress can examine whether or not this collaborative mission analysis and assignment process is happening, and if so, whether it is happening frequently enough.

If the mission requires a combination of covert tradecraft and military action, as many counterterrorist missions do, it is preferable that the two communities work closely together. Reportedly much progress in defense and intelligence cooperation has been achieved since 9/11, but the standing presumption should be that both the intelligence and defense communities will be tempted to "go it alone" even when the mission arguably requires capabilities from both communities. Each community also may be inclined to duplicate capabilities resident in the other, thereby generating risks that can compromise mission success. Trying to build resident capabilities that are not consistent with an organization's core mission can dilute the focus on core competencies and, over time, degrade them. For example, some are concerned that covert tradecraft has diminished in the intelligence community since 9/11 as the CIA emphasizes paramilitary operations. Relying on more accessible but hastily assembled and less proficient secondary capabilities can compromise mission success. For example, in the past some military units have tried to conduct intelligence operations without sufficient expertise and achieved poor results.

Oversight of deconfliction and coordination efforts is admittedly difficult in current circumstances. The United States government does not have an authoritative process for command and control of missions requiring the combined efforts of multiple departments and agencies of the executive branch. Only the President has the authority to integrate the efforts of departments and agencies, and he does not have the time to do so. At the risk of flippancy, the President is "commander-in-brief." His management of any given national security mission is seldom sustained and never comprehensive. It is virtually impossible on a day-to-day basis for the President to control how departments and agencies cooperate or fail to do so, so responsibility for any given mission often remains ambiguous. Interagency committees and other bureaucratic "confederations" cannot be held accountable for results because they have no authority to direct departments and agencies to take action. Mission critical cooperative action can be spurned and later justified as beyond the mandate of any given department or agency. Alternatively, under loosely defined "lead agency" norms, it might be possible for operators in the field to take actions with the presumption that a combination of legal authorities granted to different agencies permits it. Such cooperation is laudable and can be effective, but it also can obscure clear identification of the decision chain that authorized the actions. Either way, oversight and accountability can be weakened. The absence of a mechanism for the President to delegate his executive authority for integrating the efforts of departments and agencies on priority missions is a major shortcoming in the way our national security system functions. If Congress passed legislation that gave the President authority to formally delegate his integration powers, it would improve transparency, accountability and oversight for complex, high-priority interagency missions.

Congress also should collaborate across organizational boundaries in order to provide effective oversight of complex counterterrorism missions. In the same way the departments and agencies of the executive branch must assess mission requirements to assign mission leads, the House and Senate Intelligence Committees and House and Senate Armed Services Committees should collaborate to assign over-

sight of those missions and to decide whether in certain cases it makes sense to exercise congressional oversight jointly.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 4) The Joint Interagency Task Force–South (JIATF–South) is frequently mentioned as a blueprint for how agencies across the U.S. Government and partner nations can work together to facilitate security objectives. Could this be replicated and used as a model for theater special operations forces, particularly those units engaged in long-term missions to build partner capacity?

Dr. LAMB. I believe theater special operations forces (SOF) can apply some aspects of the JIATF–South model to improve interagency cooperation in pursuit of long-term missions to build and exercise partner capacity to defeat unconventional threats. Historically our security assistance partnerships with other nations have been compromised by unrealistic assessments of what the host nation can absorb; inadequate interagency coordination of the effort; unwillingness to tolerate the lesser degree of control such an indirect strategy dictates; poor supporting coordination at the regional level; and inadequate long-term commitment. The stellar model of interagency cooperation pioneered by JIATF–South would be more likely to address these challenges effectively. Interagency security assistance teams with embedded theater SOF personnel could, I believe, achieve better results at significantly less cost than our current approach.

However, this assertion requires a few caveats. The results the security assistance teams could achieve while working primarily through host nation forces would likely be less immediate and more ambiguous than the results achieved by JIATF–South’s interdiction of drug smuggling. The teams also would be smaller and less enduring than the JIATF–South model. They might more closely resemble the small interagency train and equip program used in the Balkans in the mid-1990s, which effectively operated out of Washington but had elements working in country as well. They would ramp up and actively partner with the host nation until it was effectively engaging the irregular challenge and then ramp down and eventually stand down. They would not need to be large permanent structures like JIATF South or the National Counterterrorism Center.

To work well, they would require some of the benefits JIATF–South has, to include:

- A mandate from senior authorities that gives a high priority to the interagency mission and organization;
- An end-to-end approach to mission management that focuses on outcomes, not inputs;
- A long-term commitment from national command authorities that is bipartisan and consistent;
- A deep appreciation for and sensitivity to the missions and equities of partnering organizations; and
- A clear source of resources, with steady provision being more important than absolute levels.

Moreover, the Department of State would have to support the team the way SOUTHCOM supports JIATF South, which would allow the interagency security team semi-autonomy to pursue its mission as it saw best while operating under the country team’s broad supervision. If these conditions were met, I believe we could expect better results with smaller overall efforts, along the lines of what SOF, working with other agencies, was able to achieve in Colombia prior to the terror attacks on 9/11 and more recently by working closely with the Philippine government.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 5) Is SOCOM properly resourced to meet its current demands? In what ways will we need to adjust this resourcing as forces draw down in Afghanistan and begin to meet other demand signals for SOF capabilities?

Dr. LAMB. Overall, I believe USSOCOM has been well resourced to meet its responsibilities. Even though U.S. forces have withdrawn from Iraq and are set to ramp down in Afghanistan, SOF will continue to be heavily engaged. For this reason we should safeguard the overall level of resources provided to SOF for the immediate future. However, as requirements evolve, the distribution of those resources should as well. As many sources, including SOF leadership, have argued, in the future we should expect SOF to focus more on an indirect approach to tackling irregular threats. Accordingly, distribution of resources to SOF programs should demonstrate a shift in emphasis to indirect capabilities. In particular, more resources should be shifted to the U.S. Army Special Operations Command. It is responsible for Special Forces, Civil Affairs, Military Information Support forces, among other things. All of these units can play critical roles when SOF adopt an indirect approach where they working with and through host-nation forces to accomplish their missions.

Here are some ways resources could be redirected to improve indirect capabilities:

- Resource Theater Special Operations Commands so they can better facilitate interagency collaboration; for example, by absorbing the costs of database integration and shared intelligence.
- Accept reductions in some of the specialized hardware and intelligence support that enables theater SOF to track enemy movement. Instead, invest these resources in security assistance activities that would allow Special Forces to partner more closely with host nation personnel.
- Invest in rebuilding Special Forces language and cross-cultural skill sets applicable to parts of the world other than Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Consider standing down some of the fourth battalions added to Special Forces Groups and using the personnel for other purposes. Instead of deploying more as Special Forces teams the personnel could enter longer periods of training where they would have more family time but also could regain eroded skill sets. They also could be assigned to the Special Forces Regional Support Detachments where they would be available for special assignments in embassies and in support of other activities that better enable SOF indirect action.
- Improve the ability of military information support forces (which used to be called psychological operations forces), to support SOF indirect approaches. Military information operations require mastering persuasive communications skills as well as in-depth knowledge of indigenous attitudes and motivations. USSCOM needs to work on better selection and training for these valuable personnel.
- Transfer responsibility for the Human Terrain System from the Army's Training and Doctrine Command to the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, which should then invest in improvements to ensure Human Terrain Teams are able to support indirect approaches with socio-cultural knowledge.

Redirecting resources within USSOCOM to better balance SOF direct and indirect approaches will help ensure these two compatible but different SOF approaches, skills sets and cultures are equally robust and can work together in harmony without one dominating and distorting the other. At the same time it will be important to ensure SOF does not expend resources on capabilities and missions that are better performed by General Purpose Forces. One possible concern in this regard is the movement of security assistance from a collateral SOF mission, which was true before 9/11, to a core mission following 9/11. USSOCOM is now the designated joint proponent for Security Force Assistance, a development that requires monitoring. On the positive side, by Joint Doctrine, USSOCOM recommends the most appropriate forces for a security force assistance mission. On the down side, the USSOCOM lead might become an excuse for General Purpose Forces to ignore the security assistance mission, which would be quite disadvantageous. SOF will need to continue partnering with General Purpose Forces on security assistance or it could easily be overwhelmed by the mission and its resource implications.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 6) How do we deconflict and coordinate such capabilities within SOF from existing or nascent capabilities elsewhere in the Department of Defense and the intelligence community, and ensure proper oversight?

Dr. DAVIS. Going forward, after the tremendous successes that U.S. SOF have achieved in operational settings over the years, there is great danger that SOF will emerge as the "go to" force for military tasks that could be undertaken by General Purpose Forces (GPFs) or even other capabilities in the Interagency tool kit. To ensure that SOF remain "Special" it will be necessary to refine their core competencies and perhaps reduce their "roles and missions." In looking at the list of SOF core activities, it is apparent that activities to support missions are conflated with mission-tasking themselves. Moreover, this list was generated before the events of 9/11 and, therefore, needs to be reassessed to meet the requirements of a vastly different security-planning environment. For example, of the SOF core activities listed, at least five are missions that can be performed by SOF as well as GPFs. These five include:

- Counter-Insurgency (COIN) operations;
- Counter-Proliferation or Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction (C/WMD);
- Counter-Terrorism (CT);
- Civil Affairs (CA); and
- Information Operations (IO).

The seven remaining core activities are SOF competencies but might be conceived differently to meet new planning requirements. Accordingly, they might be considered as:

- Direct Action (DA);
- Special Reconnaissance (SR);
- Military Information Support Operations (MISO), to include PsyOps, Strategic Communications and some aspects of Cyber warfare and Computer Network Operations;
- Building Partner Capacities (BPC), which could include Foreign Internal Defense (FID), aspects of Unconventional Warfare (UW) and Security Force Assistance (SFA);
- Stability Operations, which could include CA;
- Support to GPF Operations in conventional theaters; and
- Specialized Missions as tasked by the National Command Authority (NCA).

In terms of mission deconfliction two areas need further clarification. The first is that of Security Force Assistance and Security Assistance, which is also a function of Security Cooperation and is a shared mission objective across the Interagency. The tools for implementing Security Cooperation activities are many and varied, coming from different agencies as well as from across the military forces. So far as the Department of Defense (DOD) is concerned, security cooperation is the essence of preventive planning, and yet it is among the first of the GPF accounts to be cut in difficult budget environments. Moreover, to be effective, security cooperation requires sustained engagement with partner forces, and that is oftentimes a luxury that the GPFs do not have, particularly in the current setting as our overseas basing infrastructure contracts and at a time in which the GPFs are predicating much of their planning on rotational engagements and periodic exercises. In some instances, the engagement strategies of the Services are comprised of exercises and training that have long been on the books and which embody episodic activities. As a result, they are not the kind of persistent activities that U.S. SOCOM has long sponsored and implemented through its Joint Combined Exchange and Training (JCET) exercises—which originally were created to train U.S. SOF, but have been “hijacked” by the Combatant Commanders as a critical aspect of their engagement strategies because, in part, DOD and State are at odds over who “owns” the security assistance role. DOS has the lead, but more often than not has had to depend on DOD to perform the missions because it has the resources, training, and personnel to do these things. Thus, in my view, especially as SOCOM emphasizes the greater importance of Indirect Lines of Operation in its global force planning, the military should be given the authority to lead, especially in the train and equip and building partner capacity mission sets. To facilitate this, however, SOCOM would need, as the designated lead to synchronize the SFA missions in DOD, multiyear authority that allows SOF to train partner security forces and to implement minor MILCON projects, as appropriate and feasible to support this general mission tasking.

Moreover, because the emerging strategic environment features global, networked threats, SOF will have to operate between GCC seams and with an ability to deconflict national mission force employments with those of theater SOF and GPFs. This implies the need for greater and enhanced intelligence fusion, technologies to deconflict disparate battlefield activities and an ability to operate with partners—traditional SOF allies and nontraditional partners, which may include nonmilitary security forces and international organizations. NATO SOF has created a technology called BICES—the Battlefield Information Collection and Exploitation System, which operates with firewalls to keep U.S. intelligence classified, but enables partner forces to act on time sensitive information. Perhaps BICES should be considered for use outside of NATO. There is a precedent for this as it is currently being used by ISAF in Afghanistan and with non-NATO partners.

The second area of mission deconfliction that needs further thought is that between SOCOM and CIA activities. Traditionally, CIA forces are postured for covert missions, while SOF conduct clandestine and other missions for which deniability is not an issue. This is not a bad formula in my view. Both need to operate seamlessly in specific theaters and they will need to synchronize planning and deconflict force employments when focused on a particular theater or engagement. Thus, there is a need to work together, train together, and operate synergistically based on common procedures and techniques, which can only be achieved if SOF and CIA forces collaborate closely to achieve common ends and endeavor to understand each other’s cultures. In this context, SOCOM’s efforts to assign SOF to Interagency partners is important and with the CIA, in particular, the need to share and fuse intelligence is critical to operational success. Beyond this, a new assessment of our 1947 national security structure surely is long overdue. The world has changed

since it was put into effect and the nature of the challenges that we face require cross-Agency, whole-of-government approaches.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 7) Similarly, NATO Special Operations Headquarters is a potential model for future engagement. Are its benefits replicable in other regions, and if so, are there regions suitable for similar centers in the near- to mid-term? What lessons from NSHQ partner capacity activities can SOCOM apply globally?

Dr. DAVIS. I definitely believe many of the lessons the NSHQ has learned are applicable to Admiral McRaven's Regional SOF Coordination Center (RSCC) construct. That said, obviously, there are a handful of "lessons-learned" that are unique to the NSHQ as it operates in the NATO environment, and working initiatives through the NATO process. The NATO SOF HQs has benefited the United States in several ways. First, and very importantly, it is a force multiplier that allows NATO SOF (in ISAF) to assume tasks that U.S. SOF would have had to implement had they not been deployed. Second, the NSHQ, with its Professional Military Education (PME) programs and development of NATO SOF doctrine, tactics, and procedures, has contributed to building partner capacity in and for NATO and in this way has promoted interoperability, allowing alliance and partner forces to operate seamlessly in Afghanistan. Third, the point about fostering partner relationships is very important, as the NSHQ has relationships with NATO SOF and non-NATO partner countries, such as Jordan and Australia, as I noted in my opening remarks. Fourth, with its creation of the BICES network, the NSHQ has facilitated the sharing of information, which has led to intelligence fusion in support of operational units in Afghanistan. And, finally, the NSHQ is reaching out to Interagency and other partners to foster a comprehensive—or what we call a whole-of-government—approach to security planning. Indeed, General Clapper is one of the godfathers of the BICES network and outside of the Alliance, the European Union (EU), Interpol, and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) have participated in some NSHQ classes or activities.

The answer to your second question is yes. I believe that the NSHQ construct, even absent a NATO-like Alliance umbrella, can be used in other regions to promote U.S.-regional partner SOF collaboration, to build partner capacities, and to develop a basis for allied/partner interoperability, including in multilateral settings. The priorities from my perspective are: the Asia-Pacific region, Africa, the Americas, (to include U.S. NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM), and the Middle East. As to your third question, what lessons can be applied from the NSHQ experience to other regional theaters, a number of specific ideas come to mind. First, among the most valuable attributes of the NSHQ is its capacity to facilitate networking among Special Operations Forces. This, in turn, contributes to building trust and confidence and in so doing demolishes obstacles that often get in the way of national bilateral or multilateral military planning. The experience of the NSHQ in this regard transcends the NATO alliance and it is shared between NATO allies and non-NATO partners. Using the Regional SOF Coordination Center (RSCC) construct, the NSHQ experience can be replicated in other theaters, even without a NATO-like umbrella. In many countries, SOF organizations face similar challenges—resourcing, for example—and the capacity to interact with similar organizations experiencing similar issues is a source of support that can go a long way toward building, refining, and honing SOF capabilities and planning. The RSCC construct would also support and facilitate SOF interaction with nonmilitary security forces and with national and transnational intelligence organizations, which in turn, can and would support operational planning.

A second lesson that can be universally applied is that the NSHQ has become a repository for cumulative knowledge and lessons-learned from operational experiences. Everyone brings his own unique experiences to an endeavor, and the ability to understand and appreciate that experience means that SOF can build multiple options to achieve their own asymmetric advantage over enemies. It also means that SOF can look at alternative courses of action to address everything from training, meeting, mentoring, or assessing engagements. The value of multicultural understanding is increased when one exists in a multicultural environment. A third area in which the NSHQ has excelled and which should be replicated in other theaters is the development of a data bank of capabilities and skill sets that can be tapped as situations dictate. Nations possess some unique skill sets or unique "kit" that may be unknown to its U.S. counterparts until engaged in multinational forums. For instance, the NSHQ recently hosted a SOF medical conference that led to a greater understanding of another nation's medical breakthrough, and ultimately access to that capability for the benefit of U.S. deployed forces. Finally, the NSHQ-offered Staff Officer courses in the classroom environment allow nations to discuss lessons learned from operations—and also how to maximize effects from limited assets. What this really means is that a course of instruction allows for the sharing

of best practices for employing aviation or ISR assets, sharing data (computers, phone data, other material) obtained on an objective, and mapping relations through a database (which is ultimately accessible to others). Notable in this regard, the NSHQ spearheaded the introduction of biometric enrollment and “technical exploitation operations” into NATO SOF training (and ultimately employment), and the information and intelligence collected on an objective is now introduced into a common database, accessible to all U.S. forces and agencies. Ultimately, troop success, force protection, and speed of operations are significantly enhanced, but data is also available to U.S. and other nation law enforcement agencies, thereby increasing the level of protection afforded citizens of those nations.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 8) Is SOCOM properly resourced to meet its current demands? In what ways will we need to adjust this resourcing as forces draw down in Afghanistan and begin to meet other demand signals for SOF capabilities?

Dr. DAVIS. Going forward, resourcing for SOCOM is highly dependent on U.S. strategic guidance, the level of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan after 2014, and the extent to which changes are made to SOCOM’s global posture. If the United States retains a force presence in Afghanistan after 2014, much of that commitment will likely come in the form of SOF deployments. This will mean the need to continue to resource SOF deployments in that theater, as well as resourcing SOF operations in areas of instability, such as Mali, Yemen, and in Southeast Asia, not to mention in areas of emerging “threats” and to counter looming challenges. Without sequestration, SOCOM’s budget requests for the next fiscal year and beyond in the FYDP should be adequate to oversee the rebalancing of Indirect Action Missions with Direct Action capabilities, the redeployment of CONUS-based SOF overseas, and the development of the RSCC concept in key regional theaters. If sequestration kicks in, then all bets are off, and SOCOM, like the other Combatant Commands and DOD more generally will have to make difficult choices and assign priorities. This could, conceivably, take a toll on the Admiral’s desire to augment Indirect Action strategies and lines of operation. It might also impact professional military education (PME) and the quality of life of SOF personnel, as rotational deployments are more likely to be relied on to meet mission taskings. The minor MILCON funding that SOCOM is requesting to implement the RSCC vision and to support other regional needs would probably be at risk in such an environment, and this would also hamper the Commander’s ability to support national taskings in situations/environments that are not considered crucial to U.S. national interests at the moment.

Again, depending on what the U.S. does with respect to Afghanistan after 2014, SOCOM may experience capability gaps in the forms of critical mission enablers in areas outside of Afghanistan. The most significant of these are likely to be helicopters and ISR capabilities. I fear that this will become an even more difficult shortfall as the Services downsize and make economies in their force postures. As for SOCOM’s assumption of combatant command authority over the Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) in peacetime, SOCOM would not need, nor is requesting additional funding. (Moreover, the Commander does not want to take Executive Agency (EA) for the TSOCs. This would be a burden that the Command could not handle. EA authority has been and should remain the responsibility of a Service, which has the resources, base support, and money, etc. to perform this tasking.) What would be helpful would be SOCOM’s ability to fund the MFP-11 aspects of the TSOC—something that now is not being done. This is a question of authorities and interpretation, not of additional resourcing per se. Here, as I noted in my testimony, multiyear funding for 1208 Train and Equip activities would be helpful, as it would for 1206 and 1207 accounts more generally. Most of the authorities under which U.S. SOCOM operates are focused on the counterterrorism mission set. Funding for short, episodic engagement that does not provide the persistent presence required to build SOF partner units capable of handling regional issues without significant U.S. support will not work well for the Indirect Strategy envisioned by SOCOM. This is why Congress should consider very seriously Legislative Proposal 308. Legislative Proposal 308 would enable SOF partner building, empower the TSOCs, and provide SOCOM with the authority to manage resources across AORs.