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SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF  
GENERAL TOMMY R. FRANKS  
COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
US CENTRAL COMMAND



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Mr. Chairman, Senator Warner, members of the committee:

I am honored to appear before you today to describe US Central Command's role in America's Global War on Terrorism - a fight that involves every element of our national power and extends around the world. I am privileged to command a Coalition force of more than 75,000 men and women at work today in the Central Region as part of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM. I am so very proud of them -- their professionalism, their commitment, their resolve, their successes, and their sacrifices. Our operations thus far represent the first steps in what we all know will be a long, difficult, and dangerous campaign. We have been very successful to this point, but much work remains to be done. I have visited Afghanistan several times since the campaign started and can attest to the dramatic changes Coalition forces have brought to the lives of the Afghan people. Talented and dedicated men and women in uniform, side-by-side with diplomats, arm-in-arm with Anti-Taliban Afghans, supported by the American people and the international community, executing an unconventional war--these are the characteristics of the fight we've seen.

The events of 11 September have impressed upon all of us the vulnerability of a free and open society to those who do not value human life and, in fact, despise the principles for which America stands. The violence of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon indicate the increasing lethality of terrorist networks with global reach. These attacks further define a pattern we have seen emerge over the past several years. At my confirmation hearing in June 2000, I described the nature of the threat posed by a number of terrorist organizations, many of which are resident in Central Command's area of responsibility. As you know, this region has long been associated with some of the most dangerous terrorist organizations, including Al Qaida and Egyptian Islamic Jihad. Three of the seven nations on the State Department's list of States sponsoring terrorism are in our area.

Over the past seven years American interests have been attacked five times in countries within this region: the Office of Program Management for the Saudi Arabian National Guard, 1995; Khobar Towers, 1996; the American Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998; and the USS COLE in 2000. As I said last year in my remarks to this committee, "These attacks demonstrate that our opponents are dedicated, determined and resourceful."

On 11 September 2001, I was enroute to Pakistan, to meet with President Musharraf, to discuss a number of issues, among them, security cooperation and terrorism. The events of that day caused me to curtail my trip and return immediately to Tampa, Florida, where my staff was already working to ensure, what we refer to in the military as, "command and control survivability" while continuing to develop "situational awareness" along with Defense and other government agencies. On 12 September the Secretary of Defense directed the preparation of "credible military options" to respond to international terrorism. For Central Command, that directive guided the preparation of the warplan we see unfolding in Afghanistan today. The concept, which I briefed to the President on 21 September proposed that "US Central Command, as a part of America's Global War on Terrorism...would destroy the Al Qaida network inside Afghanistan along with the illegitimate Taliban regime which was harboring and protecting the terrorists..."

When I returned to Tampa our headquarters and subordinate commanders were finalizing plans for combat operations. Planning involved not only the evaluation of the current enemy situation, but also the history of military operations in Afghanistan and the political and military situation across the region. This "mission analysis" resulted in my recommendation of a military course of action which was approved by Secretary Rumsfeld on 1 October. I briefed the concept to President Bush on 2 October, and he directed that combat operations should begin on 7 October--26 days after the attacks on New York and the Pentagon.

Operations would involve the full weight of America's national power, and would include significant contributions from the international community. Coalition nations were already joining the fight against terrorism and many were sending military liaison teams to our headquarters in Tampa. The Coalition has grown to more than 50 nations, with 27 nations having representatives at our headquarters. Of our currently deployed strength of approximately 75,000 personnel, 14,000 are Coalition forces.

With the cooperation and support of this Coalition and the integration of virtually every Agency of our Government, we have executed multiple "Lines of Operation", attacking simultaneously on several fronts. Our intention from the outset was to seize the initiative and reinforce success, while keeping in mind the lessons of previous campaigns in Afghanistan--avoid "invading", and work with (rather than against) the people. A critical enabler of the strategy was the coordination of basing, staging and over-flight. This political-military coordination set (and maintains) the conditions necessary to execute and support sustained combat. Among the lines of operation which characterize the campaign have been "Direct Attack of the Leadership of Al Qaida and the Taliban", and the provision of "Humanitarian Aid" to the Afghan people. Another line has focused on "Destroying the Taliban Military", using Unconventional Warfare forces alongside Afghan opposition groups whose goals were consistent with our own. And, "Operational Fires" directed by horse-mounted Special Forces troopers have also proven to be unique and successful. Additionally, we have employed Special Operating Forces (SOF) in "Reconnaissance and Direct Action" roles while maintaining the capability to introduce "Operational Maneuver" (conventional forces) if required. Through the course of the operation, more than 100 "Sensitive Site" exploitations have been conducted, seeking evidence of development or production of weapons of mass destruction. As forces have attacked "Caves and Tunnels" to deny enemy safe harbor, "Radio

Broadcast and Leaflet Programs" have effectively informed the population of our goals and encouraged enemy forces to surrender.

The success of these lines of operation, which have been applied simultaneously rather than sequentially, is a matter of record. On 7 October, the Taliban controlled more than 80% of Afghanistan, and Anti-Taliban forces were on the defensive. Al Qaida was entrenched in camps and safe houses throughout the country. And in fact, Afghanistan was a terrorist sponsored state. By October 20<sup>th</sup> we had destroyed virtually all Taliban air defenses and had conducted a highly successful direct action mission on the residence of Mullah Omar in the middle of the Taliban capital, Qandahar. During this time frame Special Forces detachments linked up with Anti-Taliban leaders and coordinated operational fires and logistical support on multiple fronts. Twenty days later, the provincial capital of Mazar-e Sharif fell. In rapid succession, Herat, Kabul, and Jalalabad followed. By mid December, US Marines had secured Qandahar Airport and the Taliban capital was in the hands of Anti-Taliban forces. Within weeks the Taliban and Al Qaida were reduced to isolated pockets of fighters. On 22 December I traveled to Kabul to attend a moving ceremony marking the inauguration of the Afghan interim government--78 days after the beginning of combat operations.

Today, the Taliban have been removed from power and the Al Qaida network in Afghanistan has been destroyed. We continue to exploit detainees and sensitive sites for their intelligence value in order to prevent future terrorist attacks and to further our understanding of Al Qaida--their plans, membership, structure, and intentions. We are investigating each site to confirm or deny the existence of research into, or production of chemical, biological, or radiological weapons. Coalition forces continue to locate and destroy remaining pockets of Taliban and Al Qaida fighters and to search for surviving leadership. The Coalition continues to grow and remains committed to America's Global War on Terrorism.

President Bush said last week in a joint statement with Chairman Hamid Karzai, that our two nations have committed to building "a lasting permanent solution for Afghanistan security needs ... based upon strengthening Afghanistan's own capacities. We will work with Afghanistan's friends in the international community to help Afghanistan stand up and train a national military and police force." We are working today with Afghanistan's Interim Authority to fulfill this promise. The standup of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul is an example of progress to date. The ISAF's daily operations with local police are providing needed security and stability for the citizens of Kabul, and US Central Command will continue to support these efforts. There is much work left to be done, and to quote the President again, "It will take as long as it takes."

In the 149 days since 11 September, our forces have amassed a remarkable record of achievements. Following are but a few examples: All positioning and resupply of forces in the theater has been accomplished by air as a result of a remarkable effort by US Transportation Command. In addition to providing the firepower and "staying power" of two Carrier Battlegroups, the Navy steamed the USS KITTY HAWK 6,000 miles at flank speed to establish an afloat forward operating base for Special Operating Forces. In terms of operational fires, Navy, Marine, and Air Force pilots have delivered in excess of 18,000 munitions, of which, more than 10,000 were precision guided. During DESERT STORM we averaged 10 aircraft per target; in ENDURING FREEDOM we have averaged 2 targets per aircraft. Our airmen have flown the longest combat fighter mission in our Nation's history (more than 15 hours), and conducted the longest surveillance mission (26 hours). The extensive use of unmanned aerial vehicles has permitted around the clock surveillance of critical sites, facilities, and troop concentrations. Our psychological warfare operators have delivered more than 50 million leaflets, and transport crews have delivered 2.5 million humanitarian daily rations,

1,700 tons of wheat, and 328,200 blankets. More than 5,000 radios have been provided to the Afghan people, and our broadcast capabilities continue to bring music to people for the first time in more than six years. We also have made enormous improvements in our ability to bring firepower to bear rapidly. Through improved technology and training the Tomahawk targeting cycle has been reduced from 101 minutes during ALLIED FORCE to 19 minutes during ENDURING FREEDOM, with half of our Tomahawks having been fired from submarines.

We are now in the preliminary stages of capturing the lessons of this campaign. It is too early to draw final conclusions because the fight continues, but we do have some emerging insights:

Combining the resources and capabilities of the Defense Department, Central Intelligence Agency, and other agencies of the Federal government has produced results no single entity could have achieved. Similarly, the adoption of flexible Coalition arrangements has enabled us to leverage individual national strengths. "The mission has determined the Coalition; the Coalition has not determined the mission."

This operation continues to be commanded and controlled from Tampa, Florida with fielded technology that provides real time connectivity with air, ground, naval, and Special Operations Forces 7000 miles away. Our forces which have deployed from over 267 bases; are operating from 30 locations in 15 nations; and over flying 46 nations in the course of operations; yet our ability to "see" the battlefield literally and figuratively at each location provides unprecedented situational awareness.

Security cooperation, diplomacy, and military to military contacts have built personal relationships which have proven invaluable during the campaign. Humanitarian airdrops; economic and security assistance to Coalition partners and regional allies; visits to the region by senior Administration, Congressional, and military officials; and a US commitment to

post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan have permitted us to build upon these essential relationships. Our investment in security cooperation has been repaid tenfold in access to basing, staging, and overflight rights with regional partners. We must not underestimate the worth of our commitment to these programs.

Precision guided munitions are more than a force multiplier. They have reduced the numbers of air sorties required to destroy targets and have resulted in unprecedented low levels of collateral damage. From this perspective, precision guided munitions have had a strategic effect.

As we have said in the past, the availability of strategic airlift is critical to the success of operations which require force projection. Our current airlift fleet requires strict management and innovative scheduling. This would seem to validate the testimony the committee received last year. We must continue to expand our strategic lift capabilities.

The importance of combined and joint operations training and readiness has been revalidated. The power of a well-trained air-ground team has permitted the melding of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Cavalry and 21<sup>st</sup> Century precision guided munitions into an effective fighting force.

A continuous, unimpeded flow of intelligence remains key to success on the battlefield. Human intelligence is essential when mission objectives include locating, identifying and capturing or killing mobile targets. This requires people on the ground. Similarly, unmanned aerial vehicles have proven their worth in the skies over Afghanistan. We must continue to expand their use, develop their capabilities, and increase their numbers.

Information Operations also have been vital to the success of ENDURING FREEDOM. Psychological operations, electronic warfare, and a number of special capabilities have proven their value and potential. To maintain information dominance, we must commit to improving our ability to influence

target audiences and manipulate our adversary's information environment. Continued development of these capabilities is essential.

Again, these are only glimpses of lessons we may take from the campaign in Afghanistan. Much study is required to separate "useful truths" as they may relate to the enduring nature of warfare, from observations which, while interesting, may not offer much as we prepare for an uncertain future.

Our operations to this point represent a first step in what will be a long campaign to defeat terrorism. The terrorist attacks of 11 September have impressed upon all of us the importance of taking the fight to the enemy and maintaining the initiative. Our Command remains "on the offensive".

The real story of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM is a story of the human spirit--US and Coalition men and women in uniform and civilian patriots--those who serve and those who support, those who command and those under command. From Special Forces troopers representing nine nations in Qandahar to the "Red Shirt" ordnance handlers aboard our aircraft carriers, to Jordanian medics serving in a hospital in Mazar-e Sharif, new standards of excellence have been set. Our pilots and airlift specialists, intelligence analysts, staff specialists, those who stand sentinel, and members of government agencies whose bravery will likely never be known, have worked hand-in-hand toward a common goal, each of them serving tirelessly without complaint, many in harm's way and under extreme environmental conditions. They come from many nations, but are unified by their sense of duty and selfless service. Our pride in these people should be boundless, our thanks the same. They are the means by which we will defeat the scourge of terrorism.

In a great work, "On War", published in 1873, Baron Carl Von Clausewitz affirmed that successful war required the "trinity" of the people, the government and the military...to enter into war without this support would be folly. OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM rests firmly upon the foundation of that trilogy. The will and support of the American people, represented by Members

of Congress and our Commander-in-Chief, have left nothing to be desired. The men and women of Central Command, express their profound appreciation to the American People, to this body, and to our Commander-in-Chief for continuing steadfast resolve.