

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

HOMELAND SECURITY
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STATEMENT

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING THREATS, AND

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

“COMBATING TERRORISM: DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES AGAINST
TERRORISM”

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Chairman Shays, distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you again today. In holding these hearings the Committee on Government Reform, and Congress as a whole, should be commended for its continuous efforts to evaluate how our current policies and programs come together and to identify gaps and shortfalls within them so that they may be remedied to enhance the security of our homeland. This subcommittee in particular, should be proud of its longstanding role in framing and helping shape the national strategies to combat the threat of terrorism before us today. It is only with efforts like these that we will be able to continually develop, integrate, and implement effective “living” strategies, which are vital to combating this dynamic threat.

The September 11th attacks were not a “snapshot in history.” We are in a new normalcy where the responsibility for protecting the homeland from terrorist attack remains will be with us now and well into the future. We must remember that we do not face a single, geographically anchored enemy but a myriad of threats, smaller in magnitude and harder to see and counter. A successful overall national strategy to combat these ambiguous, amorphous, moving targets must be flexible, comprehensive, and coordinated. It is with this recognition that the current strategies for securing the homeland were created.

The President has acted decisively on the need to have an integrated overall strategy to combat terrorism. In the weeks following September 11th, the President issued a directive that tasked the government to direct every resource at its command—all tools of diplomacy, intelligence, law enforcement, and financial influence—to win the war against terrorism; the President has led the way to ensure the directive was acted upon. Less than three years ago we did not have a comprehensive strategy for combating the threat of terrorism or the substantial challenges of homeland security. Now, under the President’s leadership, we not only have the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, the *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, and the *National Security Strategy of the United States*, but we also have the *National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism* which provides a clear framework for how the U.S. Armed Forces continue to conduct the war on terrorism and the *2002 National Money Laundering Strategy* which is the first to outline a government-wide strategy to combat terrorist financing in order to destroy the conventional and unconventional financial tools on which the enemy depends. In addition, the President has provided us with essential guidance to address specific concerns including the *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction*, the



National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace, and the *National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures*. All of these documents, in conjunction with one another, provide the comprehensive national strategy we need to win the war on terrorism on all fronts. Terrorists are seeking to exploit our vulnerabilities—these strategies provide a clear way forward to prevent them from doing so while protecting that which we hold dear.

On September 11th, the terrorists attacked highly visible symbols of our military strength and our economic prowess. Though exceedingly well planned, coordinated, and executed, the comparatively low-tech means employed by the terrorists raises the future possibility of a well placed bomb or attack meant to cause mass effect; a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) attack; a cyber strike; or a more inclusive, more sophisticated assault combining both physical and virtual means on one, or several, critical infrastructures. The threat remains very real. A low-tech, high-tech combination attack is an especially dangerous possibility, for while Bin Laden may have his finger on the trigger of an AK-47, his nephew may have his finger on a computer mouse. Such a scenario demonstrates the need for an integrated, comprehensive approach rather than one that tries simply to isolate and counter a single threat.

Thus, a comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism should incorporate a full spectrum of organized actions by employing every instrument of statecraft to attack the enemy on all fronts and secure the homeland. Homeland security policy is inseparable from economic policy, health policy, national security policy, and foreign policy—all of which must exist underpinned by the rule of law. The task of securing the homeland has been cast by some as a choice between security *or* privacy, security *or* freedom, and security *or* competitiveness. These are not either-or issues; we can and must have both. We cannot codify our activities into neat, clean boxes or treat elements of the strategy isolation; this threat requires a balanced and integrated approach.

Accordingly, the overall strategy to combat the threat of terrorism must incorporate the marshalling of these domestic resources with the engagement of international allies and assets to be effective. To truly defeat terrorism, we must be cognizant of the fact that this is a transnational threat that requires transnational resources and solutions. The shift away from political and towards ideologically based terrorism means that many more countries have become direct targets of escalating acts. As a



result, many countries now have a vested interest in studying and defeating terrorism. Indeed, some already possess a breadth of knowledge and experience from dealing with years of terrorism within their own borders. We should learn from the experiences of our allies, and build on the successes we have had thus far in prosecuting this global war on terrorism.

The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism recognizes that the war on terrorism cannot be won without employing resources abroad in collaboration with our allies. It also makes the important point that in order to *defeat* terrorist organizations of global reach, *deny* further sponsorship and support, *diminish* the underlying conditions that terrorists seek to exploit, and *defend* the United States at home and abroad, we need to be proactive in our efforts by extending our defenses outward. This means stopping the terrorists abroad before they ever reach our shores. Relying on catching the terrorists at our borders is not enough to protect the homeland. We must push the protection of our borders out—widening the net to catch the terrorists. To do this we need to continue to maintain a coalition of countries dedicated to isolating not only terrorist organizations, but also the nations that support or harbor them.

In the *National Security Strategy of the United States*, the President recognized this need, vowing to hold accountable nations that are compromised by terror including those that harbor terrorists or support terrorism. These countries still pose a significant threat to the United States because they can share information, technologies, means, and capabilities with terrorists. We need to continue to work cooperatively when possible to use all of the tools at our disposal including law enforcement instruments to prevent such transfers, military instruments including covert action to preempt imminent attacks, economic instruments to starve the terrorists of funding and punish those who provide financial support, and diplomatic instruments to isolate nations that harbor terrorists. The consequences of harboring terrorists should be made too great for a nation to consider it acceptable. Bringing all these instruments of statecraft to bear will not only pressure these countries to cease actively or passively harboring terrorist organizations, but also pressure them to take the initiative to deal with the terrorist problem within their own borders. We can offer support to those countries that continue to join our coalition and commit themselves to fighting terrorism by helping to train and equip their indigenous authorities so that they can drain the swamp of terrorism. But in order to know what clandestine activity these nations are involved in and apply pressure for them to cease



their support of terrorism and join the coalition, we must refine the most important tool we have to combat terrorism—Intelligence.

Underpinning every aspect of the war on terrorism is the need to have a first-rate intelligence capability. Accurate and timely information, coupled with proper analysis, is the lifeblood of the war on terrorism. Combating the breadth, depth and uncertainty of the terrorist threat demands significant investment, coordination and accuracy in the intelligence process across the board. The intelligence community has made great strides in information sharing and coordination among intelligence agencies and security services, but it must continue to be vigilant in its analysis to provide accurate, timely, and actionable intelligence. Every aspect of the campaign—from diplomatic efforts to covert action to financial and political operations to the provision of warnings about future attacks—relies largely on our intelligence, coupled with intelligence from allies. Intelligence not only provides the detailed information we need to preempt attacks, seize terrorist assets, and identify terrorist capabilities, it also can provide us insight into what the terrorists value, allowing us to go on the offensive and take it away. Intelligence involves understanding the motivations, thoughts, and plans of one's enemies. It is also critical to illuminating key vulnerabilities that can be exploited and leveraged to prevent, preempt, and disrupt terrorist activities before they occur. The goal here is to obtain the intelligence needed to isolate the military and operational planners from their organization, and terrorist organizations from their network in order to fragment the enterprise and attack its pieces. Ironically enough, even the vilest terrorist depends on the “honor” of another terrorist to do his or her work. Once that honor and loyalty is breached, the system of trust—the glue of the organization—collapses. In addition to illuminating vulnerabilities within the terrorist network, intelligence provides insights into the cultures and mindsets of terrorist organizations that are crucial to providing indications and warnings of possible attacks. The first priority should always be to get there before the bomb goes off; having a top-notch intelligence ability is the way we do that.

Nevertheless, no matter how hard we work and how many resources we invest to prevent another attack from occurring, we cannot guarantee 100 % success. Understanding this, the President implemented measures to protect the vulnerabilities we have at home and build up our capacity to mitigate the effects of a terrorist attack and minimize the loss of life. The President's *National Strategy for Homeland Security* provides clear goals and objectives for how this should be



accomplished, linking the diplomatic and intelligence pieces together with the response needed at home. In addition, the President recognized that coordination and integration of these efforts was essential for success. To accomplish this synergy, he proposed large, sweeping actions to protect and defend the homeland—namely the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. Together, the President and Congress worked to stand up the Department, achieving the most significant reorganization within the U.S. government in over 50 years. At its creation, DHS was tasked with preventing terrorist attacks within the United States, reducing America’s vulnerability to terrorism, minimizing the damage, and enhancing the response and recovery efforts should an attack occur. Under the outstanding leadership of Secretary Ridge, DHS has been working tirelessly with other agencies to analyze threats and intelligence, guard our borders and airports, protect our critical infrastructure, and coordinate emergency response efforts. The Secretary and the department deserve to be commended for what they have accomplished in such a short period of time.

But we are still in the early stages of this war on terrorism and DHS recognizes that there is much more to be done to secure the homeland. Paramount among these future actions is the need for enhanced coordination among all levels of government. We must ensure that we continue to connect relevant federal entities with each other but we also need to connect federal authorities with state and local officials, states with other states, all levels of government with the private sector, and each of these actors with the American people. Terrorism is at its very core a psychological weapon, intended to erode trust and undermine confidence in our government, its elected officials, institutions or policies. Without working relationships of trust and mutual confidence between and among all of the actors who are key to our efforts to fight terrorism, the overall strategy to prevent and prepare for terrorism will be defeated. This is why it is absolutely essential that we connect all of the relevant players in homeland security—we cannot be exchanging business cards on game day.

DHS is the belly button that links this whole system as it provides a central clearinghouse to marry up accountable resources and actors, making sure that all of those who need a seat at the homeland security table have one. This is an especially important function for DHS in fostering a healthy and reciprocal public-private partnership. The vast majority of the owners and operators of our critical infrastructure are in the private sector. And, as the *National Strategy for the Physical Protection of Critical Infrastructures* and the *National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace* emphasize, critical infrastructure protection is a shared responsibility that cannot be



accomplished by the government alone. But the government must lead by example—getting its own house in order—and then driving the guidelines and best practices for the private sector. By then building the business case for homeland security, the government will foster the public-private partnership. This will require coordinated action on the part of federal, state and local governments, the private sector, and American citizens to secure the infrastructure from virtual or physical attack.

Securing the homeland relies on the very essence of federalism. This principle is embodied in the cooperation required for critical infrastructure protection, but it is also manifested in the communication now occurring between the federal government and state and local emergency responders so as to ensure seamless coordination between state and local emergency personnel and federal assets. They are continually working to clearly allocate between and among one another the responsibilities and resources for emergency preparedness and response while making a concerted effort to ensure the harmonization and interoperability of equipment and incident command structures. Such organization and coordination figures most prominently in the area of emergency preparedness and response, particularly when responding to a catastrophic CBRN attack. The government must be able to adapt to, cope with, and manage the myriad of multi-dimensional issues that CBRN terrorism poses. *The National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction* set forth the urgent objective of developing and maintaining the capability to reduce the horrific consequences of such catastrophic attacks. But as it stands now, the medical and public health communities would be severely strained in the case of a CBRN attack, particularly with the challenges of bioterrorism. To address this, we must continue to enhance the core capacity for public health and medical preparedness.

The President has been working to this end. Recently, DHS, along with the Department of Health and Human Services announced that the President's FY '05 budget request will include a \$274 million Bio-Surveillance Program Initiative that will provide some of the improvements needed in this area. The initiative will build upon the on-going BioWatch program by enhancing surveillance in human health, hospital preparedness, state and local preparedness, and vaccine research and procurement, with the overarching goal of integrating all of these surveillance efforts across the government into one comprehensive system. The tools of epidemiological surveillance and detection that it calls for are vital to protecting the homeland from the very real and very deadly threat of bioterrorism. This initiative embodies the



integrative approach we need to have in combating terrorism throughout all levels of the government.

To complement the strides we have made and are continuing to make in the surveillance arena, we also need to make progress on the President's Project BioShield. I applaud the House of Representatives for passing HR 2122, Project BioShield Act of 2003, and I encourage the Senate to do the same. Project BioShield will give us the tools we need now to bring the best and the brightest of researchers, medical experts, and the biomedical industry together to develop more effective vaccines and countermeasures to protect against biological warfare agents. The President has introduced these vital programs to protect against one of the world's most dangerous threats, but in order to link together these important bio programs, it may be necessary to add another national strategy into the mix. Namely, an end-to-end strategy to combat bioterrorism—from prevention through treatment—by better integrating the bio-medical industry, our nations hospitals, healthcare providers, physicians, agricultural services inspectors, and entomologists, to name a few. In our efforts to secure the homeland against bioterrorism and a plethora of other threats, both our capabilities and organizations must continue to be strengthened, streamlined, and synergized so that effective prevention will enhance emergency preparedness and response and vice versa.

It is true that as many resources as the government devotes to protecting the homeland, it is not possible to protect against everything, everywhere, all the time from every adversary and every modality of attack. Our resources are finite. This is why it is critical to continue to prioritize resources, generating a national return on our investment by identifying initiatives that will maximize secondary and tertiary benefits beyond guards, guns, and gates. Strengthening the ability to deal with the extraordinary (i.e. bioterrorism) provides tools and capabilities that are equally valuable in dealing with the ordinary (i.e. the flu).

Still, the task before us remains enormous. This mission of securing the homeland is much like the role of a goalie in a hockey game. The goalie does not have many opportunities to score a goal, but when his team's net is threatened, it is imperative that he be successful in blocking the attack. To prevent an attack, we've got to be right every time, all the time, whereas the terrorist needs only be right once to succeed. This is why it is so important for us to train and exercise to continually test



our preparedness and response. We want the mistakes to be made on the practice field, not on game day on Main Street in Somewhere, USA.

General Eisenhower once said that in preparing for battle plans are useless, but planning is indispensable. It is in the planning, organizing, training, and operationalizing of our national strategy to combat terrorism that we will win this war. The development of these strategies to date has provided much-needed guidance in the almost two and a half years since September 11th. But we are still in the early stages of war. The old military adage goes like this: Amateurs talk about strategy; professionals talk about logistics. We have a national strategy before us that is working. Now we need to continue to concentrate on execution. To translate the strategy from the 10,000-foot level all the way down to the ground, we must push capacity to the frontlines, to the muddy boots and white coats.

Our adversaries recognize that we cannot be defeated in a conventional war, tank for tank, plane for plane on the traditional battlefield. Thus, the terrorist enemy is employing asymmetric tactics to offset our strengths and attack our weaknesses. They're searching out our vulnerabilities. Though it is not possible to protect the homeland from every fathomable attack scenario, at least not in a democracy such as our own, we can stay one step ahead of the terrorists by keeping them on the run while simultaneously securing our critical vulnerabilities from attack. In the words of Benjamin Franklin, failing to prepare is preparing to fail. But we cannot afford to fail this test. We must think the unthinkable—because the terrorists are thinking it—and then we need to take actions to prevent it from happening while we still have time to do so.

The subcommittee is meeting today for this purpose. The overall national strategy to combat terrorism and the individual strategies under review at this hearing recognize that the crosscutting nature of the threat requires that we treat the actions the government implements as an integrated whole. These are inextricably interwoven, living strategies. But any successful strategy to combat terrorism will require continually monitoring and measuring the effectiveness ("benchmarking") of the many programs that implement it so as to lead to common and integrated standards, practices, and procedures. The terrorists want us looking over our shoulders in fear of an attack but we need to keep the terrorists looking over their shoulders, not knowing when, where, or how we will strike. We cannot march into the future backwards and fight yesterday's war alone. This living, thinking enemy bases its



actions on our actions. Thus, we must be willing to learn from our successes and mistakes by constantly reevaluating our policies and programs in order to stay ahead of the terrorists, prevent future attacks, and secure the homeland.

Policy and strategy without resources is rhetoric. It is imperative that the President and Congress continue to set their sights on the comprehensive implementation of a living national strategy to combat terrorism. This process of turning concepts into capabilities will require not only vision but also sustained political will. It is the responsibility of policymakers on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue to be enablers in marshalling and mobilizing the vast resources of the United States to combat this threat for today, tomorrow, and for years to come. We cannot be lulled into a sense of complacency. Instead, we must present a sustained, united front to defeat terrorism at home and abroad so that we may have an America that is not only more safe and secure, but better too.

Thank you for the opportunity to once again share my thoughts with you. I would be pleased to try and answer any questions you may have.