Military Assistance in a Changing World Environment

By

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Mr. Chairman, honored members, I am pleased to be here today to testify on military assistance. This is my first appearance before this committee as Director of the Defense Security Assistance Agency, and I look forward to many more opportunities to work with you throughout the Congressional consideration of the Administration's budget request and legislative proposals.

I think everyone will agree that the past twenty months have produced world change at a pace that almost defies comprehension. Last year, just about this time, the Administration came here to explain its proposed security assistance program to the Congress. At that time, all agreed that as a result of those changes, particularly those in the Soviet Union, the security assistance program would be reviewed in its new context. Everyone anticipated that military assistance would be reduced. The only real question was how fast. We believed that once the new international political system had begun to gel we would be better able to assess the future of our security assistance policy. But since then. events have stubbornly refused to slow down.

Ever since the end of the Second World War we have planned our foreign and security assistance in the context of a stable, if sometimes threatening, bipolar environment. Whatever the crisis of the day, the basic structure of global politico-military relations remained. This is true no more. We can no longer define our national security objectives simply in a Cold War context. We knew that regional instability would remain a threat to U.S. interests. But we did not know that a regional crisis would arise so soon and with such fury. The major event that has upset last year's calculations of reduced military assistance is, of course, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and all that has happened since.

One of the constants of U.S. policy in the post-war period was coalition building. We prepared ourselves to combat a wide variety of potential threats, not just the Soviets, by building diplomatic and military relations with friends and allies. A key tool in that policy has been and remains military assistance, both arms sales and grant aid and training. Nowhere has the wisdom of this decades-old policy been more evident than in the success of operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

DESERT SHIELD/STORM

When Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait on August 2 and were poised to sweep into Saudi Arabia, the United States was able to marshal allies and begin responding with remarkable speed. When it became necessary to go to war we were able to do so with unprecedented efficiency. The effectiveness of our response was, I believe, to a large extent a direct result of years of patient work building military-to-military and political relations via military assistance and sales, not only with Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states, but with Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Portugal, Morocco in particular, and a number of others worldwide that joined us to the best of their own capacities. We did not have to scramble for friends in the region. We already had them. We didn't have to

worry much about access to transit and in-region port and airfield facilities—we already had them. In many cases countries have even paid us to build them. We did not have to face a logistical and tactical nightmare of incompatible communications, training and equipment with most of our allies—we had already supplied them and trained them.

Our success in the Gulf is the result of a number of factors including diplomacy, the quality of our fighting men and women, the excellence of our equipment and the strength of our will. But the job of bringing a coalition together first to stop Saddam Hussein and then to liberate Kuwait would have been far more difficult, if not impossible without the broad base laid down by years of patient military assistance work on a military-to-military basis. Once we began fighting alongside our coalition allies the importance of interoperability was even more in evidence. You have all seen the interviews (in fluent English) on the nightly news with the Saudi and Kuwaiti pilots of American-supplied fighter aircraft. Their skill, dedication, and professionalism is a testament to this long-standing aim of U.S. policy—a policy that was always under Congressional oversight—sometimes accompanied by candid debate that is the pride of our democracy. This policy was achieved over the years through the carefully selected sales of U.S. arms and training and, where it was needed, the provision of military assistance funding.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE

What implications does the Gulf War have for the future of military assistance? As I was saying, last year we all fully expected to see reductions in FMF funding. For southern-flank NATO countries in particular, many thought the significant reduction of the Soviet threat had rendered assistance to them outdated. I think you will agree that Desert Shield/Storm has overturned that logic, at least for the near term. All of these countries have been stalwart in support of coalition forces in the gulf. Their subsequent extra burden—in the case of Turkey a particularly painful economic one—has been shared by many different countries. But clearly, our carefully-nurtured defense relationships with them have a utility independent of the Soviet threat. What the shape of the post-war world will be is as yet unclear. But we know that we will continue to need these kinds of politico-military relationships with our friends and allies, relationships that cannot be fostered without military assistance, whether it be aid, training or sales.

The size and shape of the program in the future cannot yet be determined. We must remain adaptable in an unpredictable world. I can say that our challenges in this decade are as Secretary of State Baker outlined last year: promoting democratic values, promoting free market principles and strengthening U.S. competitiveness, protecting against transnational threats such as narcotics and terrorism, and promoting peace by defusing regional conflicts. Military assistance will continue to play an important part in addressing many of these challenges.

At this time it is clearly too soon to be able comfortably to reduce the FMF program drastically. We want to work with you to determine the future direction. But it cannot be done all at once. We must feel our way together.

Our commitment to the security of Israel remains steadfast. In fact, the Kuwait crisis has in some ways brought us to a closer security relationship with Israel than ever. Patriot missile batteries, in part supplied out of DOD stocks via FAA Sec. 506(a) drawdowns, were the linchpin of our success in foiling Saddam's cynical attempts to split the coalition.

One word of caution. Our success in the Gulf owes much to our steadfast military assistance policy; at the same time, regional politics are being drastically altered. This is not the time to abandon our carefully-nurtured ties to Arab militaries. Countries in the Gulf will continue to have

a legitimate need for modern means of self-defense. The Middle East will remain a relatively unstable area.

FY 1992 MILITARY ASSISTANCE REQUEST

Our request for military assistance in FY 1992 is based on the following principles:

- **Power Projection is critical.** This category covers countries with which we have formal base rights agreements such as Turkey, Greece, Portugal, and the Philippines; and other countries, such as Kenya and Djibouti, where we have arrangements for access to facilities.

- **Preserve Middle East peace and stability.** Our interests in the Middle East remain the security of Israel and the stability of the region. Aid to Egypt and Israel, as well as to certain other countries in the region, will continue to be important in this regard.

- **Drug Interdiction.** Aid to the Andean nations and to other Latin American and Caribbean countries such as Ecuador, Jamaica, and the island nations of the Eastern Caribbean, is critical if these countries are to sustain their struggle against the drug threat.

- **Review assistance to all other countries.** Military assistance that had been justified in terms of containment to countries that do not fit into the above three categories, or to countries participating in post-Cold War international security cooperation, certainly needs to be reviewed in detail. We are in the process of doing this, and have cut back or eliminated military assistance to several countries. For many of these countries, economic aid may be more appropriate than military aid. In some instances, military aid must be reviewed in the context of achieving steps toward peaceful solutions to long-term regional problems.

Turkey. We are asking $625 million for Turkey. Turkey is in the middle of one of the world's most dangerous regions, sharing borders with Iraq, Iran and Syria as well as the Soviet Union. Turkey is a pro-western, non-fundamentalist Moslem state and is an example for Turkic people throughout Asia. Turkey has proven itself a loyal ally indeed, bearing considerable economic hardship and domestic controversy in its role in Desert Shield and Desert Storm. It is an anchor of stability in the region and provides bases and facilities that will continue to be critical to U.S. security interests in maintaining the stability we have achieved to date.

However, the Turkish armed forces remain seriously underequipped. This year's increased request reflects our long-standing efforts to assist Turkish modernization, efforts whose value has been proven this year.

Philippines. This year, as last year, we are requesting $200 million for the Philippines. As you know, we are nearing the end of negotiations on our base rights in the Philippines. These funds are necessary to purchase support, training, maintenance and new equipment to combat the anti-democratic insurgency. It is important to the success of Philippine democratic institutions, as well as the future of military facilities in the Philippines, that our "best efforts" pledges be honored. The bases at Subic Bay and Clark field, along with other available facilities in the Philippines, provide unique advantages to U.S. Pacific forces and are a key component of our power projection capability.

Portugal. Portugal, like Turkey, is another firm ally to which we have prior commitments to support modernization. Lajes air base in the Azores is a critical asset for U.S. force projection. The Portuguese have freely allowed U.S. use of Lajes air base for transit to the Gulf, as they have in past contingencies. The flexibility these facilities give us becomes even more important with

anticipated reductions in overseas forces. There is no geographically satisfactory alternative in the Atlantic.

As with the Philippines, we have begun the process of renegotiating our base rights agreement. Portugal is the second-poorest NATO nation after Turkey, and the $125 million we seek is needed to establish modern Portuguese air defense and anti-submarine warfare and to support mobility, communications, combat support, anti-armor, and program management capabilities.

El Salvador. In El Salvador, we are asking for $85 million to provide equipment and training to assist the Salvadoran Armed Forces to combat the FMLN insurgency. This radical Marxist organization still seeks the violent overthrow of the democratically-elected government.

The U.S. continues to support a peaceful solution. 50 percent of the FY 1991 military aid was withheld and its release conditioned to pressure both the Government of El Salvador and the FMLN to negotiate in good faith and to pressure the Government of El Salvador to pursue the Jesuit case actively. The FMLN flagrantly abused the situation, believing the conditioned 50 percent would be withheld no matter what it did. As a result, the President's 15 January declaration released the funds but put them on a 60-day Administration hold until March 15, pending approval by both sides of a UN-sponsored cease-fire.

Latin America and Caribbean. We are requesting a total of $137 million for Andean nations and another $16 million for other, principally Caribbean countries, with narcotics, and in some cases, related insurgency problems. We believe that this funding is absolutely necessary for a number of reasons. The staunch resolve of Colombia's government has significantly hindered illegal drug trafficking operations. Our assistance is needed to help Colombia continue to fight both them and related insurgencies. The proposed $58 million will provide much-needed helicopters, spare parts, vehicles, weapons, ammunition, and other vital supplies to the Colombian counternarcotics forces. We propose $39 million for Peru, which faces a similar situation to Colombia's, and $40 million for Bolivia, another Andean nation with extremely limited resources. However, release of the funds for Peru is contingent upon the signing of a framework agreement for counternarcotics.

FY 1991 budget constraints and earmarking did not permit us to fund other states with narcotics problems such as Ecuador. The island nations of the Eastern Caribbean continue to play a critical role in our counternarcotics efforts by anchoring the eastern rim of the region. Through highly successful cooperative arrangements such as the Regional Security System (RSS) and other combined efforts with the British, narcotrafficking in the region has been deterred and interdicted to a great extent. These countries need and deserve our assistance in the joint struggle against narcotrafficking. We are also requesting funding to restore selected small, but nevertheless valuable programs in Latin America, Africa, and Asia that had to be dropped in FY 1991. Such small programs can bear fruit in terms of the promoting of democratic institutions and respect for civilian control of the military, as well as good will, contacts and influence, that far exceed the dollar amount.

IMET

The International Military Education and Training program (IMET) is another key tool for promoting invaluable military-to-military ties. As of this year, thanks to new legislation, we are embarking on an expansion of IMET—training senior defense-related management officials from civilian ministries. We have always emphasized professional military education courses for IMET trainees that stress democratic institutions, civilian control and respect for human rights for IMET trainees. The FY 1991 change to the law now enables us to assist existing and newly emerging democratic governments develop expertise in their civilians as well as military in the cooperative

administration of defense establishments and military justice. We support this expansion of the role of IMET. At a time when many countries are struggling to emerge from decades of authoritarian and totalitarian rule, fledgling democracies are badly in need of help in learning to control/overcome the entrenched bureaucratic vestiges of the old regime. This training should give civilians and military alike the standing and the credentials to work with one another to strengthen their democratic institutions and rationally manage defense resources. We believe that this new authority will have particular utility in Latin America and in certain Eastern European countries. However, while we are working hard to develop this new program, it does take time. As is often the case, more is not necessarily better. The limitations imposed by the size of U.S. facilities, for example, cannot be overcome immediately. We are increasing the size and scope of the training as fast as is feasible.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, I believe that in these times of historic change we have a responsibility to preserve the stability we have worked for all these years. Our policies must remain flexible and adaptive in order to counter aggression and to promote democracy and prosperity worldwide. Military assistance and arms sales are a vital part of U.S. national security policy, and will continue to play a role in managing global peace and stability in years to come. As we have seen in the Middle East, in an uncertain and frequently still dangerous world it is vital to be prepared ourselves and to prepare our friends to manage that uncertainty and to deter or combat regional conflict. American equipment is the best in the world, but it comes with strings attached. Those strings—the result of Congressional oversight and Administration policy—when applied judiciously help make our sales of weapons an effective policy tool. I recognize that fiscal constraints limit our abilities. We do not ask for increased funding, but we do ask for flexibility. With that flexibility, the proposed budget represents adequate levels for Military Assistance in 1992. I urge you to support it. Thank you.