

**Testimony to the
House Armed Services Committee**

**“Security Assistance as a Tool for
Building Capacity”**

**The Honorable Dr. John Hillen
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10:00 – 12:00**

Good morning Chairman Hunter, Representative Skelton, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you to discuss the State Department's role in building the capacity of the military forces of our allied and partner nations.

Security assistance is a critical foreign policy tool that allows the United States to advance its national security interests worldwide from continuing rewarding partnerships with our allies to broader goals of promoting key American values with respect to democracy, human rights, and civilian rule of the military. In addition, security assistance also increases the capacity of our military forces by providing the necessary funding and training to our coalition partners and friendly nations so that they can work towards common security goals and share burdens in joint missions. The State Department, and specifically my bureau Political-Military Affairs, has the policy lead on developing and implementing security assistance. The accounts we manage are Foreign Military Financing (FMF), International Military Education and Training (IMET), and Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) accounts.

In addition to these three traditional capacity building programs, the State Department welcomes the opportunity to work closely with our Defense Department colleagues in formulating plans for using the “1206” train and equip authority. The State Department continues to support new DoD authorities, such as 1206 and 1207, because these authorities augment the tools available to both Secretaries to act quickly when unforeseen events or new opportunities make the initiation or expansion of a training, equipping or advisory program necessary. In the case of supporting select DoD authorities, the Administration is seeking to maximize the use of complementary resources and capabilities of the various agencies, in ways that will best serve the Administration’s overall goals of providing comprehensive, integrated assistance. These authorities received a joint endorsement from the Secretaries of State and Defense and are exactly the kind of flexible tools we need to win the long war. We hope that Congress will continue to lend its support to these and other flexible authorities requested by the administration. I have been personally involved in the joint formulation and approval of plans for using 1206 in FY 2006. State and DoD coordination throughout this process has been excellent and we look forward to briefing this committee soon with our final proposals.

FMF

Foreign Military Financing (FMF) is the cornerstone of security assistance. FMF provides grants for the acquisition of U.S. defense equipment, services, and training, which promotes U.S. national security by contributing to regional and global stability, strengthening military support for democratically-elected governments, and containing transnational threats including terrorism and trafficking in narcotics, weapons, and persons. These grants enable key allies and friends to improve their defense capabilities and foster closer military relationships between the U.S. and recipient nations. Increased military capabilities build and strengthen multilateral coalitions with the U.S. and enable friends and allies to be increasingly interoperable with regional, U.S., and NATO forces. By increasing demand for U.S. systems, FMF also contributes to a strong U.S. defense industrial base, an important element of U.S. national defense strategy that reduces cost for Department of Defense acquisitions.

FMF has proven a vital tool in preparing our coalition partners to participate effectively in U.S.-led operations such as in Iraq and

Afghanistan. The FMF funds we are using in FY06 and requesting in FY07 are critical to burden-sharing in these operations.

IMET

The International Military Education and Training (IMET) program is a key component of the U.S. security assistance program. IMET provides training and education on a grant basis to students from allied and friendly nations. In addition to improving defense capabilities, IMET's traditional purpose of promoting more professional militaries around the world through training has taken on greater importance as an effective means to strengthen military alliances and the international coalition against terrorism. Military cooperation between the U.S. and coalition partners and friendly governments is strengthened as foreign militaries improve their knowledge of U.S. military doctrine, strategic planning processes and operational procedures. This cooperation leads to opportunities for military-to-military interaction, information sharing, joint planning and combined force exercises that facilitate interoperability with U.S., NATO, and regional coalition forces.

IMET funding has been very important in preparing coalition forces and friendly nations to participate in peace-keeping operations and joint missions world-wide. The benefits of IMET training with countries working closely in the war on terrorism already have been evident, reflected in smooth collaboration with a growing number of countries.

PKO

The third account, Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), supports multilateral peacekeeping and regional stability operations that are not funded through the UN (assessed) mechanism. This funding helps to support regional peace support operations for which international coalitions or neighboring countries take primary responsibility. These funds also help build capabilities in countries seeking to participate in international peace support missions. PKO enables the United States to better assist countries in transition to create an environment of security and stability essential to their social, economic, and political progress. The United States is committed to enhancing the ability of other nations and international organizations to carry out voluntary peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, thereby sharing an international burden to restore regional stability and peace.

An important part of our PKO program is the Global Peace Operations Initiative. The GPOI is a Presidential initiative to increase the capacity of other countries to deploy to international peace support operations. It is a five-year program that focuses on addressing key gaps in global peacekeeping capacity by 1) training 75,000 peace support troops worldwide, with an emphasis in the Africa region and building African command headquarters capability; 2) increasing the number of gendarme units deployable to international operations; and 3) facilitating deployment by helping to provide equipment, transportation, and field sustainment.

Thank you for allowing me to testify before you this morning about the important role the State Department plays in building our military's capacity through our security assistance programs.