

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

GENERAL PETER J. SCHOOMAKER
CHIEF OF STAFF
UNITED STATES ARMY

BEFORE THE

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Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Committee, on behalf of our Secretary, Dr. Francis Harvey, and the more than one million Active, Guard, Reserve Soldiers, and civilians of the United States Army, serving around the globe, I welcome the opportunity to discuss the need to improve Army readiness, to increase strategic depth, and to decrease our overall strategic risk.

We are in a dangerous, uncertain, and unpredictable time. As we continue our mission worldwide and prepare to increase our commitment in Iraq, we face challenges that exceed the level of demand envisioned in the recent quadrennial review of defense strategy.

Strategy involves establishing a proper balance among ends, ways, and means. Policy and strategy discussions often focus on ends and ways and fail to sufficiently address means. The recent decisions by the President and the Secretary of Defense – to grow our ground forces and to assure access to all components of our force – will help to establish the balance required to meet and sustain high levels of strategic demand for Army forces by providing additional means.

We have received considerable support from this Committee and the Congress to increase the readiness of our Army. As a result, the Soldiers we have deployed into current theaters of operation are the best trained, best equipped, and best led we have ever fielded. As I explained in testimony before this committee last June, our immediate challenge lies in the readiness of our *non-deployed* forces. We will need your continued support in six key areas to restore the strategic depth of our Army necessary to respond decisively to potential strategic contingencies:

First, recent decisions to expand the Army reflect the clear recognition of the dangers we face and the strain that five years of sustained demand has placed on our All-Volunteer force. We plan to grow

six new Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) and enabling organizations in our active component, and other enabling organizations in our Army National Guard and Army Reserve. This will expand our rotational pool to 76 BCTs and more than 200 enabling organizations in the operational force of the Total Army. Our goal is to provide a continuous supply of 20-21 BCTs to meet global commitments. We remain committed to generating whole, cohesive units that are fully manned, trained, and equipped – that are fully ready for the challenges they will face. This will require a national commitment to sustain predictable resourcing over time and to build our force in a balanced, coordinated fashion, while providing adequately for the needs of our All-Volunteer Soldiers and their families.

Second, in the near term, to prosecute the long war, and to sustain the full range of our global commitments, we must have all components of the Army – Active, Guard, and Reserve – ready and able to deploy together. The changes in reserve component mobilization policies, recently announced by Secretary Gates, are essential. Our reserve components comprise 55 percent of our Army's capabilities. We must fully enable them to perform their new role as an integral part of our operationally deployable force. These new policies will provide predictability and facilitate the deployment of trained, ready, and cohesive units, while decreasing the burden on our Soldiers and their families. We are working to implement these changes rapidly and will require continued Congressional support to do so.

Third, with the support of this Committee and the Congress, we have been provided the resources needed to restore battle losses and repair worn equipment through an aggressive reset program. We are well ahead of schedule in executing these funds in fiscal year 2007. In just the first quarter, we have already obligated \$10 billion of the \$17.1 billion appropriated.

As I testified last year, we anticipate that our fiscal year 2008 reset requirements will be approximately \$13.5 billion – a figure that will

increase as we plus up forces in current theaters of operation and increase the size of our Army. Because the replacement of equipment can take up to three years following the commitment of funds, we seek to make this funding available for use as soon as possible. To overcome the unprecedented stress being placed on our equipment today, reset funding will be required for a minimum of two to three years beyond the duration of the current conflict.

Fourth, with your support, we have made great progress in increasing Soldier and unit effectiveness through our modernization efforts. As I have said before, we have historically entered conflicts flatfooted. This current conflict is no exception. Investment accounts were under funded by approximately \$100 billion during the previous decade, resulting in nearly \$56 billion in equipment shortages across the Army. To meet Combatant Commanders' immediate wartime needs, we pooled equipment from across the force to equip Soldiers deploying into harm's way. This practice, which we are continuing today, increases risk for our next-to-deploy units, and limits our ability to respond to emerging strategic contingencies.

The changed conditions of warfare necessitate that we can no longer accept risk in how we equip our combat support and combat service support units. There are no front lines in today's battle space. We must equip *all* units with force protection, night vision goggles, crew served weapons, radios, and other critical items needed to operate. Your continued support is helping to fix what I call our "holes in the force." I ask you to increase your support for this effort as we work to break the historical cycle of unpreparedness. We must remain committed to investing in technologies and equipment that enable our most important asset – the Soldier - to remain ahead of our adversaries who are quickly adapting their methods, tactics, and tools of warfare. Investing sufficiently in our future readiness is a strategic necessity – which must be viewed as a matter of priority not just affordability.

Fifth, our ability to grow the force to meet rotation requirements is jeopardized by our inability to execute nearly \$6 billion worth of scheduled military construction. We have developed a carefully synchronized, closely knitted stationing plan to enable us to meet our global commitments while fighting the long war. Current delays in funding military construction projects contained in the 2007 Military Quality of Life and Veterans' Affairs Appropriations Bill limit our ability to build our modular force and to deliver quality of life improvements which our Soldiers and families both need and deserve. I have addressed my concerns in two separate letters. In November, I co-authored a 16 star letter with the other service chiefs, and in December, Secretary Harvey and I reemphasized the significant impact of this delay. I recently requested to meet with Speaker Pelosi to emphasize how imperative it is to pass this legislation without delay, especially now while we are at war. To properly house, train, and prepare our Soldiers, we need Congress to pass the appropriations bill, or amend continuing resolution language, to permit execution of all military construction and BRAC projects requested in the 2007 President's Budget.

Sixth, we will require access to supplemental funding for fiscal year 2007 by April, and possibly sooner, to properly sustain the Army. We cannot repeat last year's near disastrous "cash flow" experience and meet the increased operational demands now facing us. For fiscal year 2008 and beyond, we must fully resource the Army to enable it to grow as projected. We are continuing to work with the Department of Defense to revise our equipment investment strategy and to obtain the additional resources needed to support that strategy. These requirements should be transmitted in the fiscal year 2008 President's Budget. I ask you to increase funding for these necessary requirements.

The fundamental challenge impacting Army readiness and strategic depth is the need to establish a proper balance between strategy and resources. Had we funded the Army to requested levels in recent years,

and endorsed policies to assure access to all of our capability, we would be in a better strategic posture today. I am greatly encouraged by the actions of the Congress, the President, and the Secretary of Defense which reflect clear recognition of the compelling need to rectify our current situation. I look forward to working with this Congress to enhance the readiness and strategic depth of our Army.