

Prepared Statement of Senator Daniel K. Akaka
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
September 19, 2012

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing.

I join all Americans in mourning the loss of the four brave and dedicated American public servants who died as a result of the senseless attacks in Libya last week. I honor them and the thousands of civilian federal employees overseas, as well as members of the military, who risk their lives every day in service to this country.

I am troubled by the recent violence that has targeted U.S. facilities across the Muslim world. These incidents raise concerns about the protection of Americans working abroad, including questions about U.S. efforts to secure our 270 posts around the world. I applaud President Obama's action sending Marines to secure diplomatic posts in Libya and Yemen, and I recognize the important work the State Department's Diplomatic Security Bureau is doing to protect American posts overseas. In the wake of these violent protests, I hope our witnesses today will address the current threats to Americans both at home and abroad, how those threats are being countered, and how the Departments represented today are working with the State Department to ensure the security of all Americans serving overseas.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the government workers who have made essential contributions to thwarting terrorism. I want to particularly applaud the leadership of our witnesses today and thank them for collaborating in this important effort. In the face of domestic and international threats, we rely on them and the many men and women of our military, law enforcement, homeland security, and intelligence communities to keep us safe.