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EVALUATING U.S. POLICY OPTIONS ON THE HORN OF AFRICA

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EVALUATING U.S. POLICY OPTIONS ON THE HORN OF AFRICA

TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2008

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:15 a.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Russ Feingold, presiding.

Present: Senators Feingold, Bill Nelson, Cardin, Lugar, and Isakson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator FEINGOLD. This hearing will come to order. I want to begin by thanking Senator Biden, Chairman Biden, for making this a full committee hearing, while allowing me to chair as the Africa Subcommittee chairman. Today's hearing will address U.S. policy toward arguably the most worrisome region on the African Continent, the Horn of Africa. Since, I visited that region just over a year ago; the situation has gone from bad to worse.

Today's hearing is an effort to examine the United States Government's policy toward the Horn—specifically, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia—and to assess what we've done right, what we've gotten wrong, and most importantly, what we need to do going forward to reconcile what appears to be, by most accounts, a failing policy in a very critical part of the world.

This committee has sought to understand and address the escalating deterioration of security, political, and humanitarian conditions on the Horn that have been generated and exacerbated by more than two decades of instability. This is our third hearing in less than 2 years to try to inform and encourage a comprehensive U.S. strategy to address the Horn.

Unfortunately, the problems we will hear about today are quite similar to those discussed at previous hearings, while the deterioration on the Horn continues to pose a serious threat to regional and international security. We need to address this—the insecurity and instability in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, as in other countries in Africa—by working to end violence, promote democracy, defend human rights, reduce poverty, and improve security. But too often, these long-term goals have taken a back seat to more short-term and short-sighted priorities.

I would like to say a word about why this hearing is so timely and important. There may be less than 10 months left in this ad-

ministration, but we must nonetheless develop a policy that can help reverse the declining trends in the Horn of Africa, both at the national level as well as regionally. We have no option but to reassess where we currently stand, given that the political crises in Ethiopia and Eritrea are escalating dramatically, the border situation between those two countries remains inflamed, and the bloody fighting in Somalia shows little sign of abating, despite the recent appointment of a Prime Minister who appears to be saying many of the right things.

The challenges we face on the Horn are not new, but in the post-9/11 world, how we deal with them presents new challenges that have, in my opinion, yet to be met. We have repeatedly discussed the need for a long-term comprehensive and coordinated U.S. Government policy that considers our strategic concerns, political dynamics, humanitarian concerns and, perhaps most critical, our national security interests, and applies our significant diplomatic, military, intelligence, and foreign assistance resources toward building a secure and stable Horn of Africa.

Unfortunately, such a policy remains elusive. As we are likely to hear today, the problems in Somalia have a ripple effect across the Horn; they reflect longstanding clashes between Ethiopia and Eritrea that, in turn, benefit from the turmoil of a country with no functioning central government.

In other parts of the world, we've seen what happens when decisions are made and executed without the benefit of a long-term, comprehensive strategy. We've seen what happens when the administration's counterterrorism agenda dominates its bilateral relationships, and poor governance and human rights abuses therefore get a pass. Such actions undermine our country's own credibility and actually end up contributing to instability.

This hearing is intended to not only inform the legislative process here in the Senate, but also to continue to emphasize the need for a more interconnected and balanced approach to the Horn of Africa that addresses each country specifically while still recognizing the transactional challenges and national security implications. This part of the world is far too important for us to rely on narrow, feeble policies or half-hearted ad-hoc measures.

And so with that said, let me introduce our two distinguished panels so we can begin today's discussion. On our first panel we have three witnesses from the administration who represent the top Africa Policy Directors in their respective agencies. We have Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Dr. Jendayi Frazer; the Assistant Administrator for Africa at the U.S. Agency for International Development, Ms. Katherine Almquist; and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Africa at the Defense Department, Ms. Theresa Whelan.

All three of these witnesses have testified before the Africa Subcommittee, so it's my pleasure to welcome you back to full committee. I appreciate your willingness to testify and look forward to, what I hope, will be a frank and productive discussion.

Our second panel features a range of individuals who are well-qualified to speak on the unique challenges related to this complex region and the impact that U.S. policy is having throughout the

volatile Horn of Africa, as well as on the U.S. national security priorities and policies, more generally.

First, we'll hear from Ms. Lynn Fredriksson, the Africa Advocacy Director for Amnesty International U.S.A. We will look to you, Ms. Fredriksson, for a detailed picture of dynamics on the ground, and how they have been affected by recent developments.

We are also privileged to welcome back Dr. David Shinn. Ambassador Shinn was the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia between 1996 and 1999, and currently serves as an Adjunct Professor of International Affairs at George Washington University. Mr. Ambassador, we hope that you will offer analysis of the regional and international dynamics relating to developments on the Horn, as well as your opinion of how the United States and the international community can most effectively address the challenges we face there.

Last, we welcome Retired Colonel Thomas Dempsey, currently the Professor of Security Reform, at the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute. Mr. Dempsey has served as a Strategic Intelligence Analyst for Africa at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center, and as Chief of Africa Branch for the Defense Intelligence Agency.

I'd like to extend a special welcome, also, to all those in the audience today who have personal ties and commitments to these countries and issues. I know many of you have traveled a long way to attend this hearing, and I'm pleased that you could be with us. We are seeking to obtain balance and insightful recommendations that will have lasting implications for the Horn of Africa and for United States and international security.

I am looking forward to hearing from each of our witnesses about the nature and consequences of our actions and our inaction on the Horn, as well as what our long-term objectives and strategies should be.

Now, I am pleased to turn to the ranking member of the full committee and the former chairman of the committee, and really find it impossible not to mention his consistent commitment—not only his famous work on African issues, but he is almost always at this subcommittee's hearings, showing his continued devotion to working on issues related to African countries.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me just mention again the commendation you've given to our witnesses, and likewise to the distinguished audience that has joined us today, as you pointed out, many from long distances, but all with very compassionate and constructive interests in Africa.

And I appreciate so much your leadership, your willingness to have extensive hearings discussing all parts of the continent and the various dimensions of what we can do. So I will forgo any opening statement. I will be in and out of the hearing, as will be the case of many Senators, I suspect today, trying to cover several bases, but I really look forward to the hearing and the witnesses.

And I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. I thank you, Senator Lugar. And, with that, we'll start with our first panel.

Secretary Frazer, please.

STATEMENT OF HON. JENDAYI FRAZER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, AFRICAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. FRAZER. Good morning. And thank you, Chairman Feingold, Senator Lugar, and members of the committee, for calling the hearing on this important subject.

I am especially pleased to have this opportunity to meet with you shortly after the President's overwhelmingly successful visit to Africa and the critical peace agreement in Kenya. The President's trip saw an extraordinary outpouring of support for the United States and the American people, and appreciation of the President's initiatives funded by the U.S. Congress.

At points in their history, the five countries the President visited—Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana, and Liberia—experienced some of the turmoil now facing countries in the Horn of Africa, that is, societies torn apart by war, and conflict with neighbors, and experiencing political strife. Yet today, these countries stand as transformative models, and we foresee the same in the Horn of Africa. Today, the Horn of Africa is a crucible in which many of our most important priorities for Africa are being addressed in their most raw forms. We will continue to work for U.S. interests in the Horn, as elsewhere in Africa, to promote regional stability, facilitate economic growth, eliminate any platforms for al-Qaeda or other terrorist operations, provide humanitarian assistance to the people in need, and work with governments in the region to transform the countries to invest in the people and good governance. Our strategy focuses on a regional approach working in partnership with African countries.

The situation in Somalia remains the key challenge to regional stability and security in the Horn of Africa. Somalia has been characterized as a complex emergency, both in humanitarian and political terms, since the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in January 1991. For the last 17 years, Somalis have struggled to establish credible governance and stability in their country.

During 14 reconciliation conferences, and numerous civil conflicts during the intervening years, U.S. strategy for Somalia aims to advance four key policy objectives.

First, encourage inclusive political dialog to further the transitional political process outlined by the Transitional Federal Charter and leading to national elections in 2009.

Second, provide humanitarian and development assistance for the Somali people, and help build the capacity of the Transitional Federal Government to better govern and deliver services.

Third, facilitate the full deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia, AMISOM, to stabilize the country and create the conditions for Ethiopia's withdrawal.

And fourth, deny terrorists the opportunity to find save haven in Somali territory.

Over the past year, we pursued our objectives coordinating closely with the Transitional Federal Government, or TFG, and regional countries, and working multilaterally, especially through the International Contact Group on Somalia.

Mr. Chairman, the committee requested an update on our core objectives. Since we submitted the comprehensive regional strategy

on Somalia to Congress in February 2007, we have made important progress. But we still have a ways to go, as expected, and working to transform Africa's one, true failed state.

First, we have worked closely with the Transitional Federal Government leadership and the U.N. Special Representative to the Secretary General, Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, to continue the political dialog process and encourage additional outreach to key Somalia stakeholders. The TFG successfully held a National Reconciliation Congress in Mogadishu in July through August 2007 that was attended by 2,600 delegates, and funded by the United States and other donors, and backed by the African Union, the Arab League, and the United Nations.

The conference recommendations were also blessed by Saudi Arabia, recognizing the inclusive participation of Somali clan leaders, business, civil society, women's groups, and the religious leaders, among others. Only the truly extremists refused to take part, as noted in the GAO Report on Somalia.

In more recent months, we have seen the emergence of a very positive momentum with President Yusuf's appointment of a new Prime Minister in November 2007, and that Prime Minister's selection of a more representative Transitional Federal Government Cabinet. Prime Minister Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein has promoted reconciliation by engaging in extensive outreach to elements of the Somali opposition, working closely with humanitarian agencies, and preparing the ground for the key tasks that remain to be completely before elections in 2009.

However, time is short for this 2009 transition, and significant tasks remain ahead. Needed among them are effective and inclusive security and justice mechanisms that will allow Somalis to live in peace and security. Given financial support, the neighboring countries are prepared to provide training to assist the TFG to create viable and responsive security forces, to establish a more secure environment in which the political process can move forward.

Second, as correctly noted in a GAO Report, Somalia's chronic humanitarian emergencies continue today, following almost two decades of civil conflict. Localized droughts and flooding have exacerbated the deteriorating humanitarian conditions. We will continue to pressure all parties to allow unfettered delivery of humanitarian aid to effective populations. We have to develop greater leverage over extremists, especially groups like al-Shabaab that attack humanitarian relief staff and facilities.

We will continue urging the Transitional Federal Government and Ethiopians to do all that they can to protect fluencies and prevent further deaths and displacement of innocent people. In 2007, the United States was the leading donor of humanitarian assistance, providing more than $140 million to assist the Somali people.

Third, at the time of the Somali Strategy Report to Congress, AMISOM was but a concept on paper. One month later, in March 2007, Uganda deployed two battalions, and today, Uganda and Burundi have deployed more than 2,500 soldiers as part of AMISOM.

Burundi deployed its first battalion of approximately 850 soldiers in January 2008, and has an additional battalion that awaits only funding to deploy. Uganda also plans to deploy an additional two

battalions of 1,600 troops, if the necessary financial support is provided.

Nigeria has pledged a battalion as well. Once deployed, this would bring the total number of troops in AMISOM to almost 6,000, closer to the authorized strength of 8,000. To date, the United States has allocated $59.1 million to support this critical mission. We continue to work with the United Nations on contingency plans to support AMISOM, and a possible rehatting as a U.N. force, as conditions permit.

Fourth, while the al-Qaeda-affiliated al-Shabaab is more isolated than ever, we remain deeply troubled that al-Qaeda operatives are treating Somalia as a safe haven. The United States remains committed to neutralizing the threat that al-Qaeda poses to all Americans, Somalis, and others in the Horn of Africa.

We have been clear that we will therefore take strong measures to deny terrorists safe haven, as well as the ability to plan and operate from Somalia. Fighting terrorism in Somali is not our sole priority, but rather is part of a comprehensive regional strategy to improve governance and the rule of law, stabilize the country and the region, and create the conditions for economic growth and development.

Finally, since the report to Congress, Secretary Rice has appointed a special envoy for Somalia based in Nairobi and has increased the staff of our Nairobi office, working exclusively on Somalia.

Our effectiveness will be further enhanced with the ability to regularly travel to Somalia and establish offices in the country. I have traveled to Baidoa in Somalia, and Hargeisa in Somaliland, to pave the way for regular, in-country, diplomatic engagement. This is a difficult and long-term effort in Somalia. As we encourage political dialogue, we will continue to seek to isolate those who out of extremism refuse that dialog and insist on violence.

This dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea regarding demarcation of their common border poses an additional threat to regional stability. However, the current standoff is not comparable to the 1998 to 2000 war that claimed the lives of 120,000 combatants. Our diplomatic goals are for Eritrea and Ethiopia to work together in good faith to implement the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission's Delimitation Decision, and for both parties to engage in talks to normalize relations.

Unfortunately, recent efforts to resolve the boundary impasse remain stalled. Ethiopia refuses to demarcate the border without broader normalization talks, and Eritrea's longstanding restrictions on the U.N. Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, UNMEE operations, and the more recent refusal to allow UNMEE to obtain fuel have caused the U.N. to begin withdrawing UNMEE personnel.

The Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission's virtual demarcation decision by map coordinates has not brought the parties closer to resolution. The result has been a hardening of positions on both sides, and increased tension between them. We will continue to seek opportunities for progress, especially supporting U.N. efforts, but we do not expect this impasse to be resolved in the near future.

With Eritrea, while publicly claiming to seek peace and stability for the region, the Government of the state of Eritrea has privately

undermined nearly all efforts for broad-based inclusive dialog and reconciliation in the region, most notably in Somalia and Sudan.

Its activities include supporting and hosting Hassan Dahir Aweys, a United States and United Nations designated terrorist; supporting Somalia extremists elements associated with the now-defunct Council of Islamic Courts; and supporting the Ogaden National Liberation Front, ONLF, in Ethiopia-Somalia region.

In addition to its destabilizing activities in the region, the Government of Eritrea has stamped out political freedom at home. Fifteen years after independence, national elections have yet to be held, and the constitution was never implemented. The Eritrean people deserve better. The United States has repeatedly pressed the Eritrean Government on these issues, but the Eritrean people continue to suffer.

Ethiopia is the oldest independent country in Africa, one of the poorest countries in the world, and one of America's staunchest partners, especially in countering terrorism in the Horn of Africa. In Ethiopia, the Somali region commonly called the Ogaden, is both a humanitarian and an emergency problem, complicated by Eritrea's support for the ONLF and the periodic infiltration of al-Qaeda-trained terrorists, like Aden Ayro.

Our objectives in Ogaden are to assist the Government of Ethiopia to prevent famine in the short term by reopening commercial trade routes and ensuring food deliveries, to push for improvement in the human rights conditions, and over time support efforts to integrate the Ogaden into national strategy for better health, education, agriculture, and economic development.

The United States is deeply involved in the persistent diplomacy to ensure that humanitarian conditions in Ogaden do not deteriorate into famine. Our Ambassador in Addis Ababa coordinates the humanitarian response from the international community. I visited the Ogaden in September to push for increased commercial food deliveries, greater access, and respect for human rights.

USAID Administrator Henrietta Fore and my colleague, Kate Almquist, also traveled to the region in November. It is not easy to ensure access for humanitarian workers for parts of the Ogaden, at the time, remained mired in conflict to ONLF attacks and counterinsurgency measures by the Ethiopian National Defense Forces.

We acknowledge the government's right to defend its territory, including against insurgents, but equally, I've made clear to the Government of Ethiopia its responsibilities toward noncombatants during its operations, and have expressed our concerns about the impact of the insurgency and counterinsurgency on the civilian population.

In promoting improved governance, we were encouraged by the Government of Ethiopia's release of political detainees in July and August of 2007. Again, this achievement was the result of persistent diplomacy. Although Ethiopia has a long and proud history, its democratic governance institutions are still young. We have conveyed directly our expectations for improvement on human rights and democracy issues, but also recognize the progress made over the past 15 years.

We are confident that Ethiopia will work through its challenges, and will work with the government and opposition to find them—to help them find common ground as they work toward the elections in 2010.

Djibouti is in a region fraught with instability, yet Djibouti is a peaceful, tolerant, democratic country serving as a valuable partner for both its neighbors and the United States. Though challenged by poverty and chronic food insecurity, Djibouti is rapidly becoming a vital hub for regional economic growth.

President Guelleh recognizes that Djibouti knows that its future success depends on regional stability and economic integration, and with successful elections, it will continue to serve as a model for several of its neighbors.

Somaliland: In early February, I also had an opportunity to visit the city of Hargeisa in the self-declared Republic of Somaliland. Somaliland has achieved a commendable level of stability, largely without external support or assistance. However, Somaliland's democracy remains fragile, and it is important to maintain the success of the past.

We will continue to urge Somaliland's political parties to demonstrate the level of political will that ensured the previous Presidential elections in 2003 were credible and transparent, and to work together to ensure a peaceful result, regardless of who wins the elections.

Although not a focus of this hearing, Kenya is an integral part of our policy in the greater Horn of Africa, and has long been a productive force of peace and stability in this region. We are encouraged by the February 28 political agreement reached by President Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader, Raila Odinga. And we believe that that agreement will allow Kenya to play its traditional leadership role in the region.

In conclusion, despite continued instability in Somalia, and persistent tensions along the Ethiopia-Eritrea border, the Horn of Africa as a whole is making some progress. Our policy objectives remain consistent with our international and regional partners, but as always, we are constrained by limited resources, and to date, an inability to regularly travel to and set up offices in Somalia and Somaliland.

Despite these constraints, we will continue to work with our partners to bring lasting stability to areas of conflict in the Horn of Africa, and to maintain stability and good governance where these goals have been achieved.

Thank you. And I would be happy to take your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Frazer follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JENDAYI E. FRAZER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

INTRODUCTION

Good morning, and thank you, Chairman Feingold and members of the committee, for calling a hearing on this timely and important issue. I am especially pleased to have this opportunity to meet with you shortly after the President's tremendously successful visit to Africa, and in the wake of the critical peace agreement in Kenya.

The President's trip saw an extraordinary outpouring of support for the United States and the American people. We are working closely with our African partners

in a way that brings credit to our country. Our objectives in the countries the President visited—Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana, and Liberia—are similar to those currently dominating our agenda in the Horn: Helping Africans resolve conflict and rebuild societies torn asunder by war; promoting ethnic tolerance and reconciliation; encouraging economic growth and job creation; improving health conditions; and ensuring democratic institutions and values prosper, including in nations with significant Muslim populations, for Islam is clearly compatible with democracy.

The Horn of Africa today is the crucible in which many of our most important priorities for Africa are being addressed in their rawest forms. The issues are not conceptually different in the Horn than in the countries the President visited, but in some cases they present starker challenges in societies confronting ongoing conflict, where delivering state services and entrenching democratic values and institutions remain major challenges.

Somalia's challenges have frustrated its citizens, neighbors, and friends for decades. Following the appointment of Prime Minister Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein, we are now seeing greater and more effective outreach to elements of the Somali political opposition, isolation of terrorist and extremist elements, efforts to repair and strengthen relationships with the humanitarian organizations, and concrete plans and timetables to accomplish the required transitional tasks under the Transitional Federal Charter. In Somaliland, we are witnessing the patient, methodical emergence of representative institutions.

While Ethiopia and Eritrea have been as yet unable to resolve their many differences, the parties have controlled their militaries and largely refrained from reckless behavior on the border. Ethiopia has a unique history and is making the transition from two millennia of autocracy to a modern state. Djibouti is stable and preparing to be an important regional hub centered on its strategically located port. Eritrea remains the tragic exception to this picture. We have strong relations and mutual interests with the countries of the Horn of Africa, except Eritrea. President Isaias sponsors instability in Ethiopia, Darfur, and Somalia and is undermining the integrity of United Nations (U.N.) peacekeeping operations. His contempt for his neighbors and the U.N. is not new but it is particularly egregious at this sensitive time and sets a dangerous precedent.

We will continue to work in the Horn, as elsewhere in Africa, to promote regional stability and representative government; facilitate economic growth, increased prosperity and jobs; eliminate any platform for al-Qaeda or other terrorist operations; provide humanitarian assistance in the wake of drought, flooding, and 17 years of near-constant conflict in southern and central Somalia; and work with governments in the region to transform the countries through investing in people and good governance.

SOMALIA

The situation in Somalia remains a key challenge to regional stability and security in the Horn of Africa. Somalia has been characterized as a complex emergency, both in humanitarian and political terms, since the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in January 1991. For the last 17 years, Somalis have struggled to return lasting governance and stability to their country, enduring 14 reconciliation conferences and numerous civil conflicts during the intervening years.

U.S. strategy for Somalia remains centered around four key policy priorities. First, encourage inclusive political dialog with the goal of resuming the transitional political process outlined by the Transitional Federal Charter and leading to national elections in 2009. Isolating terrorist and extremist elements is a key component of this priority. Second, provide development and humanitarian assistance for the Somali people and help build the governance capacity of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Third, facilitate the full and timely deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to stabilize the country and create the conditions for Ethiopia's withdrawal. And four, deny terrorists the opportunity to find a safe haven in Somali territory.

Over the past year, and particularly since President Yusuf appointed Prime Minister Hussein in November 2007 and Hussein's subsequent appointment of a new TFG Cabinet in January 2008, we have worked closely with the TFG leadership and the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General (SRSG) to continue this dialog process and encourage additional outreach to key Somali stakeholders, including clan leaders, business and civil society, women's groups, and religious leaders, among others. It is also important to continue the efforts begun during the National Reconciliation Congress in Mogadishu held in July–August 2007 in moving toward national elections in 2009.

As a result of the efforts of the President, Prime Minister, and SRSG, we have seen the emergence of a new, positive, yet fragile, momentum in recent months. The Prime Minister has promoted reconciliation by engaging in extensive outreach to elements of the Somali opposition, working closely with humanitarian agencies, and preparing the ground for the key tasks that remain to be completed before elections in 2009. Similarly, and as a consequence of its own extremist tendencies, the al-Qaeda-affiliated al-Shabaab is more isolated than ever. However, time is short for the 2009 transition and significant tasks remain ahead, among them building effective and inclusive security and justice mechanisms that will allow Somalis to live in peace and security.

The United States remains the leading donor of humanitarian assistance in Somalia, with approximately $140 million provided to date over FY 2007–FY 2008. Working with our international and regional partners in the International Contact Group on Somalia, we continue to call on all parties, including the TFG, to ensure unfettered delivery of humanitarian aid to affected populations, and encourage all Somalis to protect civilians and prevent further deaths and displacement of innocent people. We continue to work closely with our international partners and the donor community to improve humanitarian access and respond to the humanitarian needs of the Somali people.

Similarly, additional deployments under AMISOM will help create a more secure environment in which this political process can move forward and the TFG can create viable and responsive security forces. Since I last appeared before this subcommittee to discuss Somalia, Uganda has deployed more than 1,800 soldiers as part of AMISOM, and was joined by a battalion, or approximately 850 soldiers, from Burundi in January 2008. Uganda plans to deploy an additional 1,600 and Burundi an additional battalion. Nigeria has pledged a battalion as well. Once deployed this would bring the total number of troops in AMISOM to almost 6,000, closer to the authorized strength of 8,000.

To date, the United States has allocated $49.1 million over FY 2007–FY 2008 in Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) funds to support this critical mission. We have also contributed $10 million in deployment equipment and transportation as part of the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) to help Burundi and Uganda deploy to AMISOM. We continue to work closely with the African Union (AU) and troop contributing countries to encourage additional troop deployments under AMISOM.

At the same time, we remain deeply troubled that foreign terrorists associated with al-Qaeda have received safe haven in Somalia. The United States remains committed to neutralizing the threat that al-Qaeda poses to all Americans, Somalis, and others in the Horn of Africa. We have been clear that we will therefore take strong measures to deny terrorists safe haven in Somalia, as well as the ability to plan and operate from Somalia.

Fighting terrorism in Somalia is not our sole priority, but rather is part of a comprehensive strategy to reverse radicalization, improve governance, rule of law, democracy and human rights, and improve economic growth and job creation. This is a difficult and long-term effort in Somalia. As we encourage political dialog, we will continue to seek to isolate those who, out of extremism, refuse that dialog and insist on violence. Unchecked, terrorists will continue to undermine and threaten stability and the lives of civilians inside Somalia and throughout the region. Therefore, we will remain engaged in working with our regional partners, Somali stakeholders, to ensure a successful political process leading to the return of effective governance and lasting peace and stability.

ETHIOPIA–ERITREA

The dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea regarding demarcation of their common border poses an additional threat to regional stability. Unfortunately, recent efforts to resolve the boundary impasse are stalled and the situation has deteriorated. Eritrea's refusal to allow the U.N. mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) to obtain fuel and continued restrictions on UNMEE operations have caused the U.N. to begin to withdraw UNMEE personnel.

Eritrea's restrictions on UNMEE have been nearly universally perceived as an assault on the integrity of the U.N. with dangerous consequences for other U.N. missions and activities. The U.N. Security Council and other interested governments have strongly condemned Eritrea's actions. We are now supporting the U.N. to ensure the safe withdrawal of UNMEE and avoid a further escalation in tensions.

The Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission's (EEBC) demarcation decision by map coordinates has not brought the parties closer to resolution of the impasse. Eritrea accepts the decision, while Ethiopia rejects it as inconsistent with international law. The result has been a hardening of positions on both sides and increased ten-

sion between them. Eritrea and Ethiopia will have to work together in good faith to implement the delimitation decision of the EEBC, a decision that both parties have accepted.

It is essential for both parties to engage in talks on issues that prevent normalized relations. We strongly support the U.N.'s efforts to achieve such talks and expect that these efforts will resume after the situation involving UNMEE has been resolved. At the same time, we continue to press both parties to respect the Algiers Agreement and implement concrete steps on the border to reduce tension and avoid renewed conflict. We will continue to seek opportunities for progress, but do not expect this impasse to be resolved in the near future.

ERITREA

While publicly claiming to seek peace and stability for the region, the Government of the State of Eritrea has pursued a widespread strategy of fomenting instability throughout the Horn of Africa and privately undermined nearly all efforts for broad-based, inclusive dialog and reconciliation in the region—most notably in Somalia and Sudan. Its activities include supporting and hosting Hassan Dahir Aweys, a U.S.- and U.N.-designated terrorist; supporting Somali extremist elements associated with the now-defunct Council of Islamic Courts; and supporting and training the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) in Ethiopia. Last year, Eritrea also suspended its membership in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and did not support the region's strategy for achieving a long-term solution in Somalia.

In addition to the Government of Eritrea's increasingly destabilizing activities in the region, its domestic human rights record remains deplorable and is steadily declining. Last year and this year it was listed in the Human Rights Report among the "world's most systematic human rights violators." This is no surprise as several thousand prisoners of conscience are detained indefinitely without charge and without the ability to communicate with friends and relatives. There is no freedom of press, religion, speech, or assembly. Tight government controls on the financial system and private sector have destroyed the economy.

The United States has repeatedly pressed the Eritrean Government on these issues, but Eritrea remains unresponsive and the Eritrean people continue to suffer. Fifteen years after independence, national elections have yet to be held, and the constitution has never been implemented. The Eritrean people deserve better.

ETHIOPIA

In Ethiopia, the United States was deeply involved in the persistent diplomacy that ensured humanitarian conditions in the Ogaden did not deteriorate into famine. I visited the region personally, as did USAID Administrator Henrietta Fore, and our Ambassador in Addis Ababa coordinated the humanitarian response from the international community. It was not easy to ensure access for humanitarian workers, for parts of the Ogaden at the time remained mired in conflict, with Ogaden National Liberation Front attacks and counterinsurgency measures by the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF). We have made clear to the Government of Ethiopia its responsibilities toward noncombatants during its operations and have expressed our concerns about the impact of the insurgency and counterinsurgency on the civilian population.

While the humanitarian situation in the Ogaden is not deteriorating, access remains a key challenge. Commercial trade in and out of the region has improved in the past several months, although poor rains, drought, and security restrictions provide a continued risk of famine. Our Embassy in Addis Ababa is leading the international effort to work with the government to get food distributed throughout the region by March and April before the rainy season in an effort to prevent a famine from emerging.

The United States has committed approximately $53 million in emergency assistance to the Ogaden since August 2007, accounting for 98 percent of all international emergency assistance. Since January 2008, a USAID-sponsored Humanitarian Assistance Team has been in place in Ethiopia, traveling through much of the Ogaden, assessing needs and working closely with Ethiopian and international organizations to coordinate relief efforts.

In promoting improved governance, we were encouraged by the Government of Ethiopia's release of political detainees in July and August 2007. Again, this achievement was a result of persistent diplomacy, unheralded in public at the time but without which the detainees might not have been released. Although Ethiopia has a long and proud history, its democratic governance institutions are still young. It is frequently forgotten that Ethiopia is a country emerging from almost two mil-

lennia of autocracy. We have conveyed directly our expectations for improvement on human rights and democracy issues, but also recognize significant progress made over the past 15 years.

Ethiopia is still working through the aftermath of the 2005 elections, which saw a vibrant political culture emerge. This is a talented people, destined by dint of population, location, and energy to play a prominent leadership role on the continent for a long time to come. We are confident Ethiopia will work through its challenges and we will work with the government and opposition to help them find common ground as they move toward elections in 2010.

DJIBOUTI

In a region fraught with instability, Djibouti is a peaceful, tolerant, democratic, Muslim country, serving as a valuable partner for both its neighbors and the United States. Djibouti plays a key role in supporting regional efforts to reach a lasting solution in Somalia. I visited Djibouti in early February, just prior to its parliamentary elections. Despite a boycott call from a rival coalition, the elections were peaceful and voter turnout was over 72 percent.

Though Djibouti is challenged by poverty and chronic food insecurity, it is rapidly becoming a vital hub for economic growth in the region. Current significant foreign investment into Djibouti's port and infrastructure will likely allow Djibouti to serve as a regional transshipment hub. Djibouti's expanding port capacity speeds regional trade, and its livestock quarantine and export facility (launched by USAID) permits legitimate exports from the Horn to key Middle East markets for the first time in decades.

President Ismail Omar Guelleh is committed not only to expanding Djibouti's role in the global economy and increasing foreign and private investment, but has also emphasized education and health care, so the Djiboutian people can realize the benefits of the country's economic growth. Djibouti knows that its future success depends on regional stability and economic integration, and it serves as a model for several of its neighbors.

SOMALILAND

In early February, I also had an opportunity to visit the city of Hargeisa in the self-declared Republic of Somaliland. Somaliland has achieved a commendable level of stability, largely without external support or assistance, which the international community must help to sustain regardless of the question of formal recognition. My visit in February provided a chance to witness Somaliland's progress regarding economic development, but also to hear about the challenges that Somaliland faces in its democratic process.

During my visit, I met with members of the Somaliland administration, as well as representatives from Somaliland's three political parties to discuss the municipal and Presidential elections expected to take place in July and August of this year. The United States has provided $1 million through the International Republican Institute (IRI) to support training for members of Parliament elected in Somaliland's September 2005 parliamentary elections, as well as capacity-building programs for Somaliland's three political parties. We also plan to contribute an additional $1 million in support of the upcoming municipal and Presidential elections.

Despite some recent delays in beginning a voter registration process, we are hopeful that the recent decision by President Dahir Rayale Kahin to authorize the voter registration process proposed by the National Electoral Commission will enable the elections to take place on schedule. At the same time, Somaliland's democracy remains fragile and it is important to maintain the success of the past. We will continue to urge Somaliland's political parties to demonstrate the same level of political will that ensured the previous Presidential elections in 2003 were credible and transparent, and to work together to ensure a peaceful result regardless of which candidate wins the election.

KENYA

Although not a focus of this hearing, Kenya is an integral part of our policy in the greater Horn of Africa and has long been a productive force for peace and stability in this troubled region and I just want briefly to address it. As chair of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Kenya has had a leadership role in supporting the peace processes in southern Sudan, Somalia, and northern Uganda.

Kenya is the economic anchor of the region, with food aid, fuel, and commercial goods for Horn countries passing through Kenya. The Kenyan Government continues to support and pursue our joint efforts to counter the threat of terrorism in

Kenya and elsewhere in East Africa. Kenya's recent political crisis has somewhat diverted Kenya's focus on this effort, but we expect this will quickly be resolved.

Kenya's recent political crisis following the December 27 elections harmed its economy (and thus, the economies of the Horn countries) and impeded Kenya's ability to play its traditional leadership role in the region. We are encouraged by the February 28 political agreement reached by President Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga, and we will continue to monitor implementation of the agreement closely. We believe one of the most important reasons the parties decided to sign this agreement was the skilled mediation of Kofi Annan and strong private messages to both parties from the United States.

To support implementation of the agreement and economic recovery, Secretary Rice has committed an initial assistance package of $25 million that will focus on three key areas: Peace and reconciliation, institutional reform, and restoring livelihoods and communities. With the continued support and assistance of the United States and the international community, we are confident that Kenya will soon be back on the path of democracy, prosperity, and stability, and will be once again in the position to support and advocate for peace initiatives in the Horn of Africa. Implementation is critical, and we will remain closely engaged with the government, opposition, and civil society.

CONCLUSION

Despite continued instability in Somalia and persistent tensions along the Ethiopia-Eritrea border, the Horn of Africa as a whole is making progress toward improved regional stability and governance. Our policy objectives remain consistent with our international and regional partners, but as always we are constrained by a lack of resources. Despite these constraints, we will continue to work with our partners to bring lasting stability to areas of conflict in the Horn of Africa, and to maintain stability and good governance where these goals have been achieved.

Senator FEINGOLD. I thank the Assistant Secretary. It is clear from the range of issues you raised, how important it is to try to look at this region as a whole, as well as the individual difficulties, because the challenges are so interrelated. And I certainly take your point about Kenya as being very relevant to the region, as well.

So we thank you. And now, we turn to Ms. Almquist.

STATEMENT OF HON. KATHERINE ALMQUIST, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR AFRICA, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. ALMQUIST. Thank you, Chairman Feingold, and members of the committee, for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss USAID's programs in the Horn of Africa.

Like elsewhere in the world, USAID's efforts to promote economic development, strengthen democracies, and provide lifesaving humanitarian assistance in the countries of the Horn will ultimately contribute to greater stability in the region. I have prepared a longer statement about our programs, which I would request be entered today for the record.

The Horn of Africa continues to face numerous humanitarian challenges which constrain our development opportunities. Thus far in fiscal year 2008, USAID has spent over $265 million in food and nonfood to humanitarian assistance in Ethiopia and Somalia alone.

In addition to drought, which has contributed to near-famine conditions in the Horn during 6 of the past 10 years, ongoing tension between Ethiopia and Eritrea, prolonged civil and clan conflict in Somalia, and the multifaceted conflict in Ethiopia's Ogaden region continue to drain the human and financial resources of these coun-

tries, undermining national and international development efforts and the stability of the region as a whole.

Providing effective humanitarian assistance in these environments is enormously difficult, and attacks targeting humanitarian personnel in both Somalia and the Ogaden highlight the risks our partners face on a daily basis. The unexpected crisis in Kenya, the stable anchor country in the Horn and East Africa region, has also added further challenging dimensions.

As Somalia enters a projected transition to a democratically elected government in 2009, United States foreign policy objectives in Somalia are to eliminate the terrorist threat, promote political stability by supporting the establishment of a functioning central government, and address the humanitarian needs of the Somali people. U.S. assistance is helping to build the capacity of the Transitional Federal Government, the components of which are known as the Transitional Federal Institutions, to provide social services and support the transitional process leading to national elections and the establishment of permanent, representative government institutions.

Despite the difficult environments and the limited timeframe, the outcome of the National Reconciliation Congress, and the appointment of the new Prime Minister and Cabinet in the late fall, provide an opportunity for reviving the constitutional process.

USAID is also encouraging the continued democratization and development in the regional administrations in Somaliland and Puntland.

The continued insecurity, localized drought conditions, and increasing numbers of internally displaced persons have generated deteriorating humanitarian conditions in Somalia, even while this transition takes place. Multiple attacks on humanitarian relief staff and facilities in January and early February have led to the withdrawal of some international staff and temporary travel restrictions, further complicating efforts to provide critical assistance.

According to the United Nations, the number of people requiring humanitarian assistance and livelihood support has increased from 1.5 million as of mid-2007 to nearly 2 million people in early 2008, which includes both new and long-term internally displaced populations in rural areas of southern and central Somalia.

These figures do not represent the sizeable but unknown number of vulnerable households in urban settings, which also are affected by record high prices for staple foods, disruptions in market and commercial activities, and the ongoing conflict. In response to growing concern over food insecurity among displaced and affected households, relief agencies are reviewing current response plans and food stocks.

The United States and other donors are working with the Prime Minister and his Cabinet to help address bureaucratic and security impediments to delivery of humanitarian assistance and help improve access for humanitarian relief. We are heartened by the Transitional Federal Government's recent commitment to work with donor partners and NGOs to improve access, but urge the Transitional Federal Government to further implement the necessary steps as soon as possible to ensure that aid reaches those in need.

Ethiopia is one of the world's poorest countries, with severe malnutrition and health problems affecting up to one-tenth of the population of over 77 million. The country nevertheless has experienced robust economic and export growth in recent years, around 8 percent annually, but subsistence agriculture is prevalent and vulnerable to seasonal flooding and cyclical droughts.

While the country is experiencing growing pains, sometimes severe, in its march toward democracy and a market economy, with U.S. support, Ethiopia continues to undertake ambitious programs to reduce poverty, advance political reform, boost sustainable economic growth, and increase the quality and coverage of health, education, and other service delivery.

U.S.-supported governance, judicial and conflict mitigation programs help improve political dialog, strengthen civil society, and lessen ethnic conflict. U.S. assistance will continue to help the government tackle the underlying causes of food insecurity through employment generation and enterprise growth. And we have a robust development program working with the Government of Ethiopia and our donor colleagues on all of these areas.

In terms of the humanitarian situation, overall food security in Ethiopia has improved over the past several years. And the main agriculture season between October and December which represents 90 to 95 percent of total crop production countrywide, was above the recent 5-year average.

However, an estimated 8 million chronically food insecure people across Ethiopia receiving food assistance and cash transfers while building productive assets through the Productive Safety Net Program, continue to confront a food security crisis. In addition, approximately 1.3 million people require emergency food assistance, including nearly 1 million people in the Somali region.

Although slowly improving, recent restrictions on trade and movement in the Somali region have disrupted livelihoods and increased food insecurity among pastoralists and agropastoralists in the five zones under military operations. And 1.5 million people living in these restricted areas are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance between now and June of this year.

The inability to access markets, combined with high food commodity prices, has decreased food availability and dietary diversity, contributing to increased levels of malnutrition in affected areas for local populations' dependant on the sale and exchange of livestock for income.

Delays and logistical constraints have limited actual food distributions, and the full resumption of commercial activities remains critical to improving food security in the region.

In late November, the USAID Administrator and Director for U.S. Foreign Assistance, Henrietta Fore, and I traveled to Ethiopia, including the Somali region. As a result of Administrator Fore's meeting with Prime Minister Meles, in December USAID deployed a Humanitarian Assistance Team to the conflict-affected zones of the Somali region to assess nutritional and humanitarian conditions there and determine what steps could be taken to further facilitate delivery of aid.

The Humanitarian Assistance Team concluded an initial assessment phase on January 31. While it did not observe indicators of

an immediate crisis within the areas it was able to visit, it cautions that humanitarian conditions and the food security situation could still significantly deteriorate in the next couple of months due to poor seasonal rains, continued restriction on commercial trade and disruptions to livestock movement, poor delivery mechanisms for food aid being employed by the Government of Ethiopia's Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency, limited access to and delivery of essential health services, and ongoing insecurity and overall reduced humanitarian access.

In order to address obstacles to effective food and humanitarian aid distribution, USAID is urging the Government of Ethiopia to improve access to affected populations for further needs assessments and response activities.

We look forward to working with the Government of Ethiopia, beyond this humanitarian situation in the Ogaden, on a recovery and a development strategy for this region, which is critical to addressing some of the underlying causes behind this conflict.

In Eritrea, chronic drought conditions continue to negatively impact food security, health, and nutrition indicators, as well as water availability. Economic and political challenges, including a lack of human resources due to high levels of military conscription and shortages of agricultural inputs, have also contributed to the disruption of agricultural production and economic development, exacerbating existing poverty and deteriorating humanitarian conditions. In addition, political constraints prevent comprehensive assessments and monitoring, and have led to a significant reduction in the number of humanitarian agencies operating in Eritrea.

Indeed, USAID is not currently providing any development or humanitarian assistance, as we closed our mission at the end of 2005 at the request of the Government of Eritrea.

In Djibouti, United States assistance programs support health, education, governance, food security, and economic development. United States-funded programs serve as catalytic agents, helping Djibouti ensure that it stays safe from security threats; its health care and education programs reach rural and large urban areas; it is prepared to respond to the food emergencies and other food insecurity, and help its people obtain the tools they need to secure jobs in a rapidly changing economy. U.S. investments also contribute substantially to achieving our own security and development objectives in the region.

And finally, I would just like to note how critical stability in Kenya is to avoiding massive instability in the entire Horn of Africa region. The crisis in Kenya has already affected its neighboring countries in the region through the sharp increases in fuel prices and transportation blockades. We are extremely encouraged by the breakthrough in negotiations and the agreement reached on February 28, but are very mindful that our attention will need to stay focused on Kenya, as this will be a long-term process of national healing and reform.

The political and security challenges in the Horn of Africa are significant, as are the development and humanitarian needs. USAID is deeply engaged with our partners to help to address these challenges and support emerging opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity this morning, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Almquist follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. KATHERINE J. ALMQUIST, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR AFRICA, USAID, WASHINGTON, DC

Chairman Feingold and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss USAID's programs in the Horn of Africa. U.S. Government objectives for the Horn of Africa are to promote stability, combat terrorism, and advance democracy and economic development while addressing the humanitarian needs of the region's people. Like elsewhere in the world, USAID's efforts to promote economic development, strengthen democracies, and help people fulfill their human aspirations in the countries of the Horn of Africa will ultimately contribute to greater stability in the region.

The Horn of Africa continues to face numerous humanitarian challenges. Thus far in FY 2008, USAID has spent over $265 million in food and nonfood humanitarian assistance in Ethiopia and Somalia alone. In addition to drought, which has contributed to near-famine conditions in the Horn during 6 of the past 10 years, ongoing tension between Ethiopia and Eritrea, prolonged civil and clan conflict in Somalia, and the multifaceted conflict in Ethiopia's Ogaden region continue to drain the human and financial resources of these countries, undermining national and international development efforts and the stability of the region as a whole. Providing effective humanitarian assistance in these environments is enormously difficult, and attacks targeting humanitarian personnel in both Somalia and the Ogaden highlight the risks our partners face on a daily basis. The unexpected crisis in Kenya—the stable "anchor" country in the Horn and East Africa region—has also added further challenging dimensions.

SOMALIA

Somalia has struggled to reestablish effective central governance following nearly two decades of civil conflict. As Somalia enters a projected transition to a democratically elected government in 2009, U.S. foreign policy objectives in Somalia are to eliminate the terrorist threat, promote political stability by supporting the establishment of a functioning central government, and address the humanitarian needs of the Somali people. U.S. assistance is helping to build the capacity of the Transitional Federal Government, the components of which are known as the Transitional Federal Institutions, to provide social services and support the transitional process leading to national elections and the establishment of permanent, representative government institutions. The United States also works closely with other donor partners and international organizations to support the development of an effective and representative security sector, including the military, police, and judiciary, while supporting ongoing peacekeeping efforts in Somalia. The deteriorating humanitarian situation continues to be a significant concern to which the United States is providing substantial assistance.

Peace and Security

USAID will continue to provide training and support in conflict mitigation and reconciliation to political, clan, and civil society leaders in order to promote stability conducive to social and economic development. In FY 2007, the United States supported the successful convening of the National Reconciliation Congress, which brought together more than 2,600 delegates to Mogadishu. The National Reconciliation Congress succeeded in producing concrete recommendations on the transitional tasks ahead, including the drafting of a constitution and preparations for elections, as well as calling for the Transitional Federal Parliament to ratify an amendment to the Transitional Federal Charter that allowed for ministerial positions to be held by nonmembers of Parliament, paving the way for enhanced representation in the Transitional Federal Government. USAID, in concert with the State Department, is working closely with other donor partners to support the efforts of Prime Minister Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein, under the leadership of President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, in promoting reconciliation at all levels across Somali society.

USAID is also supporting quick impact community-based projects to provide tangible, practical benefits; in FY 2007, 65 quick impact projects were supported benefiting over 6,000 households. Complementary support is being provided to civil soci-

ety and media programs to enable government-civil society collaboration and promote transparency and accountability.

Governing Justly and Democratically

USAID assistance both supports the transitional political process, as well as programs to build the capacity of government ministries and train public sector executives in the transparent and accountable management. USAID recently contributed to a multidonor package of minimum needs that will allow the new Transitional Federal Government Cabinet to establish itself in Mogadishu over the next 6 months. Programs are providing assistance for the Transitional Federal Institutions to help reestablish appropriate executive functions, including ongoing training of 30 directors general from selected ministries, provision of basic equipment, and deployment of technical advisors in the office of the President and other key ministries. Support also includes the launching of a Public Administration and Capacity Building Institute in Mogadishu and programs to strengthen the capacity of the Transitional Federal Parliament. Despite the difficult environment and the limited timeframe available for constitutionmaking, the outcome of the National Reconciliation Congress and the recent appointments of a new Prime Minister and Cabinet provide an opportunity for reviving the constitutional process. U.S. assistance is also encouraging continued democratization and development in the regional administrations in Somaliland and Puntland. USAID will continue to support existing and emerging civil society institutions, including independent media outlets, which are key stakeholders in Somalia.

Investing in People

USAID is also working with the Transitional Federal Government to support the delivery of critical social services, including basic education and essential health interventions. The integrated USAID program provides support for essential social services directly at the community level. The program is expanding assistance designed to increase student attendance and retention by rehabilitating community primary schools; training additional teachers, especially women; and increasing access to education. Health programs are focusing resources on delivering basic maternal and child health interventions at the health facility and community levels in collaboration with relevant line ministries and local government counterparts. U.S. assistance will also provide funds to develop safe water points and latrines in community schools and health posts.

Humanitarian Assistance

Continued insecurity, localized drought conditions, and increasing numbers of internally displaced persons have generated deteriorating humanitarian conditions in Somalia, particularly affecting Mogadishu and Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Hiran, and Central regions. Multiple attacks on humanitarian relief staff and facilities in January and early February have led to the withdrawal of some international staff and temporary travel restrictions, further complicating efforts to provide critical assistance. According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's Food Security Analysis Unit, the number of people requiring humanitarian assistance and livelihood support has increased from 1.5 million as of mid-2007 to nearly 2 million people in early 2008, which includes both new and long-term internally displaced populations in rural areas of southern and central Somalia. The Food Security Analysis Unit notes that these figures do not represent the sizeable but unknown number of vulnerable households in urban settings, which are also affected by record high prices for staple foods, disruptions in market and commercial activities, and the ongoing conflict. In response to growing concern over food insecurity among displaced and affected households, relief agencies are reviewing current response plans and food stocks.

The United States and other donors are working with the Prime Minister and his Cabinet to help address bureaucratic and security impediments to delivery of humanitarian assistance and help improve access for humanitarian relief. We are heartened by the Transitional Federal Government's recent commitment to work with donor partners and NGOs to improve humanitarian access, but urge the Transitional Federal Government to implement the necessary steps as soon as possible to ensure that aid reaches those in need.

In FY 2007 and to date in FY 2008, the U.S. Government has provided more than $139 million for health, nutrition, agriculture and food security, livelihoods, coordination, protection, and water, sanitation, and hygiene programs, as well as for emergency food assistance, peace-building activities, refugee assistance, and air operations in Somalia.

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia is one of the world's poorest countries, with severe malnutrition and health problems affecting up to one-tenth of the population of over 77 million. The country nevertheless has experienced robust economic and export growth in recent years (around 8 percent annually) but subsistence agriculture is prevalent and vulnerable to seasonal flooding and cyclical droughts. The country is experiencing growing pains in its march toward democracy and a market economy. With U.S. support, Ethiopia continues to undertake ambitious programs to facilitate peaceful change, reduce poverty, advance political reform, boost sustainable economic growth, and increase the quality and coverage of health, education, and other service delivery. U.S.-supported governance, judicial and conflict mitigation programs help improve political dialog, strengthen civil society, and lessen ethnic conflict. U.S. assistance will continue to help the government tackle the underlying causes of food insecurity through employment generation and enterprise growth. Support to the Productive Safety Net Program and Pastoral Livelihoods Initiatives will continue to build resilience among the most vulnerable. Three Presidential Initiatives—the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, and the recent Education Initiative—will provide assistance for integrated programs for the prevention, treatment, and care of HIV/AIDS and malaria, and improve access to education for all Ethiopians, particularly underserved girls. Regional foreign assistance programs will continue to support refugee flows, including repatriation programs, as well as projects which combat environmental degradation.

Peace and Security

Conflict mitigation and reconciliation programming is designed to help stabilize border regions with Eritrea, Sudan, and Somalia by addressing tensions arising from competition over scarce resources and expanding openings to resolve longstanding disputes between the Government of Ethiopia and insurgent groups. USAID is working to build the capacity and support the interventions of joint government-civil society conflict management partnerships at the local, regional, state and national levels to prevent and manage conflict in violence-prone areas, including assisting with the development of a national conflict management policy.

Governing Justly and Democratically

USAID programs are supporting constructive dialog among Ethiopians who represent diverse political perspectives and ethnic groups to build consensus on key issues. Funds are also being used to support multilateral efforts to facilitate the ongoing restructuring of elections and political processes and build capacity in preparation for the May 2010 national elections. USAID is helping to strengthen the capacity and role of civil society; improve independent human rights monitoring, investigation and reporting; and improve the respect the judiciary and police have for international, national, and institutional human rights standards. U.S. assistance is also used to ensure a U.S. role in the ongoing multidonor support program to strengthen the federal and regional Parliaments operating in the new, multiparty environment, and build the capacity of the National and Regional Judicial Training Centers and selected law schools. Capacity-building efforts are also assisting the Gambella and Somali Regional State Governments to improve governance through better service delivery.

Investing in People

Ethiopia's health services and education are slowly improving but are still among the poorest quality in the world. USAID programs continue to support and improve management and quality of health care services including family planning services to meet the growing unmet demand in order to reduce Ethiopia's very high population growth rate to sustainable levels. Investments in health and education are enabling Ethiopians to take advantage of expanded economic opportunities. USAID is supporting activities that expand access to sustainable reproductive health care and high-quality, voluntary family planning services and information contributing to poverty reduction. USAID provides support in maternal and child health to help mitigate the effects of external shocks, foster a healthier workforce, and focus on both child and adult education in the hinterlands. Funds are also used to help combat tuberculosis and reduce the incidence of malaria, major sources of morbidity and workforce absenteeism, and improve access to safe water supplies and basic sanitation, ultimately improving rural household health and food security. Africa Education Initiative assistance and other USAID support will improve the quality and equity of primary education through training teachers and administrators, strengthening planning, management, and monitoring and evaluation systems, and fostering community partnerships and school governance through capacity-building of parent-

teacher associations and management of school grants. Scholarship support is assisting girls and HIV/AIDS orphans to succeed in school. Ethiopia is receiving significant support to scale up integrated prevention, care, and treatment programs throughout the country and support orphans and vulnerable children, thereby forging linkages with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief funded programs.

New assistance in FY 2008 under the President's Malaria Initiative will expand efforts to scale up proven preventive and treatment interventions toward achievement of 85 percent coverage among vulnerable groups to support the program's goal of reducing malaria-related morbidity by 50 percent.

Economic Growth

The U.S. Mission in Ethiopia is using a range of assistance to leverage investment, export and private sector growth. USAID programs help to drive economic growth and promote a more enabling environment for agriculture, the private sector, small and medium enterprises, and trade and investment in general. Focus will continue on developing commodity exchanges, improving access to finance, and establishing policies to enable private-sector-led economic growth. Programs also focus on enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of key sectors, especially in rural areas. This includes investments in the tourism sector, agribusiness expansion, support to African Growth and Opportunity Act exports and World Trade Organization accession, continued support to pastoralist areas, and support to the livestock and agriculture sectors which employ 85 percent of the workforce and contribute 45 percent of GDP. These programs are continuing to increase economic prosperity through exports and job and wealth creation. The U.S. mission will continue its focus on the most vulnerable populations, providing impetus for new and alternative livelihood programs, improved agricultural practices, better livestock husbandry and meat and dairy marketing, and phyto-sanitation. Along with other major donors, the United States supports the Government of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program to reduce food insecurity, which affects 44 percent of the population. Investments in the Safety Net Program and related policy, regulatory, and administrative systems are serving to protect vulnerable populations and contribute to poverty reduction and rural economic growth. USAID funding is also helping to strengthen small enterprise and other poverty reduction efforts related to the Productive Safety Net Program.

Humanitarian Assistance

The United States is the major donor assisting the Government of Ethiopia to anticipate and respond effectively to any natural or manmade disaster. USAID will continue to work closely with the Ethiopia Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency, to increase capacity for early warning and to provide humanitarian assistance of emergency food and nonfood aid.

CURRENT HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

Ongoing trade and access restrictions in Somali region—though they have eased just slightly over the last few months—coupled with insecurity and recent drought conditions in Southern Ethiopia have increased humanitarian needs and food security concerns. In Somali region, insecurity, reduced humanitarian access and now poor rainfall are leading to deteriorating humanitarian conditions and increased malnutrition. Distributions of food aid and commercial food deliveries in some areas are subject to inadequate delivery systems or are being disrupted, impeding the ability to address the needs of affected populations, according to USAID's Famine Early Warning Systems Network.

Food Security and Agriculture

Overall food security in Ethiopia has improved over the past several years, and the main agricultural season between October and December, which represents 90 to 95 percent of total crop production countrywide, was above the recent 5-year average. However an estimated 8 million chronically food insecure people in Afar, Oromiya, Amhara, Tigray, Somali, and Southern Nations regions receiving food assistance and cash transfers while building productive assets through the Productive Safety Net Program continue to confront a food security crisis. In addition, approximately 1.3 million people require emergency food assistance, including nearly 1 million people in Somali region, 84,000 people displaced by last year's flooding, and more than 260,000 people in Oromiya region affected by localized crop failures, according to Famine Early Warning Systems Network.

Somali Region

Although slowly improving, recent restrictions on trade and movement in Somali region have disrupted livelihoods and increased food insecurity among pastoralists and agropastoralists in the five zones under military operations—Warder, Korahe, Gode, Fik, and Degehabur. The inability to access markets combined with high food commodity prices has decreased food availability and dietary diversity, contributing to increased levels of malnutrition in affected areas for local populations dependent on the sale and exchange of livestock for income.

The December 2007 deyr rains assessment mission in Somali region identified approximately 1.5 million people living in restricted areas of Warder, Korahe, Gode, Fik, and Degehabur zones in need of humanitarian or livelihood assistance between January and June 2008. As of February 19, humanitarian agencies had distributed approximately 10,000 of the estimated 52,000 metric tons of food aid required to the region, according to the U.N. World Food Program. The Government of Ethiopia has approved 21 nongovernmental organizations to operate in the five Somali zones under military operations, but few organizations have been able to initiate programs to date, according to field reports. In addition, the Government of Ethiopia has approved 186 food distribution points—a 38-percent decrease from the previously utilized 300 distribution points. However, delays and logistical restraints have limited actual food distributions, and the full resumption of commercial activities remains critical to improving food security in the region.

From November 23 to 26, USAID Administrator and Director of Foreign Assistance Henrietta H. Fore and I visited Ethiopia, including Somali region, to discuss humanitarian conditions and efforts to facilitate emergency assistance to affected populations. On December 4, we met with Prime Minister Meles to discuss our concerns and offer USAID's assistance in response to his expressed need for better nutritional data for the region. Administrator Fore formally offered to Prime Minister Meles that USAID could deploy a Humanitarian Assistance Team to the conflict-affected zones of Somali region to assess nutritional and humanitarian conditions there and determine what steps could be taken to facilitate delivery of food and other humanitarian assistance. The Prime Minister accepted and the team deployed to Ethiopia on December 20.

The Humanitarian Assistance Team concluded an initial assessment phase on January 31 and while it did not observe indicators of an immediate crisis within the areas of travel to date, it cautioned that humanitarian conditions and the food security situation could significantly deteriorate in March or April. Among the factors that signal potential deteriorating conditions in the region are:

- The poor performance of the 2007 gu and deyr rains;
- Current restrictions on commercial trade and disruptions to livestock movement;
- Poor delivery mechanisms for food aid being employed by the Government of Ethiopia's Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency;
- Limited access to and delivery of essential health services; and
- Ongoing insecurity and reduced humanitarian access.

In addition, Ethiopia's National Meteorological Agency is predicting an 80-percent chance of average or below average rains beginning in the March through May rainy season, with a 45-percent chance of below average rains. The Somali Regional Government has just appealed to donors for help due to poor rainfall and the U.N. is pressing the Government of Ethiopia to formally acknowledge the drought conditions and need for assistance.

Some of the key recommendations from the team's initial assessment phase were that:

- The capacity of the Government of Ethiopia's Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency to target, monitor, and deliver assistance needs to be enhanced to address obstacles to effective food aid distribution;
- USAID should support the current joint UNICEF and Government measles vaccination campaign, given a serious outbreak in the region;
- The Government of Ethiopia should allow qualified U.N. or nongovernmental organization partners to conduct standardized nutritional surveys in conflict-affected areas; and
- The Government of Ethiopia should work to improve humanitarian access to affected populations for further needs assessments and response activities.

The Humanitarian Assistance Team remains engaged in the conflict-affected areas of the Somali region, and has shifted focus from assessment to advocacy, monitoring, and program management. The team plans to undertake ongoing targeted field visits to Somali region to enhance findings and monitor humanitarian condi-

tions, and assist the USAID/Ethiopia mission, partners, and host-country government ministries to implement response programs.

OFDA has committed $5.3 million in Nutrition, Health, Water/Sanitation, Livestock and Market interventions in Somali region to date in FY 2008.

ERITREA

We are not currently providing any development or humanitarian assistance to Eritrea. We closed down our mission in Asmara on December 31, 2005, in response to a request from the Government of Eritrea that we do so.

In FY 2007, however, we did provide nearly $3 million in humanitarian assistance for ongoing programming in the areas of health, nutrition, humanitarian coordination and information management, and water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Chronic drought conditions continue to negatively impact food security, health, and nutrition indicators, as well as water availability in Eritrea. According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, only 32 percent of rural populations have access to protected water sources. Economic and political challenges, including a lack of human resources due to high levels of military conscription and shortages of agricultural inputs, have also contributed to the disruption of agricultural production and economic development, exacerbating existing poverty and deteriorating humanitarian conditions. In addition, political constraints prevent comprehensive assessments and monitoring and have led to a significant reduction in the number of humanitarian agencies operating in Eritrea.

DJIBOUTI

U.S. assistance programs supporting health, education, governance, food security, and economic development are helping Djibouti build on its demonstrated will to achieve its goals. U.S.-funded programs serve as catalytic agents, helping Djibouti ensure that it stays safe from security threats, that its health care and education programs reach rural and marginalized urban areas, that it is prepared to respond to food emergencies, and that its people obtain the tools they need to secure jobs in a rapidly changing economy. U.S. investments will also contribute substantially to achieving our own security and development objectives in the region.

Peace and Security

Djibouti is on the mainline between the Middle East and Africa and faces steady pressure aimed at radicalizing its people and changing its polity. U.S. security cooperation is intended to ensure Djibouti has the tools to resist the threat of terror and instability. Department of State-funded programs promote stabilization operations and security sector reform, fight transnational crime, and support counterterrorism activities.

Governing Justly and Democratically

Assistance for improving governance, provided by USAID, is helping promote a more transparent and efficient government at the national, regional, and local levels, increase confidence in the electoral process, and advance Djibouti's decentralization. It also helps to increase political participation, guarantee civil liberties, promote government accountability, and strengthen civil society. The democracy and governance program addresses major obstacles to Djibouti's capacity to sustain private sector development by promoting dialog between government, civil society, and the private sector. Popular frustration over the lack of jobs, inadequate public services, and obstacles to political participation must be overcome to ensure Djibouti's long-term success and stability. Leadership education and training will constitute a major focus of the democracy and governance program.

Investing in People

To ensure Djibouti's continued stability in the volatile Horn of Africa region, U.S. assistance programs promote improved quality of life for Djiboutian citizens. USAID-funded health and education activities combat low life expectancy, maternal and under-5 child mortality, and the transmission of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. In addition, USAID activities continue to assist Djibouti in responding to food and other humanitarian emergencies. The health program continues to focus on expanded access to quality health care by improving maternal and child health services, and on the prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. The education program continues its essential focus on basic education, promoting expanded access, particularly for girls and rural children, and an emphasis on preparation for employment opportunities. Support for teacher training, the provision of pedagogic materials, expanded community participation in education, the improvement and decentralization of education sector service delivery, and improved

sector information systems and management capacity are also priority targets for U.S. assistance.

KENYA

It is important to note how critical stability in Kenya is to avoiding massive instability in the entire Horn subregion. The crisis in Kenya has already affected its neighboring countries region through the sharp increases in fuel prices and transportation blockades.

We are extremely encouraged by the breakthrough in negotiations and the agreement reached on February 28 but are very mindful that our attention will need to stay focused on Kenya as this will be a very long-term process of national healing and reform.

The political and security challenges in the Horn of Africa are significant as are the development and humanitarian needs. USAID is deeply engaged with our partners to help to address these challenges and support emerging opportunities.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you very much, Ms. Almquist. And now, Ms. Whelan.

STATEMENT OF THERESA WHELAN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. WHELAN. Good morning, Chairman Feingold, and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the invitation to speak to you today about the situation in the Horn of Africa, and the Department of Defense's activities in the region.

Africa, and the Horn of Africa in particular, is a region of great strategic importance to the United States. At the crossroads of sub-Saharan Africa and the Near East, the Horn presents a series of complex threats to U.S. national security, including weak governance, lawlessness, territorial disputes, and safe havens for terrorism.

If ignored or unaddressed, all of these issues will have dire consequences for the people of the Horn, for the broader region, for our friends and allies on the continent, and for the United States. We believe that a coordinated U.S. foreign and national security policy in the Horn of Africa, of which our defense relations are a component, is of critical importance to U.S. security interests.

The Department of Defense's activities in the Horn are a subset of U.S. national security strategy for Africa, as outlined by the President in the National Security Presidential Directive 50. And we also support the Department of State's foreign policy goals of countering terrorism and building local capacity. Our activities with African partners focused on issues of mutual strategic concern, including the elimination of terrorist safe havens, prevention of arms and human trafficking, and ensuring access to land and sea lines of communication.

We addressed these security interests by working with African partners to promote civilian control and defense reform, and to build local military capacity. This is achieved by ensuring their militaries are appropriately sized and funded, by professionalizing militaries through training to develop and maintain well-trained and well-led and disciplined forces, with respect for law and human rights, and by building capacity of African partner militaries that positively contribute to combating terrorism, and that prevent and respond to national and regional crises.

Theater Security Cooperation remains the cornerstone of our strategy to enhance partner capabilities and to promote these relationships and common interests. Within the Horn, our engagement and activities are governed by the realities of regional instability and our bilateral relationships.

In Ethiopia, the security situation remains challenging and complex, with profound regional implications. One area of significant concern is the ongoing border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Both Ethiopia and Eritrea dedicate a significant portion of the military resources and efforts to manning the border region, and we remain concerned about the possibility for renewed hostilities along the border. We believe that any return to conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea would undermine stability throughout the entire region.

Beyond the border, Ethiopia is facing genuine security concerns in the Ogaden region. The Ogaden National Liberation Front continues to wage a separatist insurgency in the Ogaden region with outside support, including from neighboring Eritrea.

Following the April 2007 attack, that killed 9 Chinese oil workers and more than 70 Ethiopians, the Government of Ethiopia increased its operations in a coordinated counterinsurgency campaign in the region. As a result, we have seen increased military operations, coupled with restrictions on commercial traffic and humanitarian access.

We continue to monitor the situation in the Ogaden, but given that we in DOD no longer have the level of direct access that we previously had to the region, we are unable to confirm the actual facts on the ground. We are, however, acutely aware that for a counterinsurgency campaign to be successful, the military must respect the local civilian populace.

We continue to pursue the strategic bilateral relationship with Ethiopia and the Ethiopian National Defense Force, a partner in regional counterterrorism activities. We believe that promotion of a professional ENDF, committed to human rights and rule of law, is best achieved through engagement, rather than isolation. And we have invested in training and supporting the professionalization of the Ethiopian forces.

Our engagement with the Government of Ethiopia and the ENDF emphasizes our expectations that any military partner of the United States behave in a professional manner with respect for the rule of law and citizens' rights. Our training engagement is particularly important with the ENDF, a 200,000-person military that is professionalizing and restructuring into a more conventional force. This transformation has been challenged and made all the more necessary by the border conflict, the counterinsurgency campaign in the Ogaden, and Ethiopia's military activities in Somalia.

Our relationship with the ENDF includes military education, counterterrorism capability development, and funding for nonlethal equipment purchases and maintenance to support the ENDF's modernization. Our Security Assistance Office in Addis works closely with the embassy to ensure our assistance complies with Leahy Law requirements. Until last year, the United States conducted military-to-military training in basic soldiering and commando skills at small outposts in Central Ethiopia. All of this

training emphasized the rule of law. While this training ceased in 2007 at the request of the Ethiopian Government, we continue our activities at the Ethiopian Command and Staff College, where we have two uniformed instructors who have trained over 120 mid- and senior-level Ethiopian military officers. We believe that continued robust security cooperation, including military-to-military training, is critical to the development of the ENDF and to U.S. foreign and national security policy in the region.

Although we currently do not have a bilateral relationship with the Eritrean Defense Forces, we believe that there are areas of strategic security interest to the United States, including maritime security in the crucial shipping lanes in the Red Sea and the transformation of the ENDF from a guerilla force to a smaller, professional military.

Since the closure of our Security Assistance Office in Asmara in early 2006, based on indications from the Government of Eritrea that it no longer wished to maintain a bilateral military relationship, we have had little to no contact with the Eritrean forces.

The Government of Eritrea continues to undermine security in the Horn of Africa by supporting destabilizing elements in the region. We are concerned about Eritrea's actions, including the decision in November 2007 to deny the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea on the right to purchase or import fuel, de facto forcing UNMEE's current relocation of forces out of the TSZ and into Asmara.

We continue to monitor the situation with UNMEE, and particularly whether UNMEE—now that it has started to withdraw from Eritrea—will be allowed to take with it all its equipment. If UNMEE were not allowed to take its equipment out of the country, Eritrea in essence would receive a windfall of military equipment left by departing U.N. troops.

Another area of concern for us is the situation in Somalia. Although we have no bilateral military cooperation with the Transitional Federal Government, we are watching the security situation in Somalia and the implications of its continued instability for the region as a whole.

Although recent efforts of the new TFG Prime Minister to reach out to elements of the opposition appear promising, there are serious and ongoing concerns about the security situation throughout Somalia. There is sporadic violence between Somaliland and Puntland forces. The lack of a representative security force impedes the TFG's efforts to extend its authority and control over all of Somalia, including portions of Mogadishu and the southern border area. Terrorist and extremist elements, including the al-Qaeda-affiliated al-Shabaab militia, continue to exploit TFG weaknesses and are attempting to undermine any efforts toward peaceful dialog process and to seek safe haven in Somalia.

The ability of al-Qaeda operatives and their affiliates to continue to use Somalia as a base for operations is a real and severe threat, not only to Somalia, but to the entire region and to the United States. We continue to work with our partners, particularly Djibouti and Kenya and Ethiopia, to develop regional counterterrorism capability to respond to terrorists and extremist

elements in Somalia that threaten United States interests and the security of the region.

Security assistance, including through traditional funding streams like foreign military financing and international military education training, and the DOD 1206 authority, have allowed us to support partners as they develop the capability to respond to the terrorist threat emanating from Somalia.

Kenya's progress in developing a counterterrorism capability, with United States assistance, has been critical to regional security. Continued and increased assistance to these frontline states is crucial to ensuring that the instability in Somalia does not impact its neighbors. There may also be opportunities to make progress in Somalia by working with those parts of Somalia, including Somaliland, that are relatively stable. In addition to our partner relationships, the United States also has ongoing operations in the region that respond to the presence of identified al-Qaeda terrorists in Somalia.

We remain committed to promoting security and stability in the Horn of Africa, and believe this is in the best interests of the people and governments of the region, and of the United States. The Department of Defense's relations and policies in the region are subordinate to our foreign and national security policies, and consequently, we continue to support and work closely with the embassies and USAID missions in the region to ensure our activities are consistent with and support the U.S. foreign policy objectives in the Horn.

Thank you very much, and I would be happy to take your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Whelan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THERESA WHELAN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, WASHINGTON, DC

INTRODUCTION

Good morning, Chairman Feingold, distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the situation in the Horn of Africa, and the Department of Defense's activities in the region.

Africa, and the Horn of Africa in particular, is a region of great strategic importance to the United States. At the crossroads of sub-Saharan Africa and the Near East, the Horn presents a series of complex threats to U.S. national security, including weak governance, lawlessness, territorial disputes, and safe havens for terrorism. If ignored or unaddressed, all of these issues will have dire consequences for the people of the Horn, for the broader region, for our friends and allies on the continent, and for the United States. We believe that a coordinated U.S. foreign and national security policy in the Horn of Africa, of which our defense relations are a component, is of critical importance to U.S. strategic and security interests.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE IN THE HORN

The Department of Defense's activities in the Horn are a subset of the U.S. national strategy for Africa, as outlined by the President in National Security Presidential Directive 50, and support the Department of State's foreign policy goals of countering terrorism and building local capacity. Our activities with African partners focus on issues of mutual strategic concern, including the elimination of terrorist safe havens, prevention of arms and human trafficking, and ensuring enduring access to land and sea lanes of communication. We address these security interests by working with African partners to promote civilian control and defense reform, and to build local military capacity. This is achieved by ensuring their militaries are appropriately sized and funded, by professionalizing militaries through training to develop and maintain well-trained and disciplined forces with a respect

for law and human rights, and by building capacity of African partner militaries that positively contribute to combating terrorism, and that prevent and respond to national and regional crises.

Theater security cooperation remains the cornerstone of our strategy to enhance partner capabilities and to promote these relationships and common interests. Within the Horn, our engagement and activities are governed by the realities of regional instability and our bilateral relationships.

ETHIOPIA

The security situation in Ethiopia remains challenging and complex, with profound regional implications.

One area of significant concern is the ongoing border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Both Ethiopia and Eritrea dedicate a significant portion of military resources and efforts to manning the border region, and we remain concerned about the possibility for renewal of hostilities along the border. We believe that any return to conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea would undermine stability throughout the entire region.

Beyond the border, Ethiopia is facing genuine security concerns in the Ogaden region. The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) continues to wage a separatist movement in the Ogaden region with outside support, including from neighboring Eritrea. Following the April 2007 attack that killed 9 Chinese oil workers and more than 70 Ethiopians, the Government of Ethiopia increased its operations in a coordinated counterinsurgency campaign in the region. As a result, we have seen increased military operations coupled with restrictions on commercial traffic and humanitarian access. We continue to monitor the situation in the Ogaden, but given that we no longer have the level of access that we previously had to the region, we are unable to confirm the actual facts on the ground. We are, however, acutely aware that for a counterinsurgency campaign to be successful, the military must respect the local civilian populace.

We continue to pursue a strategic bilateral relationship with Ethiopia and the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), a partner in regional counterterrorism activities. We believe that promotion of a professional ENDF, committed to human rights and rule of law, is best achieved through engagement, rather than isolation, and we have invested in training and supporting the professionalization of the Ethiopian forces. Our engagement with the Government of Ethiopia and the ENDF emphasizes our expectation that any military partner of the United States is to behave in a professional manner with full respect for the rule of law and citizens' rights. Our training engagement is particularly important with the ENDF, a 200,000-person military that is professionalizing and restructuring into a more conventional force. This transformation has been challenged and made all the more necessary by the border conflict, the counterinsurgency campaign in the Ogaden, and Ethiopia's military activities in Somalia.

Our relationship with the ENDF includes military education, counterterrorism capability development, and funding for equipment purchases and maintenance to support the ENDF's modernization. Our security assistance office in Addis works closely with the Embassy to ensure our assistance complies with Leahy law requirements. Until last year, the United States conducted military-to-military training in basic soldiering and commando skills at small outposts in central Ethiopia. All of this training emphasized the rule of law. While this training ceased in 2007 at the request of the Ethiopian Government, we continue our activities at the Ethiopian Command and Staff College, where we have two uniformed instructors who have trained over 120 mid- and senior-level Ethiopian military officers. We believe that continued robust security cooperation, including military-to-military training, is critical to the development of the ENDF and to U.S. foreign and national security policy in the region.

ERITREA

Although we currently do not have a bilateral relationship with the Eritrean Defense Forces (EDF), we believe there are areas of strategic security interest to the United States, including maritime security in the crucial shipping lanes in the Red Sea and the transformation of the EDF from a guerilla force to a smaller, professional military. Since the closure of our Security Assistance Office in Asmara in early 2006, based on indications from the Government of Eritrea that it no longer wished to maintain a bilateral military relationship, we have had little to no contact with the Eritrean forces.

The Government of Eritrea continues to undermine security in the Horn of Africa by supporting destabilizing elements in the region. We are concerned about Eritrea's

actions, including the decision in November 2007 to deny the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) the right to purchase or import fuel, de facto forcing UNMEE's current relocation of forces out of the TSZ and into Asmara. We continue to monitor the situation with UNMEE, and particularly whether UNMEE, now that it has started to withdraw from Eritrea, will be allowed to take with it all its equipment. If UNMEE were not allowed to take its equipment out of the country, Eritrea in essence would receive a windfall of military equipment left by departing U.N. troops.

SOMALIA

Another area of concern for us is the situation in Somalia. Although we have no bilateral military cooperation with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), we are watching the security situation in Somalia and the implications of its continued instability for the region as a whole.

Although recent efforts of the new TFG Prime Minister to reach out to elements of the opposition appear promising, there are serious and ongoing concerns about the security situation throughout Somalia. There is sporadic violence between Somaliland and Puntland forces. The lack of a representative security force impedes the TFG's efforts to extend its authority and control over all of Somalia, including portions of Mogadishu and the southern border area. Terrorist and extremist elements, including the al-Qaeda-affiliated al-Shabaab militia, continue to exploit TFG weaknesses and are attempting to undermine any efforts toward a peaceful dialog process and seek a safe haven in Somalia.

The ability of al-Qaeda operatives and their affiliates to continue to use Somalia as a base for operations is a real and severe threat not only to Somalia, but to the entire region and to the United States. We continue to work with our partners, particularly Djibouti, Kenya, and Ethiopia, to develop a regional counterterrorism capability to respond to terrorists and extremist elements in Somalia that threaten U.S. interests and the security of the region. Security assistance, including through traditional funding streams like foreign military financing (FMF) and international military education training (IMET), and the DOD 1206 authority, have allowed us to support partners as they develop the capability to respond to the terrorist threat emanating from Somalia. Kenya's progress in developing a counterterrorism capability, with U.S. assistance, has been critical to regional security. Continued and increased assistance to these front-line states is crucial to ensuring that the instability in Somalia does not impact its neighbors. There also may be opportunities to make progress in Somalia by working with those parts of Somalia, including Somaliland, that are relatively stable. In addition to our partner relationships, the United States also has ongoing operations in the region that respond to the presence of identified al-Qaeda terrorists in Somalia.

SUMMARY

We remain committed to promoting security and stability in the Horn of Africa, and believe this is in the best interests of the people and governments of the region, and of the United States. The Department of Defense's relations and policies in the region are subordinate to our foreign and national security policies, and consequently we continue to support and work closely with the Embassies and USAID missions in the region to ensure our activities are consistent with and support U.S. foreign policy objectives in the Horn.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Ms. Whelan.

Even if there is not a Defense Department presence in the Ogaden we can, or we could at least, hope that you're talking to State and USAID through the interagency process to get the facts on the ground. Perhaps your staff can confirm some of these reports that way, instead of simply suggesting that you're unable to get it any information because the United States does have some presence there.

But I do thank you for your testimony. I allowed much longer testimony than usual, because this is such a broad and intricate subject. So I thank all of you, and I will begin 10-minute question rounds at this point.

Dr. Frazer, the U.S. Government Accountability Office recently released a report I requested in 2006, analyzing U.S. policy in So-

malia, which found that the administration's strategy has been insufficient, incomplete, and ineffective. Now this comes not really as a surprise. As you know, I had a requirement passed into law that same year requiring the administration to detail its Somalia strategy. The document that Congress received, which was received long past the deadline, was badly insufficient. The Pentagon has acknowledged the need for a detailed interagency strategy, but the State Department did not respond to the GAO's recommendation.

Do you agree with the GAO's assessment that a more specific coordinated and comprehensive plan for restoring security and stability in Somalia is necessary?

Dr. FRAZER. I read the GAO Report, Senator, in great detail, and I came away with a very different take than the one that you just described.

I felt that the GAO, based on their interviews both in the region and in Washington, did a really excellent job of describing a very complex situation in Somalia that creates many barriers to transforming that country into what we both would share as our goals of well-governed, developed, without humanitarian crisis. The GAO talked about the weaknesses of the Transitional Federal Government. The GAO Report talked about the need to have more African troops deployed. And so, I didn't take the report the way you characterized it.

I do recognize that the GAO gave one or two recommendations.

One, that we should have used their six characteristics of an effective national strategy in our report of our strategy. And so, they compared our strategy—which answered the mandate of the legislation that you put forward—versus their six criteria that they've used in many other cases. And then, they broke those six criteria into another 27 component elements. And so, I think they were comparing apples and oranges.

We, in our strategy, did what the legislation asked us to do. If the legislation had asked us to use the six criteria from the GAO Report, then we would have done so.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, do you think the current strategy—if we can call it that—is actually working? And why do you think the Pentagon believes interagency planning and coordination on Somalia policy is insufficient?

Dr. FRAZER. I think I outlined in my testimony that in each of the four areas of our strategic objectives, we have seen significant progress, over the last few years, and more progress than we've seen over the previous 17 years.

And so, yes; I do think our strategy is working. I don't think you can fix a country that's been broken for at least 17 years—and much longer, in fact, because it was under an authoritarian regime—in just 2 years.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, why do you think the Pentagon thinks that interagency planning and coordination in Somalia policy is insufficient?

Dr. FRAZER. I think the GAO probably interviewed a low-level Pentagon official, because Secretary Gates was the principle at the Principles Committee who blessed the interagency policy and strategy on Somalia.

And so, sure, whenever you go around any government, you're going to find some person who's going to say that they don't feel that it accurately——Senator FEINGOLD. Dr. Frazer, it is my understanding that the Pentagon's response to the GAO Report was written by Deputy Assistant Secretary Whelan.

Dr. FRAZER. Well, I know what——Senator FEINGOLD. And we're fortunate to have her with us. I'd like to ask you, Ms. Whelan, to explain why you not only accepted and agreed with the GAO's recommendation for a more detailed U.S. strategy on Somalia, but actually asked that the recommendation be strengthened.

Ms. WHELAN. Since the strategy came out in—last spring—April, almost a year ago, there have been numerous developments in Somalia, to include: A new Prime Minister, Prime Minister Nur Hussein, or otherwise known as Nur Adde; President Yusuf and the TFG has confronted some health challenges that have raised questions about his future, at least, it raised questions in some of the Somali's minds; there have been some tensions between the President and the Prime Minister that have been reflected in Somali press; Ethiopia's posture in Somalia has changed considerably over the course of the past year; there have been splits noted in the Shabaab militia; and we also have seen, unfortunately, only two of the nations that had pledged to pull their troops to AMASOM follow through.

So our contention is simply that the situation has evolved over the course of the last year. And in such circumstances, it always is healthy to review one strategy to take into account the evolving situation.

Senator FEINGOLD. Let me go back, Secretary Frazer, and you can respond to that, as well. But let me also ask you—I had been pleased to see Somalia's new Prime Minister Nur Hussein calling for inclusive negotiations and a renunciation of violence by all sides, but I'm not aware of any concrete measures he has taken since his appointment last November.

So let me ask, what is your assessment of his potential and progress to date as a unifying and credible leader of the TFG? And also, what steps have we taken to ensure that this rhetoric of the Prime Minister has tangible outcomes? I'm a little concerned that, once again, we based our policy on one man, or one leader, one person, as opposed to seeking opportunities to build and bolster institutions.

Dr. FRAZER. Thank you Senator. I think we're trying to do both. I think the very, very first test of the Prime Minister was in the false start that he had in appointing his first Cabinet, or floating names for a Cabinet.

He quickly reversed himself, and appointed a Cabinet that by all accounts is extremely representative, and far more credible than the previous Transitional Federal Government. And so, I think that's a very first important step that he put in place—people who could be more representative.

Second, he has certainly reached out to the NGO community. He has, in fact, reversed decisions of some of the security officials to end the arrest of certain media, certain reporters, as well as humanitarian aid workers. And so, he's gotten them out of jail. That's an important step.

Third, he has reached out effectively to the international community particularly in establishing a very strong relationship with the U.N. Special Representative to the Secretary General. And so, he has credibility internationally.

It's going to take a much longer time to build the capacity of his ministry. Yes; he has ministers, but to get civil servants and others who can really work in these ministries is going to take some more time. But I do think that his early steps have been promising.

Senator FEINGOLD. On another topic, Dr. Frazer, last fall the U.N. conducted an assessment mission of the Ogaden and released publicly its humanitarian assessment, but did not release its human rights assessment.

Have you seen this report and would you recommend that it be released?

Dr. FRAZER. I haven't seen the report, but I would imagine that our Ambassador in Ethiopia, who is a coordinator of the international community in Addis Abbaba, may have seen the report. But I have not personally seen that report.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, I would ask your assistance in having this reviewed. And if there's not a reason to release that part of it, we would like to see that happen.

Ms. Almquist, what is the U.S. Government doing to hold the TFG and Ethiopians accountable for their promise to facilitate humanitarian access? For example, I've heard reports of checkpoints run by TFG-appointed officials, and then secured by Ethiopians and TFG militia on the road leading from Mogadishu, that are taxing humanitarian aid shipments. What is being done to reduce these kinds of activities?

Ms. ALMQUIST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the question. We are working closely with the Prime Minister and his Cabinet to raise these issues and to seek a humanitarian focal point from him and on behalf of the TFG. He has committed to appointing one.

That has not happened yet, but we understand that it will be forthcoming soon, so that we can address each of the blockages and the taxation issues, and other hurdles that are coming up from the TFG, or those elements that the TFG might influence directly in Somalia.

We also have more engagement now with the Prime Minister. He's met with the donors and the humanitarian community in Nairobi several times. He's seeking to have more interaction in Mogadishu itself. It's complicated for us, since we aren't present in Somalia as American officials, but our partners are there, and the United Nations is there, and so we're actively working on the agenda of this issue.

Senator FEINGOLD. Also on the issue of accountability, earlier this month there were reports of TFG troops looting the country's bustling Bakara Market in broad daylight. The Prime Minister apologized for the soldiers' misconduct and promised to take immediate action against those that had committed these crimes.

Do you know if any action's been taken yet?

Dr. FRAZER. No, Mr. Chairman; I do not have information on that.

Senator FEINGOLD. If you could get back to me on that, and I thank my colleagues for their patience.

[Dr. Frazer's response to Senator Feingold follows:]

Dr. FRAZER. Unfortunately, due to the rather loose chain of command in the TFG's security forces, there was no structure within which to investigate, identify, and hold accountable the perpetrators of the misconduct in Bakara market. As a result, in order to address this problem and prevent future incidents, the TFG leadership opted for a systemic remedy.

Following the incident in Bakara market, TFG Prime Minister Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein engaged in discussions with the Benaadir Business Council, which includes the key business leaders of Bakara market, with the goal of establishing a private security force of 200 persons who would be paid by the traders in Bakara market to guarantee security in the area. In exchange, the business leaders agreed to deny safe haven for extremist elements within Bakara market. Since the establishment of this private security force, violence in Bakara market has decreased, and there have been no further looting incidents.

To address the broader problem of a lack of an effective chain of command within some of its security forces, the TFG is working to create effective security institutions to prevent and address misconduct in the future. The Prime Minister and his cabinet, under the leadership of President Yusuf, have launched an overhaul of the security forces, removing clan-based militia leaders from positions of power and sending troops to participate in training that will integrate them into a broader national force. While this will be part of a longer-term security sector reform process, we are hopeful this institutional action will help i prove accountability within the TFG security forces and prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.

Senator FEINGOLD. I note that Senator Isakson has joined us. I understand that you will be the ranking member of the subcommittee?

Senator ISAKSON. Pending a vote admitting, yes.

Senator FEINGOLD. I wish you good luck on the vote. And, obviously, I look forward and would be delighted to work with you.

Of course, Senator Cardin, very active on the subcommittee, as well as the whole committee, and I know Senator Nelson of Florida has already been here, so this is a long hearing, but we have had a fair amount of interest.

And, with that, I turn to Senator Lugar for his round.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I will welcome, along with you, Senator Isakson, as our ranking member, pending the election which is to occur about noontime, and which appears to, I hope, be a unanimous vote for him.

Let me just ask you, Secretary Frazer, about the election of 2005 in Ethiopia. At least, for many of us, it was a setback for democratic efforts, and I think you've testified to that effect in previous hearings. But the opposition did make some gains in the Parliament.

Can you trace what that has meant in governance in the country, and specifically speculate what the position of the opposition is with regard to Ethiopia's military deployment in Somalia?

Dr. FRAZER. Thank you, Senator Lugar. The opposition took up their seats; they hold now 173 out of 547 seats in Parliament. And it's been important to move toward what Senator Feingold just asked for, "greater institutionalization of good governance."

The rules and procedures of Parliament have been modified to accommodate the opposition to allow opposition members to initiate legislation. And so, we think that taking their seats in Parliament is key to the continued development and the strengthening of the quality of Ethiopia's democracy.

And we will continue to work with the opposition members in Parliament. We will continue to work with the Government to have

effective electoral campaign regulations, including for the local elections, which are going to be taking place this year.

On the issue of what the opposition feels about Ethiopia's deployment in Somalia, I'll have to come back to you, Senator, with a specific answer to that.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I was just hoping for some speculation down the trail as to whether there is an active debate going on in the country. Can you characterize that? Is this—is Somalia discussed in the Ethiopian Parliament?

Dr. FRAZER. Somalia is discussed, and certainly it was discussed in Parliament. It's also discussed within the ruling party itself. There are definitely differences of views about whether Ethiopia should have deployed into Somalia.

Senator LUGAR. Now, let me ask, what justification does Ethiopia have to perceive Eritrea as a threat in the region? You've characterized these free border disputes in Eritrea as serious, with regard not just to Ethiopia, but certainly to Somalia and Sudan.

Describe, will you, that relationship between Ethiopia and Eritrea?

Dr. FRAZER. Well, Ethiopia perceives Eritrea as a threat, because Eritrea has been funding, and perhaps training and arming insurgents within Ethiopia, including the ONLF, but not restricted to the ONLF.

Eritrea, of course, not only doing this in Ethiopia, but is also doing it in Sudan, so it has a long history of doing this. Eritrea also continues to essentially almost hold hostage Somalis who were part of the Somali Courts, and so that's part of the concern of Ethiopia.

Also, Eritrea has moved its forces into the Temporary Security Zone, so it's moved it closer to Ethiopia's border, leading to some speculation about Eritrea's real intentions in pushing to get the UNMEE forces out of that border region.

So I think that Eritrea, on several fronts, support for insurgencies, past support for extremists, as well as the deployment on the border has led the Ethiopians to feel threatened.

Senator LUGAR. What do we counsel with regard to that? In other words, in dialog with leadership of Ethiopia vis-a-vis Eritrea.

Dr. FRAZER. We've been very clear, especially regarding the border, that Ethiopia should do nothing to provoke any type of attack by the Eritreans. We, of course, counseled them that they have the majority of forces, and that they really should use all restraint necessary.

We, of course, with their insurgency, continue to push as we do around Africa for a political solution for reaching out to these insurgent groups, to the extent that the insurgents will also reach out. And we've pushed them also with Eritrea to try to normalize the relations through allowing the demarcation of the Ethiopia-Eritrea boundary delimitation decision.

Senator LUGAR. Senator Frazer, we now have an Ambassador to the African Union headquartered in Ethiopia. Would you give us some further information about what kind of institutional assistance we provide to the African Union, and how that mission is progressing.

How does that particular Ambassador fit into the scheme of all that you have commented on this morning?

Dr. FRAZER. Well, our Ambassador to the African Union, our mission to the African Union (AU) is extremely important. We are providing assistance to try to strengthen the AU's institutional capacity, including on the peacekeeping front. We have planners there working with the AU planners for the deployment of the AMISOM force, as well as for the deployment of the UNAMID force in Sudan.

We are also working to strengthen a democracy unit, so that they can better train observers who can go to, for instance, hopefully to Ethiopia, also to Zimbabwe and other countries. The mission has grown. It's growing slowly. We have a——Senator LUGAR. How many people do you have there?

Dr. FRAZER. We have the Ambassador, a DCM, a Public Affairs Officer, a Health Attaché, an Office Management Specialist, and three or four locally engaged staff.

So it's growing. And we anticipate that it will grow further, but certainly we arehelping the African Union to be able to deploy these peacekeepers, to plan these peacekeeping operations, as well as to support countries in what are the fundamental basis for peace and stability, which is democracy. The USAU mission is certainly playing a positive role.

Senator LUGAR. In your judgment, that's the proper place for that Ambassador to be headquartered? In other words, our relationship with Ethiopia is such that working from that point and with regard to all these democracy efforts, that that's the—at least, the right spot for the Ambassador?

Dr. FRAZER. It is. It's much like the U.N. in New York. It is the headquarters of the AU. All of the permanent representatives to the AU are based in and out of Addis Ababa, and so it's the appropriate place for our Ambassador to the AU to be located.

Senator LUGAR. Now, finally, let me just ask one further question of you. The Combined Joint Task Force for the Horn of Africa has now been in place since May 2003, with the support of the Maritime Task Force and Special Operations Task Force.

Now, granted the complexity that you and the other witnesses have described today, what sort of added value has this given to our diplomatic efforts in the Horn of Africa?

Dr. FRAZER. The Combined Joint Task Force has been absolutely critical. I can say that they have planners who are at our USAU headquarters, again assisting the AMISOM deployment. In addition, they have helped me personally with my diplomatic missions, providing left and sitting right with me in meetings with heads of state, Foreign Ministers, Defense Ministers, as we have coordinated this regional approach to the challenges in the Horn of Africa. So they've played a fundamental role.

They're also working in civil affairs in areas to try to prevent these crises. For instance, in Comoros, a place that very few people get to—I went myself to Comoros—there are a number of Seabees there who are building schools and painting the schools. So they have an important presence and, I believe, a stabilizing presence, and certainly help our diplomatic efforts.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Senator Cardin.

Senator CARDIN. Well, first, Mr. Chairman, let me thank you for holding this hearing. The Horn of Africa represents significant challenge for the international community and for the United States, and I very much appreciate this opportunity of hearing from our key people as to the strategy related to the countries of the Horn of Africa. And I would ask that my full statement be made part of the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Cardin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity to hear testimony from the administration and expert analysts about the Horn of Africa.

Without a doubt, the Horn of Africa is the most volatile subregion in all of Africa. The potential for the outbreak of war, terrorist activity, and complex humanitarian emergencies are all serious threats in this area.

As we witnessed recently in the aftermath of Kenya's elections, long-seeded tensions can take a turn for the worst almost overnight because mechanisms for resolving conflict are either inadequate or nonexistent.

In the Horn of Africa, millions face starvation, displacement, and political marginalization. While the world watches little is, or can be, done from the outside.

If we take a brief survey of the region, we see that Somalia is still a failed state without a central government. Following Ethiopia's December 2006 invasion and removal of the Islamic Courts, Somalia is even more dangerous than ever. Added to that, some 600,000 people had to flee their homes in Mogadishu during fighting in 2007.

The small nation of Eritrea continues to act in an obstructionist manner. Relations between the United States and Eritrea are not good. Issues pertaining to religious freedom and Eritrea's alleged links to funneling weapons into the region is worrisome.

Mr. Chairman, perhaps no other nation in the Horn of Africa is more complex than Ethiopia. Ethiopia is an important U.S. ally in our war on terror and peacekeeping operations in the region.

However, Ethiopia's recent activities have caused many observers to question their commitment to democracy and human rights. The May 2005 elections in Ethiopia and the subsequent crackdown on political opponents was a major cause of international concern for a nation which views itself as a regional power. The level of secrecy and intimidation worried many friends and analysts of this ancient and proud nation.

As a Senator who is concerned about human rights, I am particularly concerned about Ethiopia's activities in the Ogaden region. It is my understanding that international human rights groups have raised concerns about human rights abuses, perpetrated by the Ethiopian military in the Ogaden.

These allegations include public executions, disappearances, arbitrary arrests, rape, torture and other inhumane treatment. Additionally, there are allegations of burning villages and denying food and water to the civilian population.

For some time the International Committee of the Red Cross was denied access to the area. I understand now this situation has been corrected, but I am under the opinion that humanitarian corridors must be maintained to assist the most vulnerable populations during humanitarian crises.

To conclude, I am very interested in learning from the Assistant Secretary of State what the U.S. position is regarding Ethiopia's Ogaden region. Additionally, I wish to learn from the USAID what findings the DART (Disaster Assistance Response Team) team concluded from its recent assessment mission to the region.

In the end, a workable solution to the situation in the Ogaden must be found and I believe the United States can help Ethiopia reach a solution that is in the best interest of all parties.

Senator CARDIN. I want to deal with the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, and talk a little bit more about what our strategy is there. It seems to me that the communities are at risk. The underlining problems do not appear to be addressed. There are fundamental

issues that need to be dealt with for the safety of the people of that region.

And I would just like to get a better assessment from the panel as to what the U.S. policy is in regards to the rights of the people in that region, our involvement, how we're protecting the safety, or how we're participating in protecting the safety of the people of the region, and providing the appropriate type of international attention.

Whomever would like to take that question. I see that everybody's volunteering all at once.

Ms. ALMQUIST. Senator Cardin, maybe I have in some ways the easiest job to answer what we're doing on the humanitarian assistance side. And from our foreign assistance perspective, we have certainly, all of us, in fact—Assistant Secretary Frazer, and other senior officials, as well as USAID Administrator Fore, and myself—been raising concern over the humanitarian situation in the Ogaden, and trying to follow it as closely as possible. Access to the area is difficult, and we've seen some improvement in that as a result, I think, of our engagement with the Government of Ethiopia in terms of the ability to even monitor what's happening on the ground for the condition of the civilian population.

Additional access is still needed in order for us to truly respond to the humanitarian situation. There are nearly 1 million people in the Ogaden that are in need of food assistance, and 1.5 million people in the Ogaden region are in need of some sort of humanitarian assistance, including the food assistance, and more broadly in the Somalia region, 4.5 million people are—the region as a whole is 4.5 million people.

So this is a significant proportion of the population that we would like to be able to address more directly.

We have seen some increase in the delivery of foods to the region; 12,000 metric tons out of about 36,000 metric tons that have been allocated by WFP for the Ogaden have been distributed. There are 186 distribution points. Unfortunately, the World Food Program cannot reach all of those distribution points to monitor delivery of food assistance, and this is something that we would still, and are selectively, pursuing with the Government of Ethiopia so that we can get monitors out, and ensure that food is reaching the intended beneficiaries.

The Ambassador has been very engaged on behalf of the humanitarian community in Addis Abbaba. And when briefing these issues with the Government of Ethiopia, a number of us have visited the region ourselves to draw more attention to the situation there and try and understand it better. We think that the coming—in fact, this month and next month are crucial, because of the projections for poor rainfall, which is critical right now given the vulnerability of the population in that area. And we hope that increased access will enable us to provide a better immediate response to the situation.

In the longer term, we look very much forward to working with the Government of Ethiopia on a recovery and a development strategy for the Ogaden, and addressing the needs of the pastoralist population there. And we have some experience with this already in the Somalia and Afar regions in Ethiopia, and we think there

are a number of interventions that would be very beneficial in recovering the assets of the livelihoods of the population that have been affected by conflict and security, as well as the cyclical droughts and other conditions aggravating the situation that they have right now.

Senator CARDIN. Is this as a result of findings of the DART assessment? What were the key findings within the DART assessment?

Ms. ALMQUIST. Yes. We feel that the Humanitarian Assessment Team, more or less the same thing as the DART, although we chose a different title for bureaucratic reasons.

Senator CARDIN. We can't keep up with all your titles.

Ms. ALMQUIST. I know, I'm sorry. We try and limit the number of acronyms these days.

So far, the Humanitarian Assessment Team did not find famine conditions in the region. They were able to visit a number of areas, but insecurity and time prevented them from visiting all of the areas that we think are affected by this situation. They found that there are some improvements in humanitarian and commercial access, but overall, the situation is still quite concerning, in terms of the distribution process for humanitarian food assistance.

They looked at what the Ethiopia Government, DPPA, Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency, is able to do with WFP. They looked at what international NGOs are able to do, in terms of delivery of health services and other nonfood assistance. And they tried to assess the level of commercial trade, and the prices of foods in the markets, and that sort of thing, and livestock movements, in order to understand the livelihoods of the people in the region.

They came away with an impression that there is a serious humanitarian situation that could deteriorate significantly if there is another shock, such as poor rains forthcoming, or even worse, further reduced humanitarian access, so that food aid cannot get out.

There are a number of things that could be done to improve that, in terms of movement of humanitarian organizations, working to increase the capacity of the local government agency responsible for working with World Food Program on distribution of aid, as well as trying to ease the restrictions on commercial trade. And those would all benefit the people of the region.

Senator CARDIN. I take it when you mean access to humanitarian assistance that you're talking about the safety of operating within that area, and the operations of either government officials or those that are for independence in that region. Is that right?

Ms. ALMQUIST. Right now, the humanitarian organizations, to operate in the region, they must be registered with the government, and then they have to have essentially travel clearances from the government to move about the area. The Somali regional government, as well as the military, given its operations, are relevant actors in that regard.

And so, there are efforts to coordinate movements of humanitarian aid with both of those parties. Now, obviously, if there's an ongoing military or security situation, it's not appropriate or it's much more difficult for humanitarian actors who are unarmed to move freely in those areas. Now, we would encourage in our working with the United Nations to see if, through their Department of

Security, they can put more staff on the ground in the Ogaden to work with the Ethiopian authorities in assessing the security conditions, so that in the maximum number of cases we can get out and deliver humanitarian aid.

Now, that's the stuff that is under discussion right now, both with the United Nations and with the Government of Ethiopia, and we only hope very much that we can move forward.

Senator CARDIN. Well, let me just turn to the political situation and the future of that region, as far as stability and respect for the communities. Is there a game plan? Is there an end game here that appears to be moving forward?

Dr. FRAZER. Senator, in terms of the Somali region, it is very difficult. What we've been pushing for, of course, is on the humanitarian side, primarily. But in addition to the humanitarian side, we've sent signals to the ONLF to renounce violence, and we've also pushed the Government of Ethiopia to positively respond to the ONLF should the ONLF actually renounce violence. So that's on the internal dynamics.

We've also pushed for the Government of Ethiopia to treat the Ogaden in a more integrated fashion. As all of us have said, it's important to win over the civilian population. And so, the only way to do that is to bring development to that region. And so, there needs to be a real focused effort, and an increased effort on the part of the Government of Ethiopia.

Senator CARDIN. Do you see that happening?

Dr. FRAZER. We're pushing for it. I think that the focus is on counterinsurgency, and also to allow for more humanitarian aid to come in. But we need more development, as well.

And then, the third part of that strategy is, of course, one that is far more difficult, which is that you have to get the normalization between Ethiopia and Eritrea, because Eritrea is continuing to arm and finance and train the insurgents.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Senator Cardin.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I look forward to working with you on the subcommittee, and I appreciate the opportunity to be here. And I apologize to our panelists for having missed your testimony. This is an unusually bad day for me with commitments. I'm overcommitted and underprepared. But I'm glad to be here. And I want to make a couple of comments, if I can.

First of all, to Dr. Frazer, I just returned from Djibouti. I was there visiting Ambassador Symington, and the military installation that we have there, and the deployments that we have there assisting people in Africa. And I would like to note that last month when the President made his trip to Africa, there were a couple of African leaders that made outspoken statements not wishing any American military personnel in their country.

But the people of Djibouti, and the Governor of Djibouti, seemed not only to be very hospitable, but very welcoming to our investment there. Was I correct in that judgment?

Dr. FRAZER. Yes, sir. Without a doubt.

Senator ISAKSON. The folks I talked to, the ones who were going out and drilling wells and providing infrastructure assistance, said they were being received very well in the outlands of the countries they were going visiting. Is that correct?

Dr. FRAZER. That's correct. And I think it's true of our military forces throughout Africa, where they're doing civil affairs projects, bringing assistance and development to many regions that are typically not reached. So, yes; that is correct.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, the reason I raised the point with you is I read Ms. Whelan's testimony, "We believe that a coordinated U.S. foreign and national security policy in the Horn of Africa is of critical importance to the United States' both strategically and regarding our security interests."

Having now been there and seeing firsthand, I wholeheartedly echo that statement. And I think what's going on in Djibouti is a perfect combination of both the national security aspect, as well as America helping those people to have a better life. And it was very impressive.

Ms. Almquist, I also had the privilege to spend a week in Ethiopia a few years ago with the Basic Education Coalition, Save the Children, and CARE, organizations all of which I know USAID works with.

I was impressed with the progress that was being made in educational assistance in Ethiopia. That was 2002, so that's been—well, 5½ years ago now. Is that still progressing through USAID?

Ms. ALMQUIST. Yes, sir. We still have a Basic Education Program there. And, in fact, Ethiopia is part of the President's most recently announced International Education Initiative, which he announced last year. And so, we'll be further adding to our basic education funding for Ethiopia in support of that initiative.

[Additional information submitted by Ms. Almquist follows:]

WHAT KIND OF BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS IS USAID SUPPORTING IN ETHIOPIA?

Assistance from the Africa Education Initiative and other USAID support has helped to improve the quality and equity of primary education. Programs with the Ministry of Education improve the quality of primary and secondary education by improving teaching methods and curriculum, strengthening school-community empowerment, and fostering civic education.

These programs support the training of teachers and administrators; the provision of textbooks and other learning materials; strengthening of planning, management, monitoring, and evaluation systems; and the fostering of community partnerships and improved school governance through capacity-building of parent-teacher associations and management of school grants. USAID is working closely with the Ministry of Education to produce Ethiopia's first primary grade English as a Second language textbook with integrated HIV/AIDS messaging.

Scholarship support will assist girls and HIV/AIDS orphans to succeed in school through integrated coordination and implementation between the USAID basic education program and PEPFAR. There is a special focus on increasing access to education for girls and on schools in Muslim areas. Ethiopia received $7 million for basic education in FY 2007; the FY 2009 request level is $18 million. FY 2008 levels are not yet final but are expected to be on par with or higher than the FY 2009 request level.

Senator ISAKSON. And CDC out of my hometown of Atlanta, GA, is operating in Addis Abbaba, and in Africa, on the American AIDS Initiative, if I'm not mistaken.

Ms. ALMQUIST. Yes, sir. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, is also present in Ethiopia. And USAID is

implementing a substantial portion of that program, as well as the President's Malaria Initiative.

Senator ISAKSON. Has there been a decline in the AIDS infection rate in Ethiopia over the last few years? They were one of the worst at one time, I know.

Ms. ALMQUIST. Yes, sir. I unfortunately don't have those statistics off the top of my head, but I would be happy to get back to you on that.

[Ms. Almquist's response to Senator Isakson's question follows:]

Ms. ALMQUIST. The most recent HIV prevalence rates for Ethiopia are indeed lower than those published in previous years. However, this reflects a change in the way that prevalence is being measured rather than a true decrease in HIV infection rates.

The new estimate is a calibration of both antenatal clinic (ANC) sentinel surveillance and the 2005 population-based Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). The 2005 ANC estimate was about 3.5 percent; the 2005 DHS prevalence was 1.4 percent (with an urban prevalence of 5.5 percent and a rural prevalence of 0.7 percent). The Government of Ethiopia conducted a data synthesis exercise in conjunction with the World Bank in 2006, and the official prevalence rate of the Government of Ethiopia was derived from that exercise. The Government of Ethiopia states that the national prevalence is 2.1 percent. The range published by UNAIDS, which shows the range of 0.9–2.5 percent, rather than a single number, is a "confidence interval" that reflects the statistical precision of the estimate.

Through linkages with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Ethiopia will receive significant support to scale up integrated prevention, care and treatment programs throughout the country and support orphans and vulnerable children. These programs leverage and complement resources of other international partners, Ethiopia's public and private sectors, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

USAID PEPFAR programs support HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support, and treatment at primary care facilities and include prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV, activities that strengthen the health system and develop its human resources, HIV education activities, community care for people living with HIV and AIDS, and provision of food, safe water, education, protection, and health care services for orphans and vulnerable children. PEPFAR provided close to $230.2 million for Ethiopia in FY 2007; the FY 2009 request is $337 million. FY 2008 levels are not yet final but are expected to approximate the FY 2009 level.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to serving with you. Thank you.

Senator FEINGOLD. I share that, Senator. Thank you for your participation. We do need to get to another panel, so I'll only use a portion of my second round time.

Ms. Whelan, I noted in your testimony that you referred to al-Shabaab as al-Qaeda-affiliated. What are the implications of this designation, in terms of DOD's activities?

And then, I'd like Dr. Frazer to indicate if she agrees with this assessment. And what are the implications of such a designation on U.S. counterterrorism policy, Ms. Whelan?

Ms. WHELAN. Thank you, Senator. The al-Shabaab, we believe, is affiliated with al-Qaeda in that certain elements of the al-Shabaab militia have sought to gain financial support from the al-Qaeda organization.

In the context of our counterterrorism policy, we continue to see our counterterrorism approach in the Horn, and particularly in Somalia, in a holistic fashion, in that we need to work with our partners in the Horn to develop their capacities to deal with the terrorist issues inside their borders, particularly with the Kenyans, and we have had great success there.

We also need to work directly where we can to go after al-Qaeda terrorists, particularly those who were engaged in the bombings in Mombasa, and the bombings in Nairobi, and Dar-us-Salam. So the fact that al-Shabaab is courting—or at least elements of al-Shabaab are courting al-Qaeda for greater support, somewhat along the lines of the al-Qaeda in the lands of Islamic Maghreb in Northern Africa, that relationship, this to us is a very disturbing development.

And it could lead to further entrenchment, potentially, of al-Qaeda elements in the Horn. So we are continuing to monitor this, and we will continue to work with our partners in the region to attempt to address it, if it develops along those lines.

Senator FEINGOLD. Dr. Frazer, your comments on this?

Dr. FRAZER. Yes. The al-Shabaab is very much linked to al-Qaeda. Leaders, like Aden Hashi Ayro, trained with al-Qaeda in Afghanistan prior to 2001. He's issued statements praising al-Qaeda leader, Osama bin Laden, and inviting foreign fighters to come to Somalia to participate in holy war against Ethiopians and Ugandan forces.

He's also responsible for the assassination of Somali peace activists in July 2005, and multiple targeted assassinations, and harassment of civil society figures, government officials, and journalists. He is also implicated in the murder of an Italian nun in Mogadishu in September 2006.

Mukhtar Robow is another senior military commander, a spokesman of al-Shabaab who has provided logistical support for al-Qaeda operatives inside Somalia. And I can go on with others who were in the leadership of al-Shabaab, with ties and membership in al-Qaeda.

I believe that their role in attacking civilians and their connections with al-Qaeda terrorists will further isolate them from the Somali people, who are very pragmatic and who are not linked and tied to terrorists and to extremists. And so, I think that clearly going after al-Shabaab and designating them is an important part of our strategy to isolate them further, and to be able to take direct action against them.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you. Back to Ms. Whelan. Are we at war in Somalia? And, if so, who is the enemy?

Ms. WHELAN. The United States is not at war in Somalia. And I think that our enemy in that region, Senator, are the al-Qaeda operatives who are utilizing that region to plan and execute terrorist operations that kill civilians, innocent civilians.

Also, any individuals associated with those al-Qaeda operatives, who facilitate their operations, are those that we have an argument with, but we are not at war in the region.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, the Department acknowledged a strike last week against a terrorist target in Somalia. And I appreciate, of course, that there are some very bad actors in the region, whom we should be pursuing, and I support those efforts.

But from the point of view of military strategy, are our operations in Somalia simply part of a global manhunt, or do we have broader goals?

Ms. WHELAN. I think we have broader goals, but there are elements—there are individual elements and objectives that try to

achieve our broader goals. Our operations in Somalia have been quite limited in the scheme of things. In the last year, 5—about half of our top 10 individuals have been either captured or are dead.

Most of that has been through the support of our partners in the region. And so, our efforts in the region are really not necessarily focused on U.S. military action, per se, although there are some very limited circumstances in which we have found it necessary to take action ourselves.

But, for the most part, our efforts in the region have been coordinated with and supported by and, in some cases, the counterterrorism campaign has been directly executed by our partners in the region who share our goals to eliminate global extremism.

Senator FEINGOLD. Ms. Whelan, only about one dozen sub-Saharan African countries receive foreign military financing. And the total amount requested for bilateral military assistance to these countries has fallen significantly in recent years.

However, the administration's fiscal year 2009 request includes the seven-fold increase in EMF money for Ethiopia. Why are you asking for such a large increase? I am very concerned by the fact that we've received reports from a range of sources citing serious human rights abuses committed by Ethiopian security forces, particularly in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, even though the Ethiopian Government certainly has legitimate security concerns in that part of the country.

What steps has the administration taken to investigate these reports, and convey to the Ethiopian military and political leadership that such misconduct is not acceptable? And what steps have the Ethiopians themselves taken to investigate these reports?

Ms. WHELAN. Thank you, Senator. With regard to overall FMF numbers for Africa, certainly we hope that in the future that FMF numbers will increase, in that FMF is critical to capacity-building, long-term capacity-building. It is through such long-term capacity-building that we see positive change in not only the capability of African militaries, but also their professionalism and their behavior in difficult and challenging combat situations.

We have seen, for example, our capacity-building training with Nigeria, some years ago, in preparation for their deployment to Sierra Leone to support the U.N. And Sierra Leone resulted in the Nigerian battalions that deployed to Sierra Leone performing in a much better way than previously untrained battalions. So capacity building is critical to ensuring professional militaries on the continent.

With regard to the Ethiopian request, the Ethiopian Government has been a strong supporter of the United States. We have strong military relations with the United States. And, as I mentioned in my statement, the Ethiopian military is a 200,000-man military. It is a military that the intention of the Ethiopians has been to transform that military into a much more professional force.

This is the force that Ethiopia's inherited, essentially, from its years of conflict against the Dergue. And, subsequent to that, instead of having the opportunity to restructure and reform the military, the Ethiopians found themselves in a border conflict with Eri-

trea. And, since then, of course, there have been numerous other issues in the Horn.

So the Ethiopians have not necessarily had the time to focus on the reforming and professionalization.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, what are we doing to investigate these reports of human rights abuses by the Ethiopian forces?

Ms. WHELAN. I have met with both Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, and we have encouraged them to provide us in the Defense Department with as much specificity as possible with regard to allegations of Ethiopian forces committing human rights violations in their operations in the Ogaden.

I think—and we are waiting for both of those organizations to get back to us with that specificity. General accusations are not helpful. Specific accusations can be helpful. We believe that the Ethiopian military understands just as much as we do that a successful counterinsurgency campaign requires taking into account the local populous, and not turning the local populous into your enemy.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, I would urge you, and the Department, and the administration, and Ethiopia, with all respect, to make this a high priority. It's very important on the merits, and also for credibility.

Well, this has been a very long panel, and I appreciate your patience. Thanks so much. I'd ask the next panel to come forward.

All right, we will begin the second panel. Ms. Fredriksson, please proceed with your testimony.

STATEMENT OF LYNN FREDRIKSSON, ADVOCACY DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. FREDRIKSSON. I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the committee, for this important opportunity for Amnesty International to share our concerns about violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, and the need for a consistent recentering of human rights in U.S. foreign policy on the Horn of Africa.

Amnesty International is deeply concerned by widespread egregious human rights violations being perpetrated against civilians throughout the Horn. Ending current violations and preventing future violations in these three countries is perhaps one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring immediate action and long-term planning, attention to domestic conditions within the context of a regional perspective.

Each set of country concerns must be considered independently, as with Ethiopian Government repression of its domestic opposition, journalists and human rights defenders, and the humanitarian crisis in the Somali region.

In Eritrea, an authoritarian government maintains a stranglehold on freedom of expression, freedom of religion, and press freedom, while detaining thousands of dissidents, many in the harshest conditions.

In Somalia, a transitional government without popular mandate has not only failed to protect over 1 million displaced civilians, but has failed to hold its own troops accountable for violations against them. Compounding these challenges is the intervention of Ethio-

pian forces in Somalia, and recent threats of renewed conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea along their disputed border. Further compounding these challenges is what I consider a flawed—what Amnesty considers a flawed U.S. foreign policy, which has placed counterterror concerns at the forefront of U.S. involvement in the region, often at the expense of human rights and humanitarian concerns.

In large part, because of the capable and resilient civil society throughout the region, despite these conditions, the situation is far from hopeless. But the United States, the International Contact Group, regional donors, and the U.N. Security Council, and the U.N. Human Rights Council, as well as other international organizations cannot simply maintain their current priorities and refuse to shift course.

Crucial to this course shift is a recentering of humanitarian and human rights in U.S. foreign policy. On Ethiopia, that means more consistent and more public denunciations of ongoing restrictions on civil society and the private media, demands for the release of remaining prisoners of conscience, and the requirement of a demonstrated opening of commercial and humanitarian access to the Somali region.

Eritrea represents a different type of situation. The U.S. administration should seriously reconsider any plans it might have to add Eritrean opposition groups to the United States list of foreign terrorist organizations, or to add an already isolated regime to the United States list of state sponsors of terrorism, but should consider opportunities to provide essential humanitarian assistance.

The international community must also decide where it stands on the Border Commission ruling, thereby denying Ethiopia the ability to continue to flout its findings, and Eritrea the excuse to interfere with UNMEE. On Somalia, if the United States intends to alleviate, not worsen, the anti-American sentiment on the Horn, it must first and foremost cease all land and air assaults intended to "take out" presumed al-Qaeda or other terrorist operatives.

Since early 2007, four such assaults have been launched in Somalia, leading to civilian casualties, destruction of civilian property and livelihood, and the widespread belief that the United States protects the TFG and backs the Ethiopian forces, without genuine concern for civilians.

In addition, the United States Government must exert significantly more pressure on the governments of Ethiopia and Somalia to prevent human rights abuses and ensure accountability for the conduct of their armed forces.

Additional specific recommendations from Amnesty are included in an extensive written testimony, which I ask to be included in the record.

Senator FEINGOLD. Without objection.

Ms. FREDRIKSSON. I will use my remaining time to just briefly outline a few of the most disturbing aspects——Senator FEINGOLD. I would ask you to conclude within a minute or two.

Ms. FREDRIKSSON. OK, I will do that. I want to mention simply a few of the most egregious violations in Somalia, Eritrea, and Ethiopia.

In Somalia, witnesses describe disproportionate military responses by Ethiopian forces after opposition groups launch attacks against them, most often using small improvised explosive devices. These forms of human rights abuses include rape and unlawful killing referred to by Somalis locally as "slaughtering like goats." And we have collected scores of testimonies regarding men whose throats were slit and left in the street. Displaced civilians are also facing abuses on the road, and they are facing abuses within the IDP settlements and camps.

I just also want to mention that the contrast between Somaliland, Hargeisa, and Mogadishu is striking. I don't want to admit that from the testimony, but the longer testimony includes further information.

On Ethiopia, I want to skip from our concerns regarding ongoing incarceration of prisoners of conscience to the Ogaden region, where the Government of Ethiopia, initially in response to attacks by the ONLF, has maintained a blockade of commercial aid and trade, and that has had a devastating impact on conflict-affected areas in the region. And, in addition to that, we have not seen the type of human rights access that is necessary to actually understand whether or not progress has been made, as the first panel indicated it might have been.

In terms of Eritrea, the situation is simply that one would be hard-pressed to find a country in sub-Saharan Africa in which United States foreign policy has had less impact. The government maintains a stranglehold on basic human rights and perceived protection against threats to the President's rule. Eritrea's human rights record remains abysmal, including persecution for religious beliefs, arbitrary detention, and cruel and unusual punishment.

I'd like to just conclude by saying that the dearth of consideration of serious human rights and humanitarian concerns throughout the Horn of Africa by United States policymakers has dire consequences. As described, these violations in all three countries are not improving, as indicated by some on the first panel. It is time for a shift in policy that puts civilians, and particularly vulnerable civilians, at the center of our foreign policy.

We have welcomed the opportunity to present longer recommendations in our written testimony. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Fredriksson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LYNN FREDRIKSSON, ADVOCACY DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA, WASHINGTON, DC

I would like to thank Chairman Feingold and distinguished members of the subcommittee for this important opportunity for Amnesty International to share our concerns about violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, and the need for a consistent recentering of human rights in U.S. foreign policy on the Horn of Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Amnesty International is deeply concerned by widespread egregious human rights violations being perpetrated against civilians throughout the Horn of Africa. Ending current violations and preventing future violations in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea is perhaps one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring immediate action and long-term planning, attention to domestic conditions within the context of a regional perspective. Each set of country concerns must be considered independently—as with Ethiopian Government repression of its domestic opposition, journalists and

human rights defenders, and the humanitarian crisis in the Somali region (known as the Ogaden). In Eritrea an authoritarian government maintains a stranglehold on freedom of expression, freedom of religion, and press freedom, while detaining thousands of dissidents, many in the harshest conditions. In Somalia a transitional government without popular mandate has not only failed to protect over 1 million displaced civilians, but has failed to hold its own troops accountable for violations against them. Compounding these challenges is the intervention of Ethiopian forces in Somalia, and recent threats of renewed conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea along their disputed border. Further compounding these challenges is a flawed U.S. foreign policy which has placed short-sighted counterterror concerns at the forefront of U.S. involvement in the region, while human rights and humanitarian concerns are routinely pushed aside.

In large part because of capable and resilient civil society throughout the region, despite these conditions, the situation is far from hopeless. But the United States and the International Contact Group, regional donors, and the U.N. Security Council, the U.N. Human Rights Council, and other international organizations cannot simply maintain their current priorities and refuse to shift course. Crucial to this course shift is the recentering of humanitarian and human rights in U.S. foreign policy. On Ethiopia, that means more consistent and more public denunciations of ongoing restrictions on civil society and the private media, demands for the release of remaining prisoners of conscience, and the requirement of a demonstrated opening of commercial and humanitarian access to the Somali region. Eritrea represents a different type of situation which requires a reversal in current policy. The U.S. administration should seriously consider any plans it might have to add Eritrean opposition groups to the U.S. list of foreign terrorist organizations or to add an already isolated regime to the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism, but should consider opportunities to provide essential humanitarian aid. The international community must also decide where it stands on the Boundary Commission Ruling, denying Ethiopia the ability to continue to flout its findings, and Eritrea an excuse to interfere with UNMEE. On Somalia, if the United States intends to alleviate, not worsen, anti-American sentiment on the Horn, it must first and foremost cease all land and air assaults intended to "take out" presumed al-Qaeda or other terrorist operatives. Since early 2007 four such assaults have been launched in Somalia, leading to civilian casualties, destruction of civilian property and livelihood, and the widespread belief that the U.S. protects the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and backs up Ethiopian forces, without genuine concern for civilians. In addition, the U.S. Government must exert significantly more pressure on the governments of Ethiopia and Somalia to prevent human rights abuses and ensure accountability for the conduct of their armed forces.

I will note additional specific recommendations from Amnesty International after outlining a few of the most disturbing aspects of recent findings. This information was obtained on a November/December 2007 mission to Nairobi, Kenya, and Hargeisa, Somaliland to meet with international actors and interview refugees from southern and central Somalia, as well as recent reporting on the state of human rights in Ethiopia and Eritrea. A short report on the targeting of journalists in Somalia, entitled "Journalists under Attack," is already available, and a full report on our findings on Somalia, entitled "Who Will Protect Human Rights in Somalia," will be made available in the coming weeks.

RECENT FINDINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN SOMALIA: ABUSES BY ALL PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT

Amnesty International has documented ongoing human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict in Somalia, including unlawful killings, rape, arbitrary detention, and attacks on civilians and civilian property. Some 6,000 civilians are estimated to have been killed in Mogadishu and across southern and central Somalia in 2007. Over 600,000 are reported to have been displaced in 2007, and a further 50,000 so far this year, joining some 400,000 already displaced from previous periods, for a total of over 1 million internally displaced persons in southern and central Somalia today. In addition, an estimated 335,000 refugees fled Somalia in 2007, seeking safety in other countries. On February 14, 2008, UNICEF announced that some 90,000 children could die in the next few months if the international community doesn't increase funding for nutrition, water and sanitation programs in Somalia.

Our findings from November and December included testimony and other information reporting frequent incidents of rape and pillaging by the TFG, a recent surge in violent abuses by Ethiopian Armed Forces in Somalia, and the targeting of Somali journalists and human rights defenders by all parties to the conflict. House-

to-house searches and raids in neighborhoods around Mogadishu were carried out by both TFG and Ethiopian forces, as were violent abuses against individuals and groups on the streets.

"Armed groups" in Somalia constitute a range of nonstate combatants fighting the TFG, including remnants of the Islamic Courts Union, supporters of the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia, and Shabab youth militia. Subclan and other local political leaders have also acted outside of the law, as have bandits and clan militia conducting raids, robberies, and violent attacks on civilians. While the command structures within these entities are opaque, and nonstate armed groups and criminal elements are more difficult to identify by dress, vehicle, or appearance, some leaders have made themselves known and should be held responsible for the conduct of their forces.

Those fleeing armed violence in Mogadishu have faced violence on the roads north toward Puntland and west toward Afgooye and Baidoa, including theft, rape, and shootings. Once they arrive at displacement settlements and camps, IDPs and refugees have faced further violence, and a lack of access to essential services, including clean water, medical care, and adequate food supplies. Humanitarian operations attempting to deliver these services have frequently been impeded by the TFG and other parties to the conflict and armed criminal groups, as well as overall high levels of insecurity throughout Somalia.

Violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law by TFG and Ethiopian Forces

From testimonies we have collected, Amnesty International has concluded that until mid to late 2007 TFG forces are believed to be responsible for the majority of incidents of theft, looting, beatings and rape in and around Mogadishu. For example, one eyewitness reported seeing TFG soldiers seizing mobile phones from Somalis outside of a mosque as men were leaving Friday prayers. Somali civilians reported that they were more afraid of TFG forces than Ethiopians. This situation shifted in late 2007 with growing reports of increased incidents of theft, looting, beatings and rape, as well as unlawful killings, by Ethiopian forces.

This shift followed fighting in early November 2007 when several Ethiopian soldiers' bodies were dragged through the streets, recalling images of Somali gunmen dragging the bodies of American marines through the streets of Mogadishu after clan militia downed two Black Hawk helicopters in 1993. The shift also followed reported deployments of new Ethiopian troops to Somalia as more seasoned veterans were reported to have been transferred to Ethiopia's border with Eritrea when threats of renewed conflict along the border intensified in November.

In some instances involving rape and killing, the Somali Government and Ethiopian forces have targeted individuals and small groups of civilians. In other cases they have targeted entire neighborhoods in disproportionate response to smaller scale attacks by armed opponents, sometimes decimating or emptying entire areas, and often resulting in injuries and unlawful killings of civilians.

Somali refugees in Nairobi and Hargeisa described incidents of attacks on their homes and in the streets. In some cases TFG and Ethiopians forces were searching for named individuals believed to have collaborated with armed groups, and in several such cases, they beat, arrested, or killed someone other than the person they were looking for. TFG and Ethiopian forces would also "sweep" entire streets, moving door to door in areas believed to be insurgent strongholds.

Witnesses described military responses by Ethiopian forces after opposition armed groups launched attacks against them, most often using small improvised explosive devices. Among the most commonly reported abuses were gang rape, mass rape, and a form of unlawful killing referred to by Somalis we interviewed as "slaughtering like goats," which refers to the slitting of throats. AI collected scores of testimonies regarding incidents where bodies of men whose throats had been slit were left lying in pools of blood on the street until combatants, including snipers, had cleared the area.

Somali refugees noted specific characteristics, including uniforms, by which they identified their attackers as Ethiopian. They often referred to Ethiopian soldiers by language as "Amharic," describing situations in which they said they pleaded for their families and their own lives but could not make themselves understood.

Violations by Antigovernment Armed Groups

Many survivors of violence in Mogadishu reported that "militias" are not visible, but known to launch small scale attacks to which the TFG and Ethiopian military respond with heavy artillery fire. There was a clear reluctance among many displaced Somalis to provide information about abuses by armed groups, presumably out of fear of retribution. Many were aware of rocket fire, shelling, or gunfire they

assumed came from armed groups, but said they never saw the attackers. Others received threats from armed groups by telephone, text message, or letter delivered by a third party.

Targeting Journalists and Human Rights Defenders

Journalists and human rights defenders have been specifically targeted for their professional activities in exposing human rights violations by multiple parties to the conflict. Amnesty International spoke with scores of journalists among many who fled Somalia in the last few months of 2007 when attacks against them increased. While international journalists and human rights organizations have been able to document some violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, we can assume that the majority of violations are not being documented, given restrictions on, and closures of, independent media by the TFG, and the general silencing of journalists and human rights defenders reporting on military operations by TFG and Ethiopian forces and antigovernment armed groups.

Some reporters and other media workers reported staying for days, sometimes weeks, in their offices because of general insecurity, specific threats, and fear of TFG forces. At other times they were unable to reach their offices for fear of violence by all parties to the conflict. Journalists reported arbitrary detentions by TFG and Ethiopian forces, lasting from a couple of hours to 11 days.

Since the intensive fighting in March–April 2007, local human rights organizations active in Mogadishu have also been largely silenced. One local women's organization was raided by TFG soldiers who asked, "Are you the ones giving us a bad name?"

Attacks on Civilian-Populated Neighborhoods

Shelling and mortar fire have destroyed buildings and other civilian infrastructure, resulted in deaths and injuries of civilians, and often emptied entire neighborhoods, as residents fled for safety. In early December 2007, five Mogadishu districts were reported "completely empty" by humanitarian organizations providing emergency assistance in IDP settlements in Somalia.

All parties to the conflict are reported to have carried out attacks on civilian-populated areas, but TFG and Ethiopian artillery is generally capable of causing much heavier damage, while armed groups with less military support resort to small mortar fire and improvised explosive devises. At times TFG and Ethiopian strikes were reported to have targeted civilian-populated areas after armed group attacks had been launched from specific locations within those areas. A number of refugees told Amnesty International that they had left their homes (to collect water, food, or other necessities) and when they returned their houses were simply gone, destroyed by rocket-propelled grenades or mortar fire.

Under international humanitarian law, civilians are unlawful targets for attack, unless they take a direct part in the hostilities. Amnesty International is not in a position to determine whether each of the intended targets in the incidents reported meet these criteria, but care was clearly not taken to avoid civilian casualties in most if not all of these cases.

Attacks on Civilians on the Road

Displaced civilians from southern and central Somalia frequently reported being attacked on the road from Mogadishu to several destinations to the north and the southwest as they sought safety. Unidentified robbers stole money, food, and other possessions. IDPs were attacked or forced to pay fees at multiple check points and road blocks. One of the most dangerous areas reported was between Jowhar and Beletweyne on the route to Somaliland.

The number of reported attacks on displaced Somalis on the road fleeing Mogadishu rose in late 2007, as did the level of brutality exhibited by perpetrators, most notably in cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence, as well as shootings, beatings, and "disappearance." AL received reports of violations against IDPs on the road in Somalia committed by Ethiopian and TFG troops, antigovernment armed groups, clan gangs, and common bandits. At times perpetrators would cover their faces to mask their identity, but often survivors believed they could still identify them by language or appearance. While in September 2007, some drivers were able to travel though certain areas by virtue of their clan affiliation, this changed in late 2007 when clan affiliation no longer offered any assurance of favoritism in an attack. IDPs were increasingly targeted even in cases where they shared clan affiliations with their attackers.

Conditions for Somali Refugees

Despite the Government of Kenya's closure of its border with Somalia since January 2007, a significant number of Somali refugees have managed to find refuge in

Kenya. Kenya's border closure has served particularly to keep the most vulnerable from reaching safety. Individual Somali men can now reach Kenya much more easily than women and children, so families are being separated, with women and children stranded in overcrowded IDP settlements in southern and central Somalia. While some Somali refugees in Nairobi have been receiving basic assistance from local NGOs, others are completely dependent on the good will of clans and neighbors for food and shelter.

In Hargeisa, there are approximately six major displacement settlements. While the Government of Somaliland does not officially accept displaced persons from southern Somalia, it has allowed thousands or more to find refuge on its territory, particularly in Hargeisa.

The U.N. reports there are now over 1 million IDPs in southern and central Somalia. Yet, as one source told us, "Everyone is in denial—denial of the scope of the problem. We say there are 600,000 newly displaced from Mogadishu and we're accused of distorting reality. The mention of [numbers] starts everyone shouting."

Risks were grave for humanitarian organizations in Somalia in 2007. Every day humanitarian workers face checkpoints, extortion, car jacking, a lack of acceptance of the impartial nature of assistance, and lack of authority and command structure among local security officials. The provision of humanitarian assistance is made difficult by unacceptable bureaucratic impediments, restricted access, restricted movement and overall insecurity, but also by the contempt for humanitarian operations indicated in recent speeches by TFG authorities. In October TFG security arbitrarily detained the director of the World Food Program for nearly a week. Staff from CARE (in May), Medecins Sans Frontieres (in December) and a French reporter (in December) were abducted, and later released, in Puntland. MSF staff were also abducted in Puntland, and several were killed in Kismayo early this year.

The situation has been so dire that humanitarian organizations made a rare public statement in October 2007, calling for urgent support for increased humanitarian space. Forty international aid organizations wrote: "There is an unfolding humanitarian catastrophe in South Central Somalia . . . International and national NGOs cannot respond effectively to the crisis because access and security are deteriorating dramatically at a time when needs are increasing. The international community and all parties to the present conflict have a responsibility to protect civilians, to allow the delivery of aid and to respect humanitarian space and the safety of humanitarian workers."

SOMALILAND: A STRIKING CONTRAST WITH THE SOUTH

It's important not to omit formal mention of self-declared independent Somaliland. While overall human rights and humanitarian conditions continue to worsen in southern and central Somalia, and more recently Puntland, a stable Somaliland has devoted attention to democratization, institutional capacity and development in its decade and a half long pursuit of international recognition for independence. The contrast between Hargeisa and Mogadishu is striking, and the international community should consider what the Government of Somaliland needs to maintain peace and stability, including bilateral assistance to ensure it has the capacity to institutionalize human rights protections. Somaliland is not without its own set of human rights concerns. Its border with Puntland is contested, with unfortunate outbreaks of fighting in late 2007, and it has not established a monopoly on power in its boundary regions of Sool and Sanaag. In 2007 it held a journalist and unrecognized fourth party opposition leaders in prison for several months after unfair trials. And the Government of Somaliland issued an expulsion order for 24 young southern Somali journalists seeking refuge in Hargeisa in late 2007. To its credit that order was never carried out, and the Government of Somaliland has also allowed itself to become the de facto refuge for thousands or more southern Somali displaced persons fleeing armed conflict in Mogadishu, despite a near-total lack of international assistance to meet their basic needs.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN ETHIOPIA: POLITICAL RIGHTS, THE SOMALI REGION, AND THE ERITREAN BORDER

In early 2005, leading up to the May 15 elections, Ethiopia appeared to be turning a corner with respect to international human rights. The Government of Ethiopia was allowing some—albeit limited—international press access and space for political opposition rallies in Addis Ababa. Yet since the disputed 2005 elections, plagued by accusations of electoral fraud and mass protest demonstrations, political repression greatly increased. As reported by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the U.S. Department of State, these violations have included mass arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture, extrajudicial killings, repression of ethnic minorities, intimi-

dation of students and teachers, suppression of press freedom, and the less reported practice of targeting peaceful political opposition in the countryside. In several days of demonstrations in June and November 2005, government security forces shot and killed 187 people and wounded 765, including 99 women and several children. Six police officers were also killed in clashes with demonstrators.

In its most recent Country Report for Ethiopia, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and labor reported human rights abuses including: Uunlawful killings, and beating, abuse, and mistreatment of detainees and opposition supporters by security forces; poor prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention; restrictions on freedom of the press; restrictions on freedom of assembly and association; and discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities.

Prisoners of Conscience and Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) Trials

While allowed very limited access to observe the trials in Addis Ababa, Amnesty International has nevertheless closely monitored their progress as a means to gauge overall human rights conditions for journalists, Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) opposition leaders, and human rights defenders in Ethiopia.

Defendants have been held in different sections of Kaliti prison on the outskirts of Addis Ababa. Conditions in the worst sections have been harsh, with severe overcrowding, inadequate sanitation, and poor hygiene. Correspondence has often been prohibited, and private consultation with lawyers not allowed.

Amnesty International has consistently called for the immediate and unconditional release of those defendants whom it classified as prisoners of conscience, because they did not use or advocate violence but were peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression, association and assembly, as guaranteed by the Ethiopian Constitution and international human rights treaties which Ethiopia has ratified. Several trials of CUD leaders, journalists, and human rights defenders began in spring 2006, with the prosecution resting its case in April 2007. More than 30 defendants were acquitted. In June 38 others, including human rights leader Mesfin Woldemariam and parliamentarian Kifle Tigneh, were convicted and sentenced to life, but they were pardoned and released in July, after a Presidential pardon was negotiated by Ethiopian elders and other parties.

Two civil society activists and human rights lawyers, Daniel Bekele, policy manager of the Ethiopian office of ActionAid, and Netsanet Demissie, founder and director of the Organization for Social Justice, who refused to sign documents requesting pardon, were convicted in a trial which failed to meet international standards of justice, and sentenced to 2 years and 8 months. Their convictions were based on evidence that did not prove beyond reasonable doubt that they committed a crime under Ethiopian law. While their release, after time served, was expected in early January they are still in prison. Yalemzawde Bekele, a human rights lawyer working for the European Commission, was charged in July 2007 with conspiring to commit outrage against the constitution, but granted bail pending trial in late March 2008.

Over 17,000 prisoners, mostly convicted criminals, were released in September 2007, by Presidential amnesty upon the occasion of the Ethiopian millennium new year, while hundreds more CUD members detained in 2005 are still being held without trial.

Separate from the CUD trials, a parliamentary inquiry was established in December 2005 to investigate the demonstration killings. This body initially concluded that Ethiopian security forces had used excessive force. However, the Chair and other members of the inquiry commission were later forced to flee the country, after receiving threats that they must alter their findings. The remaining members of the commission subsequently endorsed a report accepted by the Parliament in October 2006 that the actions of the security forces had been "legal and necessary." No member of the security forces has since been arrested or charged with any offense in connection with the demonstration violence.

Ethiopia's Border Dispute With Eritrea

Despite the Government of Ethiopia's stated acceptance, the international boundary commission ruling in 2002, following the 1998–2000 border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, it has resisted the implementation of this ruling and called for further negotiations. Not surprising, Eritrea has refused to allow the commission's ruling to be reexamined and demanded international enforcement instead. The ICB was dissolved in November without any further progress toward formal demarcation. The potential for mass abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law in the event of renewed combat along the border is grave, with new deployments by both sides in late 2007. Instability and threats of violence have already had dire effects on the livelihood, health, and right to movement of local popu-

lations. Though the mandate for the U.N. Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) was renewed in December 2007, Eritrea has created such severe obstacles to its function that U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon is temporarily disbanding UNMEE pending further UNSC consideration.

Ethiopian Blockade in the Somali Region (the Ogaden)

The Government of Ethiopia, initially in response to attacks by the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) on an oil installation in Obole in April 2007, which reportedly killed 65 Ethiopian and six Chinese oil workers, stepped up counter-insurgency operations in the Somali region, including a blockade of aid and commercial trade that has had devastating impact on conflict-affected districts of the region, including food shortages. It has also further injured Ethiopia's overall relationship with the people of Somalia.

Amnesty International has received reports of mass arrests, lengthy detentions without trial, beatings, rape and other forms of torture, forcible conscription and extrajudicial executions of alleged ONLF supporters by Ethiopian forces. And the ONLF has reportedly assassinated some civilian officials.

A U.N. fact-finding mission in August 2007 reported on the humanitarian crisis, but a subsequent mission to assess human rights conditions in the Somali region has not yet materialized. In addition, Sultan Fowsi Mohamed Ali, a clan elder and mediator, was detained in August, reportedly to prevent him from speaking with members of the U.N. fact-finding mission, and he is still being detained without trial. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience.

While some reports indicate a partial lessening of abuses in the region, most particularly a partial lifting of Ethiopia's blockade, there is no way to assess this information without full access for human rights monitors throughout the Somali region.

Armed Ethiopian Intervention in Somalia

Please see related human rights concerns about Ethiopian violations of human rights and international humanitarian law addressed under Somalia above.

Renditions and Forcible Returns

In January and February 2007 Ethiopian forces in Somalia rendered at least 85 political prisoners to Ethiopia. Most had been arrested in Kenya when Kenya closed its border to people fleeing Somalia. Foreign nationals from some 14 countries were released after some months and sent back to their countries of origin. In May the Ethiopian authorities acknowledged holding 41 detainees in military custody, but authorities have still not released their charges or their whereabouts. These detainees included Somalis who are Kenyan citizens, two conscripted Eritrean journalists, and alleged members of armed Ethiopian opposition groups. Detainees from Kenya and Somalia were reported to have been tortured or ill-treated in secret military places of detention in Addis Ababa.

Fifteen refugees forcibly returned to Ethiopia by Sudan in August 2007 were detained in Ethiopia, and five people from the Somali region were forcibly returned to Ethiopia by Somaliland in October 2007 and their whereabouts are unknown.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN ERITREA: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND MILITARY CONSCRIPTION

One would be hard pressed to find a country in sub-Saharan Africa in which U.S. foreign policy currently has less impact than Eritrea, where the regime of President Issayas Afewerki maintains a stranglehold on basic human rights in perceived protection against multiple threats, domestic and regional, to his rule. International relations for Eritrea have not been improving—from the Government of Eritrea's conduct toward UNMEE to its support for Ethiopian and Somali opposition groups. And its human rights record remains abysmal, including persecution of Eritreans for their religious beliefs, arbitrary detention, cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment of detainees, and forced conscription. The government, supported by remittances from the Eritrean diaspora, maintains its bellicosity on the Horn and its international isolation, with the ready excuse of the unenforced border commission ruling, and in retaliation for years of neglect by an international community biased against independence claims. No independent or private news outlets have been allowed since 2001, and university education is no longer available in Eritrea.

Political Prisoners

There is no tolerance for dissent in Eritrea, evidenced by frequent arrests of suspected government critics, the absence of any authorized forums for assembly and association, and government violations of telephone and Internet privacy. Since authorities have taken reprisals against detainees' families if they made inquiries or

communicated with international human rights organizations, it is very difficult to obtain information on their cases.

In addition to religious detainees (mostly evangelical Christians), 11 former government ministers, and Eritrean liberation veterans, who called for democratic reform and were charged with treason, remain in secret detention since 2001. They have not been seen by their families since their arrest in 2001. Ten journalists, determined to be prisoners of conscience, have been held in incommunicado detention since 2001 for supporting the detained government ministers. Journalist and educator Fessahaye "Joshua" Yohannes is reported to have died in detention, as have certain of the former government leaders. Aster Yohannes, arrested in 2003 when she returned from the United States to see her children, also remains in incommunicado detention, as does her husband, who was detained in 2001. Thousands of other political detainees have been held incommunicado for years.

Prison conditions are extremely harsh and constitute cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment. Many prisoners are held in overcrowded shipping containers, with no protection against extremes of heat and cold. Torture by means of painful tying, known as "helicopter," is routinely employed as punishment and a method of interrogation for religious and political prisoners. Evangelicals have been tortured to make them abandon their faith.

Freedom of Religion

Some 2,000 members of minority religions arrested since their faiths were banned in 2002, including women and children, have been held in incommunicado detention without charge or trial. Some members of authorized religions (including the Eritrean Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church and Islam) were also detained. Government officials closed churches and seized church property. In one notable example, Patriarch Antonios, head of the Eritrean Orthodox Church, aged 79 and in poor health due to diabetes, was placed in secret detention and deposed in May 2007 after having been under house arrest since January 2006, for protesting the detention of three priests and the government's intervention in church affairs.

Conscription

National military service has been compulsory for all citizens aged 18–40, with women over 27 informally exempted. Relatives of young people who eluded conscription, by hiding in Eritrea or leaving the country, are detained and forced to pay heavy fines. They remain in indefinite detention if they can't pay the fine. Legal challenges to this system are not allowed. Thousands of young people facing conscription and conscripts have fled the country seeking asylum. Conscientious objection is not recognized, and three Jehovah's Witnesses have been detained by the military since 1994.

Forced Returns

Despite guidelines from the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, that rejected Eritrean asylum seekers should not be returned to Eritrea on account of its serious human rights situation, several recognized refugees were returned by Sudan and detained by Eritrea in late 2007. One asylum seeker from the United Kingdom was also forcibly returned and detained. Hundreds of detained Eritrean asylum seekers in Libya remain at risk of forced return. Asylum seekers forcibly returned from Malta in 2002 and from Libya in 2003 remain in incommunicado detention. Recent threats to add Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) groups to the U.S. list of foreign terrorist organizations will only serve to harm refugees seeking asylum based on serious human rights concerns, where previously affiliations with these groups constituted reason for consideration of asylum.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: A HUMAN-RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO U.S. POLICY ON THE HORN

There has been a dearth of consideration for serious human rights and humanitarian concerns throughout the Horn of Africa by U.S. policymakers, with dire consequences. As described in this testimony, trends indicate that violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea are worsening, not improving. It is now time for a shift in approach—to make the immediate protection of vulnerable civilians central to an effective U.S. foreign policy on the Horn. This means holding individual governments accountable for protecting the rights of civilians and controlling the conduct of their armed forces. It also means taking a step back to gain a regional perspective on interlocking crises on the Ethiopia-Eritrea border, in southern and central Somalia, and in the Somali region of Ethiopia. Toward these ends, Amnesty International is grateful for the opportunity

to offer the following recommendations on how to recenter human rights in U.S. foreign policy on the Horn of Africa.

Foreign Policy Recommendations on Ethiopia

- The U.S. Government must make human rights central to U.S. relations with the Government of Ethiopia and Ethiopian civil society.
- The U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia and other U.S. officials should press the Government of Ethiopia to release all prisoners of conscience immediately and unconditionally.
- The U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia and other U.S. officials should actively monitor all political trials and visit political detainees in Addis Ababa and other places in Ethiopia, insist that trials and prison conditions adhere to international standards, and actively monitor the treatment of all prisoners of conscience and political detainees.
- U.S. Government officials, including the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, must ensure that steps are taken by the Government of Ethiopia to fully remove all remaining obstacles to unhindered humanitarian assistance and commercial trade in the Somali region of Ethiopia.
- U.S. Government officials must press the Government of Ethiopia to do everything in its power to avoid armed conflict with Eritrea.
- The Appropriations Committees of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives should provide humanitarian assistance at appropriate levels to meet the basic needs of the people of Ethiopia.
- The U.S. Congress should actively fund and support judicial and security sector reform in Ethiopia.
- In the spirit of current notification requirements for IMET and FMF funding to Ethiopia, the Appropriations Committees of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives should consider withholding a portion of both programs' assistance until the Secretary of State certifies that assistance under these programs is not being used by Ethiopian security forces against Ethiopian civilians, including students and political opposition groups, with special attention to the Somali, Oromia, and Gambella regions of Ethiopia.
- The United States Government should establish investigations to determine which units of the TFG and the Ethiopian Armed Forces are responsible for mass human rights violations, and military assistance should be conditioned for those units.
- The U.S. Permanent Representative to the U.N. should call for the establishment of a long-overdue U.N. fact-finding mission on human rights conditions in the Somali region.

Foreign Policy Recommendations on Eritrea

- The U.S. Government should make human rights central to U.S. relations with the Government of Eritrea and Eritrean civil society.
- The U.S. Ambassador to Eritrea and other U.S. officials should press the Government of Eritrea, directly and through mutual bilateral partners, to release all prisoners of conscience immediately and unconditionally.
- The U.S. Ambassador to Eritrea and other U.S. officials should actively monitor all political trials and visit political detainees in Asmara and other places in Eritrea, insist that trials and prison conditions adhere to international standards, and actively monitor the treatment of all prisoners of conscience and political detainees.
- The U.S. Government must press the Government of Eritrea, directly and through mutual bilateral partners, to do everything in its power to avoid armed conflict with Ethiopia.
- The Appropriations Committees of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives should provide humanitarian assistance at appropriate levels to meet the basic needs of the people of Eritrea, with special emphasis on the needs of displaced persons along its borders.
- The Appropriations Committees of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives should consider initial ESF funding to support Eritrean diaspora projects in the United States, to provide disenfranchised expatriate Eritreans with an effective means to promote human rights and democracy in their home country.

Foreign Policy Recommendations on Somalia

- U.S. Government officials should strongly condemn human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law in all documents and statements pertaining to Somalia.
- The United States and other countries to which Somali refugees have fled persecution must ensure that they are afforded protection, as required under inter-

national human rights standards and international standards governing the treatment of refugees.

- U.N. agencies and bilateral partners, including the U.S. Government, should fund and implement programs to provide vulnerable groups, including women, young people, and minorities, with education, employment, and training opportunities, in addition to fully funding and staffing emergency assistance programs throughout Somalia.
- The U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations should work within the U.N. Security Council to give the human rights and humanitarian crisis in Somalia a higher profile, beyond the question of a peacekeeping force, strengthen human rights components of UNPOS, and ensure authorization of resources necessary to support human rights assistance for Somalia through the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- The U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations should work within the UNSC to strengthen and enforce the U.N. arms embargo.
- Any U.S. military or police assistance to the TFG should require a vetting process to ensure that violators of human rights are not placed in positions of authority in Somalia.
- The U.S. Congress should consider conditioning plans for further security sector assistance to the TFG on the inclusion of mechanisms to monitor the human rights performance of its security forces and hold individual leaders, soldiers and units responsible for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law accountable for their actions, according to international standards of justice.
- The United States should establish investigations to determine which forces of the TFG are responsible for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.
- The U.S. Government and the international community are strongly encouraged to fulfill all commitments made in UNSC Resolution 1745 to fund and support full deployment of AMISOM, as part of the process required to facilitate the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Somalia, while acting to encourage AMISOM to extend its operational mandate to include civilian protection.
- As national reconciliation efforts continue, diplomatic initiatives must ensure that human rights and humanitarian assistance are made central to the dialog among all political actors and parties to the conflict in Somalia.

Foreign Policy Recommendations on Somaliland

- The Appropriations Committees of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives should consider initial ESF and Development Assistance to support democratization, elections, institutionalization of human rights protections, police and security sector reform and judicial capacity-building in self-declared independent Somaliland. Such assistance need not address the question of international recognition, but would ensure the support of the Government of Somaliland requires to continue to build democratic institutions and a secure environment for its citizens.

Senator FEINGOLD. Of course, we will put that in the record. And I thank you for your important testimony.

Dr. Shinn.

STATEMENT OF DR. DAVID SHINN, ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, THE ELLIOT SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, DC

Ambassador SHINN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I also have a longer statement that I would like to include in the record.

I think there are essentially four issues that are of great concern today, potentially and actual, in the Horn of Africa. The first, by far, is the situation in Somalia and the continuing violence there. Another is the potential breakdown of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in Sudan. A third is the situation in Darfur, although the implications for the Horn are not that great. And lastly, is a possible conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, although I don't believe that will happen.

The situation in Somalia is particularly worrisome. The humanitarian situation is worsening. It impacts directly all of its neighbors, but also has brought Eritrea very much into the picture. The United States is treating Somalia primarily as a counterterrorist threat, and I think this raises some serious questions about the best way to approach the problem. The possible resumption of civil war between northern and southern Sudan would, in fact, have far greater consequences for the Horn of Africa than does, for example, the situation in Darfur.

And the absence of normal relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea contributes significantly to instability in the region. As I say, I don't subscribe to the school of thought that suggests there will be a return to war between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Efforts by governments in the region to solve the problem in Somalia, to keep the CPA on track, and to encourage the normalization of relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea are sometimes at counter purposes with American objectives. The United States seeks stability in the region, and wants to mitigate or even eliminate the terrorist threat. Regional governments do not necessarily share these priorities.

For its part, the U.S. obsession with counterterrorism emphasizes short-term objectives aimed at tracking down terrorists. It gives insufficient attention to working with regional governments on ameliorating the long-term causes that lead to support for people who use terrorist tactics.

The United States, I think, has the most leverage with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of all of the actors outside the neighborhood. Although its assistance is modest, the TFG exists at the mercy of Ethiopia and the United States. The United States has also expended considerable political capital in helping to achieve the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and as a result, has some leverage there. The rocky relationship with Khartoum, however, limits United States leverage to affect policy change, either in Darfur or to ensure implementation of the CPA.

Washington has virtually no leverage with Eritrea. But even in the case of Ethiopia, leverage is a relative concept. The leaderships in both Ethiopia and Eritrea, since they assumed power in their respective countries in 1991, are notably resistant to outside pressure, even when large amounts of assistance are at stake. Both Prime Minister Meles and President Isaias will change positions on a policy only after they have concluded it is in the long-term interest of their respective governments.

Mr. Chairman, I ended with a very long list of proposed recommendations. I certainly won't take time here to go through them all. I will only cite a few of them.

I think, mostly importantly, United States policy should work in a stronger way to encourage the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia to create a government of national unity that includes moderates from the Alliance for the Reliberation of Somalia and from some clans in the Mogadishu area that now oppose the TFG.

On a contingency basis, I think it should request, if it hasn't already done so, the United Nations to draw up plans for a peacekeeping operation that would eventually replace the small African Union presence in Somalia. It should help both Ethiopia and Eri-

trea identify confidence-building measures that may eventually lead to Ethiopian acceptance of the Boundary Commission's decision, followed by practical adjustments along the border that are acceptable to both. And it should encourage both Ethiopia and Eritrea to end support for groups whose goal is to destabilize the situation in the other's country.

Finally, I would urge that the United States put front and center counterterrorism programs that mitigate the root causes of terrorism and the environment in the Horn that sustains but domestic terrorists and those coming from outside the region.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Shinn follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. DAVID H. SHINN, ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, THE ELLIOTT SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, DC

I thank Chairman Feingold for inviting me to testify on U.S. policy objectives and options on the Horn of Africa. The Horn has long been one of the most conflicted regions of the world and, as back door to the Middle East, is strategically important to the United States. It merits close attention by both the administration and Congress.

The Subcommittee on African Affairs asked me to assess the current security situation in Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia, and to identify the most serious threats to regional and U.S. security, It also solicited my analysis of efforts by governments in the Horn and by the administration to address these threats. It then urged that I offer recommendations on how the United States can better contribute to security, stability, growth, and democracy in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. In particular, the subcommittee asked what tools and leverage the United States possesses that would be most effective in achieving U.S. objectives in the Horn of Africa.

CURRENT SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA, ERITREA, AND SOMALIA

The serious challenges facing Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia are longstanding and have implications for neighboring Djibouti, Kenya, and Sudan just as developments in those countries impact the situation for the three countries discussed in this testimony. With approximately 75 million people and located in the center of the Horn, Ethiopia is in many ways key to peace and security (or lack thereof) in the region. But the cross-border linkages are so important in the Horn that any one of the countries has the potential to destabilize or make more stable the other countries in the region.

Turning first to Ethiopia, the country is still recovering from the aftermath of the 2005 general election. The runup to the election and the actual balloting were deemed to be generally free and fair. It was a major improvement over all previous elections. Charges by some opposition parties that the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) stole the election during the ballot counting process resulted in violence that continued sporadically for the subsequent 6 months. In some cases the opposition provoked a strong reaction by government security forces. Nevertheless, the security forces clearly used excessive force in responding to a number of challenges.

With local elections (districts and kebeles or wards) and those for some 40 vacancies in the national legislature scheduled for April 2008, the internal political situation approaches another potentially significant turning point. Unfortunately, opposition political parties are demoralized, arguing that the government has shut down most of their regional offices and arrested some of their supporters. Several of the opposition parties may not even contest seats for local offices, which in Ethiopia are actually very important. The current internal political dynamic surrounding these elections does not auger well for enhancing democracy in the country. Traditionally, there are no international observers for local elections. In any event, because of the size of the country and large number of contests, it would be difficult to mobilize a sufficient number of international observers. Nevertheless, the local elections are an opportunity for advancing democracy in Ethiopia. If they fail to achieve this goal, it will be an enormous lost opportunity.

Turning to Ethiopia's relations with neighboring countries, Addis Ababa has close relations with Kenya and Djibouti, which now serves as the principal port for all

Ethiopian imports and exports. Relations with Sudan have fluctuated since the EPRDF took power in 1991, but have been good following the outbreak of conflict in 1998 between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Addis Ababa is particularly hopeful that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended conflict between northern and southern Sudan not collapse. From the perspective of Ethiopia's security, maintaining peace in southern Sudan is more important than ending the conflict in Darfur. Nevertheless, Ethiopia has offered both helicopters and troops to the United Nations/African Union peacekeeping operation in Darfur. This has ingratiated Ethiopia with the United States and presumably with Sudan. Ethiopia has also earned praise in Washington for supporting U.S. counterterrorism efforts in the region.

Ethiopia has established a good working relationship with Somaliland, which declared its independence from Somalia in 1991 but has not been recognized by any country. Ethiopia's military intervention in Somalia in 2006 at the request of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) has been opposed by virtually all Somalis except those aligned with the TFG. If Ethiopian troops left Somalia tomorrow, however, the TFG would almost certainly collapse. The leaders of most Somali groups opposing the TFG are in exile in Asmara, Eritrea, where they formed the Alliance for Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) and receive support from Eritrea.

Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia has also led to increased conflict in its Somali-inhabited Ogaden region in the southeastern part of the country. There is strong evidence that Eritrea is supporting the dissident Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) in the Ogaden. The withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from Somalia and the end of Eritrean support for the ONLF would reduce, but not eliminate, conflict in the Ogaden between ONLF and Ethiopian Government forces.

The situation in Somalia remains extremely volatile. The TFG has limited support of Somalis, most of whom see the Ethiopians as an occupying force. Almost 300,000 Somalis have fled the violence in Mogadishu since last October, raising the total number who has left the capital to about 700,000. A UNHCR representative commented at the end of January that Somalia "is the most pressing humanitarian emergency in the world today—even worse than Darfur." The African Union force is unable to take control of the situation in Mogadishu as a replacement for Ethiopian troops. The U.N. is debating whether the security situation even permits planning to send a U.N. peacekeeping operation to replace the African Union force. An affirmative U.N. decision, which does not seem likely anytime soon, would be followed by many months of delay before the U.N. could mobilize such a force. In the meantime, Somali animosity against the Ethiopians increases.

Two spoiler groups, which may have concluded it is in their interest for conflict to continue, are also benefiting from the current deadlock. The al-Shabaab militia, which once served as the muscle for the Islamic Courts, is by most accounts gaining strength. Some key al-Shabaab leaders now operate independently of the Islamic Courts while others reportedly still follow its lead. Mogadishu's warlords, some of whom now support the TFG, are notorious for switching sides or operating completely independently when that serves their purpose. Often backed by businessmen, some of them actually benefit financially from continuing conflict. Neither they nor al-Shabaab can be counted on to work for peace or to serve the broader interests of the Somali people.

The positive development in this otherwise bleak analysis of Somalia was the appointment in 2007 of Prime Minister Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein by President Abdullahi Yusuf. Nur Adde has stated that he supports a broad-based reconciliation process that takes into account Islamists and clan-based factions that now oppose the TFG. He said the TFG is "ready to talk to those who are fighting in Mogadishu. Nobody is exempted from negotiations." International envoys who have met with Nur Adde believe he is sincere in reaching out to disaffected Somali groups. There are still concerns, however, whether President Abdullahi Yusuf is as committed to a reconciliation process with the enemies of the TFG. Nor is it clear that the ARS is prepared to join a government of national unity before the departure of all Ethiopian troops. Such a precondition would result in even more chaos in Mogadishu than exists now. Nur Adde has for the first time raised the possibility of real accommodation with the TFG's opponents. A sequenced departure of Ethiopian troops agreed upon by both the TFG and ARS should not be ruled out.

The U.S. role in Somalia is focused primarily on countering terrorism, although it deserves credit for providing significant amounts of emergency assistance to Somalis through international and nongovernmental organizations. So long as the U.S. effort in Somalia remains essentially to capture and kill bad guys, and there are some in Somalia, the United States marginalizes its ability to impact in a positive way any long-term solution to the Somali problem. U.S. aerial attacks against suspected high value terrorist targets inside Somalia can be justified if there is a very high probability they are conducted on the basis of accurate, up-to-the-minute intel-

ligence. Going back many years, however, the U.S. record for accurate intelligence in this part of the world is, unfortunately, not very good. The United States has conducted four aerial attacks inside Somalia since January 2007. The most recent one occurred early in March. If there was any success against high value targets as a result of these attacks, this information has not become public knowledge. Anecdotal evidence suggests the aerial attacks accomplished little. In the meantime, each American attack only increases the anger of most Somalis toward the United States, Ethiopia, and the TFG.

Developments in Eritrea present special challenges for U.S. policy. The internal Eritrean situation leaves much to be desired. While Ethiopia has had a long series of controversial elections, Eritrea has not even had a national election since it became independent in 1993. It is subject to growing criticism in the West for a concentration of power around the Executive, a lack of press freedom, a faltering economy, support for the Islamic Courts and opposition groups in Somalia, and effectively ending the ability of the U.N. Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) to operate in Eritrea. It supports a number of organizations that are trying to destabilize the Government in Ethiopia while Ethiopia provides sanctuary to Eritrean dissidents who wish to do the same in Eritrea. On the other hand, for a country that is approximately half Christian and half Muslim, it has managed to preserve cordial relations between these two major religious groups. Eritrea has good relations with neighboring Djibouti and Sudan and even played the principal role in brokering a peace agreement between dissident groups in eastern Sudan and the Government in Khartoum.

A close friend of the United States until the outbreak of conflict with Ethiopia in 1998, relations between Washington and Asmara subsequently steadily deteriorated. Eritrea has been particularly frustrated by the inability of the United States to convince Ethiopia to accept the 2002 ruling of the Ethiopia Eritrea Boundary Commission. This disagreement largely accounted for a series of decisions by Asmara that have worsened the United States-Eritrea relationship. At one point recently, there was even a suggestion in Washington that Eritrea might be added to the list of states that support terrorism. This would have been an unwise decision. It is more important to find ways, as difficult as it will be, to encourage Eritrea to support initiatives that improve peace and stability in the region.

MOST SERIOUS THREATS TO REGIONAL AND U.S. SECURITY

The most serious threats to the Horn of Africa, and indirectly United States, security are in order of priority the continuing violence in Somalia, a breakdown of the CPA in Sudan, the conflict in Darfur, and a possible but unlikely resumption of conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Other issues of concern are instability in Ethiopia's Ogaden region, ethnic conflict in Kenya, opposition to the EPRDF by the Oromo Liberation Front, continuing violence by Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army, and a possible resumption of conflict in eastern Sudan.

The situation in Somalia is particularly worrisome because the country has effectively not been governed since the early 1990s. It has attracted a number of movements that do not represent mainstream Somali thought, including some affiliated with terrorism. The humanitarian situation is worsening. The Somali conflict either impacts directly or has drawn in Ethiopia, Kenya, Eritrea, and Djibouti. The United States treats Somalia primarily as a counterterrorist threat and is especially anxious to capture or kill three persons (all non-Somalis linked to al-Qaeda and believed to have taken refuge in Somalia) who were involved in the 1998 bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Even if counterterrorism were not, a key to the U.S. agenda, Somalia would pose a major threat to regional stability and, hence, American interests in the Horn.

The United States played a significant, positive role in helping to broker the CPA in Sudan and bring an end to the civil war. This was the most significant political achievement of the Bush administration in Africa. The international community and, at least until recently, the United States have allowed the conflict in Darfur to monopolize their collective energy while paying insufficient attention to a possible breakdown of the CPA. As serious as the situation is in Darfur and its negative impact on neighboring Chad and the Central African Republic, the possible resumption of civil war between northern and southern Sudan would have far greater negative implications for the Horn of Africa. Consequently, it is critical that all parties, including the United States refocus attention to assure the successful implementation of the CPA and the avoidance of a return to war both between the north and south and among rival southern factions.

The absence of normal relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea contributes to instability in the region. When these two countries resolve their differences and re-

sume their important economic relationship, all neighboring countries will benefit. I do not subscribe to the school of thought that war is likely between Ethiopia and Eritrea because of the failure to implement the border agreement. I believe both countries have concluded that it is not in their interest to initiate conflict, although both sides support groups that have hostile intentions against the other. Any diminution in effectiveness of the UNMEE operation increases slightly the possibility for conflict along the border. Therefore, it is important, even as UNMEE is forced to leave Eritrea, that it maintain a presence, however modest, on the Ethiopian side of the border. Independent UNMEE observers would be in a position to identify quickly and point the finger at whichever party might initiate a border incursion.

ANALYSIS OF EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THESE THREATS

Efforts by governments in the region to solve the problem in Somalia, keep the CPA on track, and encourage a normalization of relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea are sometimes at counter purposes with American objectives. The United States seeks stability in the region and wants to mitigate or even eliminate the terrorist threat. Regional governments do not necessarily share these priorities. Eritrea and Ethiopia support each other's opposition groups; this does not encourage stability. The TFG has been more interested in retaining political power than encouraging reconciliation among all Somalis. It is not even clear how committed the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and especially the Bashir government in Sudan are to implementing the letter and spirit of the CPA. All governments in the Horn give lip service to countering terrorism, but with the possible exception of Ethiopia their support for this goal is not always convincing.

For its part, the U.S. obsession with counterterrorism emphasizes short-term objectives aimed at tracking down terrorists. It gives insufficient attention to working with regional governments on ameliorating the long-term root causes that lead to support for groups that use terrorist tactics. Nor has there been a meeting of the minds on what constitutes terrorism in the region. The United States is primarily interested in international terrorism instigated by al-Qaeda and groups affiliated with it like the now moribund al-Ittihad al-Islami in Somalia. It is much less interested in terrorist tactics used by local groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army, which is not affiliated with al-Qaeda. Ethiopia, for example, ascribes terrorist acts to groups such as the ONLF and the Oromo Liberation Front that are not on the U.S. terrorist list. It should come as no surprise that regional governments are more concerned with these groups that have a domestic objective than they are with al-Qaeda.

All international and regional efforts since the early 1990s to solve the Somali dilemma have failed, although not for lack of trying. The United States essentially abandoned Somalia following the departure of American troops in 1994 and the end of the U.N. peacekeeping operation in 1995. It reengaged sporadically only after 9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan for fear that the Taliban might move to Somalia. It became much more involved about 2 years ago as the Islamic Courts began to assert authority in Mogadishu, but again with an overwhelming focus on counterterrorism. The United States ill-advisedly supported an alliance of warlords in Mogadishu that led directly to a military victory by the Islamic Courts. Ethiopian military intervention, at some point encouraged by the United States, resulted in the defeat of the Islamic Courts, but did not contribute to a solution that allowed Somalia to establish a government that has the support of most Somalis. From the standpoint of regional stability, the situation in Somalia today is no better, and arguably worse, than during the period of control by the Islamic Courts.

Sudan's CPA nearly collapsed in 2007 when the SPLM withdrew its representatives from the government of national unity. This occurred at a time when the international community was far more engaged in the situation in Darfur. Fortunately, the SPLM and the Bashir government resolved their differences. The CPA is back on track but remains in a highly fragile state. In recent months, the United States appears appropriately to be giving this issue greater high-level attention. Ethiopia is also taking steps that encourage peace and stability between northern and southern Sudan.

Since the outbreak of conflict in 1998 between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the United States worked hard to end the war and made considerable effort to convince both countries to normalize their relations. The major stumbling block has been the unwillingness of Ethiopia to implement the decision of the Boundary Commission. Eritrea has not helped its case by taking a series of steps aimed at destabilizing Ethiopia. The international community, including the United States, seems to have concluded in the past year that there is little it can do to resolve the impasse.

U.S. LEVERAGE AND RESOURCES

Of the major challenges facing the United States in the Horn, it probably has the most leverage with Somalia's TFG. Although total American assistance to Somalia is modest and not likely to influence the TFG, its political leverage should be enormous. The TFG is heavily dependent on Ethiopia and the United States for its very survival. If the TFG chooses to ignore advice from Ethiopia and the United States, it does so at its peril. The United States has also worked hard to stand up the African Union force to replace the Ethiopians in Somalia.

The United States has brought substantial financial resources to bear in Sudan for both implementing the CPA and alleviating suffering in Darfur. It expended considerable political capital in helping to achieve the CPA, but has been much less successful in resolving the conflict in Darfur. The United States has far better relations with the SPLM than it has with the Bashir government, with whom relations are strained. The rocky relationship with Khartoum limits U.S. leverage to effect policy change in Darfur or to ensure implementation of the CPA.

The United States provides Ethiopia substantial assistance, although most of it in recent years has been emergency aid and support to counter HIV/AIDS. Washington also has a close working relationship with Addis Ababa. In theory, therefore, the United States has considerable leverage with the Meles government. At the same time, the close relations with Ethiopia have contributed directly to a worsening of relations with Eritrea. The Isaias government accuses Washington of favoring Ethiopia on the border question. As a consequence, it asked the USAID mission to leave Eritrea. Washington has virtually no leverage with Eritrea. But even in the case of Ethiopia, leverage is a relative concept. The leaderships in both Ethiopia and Eritrea since they assumed power in their respective countries in 1991 are notably resistant to outside pressure even when large amounts of assistance are at stake. Both Meles and Isaias will change positions on a policy only after they have concluded it is in the long-term interest of their respective governments.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES

Taking the above analysis into account and as requested in the invitation to testify, I suggest the following recommendations for ways the United States can contribute to security, stability, growth, and democracy in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. I have purposely omitted many desirable recommendations that are hopelessly unrealistic or beyond the ability of the United States to implement because of its limited leverage in one or more of the three countries.

- Work closely with Ethiopia to encourage the TFG to create a government of national unity that includes moderates from the ARS and from subclans in Mogadishu who currently oppose the TFG.
- Consult closely with the Somalia "Contact Group" and ask its members to follow the same approach with the TFG.
- Ask the Arab League and its member governments to encourage the ARS to engage without preconditions in power-sharing talks with the TFG.
- Encourage governments that have good relations with Eritrea to follow the same approach with Eritrea vis-a-vis the ARS.
- If a government of national unity that is widely accepted by the Somali people actually materializes, be prepared quickly to mobilize a significant amount of development assistance for Somalia.
- Likewise, push the wealthier Arab countries to make major contributions to Somalia's development.
- As security improves in Somalia, work with Ethiopia and the TFG to design a quick, sequenced departure of Ethiopian forces from Somalia so as to encourage broader Somali support for a new government of national unity.
- On a contingency basis, request the U.N. to draw up plans for a peacekeeping operation that would replace the small African Union presence and would actually keep the peace rather than try to separate warring factions.
- Be prepared to offer substantial logistical support for standing up a U.N. peacekeeping mission in Somalia.
- Make a concerted effort to reach out to the Somali diaspora in the United States to solicit ways it can help to bring peace and stability to Somalia.
- Help Ethiopia and Eritrea identify confidence-building measures that may eventually lead to Ethiopian acceptance of the Boundary Commission's decision followed by practical adjustments along the border that are acceptable to both countries.
- Encourage both Ethiopia and Eritrea to end support for groups whose goal is to destabilize the situation in the other's country.

- Following the departure of UNMEE from Eritrea, insist that it maintain observers inside Ethiopia along the border so that it can assign blame for any military incursion across the Ethiopian-Eritrean frontier.
- If requested by the U.N., assign a significant number of U.S. personnel to this effort, certainly more than the tiny number that has participated in UNMEE.
- Continue and even increase the high-level attention devoted to ensuring implementation of the CPA in Sudan.
- Initiate a working group of government and nongovernment experts from the Horn, a few European and Arab countries, and China to identify and suggest solutions for the root causes of both domestic and international terrorism in the region.
- Put front and center counterterrorism programs that mitigate the root causes of terrorism and the environment in the Horn that sustains both domestic terrorists and those coming from outside the region.
- Engage governments in the region on their responsibility to reduce social and economic inequality and political marginalization as important ways to reduce both conflict and support for terrorist groups.
- Engage governments and groups inside and outside the region to end their support for religious ideology of whatever persuasion that expressly encourages intolerance.
- Increase support for democracy, good governance, and anticorruption programs in Ethiopia and be prepared to initiate funding for such programs in Somalia and Eritrea when the situation permits.
- Provide additional funding for basic education programs, especially in the Somali language, conducted over the radio and which also contain useful civic lessons that include encouragement of religious and ethnic tolerance.
- Identify and, where desired by host governments, fund programs, even on a pilot basis that help reduce youth unemployment.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, thank you so much, Doctor, for that information and testimony.

Colonel Dempsey.

STATEMENT OF COLONEL THOMAS DEMPSEY, USA (RET.), PROFESSOR, PEACEKEEPING AND STABILITY OPERATIONS INSTITUTE, U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA

Colonel DEMPSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for inviting me to participate in the hearing. The views I'm about to offer are my own.

I suggested almost 2 years ago that the U.S. response to terrorist hubs operating in African failed states, like Somalia, had been less than adequate. I noted that military strikes, which target terrorists directly, have enjoyed few successes in failed states, and that they tended to legitimate terrorist groups by providing them combatant status under the Geneva Convention.

I also noted that law enforcement efforts have likewise enjoyed few successes in places like Somalia, largely because law enforcement agencies lack the capacity to access and operate in those very violent and austere environments. Integrating U.S. military capabilities and U.S. law enforcement, I suggested, offered a more effective strategy for countering terrorist in the kind of volatile environments that confront us in the Horn.

The military forces can establish access to failed states and ungoverned spaces for law enforcement agencies, carve out a secure environment for those agencies to carry out their core function of identifying and apprehending terrorist suspects. I also suggested that once those suspects were apprehended, they ought to be delivered to an appropriate criminal justice system, discrediting their

activities through public trials that shine the light of international scrutiny on their terrorist acts and the consequences of those acts.

In the 2 years since that study was published, I think events have borne out several of my original conclusions. As we have heard here today, failed states like Somalia continue to provide venues for terrorism. Our continued dependence upon military strikes has yielded a few tactical successes, but I would argue that the strikes have generated significant levels of controversy, skepticism, and outright mistrust among many of our key partners, especially within the AFRICOM AOR.

The collateral damage, including the loss of innocent civilian lives, which are an unavoidable consequence of military strikes, no matter how carefully planned or carried out, threatens to undermine the moral authority of our counterterrorism campaigns, and arguably contributes to the ongoing recruitment by the terrorists themselves.

On the positive side, however, the past 2 years have seen some significant progress in fostering cooperation and synergy between military and law enforcement agencies in the Africa region. Developments on the American side, like the promulgation of NSPD–44, the establishment of SCRS, the issuance of Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, and the emergence of whole-of-government approaches to stabilization and reconstruction that those initiatives represent—promoting rule of law and good governance, strengthening accountability mechanisms, supporting democratic processes—I would suggest to offer an opportunity to both implement an alternative strategy, combining military and law enforcement capabilities, and also offer an opportunity to improve our strategies across a broad range of agendas and objectives in the region.

I'd note that especially in—and I'd add, this is not a pipe dream. This process is already underway in West Africa, and you can see significant progress in helping the northern tier of ECOWAS states deal with exactly these kinds of problems, and in the comprehensive security sector reform and governance programs that we can see being implemented today in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

And especially encouraging development in this respect is the emergence of U.N. Integrated Missions as a key player in stabilization and reconstruction efforts. These U.N. Integrated Missions offer a vehicle for undertaking the transformative reconstruction of the security sector. It's really necessary for the recovery of states that have failed completely, as is the case in Somalia, and can provide a means of pursuing an effective set of counterterrorism strategies.

In that context, I would suggest that in Somalia, a quick transition from African Union Forces to a full-fledged integrated U.N. Mission could provide a key to jumpstarting a recovery process that will ultimately support counterterrorism initiatives, as well as broader governance and security agendas that Deputy Assistant Secretary Whelan and Assistant Secretary Frazer discussed earlier today.

Thank you for the opportunity. I would ask that the full text of my statement be entered into the record.

Senator FEINGOLD. Without objection.

[The prepared statement of Colonel Dempsey follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF COLONEL THOMAS A. DEMPSEY, U.S. ARMY (RET.), PROFESSOR, SECURITY SECTOR REFORM, PEACEKEEPING AND STABILITY OPERATIONS INSTITUTE, U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA

I thank the subcommittee and Chairman Feingold for inviting me to participate in this hearing. I have been asked to discuss recent developments in the Horn of Africa and their implications for U.S. military and counterterrorism policy toward this region over the past 2 years. I will also offer some comments regarding our efforts to improve regional security capacity more generally in this volatile area of the world. The views that I offer are my own, as an academic and former practitioner in African security affairs, and are not intended to be a statement on behalf of the United States Army, the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, or the current administration.

COUNTERTERRORISM IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

I suggested almost 2 years ago that the U.S. response to terrorist hubs operating in African failed states, like Somalia, had been less than adequate. I noted that military strikes which target terrorists directly have enjoyed few successes in failed states, and have tended to legitimate terrorist groups by providing them combatant status under the Geneva Convention. Law enforcement efforts have likewise enjoyed few successes in failed states, as civilian law enforcement agencies lack the capacity to penetrate or operate effectively in the violent environments presented by countries like Somalia. Security assistance programs, while enjoying some remarkable successes elsewhere on the African Continent, require partnering with host nation security institutions that are simply not present in those areas of the Horn at greatest risk. While attempts to address the root causes of terrorism may offer an effective counterterrorism strategy, such efforts require extended periods of time in order to show results—time which appears to be running short in the case of the Horn.

I argued in my original study of this topic that better integrating the efforts of the U.S. foreign intelligence community with U.S. military capabilities and U.S. law enforcement offers a more effective strategy for countering terrorist hubs operating in failed states and ungoverned spaces like those that confront us in the Horn of Africa. The foreign intelligence community is best equipped to identify terrorist hubs operating in these areas which may be developing global reach and directly threatening U.S. national interests. Once those threats have been identified, a synthesis of expeditionary military forces and civilian law enforcement agencies will be far more effective in dealing with the terrorist hubs than either element can be while operating independently. The military forces establish access to failed states and ungoverned spaces for law enforcement officers, and carve out a secure environment for those officers to perform their core function of indentifying, locating, and apprehending criminal, in this case terrorist, suspects.

Dealing effectively with terrorist groups and activities requires more than just taking them into custody, however. Once terrorists have been located, identified, and apprehended, they must be screened to assure that they are, indeed, the terrorist suspects that the apprehending officers believe them to be, a task that I suggested was appropriate to a properly constituted and administered military tribunal, which could be provided by the supporting military force. Individuals whose status as a terrorist suspect is confirmed would then be delivered to an appropriate criminal justice system, whether national or international, for arraignment and trial. This strategy would avoid the legitimizing effect of treating terrorists as military targets, while discrediting their activities through public trials that shine the light of international scrutiny on their terrorist acts.

In the 2 years since that study was published, I believe that events have borne out several of my original conclusions. Failed states and ungoverned spaces have continued to provide platforms for terrorist recruiting and operational planning, as events in Somalia have demonstrated. Our continued dependence upon military strikes as our primary approach to counterterrorism has yielded a few tactical successes, but has yet to demonstrate any long-term impact at the operational or strategic levels. Those strikes have, however, generated significant levels of controversy, skepticism, and outright mistrust among many of our key partners, especially within the AFRICOM AOR. The collateral damage, including loss of innocent civilian lives, which is an unavoidable consequence of military strikes, no matter how carefully or surgically delivered, threatens to undermine the moral authority of our counterterrorism efforts and arguably contributes to the ongoing recruitment efforts of the terrorist groups themselves. This is particularly problematic in a country like Somalia, where clan politics and the complex web of alliances and obligations among dia-paying groups lend unexpected consequences to the exercise of lethal force.

On the positive side, however, the past 2 years have seen some significant progress in fostering cooperation and synergy between military and law enforcement communities in the Africa region, including the Horn. Several developments on the American side have contributed to this progress, most notably the promulgation of NSPD–44, the establishment of the Office of the Department of State Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction, and issuance of Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, which established stability operations as a core mission of U.S. military forces. The emergence of whole-of-government approaches to stabilization and reconstruction, both within the U.S. Government and among its international partners, is transforming strategies for dealing with transnational problems like terrorism and drug trafficking in failed states and ungoverned spaces. This transformation opens the door to pursuing an alternative counterterrorism strategy that leverages both military and law enforcement core competencies to identify, apprehend, and convict the planners and perpetrators of terrorist acts. The emergence of security sector reform as an effective tool of state, subregional, regional and international capacity-building can facilitate and support the pursuit of such alternative strategies.

IMPROVING SECURITY CAPACITY IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

The same developments that offer opportunities to enhance regional counterterrorism strategies promise to enhance the building of security capacity in the subregion more generally. Integrated strategies that address capacity-building in a comprehensive way have the potential to fundamentally recast the security environment in the Horn. Promoting rule of law and good governance, to include strengthening accountability mechanisms and supporting democratic processes, can lay the foundation for a broader and more durable concept of subregional security. This is not a pipe dream: The process is already underway in West Africa, embodied in the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Management and its Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, and clearly evident in the comprehensive governance and security sector reform programs underway in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

An especially encouraging development in this respect is the emergence of the U.N. Integrated Mission as a key player in stabilization and reconstruction efforts. U.N. Integrated Missions, the best examples of which are currently in Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, provide a comprehensive framework within which partners, to include the U.S., can develop and implement a complete restructuring of the security environment in collaboration with the host nation. An Integrated Mission can provide levels of resourcing and oversight that are not available from any other source, and can offer a vehicle for undertaking the massive, transformative reconstruction of the security sector that is necessary to the recovery of states that have failed as completely, as was the case in Liberia, and continues to be the case in Somalia.

The rapid recovery currently underway in Liberia demonstrates clearly the potential of even the most devastated area to restore legitimate, functional governance, once a genuinely secure environment is created for the host nation and its partners to undertake reconstruction activities. In the context of Somalia, a quick transition from African Union forces to a full-fledged, Integrated U.N. Mission is the key to jump-starting a recovery process that will ultimately support counterterrorism initiatives as well as broader governance and security agendas. U.S. support to such a mission in a whole-of-government approach orchestrated through the mechanisms currently being developed by the U.S. interagency, under the leadership of S/CRS, can provide critical mass to this effort. Active involvement of AFRICOM, the new Unified Command for Africa, can also contribute significantly to helping U.S. agencies focus effectively on a broader security agenda in the Horn. Such an agenda, while it cannot neglect the other major issues confronting the subregion, must center, first and foremost, on addressing the ongoing challenges posed by the situation in Somalia.

Senator FEINGOLD. Colonel, thank you for your candid and thoughtful testimony. In fact, thanks to all three of you for being able to do that in a rather brief period of time. I know it was a little rushed, so thank you. And now I will just ask a few questions.

Ms. Fredriksson, you suggest that the United States should help alleviate Eritrea's dire humanitarian situation. What kind of assistance do you think would be most effective? And given that the Eritrean Government has banished USAID from the country, how could this assistance best be provided and monitored?

Ms. FREDRIKSSON. Well, I think there are three different ways to approach this. One would be through our international agency partners, through bilateral partnerships, and others who have an ongoing relationship with the Government of Eritrea to encourage further assistance through those bodies.

Another would be to consider options as to what we could provide without a presence physically on the ground.

And, in addition to that, I think the specific type of assistance most desperately needed at this time is assistance to IDPs and refugees along the border.

And I hope that that actually—consideration, serious consideration, by the administration of that need would improve to some degree the dialog that is at the moment pretty minimal.

Senator FEINGOLD. Ms. Fredriksson, the U.N. Arms Embargo in Somalia is clearly failing. Can you provide the committee with some analysis of why this embargo is failing? And what can be done to strengthen and enforce it?

Ms. FREDRIKSSON. Thank you, Senator. I am very glad to provide some thoughts on that.

Currently, there is no enforcement mechanism for the U.N. Arms Embargo. There is a free flow of arms into Somalia from several different directions and several different funding sources. Some of those funding sources, according to our local partners, come through the UAE, through Saudi Arabia, through Kuwait, and other places.

As you know, Eritrea has been accused of being one of the direct sources of arms transfers, as have Somalis based in Eritrea. And beyond that, the conditions on the ground are such that we're seeing an increase in the market flow through Bakara, which is now split into three or four or five different markets, and this is ammunitions, this is small arms, and this is heavy arms.

So the answer that I would like to suggest is that we consider, first of all, that no specific exemptions have actually been requested to the Arms Embargo and to make that process a stronger one.

And, in addition to that, to look at means by which we could consider bans which have worked in other countries in Africa at different times on individuals, companies, or countries which are believed to have been providers.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you. Ambassador Shinn, looking ahead to next month's bielections and local polls throughout Ethiopia, what do you see as the best- and worst-case scenarios? And what can the United States and the broader international community do to encourage a positive outcome? And what measures should be taken in the event of a worst-case scenario?

Ambassador SHINN. The elections are scheduled for April, so they're coming very quickly. Unfortunately, at this late date, there's relatively little that can be done to make them more successful. They've already been postponed a number of times. They were to have taken place about 2 years ago.

The likely outcome is a rather a tepid outcome that will simply not allow a great deal of contestation by opposition groups. And that, in my view, will be unfortunate; essentially, a missed opportunity. There probably are a lot of players to blame for that, includ-

ing some of the opposition themselves, for not having either the ability or the capacity to mount a real serious threat to the EPRDF in terms of going to the ballot box.

But part of it also certainly lies with the government, where it's made life very difficult for the opposition to function in Ethiopia. And it's just a shame, because the local elections are actually very important in the Ethiopian context. And it should be an opportunity for progress on democratization.

My fear is that it's not really going to change anything one way or the other; it will be a continuation of the same.

Senator FEINGOLD. Colonel, the threats emanating from the Horn of Africa are real and need to be addressed properly, as you indicated. You mentioned in your testimony the importance of integrating foreign intelligence with military capabilities, but what about other elements of national power, like foreign and development assistance, or diplomatic engagement? How do these elements fit into the framework that you've delineated?

Colonel DEMPSEY. Thank you for the question, sir. They fit very clearly into that format. The challenge of addressing counterterrorism is one of trying to address it in an environment where the accompanying government structures to support it aren't present.

And one of the keys to establishing those frameworks is a robust approach involving all agencies—not just of the U.S. Government, but of our inner-governmental partners, of our bilateral partners—so that we have a comprehensive approach, rather than trying to solve this a piece at a time.

As I suggested in my testimony, the best vehicle that I can see for doing that is a U.N. Integrated Mission. It has the robustness, it offers a comprehensive framework in which all of the agencies of the U.S. Government that have a piece of this, can engage, engage effectively, and engage with a very high level of legitimacy.

But going back to my original thesis, I would say the key here is addressing counterterrorism in a law enforcement context. Military capabilities can facilitate and support them.

Senator FEINGOLD. Finally, Colonel, what role do you see for the new U.S. Africa Command, or AFRICOM, furthering the United States security agenda in the Horn of Africa? What do you think this new Command should and should not be responsible for? And how should it collaborate with the existing programs like CJTF-HOA?

Colonel DEMPSEY. I would suggest, sir, that there are two areas in which AFRICOM can be especially supportive of our agenda in places like the Horn of Africa.

First, AFRICOM will bring to the table a focus on African issues in advising the President, the Secretary of Defense, and advising members of Congress. That is not distracted by responsibilities for other areas of the world. The AFRICOM Commander will not have to balance in his own mind how important his African concerns are with his European concerns or with his Middle Eastern concerns. That's the significant—that's significant progress that I think very important.

Second, as AFRICOM has been presented by the Department of Defense, it seeks, I think sincerely, a much more collaborative role

with nonmilitary and non-OSD players in this arena. And my hope is that AFRICOM, as it emerges, will include a robust component from agencies like the Department of State, like USAID, like Department of Justice, that will be able to coordinate one of the second major shortfalls that I see, and that is a lack of resolution on exactly how the U.S. military can best support these other agencies in carrying out those duties.

And we listened to that earlier today when we heard the difficulties the Department of State and USAID are having in accessing the Ogaden and finding out exactly what's going on there.

The U.S. military can do for those other agencies exactly what I suggest it can do for law enforcement. It can provide access, it can carve out a secure space, it can provide support for those agencies to fulfill their functions in very, very difficult, violent, and austere conditions.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you. Well, you've articulated both the reasons why I've supported the general idea of AFRICOM, and the need to have concentrated focus on Africa, but also you've alluded to some of the real concerns I have about the new command.

I have a chance in the last couple of weeks to speak directly to both the President of the United States and the Secretary of State about this issue. And I know that the President heard concerns when he was in Africa about this. This is an opportunity to get something right, but it is very complicated and requires a long-term view.

I want to thank again this panel and I also want to thank everyone in the audience and everyone who would be reviewing the record of this. I hope that this hearing demonstrates, again, how seriously this committee takes this part of the world and how seriously we intend to follow the events there and give it the attention it deserves.

I thank you and this adjourns the hearing.

[Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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