

**REMARKS BY  
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ADMIRAL MICHAEL MULLEN: Secretary and Mrs. Shultz, General and Mrs. Mrs. Myatt, it is indeed a great honor for Deborah and I to join you and so many this evening for this very special series. And speaking of my mother, believe me, she would not have anticipated – or maybe my father – my mother would have anticipated that I might be here – but my father would have certainly not anticipated that Secretary of State – former Secretary of State – George Shultz would have introduced me. It really is a great privilege to be here.

I actually have chapters in my life here that I didn't expect, or didn't really think about, because I have family here – my cousin Bill and the Hafner family – I've got actually a grade-school, little-league baseball player friend of mine from Southern California, Dave Kelly Smith and his wife Dana. And I think somewhere out there is a Marine named Kalaishin who I went to the Naval Academy with and served with and a dear friend as well. And it reminds me of how special it is to come back to my home state and to be both in Los Angeles and, as well as, here – for the last few days – here in San Francisco.

But of all the chapters that I have, it is indeed this one that I'm living now, and those that I served with – some of whom are here this evening – who serve and represent the current and the future of armed forces and represent the 2.2 million men and women who serve around the world, active and reserve, and do so in an exceptional way in the best military that I have ever seen. And we should keep in mind that many of them serve in harm's way this evening, around the world, and keep them and their families – without whom they could not serve as well as they are – in our thoughts and prayers for it is their service that makes all this possible.

I thought I'd concentrate on three areas this evening, for the time that I've got allotted to speak and then certainly open it up for questions. First of all, I will be in the job about a year – I took over last October – so the priorities when I came in I had included first of all focusing on the Middle East, and focusing on a sound military

strategy for the Middle East and I call it, sort of from Beirut to Tehran and certainly extend that into Afghanistan and Pakistan. Because that part of the world is the most unstable part of the world. It's the part of the world that continues to create great uncertainty and unpredictability. And it's a part of the world that we're all tied to, one way or another. And so in the time that I've been here, I've worked hard to strategize how we should approach that.

And certainly it includes our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in great focus there, and I can tell you having been to Iraq as recently as last week – and been many times actually over the last year – that things in Iraq are much better. Security is much better, the economy is starting to move, the political reconciliation that many thought not possible as recently as 15 to 18 months ago has taken significant steps forward, although there is still a long way to go. We talk about it in terms of still being fragile, still reversible, but there is a durability about it now that just wasn't there a few months ago.

And that is good news, it's good news for the Iraqi people and it's good news for the American military and our coalition partners who've shed so much blood and sacrificed so much to make this possible. And not many of us thought, as recently as two summers ago, that there was much hope. And it's tied to a combination of things: the surge, the awakening in Anbar, actually the progress that has been made by the political leaders in Iraq, and we have gotten to a point where al Qaeda is very much on the run, not down and out, still very dangerous and still very much in the game in terms of possibly creating spectacular events.

And in fact one of the results of al Qaeda being so much on the run there is they're starting to migrate over towards the safe haven in Pakistan and I'll talk about that in a minute. So lots of progress in Iraq that has allowed us to – allowed me to recommend to the president – and he accepted that recommendation and made a decision a couple of weeks ago to start to reduce the number of forces in Iraq, and that I think – and do that at a time where I think we're at minimal risk in taking those steps.

And at the same time, that will allow us to send additional forces to Afghanistan. And Afghanistan is a growing concern, and the violence is up. There is a more intense insurgency, more sophisticated than it was a year ago and the year before that, and it is empowered by the safe haven in Pakistan where they're free to train, free to live, taken care of by the tribes that are there and that's why there is so much focus on the FATA in Pakistan and so much, a lot of my personal time, has been spent engaging the military leadership there to see if we can bring more and more pressure on that border.

There are three threats that lie – three different ways to describe the threat – that lie within that FATA. One is al Qaeda. We know the leadership is there and we know they are planning against the West and particularly they are planning against the homeland here. Those plans continue. There is an al Qaeda-Taliban syndication which is ongoing, which trains insurgents to come across that border, and those insurgents are actually killing Americans and killing coalition troops. And there's an insurgency which is rising in Pakistan, as evidenced by the bomb that went off over the weekend and killed

over 50 people, and an awakening and an acceptance – a realization – that I see certainly in my recent visits to Pakistan, that they have a very significant problem internally.

So, the focus on Iraq and on the opportunity – and I hope in the near future we will continue to be able to draw down our troop levels in Iraq – and as the Iraqi security forces who've gotten better and better continue to stand up – and as the economy there continues to get better – and as political reconciliation continues. And yet there will be this continuing focus on Afghanistan.

We don't have enough troops there yet, even though six or seven-thousand that we will send there starting in November and early next year fall short of about the fifteen or sixteen-thousand that the commander on the ground there says they need. And Afghanistan is a country where we're going to be there for a while. If you take the Afghanistan economy – it's one of the poorest in the world – the ambassador there told me not too long ago that if you take that economy and put it in Africa, it falls out at the bottom of Africa. So the development challenge there, in the long run, is going to be significant.

Same kinds of issues in terms of the economy needs to get going, the government needs to be robust in providing services, the rule of law needs to be established, there needs to be a growth of Afghan security forces, both army – and actually that's happened – as well as the police, and that's really pretty slow right now. So, the Iraq piece, the Afghanistan and Pakistan piece – and I think in Pakistan, focusing clearly on the border and the FATA is important, but it's also important to focus on a comprehensive relationship with them. I've worked hard – many in our military have worked hard – on a military-military relationship. Part of that is tied to the fact that they were sanctioned by our country for 12 years. And that leaves a hole that it's going to take a long time to fill up. There's a trust issue there because many of them don't know us, because we haven't been there in a long time, and clearly there are internal challenges that are driven politically by the dramatically changing political landscape that is going on in Pakistan as well. But having a long-term relationship, a dependable relationship, a predictable relationship there with Pakistan as well as the other countries in that part of the world is important.

And I don't talk about Afghanistan and Pakistan without including India. And I think we need to make sure that we do include India in this discussion. India has shown great restraint – Maj. Gen. Myatt Singh and President Musharraf actually de-tentioned the relationship between the two countries quite a bit – and I would hope that in the future we could continue that as things continue to evolve.

But it's not all focused there, because I talked about from Beirut to Tehran, clearly focus on what's going on with respect to Iran – how does it move forward – and Iran continues to be a concern. Certainly they are a state in being, and at the same time they have a reach that is a network kind of reach, whether it's to Hezbollah in Lebanon or Hamas on the Gaza Strip, and they foment terror in that part of the world, and needless to say, I remained extremely concerned about Iran achieving the status of having nuclear

weapons. I think that will continue to destabilize that part of the world, and if past proves prologue, will undoubtedly generate other countries in the area who feel they will need to have nuclear weapons to balance that once Iran gets it.

So it continues to be – and there are many other issues associated with that part of the world – but focusing on the Middle East, being engaged there, continuing to head in the right direction in Iraq, focus on making sure we can succeed in Afghanistan – and that is a long-term prospect – there are 42 countries in Afghanistan.

Another part of Afghanistan, in addition to the Taliban resurgence and the safe haven, is the poppy crop – a particularly challenging problem. The fact of matter is that crop and its profits are directly feeding the insurgency, and in that regard, while not a military problem to take care of, certainly the effect on the military options there, given how it feeds the insurgents, is one we're going to have to figure out. It's a very difficult problem. Different countries look to handle it differently and I just think we need to, as a group, come to a consensus and a decision on what we're going to do and get it done. And the day we do away with that poppy crop, we need to be there with another crop so that farmer has got something to plant, something to grow, and something that will provide an income so that he can feed his family, or all we've done is create another insurgent.

So it's a very complex part of the world and it's going to take constant and continuous engagement by every level of government, and not just the military. The military in Iraq, our military in Iraq, our military in Afghanistan is necessary – the security piece of this is necessary – it is not sufficient, so those are two legs of that three-legged stool: the governmental piece, the economic piece are going to also have to be put in place to sustain what should be an acceptable future for the citizens of those countries. So I spend an awful lot of time not sleeping at night worrying about that part of the world, and we're living in a global world and all interconnected and instability there certainly impacts and creates instability elsewhere.

The second thing I've tried to focus on as chairman has been the health of our force. This is our sixth year at war. If you go back to 2001, or if you take me back to 2001 and said we're going to take our army and our Marine Corps and we're going to take the Marine Corps and we're going to deploy it for six years at seven months on-seven months off, and take our army and send them overseas for 12 to 15 months, bring them back for about that time and do that four or five times, and I have sat in the theater – most recently with 500 soldiers down at Fort Stewart, Georgia – and asked them how many deployments they've been on since 2002, and this is the 3d ID – the third infantry division – and the number of hands that stayed up after four deployments was upwards of 40 percent. We have asked a lot of them. They have – and particularly this division, because this division was there for the surge – they know they made a difference. They know they created possibilities that didn't exist, or certainly the probabilities weren't very high when they showed up, and after 15 months through that surge, they are proud of what they've done, they succeeded in what they did, and they have a skip in their step and they're unbelievably resilient.

And at the same time, their families have sacrificed a great deal, and as I go around and really – Deborah... Deborah has a way of sitting down with spouses and finding out a whole lot more and a whole lot more quickly – than I do when I sit down and talk to members of the military, about what's really going on. And the families are brittle. They are supportive, their support has never been better, but they are brittle. And so I spend a lot of time worrying about the health of our force in that regard. And I'm also a Vietnam baby, that's where I started. I was here in the '70s, when our military almost fell apart. I was here in the '70s, when the American people disconnected from our military, and it is something I am sensitive to and I am, and I would certainly look to you this evening. I have seen the American people just – whatever the politics of the war are, however you feel about it – I've seen the American people back up and stay tied to in support of our men and women in uniform, and I am exceptionally grateful for that, for of all the things that we need, we need that support. Without that, we can't carry out our mission, and with it, we can succeed in our mission. So I thank you for that.

So they're very resilient, we've pushed them hard. We're growing the Marine Corps, in fact this month we will deploy the first new battalion from that Marine Corps growth, but it will be two more years before – and we're growing the Army – before I can deploy additional forces from the growth of our Army because we're just not going to get there until about 2011. So we're, for this next two to three-year period, we're very much on edge with respect to that operational tempo. The need to succeed in the mission, and that clearly is at the top of the list, that operational tempo – that balance of building some time at home. President Bush made a decision not too long ago to reduce the 15-month deployment that the active duty Army had to 12 months. That was a terrific decision, and that will help, but we also must start building some time at home with the goal being when I go for a year, I come back for two. And right now – or when I go for seven months, in the case of the Marine Corps, I come back for 14 months – and we have to continue to keep the pressure on to do that.

The health of force is also tied to how we take care of our people, and two groups that I really do want to focus on. One are the families of the fallen, and I met – we were at the Veteran's Administration hospital in Palo Alto earlier today – and I met a gold-star mother, a mother who lost a son in this war. I want to make sure that what we see as we travel, and Deborah usually will meet with groups of spouses whose spouses have fallen in this war, and many of them want to stay connected. They typically will say that their – mostly husbands – their husbands died doing exactly what he wanted to do, and that is their, that is what they hang onto. And in many cases they want to stay attached to the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, in most cases obviously it's the Army and the Marine Corps. We need to make sure that we are reaching out to them because these are families who have sacrificed everything – done what our country asked and sacrificed everything.

Those who are wounded, and there are thousands who are wounded, and we need to reach out and make sure that we take care of them. And we have a system in our country, which doesn't necessarily facilitate that very easily. We've got a lot of focus on

this in the Department of Defense, and then if you're discharged from the military you then move over to the VA. And there's a lot of focus on the VA, and then when you move on from the VA, you move back to the community.

And our system is one that essentially has these three different sections, but the hand-offs aren't very smooth, we haven't done it well historically, and now we're generating a whole new set of veterans that will need to assistance of this country, whose dreams haven't changed. They still want to own a home. They still want to send their kids to school. They'd like an education themselves. They'd like, certainly an income stream if not two – most young families they require two. So their American dream is still out there. It's the path that they're on, or that they're now taking, that they're learning their way through, learning as they come back – and again these are individuals who've sacrificed so much, whose lives have changed forever – military members, yes, but also families – and as far as I'm concerned, they deserve to be taken care of for the rest of their lives.

So that's the vision. What's interesting when I talk about this with the Israeli defense force, the chief tells me that the last thing a commander does when they sign for, to take over a command and take the flag, they sign an accountability log. For every individual who has been injured or every individual who has fallen in that unit for the last 60 years, to make sure they take care of that individual if he or she is living, or that family. That's a little different than the system I just described to you, and they are inspected on that accountability as commanders in that unit, so – and I'm not arguing we should do that in the United States this way, but the effect, the outcome should be the same.

So as I go through communities throughout the land, one of the areas that I am asking for your help in, is in communities, is to reach out to these young men and women who sacrificed so much, who live here and who want to be employed, who want to go to school – and again, who sacrificed so much – so that the three entities – the Department of Defense, the Veterans Administration, and the communities throughout America – and I really believe it's the communities throughout America – are the ones who can really reach in and take care of these young people. So I would ask you to certainly consider that, in this area as well.

So lots of things to focus on with respect to the health of the force: how we retain people – our retention quite frankly, is exceptional right now and it is highest in the United States Army in those units that are in the middle of this fight. And that is indicative of the young people we have out there who are serving right now. Our recruiting is also – we're meeting our numbers – but it is a month-to-month challenge. At a time when I believe many young people are looking for ways to serve, and yet the propensity to serve and the guidance they get from their parents, teachers, coaches, those who are their influencers often times does not steer them toward the military because of the unpopular wars that we are in.

And while I speak of service, I also think it is such an important part of us as a nation, at every age, to be able to figure out in these very challenging times, in this world – and I talked about the Middle East – it's a dangerous, unpredictable world, and service – volunteering from a neighborhood to anywhere in our country to many places around the world – there are great needs to be taken care of. And I'm particularly – just take an opportunity as a leading baby boomer – and I won't say exactly how old I am – but as someone of that age, many of my peers are retiring or beginning to retire, who benefited greatly from our nation, and we need that talent, we need that dedication, we need that capability and certainly in lives that are long-lived, how can we still serve even though we aren't – we may not be – actively employed, and I certainly encourage that as well.

So the health of our force and all the things that we do, both now and in the future, is tied to our people. And they are the best – as I indicated – the best I've ever seen, without whom we could not be the military, and I believe, could not be the nation that we are.

And then lastly, I've tried to keep an eye on the rest of the world. Clearly, with roughly 80 percent of our military forces committed to the Middle East, with a Central Command AOR obviously in Iraq and Afghanistan, but it is actually more expansive than that in that part of the world. That creates risk in other parts of the world, and it's a big world. And we are very much intertwined, and at the highest level, I honestly believe that the economic engines of the world are reorienting how the world will be in the future. And the economic engine that China is, that India is, the economic engine that Brazil is, that we are, that exists in Europe, are doing that. And those engines drive – and one of the things that I see around the world from parents no matter where I am is parents want to raise their children to a higher standard of living and in peace. And those economic engines – in order for those engines to drive, that stability needs to be there.

So engaging and having relationships and being preventative, ahead of time, are all part of what the United States military – but I would argue other parts of our government as well and actually many non-governmental organizations – need to do as America looks to its future. And so we build – (inaudible) – in certain areas where we're just not there. We just stood up a new command in the military in Africa. There are those in Africa that are very concerned about that, because we're the military, and I understand that. But in fact, what it really recognizes is the importance of Africa, the challenges of Africa, the need to have relationships with the countries of Africa and a continent that has a wealth of resources and significant challenges with respect to disease and famine and government that are there, that certainly, I think, the United States and many other countries are going to have to engage at some point in time.

Clearly, engaging north and south of where we stand – I was raised at a time where for the most part I was trained to look east and west, and not look north and south – but you look at the economic ties that we have north and south of us, and I think we need to spend a significant amount of time engaging there as well. And in other places where we haven't historically, certainly on the military side, be it countries like Malaysia and Indonesia and Central Asia. We also live at a time where events seem to be

occurring at a more frequent pace. I don't think four weeks ago, I would have sat here and told you that in a few days, that Russia was going to move into Georgia. And there seemingly are events like this which occur all the time and that event in and of itself certainly is a reminder of – one, my view, of a relationship that is certainly evolving – two, the uncertainty that is associated with that.

And at the same time, my belief is that we have to continue to have that relationship with Russia, for the good of the world – good of America – as well as the good of the world, and then working that from a military-to-military standpoint. So there's risk around the world. And then I'm sitting right on the edge of the Pacific Rim, 60 percent of the people in the world live on or around the Pacific, more are migrating to its shores. And it is an economic engine and stability in this part of the world is as important as it is anywhere else.

Lastly – so I talked about the three big areas of focus for me – and then lastly that's underpinned by the fact, as I suspect you know, that we're about to elect a new president. It is a time of transition for the United States of America, and if you took a chart and you looked back to four months before any president was sworn in, to about a year afterwards and you go back to 1961. You look at the number of events – major events – that have occurred over that period of time, it is a – in that time of transition – it is also a time of being tested, for whatever reason, and then you update that with the world we're living in right now. The scale and the enormity and the potential as well as just the number of challenges that we have, I am focused on that extremely well in terms of looking at what might happen, how we might prevent it, and how I might provide the best military advice to a new president when he takes over on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January.

And recognize that in this time of transition is a time of vulnerability for us, and we need to stay focused. And I'm not the only one doing this, I think – I know – there are many in our government which are doing exactly that in this time of great challenge and, I think, great uncertainty. So, with that in mind, thank you again for – with those things in mind – thank you again for coming this evening, thanks for your support for our men and women in uniform. It's great to be back in California and it's really great to be back in San Francisco. Thank you.

Maj. Gen Myatt. : Admiral, that was terrific and we have a great audience here, and I have this huge stack of questions, and I've attempted to sort them into some groups. I will tell you that there's questions along the same lines as your speech: there's questions on Afghanistan, on Iraq, on Pakistan, about the health of the active duty military today and so forth, but I will tell you that maybe we'll talk in the questions about the last part first. We have a number of veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan here in the audience, and if I could ask them to stand please – here in the front row there's several – some in the back.

There's also, I know at least one gold-star father here, Michael Anderson, his son, Michael Anderson Jr. we lost him a couple years ago, would you stand up, Michael Anderson? The question really – the first question – comes from these young veterans

who – on this front row – who just recently came from Iraq and Afghanistan and they asked for your advice on how they will integrate back into the families and communities, and you're familiar with some of the issues that we're having with our veterans with combat stress, etc.

ADM. MULLEN: Each time this issue comes up a great question, and we are learning – so we don't have all the answers yet – but the whole issue of reintegration with your families, with your – and there are various, there are lots of different groups – it is different for those on active duty. They come back and they come back to a unit, let's say Fort Bragg or Fort Stewart or Fort Bliss or wherever it is, or Pendleton, or Lejeune there are Army guard units that come back after almost a year over there. And they get off the plane and their down time is pretty short, because their employers who have been so good to us – but their employers who say, okay you've been gone a year but it's time to get come back to work, and there isn't a lot of time to come down.

And if you have been in – has anybody, and I have not, but I have talked to enough who have been – if you have been in the kind of combat that some of our men and women have been in, you need some time, you need a transition time, you need a reintegration time, and there are many competing requirements for your time, not the least of whom is yourself – you say can't wait to get home, let me get on with my life – but sometimes little realization of what you've really been through.

So the whole issue of reintegration – and Deborah and I for the last – we were with the Veterans Administration – we were down at the VA in Los Angeles – we were here today – and we visit with veterans, OEF and OIF veterans. When this war started in 2002 and I was a three-star running the Navy budget, and had no idea what job I would have in the future, certainly with no expectation that I'd be standing here this evening or be in this job for the last year, but I swore that I would do all I can to not generate another group of homeless veterans as we did in our country after the Vietnam War. (Applause.) And yet we are starting to do that, and while the overall number of homeless vets has gone down and I'm encouraged by that, it's still 150,000 in this country, according to what the VA tells me. One is too many, but we are starting to generate them from this war as well, and Deborah and I met with a number of them. And key to them getting to where they were is this whole issue of integration.

Particularly if you're leaving the military, I've been around long enough to know when you're ready to go, you're ready to go – you focus on that date and you want to move on. But individuals who've been in the kind of combat that will be with them their entire life, and they walk over that bridge and all of a sudden, they've moved from this culture of readiness, of regimen, of discipline, of being told what to do – across that bridge – standing there alone – no structure, no support, and in fact in many of their cases it goes straight downhill from there. How we as a country, and I'm talking about the Department of Defense, the Veterans Administration – again, how we reach out and make sure they're okay is a significant issue. It's also very clear that in post-traumatic stress, as well as traumatic brain injuries, time is a factor – the faster you can get to it, the less likely that it will be – that it will continue to grow in severity.

So making sure – and the scope of the challenge is fairly significant. We see, when we talk to families, and in particular Deborah in talking to spouses about what a – we hear what a challenge it is to bring a spouse home who's been in this environment. Huge challenges with in the relationship piece – spouse-to-spouse as well as to kids – and there's an awful lot of work that is ongoing. There is a lot of leadership and direction on this, but there also – there is a lot more that we can do. So we have to keep this issue front and center.

We also have to take steps to eliminate the stigma that's associated with – hey, I've got a problem. Now, again I haven't been through this but Mike Hagee is a dear friend of mine, a classmate of mine who fought in Vietnam – and I've got other peers who did that – and is a Marine. And as he said, there's nobody, including himself, that was in the kind of ground combat he was in, that doesn't suffer from stress. Everybody's got it, we just have to deal with it and we have to lead it. So, general officers and admirals, battalion commanders and sergeant majors have to be first to the door to say I need help. Others will follow.

MAJ. GEN. MYATT : Thank you, Admiral, that's terrific. I agree wholeheartedly with the whole issue of combat stress. Continuing on with the health of the force, those who are recently separated from the military in the last two to five years, their unemployment rate is 18 percent, which is three times that of the national average. Is there anything the military services can do to help that transition?

ADM. MULLEN: There clearly is, in fact we met with about 20 – a combination of 20 veterans, half of whom are OEF/OIF veterans today, about half of whom are still on active duty, and I believe we've got to do a better job getting them ready, providing information for what's out there, expectations in terms of what's going to happen, what are the opportunities for employment, and also being connected with employers who will reach out to those who've served and both train them and then employ them. I think that connection really continues to be an important one.

There is again this tendency if I know I'm leaving to sort of rush out, sign the forms. We have to be I think more deliberate about what's available. I'm taken back by the number of soldiers and Marines I've talked to just in the last few days that don't know they can use the VA, just because they've served, if they're honorably discharged, they have Veterans Administration – they have veterans benefits.

It's almost that – actually, one young soldier said today, I didn't think you could use the VA unless you are injured. Not so. And so we've got to do a better word connecting opportunities – better jobs, sorry – connecting opportunities to them in ways that we just haven't done so far.

And we should track that. And one of the things – it's back to sort of three different systems. We don't keep – we don't do a very good job keeping track of people once they're discharged from the military. So the suicide rate in the Army right now has

gone up dramatically. And most of those suicides are occurring after six to 12 to 18 to 24 months. We only keep track of individuals who leave for 120 days. That's not acceptable. We need to change that policy and, again, follow up, stay in touch, make sure that they're doing well in ways that we just haven't thought about doing before.

MAJ. GEN. MYATT : Thank you, sir. We'll now shift to the regions and the questions we have on Afghanistan. And I have a number of these that deal with – and you used the term “success.” How do we define success in Afghanistan?

ADM. MULLEN: That's one of the reasons I don't like to use that term. I actually – I think that an end state, a successful end state in Afghanistan, is a government that can provide for its people a level of military and a security force, certainly a police force, that can provide for the security and an economy which is certainly supportive of a nation which can grow. And of those things – and clearly the security challenges are growing – but I think they can be addressed.

There's a growing insurgency, particularly in the East and the South, and, in fact, when we are in combat with the insurgents, the insurgents don't do very well. That's tied more to, right now, not having enough forces there as opposed to whether we can handle the combat. But if you have – that's only a piece of it. It is the economic piece that is so important here. And because it's such a poor country and so underdeveloped, that's going to take a commitment of a lot of nations for an extended period of time to be able to establish and grow the economy in a way that it would be supportive of those who live there.

It's a country that's never had a strong central government. I think part of this is also making sure that we get – we have the tribal – we recognize the tribal culture that is there and the tribal leaders that are there in that country and enable them, in a secure environment, to lead. So providing – and it's a country whose economy is 80 to 85 percent agriculturally based, so those who know something about agriculture – and that's not many of us in the military – going there to help is a big part of that. We're going to grow the Afghan security force, the Afghan army. We just dramatically increased the size of it.

But its annual cost fairly significantly exceeds the defense budget for the country of Afghanistan. So other countries coming in and participating in ways they may not want their military to go out and fight, but they could write a check to help pay for that growth, as an example. So I think it's going to take lots of focus with respect to development and in getting to a point where the insurgency is basically gone, clearly the border is under control, the poppy crop is displaced, the government is functioning, providing for its people, and there's a rule of law and that they can take care of themselves, provide the services that a country like that needs.

When we get to that kind of state, that's where I would start to say, you know, start to use the word “success.” And I think it's doable; I just think it's going to take some time.

MAJ. GEN. MYATT : Sir, we now shift to Pakistan. And there's a number of questions that deal with cross-border operations into Pakistan sometimes coordinated with and sometimes not coordinated with the Pakistani government. Can you elaborate on when we will do those kinds of operations and the risks involved?

ADM. MULLEN: No. I would only say, that border, which is one of the reasons I've been to Pakistan a number of times, I have great faith in the chief of staff of the Army in Pakistan; he's a senior military guy, and if you know anything about the history of that country, a very significant individual. I have come to know him, have great respect for him, think he's the right individual in the right job at the right time.

He understands his country and he understands it exceptionally well. And so having this relationship and being able to support him as he requests, I think, is very important. And the whole idea at this point in time is to be able to have operations in Afghanistan and have him operate in Pakistan in a way that puts pressure on that border, that doesn't allow the insurgents to operate freely. I don't expect that to get fixed overnight. It's going to take some time.

MAJ. GEN. MYATT : We're not going to be able to get all of these questions and, I've got to tell you, I think that your answers on Afghanistan and Pakistan really literally covered most of the questions. So I'll switch to one that deals with your view of the greatest threat to our country in the next 25 years. Is it China? Is it Russia? Or is it Islamic extremists or other extremist organizations?

ADM. MULLEN: The way I look at it right now, I think the extremism, the Islamic extremism, certainly, is at the top of my list. And what I worry about most is that that threat obtains nuclear weapons or is able to proliferate nuclear weapons. And I think that that is certainly the highest in terms of probability of something that might occur. So that nexus of nuclear weapons and Islamic extremism, extremism and terrorism, is at the top of my list.

You mentioned Russia and you mentioned China. I talked briefly about Russia. I think it's important. While certainly what's happened recently puts in question exactly how to proceed with Russia, I don't think the answer is let's cut all relations off and move ahead. We have – because I don't think we will move ahead – we have common interests with Russia, including dealing with Iran, dealing with nuclear weapons with Iran, dealing with terrorism, dealing with counter-proliferation. There are common interests there that we have been working with them on, and I think there is wisdom in continuing that work.

We initially, as we typically do – we reacted very strongly on the mil-to-mil engagement. So we stopped some immediate engagements. But I think we need to look at our future engagements. And quite frankly, they are – at least they were planned to be pretty robust with Russia. And we need to look at each one and how it affects where we

would like to go specifically. At the same time, Georgia is an ally, a future member of NATO that also we want to continue to have a relationship with.

I spent last Saturday in Sofia meeting with all my counterparts in NATO. And at the top of the list, we spent basically an entire day only on two topics, one of which was Afghanistan, the second one of which was Russia. And those who live closest – my friends in the Baltics or my friends in Poland and Hungary and Czechoslovakia – those who have been closest to this certainly in their lives are very concerned about what happened and what does it mean for NATO. And NATO is very – I think it's very important for NATO to stay together on this. So I think it's important to continue to develop a relationship with Russia in these very uncertain times.

And China, I don't consider an enemy; I don't consider a threat. Certainly, they're investing in their defense. They're doing – they're developing some high-end technology that is very focused on the United States. I shouldn't say I don't consider them a threat. They have some threatening capabilities. But I don't consider them an enemy and I don't see us getting into a conflict with them. That said, their concern for their buildup in defense and some of the systems that they're building – it does routinely make me wonder what their strategic intent is. And that's a question that all of us – I continue to ask.

They're a huge economic engine. They have some huge internal challenges with the one billion or so who haven't benefited from the economic changes in China. And certainly, there is, I think, long term for the world is having a positive relationship with China would be a great outcome, should we be able to get there.

MAJ. GEN. MYATT : Sir, we're reaching that point where this is the last question. This question really deals with your role as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. You are, by law, the principal military advisor to the president of the United States. How does a service chief register his view if he disagrees with your military view?

ADM. MULLEN: Having been a service chief for two years, I'm very familiar with how that gets done. And by law, it is a requirement of the chairman, I mean, to take that view and make sure that it is provided to the secretary of defense or the president, principally National Security Council, Homeland Security Council. I have worked hard from the 1<sup>st</sup> of October with the Joint Chiefs, the service chiefs – again, because I sat at that table in another chair for two years – to ensure that the service chiefs and the wisdom of the six of us is on the table.

We always don't agree. And President Bush and Secretary Gates are both very good about meeting with all of us, not just me. They're very frank and open discussions. So I'm very comfortable that if anybody has a disagreement, they have an opportunity to address it to both the secretary and the president.

While they don't see him as often as I do, and particularly on the toughest issues of the day, if I have somebody that disagrees with me, I either relay that myself – and I would only do that if they're comfortable with me doing that – or provide an opportunity for them to voice that concern directly and personally.

MAJ. GEN. MYATT : Thank you, sir. Secretary Shultz?

GEORGE P. SHULTZ: Well, I thank you, Admiral Mullen for a wonderful talk and really terrific answers to our questions. It's inspiring to hear you talk. And so, I especially want to thank you for the job you're doing for us, your service to our country. So thank you very much.