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MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

FROM: General Wayne Downing, US Army (Retired) *9/11/05*

SUBJECT: Special Operations Forces Assessment

Provided below is my assessment of U.S. Special Operations Forces. I was assisted in this assessment by Major General Bill Garrison, US Army (Retired) and Mike Vickers of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. I was asked to:

- Conduct an assessment and report back on the state of SOF mission capabilities and overall GWOT preparedness; and
- Provide recommendations on adjustments needed to DoD systems and future SOF capabilities and capacities to anticipate, prepare for, and defeat the myriad unconventional, asymmetric threats our global enemy may employ.

A summary of the statement of work pursuant to this assessment is included as Annex A. I was asked specifically to address ten elements. Answers to these are included as Annexes B through K.

In conducting this assessment, I consulted senior officials in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Department of State, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Counterterrorism Center, the Geographic and Functional Combatant Commands, United States Special Operations Command, and the Theater Special Operations Commands. I also consulted several United States Ambassadors in priority and high priority GWOT countries and other current and former senior US Government officials. A list of those consulted is included as Annex L.

SOF Mission Capabilities and GWOT Preparedness

There have been impressive gains in SOF capability since September 11, 2001. Prior to the September 11 attacks, many SOF units were experiencing manning shortfalls in their existing force structures.

SOF was structured for and conducted short duration deployments and combat operations. SOCOM concentrated almost exclusively on its force provider role. Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) required substantial augmentation to command and control operations. Among

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the nine core SOF tasks, unconventional warfare (UW) had received reduced emphasis in the period following the end of the Cold War, and capabilities in this area had atrophied. The Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) maintained superb counterterrorism and counterproliferation capabilities, but operated from a reactive rather than a proactive posture, and was not structured for the complex, extended-duration operations they currently conduct. Although it had superb, direct assault, "finish" capabilities to find and respond to WMD threats, JSOC lacked the "find" and "fix" and intelligence fusion capabilities essential to the GWOT. More broadly, SOF intelligence capabilities, particularly in human intelligence, were very limited.

Since 9/11, additional resources and authorities have been provided to SOF, and substantial improvements in SOF capability have been made in each of these areas. Today's SOF operators are conducting more operations in a week, at a higher rate of complexity, than their pre 9/11 predecessors conducted in a career. The baseline budget provided to SOF has increased 81 percent, from \$3.7B in FY 2001 to \$6.7B in FY 2006. SOCOM also received \$5.5B in supplemental appropriations between FY 2002 and FY 2006. The Army Special Forces School has increased throughput from 282 new active duty enlisted Special Forces troops in 2001 to 617 new SF troops in 2005 -- the equivalent of an additional SF Battalion a year -- with a further goal of 750 students per year. SF ODAs and Companies are now manned at full strength. Unconventional warfare capabilities have improved dramatically as a result of Operation Enduring Freedom, and renewed emphasis is being placed on developing UW skills. JSOC has increased capacity, and has begun its transformation toward a blacker/low visibility force and preemptive posture, with improved find and fix capabilities for sustained operations.

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To operationalize its new warfighting role under UCP 2004, SOCOM created the Center for Special Operations (CSO), which combines the functions of intelligence, operations and planning into a single directorate to eliminate stove pipes and capitalize on the natural synergy of efforts created when these functions are colocated under a single commander. This synergy ultimately will allow the synchronization and prosecution of the Global War on Terror in a timely and coordinated manner. TSOC

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manning has been increased by a factor of more than two in Major Force Program-11, and by a factor of five across all MFPs.

Recommendations on Needed Adjustments

Despite the substantial progress that has been made since 9/11, much remains to be done. Five major recommendations follow from my assessment:

- Posture SOF for the future indirect and clandestine GWOT fight in countries with which we are not at war;
- Increase SOF capabilities and capacities for the GWOT in several areas, most importantly in SF and SMU capacity;
- Make JSOC a 3-Star command temporarily reporting to the SECDEF;
- Fix GWOT organization and processes within the Department and make reform across the USG a top priority; and
- Provide SOCOM with sufficient authorities, supported missions and Washington presence to realize the intent of UCP 2004.

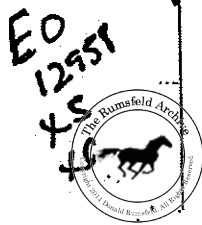
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SOF is well postured for the current GWOT main effort in Iraq and Afghanistan, but not for the future fight, which will take place in countries with which we are not at war. The major SOF effort in the GWOT has been on pursuit of high-value targets (HVTs) and on combat unconventional warfare and foreign internal defense (FID). SOF has

achieved remarkable success on the battlefield. With almost SOF located in Iraq and Afghanistan, there is little capacity left for operations in other priority countries. Looking to the future, we must increase capabilities and capacities to conduct sustained operations in multiple, sensitive, non-permissive and denied areas. The future GWOT fight will much more than the military. Broad cooperation across the Interagency, beginning in Washington and extending to field operations, will be required.

The future GWOT fight will be conducted principally using indirect and clandestine ways and means. It will require sustained UW, FID and operational preparation of the environment (OPE) in multiple countries. Building and leveraging partner capacity will be a core element of strategy, and the employment of surrogates will be a key method for accomplishing many GWOT missions.

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The Quadrennial Defense Review and PR 07 and POM 08 decisions appear to be headed in the right direction. It is imperative that SOF capacity be increased. We have essentially the same SOF ground force structure that we had prior to 9/11. To shift to a global persistent presence force, collect low-level intelligence and build partner capacity in multiple countries, there is a need to add two additional active SF Groups (6 SF Battalions) for UW/FID missions. To conduct persistent, distributed

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there is a need to increase SMU capacity by 33 percent (additional Sabre and Trident Squadrons). We should also create two additional Ranger Battalions for increased JSOC forward sustained operations and support to the TSOCs, and, most importantly, to provide additional "seed corn" for Army SMUs and SF.

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The GWOT reporting chain should be flattened and JSOC's role enhanced. JSOC should be elevated to a 3-star command (O-9), with two, 2-star (O-8) and two, 1-star (O-7) deputy commanders. This would provide the ability to field 5 task tailored JSOTFs commanded by a flag officer for world wide deployment as supported or supporting command. White and Black SOF in the field could be assigned to these JSOTFs when the mission and geographic areas dictate. The "wall" between White and Black SOF must be lowered, and joint field command of all units should be the norm, not the exception. When performing irregular warfare tasks, conventional units should be placed under the JSOTFs or TSOCs. The best practices of current SOF combat operations, such as JIATFs, Computer Network Operations Task Force, Detainee Temporary Screening Facilities and the Joint Reconnaissance Task Force, need to be institutionalized.

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To flatten the chain of command, JSOC should report directly to the SD for the immediate future. There is precedent for this new approach to the combat employment of SOF that will better position DoD for the future fight. JSOC reported directly to the CJCS prior to Goldwater-Nichols legislation and the Nunn-Cohen Amendment. Placing JSOC directly under the SD would improve responsiveness and allow SOCOM and DoD time to adjust to UCP 2004 changes. In addition to its new warfighting responsibilities, SOCOM has a full-time task in manning, training and equipping the force, which is absolutely essential to the current and future viability of SOF. JSOC would continue to



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operate supporting or supported to the GCCs, as mission needs dictate. In recognition of SOF's expanded role, the TSOCs should be upgraded to 2-star commands. SOF flag officers, as available, should also be placed in other key GCC and JTF positions to leverage their irregular warfare expertise.

Current GWOT staffing processes within DoD are cumbersome, producing lowest common denominator recommendations which are timid, unimaginative and out-of-date. Bold, creative, timely proposals rarely percolate to SD attention. JSOC is the exception, but even their actions take too long to get approved. Decisions must be made 24/7, not on peacetime battle rhythms. When actions finally leave DoD, initiatives move at glacial speed. Operations outside of Iraq and Afghanistan are complicated by Title 10 vs. Title 50 authorities, and inability to flexibly detail personnel.

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The interagency planning process and structure for the GWOT must also be addressed. This is a war-stopper. The USG must plan long term, and act beyond Iraq and Afghanistan. The National Security Council appropriately does strategy. The new National Counterterrorism Center has unique authorities and capabilities. Its Strategic Operational Planning Directorate (SOP) has the charter to conduct operational planning for the GWOT and to report to the President/NSC. This should be leveraged to advance operational planning of the war. To facilitate interagency planning and execution, COMJSOC should be moved to the DC area. JSOC planners, supported by the CSO, should be located in the NCTC's SOP Directorate.

What is still missing, however, is national level tasking and synchronizing agency for all interagency efforts including, but not limited to, military action. A National Interagency Task Force (NIATF), perhaps headed by a military flag officer with

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SOCOM's role under UCP 2004 to plan, synchronize, and, as directed, execute the GWOT is counter-culture, and places it in direct conflict with the Joint Staff, GCCs and Interagency taskings and traditions. Under current authorities and institutional resistance, SOCOM cannot accomplish its assigned task. It needs to be given the appropriate power and Washington presence to execute this role. The current confusion caused by multiple lines of GWOT guidance must be eliminated. Acceleration of SOCOM plans through the staffing process must be demanded. The SOCOM command element and LNOs must be moved to the Washington area to work the DoD/Interagency piece, including 2-star representation in the NCTC's SOP Directorate. SOCOM should have shared command



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links (COCOM or OPCON) to global SOF, to include the TSOCs and MLEs, and should be given a supported mission to execute within 60 days.

I am available for further questions or comments as you see fit. Thanks for the opportunity to serve.

The briefing upon which this memo expands is included as Annex M.

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