

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE
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1. [Panetta at NATO Cites Significant Progress in Afghanistan \(10-11-2012\)](#)

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — Defense Secretary Leon Panetta says the United States and coalition partners have made significant progress in improving security and handing over responsibilities to national security forces in Afghanistan.

Speaking at a NATO defense ministers conference October 10, Panetta said a surge of U.S. and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) forces has concluded and was successful in regaining control of ground under Taliban insurgent control in 2011 and preventing the Taliban from regaining any of those areas. In addition, the surge forces were successful in pushing the Taliban out of even more areas in 2012, he said.

“Compared to a year ago, more Afghans are secure, and the conflict has moved farther away from the population centers,” Panetta said during a briefing for journalists. In addition, Afghan security forces have now grown to approximately 350,000 men, recruitment and retention is remaining steady, and these new forces have taken on greater security responsibilities, including a willingness to take the fight to the insurgency, he said.

The defense ministers met at NATO headquarters in Brussels for updates on operations in Afghanistan and to discuss the way ahead in the phased transition to full Afghan security control by

the end of 2014. It was Panetta's fifth meeting with the defense ministers as secretary of defense and the first meeting for the ministers following the 2012 Chicago NATO Summit.

Panetta told journalists that with the surge complete, the United States and NATO-led security forces have reached a critical moment for the alliance in Afghanistan. He said that there are three keys to future success.

First, the coalition must maintain a strong partnership with the Afghan forces, Panetta said. "We must do everything we can to help Afghan security forces successfully transition and take the lead for security throughout all of Afghanistan as planned next year," he said.

That includes, he added, building the capabilities of the Afghan army and police by providing security force assistance teams with embedded trainers and mentors. Panetta said during a press briefing in Brussels that an additional 58 military training teams are needed, and that was discussed at length by the defense ministers in Brussels.

Second, Panetta said the U.S. and NATO-led security forces must provide an effective response to insider attacks — in which Afghans or insurgents masquerading as Afghan security personnel kill or attack allied forces. "Insider attacks are a tragic part of every war, and the enemy exploits them to undermine mutual trust and cohesion," Panetta told reporters. Marine General John Allen and Panetta briefed coalition leaders on steps being taken alongside Afghan military partners to diminish and defeat the threat posed by insider attacks.

"These steps include enhancing training, adapting our partnership based on real-time threat information, expansion of vetting and counterintelligence operations, and the use of guardian angels to deter and stop attackers," Panetta said. "Partnership even closer will frustrate the enemy's designs to capitalize on this problem."

Allen is slated to become the next commander of the U.S. European Command and also NATO supreme allied commander. He will succeed Navy Admiral James Stavridis. Marine General Joseph Dunford is expected to succeed Allen as commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan and also commander of ISAF.

Finally, Panetta said that the U.S. and allied forces working with Afghan forces must carefully conduct the campaign plan.

"As we look to the mid-2013 milestone, and to the end of the transition in December of 2014, we anticipate that we will operate from fewer bases, that the net flow of materiel will turn outbound from Afghanistan, that U.S. enabler support for ISAF partners will continue, but the scope of support will change as the transition proceeds and as we jointly reduce our forces, and that as Afghan forces assume full responsibility, ISAF forces will continue stepping back," Panetta said.

Panetta said that while NATO has not determined the size and composition of the force that will remain in Afghanistan after 2014, "NATO's presence should be steadfast and effective."

Regardless of what tactics the insurgents may throw at U.S. and allied forces, they will not allow that to divert forces from their mission or divide them from Afghan partners, he added.

NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen told reporters that the transition of security responsibility to the Afghan forces is progressing according to the timeline established by NATO in agreement with the Afghan government.

“We’re on track to complete it by the end of 2014 when our combat mission will come to an end,” Rasmussen said. “We must ensure we keep up the momentum of transition and continue to build professional and strong Afghan security forces capable of securing their own country.”

Rasmussen told the assembled defense ministers from NATO nations and allied nations, representing a total of 50 countries, that there will not be any acceleration of the drawdown in forces ahead of the timeline.

[Panetta's Press Conference at NATO Headquarters](#) (10-10-2012)

[Panetta at Defense Ministers' Meeting on Afghanistan](#) (10-10-2012)

2. State's Gottemoeller at U.N. Debate on Nuclear Disarmament (10-10-2012)

Statement by Rose E. Gottemoeller, Acting Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security, at the 67th UNGA First Committee General Debate, New York

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the United States, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Desra Percaya, for your election to Chair of the First Committee during its 67th session and we look forward to working with you. Thank you in advance for your fine leadership. Mr. Chairman, the United States pledges its full support to you in overseeing a productive 67th session of the United Nations General Assembly First Committee.

I am pleased to come before the UNGA First Committee, for the third time in as many years, to provide the views of my government on important issues before the First Committee. Though the road to a stable and secure world without nuclear weapons will be long and difficult, the United States has made great progress in pursuit of the vision set out by President Obama three years ago in Prague. We know that it is in everyone’s interest to extend forever the more than 65-year record of non-use of nuclear weapons.

One of the foundational cores in this pursuit is the global nuclear nonproliferation regime and the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) that underpins it. The NPT must be upheld if we are to make progress toward nuclear disarmament. This requires that all states meet their obligations under the treaty, with particular focus on the comprehensive Action Plan adopted by consensus at the 2010 Review Conference.

Understanding our responsibility to be leaders in disarmament, the United States and the Russian Federation entered into the New START Treaty – the most comprehensive arms control agreement in almost 20 years.

The implementation of New START is going very well. Parties have exchanged more than 3,000 notifications on their respective strategic forces, and the on-site inspections that enable each side to confirm the validity of that data are now well underway.

Our experience so far demonstrates that New START’s verification regime works and sets an important precedent for future negotiations.

When President Obama signed New START in Prague in 2010, he stressed his intention to pursue further reductions in strategic, non-strategic and non-deployed nuclear weapons. We and the

Russian Federation are now engaged in a dialogue on strategic stability, laying the groundwork for future negotiations.

The United States is proud to be a part of a new effort – the “P5 Process.”

This high-priority, regularized dialogue among the five NPT nuclear weapon states is integral to progress on the 2010 NPT Action Plan.

The United States hosted the Washington P5 Conference this past June – the third in a series. These conferences are contributing to political dialogue and new forms of cooperation on nuclear weapons issues to an extent unseen in prior years, and this work, I will underscore, is among all P5 states.

Regarding other multilateral efforts, the United States is working consistently and actively in support of nuclear-weapon-free zones. We are pleased to report that the P5 and Mongolia reached agreement on parallel declarations regarding Mongolia’s nuclear-weapon-free status. We also look forward to signature of a P5 Protocol to the zone treaty in Southeast Asia and to advance dialogue with parties to the zone treaty in Central Asia.

On the nonproliferation front, the United States applauds the 17 states that have brought the IAEA Additional Protocol (AP) into force since the 2010 NPT Review Conference, bringing the total to 118 states. This Protocol has become the international standard for safeguards, and we encourage all countries to adopt it.

We are also working with the IAEA and its Member States to strengthen safeguards in other ways, including by ensuring the IAEA has the political support and resources needed to fulfill its essential mission.

International cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the third NPT pillar, continues to be vigorous. I am pleased to report that the IAEA’s Peaceful Uses Initiative now has 13 contributing states and the Board of Governors has approved measures to assure IAEA members of reliable access to fuel for peaceful nuclear power plants.

While the United States and other Parties make progress on each pillar of the NPT, we have grave concerns about the actions of a few countries. Iran, North Korea and Syria violated their NPT obligations, and have not taken the steps necessary to rectify those violations. These violations continue to threaten international security and undermine confidence in the nonproliferation regime. These cases, above all, stand in the way of our shared disarmament goals. The international community must therefore insist on a return to compliance, in keeping with the NPT Action Plan.

Beyond nuclear issues, the United States welcomes the success of the 7th BWC Review Conference, and the ambitious work plan it adopted. We are also pushing forward with our bio-transparency initiative that is aimed at building confidence in the BWC regime.

We are also commemorating the 15th year since the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The United States remains fully committed to the CWC and as all States Parties to the OPCW work towards a world free from the scourge of chemical weapons, we recognize that there remain real challenges before us.

We, along with partners in the international community, call on the Syrian government to eliminate its chemical weapons arsenal, cease all threats of their use and join the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Mr. Chairman, the United States is also hard at work on the creation, completion and implementation of several other international arms control and nonproliferation treaties and agreements.

The July UN Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty made significant progress towards realizing a strong and effective Treaty to regulate international trade in conventional arms. The United States is committed to improving the current draft text and supports convening a short, focused, consensus-based Conference in 2013 to continue our work. We look forward to cooperating with our partners to achieve a treaty text that can be adopted by consensus.

Ratification and entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remains a top priority for the United States. Despite the tough budget climate in Washington, the United States has provided over \$40 million in extra-budgetary contributions to the CTBTO, in addition to our annual assessment, demonstrating our confidence in and commitment to this important Treaty.

As the United States moves forward with its ratification process, we encourage all Annex 2 States to ratify this Treaty.

The United States is continuing its fight for the verifiable end to the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. A Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) is a logical and absolutely essential next step in the path towards global nuclear disarmament.

The CD remains our preferred venue for negotiating a FMCT, since it includes every major nuclear-capable state and operates by consensus, ensuring everyone's national security concerns are protected.

A year ago the United States initiated consultations among the P5 and others on unblocking FMCT negotiations in the CD, and to prepare our own countries for what we expect would be a challenging negotiation.

This "P5 Plus" has potential to move FMCT forward. That said, our patience on this issue is not infinite and we will push for what is in the best interest of global security. We will work hard to convince others that commencement of negotiations is not something to fear.

Mr. Chairman, the United States is and has always been committed to innovation, and arms control and nonproliferation are no exception.

To respond to the ever-changing security landscape, we are looking for creative ways to tackle long-standing verification and monitoring problems in an increasingly inter-dependent and interconnected world. This kind of thinking will be vital, as we face the challenges of the 21st century.

Mr. Chairman, the United States will continue to work to make its way on the road to a world without nuclear weapons. This is hard work. There are no shortcuts and no practical alternatives to a persistent step-by-step process. This is the only viable path toward disarmament. We call on all nations to take seriously their commitments to international arms control and nonproliferation regimes and work together to move forward down the road, as well.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to our continued deliberations.

3. Amb. Cousens at U.N. Debate on Global Development Challenges (10-10-2012)

U.S. Mission to the United Nations
Ambassador Elizabeth Cousens
U.S. Representative to ECOSOC
New York, NY
October 9, 2012

Remarks by U.S. Representative to ECOSOC Elizabeth Cousens, at the 67th UNGA 2nd Committee General Debate, October 8, 2012

Mr. Chair, thank you and congratulations to you and the Bureau on your election. We are grateful for your service and look forward to working with you and all colleagues on the Second Committee.

Mr. Chair, the landscape of development is changing dramatically. In recent years, we have made unprecedented global development gains. Hundreds of millions have been lifted out of poverty, thereby achieving the Millennium Development Goal target for reducing poverty. We have also reached MDG targets for expanding access to drinking water, improving the lives of many slum dwellers, and enrolling girls in primary education. That is gratifying, important, and hard won.

However, such gains have not been enjoyed everywhere or on every issue, and far too many of the world's people face desperate conditions and choices. Progress in reducing maternal mortality is falling short. Hunger and malnutrition remain a corrosive global challenge. Least Developed Countries have seen particularly limited improvement with low-income conflict-affected states, lagging especially far behind in achieving the MDGs. As President Sirleaf of Liberia reminded us just last week, close to one-sixth of the world's population lives in states affected by conflict or fragility, making this a paramount development challenge for the 21st century.

The global economic recovery also remains incomplete, with persistent high unemployment in much of the world. Concern over sovereign debt and its impact on global growth has dampened trade, while recent fluctuations in food and fuel prices add to economic uncertainty.

As the world's largest provider of development assistance, the United States will continue to prioritize strategies to mitigate such risks and promote sustained and inclusive development. Our Global Health and Feed the Future initiatives remain a cornerstone of our efforts to reduce poverty, and we will continue to seek "game-changing" technological innovations to tackle critical development challenges around the world.

Our work in the Second Committee this year must be placed in the context of a vigorous effort to accelerate achieving the Millennium Development Goals alongside our efforts to elaborate a post-2015 development agenda that can galvanize both member states and all development partners. Over the course of this session of the Committee, the United States will return to two cross-cutting themes: one, economic empowerment and two, critical enablers for sustained growth and development, chief among them democratic and accountable governance.

First, empowering all people to participate meaningfully in an inclusive economy is both our moral obligation and critical to overall economic growth and development. Women, girls, youth, the disadvantaged and the marginalized, need to be at the center – not the margins – of development efforts.

When we advance equality and opportunity for women and girls, we unlock the potential of half of the world's population. When we promote youth employment, we do more than change a person's life, we transform societies. When we bring the disadvantaged and the marginalized into our development planning, we give hope to millions who would otherwise be ignored and create opportunities for them to contribute to their communities and societies.

A growing body of evidence shows that empowering women, in particular, and reducing gender gaps in health, education, labor markets, and other areas is associated with lower poverty, higher economic growth, greater agricultural productivity, better nutrition and education of children, and a variety of other positive outcomes.

Job creation for youth is also imperative. We need to harness their energy, ideas, and talents, and give them the real and sustained economic opportunities that all our children deserve. We also cannot afford the long-term costs of youth unemployment or disenfranchisement, where lack of prospects and economic marginalization can fuel radicalism or crime.

Second, we want to work within this Committee and the wider UN system to see greater practical attention on advancing critical enabling conditions for development. This must include the essential foundations of the rule of law and effective policies and governing institutions that can deliver on the promise of development for all their citizens. Essential to that promise is a commitment to openness, transparency, and accountability in governance at a time that citizens around the world increasingly, and rightly, demand it.

Good governance gives confidence to everyone from the small-holder farmer to the light manufacturer to the global investor and importantly is essential in attracting the large flows of capital that are essential to sustained growth. Official development assistance makes up approximately 13 percent of capital flows to developing countries. ODA remains essential and must be sustained, particularly for those areas that cannot attract private capital. But what will drive significant growth and development is not ODA, it is investment, and related factors, including trade, and remittances. Achieving our shared goals will require that we do better to tap these wider sources of investment as well as expand innovative partnerships with the private sector and civil society.

We also must expand the development dialogue to engage emerging economies and tap their drive, creativity, and growing investment capacity.

Finally, we are of course mindful that we are having this discussion after Rio+20. Our view is that in the 21st century, we cannot afford for development not to be "sustainable," and this poses a challenge to us all to better align our economic, social, and environmental policies as well as to refine and better use our institutional and operational tools. We need to build on Rio+20 to craft a realistic, but ambitious post-2015 development agenda. We need the UN development system to be operationally more efficient and effective in carrying its development activities, and we need institutions focused on implementation and results.

Mr. Chair, we look forward to a dynamic and active session under your leadership and to working with you and all colleagues in this common endeavor.

Thank you.

4. Panetta Calls for More Security Cooperation in the Western Hemisphere (10-09-2012)

By Phillip Kurata
Staff Writer

Washington — Defense Secretary Leon Panetta has called for a “new era” of security cooperation among the nations of the Western Hemisphere to deal with the challenges of the 21st century.

“As one family, we confront many of the same threats that face our nations across borders and across oceans, from terrorism to drug trafficking, to nuclear proliferation, to humanitarian disasters. We cannot deal with these threats alone or in isolation; we can only deal with them if we work together,” Panetta said at the 10th Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas in Punta del Este, Uruguay, October 8.

Panetta said the United States will reinvigorate its defense partnerships and pursue new ones on the basis of mutual respect and mutual interest to achieve three objectives:

- Promote strong institutions of government. “It is essential that our nations have strong national institutions of government in order to address legitimate threats to the state and to our citizens,” Panetta said.
- Engage in shared action. “If we face shared threats, then we need shared action by more effectively and efficiently coordinating our defense forces,” Panetta said.
- Use multilateral forums. “If we are to have shared actions, we must have forums that can bring us together” to achieve consensus, Panetta said.

Panetta told his fellow defense ministers that the United States supports Chile’s initiative to accelerate and coordinate civilian-led efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

“As one family, we have a responsibility to work together to provide immediate, comprehensive and organized relief for our people,” Panetta said. “That’s what the Chilean initiative is all about — rapid and fully integrated response. We should implement that initiative now so that we’re ready to respond quickly and effectively when the next disaster strikes.”

With regard to peacekeeping, Panetta said countries in the Western Hemisphere have taken on an impressive leadership role by engaging, addressing and improving United Nations peacekeeping. He said since 2000, 13 countries from the Western Hemisphere have contributed to or led multinational security operations and U.N. peacekeeping missions around the world, most notably in Haiti.

With regard to defense and security, Panetta said it is sometimes difficult to tell whether transnational threats are issues to be handled by the military or the police. He said the United States will do what it can to bridge the capability gaps between armed forces and law enforcement in a manner that respects human rights, the rule of law and civilian authority. “Ultimately, civilian authorities must be able to shoulder this burden on their own,” Panetta said.

At the core of the U.S. defense policy toward the Western Hemisphere is the notion that “we are one family of nations — now and forever,” Panetta said.

[Panetta Sees Remarkable Transformation in Western Hemisphere](#) (10-10-2012)

[Panetta Hails New Era for Security in the Americas](#) (10-05-2012)

5. Turkish Response to Syrian Attack Appropriate, U.S. Says (10-04-2012)

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland says Turkey's response to a recent mortar attack on civilians from Syrian military forces was appropriate and proportional.

At a State Department briefing October 4, Nuland told journalists that “as was clear last night in the unanimous support that Turkey had from the North Atlantic Council, from our perspective, the response that Turkey made was appropriate.” The North Atlantic Council is the ruling body of NATO, of which Turkey is a member.

Nuland said the Turkish response was designed “to strengthen the deterrent effect that these kinds of things don’t happen again, and it was proportional.”

Syrian military forces fired mortar rounds into Turkey on October 3, killing at least five Turkish citizens. Later the same day, Turkey responded with artillery fire on targets in Syria.

Nuland said Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton told Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu by telephone that the United States extended its deepest condolences to the families of the Turkish victims killed and those injured by the mortar attack from Syria.

“The secretary also used that opportunity to condemn the Syrian attack and to pledge U.S. support for our ally Turkey,” Nuland told journalists.

Nuland also said the United States has no reason to challenge the Turkish military and the government’s assertions that the mortar attack was fired by the Syrian military. She noted that, since the attack, the Syrian regime has acknowledged the attack and apologized to Turkey.

“Our fervent hope and expectation is that there will not be further violations of Turkish sovereignty,” Nuland said.

NATO issued a statement in Brussels following an emergency session condemning the Syrian attack.

NATO officials said in the statement that “in view of the Syrian regime’s recent aggressive acts at NATO’s southeastern border, which are a flagrant breach of international law and a clear and present danger to the security of one of its allies, the North Atlantic Council met today [October 3], within the framework of Article 4 of the Washington Treaty, and discussed the continuous shelling of locations in Turkey adjacent to the Turkish-Syrian border by the Syrian regime forces.”

“The most recent shelling on 3 October 2012, which caused the death of five Turkish citizens and injured many, constitutes a cause of greatest concern for, and is strongly condemned by, all allies,” the statement says.

“In the spirit of indivisibility of security and solidarity deriving from the Washington Treaty, the alliance continues to stand by Turkey and demands the immediate cessation of such aggressive acts against an ally, and urges the Syrian regime to put an end to flagrant violations of international law,” it says.

U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Susan Rice told journalists in New York October 4 that the United States strongly condemned the shelling.

“Turkey is a core ally of the United States, and this sort of cross-border military activity is very destabilizing and must be stopped,” Rice said.

A spokesman for U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Ban “is alarmed by escalating tensions along the Syrian-Turkish border.”

Ban's spokesman, Martin Nesirky, told journalists October 4 at U.N. headquarters that “as the situation inside Syria deteriorates yet further ... the risks of regional conflict and the threat to international peace and security are also increasing.”

Turkey asked the U.N. Security Council to take the “necessary action” to stop Syrian aggression and ensure Turkish territorial integrity is respected.

Turkey's parliament gave authorization on October 4 for military operations outside Turkish borders, if the government deemed them necessary.

6. Clinton, Afghan FM Launch U.S.-Afghanistan Bilateral Commission (10-03-2012)

By MacKenzie C. Babb
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States and Afghanistan have successfully worked together for more than a decade to improve security, strengthen democracy, support civil society and enhance economic opportunity for the Afghan people, and the United States will continue support for Afghanistan as the country works toward lasting peace and stability, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says.

“The American people have invested a great deal in Afghanistan’s future,” Clinton said October 3. “Even though our role in Afghanistan is changing, this partnership will continue.”

The secretary spoke alongside Afghan Foreign Minister Zalmay Rassoul at the launch of the U.S.-Afghanistan Bilateral Commission at the State Department.

Clinton said the new commission “reflects a shared vision and a shared commitment to mutual responsibility and accountability.”

She said it will focus on areas critical to Afghanistan’s future, including security, human rights and democracy, institutions and governance, women’s rights, economic development and regional cooperation.

The commission will implement a strategic partnership agreement signed by President Obama and Afghan President Hamid Karzai in Kabul in May, a deal that outlines the next phase of bilateral relations as U.S. and international troops work to complete their withdrawal from Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

“The transition is on track,” Clinton said. “Every day, Afghans are increasingly capable and taking more responsibility for their nation’s security.”

The secretary praised Afghan's agenda of political reforms leading up to the country's 2014 election, and said Afghanistan also is working closely with the international community to transform its economy.

Rassoul said Afghanistan is committed to building on its recent successes to deliver results for its people.

“As we continue to advance human rights; enhance regional cooperation for peace and prosperity; develop our human and national resources; combat corruption; improve governance; build infrastructure, public health and education; and to fight terrorists and extremism, we will count on the continuing and substantial support of our biggest and most important ally, the United States,” the foreign minister said.

He said the Afghan government is committed to pursuing all priorities, with special attention to the continued promotion of the rights of Afghan women and girls and increasing their significant role in the social, political, economic and cultural life of Afghanistan.

Rassoul and Clinton both also spoke about the importance of negotiating a comprehensive bilateral security agreement, and said talks will be led by U.S. Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan James Warlick and Afghan Ambassador Eklil Hakimi.

Clinton said the launch of the bilateral commission brought together leaders and experts from across both the Afghan and American governments, reflecting the breadth and depth of the joint commitment to an enduring partnership.

[Clinton at Launch of U.S.-Afghanistan Bilateral Commission](#)
[U.S.-Afghanistan Joint Statement on Bilateral Commission](#)

7. State Dept. on Latest New START Treaty Numbers (10-03-2012)

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance

New START Treaty Aggregate Numbers of Strategic Offensive Arms
 (As of September 1, 2012, as drawn from the exchange of data by the Parties) [1]

Category of Data	United States of America	Russian Federation
Deployed ICBMs, Deployed SLBMs, and Deployed Heavy Bombers	806	491
Warheads on Deployed ICBMs, on Deployed SLBMs, and Nuclear Warheads Counted for Deployed Heavy Bombers	1722	1499
Deployed and Non-deployed Launchers of ICBMs, Deployed and Non-deployed Launchers of SLBMs, and Deployed and Non-deployed Heavy Bombers	1034	884

[1] Data in this Fact Sheet comes from the biannual exchange of data required by the Treaty. It contains data declared current as of September 1, 2012. Data will be updated each six month period after entry into force of the Treaty.