

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE
November 7 - 14, 2013

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1. U.S. Officials Cautiously Optimistic About Aid Progress in Philippines (11-13-2013)

By Cheryl Pellerin
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13, 2013 – After days of logistical challenges that kept thousands of Tacloban City's desperate storm survivors cut off from food, water and medical supplies, air and overland routes are starting to open, senior administration officials familiar with the relief effort said today.

Since it made landfall in the Philippines Nov. 7, Super Typhoon Haiyan has affected more than 1.7 million families and 8 million people across nine regions of the Southeast Asian archipelago, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

"In brief what we've done is to respond quite quickly in a very coordinated way, bringing people to the disaster zone to assess the extent of the damage so we know what's needed and coordinating with our Philippine colleagues," a senior administration official told reporters today, as part of a background briefing on recovery efforts arranged for the media.

Then supplies, equipment and assets would be brought in to help deal with casualties and losses and to try to get logistics going, the official added, "so the assistance that comes in from now on can be distributed effectively. It's a pretty major effort on the part of the U.S. government."

The U.S. Embassy in Manila has been active, the official said, in touch with Philippine officials and with other U.S. agencies involved in disaster relief.

President Barack Obama called President Benigno Aquino on Monday to express condolences and support, the official said, and Secretary of State John Kerry spoke with Philippines Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario earlier this week.

“We’ve been taking very much an organized, coordinated whole-of-government approach to try to respond as best we can to meet the humanitarian needs,” the official said.

In anticipation of the super storm and its landfall in the Philippines, the U.S. Agency for International Development deployed an advance disaster assistance response team to Manila, another senior administration official told reporters.

“We had that team on the ground in the affected zones within 24 hours of the storm hitting, and that was the first international governmental response team to reach the area,” he added.

That team has been assessing and determining priorities over the past few days, the official said, which has helped the U.S. government prioritize and structure the response.

USAID has worked hand in glove with the U.S. military to coordinate the response, this official added, by providing and funding the assistance and working closely with the military on coordinating delivery and prioritizing what goes where.

The U.S. government to date has provided an initial \$20 million in humanitarian assistance, half through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. The aid is being used for emergency shelter, water purification and hygiene to prevent water-borne and other diseases. The rest is spent on food aid in partnership with the World Food Program.

“I would say we are cautiously optimistic that we are starting to turn a corner on some of the logistics challenges,” the official said.

“In the last 24 hours we have seen some improvements in the coordination at the airport ... but also very critically, an overland route to Tacloban City has now been opened,” he said, describing the original conditions as being like trying to squeeze an orange through a straw, and now having more and bigger straws.

“Through some of the military assets we are able now to get aid into some of the coastal villages that were destroyed,” the official added.

In the past 24 hours USAID and its U.S. Pacific Command counterparts have been delivering emergency shelter, hygiene and water-purification supplies to villages in some affected coastal areas. The aid is starting to push and that will accelerate in the coming days, he said.

Another administration official told reporters the Department of Defense is doing all it can to urgently provide support in close coordination with the U.S. Embassy in Manila, USAID, and international partners to the government of the Philippines and their lead in the relief operations.

“Right now our 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade Headquarters, with over 307 soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, are on deck in the Philippines and have begun initial relief operations as of Nov. 10,” he said, adding that over 1,000 Marines could be deployed to the affected area by the end of the week.

U.S. forces are supporting the armed forces of the Philippines and moving them into the area so they can help alleviate security concerns in Tacloban and the surrounding area.

“Our assessment of the security situation on the ground from the DOD side is predominantly that the threat would be armed looters and second would be vector-borne diseases,” one U.S. official said.

“At this time there are medical supplies that are being routed inbound. We have contingencies to take care of our forces and cover for the convoys as well, so the security situation is felt to be well in hand at this point,” he added.

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2. Kerry's Interview on Iran with NBC News (11-10-2013)

*Secretary Kerry's Interview on Iran with NBC's David Gregory
U.S. Department of State, Geneva, Switzerland*

QUESTION: Secretary Kerry, welcome back to Meet the Press.

SECRETARY KERRY: Thank you. Good to be with you, David.

QUESTION: The bottom-line goal here is to prevent Iran from producing or acquiring a nuclear bomb. You have said that in the interim, you want a complete halt on their weapons program. Clearly, there's not a deal yet; they are not in a position to give in to that demand. Is that a fair statement?

SECRETARY KERRY: No. I think it's a question, David, of working out the modalities by which it will be done, by which it can be verified, the ways in which you have a set of guarantees that make absolutely certain that the goal of the President – to make certain that Iran never has a nuclear weapon – can be achieved.

The first effort is to try to achieve it, obviously, peacefully. And you try to use and exhaust diplomacy in order to do that, but the President has taken no option off the table in the matter.

QUESTION: But it sounds like something broke down here because there was such anticipation that you were very close to a deal. The reporting is that the French thought it wasn't tough enough on the Iranians. And you know the history – as the Israeli Prime Minister called Rouhani as a wolf in sheep's clothing – that this is what they do. They double play; they play for time; while they keep producing, they try to win the confidence of the West, and they can play games. Is that what there is fear around the table that they're doing now?

SECRETARY KERRY: Well, no, that is not the fear around the table. And I'd say a number of nations – not just the French, but ourselves and others – wanted to make sure that we had the tough

language necessary, the clarity in the language necessary, to be absolutely certain that we were doing the job and not granting more or doing something sloppily that could wind up with a mistake. This is serious business, and I think every country came there – this is the first time that the P5[1] had come together with this kind of a serious set of possible options in front of it, with a new Iranian government. Remember that the – that this has changed since the election. This is a new overture, and it has to be put to the test very, very carefully.

QUESTION: So – but here's my bottom-line question --

SECRETARY KERRY: So I think there was unity there, David, with respect to getting it right. And we always said – President Obama has been crystal clear – don't rush, we're not in a rush, we need to get the right deal, no deal is better than a bad deal. And we are certainly adhering to that concept.

QUESTION: Let me play you a comment that I think gets to the ultimate question of what does it mean to get it right. What is the bottom-line demand of the United States? The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been outspoken about this this week. He was on this program late last month and this is what he said about the prospect of a deal with Iran. I want you to listen and I'll get your reaction on the other side.

PRIME MINISTER NETANYAHU: I think the pressure has to be maintained on Iran, even increased on Iran, until it actually stops the nuclear program – that is, dismantles it. I think that any partial deal could end up in dissolving the sanctions. There are a lot of countries that are waiting for a signal – just waiting for a signal – to get rid of their sanctions regime.

QUESTION: So a couple of points there. You want them to stop their weapons program. Others, like the Israeli Prime Minister, are saying no, they've got to dismantle their infrastructure before they get the kind of economic relief that is part of this deal.

SECRETARY KERRY: Well, I'm not sure that the Prime Minister, who I have great respect for, knows exactly what the amount or the terms are going to be, because we haven't arrived at them all yet. That's what we're negotiating.

And it is not a partial deal. Let me make that crystal clear, as I have to the Prime Minister directly. It is a first step in an effort that will lock the program in where it is today – in fact, set it back – while one negotiates the full deal. And there will not be a relaxation of the pressure. There will – nobody has talked about getting rid of the current architecture of sanctions. The pressure will remain. There will be – hopefully, if this is arrived at – a means of absolutely guaranteeing that while the negotiation on the real endgame takes place, Iran's program is not going to continue, is not going to grow. It seems to me that Israel is far safer if you make certain that Iran cannot continue the program. Now, every day that we don't have it, they're continuing it.

So I think the American people and most people in the world want the President of the United States, with the awesome power that we have, to exhaust all the diplomatic remedies before we resort to the use of military force if we had to.

QUESTION: And nothing is off the table?

SECRETARY KERRY: That option is not off the table. Nothing is off the table, David.

QUESTION: But here's the question.

SECRETARY KERRY: But – yeah.

QUESTION: If the only reason they're coming to the table now is because they feel the economic pain of sanctions --

SECRETARY KERRY: Right.

QUESTION: -- it's not just the Israelis, it's the Saudis, it's Republicans in Congress who have said --

SECRETARY KERRY: Right.

QUESTION: -- if that's the only reason they're coming to the table, what's the rush? Why not increase that economic pressure so you get not just a halt, but actually get a dismantlement of the architecture, which is the goal the President seeks?

SECRETARY KERRY: Because the President believes, as I do, that the pressure exists today, which is why they're willing to negotiate. I mean, look, I was there and I voted for these sanctions. We voted for these sanctions in order to bring Iran to the negotiating table. Now that they're there, you have to act in some good faith in an effort to be able to move towards the goal you want to achieve. If, as their act of good faith, they freeze their program and allow us absolutely unprecedented access to inspection and to other things -- I'm not going to go into the list -- but if they do the things that we believe is necessary so that we can guarantee we know what is happening and we can move it back, while we negotiate the endgame, it seems to me you've got to do something that indicates your good faith.

Now, we're not -- the President has made it clear -- he will not reduce or change the overall core architecture of the oil sanctions, banking sanctions. Iran will still be under enormous pressure, precisely to complete the task. So I think there's a lot of hype and an awful lot of speculation about what is going on here when all that is happening is an effort through the sanctions Congress put in place to get negotiations, when those negotiations hopefully produce an actual result. That's what we want to have happen.

QUESTION: But as America's chief diplomat, are you being skeptical enough about a man who has been called a wolf in sheep's clothing, who wrote a book in which he talked about how they can continue work on their nuclear program while they gain confidence of the West -- basically played games with the West? Are you being skeptical enough?

SECRETARY KERRY: David, some of the most serious and capable, expert people in our government, who have spent a lifetime dealing both with Iran as well as with nuclear weapons and nuclear armament and proliferation, are engaged in our negotiation. We are not blind, and I don't think we're stupid. I think we have a pretty strong sense of how to measure whether or not we are acting in the interests of our country and of the globe, and particularly of our allies like Israel and Gulf states and others in the region.

We are absolutely determined that this would be a good deal or there'll be no deal. Now, that's why it's hard. That's why we didn't close the deal here in the last couple days, because we are together unified, pushing for things that we believe provide the guarantees that Israel and the rest of the world demand here.

But one thing is clear, is that we're not going into a full deal and giving away something. We're talking about stopping their program where it is, with enough guarantees to know that it is in fact

stopped where it is, while we then negotiate the full measure of the deal with our allies, with our friends, with all of the interested parties, advising at the table, consulting, and their interests well represented.

QUESTION: There is a broader criticism that goes beyond this that no doubt you've confronted in your extensive travels throughout that region. And let me sum it up this way. It amounts to this criticism that the President appears reluctant to exercise power on the world stage. It's not just Israel. It's Egypt. It's Saudi Arabia. There's a feeling that the U.S. has abandoned critical friends in that region, in part because you're moving toward a deal with Iran which could provide them tremendous economic relief when, at the same time, critics would say their major client, Syria, has gotten a pass to murder their own people as long as they don't use chemical weapons, so that all of this is amounting to this reluctance to really exercise U.S. power. That is my description of that criticism, and please respond to it.

SECRETARY KERRY: Well, let me respond very directly to it, David. I couldn't disagree with it more. The President of the United States made his decision. He decided to use military force in Syria. He also made a decision to respect the requests of many members of Congress to come to them. And guess what? When he did, it was the members of Congress, as you know better than anybody, who balked very significantly, with the exception of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate, which took the lead. But the House clearly indicated a very, very strong reluctance to be engaged. The President, before he had to make a decision of whether or not he would use force anyway, succeeded in getting an arrangement with Russia to remove the chemical weapons altogether. That would never have happened – that deal would never have come about if the President had not made his decision to use force.

The President used force in Libya. The President has been willing and made it clear that he is prepared to use force with respect to Iran's weapon, and he has deployed the forces and the weapons necessary to achieve that goal if it has to be achieved.

QUESTION: And yet there's an AP headline tonight --

SECRETARY KERRY: And the President – let me just finish.

QUESTION: Okay.

SECRETARY KERRY: The President has continued in Afghanistan. He has sought a security agreement in Afghanistan that is in the throes of being agreed on, that will continue American presence to complete the task in Afghanistan.

I just think that we can't let mythology and politics start to cloud reality here. This President has made it clear. And he's also the President who has prosecuted al-Qaida with an intensity, and terrorists generally with an intensity unprecedented and way beyond the last administration.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, a final question before you go. You gave some comments in light of the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President Kennedy to NBC News that have now been widely broadcast and reported on. And in those comments, you said this: "To this day, I have serious doubts that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone." That certainly would be surprising to a lot of people that those are your views. Would you care to elaborate?

SECRETARY KERRY: No. (Laughter.) I just have a point of view. And I'm not going to get into that. It's not something that I think needs to be commented on, and certainly not at this time.

QUESTION: Do you think that conspiracy theories – his involvement with Russia, motivation from the Soviet Union or Cuba – are valid at some level?

SECRETARY KERRY: David, I'm not going to go into it. It's just inappropriate and I'm not going to do more than say that it's a point of view that I have. But it's not ripe or worthy or appropriate for me to comment further.

QUESTION: All right. Mr. Secretary, we thank you for your time very much.

SECRETARY KERRY: Thanks.

3. Afghan Forces Effective While Sustainment Remains a Problem (11-08-2013)

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Nov. 8, 2013 – Afghan soldiers and police are holding the hard-won gains International Security Assistance Force personnel took during the surge, but they will require more support to be successful, according to a report Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel sent to Congress today.

Afghan forces are defending their fellow citizens, but sustaining those forces remains a problem, according to the Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan -- also known as the 1230 Report.

The report says there has been a fundamental shift in the battle in Afghanistan with the move to Afghan forces in the lead.

"During the 2013 fighting season, the Afghan National security forces led the fight, and have consolidated the Afghan government's control of Afghanistan's urban areas," the report says. "The fact that the ANSF -- a force in its infancy five years ago -- can now maintain the gains made by a coalition of 50 nations with the best trained and equipped forces in the world is a significant accomplishment."

Afghan forces now conduct 95 percent of conventional operations and 98 percent of special operations in the country. Compared to last year, there has been a six-percent drop in enemy-initiated attacks, a 12-percent drop in security incidents and a 22-percent drop in improvised explosive device events.

This has had a cost. Casualties to Afghan forces increased 79 percent compared to the same period last year. Casualties for the NATO-led coalition dropped 59 percent. Insurgents also consolidated gains in some of the rural areas in which it has traditionally held power.

The International Security Assistance Force continues a large advise-and-assist effort and provides many supporting functions to Afghan operations. These include logistics, maintenance, airlift support and close-air support.

"This enabling support will decline through 2014 and will be difficult for the ANSF to fully replace," the report says. "ANSF capabilities are not yet fully self-sustainable, and considerable effort will be required to make progress permanent."

With the conclusion of the NATO mission slated for the end of 2014, sustaining the Afghan forces "will be at high risk without continued aid from the international community and continued coalition force assistance including institutional advising," the report says.

"With assistance, however, the ANSF will remain on a path towards an enduring ability to overmatch the Taliban," the report added.

If you could look at Afghanistan solely through security glasses, the view is encouraging. But military progress is only one aspect of what is needed.

"In addition to uncertainties about ANSF sustainability and challenges to security outside of urban areas, challenges with the economy and governance continue to foster uncertainty about long-term prospects for stability," the report says.

This uncertainty causes Afghans to hedge their bets and exacerbates instability. While the economic situation in the country has improved, Afghanistan remains one of the poorest countries in the world. International aid will continue to be the mainstay of the country's economy.

"The Afghan government is increasingly able to execute parts of its budget and to deliver very basic goods and services," the report says. But corruption and inefficiency, the report added, remain as problems.

Looking ahead, the Afghan military gains remain dependent "upon the size and structure of the post-2014 U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization presence, the Afghan election in 2014, the level of international support provided to Afghanistan after 2014 and whether Afghanistan can put in place the legal and other structures needed to attract investment and promote growth," the report says.

(Follow Jim Garamone on Twitter: @garamoneAFPS)

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[4. Locklear: U.S. Focuses on Strengthening Asia-Pacific Alliances \(11-07-2013\)](#)

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Nov. 7, 2013 – Declaring the United States' five alliances in the Asia-Pacific region "as strong and as confident as they have been in history," the U.S. Pacific Command chief said efforts are underway to bolster the relationships he called vital to the U.S. rebalance to the region.

Speaking earlier this week at the Foreign Press Center here, Navy Adm. Samuel J. Locklear III said the United States and its Asia-Pacific regional allies regularly interact and train together.

"We do a broad range of planning with them to make sure that all aspects of the alliance are well understood," Locklear said. "That ranges from how we interact every day, day to day, how we train

together, how we live together, how we socialize together, how we plan for human disaster response, how we look at a broad range of contingencies.”

Locklear noted upcoming milestones for the alliances in the coming year, including the first review of the defense planning guidance with Japan since 1997.

Secretary of State John F. Kerry, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel and their counterparts, Japanese Foreign Affairs Minister Fumio Kishida and Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera, agreed last month to revise the 1997 Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation. They also agreed during a series of meetings in Tokyo to increase security and defense collaboration and advance the realignment of American troops in Japan.

Locklear welcomed the review process, which he said will enable the United States and Japan “to build the alliance in a way that ensures its credibility for several decades.”

Also in 2014, Marine Rotational Force Darwin is slated to increase five-fold in size -- symbolic, Locklear said, of the close U.S.-Australian alliance. A battalion-sized Marine Air-Ground Task Force of about 1,150 Marines is expected to deploy to Darwin next spring, almost one-half the size of the force ultimately envisioned to exercise with the Australian Defence Force and train regional militaries.

“I would give the U.S.-Australian alliance an A-plus on being able to execute that in the way they have done it,” Locklear told American Forces Press Service. “We are probably, in my time in the Pacific, at a high point of our relationship with Australia.”

Meanwhile, the United States and South Korea are working together to prepare for a change in the command structure. South Korea’s military is slated to assume wartime operational control of its forces in December 2015.

The transfer originally had been slated for April 2012, but South Korea asked to delay it after North Korea began a series of provocations, including the sinking of South Korea’s Cheonan warship in 2010.

Locklear, who told reporters at the Foreign Press Center the U.S.-South Korea security alliance “has never been stronger,” said the actual timing of the transfer isn’t nearly as important as the outcome.

“We are moving toward 2015,” he said, but emphasized that the transfer “will be based on what the conditions are at that time.”

“What we don’t want to do is to delay ensuring that we have the right things in place to make sure the alliance is as viable as it can be in the future,” the admiral said.

Meanwhile, U.S. Pacific Command is evaluating how to further bolster the U.S.-Philippine alliance. The focus is on “how we can help them move toward a minimum credible defense that makes them feel more secure in a more difficult environment that they find themselves in today,” Locklear told American Forces Press Service.

Among issues being explored are access agreements that would allow U.S. forces to operate on Philippine military bases and in Philippine territory and waters to help build Philippine armed forces capacity in maritime security and maritime domain awareness.

Such an agreement would pave the way for more routine troop rotations and related activities that essentially ended when the United States was required to close its bases in the Philippines in the 1990s.

“In the end, we both recognized that was not in the best interest of either nation,” Locklear said. “So we are trying to figure out how to make that alliance more enduring and more credible for the security environment we are in.”

Similar outreach is underway with Thailand, the oldest U.S. alliance in the region that dates back 181 years.

Former Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta and Thai Defense Minister Sukampol Suwannathat signed the 2012 Joint Vision Statement for the Thai-U.S. Defense Alliance last year. The vision paves the way for stronger military-to-military ties and increased cooperation in confronting common threats and challenges.

“We continue good dialog with them about the way ahead,” Locklear said.

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[Adm. Samuel J. Locklear III](#)

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5. Service Chiefs Testify on Risks of Sequestration (11-07-2013)

By Amaani Lyle

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Nov. 7, 2013 – As they face the prospect of another year of deep cuts to their budgets, the military’s service chiefs testified today before the Senate Armed Services Committee on the impact sequestration is having on the ability to organize, train and equip their service members.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, and Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James F. Amos told lawmakers sequestration portends a hollow force, greater risk of coercion and fewer options to handle global adversaries.

Odierno urged all military leaders and lawmakers to keep foremost in their minds the impact budget shortfalls have on soldiers who are asked to protect the nation.

“They are national treasures and their sacrifices cannot be taken for granted,” Odierno said. “They are not chess pieces to be moved upon a board -- each and every one is irreplaceable.”

Odierno added, “We are drawing down our Army not only before a war is over, but at a time when unprecedented uncertainty remains in the international security environment.”

The total Army -- active duty, Guard and Reserve – currently remains heavily committed in operations overseas and at home.

“More than 70,000 U.S. Army soldiers are deployed to contingency operations with nearly 50,000 soldiers in Afghanistan alone,” Odierno said. There are more than 87,000 soldiers forward stationed across the globe in nearly 120 countries, he added.

During his 37 years of service, Odierno said the Army has deployed soldiers and fought more than 10 conflicts, including Afghanistan, the longest war in the nation’s history.

“No one desires peace more than the soldier who has lived through war,” he said.

But with a looming drawdown and the restructuring of the Army into a smaller force, the general explained, the service will experience degraded readiness and extensive modernization shortfalls.

“We’ll be required to end, restructure or delay over 100 acquisition programs,” Odierno said. Personnel cuts will also take a toll, the general said.

“The Army will be forced to take additional end-strength cuts to no more than 420,000 active duty, 315,000 Army National Guard and 185,000 in the U.S. Army Reserves,” Odierno said. “This will represent a total Army end strength reduction of more than 18 percent over seven years -- a 26 percent reduction in the active component ... a 12 percent reduction in the national guard and a 9 percent reduction in the U.S. Army Reserves.”

Odierno stressed that he does not consider himself an alarmist, but a realist.

“In the end, our decisions today and in the near future will impact our nation’s security posture for the next 10 years,” He said.

The Navy, too, will have to make strategic choices, operating where and when it matters to respond to contingencies with acceptable readiness, Greenert said. He noted current hot spots such as North Korea, Egypt and Syria.

“This ability to be present reassures our allies and ensures that U.S. interests around the world are properly served,” Greenert said.

Sequestration in 2014, Greenert warned, will further reduce Navy readiness and the service’s ship and aircraft investment as the service attempts to maintain a sea-based strategic deterrent and sustain a relevant industrial base and an appropriate forward presence.

Greenert said most concerning is the reduction in the Navy’s operations and maintenance budget, which will result in only one non-deployed carrier strike group and one amphibious ready group trained for contingency response.

Greenert said this will fall short of the Navy’s covenant with combatant commanders -- the provision of at least two carrier strike groups, two amphibious ready groups deployed and another three of each in and around the continental United States for short-notice response.

The budget fallout also ensures a continued hiring freeze for most of the Navy’s civilian positions, degrading the distribution of skill in the workforce, the admiral said.

Greenert recommended Congress allow the Navy to transfer money between accounts as one way of mitigating the situation.

“This would enable us to pursue innovative acquisition approaches, start new projects, increase production quantities and complete the ships that are under construction,” recommending the transfer of about billion dollars each into his service’s operations, maintenance and procurement accounts.

Similarly, Amos, the Marine Corps commandant, described readiness sustainment within the current fiscal environment as a “mortgage” of tomorrow’s readiness, infrastructure sustainment and modernization.

“We are ready today because your Marines are resilient and determined to defend the United States of America,” Amos said. “We are funding today’s readiness by curtailing future investment in equipment and in our facilities.”

Amos expressed his displeasure over last month’s furlough of some 14,000 Marine Corps civilians. Since sequestration began in March, Amos said he has realigned funds within his authority to maintain unit readiness to the highest extent possible.

“My priorities have remained consistent: first and foremost, the near-term readiness of forward deployed forces, followed by those that are next to deploy,” he said.

The commandant reported that the Marine Corps is currently spending about 16 percent of what is required “bare minimum” to maintain barracks, facilities, bases, stations and training ranges.

“This is unsustainable and it can’t continue over the long term.”

To meet the requirements of future conflicts, investments in modernization, infrastructure and people are critical, he said.

The defense strategic guidance calls for 186,800 active duty Marines, which enables the Marine Corps to meet steady state operations and fight a major war, and preserves a 1:3 dwell time for Marines and their families.

A force of 174,000 Marines, which sequestration will require, drives the service to a 1:2 dwell, or 6 months deployed with 12 months of recuperation and training, Amos said.

“This is dangerously close to the same combat operational tempo we had in Iraq and Afghanistan while fighting in multiple theaters and maintaining steady state amphibious operations around the world,” Amos said. “This is a formula for more American casualties.”

In the Air Force, Welsh described the impacts of sequestration as sobering and warned that the service will be forced to cut flying hours to the extent that in coming years many flying units won’t be able to retain mission readiness.

“We’ll cancel or significantly curtail mission exercises again,” Welsh said. “And we’ll reduce our initial pilot production targets which we were able to avoid in FY 13 because prior year unobligated funds helped offset about 25 percent of our sequestration bill last year.” Those funds; however, are no longer available, Welsh said.

The Air Force hopes to build a viable plan to slow personnel and infrastructure costs when able, he said. Yet, the only way to pay the full sequestration bill, he added, is to reduce force structure, readiness and modernization.

“Over the next five years, the Air Force can be forced to cut up to 25,000 airmen and up to 550 aircraft, which is about 9 percent of our inventory,” Welsh said. These cost savings, he said, could force the Air Force to divest entire fleets of aircraft.

Meanwhile, Air Force officials will prioritize, focusing on long-range capabilities, readiness and full-spectrum training, Welsh said.

“We’ll favor recapitalization over modernization, which is why our top-three acquisition programs remain the F-35, the KC-46 and the long-range strike bomber,” Welsh said.

(Follow Amaani Lyle on Twitter: @lyleAFPS)

Biographies:

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6. Face of Defense: U.S. Soldiers Assist, Train Afghan Police (11-07-2013)

By Army Sgt. Eric Provost
4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division

LAGHMAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan, Nov. 7, 2013 – With the aid of U.S. soldiers, Afghan police here are making big strides in their professional development and the protection of their country.

Afghan Uniformed Police officer 2nd Lt. Omar Khan typifies these gains as he transfers the combat life saver skills he learned with coalition forces to his fellow officers in the Afghan Local Police.

In a small red classroom in Laghman’s police headquarters, American soldiers from 5th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery Regiment, based at Forward Operating Base Mehtar Lam, have been training the AUP in skills including combat lifesaver techniques. The soldiers are proud to see their students take the lessons they learned and conduct their own classes.

“They took everything we had to teach them; they absorbed it, and now they’re running with it,” said Army Sgt. Bartholomew Murphy III, a medical advisor with 5th Battalion from Syracuse, N.Y.

“I’m just really impressed with them and how well their own class has turned out,” Murphy said of his Afghan students.

Murphy developed the combat lifesaver training for Laghman’s police, including both the skills classes and the train-the-trainer course.

The Afghan students are taught how to set broken bones with splints, how to stop bleeding, how to keep patients breathing correctly, and how to do get the patient to the next level of care.

The trainers' most important mission has been transferring skills and knowledge to their Afghan counterparts to ensure they can provide security for the Afghan people.

In order to accomplish this, the 5th Battalion's soldiers ensure their students are proficient in teaching the skills themselves and are able to teach others how to conduct the training.

"That's really what we see as the next big way ahead for the police here. We want them to be fully self-sufficient. They're taking big steps toward doing that and they're doing very well at it," said Army Capt. Joshua Page, another 5th Battalion medical advisor.

Combat lifesaver skills have been a big focus for the police in Laghman province because they are responsible for the citizens of Afghanistan, as well as for the men to their left and right when they're patrolling their checkpoints and pulling field duty.

"It's very important for the police because we are working with the local people in the community," said Khan, who's the executive officer for Laghman province's police training company. "If there are some civilian casualties then we can treat them; and if we don't have good training then we will not be able to treat the people properly."

Khan's class included local police officers from every checkpoint in the province. The plan is for them to share the skills they've learned with other police officers in their units.

"I'm feeling great," Khan said. "All of my guys who I trained got everything and everything was done properly. And when they go back to their checkpoints, I know they'll be able to treat any casualty."

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