RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

GENERAL CARTER HAM
MEMBER, BOARD OF ADVISORS
DOD INDEPENDENT REVIEW RELATED TO FORT HOOD
AND COMMANDER, U.S. ARMY EUROPE

BEFORE THE

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OVERVIEW OF DOD INDEPENDENT REVIEW RELATED TO FORT HOOD

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GENERAL CARTER HAM, U.S. ARMY
MEMBER, BOARD OF ADVISORS
DOD INDEPENDENT REVIEW RELATED TO FORT HOOD

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Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, it is a pleasure to appear before you to discuss the findings and recommendations of the Department of Defense Independent Review Relating to Fort Hood. Almost four months ago, a gunman opened fire at the Soldier Readiness Center at Fort Hood, Texas. Thirteen people were killed and 43 others were wounded. November 5, 2009 will be remembered as a day of great tragedy. We extend our deepest sympathy to the families of the fallen, to the wounded, to their families, and indeed to all touched by this tragic event.

Following the shooting, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates established the Department of Defense Independent Review Related to Fort Hood. He asked Admiral Vern Clark, U.S. Navy (Ret.), and the Honorable Togo Dennis West, Jr. to Co-Chair this independent review. Since Admiral Clark and Togo West could not be with you here today, as the senior Military Advisor to the review, I am pleased to report on it.

Events such as the Fort Hood shooting raise questions about how best to defend against threats posed by external influences operating on members of our military community. The challenge for the Department of Defense is to prepare more effectively for a constantly changing security environment. It is with that backdrop in mind that Secretary Gates requested the Independent Review to assess whether there are programs, policies, or procedural weaknesses within the Department of Defense that create vulnerabilities to the health and safety of our servicemen and women, DOD civilians, and their families. Secretary Gates asked the review panel to take a careful look at personnel policies, force protection measures, emergency response procedures, and support to our military health care providers. He asked the Independent Review to evaluate the Army's application of its policies, programs, processes, and procedures to the alleged perpetrator. The Co-chairs established a board of advisors with senior officers from the four services and five review teams, consisting of a range of experts, who investigated the key tasks outlined in the terms of reference. The teams had unrestricted access to personnel and facilities. The teams traveled to Fort Hood as part of their review.

The Independent Review focused on the non-criminal aspects of the shooting. Although Fort Hood was central to our review, our scope extended across the entire Department in order to gather the most significant and meaningful findings and recommendations. As recognized by the Secretary of Defense when he stated that he intends to call upon the military departments to conduct in-depth follow-on reviews, certain areas addressed in our report will require further study. By design, we limited the depth of our report in the areas that will be covered in follow-on reviews.

The Independent Review's report to the Secretary of Defense was released to Congress and the public on 15 January 2010. Please note, however, that I cannot yet address specifics with respect to the alleged perpetrator in order to preserve the integrity of the ongoing military justice process. The detailed results and findings associated with the alleged perpetrator are found in a restricted annex that will not be publically released at this time. The overall report was much broader than the

assessment of the alleged perpetrator. The report includes recommendations to strengthen the Department of Defense's ability to prepare for and respond to potential threats. It is based upon research amassed by the teams of more than 35,000 pages from over 700 documents related to departmental policies, programs, processes, and procedures.

Before discussing the details of the Independent Review findings, I would like to highlight some observations from the Co-chairs concerning the tragic events on November 5th. First, no amount of preparation is ever too much. Leaders at Fort Hood had anticipated mass casualty events in their emergency response plans and exercises. The initial response to the incident demonstrated this. It was prompt and effective. Two minutes and forty seconds after the initial 9-1-1 call, Fort Hood first responders arrived on the scene. One-and-a-half minutes later, the assailant was incapacitated, taken into custody, and remained in custody handcuffed to a law enforcement representative for the next several chaotic hours. Two ambulances and an incident command vehicle from the post hospital arrived on the scene two minutes and fifty seconds later to begin providing life-saving emergency care. DoD must be prepared to plan more diligently and seek to envision the next incident. Second, DoD must be attentive to today's hazard. Even as the role of our nation's military is to confront the external threat to our country, one of the most significant emerging concerns in the protection of our force is the internal threat. The Independent Review concluded that DoD needs to develop a better understanding of the forces that cause a person to become radicalized, commit violent acts, and make us vulnerable from within. Third, courage and presence of mind in the face of crisis can carry the day. It happened at Fort Hood. Courageous acts were the key to preventing greater losses that day. As our report reveals, however, these attributes alone are not enough to protect our force. DoD must exercise the foresight necessary to identify the looming menace – self radicalization and its often resultant violence -- and act preemptively.

The review of DoD policies, procedures, and processes revealed shortcomings in the way DoD is prepared to deal with internal threats, and in particular, the threat posed

by troubled and potentially dangerous individuals and groups. Commanders are the key to identifying and monitoring internal threats. Existing policies, however, are not optimized for countering these threats. The policies reflect insufficient knowledge and awareness required to help identify and address individuals likely to commit violence. While DoD focuses very effectively on many things, guidance concerning workplace violence and the potential for self-radicalization is insufficient. DoD policy on prohibited activities is limited and only addresses active and visible participation in groups that may pose threats to good order and discipline. This lack of clarity for comprehensive indicators limits commanders' and supervisors' ability to recognize potential threats. Detection of a trusted insider's intent to commit a violent act requires observation and assessment of behavioral cues and anomalies.

Complicating the force protection challenge is the diverse nature of responsibilities that have evolved within DoD since 911. Because no senior DoD official is assigned overall responsibility for force protection policy (diverse nature of responsibilities throughout DoD), synchronization is difficult. Moreover, there is a lack of DoD policy integration. This has resulted in a lack of a well-integrated means to gather, evaluate, and disseminate the wide range of behavioral indicators that could signal an insider threat. Some policies governing information exchange, both within DoD and between outside agencies, are deficient and do not support detection and mitigation of internal threats. The time has passed when concerns by specific entities over protecting "their" information can be allowed to prevent relevant threat information and indicators from reaching those who need it—the commanders.

As the Secretary indicated, the Independent Review Panel identified a requirement to create the ability to adapt rapidly to the changing security environment, which requires anticipating new threats and bringing a wide and continuously evolving range of tools, techniques, and programs into play. Robust information sharing, therefore, is essential, along with the accompanying command and control structure to convert active information gathered on potential threats into decisions and actions,

including dissemination of the analysis and assessments to the appropriate levels of command.

While leaders at Fort Hood responded well under the stress of a rapidly evolving crisis, we are fortunate that we faced only one incident at one location. Real time information sharing will be critical should we face a situation of multiple events. While all 50 states have complied with the Federal requirements for the National Incident Management System, designed for a synchronized response in crises, there are no established milestones to define initial and full capability within DoD. The timelines should be evaluated; doing so could lead to an umbrella plan for emergency response and recovery and ensure interoperability with all the states. Synchronizing the DoD emergency management program with this national guidance will ensure the Department can integrate effectively with all partners in response to any and all emergencies. Using common emergency management principles, we can prepare our military communities to respond to emergencies, from the smallest incident to the largest catastrophe.

Following the release of the Independent Review Panel report on January 15, 2010, Secretary of Defense Gates directed the Honorable Paul Stockton, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas Security Affairs, to lead an assessment of the report and to make recommendations for implementation. A March deadline has been set for the immediate fixes recommended in the review, and major institutional changes should be identified by June.

The Secretary of Defense also forwarded the Independent Review Panel report to Army Secretary John McHugh to address the recommendations concerning holding Army personnel responsible for supervising MAJ Hasan accountable. On January 15, 2010, the Secretary of the Army, John McHugh, directed me to conduct an accountability review to identify whether any personnel were responsible for failures or deficiencies in applying Army programs, policies, and procedures to the alleged assailant. Secretary McHugh also tasked me to provide personal observations as a

senior Army leader and as a member of the Independent Review Panel that he believes may be of help to the Army in charting a way ahead.

CONCLUSION

The response by the Fort Hood community in the aftermath of this tragedy serves as a reminder of the strength, resiliency, and character of our people. The Independent Review Panel was very impressed with the military and civilian response. In a community where we might have expected the fabric of trust to fray, it remained intact and grew stronger through mutual support. The thrust of the review effort is to identify all the possible steps that the Departments of Defense can take to prevent similar tragedies in the future.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.