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Manning, Bradley E. **PFC, U.S. Army,** **HHC, U.S. Army Garrison,** **Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall** **Fort Myer, Virginia 22211**	)))))	**<u>Enclosure 20</u>** **11 January 2013**

Al-Qaida After Bin Laden

Remarks
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As Prepared for Delivery

Good afternoon. I want to thank Jamestown for holding this important conference and Glen Howard for inviting me to address it. I'm pleased to have become a regular at Jamestown Conferences and almost feel like this is a homecoming of sorts – this is my third appearance at a Jamestown Conference event in the two years I've been with the State Department, and I also participated in earlier events when I was part of think tank community. Because of its commitment to serious scholarship and analysis on terrorism issues, I can't think of a more appropriate place to do an end-of-year reckoning on al-Qaida – an assessment that is particularly timely after such a remarkable year.

I was asked to speak about al-Qaida after bin Laden. There is no question that bin Laden's departure from the scene was the most important milestone ever in the fight against al-Qaida. Bin Laden was al-Qaida's founder and sole commander for 22 years. He was an iconic leader whose personal story had a profound attraction for violent extremists, and he was the pnme advocate of the group's focus on America as a terrorist target. We know now that even in the years when he had to carefully limit and manage his contacts with the rest of the organization, he was more deeply involved in directing its operations and setting its strategy than we had expected. The loss of bin Laden puts the group on a path of decline that will be difficult to reverse.

Having said that, it's important to note that bin Laden wasn't the only top AQ leader who departed in 2011, and in important ways, the terrorist network under consideration is not just "post" bin Laden.

- In June, Ilyas Kashmiri, who was implicated in the 2009 Mumbai attacks and widely considered to have been the most dangerous terrorist planner in South Asia was killed in Pakistan.
- In June as well, Harun Fazul, one of the architects of the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, and the foremost member of al-Qaida in East Africa was killed in Somalia by the forces of the Transitional Federal Government.
- In August, AQ's second-in-command after bin Laden's death, Atiya Abdul Rahman, who was also a highly capable operational commander, was killed in Pakistan.
- And in September, Anwar al-Aulaqi, AQAP's chief of external operations in Yemen was also killed. Aulaqi, it's worth underscoring, was intimately involved in planning and directing attacks against the United States had also opened up a new door on recruitment in the English speaking world. He was an important reason why AQAP had become the most capable of the AQ affiliates and the first to make attacking the U.S. at home a core goal.

So there is no question that the top leadership of AQ and its major affiliates was hit hard in 2011.

Now as everyone remembers from their college history, there is the theory that it is great men who drive history – Thomas Carlyle was famous for advocating this And while "great" is the wrong word for these criminals, they were certainly highly capable individuals, and if this school of history is right, then AQ should be finished.

Of course, we also know that Carlyle wasn't the last word on history, and we recognize that ideology or world-view, social conditions, and a range of other factors drive events as well. And those factors help explain why despite the punishing blows I've mentioned, AQ and its affiliates continue to show resilience...continue to operate in worrisome ways...and continue to pose a threat to our national security. So while we're pleased about the important successes of 2011, as the President has said, this story is not over and we have much more work to do.

Indeed, even as the core of al-Qaida experienced massive setbacks, activity by the affiliates continued to spread geographically, and other groups with AQ-related ideological leanings gained prominence. In 2011, the protean nature of AQ has very much been on display.

Consider some of these facts: al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) still remains at the top of the affiliates list despite the death of Aulaqi and we're concerned about its attempts to hold territory in South Yemen and to exploit current unrest to advance plots against regional and U.S. interests.

In the Sahel, al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has historically been the weakest of the major AQ affiliates. Yet in the last couple of years, the group has managed to fill its coffers with ransoms from kidnappings – a practice that other AQ groups are adopting to considerable advantage thanks to the willingness of wealthy Western nations to pay off the hostage-takers. These newfound resources together with AQIM efforts to take advantage of the recent flux/instability in Libya have raised concern about this group's trajectory. Of particular concern are both the issue of terrorist transit in light of instability in Libya, and the threat posed by loose munitions that were previously under Libyan government control.

While not an al-Qaida affiliate, widespread attacks in Nigeria by elements of the group known as Boko Haram are also greatly disturbing, especially following the August attack against the UN headquarters in Abuja that signaled the group's interest in traditional AQ targeting. Al-Qaida and its affiliates have been transparent in their efforts to strengthen other incipient movements, including Boko Haram.

In the Sinai Peninsula, we have also been tracking the activities of militant groups for some time and are aware of loosely-knit groups of militants, some of whom espouse the same aspirational goals as al-Qaida, and they're becoming more conspicuous in the Sinai over the past year. We are not aware of any significant operational or other linkages between these militants and al-AQ core leadership or affiliates elsewhere in the region. But we will not be complacent and wait for those ties to appear.

In the Horn of Africa, al-Shabaab may have experienced setbacks in Somalia, but it too has shown its interest in pursuing a more diverse set of targets. We saw that in last year's twin suicide bombings in Uganda during the World Cup that killed 76 people, and we've seen its recent "out-of-area" threats against targets in Kenya.

In other areas that have been critically important theaters over the last decade, I wouldn't say we see signs for renewed alarm, but we recognize that there is a persistent threat. In Iraq, as the United States withdraws its final forces, we shouldn't be surprised to see al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI) try to exploit the moment and carry out high-profile attacks. The good news is that AQI has suffered leadership losses, continues to fail to mobilize a Sunni community that turned decisively against it after the carnage earlier in the decade, and Iraqi security forces are showing greater capabilities than ever before. However, AQI is resilient and likely to carry out attacks into the foreseeable future. So we need to remain vigilant and to ensure that our cooperation with the Iraqi authorities meets the needs of the new circumstances.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't remark on one other area of concern: the homeland. In the last couple of years we've seen high-profile law-enforcement cases, individuals who appear to have been trained and handled from the FATA, operating within U.S. borders. Najibullah Zazi, a U.S. lawful permanent resident, obtained training in Pakistan and pleaded guilty to charges that he was planning to set off several bombs in the United States. We also saw Faisal Shahzad, who was linked to the Pakistani Taliban, attempt to detonate a car bomb in Times Square. The significance of these cases cannot be ignored, nor of others who have far fewer ties abroad, and today, the White House is releasing its Strategic Implementation Plan for the national Strategy on Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States, also known as a Domestic CVE Strategy, and is the first U.S. Government strategy to address ideologically-inspired radicalization to violence in the United States. The plan envisions a fusion of local partners — such as schools, community boards and leaders — with both local and federal law enforcement and other agencies.

After this tour of the horizon, how are we going to meet the challenge posed by this durable threat? By continuing – and redoubling our efforts – on those things that have worked so well for us in the past and by innovating areas where we can do better.

There are three elements that we are focusing on:

1. Strong partnerships, both bilateral and multilateral;
2. Creating capable partners through capacity building; and
3. Countering Violent Extremism.

Let me begin with partnerships. As I have said many times, our international partnerships have been at the heart of our success in a broad array of areas – from intelligence to aviation security and from economic development to law enforcement. As the National Counterterrorism Strategy released earlier this year underscores, we will work harder than ever to build on this success. Our diplomatic engagement is essential for this effort, and whether through our frequent bilateral consultations...or through the kind of intense effort in New York and around the world that led to the UN General Assembly's powerful rebuke to Iran for plotting to assassinate the Saudi ambassador here in Washington...this work is vital.

In speaking about our partnerships, obviously one of them is much in the news and deserves some comment here. That is our partnership with Pakistan

Although the AQ core is much weakened, the story in South Asia is far from over. Al-Qaida remains a threat, and the group has forged closer ties with some of the other militant groups in the region – for example Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan and the Haqqani Network – and this has provided the group with additional capabilities to draw on. And just a couple of days ago we saw another Pakistani group with ties to al-Qaida, Lashkar-e Jangawi, claim credit for attacks in Afghanistan directed at worshipers marking the Shia holy day of Ashura.

Clearly, regional cooperation on counterterrorism remains a necessity. It is no secret that the Pakistan-U.S. relationship has had its ups and downs, as we saw with the tragic cross-border incident on November 26 – and our military colleagues are conducting a full investigation so we can make absolutely sure incidents like that don't happen again. We have conveyed our sincere condolences to the Pakistani people for the loss of life during this tragic incident.

But we also know that to achieve our long term goals regarding the destruction of AQ, we must have a constructive working partnership with Pakistan. We remain committed to our relationship with Pakistan and we continue to stress to the Pakistanis that we are prepared to jointly act against violent extremist groups. As you know, senior leaders are speaking frequently to their Pakistani counterparts, and we are eager to move this essential partnership forward.

Our work building partnerships is also taking into account the great historical development of the past year – the Arab Awakening. Millions of people are pushing their nations to move away from repression that has long fueled resentment which underscores extremism. They are embracing universal human rights and dignity. And this has discredited the extremist argument that only violence can bring about change.

Should these revolts result, as we hope, in durable, democratically-elected, non-autocratic governments, AQ's single-minded focus on terrorism as an instrument of political change would be severely and irretrievably delegitimized. This would indeed be a genuinely strategic blow. We should be clear. From a security perspective, we have a great deal to gain. Because democracies increase the space for peaceful dissent and give people a stake in their governance, they greatly

weaken those who call for violence and create ways of containing extremism not available to autocratic regimes.

Inspiring as the moment may be, we cannot ignore the attendant perils. The political turmoil has distracted security officials in a number of countries. In some cases, as we've seen, weapons have gone loose. Civil strife creates the kind of environment that terrorists are drawn to – in this regard, for example, the tragic situation in Syria bears careful watching. Undoubtedly, some are tempted to exploit the situation to carry out plots that could cause significant disruptions for states undergoing challenging, difficult democratic transitions.

That is why we in the U.S. government are engaging closely with transition countries such as Tunisia and Egypt and others in the region. There are tactical needs, so we have also been working aggressively over the past several months to engage with regional governments in mitigating threats posed by the prolonged instability in Libya. This is of particular concern as it relates to loose munitions emanating from Libyan stocks, and the threat of terrorists obtaining Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS), which could pose significant risks to regional security and civilian aviation. We will continue to work this issue with our regional partners, and have been pleased with the quality of engagement on potential strategies to address this matter.

But we've also been working with them on a strategic basis across the broad array of economic, social, and political issues as well as on security issues. We all have an enormous investment in the successful transitions in these countries, and it is not a short-term investment by any means. We are supporting democracy in these countries because it is a good in itself. But it is also a matter of long-term security. We need to be concerned about the high expectations raised by the transitions in the Middle East. The inevitable frustration when change doesn't occur overnight can create an opportunity for terrorist recruitment.

We have to go forward on the premise that no switch has been irrevocably flipped. Ideologies that seem finished can come back.

Integrally tied up with our work on partnership are our efforts to build capacity and counter violent extremism. Helping our partners more effectively confront the threat within their borders is both good counterterrorism and good statecraft.

With respect to capacity-building, let me briefly discuss our efforts in North and West Africa, to illustrate our approach. We have implemented a successful regional approach through the Trans Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership, known to all as TSCTP, which came into being in 2005. The strategic goals of TSCTP are to: build military and law enforcement capacity; foster regional cooperation; and counter violent extremism.

We want the region to lead its counterterrorism efforts, and adhere to the notion that African problems are best solved by African solutions. TSCTP is working to enhance the capabilities in the Sahel including Mauritania, Mali, Chad, and Niger, as well, farther south with Nigeria, Senegal, and Burkina Faso. It is also facilitating cooperation between those countries and our TSCTP partners in the Maghreb, specifically Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia.

We believe that this program is beginning to pay off with partners taking an even greater than ever role in CT operations in the region. In addition, we have seen positive signs of greater cooperation among those countries, particularly between Algeria, Mauritania, Niger, and Mali. Moreover, select Allies, such as Canada and France, have joined to bolster TSCTP efforts with their own similar programs that complement ours. We view the success of TSCTP as so compelling that we are creating something similar for East Africa – PREACT (Partnership for Regional East African Counterterrorism).

It is important to note that we are also working on capacity building with the same vigor in the international community, and particularly through the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). The GCTF is a new multilateral counterterrorism body with 30 founding members (29 countries and the EU). Launched by Secretary Clinton on September 22 of this year in New York with her counterparts from most of those founding members, the GCTF is a major initiative within the Obama Administration's broader effort to build the international architecture for dealing with 21st century terrorist threats. With its primary focus on capacity building in relevant areas, the GCTF aims to increase the number of countries capable of dealing with the terrorist threats within their borders and regions.

The Forum will provide a much needed venue for Middle Eastern and North African countries undergoing transitions to engage with the United States on some politically sensitive issues. This could include discussing how the United States and other Western partners can best support efforts to transition away from repressive regimes to rule of law-based approaches to counterterrorism. The Forum's criminal justice/rule of law working group, which met for the first time in early November in Washington, offers an ideal platform for these discussions.

Two major deliverables announced at the September launch demonstrate the action-oriented nature of this forum. Approximately $100 million in programming funds for states seeking to support the development of rule of law institutions needed to allow countries, including those in the midst of the transition, to shift away from repressive approaches to counterterrorism, was announced. A number of GCTF members contributed to this deliverable.

The second deliverable brings us to our efforts to Counter Violent Extremism. The United Arab Emirates announced its intention to host the first ever international center of excellence on countering violent extremism, which is slated to open in Abu Dhabi next fall. There is widespread agreement on the need to prevent individuals from starting down the path toward radicalization, the embrace of violence, and support for terrorism, as well as to divert those already on that path before they are fully committed. There is no institution, however, dedicated to addressing this challenge. The proposed Center of Excellence will fill this gap. We are already working closely with the UAE on the project and will continue to do so in the months ahead.

Another line of our key CVE efforts has to do with messaging. The Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC) was stood up one year ago, and is tightly focused on undermining the terrorist propaganda and dissuading potential recruits. The center is housed at the State Department, but is a true whole-of-government interagency endeavor. It has a mandate from the President in the form of an executive order. And as part of this effort, a group of tech savvy specialists – fluent in Urdu and Arabic – that we call the digital outreach team, are contesting online space, media websites, and forums where extremists have long spread propaganda and recruited followers. With timely posts, this team is working to expose the contradictions and abuses of al-Qaida and other violent extremists, including their continuing brutal attacks on Muslim civilians.

CSCC's work is at the crossroads of American public diplomacy and CVE. It uses public diplomacy's communication tools, and its messages and videos are attributed to the Department of State. But we are reaching out to a specific, narrowly defined overseas audience: People who are or may be sympathetic to the

views of al-Qaida and could indeed be vulnerable to its propaganda; people who could be persuaded or enticed into crossing the boundary between sympathy and action.

I hope this has been a useful overview. In conclusion, protecting the United States, the American people, and our interests abroad will remain a challenge in the 21st Century. New terrorist threats will require innovative strategies, creative diplomacy, and even stronger partnerships. But Secretary Clinton believes we have an approach and a set of tools that are right for the challenge. That is why she has announced her intention to upgrade the Office of the Coordinator to a full-fledged bureau within the State Department – a move that was one of the key recommendations of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review concluded in December 2010. This transformation will continue the process of strengthening civilian-led diplomacy as a key counterterrorism tool – a process underway now for three years. Building partner capacity, countering violent extremism, and engaging partners bilaterally and multilaterally: all these are essential tools for dealing with a changing terrorist threat. Yes, we have made a lot of progress. But as I hope you'll all agree after this review, there is a great deal left to do.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. I welcome your questions.