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Countering Terrorist Ideology

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MODERATOR: Hello and welcome to the Washington Foreign Press Center. Please turn off your cell phones or anything else that makes noise. Today, we have for you Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Mike Doran, who is in charge of the Support for Public Diplomacy office. He is going to talk today about countering ideological support to terrorism. Here is Mr. Doran.

DR. DORAN: Thank you very much, Andy. I'd like to thank the Foreign Press Center and all of you for coming today. It's a great pleasure. We've seen, in the last few months, a dramatic improvement in the situation in Iraq.

I have before me here just a few statistics that I'm sure you're all aware of. Violence is at the lowest level since January of 2006. Attack levels are continuing at the downward trend that began in June. The number of weekly attacks recently reached its lowest level since early February 2006. The number of IED attacks each week is down more than 60 percent in the four months -- in the last four months, reaching the lowest level since January of 2006. Since the surge of U.S. forces began earlier this year, civilian deaths across Iraq are down by about 60 percent and they're down 75 percent in Baghdad. Recently, we had the lowest number of single-day attacks across the nation in three and a half years.

Now this clearly marks, I think, success against al-Qaida. It's important not to overstate that because al-Qaida remains a very potent and dangerous enemy. So we're nowhere near the point where we can declare a victory against al-Qaida.



We're not even near the point where we can say that we have -- that we've fully stabilized Iraq. We clearly have a long and difficult path ahead of us, but I think that this change, this significant change in the levels of violence is worth noting. And it's worth taking a pause and asking ourselves how -- why, since the surge, have we had such a significant success against al-Qaida.

I want to discuss it a little bit and I want to put the focus, actually, on al-Qaida itself. Because I think when you look at it closely, you see that the major reason for the successes against al-Qaida are to be found in the nature of al-Qaida's ideology itself. The ideology contains the seeds of its own destruction and I think that's true for four major reasons.

The first is that al-Qaida's global ideology makes it very unresponsive to the local needs of the population in Iraq and anywhere else where we find people adhering to the ideology. The second reason is that it advocates the killing of fellow Sunni Muslims. And the third reason is that it advocates the killing of innocent civilians of all kinds. And the fourth reason is that the teachings of al-Qaida that justify the indiscriminate killing of innocents flies in the face of about a thousand years of traditional Islamic teaching.

And all those factors together, in the right circumstances, I think, undo al-Qaida. We can see that if you look at the history of what's happened in Iraq over the last year. In October of last year, al-Qaida in Iraq announced the establishment of the Islamic State of Iraq. And it's really at that point that you can start seeing the seeds of the destruction of the movement taking root. Because the minute they did that, the minute al-Qaida established this -- basically, the rudiments of a territorial state, there was a counter reaction among the population. The local population was forced to ask themselves, do we really want to live under a Taliban-style regime like that of al-Qaida? And they began to realize that al-Qaida takes its ideology very seriously.

Now al-Qaida -- why did they announce this territorial state, the Islamic State of Iraq? Because they wanted to counter the claim coming from Iraqis themselves that al-Qaida is a foreign movement that doesn't represent Iraqis and Iraqi needs. So when al-Qaida established the Islamic State of Iraq, they put out into the forefront this fictional character, Abu Omar Baghdadi, who is not really the head of the Islamic State of Iraq. He's a fictional character with the name Al-Baghdadi to say that he is a son of Iraq. In actual fact, it's Abu Ayyub al-Masri that's the leader of al-Qaida in Iraq.

The local population doesn't think that -- thinks that this is a foreign movement being carried out to -- being carried out to serve the interests of the foreign movement and not responsive to the local population. Now the problem was that they didn't have -- the Iraqis didn't have the power -- the Iraqis didn't have the power to resist the intimidation of al-Qaida or didn't have enough power. And it's the combination of the movement against -- the local movement against al-Qaida combined with the surge which has given the security and the capability to the local opponents of al-Qaida to come to the forefront so that we can see the kind of dramatic change that I opened up with.

Now the key to the surge is that it provided security, because one of the most -- one of the policies of al-Qaida that most alienates the local population is the targeting of Sunni Muslims. And we've seen that since the surge began, they are now listing opponents -- Sunni Muslim opponents of al-Qaida and attacking them and killing them.

And this puts al-Qaida in a very difficult position because ideally, they would like ideologically to represent themselves as the representatives of the Iraqis, as well as the representatives of the Islamic tradition, the true representatives of the Islamic tradition. And when they're put in a position of listing Sunni Muslim targets and actually carrying out assassinations against them, it's an ideological bind for them. We have succeeded, I think, in the last eight to ten months of putting them in

a very difficult position where they can't get out of this bind; as long as they are targeting Sunni Muslims, they can't represent themselves as the true -- they can't convincingly represent themselves as the true representatives of Islam.

Now there's a second aspect to this targeting of civilians and that's that it alienates Muslim public opinion. We saw that clearly in July of 2005. There was this exchange, you remember, between Ayman Al-Zawahiri and Zarqawi where Zarqawi was attempting -- was carrying out a policy designed to create a sectarian war in Iraq. And Ayman al-Zawahiri wrote him a letter and said, listen, the average person -- the average Muslim on the street doesn't understand this indiscriminate killing that you're carrying out and you're actually having the effect of alienating people. And we can see from the polls like the Pew Trust, the Global Opinion poll that in fact, the majority of Muslims throughout the Islamic world reject al-Qaida's ideology. So Ayman al-Zawahiri, I think, had his finger on the pulse there and was very right to admonish Zarqawi.

Now they also have an additional problem, al-Qaida, in that their teachings which justify this indiscriminate killing don't accord with the -- with traditional Islam. I think it's worth noting in that regard that in the last month, Dr. Fadl, this former ideologue of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad movement, has published a book in which he has renounced the Takfiri ideology of al-Qaida. It's extremely significant because Dr. Fadl was one of the primary ideologues of the al-Qaida movement and was a mentor to Ayman al-Zawahiri himself.

So what Dr. Fadl has done in that book is he has enunciated the traditional Islamic prohibition against the kind of indiscriminate killing carried out by individuals or groups that al-Qaida undertakes. He's put himself squarely in the mainstream of the Islamic tradition and has put al-Qaida in a very difficult position, and you can see that from the fact that Ayman al-Zawahiri himself has come out -- has come out, without naming -- without naming Dr. Fadl explicitly, has come out against the position -- the position that he's taking.

So all in all, all in all, al-Qaida is in a very difficult situation, I think, now in Iraq. Obviously, that doesn't mean that they are going to -- that they're not still dangerous. The bombings that we saw in Iraq that you're reading about in Iraq today show us that Iraq remains a very dangerous and difficult place. And it shows us that the road of stabilizing Iraq is going to be a long one.

But it also teaches us, I think, a few lessons about how we can properly combat ideological support for terrorism. And the main point here is that this struggle against al-Qaida is going to be won locally, on the local level. It's important for us to focus on and understand the local conditions that make people think, even for a brief moment, that this ideology may somehow speak to their local conditions. I think when people -- as we saw in Afghanistan, all the polls in Afghanistan show and as we see now in Iraq, when people are really put face to face with a choice of this ideology and what it really means and the alternative, if given the capability to counter it, they will choose the alternative, to counter the ideology. They will choose the alternative.

But for us to do that effectively, it means that we really have to understand the specific local conditions in which people are living, what the choice is that they feel that they are facing, and to craft policies that are responsive to those conditions. And that's a very difficult thing to do. This struggle against al-Qaida is going to won, really I think, acre by acre, as we've seen in al-Anbar. So as difficult as that is to do it globally acre by acre, the drastic change, I think the drastic and swift change that's taken place in al-Anbar with the surge and with General Petraeus' understanding about the importance of being responsive to local conditions should give us some optimism about the global struggle.

And with that, I'll open it up to questions.

QUESTION: Thank you, Raghubir Goyal, *India Globe* and *Asia Today*. Can I, sir, bring your attention to Afghanistan because Secretary Gates was there on Capitol Hill before the congressional arms committee. The people of Afghanistan, of course they've got freedom and they are happy, but now they are somehow unhappy with the Karzai government because al-Qaida's presence is coming back and the Taliban are now coming back. And {Defense} Secretary {Gates} was also saying that he's not very much happy with the way NATO is operating right now. Do you think we are in the verge of shifting some kind of policy or replacing NATO with some other international forces? Or what's going on as far as al-Qaida and Taliban are concerned in Afghanistan because people are really in trouble?

DR. DORAN: With regard to your larger question about the shifting policy, Secretary Gates is on his way to Europe now, or is in Europe now, to discuss with NATO allies Afghanistan. So I think I'll leave that to him to answer.

With regard to the general situation in Afghanistan, the road there is difficult as well and we've seen some resurgence of the Taliban. I would make one little distinction, though, and say that it isn't exactly al-Qaida that's coming back in Afghanistan; it's the Taliban. And with regard to my point about this being a local fight, it's a very significant distinction because I think all indications, both from what people from Afghanistan tell us and what you see in polling and so forth, show that the Afghans themselves do not like the foreign fighters that are coming in, in the same way that the foreign fighters have alienated the Iraqis.

The question in Afghanistan, support for the Taliban, takes you into a question of the different tribal affiliations of Afghans, of questions of economics and security and so forth. And I would be foolish if I didn't argue that we have a lot more to do in Afghanistan, but I'd just take you back to what I said, that I think the answer is to be found locally. And the fact that the situation in Afghanistan is difficult doesn't mean that things haven't gotten a lot better in Iraq, that doesn't mean that al-Qaida is doing well and it doesn't mean that we don't have a clear way ahead in terms of the approach we take.

QUESTION: As far as foreign fighters are concerned, where are they coming from? Because President Karzai was complaining even when he was here at the White House with President Bush that they are coming from Pakistan and now General Musharraf -- now Mr. President has not done enough as far as cross-border terrorism from Pakistan into Afghanistan.

DR. DORAN: I don't have at my fingertips any precise statistics about the makeup, but there's no doubt that the foreign fighter network is a global network drawn from countries all over the region.

QUESTION: Mounzer Sleiman with Lebanon's *Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi*. The success that you're mentioning in Iraq, you associated it with the surge, while there was more -- it is about local solution than being associated with military operations. That would lead to the narrative that has been used by the administration about waging this ideological warfare, the long war. And I think it needs to be examined if the solution to this is not military. But it's based on the local intervention, even with the absence of governments. But this danger, if even when government exists, it's better to be left to the government to deal with it, to the local to deal with it. How about -- do you think it's serving the purpose of throwing words like Islamofacism and other terms associating with Islam when dealing with ideological warfare against al-Qaida and other extremists?

DR. DORAN: A couple of points here. With regard to the successes in Iraq, I think it's both the courage and commitment of the local population and the Iraqi security services and the surge. Without the surge, I don't think we would have given the capability and the security -- provided the capabilities and the security necessary to be successful against al-Qaida in al-

Anbar. There's no doubt that this is a locally generated movement, but it's facilitated by us. So I see it as sort of an alliance.

With regard to your question about Islamo-fascism, I don't think the word is -- I don't think the word is helpful because it doesn't lead us to look at meaningful distinctions that I was describing between the people on the ground and it doesn't help us to understand the perceptions of people on the ground and the choices that they feel they are faced with.

There is an important point, however, that we are dealing with a global ideology. There's no doubt about that. And the thing that is distinctive about this ideology is that Takfirism, I think. That is to say that al-Qaida makes it legitimate for a Muslim individual to designate other Muslims as apostates and to kill them on the basis of that designation. And this is an ideology that's been spread globally and it's what allows them to engage in such indiscriminate use of violence. So we are attacking an ideology, as well, but we would attack it successfully by paying attention to the local conditions and it makes people, even briefly, think that this is somehow going to be an answer for them.

QUESTION: Well, if this is a global ideology, do you think the United States is better equipped in the Western world to deal with this ideology inside -- you know, the extremist inside Islam or Islam itself. The Islamic world itself is the one ultimately who has to deal with this. And when you have a military solution to this kind of conflict, you exacerbate the situation and you make it more difficult to deal because there is always internal dialogue in the Islamic world about the direction they need to be going. And the experience and Iraq, I don't think it's proving that the military solution and intervention is always helpful in this so-called global war or whatever.

DR. DORAN: I think if we divided into, as the military says, direct and indirect actions, -- direct actions being hard and military power -- then I agree with you and I think the military agrees with you 100 percent that the -- that ultimately this will be won through indirect action. And it will be won working together with our Muslim allies. But it is a struggle that we share. It really is a struggle between our Muslim allies -- the vast majority of Muslims who are moderate and opposed to al-Qaida -- and us. It is really people who value -- who share all the same values and respect for human life against those who don't. The indirect lines are going to be the ones in the end that are going to be decisive. There still is a role for military power. And the story of what's happened in Al Anbar over the last, you know, eight to 10 months shows you that military action can be quite effective. It's using it effectively together with the other kinds of power that you're discussing.

QUESTION: About the Islamo-fascism, my understanding that you are -- are you advocating for the Administration to abandon such use and whether this use is going to be continued or not?

DR. DORAN: I'm advocating for all of us to pay close attention to the local conditions, while being aware of the fact that there is a global ideology out there.

QUESTION: (Inaudible) on the narrative or not since you elaborated that this should not be used and it's not helpful, you said.

DR. DORAN: I personally am not going to use it. I'm going to focus on the local conditions.

MODERATOR: We're going to take one more question from here and then I'm going to go to New York.

QUESTION: Roula Ayoubi from *BBC Arabic*. How happy are you with the performance of the Iraqi Government in

responding to the local needs and how do you see the role of this government?

DR. DORAN: The Iraqi Government, particularly the security forces, have been doing wonderful work. Going back to what I just said about this being something that we have to fight together. We are really heartened by what we've seen, both in terms of the Iraqi security services standing up and taking on this fight and also the groups of concerned local citizens who are standing up and asking to be part of the fight and to also take on positions within the security services. So the general trend is positive. I think the experts in the Department of Defense are saying that we have a -- we've got some distance to go -- probably, you know, somewhere in the vicinity of two years before we can see security services that are fully capable of doing this all by themselves. But the trend is very positive.

MODERATOR: Okay. Go ahead, New York.

QUESTION: My name is Sezai Kalayci from *Zaman* newspapers for Turkey. So, I don't know, do you have any idea about the PKK terrorist group? I want to ask all this reason if it was the PKK or what do you think about the future in Iraq for the PKK terror group?

DR. DORAN: Thanks. I can only quote the President on that question and say that we share with the Turkish Government a deep concern about the PKK and we share that concern together with the Iraqi Government. And we are looking forward to cooperating with the Turkish Government and with the Iraqi Government to bringing a resolution to the problem.

QUESTION: Hi, my name is Arshad Mahmud and I represent the daily *Prothom Alo* of Bangladesh. Your title says that you are the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Support to Public Diplomacy and I expected you to focus more on how public diplomacy can help the problems related to al-Qaida and other extremist groups. And I agree with this gentleman that you attached more importance to the success of the surge in undercutting al-Qaida.

Do you personally feel -- and I also see that you are from the academia, you were a professor at Princeton. Do you sincerely believe that the military might can actually defeat these problems? Because worldwide, the American foreign policy is perceived to be lopsided: It helps the people like Israel, the Government of Israel vis-à-vis the Palestinians; and also, it supports the repressive regimes in the Middle East. And that's how all these al-Qaida and other groups have come up. And if you even -- I take for argument's sake that if you defeat them, there will be another group that will be launched from somewhere else because they are fed up with these kind of policies. And how you do deal with this as a person from public diplomacy? Thank you.

DR. DORAN: Well, public diplomacy is about listening to people as well as explaining our own -- our policies to them. And what I was just advocating here was that we need to listen very carefully to what people are saying locally and that these local concerns are as important for understanding people's perceptions of the United States.

The view that you just presented about the perception of the United States, I don't think is accurate. And I think the events in al-Anbar really refute what -- the position that you just described, because our policy toward Israel hasn't changed in the last eight months. And yet, we have thousands and thousands of Muslims in al-Anbar who, just a few months ago, were hostile to the United States, who have shifted and are now cooperating with it openly and freely.

So you know, it's not the big picture that changed there. What changed was, I think, our understanding of local needs and

the way in which we engaged with the local population. What we're really dealing with there is not -- the deepest sources of hostility to the United States in Iraq have to do with Iraqis' perception of the Iraqi political system and their place in it. I mean, this is a very local question about who is going to run Iraq and what processes they're going to use to do that. And it was our understanding of that, I think, and our engagement with local people about their concerns that allowed us to provide the security that then gave them the ability to counter al-Qaida.

QUESTION: Can I follow that up? I mean, don't you believe -- because I read, all the experts are saying that military solution is not the solution; we have to deal with other issues. That's precisely the --

DR. DORAN: Yeah, that's absolutely the case that the -- that this problem -- this problem cannot be solved purely by military or even primarily by military means. It's -- as I said to the other gentleman, it has to be solved first through indirect means by working with our allies in a number of different ways. But there still is a role; we can't escape the fact that there is a hardened core of al-Qaida operatives out there who are going to use violence against us regardless of our policies. And in dealing with them, I think the military tool is an important tool.

MODERATOR: Okay. We'll go to New York next. I would ask that you try to limit follow-up until everyone here has had a chance to ask their question. But go ahead and we'll get to everyone that we possibly can.

QUESTION: Thank you. My name is Sara Hussein and I work for the *Saudi Press Agency*. Talking about different methods that you could use aside from military might, I wanted to ask you about the Saudis' so-called rehabilitation program. I assume that you're familiar with it. And I wonder whether you could discuss at all about your opinion of the program and whether you think it provides some kind of model for an alternative to -- or a way to counter ideology and whether you believe that the Takfiri ideology or a follower of that ideology can be rehabilitated.

DR. DORAN: I don't have at my fingertips a lot of details about the Saudi program. What you can see, though, is that there's been -- what I can see quite clearly is that has been, in the last two years, a very significant effort on the part of the Saudi Government to combat the ideology and also to limit the flow of finances to this global network. And we see, you know, clear benefits on a number of levels from those efforts.

The -- I think when you start talking -- if I just can address your question in sort of general terms, when you talk to specific representatives of specific countries, you find that the local conditions make it difficult to come up with a one size fits all method for dealing with this ideology. You know, the methods that the Government of Singapore use are not going to be the same as the Government of Egypt. They're not going to be the same as the Government of Saudi Arabia. So I don't know that we can look at the Saudi example and say that we can apply that elsewhere and especially us, the United States. But we're certainly happy to see what they're doing.

MODERATOR: I'm going to go with New York. Go ahead, New York.

QUESTION: Yury Saykin, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, of Russia: Have you ever heard about al-Qaida activity in Africa or Latin America?

DR. DORAN: I'm sorry, have I heard about al-Qaida activity in Africa and in Latin America?

QUESTION: Yeah, right.

DR. DORAN: Sure, al-Qaida activity in North Africa, we can see on the headlines of the papers today. In sub-Saharan Africa, there is activity, certainly. As far as Latin America, I do not myself -- I haven't myself heard of significant al-Qaida activity there, but I'm not a great expert, so I'd prefer if you didn't quote me as saying that. There may well be, but I'd refer you to some of our Latin America experts and some of our counterterrorism experts to see whether they're there. They're certainly working around the globe so I would assume they're there, but I don't have any information about that.

QUESTION: Umit Enginsoy with Turkish *NTV Television*. Just one on the PKK, which the President has qualified as a common enemy of the United States, Iraq and Turkey. You say the war on al-Qaida will be won on the local level, and this includes military and non-military elements. And together with the surge, you have also employed some new counterinsurgency tactics and policies. Actually, some of them are given in this famous book. The thing is, I was wondering, if you are -- and you have also increased intelligence sharing and other -- closer talks with the Turks for cooperation in PKK.

Now, when talking to the Turks, are you talking about your experience, your counterinsurgency tactics? Are you advising them anything that could be useful for the fight against PKK?

DR. DORAN: I think that counterinsurgency doctrine points you in the direction that I was discussing; that is to say, it points you to the local community and it sees the fight against terrorism as a fight for the loyalty of the local community. So I think that's a principle that's a good one to start with everywhere.

As far as the specifics about the negotiations with the Turks, I would defer -- I would refer you to those who are carrying out those negotiations to see what they're saying.

QUESTION: This seems to be the basic question because I'm just interested in the al-Qaida. So can you tell me -- this is Sang Min Lee from South Korea's *Future Korea Journal*. Can you tell me, how do you understand the al-Qaida ideology? How can you define about al-Qaida ideology? And then I think to counter the al-Qaida ideology, we must understand what caused al-Qaida to spread out over the world. So what do you think are the main cause to the al-Qaida ideology spread all over the world?

DR. DORAN: Right. Let me start with the distinctive characteristics of the ideology. I think there are three. I certainly hope there are three. I can get to one and two, and maybe three will come as I'm talking.

The first one is the Takfirism, as I said before, the branding other Muslims as non-Muslims. Everything that they do flows from that. They say that the leaders of Muslim states are not Muslims because they're carrying out laws other than the Sharia, therefore they're apostates, therefore they can be killed. The individuals who are cooperating with those states or working for them or working for apostates instead of for Muslims, and therefore they are apostates themselves and can be killed, and so on and so forth. They say that it is incumbent upon -- that the Islamic world is under threat from the West, and from the United States in particular, and it's the duty of every Muslim to take up a position of defense, as they see it, against the West. So that's the first element.

The second element, I think, is the notion of a vanguard. They have taken this -- you know, this is something for scholars to

go look at. I don't know exactly where it's come from, but they've taken some traditions, some canonical Islamic traditions, and from that fashioned the notion that there will always be at any time in history a very small group of true Muslims whose job it is to pave the way for the rest of the community. A kind of victorious sect is what they call it. And this -- so what this victorious sect is a vanguard whose job it is to lead the rest of the world out of this darkness that it's in -- the rest of the Islamic world.

The third component, I think, is this secret cellular struggle or the secret cellular organization. That's not really part of the ideology, but the ideology encourages the creation of it.

Now, why is it spread all over the world? It's, I think, the simplicity of the message together with the notion of vanguard makes it very attractive. I think the simplicity of the message, the call to violence and the notion of a vanguard makes it very attractive to people. It's a message that can be translated -- a global message that can be translated into local circumstances very, very easily. Because what it says to an individual is the Muslim world, the Islamic community, is under threat; the threat is grave; the very existence of the Islamic community is at stake; and the only way to save it is to take drastic action now.

So it divides the world up into black and white; it says who's on the black side, who's on the white side, and it says here's how we do things. And that message has appeal to a lot of people in a lot of different circumstances. If you are just a young man who is confused in Europe and you're uncertain of your identity, you're uncertain of your place in the world, and suddenly you're presented with this option of adopting a path that will make you a hero for your people, that will allow you to express some of the violent feelings that you may have, then it's attractive to you. If you're just a thug and you just want to commit acts of violence and have people tell you you're doing a good thing, it's going to be attractive to you. And so on and so forth. I mean, in some places like in al-Anbar, you see that there are people who have a set of local concerns, local concerns that feel under threat and who may feel that a temporary alliance with al-Qaida is useful because they see some benefit to themselves from the violence of al-Qaida. And so they'll make a temporary deal. That's what we saw. That was what was happening with some of the groups in al-Anbar prior to the -- prior to General Petraeus' set of policies. So it's very adaptable to a lot of different characteristics, a lot of different circumstances.

QUESTION: Thank you very much. My name is David Morgan. I'm with *Reuters*. And I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about the bombings in Algeria this week and it would be interesting to know your views on what you think al-Qaida in Maghreb is trying to accomplish, what its intents are locally, what sort of messages it seems to be sending out through this sort of action and what possible implications there may be for Europe.

DR. DORAN: I think that one of the reasons -- we look at it from a global point of view. One of the reasons for these actions is an attempt by al-Qaida to get back in the headlines. One of the purposes of any bombing by a terrorist group is just to -- is just publicity and to get their message out through the publicity. So I think that the organization as a whole has been suffering of late as a result of some of the successes that we've had in Iraq and so wants to grab the headlines again.

It's interesting to note, you know, al-Qaida would like us -- would like Muslims in the world as a whole to see it as it sees itself; that is, as the vanguard representing true Islam to all Muslims. And as part of creating that perception, it has a policy of carrying out mergers with local groups. So it merged with the group in Algeria to form al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and it recently merged with the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group.

It's doing that to try to suggest that it's moving forward rather than backward. The recent merger with the LIFG is an

interesting one, because the LIFG is a very small group, and so the significance, the overall significance, of that merger is not great. I mean, it doesn't create the perception of a movement that is sweeping North Africa.

The effect for -- the implications for Europe are significant, however, because when a little group, even a little group like the LIFG merges with a group like al-Qaida, we see a couple of things happen. One is you see, at least on the basis of the example of the AQIM, you see debates within the leadership about the desirability of aligning with al-Qaida.

In the AQIM we had a division between those who thought this was a good way to go and those who argued against it. Those who argued against it argued against it very much for the reasons that I gave here about why people rejected al-Qaida in al-Anbar: They believe it won't be responsive to local conditions; they believe that it's going to bring down the wrath of the local population on them for carrying out indiscriminate killing. And then you have others that believe in the global mission of al-Qaida and they take it in a different direction.

That has a lot of serious implications for Europe, because those small groups, despite being small, are still lethal, lethal and dangerous. And Europe has lots of North Africans in it, so it creates a threat, an additional threat, for the Europeans.

MODERATOR: We have time for one or two more questions.

QUESTION: Thank you. My name is Naseem Stanazai. I work for *Voice of America Afghanistan Service*.

As you know, sir, in Afghanistan there are -- more than 55 percent of the population are Pashtuns. And on the other side of the border, in Waziristan (inaudible) probably over 30 millions are Pashtuns. And Taliban and al-Qaida are roaming in that -- those areas. And one of the reason that they reorganized or regrouped could be the local populations help with them.

Is there any -- and recently we heard that there could be some sort of diplomatic solution or peace with them. But in al-Anbar, as you said, the people have their local concerns. So these people also have their local concerns. Is there any active diplomacy going on that at least al-Qaida can be separated from Taliban in those areas?

DR. DORAN: I think on that I'll defer you to the people who are most closely involved with the negotiations with the Pakistanis and with the Afghan Government. That falls a little bit outside of my area of expertise.

MODERATOR: Thank you all for your time, and thank you, Sir, for your remarks. This event is now concluded.

DR. DORAN: Thanks very much



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