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CIA'S STRATEGY IN THE FACE OF EMERGING CHALLENGES:
REMARKS BY CIA DIRECTOR JOHN O. BRENNAN

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Welcome and Introduction:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

GENERAL ALLEN: Ladies and gentlemen, Excellencies, I know we have ambassadors in present today in our midst, welcome to Brookings. On behalf of our President Strobe Talbot and the Co-Director of the 21st Century Security and Intelligence Dr. Michael O'Hanlon we are honored that you are able to join us today and this afternoon. As well it is indeed my honor to welcome our distinguished visitor today the Director of Central Intelligence, the Honorable John Brennan.

It is the nature of introductions of men like John Brennan that it is not possible to do justice to their careers in the public domain. But his storied career has been a long running sequence of some of the most demanding and important assignments our nation can call upon our intelligence officers to perform. He would establish himself as one of the foremost authorities on the Middle East and South Asia and he would lead counter terrorism analysis at the CIA. He would serve as the Chief of Staff to one of his predecessors at the CIA the legendary George Tennant. And Director Brennan would lay the ground work for what is today the National Counter Terrorism Center or NCTC that incomparable and indispensable entity for dealing with the scourge of terrorism worldwide. And he would serve as a chief of station in the Middle East. And then after a long and distinguished career Director Brennan would retire from the CIA in 2005. Now he failed retirement and the President wouldn't leave him alone and brought him back into the government in what for my money was one of the wisest appointments of the entire Obama administration. In that role Director Brennan would hold one of the most important and volatile portfolios in the National Security Council, Homeland Security and Counter Terrorism. And here I would have the opportunity to meet and come to respect enormously this great American.

Now once again we can't discuss the specifics of what he did on any given day but let me provide witness here today that while I was the Deputy Commander at the Central Command, a Command which embraces an area of the world from which some of the most dangerous terrorist's threats emerged to the lives and interests of our country many hours were spent dealing with threat after threat and target after target. And here will be my point though ladies and gentlemen the

President of the United States, our government and the American people were so well served by this man of action of enormous character, of towering intellect and unparalleled regional and functional wisdom and experience. I can tell you all many were the times that I would stand up at the end of a session with Director Brennan and whether I was coming in remotely from Tampa or from Cabell or was personally present with him in the White House Sit Room many were the times that I would get up from the session and thank God that it was John Brennan at the heart of this storm. Then at the NCS and now leading the magnificent men and women of the Central Intelligence Agency. So we can all sleep more soundly tonight because John Brennan is standing on the rampart of American security and we are blessed by his service and we are honored by his presence here today.

You'll also note on the stage this afternoon with Director Brennan is Brookings Senior Fellow Bruce Riedel who leads the Intelligence Project here at Brookings within the center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence. Bruce has authored several superb volumes on Pakistan, on Al-Qaeda, on covert operations and many very valuable articles which have helped to shape the thinking in this town on a number of the most daunting security and intelligence challenges and issues confronting the United States today. But beyond that Bruce Riedel is in his own right a legendary intelligence professional whose incomparable service has helped to keep America safe for many, many years. It is truly my honor to be one of his colleagues here at Brookings and certainly one of his admirers as well.

So with that gentlemen thank you very much for this session today. Director thank you for your presence. And may I invite you please for your remarks.

MR. BRENNAN: Thank you very much John for those too kind remarks and I want to thank you for your stellar service as a Marine Officer, as a military commander, as a civilian leader for many, many years of heroic work and sacrifice to the service of this nation. Thank you all who are here today very much for being here. It certainly is a pleasure to be back at Brookings and to be among some very good friends and colleagues that I see here in the audience and I must say that Bruce Riedel and I have known each other for over 35 years. We looked much different 35 years ago I can assure you. I very much look forward to my conversation with Bruce this afternoon and to

addressing your questions.

Bur first I would like to start off with some brief remarks. I had spoken recently in public settings about the many overseas threats that we face as a nation and the importance and challenges associated with dealing with countries like Russia, China, Iran and North Korea and I'll be happy to address your questions about such issues when we get to the Q&A session. Bur for now I'd like to focus my remarks on how CIA is working to meet these challenges. Specifically, the challenges of ungoverned spaces and of the digital revolution, two defining features of global instability that keep us quite busy at Langley and around the globe. Clearly the world in 2016 is witnessing a significant amount of instability and has been for some time. Now instability is a rather vague and antiseptic term but we all know that it carries some very real costs especially in terms of humanitarian suffering, rising extremist violence and diminishing freedom throughout the community of nations. In fact, Freedom House this year reported an acceleration in a decade long slide in democracy around the world. The number of countries showing a decline in freedom for the year, 72, was the largest since the downward trend began.

The challenges we face today are unprecedented in both their variety and their complexity. They are highly fluid, constantly shifting and taking on new dimensions. They are increasingly interconnected, testing our ability to anticipate how developments in one realm will shape events in another.

When CIA analysts consider the trends that are shaping the world's events in the coming decade they look at dynamics such as rapid population growth and urbanization in the developing world. They look at technological advances that vastly outpace the ability of governments to manage them as well as slow economic growth globally. Now if these trends hold we could see greater volatility an increase demands on nation states which are already under the greatest stress we have seen in many years, perhaps going back to the period following the first World War. Governments worldwide have found that handling the daunting array of 21 century challenges on their own those related to economics, security, technology, demographics, climate change and so on is increasingly difficult if not impossible to handle on their own.

The United States and other nations are lending assistance to many of these countries so that they can better deal with these pressures and maintain cohesion. And just as the various departments of our government provide and aide and expertise to their counterparts in weakened states the Agency plays a role as well. In many cases CIA helps to enhance the capability of foreign security and intelligence services so that they can increase the quality and quantity of intelligence they provide to us to help address threats of mutual interest such as violent extremism within and across their borders.

But our assistance and partnership come with conditions. These intelligence and security services must adhere to standards of professional conduct and respect for human rights in order to maintain that partnership with us. And nowhere do we find greater challenges to effective governance then in the region that stretches from the Maghreb to South Asia. Based with rapidly growing and youthful populations, North Africa and the Middle East have some of the world's highest unemployment among 12 to 24 year olds. These trends foster the appeal of militant ideas in states that are already struggling to govern territory and meet the very basic needs of their people.

Not surprisingly, this is the region where we have seen a dangerous rise in ungoverned spaces. The kind of places where the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant was able to establish its reign of terror. And these are precisely the kinds of places in which CIA must operate. To provide the President and his senior advisors with the insights they need they Agency collects critical intelligence wherever there is a need. And when we must acquire ground truth in austere and difficult locations where there is no official U.S. Government presence or established liaison partner the conventional approach of operating out of a station is not an option.

Given this imperative one of the things that we are looking at is how we can enhance further our expeditionary capabilities which depend on the ability to operate with agility and a light footprint. And because of many of our greatest national security challenges they have emerged in these ungoverned spaces and are likely to do so in the coming years, CIA must be expeditionary in both spirit and in action. This is a tradition that stretches back to the second World War when the Agencies predecessors and the Office of Strategic Services parachuted behind

enemy lines and occupied Europe. And only 15 days after the September 11th attacks teams of CIA officers were the first Americans on Afghan soil leaving our nations response by taking the fight to Al-Qaeda.

And whether in expeditionary mission or in our day to day operations we have seen since 9/11 that the power of integration is the single most decisive factor in optimizing our intelligence capabilities across the board. To that end, the Agency last year launched a modernization program which is a strategic effort to better integrate and leverage CIA's unique as well as its many strengths. The centerpiece of our modernization initiative was the creation of 10 mission centers. The line organizations that now bring together our operational, analytical, technical, digital and support disciplines. Six of these centers focus on regions of the world such as Africa and the Near East. And four focus on functional issues such as counter terrorism and counter proliferation. We needed to create an architecture that would best position the Agency to respond quickly and effectively to current and future challenges. Much like the Department of Defense did in the aftermath of the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

Today, our analysts, our case officers and our technical and digital and support officers work together within these centers in much the same way they have learned to collaborate in stations around the world. And that means we can come up to speed far more quickly on any breaking issue that might emerge somewhere on the globe. Beyond the challenge of ungoverned spaces, the digital revolution is perhaps the defining feature of our unstable world in both the most positive and negative ways. The cyber realm and information technology have fundamentally transformed the most prevalent means of human interaction. These technologies have given rise to new information based industries that have displaced older ones sometimes deepening gaps within societies and between the developed and underdeveloped worlds.

They enable social interaction that can be swift and destabilizing as we saw in the so called Arab Spring. And they invest individuals with unprecedented influence and even power for better and for worse. Cyber makes it possible for our adversaries to sabotage vital infrastructure without ever it landing and agent on our shores. And we have seen how our own citizens can be

indoctrinated by terrorist groups online to commit terrible acts of violence here in our homeland.

Moreover, these technologies are transforming how an intelligence service which is a quintessential information based enterprise how it conducts its business. And we at CIA fully understand that how we rise to the challenge of the digital age will determine the extent of our future success. That's why last year as part of our modernization program we created a directorate of digital innovation, the first new Agency directorate in more than a half century. This new directorate is at the center of the Agencies effort to hasten the adoption of digital solutions into every aspect of our work. It is accelerating the integration of our digital and cyber capabilities across all of our mission areas. Espionage, all source analysis, open source intelligence, liaison engagement, covert action, counter intelligence. The directorate is deeply involved in our efforts to defend against foreign cyber-attacks. It has been an important role to play in human intelligence collection by helping safeguard the cover of our clandestine operatives in the information age.

Equally important the directorate oversees our open source enterprise, a unit dedicated to collecting, analyzing, and disseminating publically available information of value to national security. Multiple elements of the Agency in the past have responded to the challenges of the digital area. But if we are to excel in the wired world the digital domain must be part of every aspect of our mission.

In practical terms it means that our operations officers must be able to maintain their cover in a dynamic digital environment and collect in it as well. It means that our analysts must be able to quickly process and analyze enormous volumes of data. And it means that our IT experts must be able to harden our networks against intrusion and better protect our very important and sensitive sources and methods.

We at CIA and our colleagues throughout government are doing what we can to meet the challenges of the digital revolution. But even whole of government solutions are simply not enough when it comes to cyber. That's because some 85 per cent of the internet is owned and operated by the private sector which is why we need to have an honest, vigorous dialogue between public and private sector stakeholders about governments proper role in the cyber domain. In that

vein we need to have a more robust and comprehensive national discourse about how the government and the private sector must work together to safeguard the security, the reliability, the resilience and the prosperity of the digital domain. Such public, private dialogue and partnerships will be increasingly important as technologies advance and new fields of endeavor emerge as we move further into the 21 century.

It is truly a tremendous honor for me every day to carry the title of Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. It is my privilege and pleasure to work with some of the most dedicated American patriots that we have who everyday put themselves forward sometimes at great risk to themselves in order to protect their fellow citizens. It is an Agency that I am exceptionally proud of and as long as I'm Director of Central Intelligence Agency I will work with my colleagues to do everything possible to make sure the CIA is able to play an essential role in securing the future of this great country. Thank you so much, I look forward to your questions.

MR. RIEDEL: Thank you very much. I also want to add to General Allen's thanks to you John for coming here today and spending time with us. I think it is vital in our country especially in an election year that we hear from people like you explaining what the issues are and how our country is dealing with them. And I do want to say one other thing, yes John and I have known each other for more than 35 years. 35 years ago we both had hair. Other than that I don't think a lot has changed certainly in the Middle East and South Asia. I want to go right to that.

He talked about stepping backwards in terms of the freedom index and how we have fewer free countries today than we did just four or five years ago. Of course the biggest failure of the freedom index in the last five years has been the catastrophic outcome of the Arab Spring. When the Arab Spring began I argued and many others did that it was an existential threat to Al-Qaeda and Islamic jihadism. That this was a revolution that showed there was an alternative to jihad. Five years later it is pretty hard to make that case anymore and as we think about the business of countering the Islamic narrative, the Islamic ideology how do we get around that central problem today?

MR. BRENNAN: You're absolutely right. The Arab Spring was viewed I think with

great hope in many parts of the world including, especially by those in the Middle East who were suffering in many instances under great repression. I think there was obviously a very strong and widespread populace movement that they knew what they were opposed to in terms of corruption. The fact that the authoritarian regimes were not able to take care of the basic needs of the people and the tinder was very dry throughout the Middle East and that's when the Tunisian fruit salesman self-immolated it was the spark that set off the entire region. So there was great consensus about what they were opposed to but given the lack of political institutions and any type of political freedoms that existed there they were not the institutions that enabled the new wave of individuals who were aspiring to change the system for the better to capitalize on. And so Al-Qaeda, ISIL, none of them were responsible for the Arab Spring but they took great advantage of the aftermath of the Arab Spring and the inability of the new governments that emerged to be able to adapt to what the new reality was which was great pressure from the streets. But the lack of those political institutions, those democratic institutions that I think a lot of people aspired to just allowed continued chaos in some areas as well as just a failure of the subsequent governments to be able to address the needs. I must say when I look at the problems in the Middle East and South Asia, the economic, political, social, sectarian challenges are formidable. So it is not as though anybody had a light switch that they could just flip. This is a process and a journey and I think sometimes the expectations including here in Washington that democracy was all the sudden going to break out and flourish once the authoritarian leaders were toppled they were way out of sync with what the reality of the Middle East is.

MR. RIEDEL: Let me focus in on one partner that you know very well in particular. In a recent interview with Al Arabiya you said that the CIA has an excellent cooperation with Saudi Arabia and you have really strong partners in King Salman Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Lab and Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman. And I agree with that. There is no doubt that Saudi Arabia has helped foil more than one attack on the United States and you probably know more than dozens on the United States.

At the same time many Americans and many Muslims would argue that the kind of

Islam that is propagated in Saudi Arabia, called Wahhabism, is the very sea in which Al-Qaeda and Islamic jihad ideology is born. Though on the one hand there is no doubt in the strict counter terrorism arena the Saudis are a crucial and important ally. But in the kind of ideological narrative and in the whole business of what is Islam about, many would argue they are the problem. As the director of Central Intelligence your main focus is on problem one, not on fixing Saudi Arabia. But do you see this contradiction and how would you think about explaining to Americans how we square this circle?

MR. BRENNAN: I will emphasize just the importance of security intelligence relationship that we have with Saudi Arabia. They went through their own 9/11 in 2003, 2004. Al-Qaeda killed a lot of Saudis including their security intelligence professionals. And so Saudi Arabia is among our closest counterterrorism partners. The Mabath and the GIP, the General Intelligence Presidency are really very close partners with us. But you're right that the Saudi government and leadership today has inherited a history whereby there have been a number of individuals both inside of Saudi Arabia as well as outside who have embraced a rather fundamentalist, extremist in some areas, version of the Islamic faith. Which has allowed individuals who then move toward violence and terrorism to exploit that and capitalize on it. As you well know with the Iranian revolution in 1979, 1980, the Iranian's were pushing out a lot of their propagation and possibilization as they were funding a number of elements abroad through Africa and other areas. And the Saudi government was trying to counter that in this competition in many of these areas. Unfortunately, I think a lot of these very fundamentalists realms of Saudi supported organizations were fully exploited by individuals who wanted to use that as a spring board for militancy, extremism and terrorism. And when I've talked to my Saudi partners they recognize that they have an issue and a problem that they have to deal with. Again it is getting back to there is no light switch that can transition a country like Saudi Arabia that just a generation or so ago was really anchored in a very traditional environment. There has been explosive growth in Saudi Arabia in terms of they have all the trappings of modernization but yet the environment, the culture, the society and the religious traditions really have not yet adapted to 21st century world which is one of the things the Saudis are

having to deal with.

MR. RIEDEL: You mentioned they had their own Al-Qaeda moment a decade ago. It looks like they might be on the verge of another Al-Qaeda moment. They just had on the Fourth of July bombings in three Saudi cities simultaneously. Now that's to the good work of the Saudi security services the number of casualties were relatively small. One attack in particular, the attack on the Prophet's Mosque in Medina stands out as unprecedented. Al-Qaeda as its worst never attacked the two holy mosques. No one has claimed credit for that attack so far. Do you think you know who is responsible for it and are you worried about the trajectory of terrorism inside the kingdom today?

MR. BRENNAN: I think that is the hallmarks of ISIL. Daesh as the Saudis and the Arabs call them. Although Al-Qaeda still presents a threat, whether it be Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula which is really anchored in Yemen, there is Al-Qaeda inside of Syria and other areas, ISIL presents a very, very serious threat not just to Europe and here in the United States with all of their efforts to reach out but inside of Saudi Arabia. And so those three attacks were, I think, the work of ISIL. You're right the attack at Medina is troubling. It was directed against Saudi security forces that were there and several security members were killed. But one of the things that Saudi Arabia has to do is to make sure that the two holy places in Islam, Medina and Mecca, are going to be open and available to Muslims worldwide. And the Saudis have to deal every year with the major hajj as well as just throughout the year in terms of umrah and other visitors that come to the kingdom. So they have a tremendous amount of security that's been designated to it but there is no security that is 100 percent risk free. And so that's why Crown Prince Mohammed Naïf who also is the Minister of Interior who has been a very close partner of ours really has focused on trying to maintain internal security and to counter this growth of ISIL's presence inside Saudi Arabia and along its borders.

MR. RIEDEL: Let me turn for a minute to some of the tactics we've used in counter terrorism particularly in the Obama administration. Let me start with one they haven't used. Seven and a half years ago President Obama came into office and I think very wisely decided that so called enhanced interrogation tactics would no longer be used, no longer water pouring. There are voices

now in America that are crying out to go back to that. Would we be safer using these techniques? What is your view on that judgement call?

MR. BRENNAN: Well there are a couple of aspects to this. One is that as you all know the Agency's detention interrogation program I believe was instrumental in keeping this country safe in the aftermath of 9/11. Were mistakes made in it absolutely. But the Agency was directed and authorized to carry out this program to the best of its capabilities even though it had never done it before. My view is that despite others who may argue differently you cannot establish cause and effect between the application of these EIT's and any reliable information, credible information that came out from these individuals. There were individuals who were subjected to these EIT's that subsequent to that they provided information that was in fact, credible and worthwhile for pursuit. But the Agency suffered at great cost because of that program. So just from an institutional perspective I tend to be protective of the Agency as a whole and the men and women of the Agency to make sure that we're able to preserve and enhance the Agency's ability to carry out all of our responsibilities. At the same time though I believe that those EIT's are not necessary. I know that there has been calls for waterboarding or worse whatever else. As long as I'm the Director of CIA we're not going to go down that road again. The Army's field manual is the basis for the debriefing and interrogations that take place. We provide support to other elements of the government whether it be domestic or the ones that are operating overseas but I do not believe that it is necessary to use those EIT's nor do I believe it is advisable from the standpoint of the Agency's future as well as this country's reputation and standing in the world.

MR. RIEDEL: You said something very important in your opening remarks that reflect on this. You said there are partnerships with foreign liaison services. We try to hold them to the same standards we have. Actually I don't have to imagine, from my own experience I realize that's daunting task to put it mildly. Could you expand a little bit on that because I don't think most American's realize that the CIA is not just working with intelligence liaison partners and giving them a free pass on how they deal with individuals who maybe terrorists, maybe democracy workers at the same time.

MR. BRENNAN: Well I think it should be understood that the Agency in the course of its duties will have the opportunity indeed the imperative to work with other organizations or individuals who may not adhere to the same standards that we do. However, we have some minimally acceptable standards that we insist that other governments intelligence security services adhere to as well as individuals we might work with individually. So it is not as though they can do what they want and continue to work with us. I have spoken to presidents abroad as well as heads of services about some of the abuses of human rights that have been perpetrated by their officers and I have told them we're going to cut off relations with your service unless there are changes or unless a certain person is removed from a chain of command. Sometimes there is hesitance and we make good on that threat or in most instances they oblige our request or our demands. It is critically important that the professionalism of these services is maintained. And so when we get reports of human rights abuses, extrajudicial killings we thoroughly investigate it and we want to make sure that we're not going to be working with those individuals in services who have stooped to the level of the terrorists that they are seeking to thwart.

MR. RIEDEL: I'm sure every journalist in this room is now dying for me to ask can you be specific and tell us what country but I'm not going to go there. I have a different question about a different tactic and that's so-called drones. This administration inherited a drone program but it then stepped up activities quite remarkably. Most recently the administration I think at the DNI's offices put out a report on how many drone operations there have been. I think the number of drone operations was 473 not counting in combat zones and that the number of terrorists in those operations was somewhere around 2500. But it also said that somewhere between I think 64 and 116 civilians died in that operations as well. Seven and a half years after this administration started using drones how would you characterize their importance in the struggle against Al-Qaeda and now Islamic State? Have they been as I think many people would look at this administration and say this is the central weapon in the battle against these groups. Of course others are calling it a very controversial position. I'd like to hear your balance sheet on how vital this has been to the United States.

MR. BRENNAN: And those statistics that were recently put out they refer to counter terrorism operations carried out by the United States outside of areas of active hostilities and they include not just drone it could be fixed wing aircraft or something else to that's the aggregation of all of those operations. And the drones, the predators, the predator's reapers are tremendously capable platforms that provide a variety of capabilities to the U.S. government as they are operated overseas. Tremendous ISR which is Intelligence Surveillance Recognance because they have the ability to watch areas with full motion video as well as to have technical collection capability that they can be in an area that may be denied to us otherwise. They are not manned although they are piloted remotely and they have what's called persistent dwell which allows there to be the acquisition of that intelligence either visual or technical for a sustained period of time which allows you to have much greater fidelity about what it is that is happening on the ground. Those platforms give you the opportunity to use the intelligence that it acquires and correlate it with other intelligence that you may have whether it is human intelligence on the ground or other technical capabilities. And so it is that interaction between those intelligence feeds that's very, very powerful. Also these platforms have the ability to deliver ordinance onto a target. The fact that they can watch in a persistent fashion on a target they have the ability then to observe exactly who is there and make some determinations and decisions about who it is and that's why the President has come out and has said that we need near certainty of the target who it is as well as near certainty that there will be no collateral. Now none of this is risk free. But these platforms have been able to use the great intelligence capability marry it then with a kinetic capability so it is called fine fix and finish that the U.S. government and these are platforms that have been integrated into the U.S. military for quite some time. And it has such precision and they have laser guided weapons that allow those remote pilots to be able to target the individual or the location with tremendous precision as well as be able to observe whether or not the situation on the ground has changed from the point of a trigger to the point of impact. And if the situation has changed and if there are civilians who happen to wonder into that field of fire the remote pilots have the ability to redirect, to shift cold that ordinance. And so they can continue to watch over the target while that strike takes place as well as to look at it afterward and continue to

observe it from the standpoint of what the battle damage assessment is going to be. So it is tremendously capable instrument for intelligence collection as well as an instrument of war that not just the United States but other countries now are using it helps to protect pilots, they're not flying in these areas. It has limitations but as the technological advances are incorporated into one's military the drones, the predators are key to making sure that we are able to carry out these operations when necessary but with the greatest accuracy and precision.

MR. RIEDEL: Many of the critics argue that this is operating in a realm where there is no international legal authority and to a certain extent by definition when you operate in another countries airspace without their approval you're in that territory. You mentioned that other countries are going to be in the drone business too. I don't think it's hard to imagine Russia using drones in the Ukraine some day or China using drones in Tibet or someplace like that. It seems to be that these are kind of irreconcilable. I find it very hard to imagine a Geneva style treaty in which countries all come down and say here are the rules by which drones will operate. Which puts even more burden on our government and how it handles going forward on this. I'm struck at how much President Obama seems to see that burden as his burden and to get that done in his 8 years in office. He's been criticized for releasing these documents on the eve of the Fourth of July. I understand why you do that. Do you think there's going to be more coming from the White House on the parameters and the rule of engagement?

MR. BRENNAN: Well I give President Obama a lot of credit for what we've accomplished on the counter terrorism front but also for his willingness and keen interest in trying to be as open as possible not just with the American people but with the world about the counter terrorism operations this country has engaged in. And I think what he has done is take full ownership of the activities that took place under his leadership. He also I think is trying to say we have an established process here that we try to be as good as we can be in terms of following our process and procedures and we're going to be open with what it is that the results of these operations have been. I would make a point you said in your question when we operate in countries or country skies without their approval I would challenge that. Yes, these platforms just like a

manned aircraft could operate in countries airspace without their approval but the President has made very clear that what we need to do is to work with the countries where these terrorists reside and to gain their support, assistance and approval in the conduct of these operations. A lot of times these countries don't have the capability and they seek the support of the U.S. government and our tremendous counter terrorism capabilities. Sometimes these governments do not want to trumpet that cooperation and they try to keep it quiet. But I will just caution people to think that the United States goes into airspace abroad without engaging with foreign governments.

MR. RIEDEL: I'm going to come to the audience in just a few minutes so start thinking about your questions. One more question on drones. This May in Balochistan, Pakistan the United States carried out I think it's a drone operation which killed the head of the Afghan Taliban Mullah Mansour. It was a remarkable operation in several respects. It was the first time that the senior leadership of the Afghan Taliban had been targeted. It was the first time there had been an operation in Balochistan. But I think most interestingly the United States took credit publically for this right away and the United States military rather than the intelligence community was in the lead on this operation. Is that the future of where most drone operations are going to be in that kind of more military rather than CIA role? Are we going to see more operations in which the U.S. government stands up almost immediately and says yes we're responsible for this or are we still in the we're not quite ready to make that transition yet?

MR. BRENNAN: The President announced last week about the decision to maintain 8400 troops in Afghanistan because of the continued need for us to be able to support the Afghan government. And we have not just 8400 U.S. military but a lot of U.S. personnel who are working in Cabal in support of the Afghan people. And the Taliban and particularly its subgroup the Haqqanis have been determined and continue to attempt to carry out attacks and sometimes are successful against U.S. personnel inside of Afghanistan. The President has emphasized many times that he is going to do what is necessary in order to protect the security of the American people both here and abroad. And so the decision that was made to move against the head of the Taliban was one that was a very deliberate decision and I think all of these instances and maybe future opportunities will

have to be looked at in the context of what the circumstances are what the cost benefits are and what are the alternatives to taking some of these actions. The President has always said that if we have the opportunity to stop these attacks, stop these threats short of some type of kinetic strike we should do that. And more times than a lot of people give us credit for individuals are captured, arrested, detained rather than killed.

MR. RIEDEL: The wave of terrorism that we've seen either directed by the Islamic state or inspired by the Islamic state has been bad on both sides of the Atlantic but it was particularly bad in Western Europe in the last year in Paris and in Brussels. You talked about I think the phrase you used was the power of integration. In the wake of those attacks, many people argued that the European governments have done a rather poor job of integrating not only between themselves but even inside countries. I've noticed that France for example is now wanting to create an NCTC in France. Do you see much progress in tangible terms of European governments now realizing that integration is so critical? And then the question that comes up most recently the British decision to leave the European Union. The European Union doesn't have an intelligence service but it does service as a meeting ground for governments. Is that a step backwards on this process or should we be worried that it is a step backwards on this process.

MR. BRENNAN: Well I think the Europeans have made progress including since the horrific attacks in Paris and Belgium. But clearly more progress has to be made. We learned after 9/11 some very, very painful lessons about how the different parts of the U.S. government whether it be FBI, CIA, NSA and others needed to work better together. Not just from the standpoint of their business practices but also knitting together networks and databases and other things. And that was difficult and painful but we had one country and we had one leadership and so we were directed to do that. When you look at Europe and you look at the European Union there are currently 28 members soon to be I guess 27 that have separate legal systems, separate information technology systems, different practices as far as how they follow through on their privacy and civil liberty obligations and so they are trying to design an architecture that will allow the timely sharing of information but it does involve some legal policy, information technology and other types of

adjustments. We in the U.S. government we have engaged intensively with our European partners just over the past 6 months. Been out to Europe we've sat down and talked with them and shared some of our experiences with them. I think they're going to continue to make some progress but as you point out some of the countries themselves their internal and external services will not talk with one another; they're not knitted together. So there is still a fair amount of work that needs to be done but I do think it is going in the right direction but it needs to accelerate.

MR. RIEDEL: All right let's open it up to questions. Please identify yourself.

MR. LINGUS: Hi Director Brennan, Sean Lingus with FCW Magazine. I'm wondering in your recent reorganization DDI what effort you made if any to sync some of the cyber operations that you do at CIA with your brothers at NSA at Ft. Meade. Some people have said we're in sort of a pre-9/11 moment in terms of cyber and that coordination between intelligence agencies could greatly improve on that. I'm wondering how much the reorganization was focused on getting you guys on the same page.

MR. BRENNAN: We have had extensive interaction with our colleagues throughout the intelligence community, law enforcement community whether it be FBI, NSA and others in this cyber realm for many, many years. And this new directorate really encompasses many different things. There is the cyber security, there is how are we going to use this digital environment in order to advance our mission. A lot of people think that we were trying to replicate what NSA does. NSA's main purpose is signals intelligence which is the interceptive data in motion. So we do a lot of partnering with NSA and we have benchmarked against them and FBI and others. And there are a fair amount of groups that are multi agency in terms of their efforts. So as we grow we need to take a fresh look at how the government cyber and digital related entities are interoperating with one another. When I came back to the Agency about three and a half years ago one of the first things on my plate was to take a look at how the Agency handles cyber and digital issues. Because I thought we were a bit scattered inside the Agency and I knew that if we weren't more coherent and better organized internally we weren't going to be able to interoperate then with our partners effectively and efficiently. So we are going down this road. The digital main is the new frontier and that's why I

emphasize the importance of having this national consensus because there is still not agreement on what the government's role should be in this digital domain. For years we agreed on what government's role should be in the physical domain, maritime, aviation. But that digital main is still taking shape and there are wide, wide differences of view about the government's role there. And I want to make sure that the CIA is at least configured appropriately in order to be part of the eco system of the public and private sector so that we can ensure this nations security.

MR. RIEDEL: Right over here.

MR. SANDERS: Ron Sanders with Booz Allen. Director Brennan I have a mundane organizational question. You talked about restructuring the Agency into its 10 centers and in passing you mentioned Goldwater-Nichols and we know that it took our military at least a decade maybe longer to fully embrace this culture of jointness. Can you talk a little bit about what you're doing behind the scenes in the Agency to make sure this isn't just rearranging the deck chairs that you really are reinventing the culture at CIA to something that's collaborative and more integrative?

MR. BRENNAN: Well you can talk a lot about integrating across the various mission areas and encourage that type of integration. My view was unless you really take some tangible steps to change organizational structures, processes, practices you're still going to have a lot of those cultures that are opposed to that remain. And so we myself and senior leadership team we regularly engage with our workforce. This week I had several meetings with several hundred Agency officers to make sure they understand the motivation, the vision behind the modernization effort. Which is to take full advantage of the tremendous expertise and capabilities and tools and authorities that the Agency has and to make sure that we're able to mutually empower one another. And so the new officers who are coming into the Agency and particularly over the last year and a half, those who were unfamiliar with working in that previous environment they've embraced it. They said it makes a lot of sense but so many of these things are related so you have human resource structures and practices that are inconsistent with what we're trying to do now so we're trying to adapt it. This is a continuous process of improvement. People ask me when the modernization effort is going to be over and I say it is never going to be over. The environment within which we

operate globally is constantly changing. The successful organizations are the ones that are going to be able to adapt quickly, effectively, efficiently to that changing environment. And technology has really just fundamentally and profoundly changed the intelligence profession. It is much different than when I started in 1980. I had an electric typewriter. That was the most technologically advanced piece of equipment that I had. Now things are changing so rapidly.

MR. RIEDEL: I actually shared an electric typewriter with another officer.

MR. VAN AGTMAEL: Antoine van Agtmael. Thank you very much. I'm a Brookings Trustee. I had a question. There is a lot of talk and you spoke about the sharing of information and brain power which is obviously necessary. But do you worry sometimes about a shadow side to this which is that it could open up greater vulnerability to cyber-attacks and also to bad apples?

MR. BRENNAN: Well absolutely. When I think about the internet of things to give an example everything at some point is going to be interconnected, it increasingly is so. It creates tremendous facilitation of what it is that we want to do but also there seems to be an inherent vulnerability because if it's interconnected then there are some ways theoretically that you're going to be able to navigate into something for destructive purposes. So as we put together our information technology architecture we need to make sure that we are trying to optimize sort of both objectives. One objective is to make sure that people who need access to information within the Agency and within the government have access to it. Because intelligence is not an end in and of itself. It is used to empower something else so we need to configure it so that there is that optimal ability of information to be accessible to the people who have that responsibility to leverage it. At the same time, you want to configure it in a way both from a technical standpoint as well as from an insider threat perspective that will make it as difficult as possible for there to be some type of unauthorized disclosure or hemorrhaging of information beyond the realm that you're trying to feed. So one can't go forward without having a tandem effort to make sure that as we advance information sharing we're not disadvantaging our security. That's the challenge. But I do think that we can optimize both in a manner that's going to give us the access we need while at the same time the security that certainly I and others demand.

MR. RIEDEL: Right there with the papers in the hand.

MR. HURWITZ: Thank you very much Mr. Director. I'm Elliot Hurwitz. I was a former Defense Intelligence Agency contractor and I taught at the Defense Intelligence College. Sir, you spoke about the air space and the President's commitment not to invade foreign country's airspace. About five years ago we invaded Pakistan's airspace at Abbottabad with Seal Team Six. Would you like to comment on that sir?

MR. BRANNAN: Sure. I didn't say the President made a commitment that we would not invade foreign airspace. What I was cautioning was the presumption that I think exists that these drone operations are taking place without the support approval of foreign government's whose airspace those drones operate within. The President must maintain the ability to take action as appropriate and as you know he authorized what was initially a covert action program to take Bin Laden down and then he acknowledged that this was an action that was taken without consultation with the Pakistani government, much less its approval. So there are circumstances where I know the Commander in Chief is going to continue to exercise his responsibility to do what is necessary and sometimes that is going to be going into foreign airspace without the prior consent of the government.

MR. RIEDEL: We're reaching the witching hour so what I'd like to do is take three questions right over here.

QUESTIONER: Thank you Toga (inaudible) with (inaudible). I have a follow up question to Bruce's standards issue to be more specific. Given the concerns about the direction of Turkey in terms of authoritarianism or rule of law or (inaudible) or civilian casualties in the struggle against the Kurds, do think that the practices of Turkish governments--how do the practices of Turkish governments impact the cooperation between the two intelligence services and how would you characterize the cooperation with your Turkish counterparts while there are several differences in Syria about which groups are radicals, which groups are not.

MR. RIEDEL: Let's bundle another question with that.

QUESTIONER: On the heels of the Pentagon's decision to equip South Korea with

the THAAD missile defense system, North Korea said they're going to retaliate. China is upset, Russia is upset. Can you talk about that delicate balance of protecting an ally and upsetting your peers?

MR. RIEDEL: One more.

MR. SIMMONS: Alex Simmons with the Intercept. My question is if the next president whoever that might be rescinds the recent executive order on targeted killings or withdraws the 2013 presidential policy directive would the Agency then abandon the near-certainty standard or relax its targeting standards for drone strikes?

MR. BRENNAN: The first question as far as our Turkish partners. The Turks are very close partners of ours on a number of fronts. As we know that Turkey has been the ingress and egress point for so many members of ISIL, foreign fighters and others that have joined. I have very close interaction with my Turkish counterpart and Turkey has a number of issues that it is having to deal with, given where it is located geographically. So it is a very strong supporter of the Free Syrian Army and the modern opposition as far as trying to ensure that Bashar al-Assad is not part of Syria's future. At the same time, they have some very legitimate concerns about terrorism that has been perpetrated against Turkish citizens by the PKK which is a terrorist organization. And I think as you are eluding to the Syrian Kurds in the northern part of Syria straddle that border and have been in fact a partner in some of the coalition efforts to try to uproot and destroy ISIL in that area. I must say in my experience working in Middle Eastern issues Syria is the most complex, complicated issue I've ever had to deal with. Because there are so many internal players, so many external players, so many goals and objectives that are frequently in tension with one another. So do we agree with Turkey on everything that is happening in that area no we do not. We are very open and honest with the Turks when we have disagreements and we think that they should be doing more. They certainly have expressed their disagreements with us and disapproval of some of the initiatives that we the U.S. government have embarked on but this is what close partners and allies do which is to have that open dialogue. But we do have regular interaction with the Turks. Now there are somethings that are going on inside the Turkish political system that are subject to a lot of debate

and even controversy but I'll just leave it that we do work closely with the Turks.

As far as the deployment of THAD and South Korea clearly Kim Jung Lung continues to go down a road that is exceptionally sort of irresponsible as far as regional and global security with his further development of nuclear weapons as well as ballistic missiles. And he has demonstrated that he is not going to ratchet back on any of these activities in terms of tests and other things. We have certain obligations to our partners in the region so that appropriate steps are taken to reassure our friends, partners and allies of U.S. commitment to the security of that area. This is going to be a continuous process. I know that there are objections to some of the things the United States may be moving forward with as far as trying to ensure that we have a strong defense but this is something that is done in very close consultation with our partners in the region. I think the President has demonstrated that we're trying to deal with these issues in a manner that is not going to lead to any escalation of tensions but what we want to do is make sure that we're able to fulfill our obligations in that region.

As far as the next President is concerned, President Obama put out the presidential policy guidance. It is something that the U.S. government as a whole adheres to in terms of near certainty of targeted identification, no collateral whatever. It was put out as part of an executive action of the President which any subsequent president can change. The CIA follows the guidance that comes from the Commander of Chief, the Chief Executive. Whether it be guidance like this or covert action finding, everything that the Agency does in the covert action front requires the President's signature on a cover action finding. We don't just take off and do things that are in rogue. But if this President or the next President decides to change existing direction and policy guidance it is the Agency's responsibility to carry out that direction to the best of its ability. Now picking up on what Bruce said before if a President were to order the Agency to carry out waterboarding or something else it will be up to the Director of CIA and others within CIA to decide whether or not that direction and order is something they can carry out in good conscience. And I can say that as long as I'm Director of CIA irrespective of what the President says I'm not going to be the Director of the CIA that gives that order, they will have to find another director.

MR. RIEDEL: I think we're going to say if we could have you here for several more hours no lack of questions to keep you going. But since we want you to come back, John, in the future we're going to try to adhere to being on schedule. If I could ask everyone to please remain in your seat. The Director obviously has a busy schedule so we're going to try to get him out quickly. Thank you very much.

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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