

**Hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**Subject: "Benghazi: The Attacks and the Lessons Learned"**  
**Chaired by: Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ)**  
**Witness: Secretary of State Hillary Clinton**  
**Location: 216 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C.**  
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**SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ (D-NJ):** Good morning.

**SECRETARY HILLARY CLINTON:** Great. Thank you.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** The committee will come to order.

Let me begin by welcoming the new members to the committee: Senators Kaine and Murphy; Senators Johnson, McCain, Flake and Paul.

Since the full Senate has not passed the committee resolution officially seating members, I want to ask unanimous consent of returning members to allow or prospective members to participate in today's hearing. And if there is no objection, so ordered.

Madam Secretary, let me welcome you and thank you for honoring your commitment to come before the committee after the administrative review board's findings. You said you would after the findings were completed. And of course, you had a bit of an intervening challenge, and we're thrilled to see you here today doing well and to take time out of your schedule in these final days to discuss the tragic events that occurred in Benghazi on September the 11th and the lessons we need to learn from that even to ensure that all American personnel are fully protected and our embassies fully secure wherever they are.

In your tenure of secretary of state, in your appearances before this committee, you have always been up-front, forthright and energetic in defending our foreign service officers and their needs, and I for one commend you for it.

Unfortunately, the tragic events in Benghazi are a sad reminder of the inherent risks that come with diplomatic engagement in parts of the world that are struggling to build new governments from what has often been a chaotic situation and underscore the very real courage of the unsung men and women who put their lives at risk to serve this nation's interests in those areas.

Let me say I respect what you have done during your tenure as secretary of state in representing not only this nation but all of those in our foreign service who are on the diplomatic front line in turbulent and dangerous parts of the globe.

It's a reflection of your leadership as well as your patriotism and your abiding belief in the power of our policies to move the world towards democracy, peace and preservation of human rights. Your candor before this committee has been a trademark of your service as secretary of state, and I believe that every member has always welcomed your openness and your cooperation. Your letter of December 18th to Chairman Kerry was appreciated by members of both sides as another example of that openness and cooperation.

Let me say we share your mission here today and that we look forward to a constructive dialogue today to learn from the events that occurred in Benghazi and to devise policies to better protect the nearly 70,000 men and women serving in D.C. and in more than 275 posts around the world.

Ambassador Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty lost their lives on September 11th, 2012, during terrorist attacks on the Special Mission Benghazi. As a committee, we honor their service to our nation and we grieve with their families, but we also resolve to take specific actions to prevent future incidents. We may not be able to prevent every single terror attack in the future, but we can and we must make sure that our embassies and employees, starting with high-risk, high-threat posts are capable of withstanding such an attack.

To that end, Secretary Clinton and the department have embraced and agreed to implement all 29 of the administrative review board's recommendations, and today we'll hear more about the progress that the department has already made towards implementation of many of the recommendations.

But I would add that Congress is not without responsibility here. We also have an obligation to do our part to comply with the administrative review board's recommendations. It is my intention to work with the members of the committee and the department in the coming months on legislation that will improve security and better protect our employees.

One of the first and easiest things that we can do is to ensure that the department's contracting rules allow for sufficient flexibility to allow them to quickly make decisions where security is at risk and to hire local guards not only on the basis of the lowest- priced, technically acceptable but on a best-value basis to ensure that we are not just checking the box when it comes to securing our building and protecting our people. State has this authority through March for Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq, but value should be a priority in all locations and particularly in high-risk environments.

We're also looking at where sole-source contracting may be appropriate to respond for certain security-related context. The administrative review board also supports expanding the Marine Security Guard program, hiring and equipping more diplomatic security personnel and, of critical importance, authorizing full funding for the embassy construction Capital Cost-Sharing Program. The Capital Cost-Sharing Program for embassy construction was created in the aftermath of the 1998 bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam that have resulted in 224 deaths, including 11 American citizens. In its first year, it funded the construction of 13 new facilities, followed by 11 in 2006 and nine in 2005. Nearly every year since, fewer facilities have been built than in the previous year due to both funding decreases and the fact that the allocations to the account have never been indexed to inflation. Costs in the construction industry worldwide have risen tremendously. At the current anticipated funding rate for FY 2013, the department estimates it will be able to construct just three new facilities despite the fact that there are a couple of dozen posts that have now been designated as high-risk, high-threat posts that need replacing right now.

But the lessons of Benghazi aren't only about adequately resourcing our security operations. It's also about the flow of information between the department and our foreign facilities within the department itself, among all the agencies engaged in international work and between the department and Congress. The department should be assessing and regularly designating which posts it considers to be high-threat and high-risk, using that information to drive decisions about security and reporting to Congress on security conditions at these posts.

The administrative review board also makes clear that there were failures in Benghazi that resulted in an inadequate security posture and that responsibility for these failures was shared by Washington, by the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli and by the inexact and nonstatus designation of the special mission. This left unclear what the security requirements of the mission were or should be and left staff in the field with limited ability and resources to fix the situation. Clearly, that needs to change.

There are two other crucial points made by the administrative review board that I think deserve attention on a larger scale by members of this committee, first, the -- our placed emphasis on the growing challenge faced by all American officials operating overseas of how to remain active in high-threat environments, how to get out beyond the fortified walls of our facilities to conduct the direct local interaction required for effective diplomacy.

How do we remain accessible to foreign governments, civil society and the private sector while still securing our embassies and protecting our people in these environments?

Second, the administrative review board correctly points out that the department has been resource-challenged for many years. And this has constrained our mission and led to the husbanding of resources to such a degree that restricting the use of resources, even for security, has become a conditioned response. This is to say that decisions about security resources are being made more on cost than on need and value. And the answer can't be to cut more from other foreign affairs accounts to fund security. That approach fails to recognize that diplomacy and foreign aid are but down payments that yield dividends to us in terms of good will, open borders for the export of American products, protection of our intellectual property and, most importantly, cooperation on security and counterterrorism.

So there's a lot to discuss. So Madam Secretary, welcome again. We very much appreciate your time.

On a personal note, since this is likely to be your last hearing before this committee -- and your leadership will be missed -- I know I speak for many when I say that you've been an outstanding secretary of state, an exemplary representative of American foreign policy and American values and interests to every leader around the world. You have changed the face of America abroad and extended the hospitable reach of our nation to ordinary citizens, in addition to world leaders.

During your tenure, you've steered us through economic crisis in Europe, changing relations with Asia, regime change in the Arab world, a momentous transition in Libya and a trend towards global strength based on economics rather than arms.

I personally appreciate the fact that you've used your office to aggressively implement sanctions against Iran.

In addition to these priorities, on nearly every trip, of which you were -- have -- I think the most traveled secretary in history, you also supported, met with and provided a voice to those individuals that don't live in the limelight -- women, children, the LGBT community and religious minorities; made a real difference in the personal lives of so many people, and for that you have the thanks of a grateful nation.

I know you will not go gently from the world stage, and I look forward to working closely with you in the future. We thank you for your service here in the Senate and as secretary of state. We welcome you back any time to talk about the issues of the day, recognizing that you may not care to spend any more time in that chair than you already have, but we certainly appreciate your incredible service.

With that, let me turn to my friend and colleague, the new ranking member of the committee, Senator Corker.

**SENATOR BOB CORKER (R-TN):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for your comments and also for following through, as we've all discussed, to have this hearing today.

I want to welcome the new committee members. And I know there will be a time for us to talk a little bit about the committee going forward. In many ways this is closing out business from before. But I thank you very much again for having this hearing and look forward to working with everybody on the committee.

Madam Secretary, I want to thank you also. I know we've had a number of conversations over the last several weeks, and actually over the last four years. And I want to thank you for coming in today and honoring the commitment that you made some time ago. I know you've had some health issues, still undergoing, and yet you're here today. And I think we all do respect the tremendous amount of hard work that you've put forth over the last four years. You probably traveled more than any secretary of state in history and came at your job in the way all we -- we all thought you would, with hard work and diligence.

And I know all of us appreciate the transparency with which you talk to all of us and, candidly, irreverence from time to time, which is much appreciated.

I do -- I do want to say that Benghazi, I think, to all of us represents a lot of different things. In some ways, the aftermath, in particular, of what we saw represents the very worst of Washington. And you know, I -- the most bizarre briefing I think I ever attended was the briefing we had on September 20th, where the intelligence community said more than nothing, and it was a bizarre briefing, at best.

It happened in the middle of a political campaign, and obviously there was a lot of spin from the White House and a lot of comments made on both sides of the aisle which heightened a lot of the focus on Benghazi.

I think it also represented a sclerotic department that in many way (sic) made decisions that weren't based on what was best for those in the field. I think it represented in many ways a denial of the world as it really is today.

And I think, after reading the ARB, it also represented to me a committee that has never done its work or at least in the six years that I've been here has never done the kind of oversight that this committee ought to do.

But I think it also represents an awakening. I know that you have known this and I know especially many of the members on this committee have known this, but the spiking of the ball and the thinking that when Osama bin Laden was gone, that was the end of al-Qaida -- we know nothing could be further from the truth. And the Arab Spring has actually ushered in a time where al-Qaida is on the rise. The world in many ways is even more dangerous, as we lack a central command and instead have these nodes that are scattered throughout North Africa and other places.

And I think this creates an opportunity for us to develop a policy that really addresses the world as it really is today.

And then thirdly, Madam Secretary, I know that it was a great personal loss to you that Chris Stevens died in the way that he did and his three colleagues died in the way that they did. I know that you know I was on the ground in Libya immediately after this, and I know you've experienced this, and some of the other members of the committee have, but to look at the faces of those on the ground in Libya in a state of shock, people that we sent there doing expeditionary diplomacy who felt like they were on a tether and, candidly, did not have the support from Washington that they needed to do the things that they needed to do.

So I think this is an opportunity for us to examine the systemic failures. I know that you're going to be, as per our conversation last night, as transparent as you have always been. I think this is a great opportunity for the incoming secretary to learn from what has happened. And I know that many a time political appointees have great difficulties with the bureaucracy that exists within a department, where sometimes people feel they can wait you out until the next person comes along. So I think this is an opportunity for us to look at those failures.

I think it's an opportunity for us also, as a committee but also as a country, to develop a foreign policy that reflects, again, the dynamics of the region as they really are today.

And then lastly, I think this is an opportunity for this committee to finally do the work that it should have been doing for years.

When you read the ARB report and you realize that we have never done an authorization of the State Department in the six years that I've been here, we've never looked at how foreign aid has been spent, we've never done a top-to-bottom review -- I know that it's something that people like you who come to this position look at as something that is healthy and can be done in partnership.

I know there was some mention of cost, and I was really disappointed with the ARB when the first thing that came out of the mouth of two people that I respect was money, money, money. Fact is, this committee would have no idea whether the appropriate amount of money is being spent or if that could have prevented what happened in Benghazi because we've never done an authorization.

So I look at this as a tremendous opportunity, and I want to close, again, by thanking you for your service, thanking you for your friendship, thanking you for your transparency, and I certainly look forward to your testimony. I know it'll be presented in a way that will be constructive and helpful to us in the future. Thank you.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Thank you, Senator Corker. With that, Madam Secretary, we welcome your remarks.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, both older and new. I'm very grateful for this opportunity, and I thank you very much for your patience to give me the chance to come and address these issues with you.

As both the chairman and the ranking member have said, the terrorist attacks in Benghazi on September 11, 2012 that claimed the lives of four brave Americans -- Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty -- are part of a broader strategic challenge to the United States and our partners in North Africa. Today I want briefly to offer some context for this challenge, share what we've learned, how we are protecting our people and where we can work together to not only honor our fallen colleagues but continue to champion America's interests and values.

Any clear-eyed examination of this matter must begin with this sobering fact: Since 1988 there have been 19 accountability review boards investigating attacks on American diplomats and their facilities. Benghazi joins a long list of tragedies for our department, for other agencies and for America: hostages taken in Tehran in 1979; our embassy and Marine barracks bombed in Beirut in 1983; Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia in 1996; our embassies in East Africa in 1998; consulate staff murdered in Jeddah in 2004; the Khost attack in 2009; and too many others. Since 1977 65 American diplomatic personnel have been killed by terrorists.

Now, of course, the list of attacks foiled, crises averted and lives saved is even longer. We should never forget that our security professionals get it right more than 99 percent of the time against difficult odds all over the world. That's why, like my predecessors, I literally trust them with my life.

Let's also remember that administrations of both parties, in partnership with Congress, have made concerted and good-faith efforts to learn from these attacks and deaths, to implement recommendations from the review boards, to seek the necessary resources and to do better in protecting our people from what has become constantly evolving threats. That is the least that the men and women who serve our country deserve. It's what, again, we are doing now, with your help.

As secretary, I have no higher priority and no greater responsibility. As I have said many times, I take responsibility, and nobody is more committed to getting this right. I am determined to leave the State Department and our country safer, stronger and more secure.

Now, taking responsibility meant moving quickly in those first uncertain hours and days to respond to the immediate crisis, but also to further protect our people and posts in high-threat areas across the region and the world. It meant launching an independent investigation to determine exactly what happened in Benghazi and to recommend steps for improvement, and it meant intensifying our efforts to combat terrorism and figure out effective ways to support the emerging democracies in North Africa and beyond.

Let me share some of the lessons we've learned, the steps we've taken and the work we continue to do.

First, let's start on the night of September 11th itself and those difficult early days. I directed our response from the State Department, stayed in close contact with officials from across our government and the Libyan government. So I saw firsthand what Ambassador Pickering and former Chairman Mullen called timely and exceptional coordination: no delays in decision-making, no denials of support from Washington or from our military. And I want to echo the review board's praise for the valor and courage of our people on the ground, especially the security professionals in Benghazi and Tripoli. The board said the response saved American lives in real time, and it did.

The very next morning I told the American people that heavily armed militants assaulted our compound, and I vowed to bring them to justice. And I stood with President Obama in the Rose Garden as he spoke of an act of terror.

It's also important to recall that in that same period we were seeing violent attacks on our embassies in Cairo, Sanaa, Tunis, Khartoum, as well as large protests outside many other posts where thousands of our diplomats serve. So I immediately ordered a review of our security posture around the world, with particular scrutiny for high-threat posts. I asked the Department of Defense to join interagency security assessment teams and to dispatch hundreds of additional Marine security guards. I named the first deputy assistant secretary of state for high-threat posts so missions in dangerous places get the attention they need. And we reached out to Congress to help address physical vulnerabilities, including risk from fire, and to hire additional diplomatic security personnel.

Second, even as we took these steps, I hurried to appoint the Accountability Review Board, led by Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen, so we could more fully understand, from objective, independent examination, what went wrong and how to fix it. I have accepted every one of their recommendations.

I asked the deputy secretary for management and resources to lead a task force to ensure that all 29 of them are implemented quickly and completely as well as pursuing additional steps above and beyond the recommendations.

I also pledged in my letter to you last month that implementation would begin, and it has. Our task force started by translating the recommendations into 64 specific action items. They were assigned to bureaus and offices with clear timelines for completion. Eighty-five percent are now on track to be completed by the end of March, a number are already completed, and we will use this opportunity to take a top- to-bottom look and rethink how we make decisions on where, when and whether people operate in high-threat areas and then how we respond to threats and crises.

We are initiating an annual high-threat post review chaired by the secretary of state and ongoing reviews by the deputy secretaries to ensure that pivotal questions about security do reach the highest levels. We will regularize protocols for sharing information with Congress. These are designed to increase the safety of our diplomats and development experts and reduce the chances of another Benghazi happening again.

We've also been moving forward on a third front: addressing the broader strategic challenge in North Africa and the wider region, because after all, Benghazi did not happen in a vacuum. The Arab revolutions have scrambled power dynamics and shattered security forces across the region. Instability in Mali has

created an expanding safe haven for terrorists who look to extend their influence and plot further attacks of the kind we saw just last week in Algeria.

And let me offer our deepest condolences to the families of the Americans and all the people from many nations who were killed and injured in that recent hostage crisis. We are in close touch with the government of Algeria. We stand ready to provide assistance. We are seeking to gain a fuller understanding of what took place so we can work together with Algerians and others to prevent such terrorist attacks in the future.

Concerns about terrorism and instability in North Africa are, of course, not new. They have been a top priority for the entire administration's national security team. But we have been facing a rapidly changing threat environment, and we have had to keep working at ways to increase pressure on al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and the other terrorist groups in the region.

In the first hours and days, I conferred with leaders, the president of Libya, foreign ministers of Tunisia and Morocco, and then I had a series of meetings at the United Nations General Assembly, where there was a special meeting focused on Mali and the Sahel. In October I flew to Algeria to discuss the fight against AQIM. In November I sent Deputy Secretary Bill Burns to follow up in Algiers, and then in December, in my stead, he co-chaired an organization we started to respond to some of these threats, the Global Counterterrorism Forum, which was meeting in Abu Dhabi, as well as a meeting in Tunis of leaders working to build new democracies and reform security services. We have focused on targeting al-Qaida's syndicate of terror, closing safe havens, cutting off finances, countering extremist ideology, slowing the flow of new recruits, and we continue to hunt the terrorists responsible for the attacks in Benghazi and are determined to bring them to justice.

We are using our diplomatic and economic tools to support these emerging democracies and to strengthen security forces and help provide a path away from extremism.

But let me underscore the importance of the United States continuing to lead in the Middle East, in North Africa and around the world. We've come a long way in the past four years, and we cannot afford to retreat now. When America is absent, especially from unstable environments, there are consequences: Extremism takes root, our interests suffer, our security at home is threatened.

That's why I sent Chris Stevens to Benghazi in the first place. Nobody knew the dangers better than Chris, first during the revolution, then during the transition: a weak Libyan government, marauding militias, terrorist groups. A bomb exploded in the parking lot of his hotel, but he did not waver, because he understood it was critical for America to be represented there at that time.

Our men and women who serve overseas understand that we accept a level of risk to protect the country we love, and they represent the best traditions of a bold and generous nation.

They cannot work in bunkers and do their jobs. So it is our responsibility to make sure they have the resources they need and to do everything we can to reduce the risks.

For me, this is not just a matter of policy. It's personal. I stood next to President Obama as the Marines carried those flag-draped caskets off the plane at Andrews. I put my arms around the mothers and fathers, the sisters and brothers, the sons and daughters, and the wives left alone to raise their children.

It has been one of the great honors of my life to lead the men and women of the State Department and USAID -- nearly 70,000 serving here in Washington, more than 270 posts around the world. They get up and go to work every day, often in difficult and dangerous circumstances because they believe, as we believe, the United States is the most extraordinary force for peace and progress the world has ever known. And when we suffer tragedies overseas, as we have, the number of Americans applying to the foreign

service actually increases. That tells us everything we need to know about what kind of patriots I'm talking about. They do ask what they can do for their country and America is stronger for it.

So today, after four years in this job, traveling nearly a million miles, visiting 112 countries, my faith in our country and our future is stronger than ever. Every time that blue and white airplane carrying the words "United States of America" touches down in some far-off capital, I feel again the honor it is to represent the world's indispensable nation. And I am confident that with your help, we will keep the United States safe, strong and exceptional.

So I want to thank this committee for your partnership and your support of diplomats and development experts. You know the importance of the work they do day in and day out. You know that America's values and vital national security interests are at stake. And I appreciate what Ranking Member Corker just said. It is absolutely critical that this committee and the State Department, with your new secretary and former chairman, work together to really understand and address the resources, support and changes that are needed to face what are increasingly complex threats. I know you share my sense of responsibility and urgency, and while we may not agree on everything, let's stay focused on what really matters: protecting our people and the country we love. And thank you for the support you personally have given to me over the last four years.

I now would be happy to take your questions.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Thank you, Madam Secretary, for your statement.

We have a full committee present, so in order to give each member an opportunity to ask questions in the time frame that we have with the secretary, I'm going to limit those questions to five minutes. And I'll start off with myself.

Madam Secretary, we saw some late-night reporting on discussions about the physical location of mission Benghazi, and I understand this information came from the production of documents by the department, which we appreciate your cooperation in providing those documents. My understanding is that the location of mission Benghazi was an ongoing one and that the ultimate conclusion of Ambassador Stevens was that we needed to be in Benghazi, the cradle of the Libyan revolution, and that while he was continuously reviewing other location options, that it was his conclusion as well as that of security personnel in the department that the current mission site was the best choice, despite a higher price tag, because it was more secure than returning to the hotel where there had been a bomb and bomb threats or moving closer to the annex because it was closer to the (road ?).

Can you give us your insights on the decision-making process regarding the location of the mission? And as part of that, can you also in your response -- you touched upon it in your opening statement, but -- what actions were you and your staff taking the night of September 11th and into September the 12th?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, first, you're right, Mr. Chairman, that there was an ongoing discussion. When Chris first landed in Benghazi he stayed in a hotel along with other representatives of different nations. There were attacks in the vicinity, including in the parking lot of the hotel.

The decision was made to move. The compound was selected as being a much better location in terms of security than the alternatives.

But there was an ongoing discussion between Chris and others in the embassy in Tripoli, those going in and out of Benghazi, about how best to situate our post there. I did see some overnight reporting about a document; I'm not sure what it is, but I would observe that there were a lot of ongoing efforts because it was important that we were constantly asking what was the best place. As you said, in general, Chris was committed to not only being in Benghazi but to the location. The professionals in Washington paid close

attention to Chris' judgment based on his experience and his firsthand knowledge. And so we stayed. We continued to try to upgrade the facility that was attacked. Obviously, as the ARB has pointed out, there were inadequacies in the response, and those are the specific kinds of recommendations that we are currently implementing.

Regarding what I was doing on September 11th, I was at the State Department all day and late into the night. At the -- during most of the day, prior to getting notice of the attack on our compound at Benghazi, we were very focused on our embassy in Cairo. That was under assault by a group of protesters. We were assessing the security of our embassy, which is, as those of you who have been there, certainly well-defended, but there were crowds that were intent upon trying to scale the wall, and we were in close communication with our team in Cairo.

I was notified of the attack shortly after 4 p.m. Over the following hours we were in continuous meetings and conversations, both within the department, with our team in Tripoli, with the interagency and internationally. I instructed our senior department officials and our diplomatic security personnel to consider every option to just break down the doors of the Libyan officials to get as much security support as we possibly could to coordinate with them. I spoke to the national security adviser, Tom Donilon, several times. I briefed him on developments. I sought all possible support from the White House, which they quickly provided. Tom was my first call.

I spoke with our charge in Tripoli to get situation updates. I spoke with former CIA Director Petraeus to confer and coordinate, given the presence of his facility, which, of course, was not well-known but was something that we knew and wanted to make sure we were closely lashed up together. I talked with the then-Libyan National Congress president to press him on greater support, not only in Benghazi but also in Tripoli. I participated in a secure video conference of senior officials from the intelligence community, the White House and DOD. We were going over every possible option, reviewing all that was available to us, any actions we could take. We were reaching out to everyone we could find to try to get an update about Ambassador Chris Stevens, also our information specialist, Sean Smith. So it was a constant ongoing discussion and sets of meetings. I spoke with President Obama later in the evening to, you know, bring him up to date, to hear his perspective. Obviously, we kept talking with everyone during the night. Early in the morning on the 12th I spoke with General Dempsey, again with Tom Donilon.

The two hardest calls that I made were obviously to the families of Ambassador Stevens and Sean Smith. And it -- you know, they, I have to say, were extraordinary in their responses and their understanding of the pride we had in both men and gratitude we had for their -- for their service.

I would also just quickly add, Mr. Chairman, that while this was going on and we were trying to understand it, get on top of it, we were continuing to face protests, demonstrations, violence across the region and as far as India and Indonesia.

There were so many protests happening, and thousands of people were putting our facilities at risk, so we were certainly very determined to do whatever we could about Benghazi. We were relieved when we finally got the last of the Americans out of Benghazi, but then we were turning around dealing with the very serious threats facing so many of our other facilities.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Thank you very much.

My time has expired. Senator Corker.

**SEN. CORKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I agree with you, when people go into the field to do the things they do, they do it knowing of the risk. And I agree with you one of the untold stories here is the heroic nature of many in

Libya and what they did to save lives. I met several of the JSOC folks and others that risked their lives saving others.

But I also have to say, in reading all the cables, and that many of us have done, there were systemic deficiencies. And I know you know that. And I'd like for you to just speak to that for a moment.

To my knowledge, no one has been held accountable. Our staff had a meeting with one of the State Department officials and -- I hate to use this word again, but it was nothing short of bizarre as they talked about the communications.

These officials were screaming out for more security. And I'm just wondering if you might mention one reform that would be helpful so that you would have known of the needs there of security that went undone.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, obviously, I have thought about this almost constantly since that date, Senator, because, you know, I do feel responsible. I feel responsible for the nearly 70,000 people who work for the State Department. I take it very seriously. But the specific security requests pertaining to Benghazi, you know, were handled by the security professionals in the department. I didn't see those requests. They didn't come to me. I didn't approve them. I didn't deny them. That's obviously one of the findings that Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen made; that, you know, these requests don't ordinarily come to the secretary of state.

**SEN. CORKER:** But if we could, I know -- I respect you tremendously, but we have a short amount of time -- they did come in to folks.

**SEC. CLINTON:** That's right.

**SEN. CORKER:** We did have SFT (sp) people on the ground at no cost to the State Department. They were asked to be extended by the ambassador. Someone at the State Department turned that down. They were at no charge, 16 officers. So I just wonder what has happened inside to make sure that never happens again.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, several things. Not only are we on the path to implement all of the ARB recommendations, but we've gone beyond that. We did immediately do this high-threat assessment using DOD assets as well as our own. That had never been done before. We have asked the Congress to help us reallocate funds. The Senate has given us that authority -- we don't yet have it from the House -- so that we can get more Marine guards, we can get more Diplomatic Security guards, we can try to put more money into the maintenance, the upgrades of construction that's needed.

I created the first ever -- it sounds like it should have been done years ago, but first every deputy assistant secretary for high threats. I'm also recommending that there be a regular process that includes the secretary and the deputies in these decisions, because nobody wants to sit where I am and, you know, have to think now about what "coulda, shoulda, woulda" happened in order to avoid this.

Now, as I've said, we've had 19 ARBs. Only two have ever been unclassified, the one coming out of the East Africa bombings, where there was full transparency, there was a set of recommendations, many of which have been implemented, along with recommendations from other ARBs. But this committee never had a public hearing about the 17 other ARBs because they were classified.

So we're putting into action steps that we think will help the next secretary be able to make these decisions, be part of these decisions, have more insight into what is going on, and we would obviously welcome the opportunity to work closely with a subcommittee or a set of members to make sure that that's what's happening.

**SEN. CORKER:** Well, thank you.

I will -- this many -- 19 or 17 have been done. I will say none of them have ever been fully implemented and --

**SEC. CLINTON:** Senator, that's not accurate, because I --

**SEN. CORKER:** Yeah.

**SEC. CLINTON:** -- heard you say that when Bill Burns and Tom Nides were here, and it shocked me. So we did -- we went back. We did a full and thorough investigation. The vast majority have been implemented. And we will give you a report to that effect --

**SEN. CORKER:** OK.

**SEC. CLINTON:** -- because that's the kind of -- to go back to your point, Senator, if there were an authorization process, that's the kind of information that we would be shared. And I see my --

**SEN. CORKER:** If I could --

**SEC. CLINTON:** -- my former compatriot on the Armed Services Committee -- there is always an Armed Services authorization, and there needs always to be a Foreign Relations Committee authorization.

**SEN. CORKER:** It's my sense -- my last question -- it's my sense that as a nation we were woefully unprepared for what happened in Northern Africa in general. I think you share that view, and I just wonder -- I know you made some opening comments regarding us leading in that area, but it seems to me that Benghazi symbolizes just the woeful unpreparedness that our nation had as it relates to issues in North Africa. And I hope you'll address that as you move ahead.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, let me just briefly address what is, I think, one of the key issues for this committee, for the administration, for our country.

When I was here four years ago, testifying for my confirmation, I don't think anybody thought that Mubarak would be gone, Gadhafi would be gone, Ben Ali would be gone; that we would have such revolutionary change in this region.

There were hints of it. Several of us, you know, said the institutions were sinking in the sand, as I said in Doha shortly before Tahrir Square.

So there were -- there as some feeling out there, but I don't think any of us predicted this, least of all the people in these countries, who then were given a chance to chart their own future.

This is a great opportunity as well as a serious threat to our country. I hope we seize the opportunity. It's not going to be easy, because these new countries have no experience with democracy. They don't have any real experience among the leaders in running countries, in doing security.

So yes, we now face a spreading jihadist threat. We have driven a lot of the AQ operatives out of the FATA, out of Afghanistan, Pakistan; killed a lot of them, including, of course bin Laden.

But we have to recognize this is a global movement. We can kill leaders, but until we help establish strong democratic institutions, until we do a better job communicating our values and building relationships, we're going to be faced with this level of instability.

And I do have a lot of thoughts about what more we can and should do, given this new reality we face.

**SEN. CORKER:** Thank you again.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Boxer.

**SENATOR BARBARA BOXER (D-CA):** Thank you very much.

Madam Secretary, you have represented our country with tremendous strength and poise. You've won us friends. But you've always spoken out forcefully where required.

I want to thank you -- because this is maybe the last time you come before us as secretary here, I want to thank you for your advocacy in behalf of women around the globe. You will be sorely missed but, I for one hope, not for too long.

As you have said, you were heartbroken by those losses in Benghazi. We saw it in your face many times -- today as well. You were heartbroken personally and professionally.

But rather than pointing to others for their deficiencies, you stepped up and you convened an accountability review board to look into this attack in detail and you asked them to tell it the way they saw it.

And I want to give you my take on that board. I want to go to something Senator Corker said, which I agreed with. The first report we got from the intelligence community, about a week or so after, was very confusing. It was not helpful to us. All of us, I think, felt that way.

But I want to speak for myself. The difference between that meeting and the meeting we had with those co-chairs, which was also a classified briefing, couldn't have been more different. They were so impressive. They were thorough. They were strong. They did call it the way they saw it, the way you wanted them to do. And I am grateful that you have unequivocally committed to ensuring that their recommendations are implemented to the fullest extent.

And this brings me to a question. As we all know, the House of Representatives urged and voted for a cut of \$300 million for embassy security. Now, maybe it's irrelevant for some here, but I have a message: It does cost money to pay for embassy security or police on the beat or military personnel or police here at the Capitol that protect us, which we're very grateful for and we pay for. It does cost money.

So to me, I was not disappointed to hear the co-chairs say, quote, "Congress must do its part to meet this challenge and provide necessary resources to the State Department to address security risks and meet mission imperatives." Frankly, I think it's a no-brainer. And the fact that we would even have a problem with it to me doesn't make any sense.

I hope we can work together to get the resources that we need for security, which brings me to a question about working more closely with the DOD. And here it is: Have you already engaged with DOD to provide additional Marines at U.S. facilities to fulfill the ARB's recommendation that State and DOD work together to provide more capabilities and capacities at higher-risk posts?

And before you answer that, could you maybe address the issue in Mali right now? When you look at Mali, you see a government that is weak. They don't have the best security. Are we working on that post?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, thank you. You've raised a lot of very important issues. I'll try to be as quick as I can in responding to them. Let me start with the budget, because this is a bipartisan issue. Since 2007 the department has consistently requested greater funding for embassy construction and diplomatic security. With the exception of 2010, Congress has consistently enacted less than requested. Most notably,

in 2012 the department received \$340 million less than requested, close to 10 percent less than the request. And then over the last two years, cuts to embassy construction, security and maintenance budgets were almost 10 percent off as well.

Now, the ARB, as you said, has recommended an increase in facilities funding to 2.2 billion (dollars) per year to restore the construction levels called for in the 1998 ARB report, the only other one that was ever public. And I would -- I would go back to something the chairman said, because this was a point made in the ARB: Consistent shortfalls have required the department to prioritize available funding out of security accounts. And I will be the first to say that the prioritization process was at times imperfect, but as the ARB said, the funds provided were inadequate. So we need to work together to overcome that.

We are asking for funding for more Marine security guards, for refilling the capital account so that we can begin to do the kind of upgrades and construction that's needed. Deputy Secretary Nides briefed House and Senate Appropriations and authorizing staff. We've sent letters to the House and Senate leadership to ask for transfer authority language, not new money right now, but transfer authority language. The Senate was good enough to put it into the Senate version of the Sandy supplemental. It did not get into the House side. So we're still looking for the House to act.

With respect to Mali, Senator, there was a country that had been making progress on its democracy. Unfortunately, it suffered a military coup by low-ranking military officers, which threw it into a state of instability with the Tuaregs who, as you know, some groups of, as well as other groups, had been in the employ of Gadhafi for years. He used them as mercenaries. With his fall, they came out of Libya, bringing huge amounts of weapons from the enormous stores of weapons that Gadhafi had that insurgents liberated, as well as others. And they came into Northern Mali. At the same time, there was a move by al-Qaida in the Maghreb to establish a base in Northern Mali.

We have been working to try to upgrade security around Northern Mali, among a number of the countries. Algeria's the only one with any real ability to do that. Most of these countries don't have the capacity to do that.

We are now trying to help put together an African force from ECOWAS so that African soldiers will be in the front of this fight. The Malians asked the French to come in. Obviously, France is one of our oldest allies. We are trying to provide support to them.

But this is going to be a very serious ongoing threat because if you look at the size of northern Mali, if you look at the topography, it's not only desert, it's caves -- sounds reminiscent. We are in a for a struggle.

But it is a necessary struggle. We cannot permit northern Mali to become a safe haven. People say to me all the time, well, AQIM hasn't attacked the United States. Well, before 9/11, 2011, we hadn't been attacked on our homeland since, I guess, the War of 1812 and Pearl Harbor. So you can't say, well, because they haven't done something, they're not going to do it. This is not only a terrorist syndicate; it is a criminal enterprise.

So make no mistake about it. We've got to have a better strategy. And I would hope we'd have not only a strategy that understands -- you know, making it possible for these governments to defend themselves better, for people to understand and agree with us that these terrorists are not in any way representative of their values but that we can bolster democracy and try to give these Arab revolutions a real chance to succeed.

**SEN. BOXER:** Thank you.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Risch.

**SENATOR JIM RISCH (R-ID):** Madam Secretary, thank you for your service, and thank you for the kindness you've shown this committee over the time you've been there. Particularly appreciate your facilitating the meetings with us at the State Department with yourself when we've had issues.

Moving to the issues at hand, this morning the national media is reporting that some of the -- or a number of the attackers in Algeria are people who participated in the attack in Benghazi. Can you confirm that for us this morning?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Senator, I cannot confirm it. I can give you the background that I was able to obtain. This information is coming from the Algerian government related to their questioning of certain of the terrorists that they took alive. We don't have any way to confirm it as yet, but I can certainly assure you we will do everything we can to determine that. You may know that Director Mueller was just in the region meeting with leaders. He's very well aware that we have to track every one of these connections, and this will be a new thread that will be followed.

**SEN. RISCH:** I appreciate that.

One -- only one person has been arrested regarding the attack on Benghazi and was then released.

Can you tell us whether he was one of the people that participated in the Algerian attack?

**SEC. CLINTON:** We have no information to that effect. I think you're referring to the Tunisian, Harzi, who appeared in a Tunisian court. Upon his release, I called the Tunisian prime minister. A few days later, Director Mueller met with the Tunisian prime minister. We have been assured that he is under the monitoring of the court. He was released because at that time -- and Director Mueller and I spoke about this at some length -- there was not an ability for evidence to be presented yet that was capable of being presented in an open court.

But the Tunisians have assured us that they are keeping an eye on him. I have no reason to believe he is not still in Tunis, but we are checking that all the time.

**SEN. RISCH:** Thank you.

You just testified in your prepared remarks that -- you said, quote, "The very next morning" -- which would have been Wednesday morning -- I to the American people that, quote, "heavily armed militants assaulted our compound and vowed to bring them to justice."

I'm assuming that you had rock-solid evidence to make such a bold statement at that time.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, we had four dead people and we had several injured, one seriously, who's still in Walter Reed. And although we did not have the chance yet to meet with any of our returnees, our team in Tripoli had received them, gotten medical care for them and had sent them on. So we knew that clearly there was an attack, a heavily armed attack. Who these people were, where they came from, why they did it, that was still to be determined.

**SEN. RISCH:** I think you probably know where I'm going with this.

**SEC. CLINTON:** (Laughs.)

**SEN. RISCH:** The next sentence is, "And I stood with President Obama as he spoke of an act of terror." And of course, there's been a lot of debate as to the context that the word "terror" was used in.

But be that as it may, I want to move to the next Sunday morning when Ambassador Rice went to the morning -- Sunday morning talk shows. And I think we all realize this happened at a politically charged time here in the country as we approached an election. Notwithstanding that, the American people are still entitled to be told the truth about these. Did you select Ambassador Rice to deliver the message to the American people?

**SEC. CLINTON:** No, I did not, Senator, and let me take this opportunity to address this, because obviously, even though I haven't had a chance to testify, I certainly have seen the resulting debate and concerns about this.

You're right; it was a terrorist attack. I called it an attack by heavily armed militants and --

**SEN. RISCH:** Well done.

**SEC. CLINTON:** -- and, you know, that is clearly what happened. We know that.

But second, the harder question is what caused it, and that we didn't know. We didn't know who the attackers were, what their motives were.

Third, as the ARB makes clear, after their months of research the picture remains still somewhat complicated, and I say that because in the unclassified ARB, it is -- I quote: "Key questions surrounding the identity, actions and motivations of the perpetrators remain to be determined."

I recommend that all members and staff read the classified version of the ARB, which goes into greater detail. I obviously can't speak to it, but it does go into greater detail because there were a variety of potential causes and triggers for this attack. There's evidence that the attacks were deliberate, opportunistic and pre-coordinated but not necessarily indicative of extensive planning.

And fourth, Senator, I would say that I personally was not focused on talking points. I was focused on keeping our people safe, because as I said, I have a very serious threat environment in Yemen.

It turned out we had people getting over that wall in Cairo, doing damage until we got them out. We had a serious threat against our embassy in Tunis. I had to call the president of Tunisia and beg him to send reinforcements, which he did, to finally save our embassy, which could have been a -- disastrous. They burned and trashed our school.

So I was pretty occupied about keeping our people safe, doing what needed to be done in the follow-up to Benghazi. I really don't think anybody in the administration was -- (chuckles) -- really focused on that so much as trying to figure out, you know, what we should be doing.

And you know, I wasn't involved in the talking points process. As I understand it, as I've been told, it was a typical interagency process, where staff, including from the State Department, all participated to try to come up with whatever was going to be made publicly available. And it was an intelligence product, and it's my understanding that the intelligence community is working with appropriate committees to kind of explain the whole process.

**SEN. RISCH:** Yeah. Well, thank you. I had some follow-up questions -- (inaudible) -- but my time is up. But I gather you still stand by the statement you made less than 24 hours -- that heavily armed militants assaulted our compound and that you vowed to bring them to justice. You still stand by that.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Absolutely.

**SEN. RISCH:** Thank you.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Cardin.

**SENATOR BEN CARDIN (D-MD):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Clinton, first, congratulations and thank you for your extraordinary service to our country during these past four years as secretary of state.

I believe the world is safer today because America is better understood around the world. And you have been instrumental in integrating diplomacy in our national security agenda, and I thank you for that, because I do think it has paid off in heavy dividends for the American people.

I particularly want to acknowledge your leadership in advancing basic rights. Senator Boxer already acknowledged the gender equity issues that you have taken an international leadership on. I also want to thank you for your help in dealing with corruption, particularly with transparency in the extractive industries and the progress that we've made in that regard.

Benghazi was a tragedy; we've all acknowledged that, the loss of American life. And we've also acknowledged the bravery of those people on the ground. They did extraordinary service and saved lives, and that's what they're trained to do, and we want to make sure that we acknowledge that.

Also, let me just point out that you have been very open with the committee. We had a hearing on December 20th with your deputies, and they provided all the information, and you're here today, and we thank you very much for that.

I want to follow up one area of Northern Africa, the -- you point out the risk factors that we currently have in Northern Africa. Algeria's a -- is a reminder of the global security concerns. We do not know -- as Senator Risch pointed out, the individuals who may have been involved in Libya may have been involved in Algeria. We don't know that.

But we do know there's reports from the United Nations and others that weapons have gotten from Libya into Algeria, which points out our need, as we look at transitions occurring in that region -- Syria: Assad's not going to be there, we think, much longer. There's a lot of weapons in Syria. Are we -- do we have a strategy to make sure, as we go through transition in countries, that their weapons are -- we're mindful that these weapons can end up harming U.S. interest? And it needs to be part of our strategy to make sure as we support alternative governments and the rebels that there is a strong priority in protecting the source of these weapons, not ending up harming Americans or harming our interests.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, you're absolutely right. One of the reasons that we and other government agencies were present in Benghazi is exactly that. We had a concerted effort to try to track down and find and recover as many MANPADS and other very dangerous weapons as possible.

Libya was awash in weapons before the revolution. Obviously, there were additional weapons introduced, but the vast, vast majority came out of Gadhafi warehouses and were, as they -- as they were saying, liberated and then went on the black market, were seized by militias, seized by other groups and have made their way out of Libya into other countries in the region and have made their way to Syria, we believe.

It is a red line for this administration with respect to Syria concerning the use of chemical weapons. Syria, as you probably know, in addition to having the fourth-largest army before this revolution, has a very significant supply of chemical and biological weapons. Given the instability in Syria right now, what we are trying to do is to coordinate closely with a number of like-minded nations, neighbors and partners, to be able to work to try to prevent those from falling into the wrong hands, jihadist hands, Hezbollah hands but also to try to work with the internal opposition for them to understand the dangers that are posed.

So this Pandora's box, if you will, of weapons coming out of these countries in the Middle East and North Africa is the source of one of our biggest threats.

There's no doubt that the Algerian terrorists had weapons from Libya. There's no doubt that the Malian remnants of AQIM have weapons from Libya. So we just have to do a much better job.

The final thing I would say about this is, you know, AFRICOM was stood up about 10 years ago. I think a lot of people at the time wondered, why would have another command in the world, and why in Africa? I now think we need to pay much more attention to AFRICOM, to its capacity inside Africa. It's based in Stuttgart, Germany, for all kinds of complicated logistical and political reasons. Carter Ham has been a very dedicated leader of AFRICOM during his time there. But we're going to see more and more demands on AFRICOM, and I think that's something else that the Senate and the House are going to have to address.

**SEN. CARDIN:** Thank you, Madam Secretary.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Rubio.

**SENATOR MARCO RUBIO (R-FL):** Thank you.

Madam Secretary, we all wish that we -- that this had never had happened so this hearing would never have had to happen. But it's good -- we're glad to see you here and wish you all the best.

And secondarily, I want to share the sentiments of my other colleagues of tremendous respect for the hard work and service that you've put in on behalf of our country both as a member of this chamber and then obviously now in the role that you have.

One of the things that I'm most interested in exploring with you today a little bit is how information flows within the State Department and, in particular, in hindsight, looking forward, how we can prevent some of this happening. And so I was curious about a number of things.

First of all, did -- were you ever asked to participate in any sort of internal or interagency meeting with -- before this attack with regard to the deteriorating security situation in Libya?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, you know, again, I appreciate your kind words. You know, and I reiterate my taking responsibility.

And as I have already said, with specific security requests, they didn't come to me. I had no knowledge of them.

With regard to the situation in Libya, not just eastern Libya, across Libya, there were a number of conversations and meetings to try to see what we could do, while Libya went through this transition from transitional government to interim government to elections, to try to get in there and help them with security, because it was clear that that was going to be one of their highest needs once they finally got stabilized.

So, you know, there were a number of meetings. And I personally -- you know, I went to Libya in October of 2011. I spoke with the then leadership. I met with them in international settings. We sent teams out, both civilian and military, experts, to try to help them. Until recently, while they were going through their transition, it was a very difficult conversation because they didn't have, you know, the authority, they thought. But now we're beginning, and we have a long list of ways that we're trying to help improve security in Libya.

**SEN. RUBIO:** For example, that -- the October 2011 meeting, at that meeting did this issue come up with regards to the inability of the Libyan government to protect our diplomatic institutions? Did that issue come up at all in that conversation?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, we -- we obviously talked at great deal -- a great deal about the deteriorating threat environment in Libya. One of the reasons we had our own people on the ground and why we were looking to try to figure out how to better protect Benghazi and how to have understandings with those in the annex is because it's a host- country responsibility but, you know, they were not in a position to do what we would expect from an organized country. But they did have the militias.

And the -- you know, the February 17th Brigade had proven to be responsive in the past, prior to 9/11. Other militias, in Tripoli, had proven to be responsive. You know, when I landed in Tripoli, I was met by the Zintan militia. That was the welcome I had. All these guys dressed completely in black, holding their automatic weapons, that was my welcoming party. So we knew that we were piecing together what a host nation was not yet able to do.

**SEN. RUBIO:** Right. But -- and then there was another meeting on March 2012. So just to be clear -- in October 2011 and again in March of 2012, I believe that was here with the prime minister. In neither one of these meetings was there a specific conversation between you and them with regards to concerns that we had that -- not just the deteriorating security situation, but the inability of them as a host country to meet their obligations to provide security in --

**SEC. CLINTON:** Of course. Of course.

**SEN. RUBIO:** There was a conversation.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Oh, absolutely. I mean, this was a constant conversation, Senator. And what I found with the Libyans was willingness but not capacity. You know, in Tunisia, as I told you, they had capacity but I had to call and just tell them we had to get that capacity out there, because, you know, they're still trying to figure out how to be a state without being a security state. With Cairo, we had to call and tell the Egyptians, get your people out there.

So with Libya it was different. The Libyans were very responsive, very willing, but no levers to pull. And what we've been trying to do -- and, you know, we need your help to help us pay for what we're trying to do -- we are trying to help them build a decent security force to try to rein the militias as best they can. So this was a constant conversation.

**SEN. RUBIO:** Before the attack in Benghazi, what had we done specifically to help them build their security capacity?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, there's a long list, and I'll be happy to provide that to you because it is filled with, you know, training, with equipment, with the kind of planning that they had not done before. And I'd be happy to send you the detail on that, Senator.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Casey.

**SENATOR ROBERT CASEY (D-PA):** Madam Secretary, thank you for being here today to provide this testimony. I'm going to ask you a question that relates to the implementation of the Accountability Review Board recommendations.

But before I do that, I want to express what I think is a widely shared sentiment today, both by way of gratitude and commendation for your work. We don't have time today to do a full listing of all the

achievements that you should get credit for, but I'll mention maybe two or three in light of the work that you've done and some of the work we've done together.

The terribly difficult challenge in dealing with and reducing the flow of calcium ammonium nitrate from Pakistan into Afghanistan which finds its way into the roadside bombs that kill our troops, known more popularly as IEDs. And I want to thank you for that work.

The work that was mentioned by Senator Boxer and others on behalf of women throughout the world but also women and girls particularly in Afghanistan.

And maybe thirdly, the -- even though we're still in the throes of responding to the challenge in Syria, the great work that you've done on humanitarian assistance and other elements of that strategy that we've worked together on.

And also, I want to commend the -- not just the approach, but the words you spoke today about not retrenching, not retreating when it comes to getting that balance right between engagement and also security, both high priorities.

I was struck by -- and I'm glad you were so specific on page 3 of your testimony about the specifics on implementation. Twenty-nine recommendations by the board which now has found its way into -- or I should say, which now is a set of 64 specific action items. And you said in your testimony, quote, "fully 85 percent are on track to be completed by the end of March with a number completed already."

I guess I'd ask you one question about that and then one follow-up. What, if any, impediments to implementation do you perceive right now? And are there impediments to meeting those deadlines that this committee and the Congress can help you with by way of meeting that deadline and implementation?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, thank you, Senator. And let me thank you for those three topics you covered, and particularly, your very clear focus on the IED problem and the ammonium nitrate problem in Pakistan. You and I have talked about this. You've gone there, I've gone there and carried that message, and I thank you for making it an issue.

Let me say that we need your help -- we need your help, number one, to hold us accountable, you know, to keep asking whoever sits in this chair or anybody else in the department with any responsibility in this area what are you doing and how are you doing it. And it'll help to clear up misconceptions like, no, our recommendations have ever been fully implemented, which I know is not the case. But it will also help to keep driving the change.

You know, I really believe that an authorization process will dramatically change the dynamic, and I strongly urge it be tried. And again, I go back to my Armed Services Committee experience with Senator McCain over those years. We had subcommittees, we took it very seriously. We held hearings, we brought people in. We had a three-day markup that was sacrosanct. But we also had the Quadrennial Defense Review, the QDR, where the Defense Department submitted that and it helped to provide a framework.

So when I got to the State Department, I said, there is nothing like that at the State Department, so I started the first ever Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, the first ever QDDR. You can help me continue that and make the department have to ask the hard questions if you legislate it the way the QDR is legislated for the Defense Department.

Secondly, you can help by making sure that the needs we come to you with, like what are the training needs, the budgetary needs, the bureaucratic changes that are needed, that you help support that. And certainly, we've talked a little bit about the budget, but getting that transfer authority, if you can help us with the House, it's 1.4 billion (dollars). Marine security guard detachments, 553 million (dollars).

We've been closely coordinating with DOD. Historically, Marine security guards do not do personal security, they only do protection of classified materials. So we're working through what the guards will do and how we can use more of them.

Secondly, more diplomatic security personnel, 130 million (dollars). That would fund an additional 155 DS personnel and related equipment. And then facility construction and upgrades, 736 million (dollars). We're going to have periodic reviews by these teams I started, the Defense/State Interagency Security Assessment Teams. We're going to start a high-threat post review by the secretary, which had not happened before.

We're going to strengthen the mutual security agreements between the State Department and other government agencies when they are not co-located. We had a very good relationship with the annex in Benghazi. We helped them. They helped us. But there wasn't anything that was -- it was more on the ground working together. It wasn't part of an overall template.

So there is a lot that I think we can take from this ARB because, you know, I told Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen, put it out there. You know what, I want to know more than anybody what happened. Don't hold any punches. Tell us what the facts are. But now we have to act on it, or shame on us.

**SEN. CASEY:** Thanks very much. PAGE 43 01/23/2002 .STX s ARB because, you know, I told Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen, put it out there. You know what, I want to know more than anybody what happened. Don't hold any punches. Tell us what the facts are. But now we have to act on it, or shame on us.

**SEN. CASEY:** Thanks very much. PAGE 43 SFRC-CLINTON-BENG 01/23/2002 .STX HAZI

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Johnson.

**SENATOR RON JOHNSON (R-WI):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Madam Secretary, I'd like to join my colleagues in, you know, thanking you for your service, sincerely. And also, I appreciate the fact you're here testifying and glad that you're looking in good health.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Thank you.

**SEN. JOHNSON:** Did you -- were you fully aware in real time -- and again, I realize how big your job is and, you know, everything is erupting in the Middle East this time -- were you fully aware of these 20 incidents that were reported in the ARB in real time? I mean --

**SEC. CLINTON:** I was aware of the ones that were brought to my attention. They were part of our ongoing discussion about the .ETX

x x x before. We're going to strengthen the mutual security agreements between the State Department and other government agencies when they are not co-located. We had a very good relationship with the annex in Benghazi. We helped them. They helped us. But there wasn't anything that was -- it was more on the ground working together. It wasn't part of an overall template.

So there is a lot that I think we can take from the deteriorating threat environment in eastern Libya. We certainly were very conscious of them. I was assured by our security professionals that repairs were under way, additional security upgrades had taken place.

**SEN. JOHNSON:** OK. Thank you. Did you see personally the cable on -- I believe it was August 12th -- specifically asking for basically reinforcements for the security detail that was going to be evacuating or leaving in August? Did you see that personally?

**SEC. CLINTON:** No, sir.

**SEN. JOHNSON:** OK. When you read the ARB, it strikes me as how certain the people were that the attack started at 9:40, Benghazi time. When was the first time you spoke to, or have you ever spoken to the returnees, the evacuees? Did you personally speak to those folks?

**SEC. CLINTON:** I've spoken to one of them, but I waited until after the ARB had done its investigation because I did not want there to be anybody raising any issues and I had spoken to anyone before the ARB conducted its investigation.

**SEN. JOHNSON:** How many people were evacuated from Libya?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, you -- the numbers are a little bit hard to pin down because of our other (friends ?)  
--

**SEN. JOHNSON:** Approximately.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Approximately 25 to 30.

**SEN. JOHNSON:** Did anybody in the State Department talk to those folks very shortly afterwards?

**SEC. CLINTON:** There was discussion going on afterwards, but the -- once the investigation started, the FBI spoke to them before we spoke to them. And so other than our people in Tripoli, which -- I think you're talking about Washington, right?

**SEN. JOHNSON:** Yeah. The point -- the point I'm making is a very simple phone call to these individuals I think would have ascertained immediately that there was no protest prior to this. I mean, this attack started at 9:40 p.m., Benghazi time, and it was an assault -- and I appreciate the fact that you called it an assault. But, I mean, I'm going back to then Ambassador Rice five days later going on Sunday shows and what I would say purposefully misleading the American public. .ETX

x x x before. We're going to strengthen the mutual security agreements between the State Department and other government agencies when they are not co-located. We had a very good relationship with the annex in Benghazi. We helped them. They helped us. But there wasn't anything that was -- it was more on the ground working together. It wasn't part of an overall template.

So there is a lot that I think we can take from thP

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well --

**SEN. JOHNSON:** Why wasn't that known? And again, I appreciate the fact of the transparency of this -- of this hearing, but why weren't we transparent at that point in time?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, first of all, Senator, I would say that once the assault happened and once we got our people rescued and out, our most immediate concern was, number one, taking care of their injuries -- as I said, I still a DS agent at Walter Reed seriously injured -- getting them into Frankfurt, Ramstein --

**SEN. JOHNSON:** Is that --

**SEC. CLINTON:** -- to get taken care of, the FBI going over immediately to start talking to them -- we did not think it was appropriate for us to talk to them before the FBI conducted their interviews, so -- and we did not -- I think this is accurate, sir -- I certainly did not know of any reports that contradicted the IC talking points at the time that Ambassador Rice went on the TV shows.

And, you know, I just want to say that, you know, people have accused Ambassador Rice and the administration of, you know, misleading Americans. I can say, trying to be in the middle of this and understanding what was going on, nothing could be further from the truth. Was information developing? Was the situation fluid? Would we reach conclusions later that weren't reached initially? And I appreciate the --

**SEN. JOHNSON:** But Madam Secretary, do you disagree with me that a simple phone call to those evacuees to determine what happened wouldn't have -- wouldn't have ascertained immediately that there was no protest?

I mean, that was -- that was a piece of information that could have been easily, easily obtained --

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, but Senator, again --

**SEN. JOHNSON:** -- within hours, if not days.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Senator, I -- you know, when you're in these positions, the last thing you want to do is interfere with any other process going on, number one. Number two -- number two at --

**SEN. JOHNSON:** Well, that's -- I realize -- I realize that's -- I realize that's a good excuse, but --

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, no, it's the fact. Number two, I would recommend highly you read both what the ARB said about it and the classified ARB, because even today there are questions being raised.

Now, we have no doubt they were terrorists, they were militants, they attacked us, they killed our people, but what was going on and why they were doing what they were doing is still -- is still unknown.

**SEN. JOHNSON:** No, no, no, no, I'm -- I -- again, we were misled that there were supposedly protests and then something sprang out of that, an assault sprang out of that. And that was easily ascertained that that was not the fact --

**SEC. CLINTON:** But could -- but, you know --

**SEN. JOHNSON:** -- and the American people could have known that within days, and they didn't know that.

**SEC. CLINTON:** And -- with all due respect, the fact is we had four dead Americans.

**SEN. JOHNSON:** I understand.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Was it because of a protest, or was it because of guys out for a walk one night who decided they'd go kill some Americans? What difference, at this point, does it make? It is our job to figure out what happened and do everything we can to prevent it from ever happening again, Senator.

Now, honestly, I will do my best to answer your questions about this. But the fact is that people were trying in real time to get to the best information. The IC has a process, I understand, going with the other committees to explain how these talking points came out. But, you know, to be clear, it is, from my perspective, less important today looking backwards as to why these militants decided they did it than to find them and bring them to justice, and then maybe we'll figure out what was going on in the meantime.

**SEN. JOHNSON:** OK. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Shaheen.

**SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN (D-NH):** Thank you very much, Secretary Clinton. I want to echo the praise from my colleagues for your extraordinary service, and I want to thank you for your leadership on Benghazi, for taking responsibility for what happened there, for initiating an investigation so we would understand what happened, for moving forward to address threats in other high-risk areas and for all of your efforts to implement the recommendations of the Accountability Review Board report. Thank you. That's the kind of leadership we want to see across our government.

I want to first go back to what I thought I -- you said about still looking for the funding to be transferred, the -- 1.3 billion (dollars)?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Four.

**SEN. SHAHEEN:** Four billion (dollars) from the OCO account to address the security threats not just in Libya but around the world. And do I understand that we still have not had that money transferred and so that means that the 553 million (dollars) for Marine security guards, the 130 million (dollars) for diplomatic security, the 691 million (dollars) for security installation -- that is all on hold and so we can't move forward until that has been approved by the House?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, now we have to start over, because it was in the Senate version of Sandy. It was not put into the Senate -- the House version of Sandy. So no, we cannot -- we cannot move money we already have to address the needs and deficiencies that the ARB has recommended we do.

**SEN. SHAHEEN:** Well, I would just echo the comments that have been made already by this committee and by you, that this is action that we need to get moving on immediately, because we still have people at risk around the world and we need to take the action that's going to ensure their security. So I would

certainly urge the chairman and the ranking member to move the committee to do everything we can to make this happen.

I want to go back to something that Secretary Nides said at the hearing on December 20th, because I asked him about the cooperation between the Department of Defense and State and what the situation was on the ground before the Benghazi attack in terms of the placement of our military in the region. He talked about the unprecedented cooperation between State and Defense in response to Benghazi.

But I wonder if you could talk about how we ensure that this is a standard way of doing business and that we're acting in cooperation when we're looking at the threats facing us, particularly as we look at what's happening in Northern Africa and across the Middle East.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, that's a really important and timely question, because certainly our cooperation around this crisis was exemplary.

You know, the president told the secretary and the chairman to do everything they possibly could, to spare no effort or resource. And we had a very good interagency response, as the ARB found.

But the fact is we have to look closely now at what more State and DOD can do together to prepare for contingencies such as this. And I think it's a challenge that needs to be taken up because in Iraq and now in Afghanistan, our diplomats and our military work closely together. But as we saw in Iraq, when the military left, you know, that was putting a lot of burdens on our civilians in Iraq that are very difficult for us to be able to address because we relied on our DOD colleagues for so much. Similarly, as we're starting to look at the drawdown in Afghanistan, what kind of civilian presence are we going to be able to leave there, and what can DOD do to help us to try to determine what that can and should be?

And I think you get a sense of the challenge of this from a statement that Admiral Mullen made. You know, he said, and I quote, "On the night of the attacks, Benghazi, Tripoli and Washington communicated and coordinated effectively with each other. They looped in the military right away. The interagency response was timely and appropriate, but there was simply not enough time for U.S. military forces to have made a difference. Having said that," Admiral Mullen goes on, "it is not reasonable nor feasible to tether U.S. forces at the ready to respond to protect every high-risk post in the world.

So we have to look at this from both the State Department and the DOD perspectives, and we don't have assets of any significance right now on the African continent. We're only building that up. And so what do we need in Africa? What countries will welcome us there, give us, both our military and civilian teams, a good, safe base out of which to operate? So if we're focusing just on Africa, and particularly North Africa right now, there's got to be a great deal of planning and coordination between DOD and AFRICOM and between the State Department and the rest of the administration.

**SEN. SHAHEEN:** Thank you.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Flake.

**SENATOR JEFF FLAKE (R-AZ):** Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thank you for your testimony, and also, thank you, as others have said, for your service. Traveling over a million miles and more than a hundred countries -- I think those who -- those of us who haven't done it cannot appreciate how difficult that is and the commitment that you've had to it over the years, and I thank you.

With regard to the appearance of Dr. Rice on the morning shows, you mentioned that you did not select her. Were you consulted in that decision?

**SEC. CLINTON:** No.

**SEN. FLAKE:** After --

**SEC. CLINTON:** No, but it wouldn't be -- it would not be in any way unusual for Ambassador Rice to represent the administration on a -- on a foreign relations issue.

**SEN. FLAKE:** Right, I don't think it was either. But afterwards, after she testified, it was clear that what she testified to was at variance with a lot of communications from the State Department and a lot of the -- a lot of the information that had been gathered and things that had been said by yourself and others at the State Department. Can you just enlighten us a bit as to discussions that went on at the State Department after that testimony? Was there -- I mean, these are professionals that you oversee who do a lot of hard work to give analysis and this kind of assessment. What she said was clearly at variance with a lot of the research and analysis that had gone on about the nature of these attacks. Can you just enlighten us as to discussion -- what discussions were had at the State Department after this testimony?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, I don't think -- I cannot speak to any conversation I specifically had because the conversations were ongoing before and after Ambassador Rice's appearance on the Sunday talk shows. And we did not conclude, finally, that there were no protests at all until days after the attack.

So maybe it was an abundance of caution. Maybe it was trying to make sure we didn't step on anybody's toes while we were gathering information. Maybe it was because the IC was still looking at all of their sources and having different threads coming in. But you know, as the ARB said, even today the motivations, the actions before they went onto the compound -- all of that is still not nailed down.

So I think we were trying very hard to provide information. Maybe one of the lessons learned here is, you know, just withhold, don't say what you don't know for sure until it's finally decided. But that's not part of who we are as Americans and as public officials. We get out there. We say, here's what we think happened; it's subject to change.

And so I think we all wish that nobody had ever in any way raised doubts, but certainly Ambassador Rice and all the other administration officials were speaking off of what had been determined were the most acceptable talking points.

**SEN. FLAKE:** OK. Well, I think we know now that the talking points -- we don't exactly know where they were changed or how they were changed, but they were changed or altered. And I think that we can all concede that we were not given a clear picture of what went on and what we knew.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, but Senator -- and you know, we didn't have a clear picture. I wish I could sit here today and tell you that within days, within a week, by September 20th, when we came up here, we had a clear picture. We did not have a clear picture. And that -- you know, if you wish to fault the administration, it is that we didn't have a clear picture and we probably didn't do as clear a job explaining that we did not have a clear picture until days later, creating what I think are legitimate questions.

You know, I understand -- I've been on the other side of the table. I understand trying to figure out what was going on and why were we told this, that and the other. But I can only assure you that as the information came to light and as people thought it was reliable, we shared it, but that took some time.

**SEN. FLAKE:** All right. Thank you. In the remaining seconds left, you mentioned that many of the recommendations have now been put in place; there are protocols in place to make sure that if security is not adequate, that we move our diplomats and others to places where they're more secure or whatever. But let me just say there were protocols in place before this, there were trip wires that we tripped, and the actions that were outlined to be taken were not taken.

How can we be assured here that the new protocols that are in place, with these new recommendations being implemented, will be followed or adhered to, because they clearly weren't before?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, I want to make clear that no one in the State Department, the intelligence community, any other agency ever recommended that we close Benghazi. We were clear-eyed about the threats and the dangers as they were developing in eastern Libya and in Benghazi.

But there was no decision made and nothing that prompted such a decision.

Now sitting here today, we have probably at least 20 other posts that are under a serious threat environment as I -- as I speak to you. We are working with the other agencies in our government, some of whom are co-located with us, others of whom are nearby. We're constantly assessing. And sometimes we get it wrong, but it's very -- it's rare that we get it wrong. This was one of those terrible, tragic times when, you know, there was an assessment shared by the ambassador, shared by others that turned out not to take into account the militants attacking that night.

So I can tell you there are, as you say, trip wires, but what we're going to try to do is elevate the discussion and the decision-making so that there's not any doubt that everybody's on the same page, that we're not missing information, we're not husbanding resources and thereby making less than optimal decisions. We're -- that's what we're going to try to institutionalize going forward.

**SEN. FLAKE:** Thank you.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Coons.

**SENATOR CHRIS COONS (D-DE):** I want to thank Senator Menendez for chairing this critically important hearing and to thank you, Secretary Clinton, for testifying today. We deeply regretted you were unable to appear before, due to your illness, and I'm thrilled to see you've made a full recovery.

I want to start by just thanking you for your remarkable leadership as secretary of state. One of many stops in the million miles that you've traveled and the 112 countries you've visited was a stop we shared jointly on a trip to Liberia for the second inauguration of Ellen Sirleaf Johnson. And it gave me an opportunity, as a freshman senator, to see up close your remarkable skills and stamina and your determination.

In my view, your leadership has helped restore America's credibility, build bridges with our international partners, and you've also built bridges here on the Hill, where your leadership at State is respected on both sides of the aisle and has been widely praised. While your likely successor, Senator Kerry, has my full confidence, you will be deeply, deeply missed.

You said in your opening statement you're determined to leave the State Department and our country safer, stronger and more secure and in my view, because of your leadership, they are.

Today, we continue the consideration of the recommendations of the advisory review board, which found that security was, quote, "grossly inadequate to deal with the attack that took place in Benghazi in September."

The mistakes that were made are simply unacceptable, and I'm pleased that the State Department has begun to promptly implement the board's recommendations thanks to your leadership. I know you agree that the massive security failures, such as those witnessed in Benghazi that cost the lives of four brave Americans simply cannot happen again. And I look forward to working with my colleagues on this committee in a searching review of the resources needed and the State Department structure to ensure that we do better to protect our diplomats and other Americans who put their lives at risk each and every day.

As chairman of the Africa Subcommittee, I'm particularly pleased that you have drawn for this committee today in your testimony the links between this tragic incident in Benghazi, the recent terrorist incident in Algeria and the unfolding challenges in Mali.

I chaired a hearing on Mali on December 5th, and have been impressed with your engaged leadership -- visits to Algeria, sort of raising the alarm about AQIM. And I welcome your testimony today on how you see the regional threats from AQIM, how you see the consequences of this recent incident in Algeria and what role you think there is for the United States in both supporting the current actions by the French and the Malian military and the need for our ongoing insurance investment to restore democracy in Mali, to restore development and some positive prospects moving forward for the people of Mali and how you think we can insure that State and Defense are coordinated through AFRICOM in West and North Africa going forward.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, I appreciate greatly your sustained attention to Africa. And I think it's going to be viewed as quite prophetic because there will be, I believe, a continuing set of challenges. You mentioned some of them. But by no means, we -- you know, we've got Boko Haram in Nigeria posing the threat of instability to one of the most important oil-producing nations in the world, something very important to our country. We've got other unrest and challenges coming down the west coast of Africa.

But we also have a success story, at least a hoped-for, beginning success story in Somalia. And what did the United States do there? You know, when I became secretary of state, I recommitted American money to the AMISOM forces. We worked to train the Ugandans and the Burundians and others. We worked with the Kenya PAGE 56 01/23/2002 .STX important to our country. We've got other unrest and challenges coming down the west coast of Africa.

But we also have a success story, at least a hoped-for, beginning success story in Somalia. And what did the United States do there? You know, when I became secretary of state, I recommitted American money to the AMISOM forces. We worked to train the Ugandans and the Burundians and others. We worked with the Kenya PAGE 56 SFRC-CLINTON-BENGHAZIns when they 01/23/2002 .STX went in. We worked with the Djiboutis. It took time. There was no -- there were no shortcuts. But we had literally the boots of the -- of our American soldiers and the boots of American diplomats on the ground. I visited one of the training camps in Uganda.

And what we have to do is recognize we're in for a long-term struggle here. And that means we've got to pay attention to places that historically we have not chosen to or had to. So I would hope that this committee can make that case to the rest of the Congress.

We're now looking at, you know, troops coming from other neighboring African countries. We can't just send them into Mali. They don't have training to do that. We're going to have to work with other partners to train them and equip them and then to sustain them, just like we did with the troops in Somalia. So, you know, four years ago al-Shabab was one of the biggest threats, not only to East Africa but to the United States. We have a chance to really continue on a -- on a positive track there, but it didn't happen by accident; it took American money, American know-how, American experience, and we have to make the decision we're going to do the same in North Africa as well.

**SEN. COONS:** Thank you, Madam Secretary. I certainly look forward to continuing to get your advice, direction and encouragement as I try to work with my colleagues here to ensure the same sort of success going forward in West Africa that we've recently enjoyed in East Africa. Thank you for your testimony.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator McCain.

**SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN (R-AZ):** Thank you, Madam Secretary, and it's wonderful to see you in good health and --

**SEC. CLINTON:** Thank you.

**SEN. MCCAIN:** -- as combative as ever.

**SEC. CLINTON:** (Chuckles.)

**SEN. MCCAIN:** It's -- we thank you, we thank you for your outstanding and dedicated service to this nation, and we're all proud of you. All over the world where I travel, you are viewed with admiration and respect.

Four months or months after the Benghazi tragedy -- it's a tragedy when we lose four brave Americans -- there are many questions that are unanswered. And the answers, frankly, that you've given this morning are not satisfactory to me. Was -- were you and the president made aware of the classified cable from Chris Stevens (which ?) said that the United States consulate in Benghazi could not survive a sustained assault? Numerous warnings, including personally to me, about the security were unanswered or unaddressed.

It took a CNN reporter looking through the consulate to find Chris Stevens' last warning. When were you made aware of that cable? When were you made aware of the attack on the British ambassador and the assassination attempts and the closing of the consulates there, and what actions were taken? What was the president's activities during that seven-hour period?

On the anniversary of the worst attack in American history, September 11th, we didn't have Department of Defense forces available for seven hours. Two brave Americans died in the last hour. With all these warnings, all these things -- (inaudible) -- we didn't have a single Department of Defense asset apparently available to come to these rescue.

I categorically reject your answer to Senator Johnson about, well, we didn't ask these survivors, who were flown to Ramstein the next day, that they -- that this was not a spontaneous demonstration. To say that it's because an investigation was going on -- the American people deserve to know answers, and they certainly don't deserve false answers. And the answers that were given to the American people on September 15th by the ambassador to the United Nations were false, in fact contradicted by the classified information which was kept out of the secretary to the United Nations report, who, by the way, in the president's words, had nothing to do with Benghazi, which questions why she was sent out start -- to start with.

Why is it that the administration still refuses to provide the full text of emails regarding the deletion of references to al-Qaida and terrorism in the talking points?

Why do we care? Because if the classified information had been included, it gives an entirely different version of events to the American people. Going to the American people and tell them what happened, then you ought to have your facts straight -- including, the ambassador said, quote, "al-Qaida is decimated and our consulates and embassies are secure."

So here we are, four months later, and we still don't have the basic information. Now, if you want to go out and tell the American people what happened, you should at least have interviewed the people who were there instead of saying, no, we couldn't talk to them because an FBI investigation was going on. And by the way, as I said at the time -- I just happened to be on one of those talk shows -- people don't bring RPGs and mortars to spontaneous demonstrations. That's a fundamental.

And of course the president continued to say, days afterwards -- September the 12th, he made a reference to act of terror -- September 12th, on "60 Minutes" -- "too early to know." September 20th, on Univision, "we're still doing an investigation." September 24th, on "The View," "we're still doing an investigation." The president of the United States, as late as September 24th, two weeks later, did not acknowledge that this was an act of terror, conducted by people who were at least somehow connected to the al-Qaida.

Finally, Madam Secretary, I strongly disagree with your depiction of what we did after Gadhafi fell. We did not provide the security that was needed. We did not help them with border security. We did not give them the kind of assistance that would have been necessary to help dismantle these militias that still, to this day, remain a challenge to democracy in Libya and freedom.

You knew Chris Stevens very well. I knew him very well. I knew him on July 7th, when I went to Libya to observe the elections. And at that time, on July 7th, he expressed to me his deep and grave concerns about security, particularly in Benghazi. And he continued to communicate with the State Department, and I don't know who else was privy to those cables of his deep concern about the security there and the need for additional assistance. And I will argue with facts that after that event took place, after the fall of Gadhafi, the, quote, soft footprint was partially, to some degree, responsible for the tragedy that took place. The American people and the families of these four brave Americans still have not gotten the answers that they deserve. I hope that they will get them.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, I understand your very strong feelings. You knew Chris. You were a friend of Chris. You were one of the staunchest supporters of the efforts to dislodge Gadhafi and try to give the Libyan people a chance.

And we just have a disagreement. We have a disagreement about what did happen and when it happened with respect to explaining the sequence of events. We did get to talk to the DS agents when they got back to this country. We did so. It was not before September 15th. We had no access to the surveillance cameras for weeks, which helped to answer a number of questions.

But with respect to helping the Libyans -- and that also goes to the question Senator Rubio asked -- we will provide a list of everything we were doing and were attempting to do.

But I will also tell you that since March 2011 congressional holds have been placed on programs for many months for aid to Libya. We're had frequent congressional complaints -- why are we doing anything for Libya, it's a wealthy country, it has oil -- disagreements from some sources that we should never have been part of any U.N. mission in Libya. Currently the House has holds on bilateral security assistance, on other kinds of support for antiterrorism assistance. So we got to get our act together between the administration and the Congress. If this is a priority, and if we are serious about trying to help this government stand up security and deal with what is a very dangerous environment from east to west, then we have to work together.

So I hope that we can have the kind of discussion where we can agree on certain approaches that will make a difference. We -- and I -- again, I would urge that you look and read both the classified and unclassified versions of the ARB that tries to deal with the very questions that you and Senator Johnson are raising -- the timing of it and the like. But I also hope we're looking forward because right now Libya is still dangerous; it is still in a very unstable status. And whatever we can do for them, we at least ought to agree we need to do and get out there and start delivering.

**SEN. MCCAIN:** Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Madam Secretary, I want to honor our commitment to you to try to keep you within a certain time frame, knowing you also have to go before the House. I also want to honor the opportunity for every member to ask a question. So I appreciate your very thorough and thoughtful answers, but to some degree, you will dictate your own time frame, so -- (chuckles) -- with that, Senator Durbin.

**SENATOR RICHARD DURBIN (D-IL):** Madam Secretary, thank you for being here. (Clears throat.) Excuse me. It was a little more than four years ago that a number of your colleagues, myself included, encouraged you to take on this responsibility, believing you would have a profound impact on the world and on the diplomacy of the United States, and you have. Thank you so much for all you've done.

I also want to say a word on behalf of Ambassador Rice, an extraordinary individual who has served this country well. I think some of the criticism that was heaped on her was unfair and did not reflect the fact that she was reporting the best information she had available at the time. And as you have said, more information became available, and it was dutifully reported.

I do want to make one point for the record here about whether the American people are told everything right away, in the right way, so that they can be fully informed. And I'd like to refer to five words for them to reflect on: Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. We were told by every level of government here there were Iraqi weapons of mass destruction that justified a war, the invasion of the United States. We are still searching for those weapons. They didn't exist. Thousands of Americans lost their lives. We could have a hearing on that if you'd like.

The point I'm trying to get to is two extraordinarily talented individuals, Admiral Mullen and maybe one of the best diplomats of our time, Ambassador Pickering, did a thorough review here, found shortcomings in our protection of our people overseas and reported them honestly.

You not only initiated that review, you accepted its findings in their totality -- no cover-up, an attempt to be totally honest and to make sure a tragedy like this never occurs again.

The second point I'd like to make is this. Some on the committee have already criticized the notion that this is about money. They might argue you can't solve a problem by throwing money at it. Madam Secretary, you can't solve a problem by throwing money at it, unless the problem is lack of money.

And what I understand you to testify is you have asked this Congress for the authority to transfer existing funds to protect ambassadors and diplomatic personnel around the world, and you've been refused by the House of Representatives. They will not give you the authority to even take existing funds.

If I'm not mistaken, in a few weeks your department is going to face sequestration. And we not only won't have additional funds, we will cut some \$50 million when it comes to construction of facilities to protect people who represent the United States overseas and cut money for the individuals necessary to protect those same diplomats.

So I'd like you to comment: How can we keep our commitment to be a leader in the world in the area of diplomacy and statecraft, to avoid the necessity of war, if we don't give the most basic resources to your department, which commands, as I understand it, about 1 1/2 percent of the federal budget?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Actually, it's less than 1 (percent). But let's not quibble. (Chuckles.)

Look, I am well-aware that there are deficiencies and inadequacies in the department. I went about doing what I could in the four years I had, through the QDDR process, through creating some additional incentives and changes in culture, to try to assist everybody in the State Department and USAID to do as much as they could with whatever they had.

There's -- you know, because, you know, we were never going to reach parity with the Defense Department; we were always going to be one-twelfth or less of the budget -- that was fine -- but to do what we can. But at the same time we have asked for the funds we think we need to be able to fulfill the mission you have described, Senator Durbin. And we need the help of this committee. I mean, I am one who believes that we have to both walk and chew gum at the same time. We have to deal with our own economy and our fiscal situation. That is a given, because that is the source of our strength and our capacity. But we also have to be smart about making the right investments in diplomacy and development to try to solve problems and prevent them.

So you know, I have outlined what should be no-brainer. Let us have the permission to take money we already have -- we're not asking for more money -- and put it to work with the ARB told us to do, and then let's look at the budget as we move forward.

Now sequestration will be very damaging to the State Department and USAID if it does come to pass, because it throws the baby out with the bath. Are there programs that we could reduce, make more efficient? Yes. That's part of what I've been trying to do, is to push that forward. And that's what the QDR process was about.

But there are also a lot of very essential programs, first and foremost the security of our personnel in dangerous places, that we can't afford to cut more of. And so I hope we get the transfer authority and then have a sensible budget discussion going forward.

**SEN. DURBIN:** Thank you.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Thank you. Senator Barrasso.

**SENATOR JOHN BARRASSO (R-WY):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, I want -- I want to thank you for your incredible commitment to this country as first lady, as a member of this body as well as secretary of state. And as a doctor, I will tell you, I have seen you work yourself to exhaustion, not for your own benefit but for the benefit of the people of this country, and the country is grateful for that.

I, like you, agree that we need to make sure that this -- something like never happens again. And I've kind of looked at it like the Challenger explosion where we lost those seven astronauts because of the -- an O-ring and problems there, and so we didn't see it coming but we could've seen it coming and should have seen it coming.

The -- as you said, you never saw the security requests. Vice President Biden in the presidential debate said no one told us. I mean, the current -- the concern is that we should have been seeing these sorts of things. There were the attacks on the British ambassador. There were the attacks on the Red Cross that -- they pulled out of Benghazi. There were attacks on the consulate itself. And yet we had no evacuation plan established, in spite of the fact that months earlier in Libya, we had, I think, get a -- get a -- an Italian ferry boat to be able to get people out who were in danger who were diplomats at the time. So those are these concerns.

We want to make sure that there is security for our ambassadors, which gets to the issue of -- we talk about what happened on the talk shows, and you said the best information was what was best available at the time. You know, the American people heard, we had a substantial security presence. They heard, we obviously did have a strong security presence. They heard, obviously, there was a significant security presence. And I just believe that that wasn't the case. And I would ask you today if you believe that we had a significant, substantial and strong security presence in Libya at that time because we want that for all of our ambassadors.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Right. Well, Senator, we had a security presence that was mutually reinforced with the annex. We had had, as you rightly point out, and others before you, previous incidents, not only against our compound but against the British, the Red Cross and others. And what we -- you know, what we have accepted from the ARB recommendation is that even though there was a back and forth in the cables and discussions, do you need three DS agents or do you need five, we had five there but we had an unprecedented attack -- as one of the former RSOs, regional security officers, testified, an attack that truly was not expected, even though at that -- on that night we had the requisite number of DS agents.

So, you know, we can get mired in the back and forth, but I believe we will be doing more to help prevent future tragedies and attacks if we take the ARB recommendations, because after all, they had no stake in

this debate one way or the other. They just wanted to look at the facts, which they did an excellent job doing, and then tell all of us what we needed to do, and that's what I think our highest responsibility is.

**SEN. BARRASSO:** Thank you, Madame Secretary. You know, thinking about future attacks and trying to prevent those -- on September 12th, the president vowed to, quote, bring to justice the killers who attacked our people in Benghazi. So we asked the question, and Senator Risch talked about, were the people that perpetrated the recent attacks in Algeria -- were they part of this, or were they maybe perhaps emboldened because no one has yet paid a penalty for the attack on our facility in Benghazi, and how can we make sure that people are actually brought to justice there?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, I believe that -- well, I know that the FBI has been briefing some committees -- I assume members or staff of this committee are included -- I don't know that, but I would assume -- about the progress of their investigation. I got the most recent update from the director just a few days ago, when he returned from North Africa. They are following some very promising leads and putting together cases. They would have to speak to you directly about that, in a classified setting.

But I think what they are trying to determine is how best to respond. And I think what the president clearly said is, we will respond and we will bring those to justice. And I don't think anybody should doubt this president at his word. We have some very good examples of that. It may take time, but he does not in any way divert attention from the goal of bringing them to justice.

**SEN. BARRASSO:** Thank you, Madam Secretary. The president also said al-Qaida has been decimated. And in light of the recent terrorisms -- terrorist activities that we continue to see in North Africa, around the world, would you characterize that as al-Qaida has been decimated?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, core al-Qaida certainly has been. I think you would hear the same from the intelligence community or DOD. The work that has been done in Afghanistan and the border areas between Afghanistan, Pakistan certainly has taken out a whole cadre of leadership. What we're seeing now are people who have migrated back to other parts of the world -- where they came from, primarily -- who are in effect affiliates, part of the jihadist syndicate. Some of them, like al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, use that name. Others use different names.

But the fact is they are terrorists. They are extremists. They have designs on overthrowing existing governments, even these new Islamist governments, of controlling territory. So although there has been the decimation of core al-Qaida in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, we do have to contend with the wannabes and the affiliates going forward.

**SEN. BARRASSO:** Thank you, madam.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Udall.

**SENATOR THOMAS UDALL (D-NM):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here. And it's great to see you today.

You have been, I think, a real and dedicated public servant for this country, and your travels around the world, as many here have talked about it, the million miles that you've put on and all the countries you've visited. And I think you've been to many countries where they've never had a secretary of state. And I've seen firsthand, when I've been to many of these countries, the difference it makes to have you there on the ground. So I, first of all, just want to thank you for that, and I know it does take a toll, but you are incredibly dedicated to that.

Secondly, it's great to see you here in good health, smiling and engaging with all of us. And I want to add to the list -- people -- senators, going down the line, talked about some of your accomplishments. I know previously I talked to you about cookstoves, which I know has been one of your initiatives. And it's once again an example of picking something where people around the world who are living on a dollar or two a day -- if you put in a technology like an up-to-dated (sic) cookstove, you can make a big difference on their health, in the health of their children, and you can make a big difference on the environment. So I would add that to the list that has been given here today of very thoughtful policymaking on your part.

Now, one of the findings the board made in its report is that -- and I'm quoting here -- "The total elimination of risk is a nonstarter for U.S. diplomacy given the need for the U.S. government to be present in places where stability and security are often most profoundly lacking and host government support is sometimes minimal to nonexistent," and I'm ending the quote there.

And this report really, as you know, Madam Secretary, underscores the difficulty in finding the right balance between engagement and security. And I fully support, as you've asked here and you've made the point to our committee, the idea that we should reprogram this 1.4 billion (dollars), get our act together and respond to the recommendations.

But my question here revolves around these high-risk posts. I think the term you've used is having 20 of them. Is this how many there are, how many high-risk posts we have around the world?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, it's a sliding scale. There's -- you know --

**SEN. UDALL:** Yes, but it -- the --

**SEC. CLINTON:** There's very high, and there's high -- I mean, it's a -- it's a -- it's a constantly evolving threat environment.

**SEN. UDALL:** Can you give us a little bit of a range, I mean, very high and --

**SEC. CLINTON:** Yeah. I would -- you know, I would like to give you that in a classified document, because I don't think it helps us to point out the ones that we think are most at risk and then the ones that would be perhaps in a secondary category.

But I think it's fair to say, Senator, we operate in Pakistan, we operate in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in Yemen. We operate in places where we know that our facilities are being surveilled for potential attacks, where we have a steady intel stream of plotting against us.

We know that. And we make the decision, which is a difficult decision, as to whether or not that mission continues.

And I have to say that we really rely on our security professionals to implement the protocols and the procedures. And I have to say they do a tremendous job. The vast majority of the cases -- I could give you a long list of attacks averted, of assassinations stopped, of the kinds of daily efforts that our diplomatic security professionals are engaged in. So I have a lot of confidence in them, but we're going to -- we're going to do what we can to make sure that they get the support within our bureaucracy that they deserve out on the ground protecting our diplomats.

**SEN. UDALL:** And I know I'm -- I want to obey the time limits here because you do need to do -- move over to the House, and others want to question. But maybe you could answer this one for the record. Does it make sense that in some of these high-risk areas that we consolidate those particular areas with more secure areas and then be able to be in a situation where our personnel would be safer? And I'm not asking you

really to answer that now. My time's run out, and I want others to be able to question. But if you could -- if you could give us an answer for the record, that would be great.

**SEC. CLINTON:** I will do that. And I will say, Senator, one of the recommendations out of the East Africa ARB was to do that. And that is done, again, in the vast majority of cases wherever it's possible to do what's called co-locate. But we're taking a look at that as well to see what more we can do.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Senator Paul?

**SENATOR RAND PAUL (R-KY):** Thank you for appearing, Secretary Clinton. And I'm glad to see your health is improving.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Thank you.

**SEN. PAUL:** One of the things that disappointed me most about the original 9/11 was no one was fired. We spent trillions of dollars, but there were a lot of human errors. These are judgment errors, and the people who make judgment errors need to be replaced, fired and no longer in a position of making these judgment calls.

So we have a review board. The review board finds 64 different things that we can change. A lot of them are common sense and should be done. But the questions is, it's a failure of leadership that they weren't done in advance. And four lives were cost because of this.

I'm glad that you're accepting responsibility. I think that ultimately, with your leaving, you accept the culpability for the worst tragedy since 9/11. And I really mean that. Had I been president at the time and I found that you did not read the cables from Benghazi, you did not read the cables from Ambassador Stevens, I would have relieved you of your post. I think it's inexcusable.

The thing is, is that, you know, we can understand that you're not reading every cable. I can understand that maybe you're not aware of the cable from the ambassador in Vienna that asks for \$100,000 for an electrical charging station. I can understand that maybe you're not aware that your department spent \$100,000 on three comedians who went to India on a promotional tour called "Make Chai Not War." But I think you might be able to be -- understand and might be aware of the 80 million (dollars) spent on a consulate in Mazar-e-Sharif that will never be built. I think it's inexcusable that you did not know about this and that you did not read these cables.

I would think by anybody's estimation, Libya has to have been one of the hottest of hot spots around the world. Not to know of the request for securities really, I think, cost these people their lives. Their lives could have been saved had someone been more available, had someone been aware of these things, more on top of the job.

And the thing is, is I don't suspect you of bad motives. The review board said, well, these people weren't willfully negligent. I don't think you were willfully -- I don't suspect your motives of wanting to serve your country.

But it was a failure of leadership not to be involved. It was a failure of leadership not to know these things. And so I think it is good that you're accepting responsibility because no one else is. And this is -- there is a certain amount of culpability to the worst tragedy since 9/11, and I'm glad you're accepting this.

Now, my question is, is the U.S. involved with any procuring of weapons, transfer of weapons, buying, selling, anyhow transferring weapons to Turkey out of Libya?

**SEC. CLINTON:** To Turkey? I will have to take that question for the record. That's -- I -- nobody's ever raised that with me. I --

**SEN. PAUL:** It's been in -- it's been in news reports that ships have been leaving from Libya and that they may have weapons. And what I'd like to know is, the annex that was close by, were they involved with procuring, buying, selling, obtaining weapons, and were any of these weapons being transferred to other countries, any countries, Turkey included?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, you'll have to direct that question to the agency that ran the annex. And I will -- I will see what information is available and --

**SEN. PAUL:** You're saying you don't know.

**SEC. CLINTON:** I do not know. I don't have any information on that.

And, you know, with respect to personnel, Senator, you know, first, that's why we have independent people who review the situation as we did with the Pickering and Mullen ARB. And all four individuals identified in the ARB have been removed from their job. Secondly, they've been placed on administrative leave while we stepped through the personnel process to determine the next steps.

Third, both Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen specifically highlighted the reason why this is complicated, because under federal statute and regulations, unsatisfactory leadership is not grounds for finding a breach of duty. The ARB did not find these four individuals breached their duty.

So I have submitted legislation to this committee, to the Congress, to fix this problem so future ARBs will not face the situation.

**SEN. PAUL:** But here's the problem. The review board has all these recommendations, but there's one they failed to address and I think you've failed to address and it sets us up for another tragedy like this. They should have never been sent in there without a military guard. This should have been an embassy like in Baghdad, in a war zone, and it should have been under military guard, significant military guard, Defense Department command.

I don't think the State Department's capable of being in the war zone and protecting these people. I still don't think that. I think another tragedy could happen. I think another tragedy could happen in another war zone around the world. I think someone needs to make an executive decision. Someone needs to take leadership, and with that leadership should be that you shouldn't send them in with no Marines; you shouldn't send them in with Marines there to guard records, not people; you shouldn't send them in with the same kind of ambassador or embassy staff that you have in Paris. I think that's inexcusable.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, the reason I'm here today is to answer questions the best I can. I am the secretary of state. And the ARB made very clear that the level of responsibility for the failures that they outlined was set at the assistant secretary level and below.

The administration has sent officials to the Hill more than 30 times. We've given as much information -- we've been as transparent as we can. Obviously we will continue to brief you and others to answer any and all questions that you have about going forward.

The reason we put into effect an accountability review board is to take it out of the heat of politics and partisanship and accusation, and to put it in the hands of people who have no stake in the outcome.

The reason I said, make it open, tell the world, is because I believe in transparency, I believe in taking responsibility, and I have done so.

And I hope that we're going to be able to see a good working relationship between the State Department and the committee going forward.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Thank you. Senator Murphy.

**SENATOR CHRISTOPHER MURPHY (D-CT):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Secretary Clinton, I approach this hearing with some degree of sadness. It's my first and your last. (Laughter.) But I am so appreciative of your service. You've done such credit to this nation. And though we will be sorry to see you go, we know that you will continue to give us good counsel and good advice in the coming years.

I think if some people on this committee want to call the tragedy in Benghazi the worst since 9/11, it misunderstands the nature of 4,000 Americans-plus lost over 10 years of war in Iraq fought under false pretenses. It was fought under false pretenses, but it was also fought, I think, because we had a misunderstanding of what we could do and what we could manage in that region, what was under our control.

And I guess my question to you, Secretary Clinton, is about what our expectations are going forward in North Africa. And I think you referenced this in your opening remarks about actually what is under our control. One of the criticisms in the review board was that we didn't have a full understanding of this complicated set of allegiances between jihadist groups that are shifting on an almost daily basis.

And I worry sometimes that when we do this retrospective hand-wringing over a tragedy like this that we sometimes give the impression to the American people that, you know, we can know all and see all and control all in a region that we certainly are just beginning to stand up the kind of presence that we may ultimately need and want.

And so I guess I present this as that open-ended question to you. As we move forward, and especially for new members of this committee, who are probably going to be spending a lot more time on Africa and North Africa than this committee has ever spent before, what are the expectations that we should set for the American public as to what we can control, what we can know, and potentially, what changes on the diplomatic side we need to make in order to have a more solid footprint and relationship with neighbors there who may be willing to help us when it comes to intelligence and intervention with this very complicated landscape of jihadist groups.

**SEC. CLINTON:** Senator, you're going to make an excellent member of this committee, based on that question, because it's a -- it's a multipart question, but it raises really the heart of the challenge we face.

We are in a new reality. We are trying to make sense of changes that nobody had predicted but which we're going to have to live with. I can't do justice, in the time I have left here, to the really important issues that you have highlighted. But I think first and foremost, let's be honest. Let's be honest with ourselves. Let's avoid turning everything into a political football.

Let's instead try to just say, look, this is unprecedented, we don't know what's going to happen in this new revolutionary environment across North Africa and the Middle East, but let's see what lessons we can learn from what worked in the past, see what is applicable, and then let's bring people together who will really have the kind of open discussion that used to be the hallmark of this committee and of the Senate.

I mean, people used to have hearings where it wasn't to just have administration officials come up, and, you know, ask the questions and go on from there, but really to delve into what works and what doesn't work. Bring in outside experts. Let them debate in front of you. Try to figure out what the best information going forward is.

I mean, you know, over the last weeks I've pulled writings from, you know, what you would call very conservative and very liberal commentators who kind of reach the same conclusion about what we should be doing in the -- in this region. We have to approach it with humility.

But we've got some real assets, if we deploy them right. And helping to rebuild security is essential. You know, we did it in Colombia. It took a decade. We did it directly in Colombia. We did it as a partner with others in Somalia. And there are a lot of other examples all the way across the world. Let's be smart and learn from what we've done in the past and see what can be transferred into the present and the future. And let's be honest in trying to assess it to the best of our abilities.

And I think with the new chairman and the new ranking member, from my conversations with both of them, I think this committee could play such an essential role in trying to answer your questions and put forth a policy that wouldn't go lurching from administration to administration but would be a steady one, like we did with Colombia, like we did in the Cold War. Let's be smart about this. We have more assets than anybody in the world. But I think we've gotten a little bit, you know, off-track in trying to figure out how best to utilize them.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Thank you.

Senator Kaine.

**SENATOR TIMOTHY KAINE (D-VA):** Madam Secretary, I'll -- I also regret that our overlap will be so brief. I think the country is at its strongest when we balance military strength with diplomatic strength, economic strength and strength of our moral example. And I can't think of a person that exemplifies that balance in a public service career as well as you do, and I appreciate that.

A few questions, sort of detailed questions, that trouble me -- in the unclassified version of the ARB, there's a comment, a brief one. In December 2011 the undersecretary for management approved a one-year continuation of the U.S. special mission in Benghazi, which was never a consulate and never formally notified to the Libyan government. Why wasn't this special mission notified to the Libyan government? Is that a common practice? Did the lack of the notification have any connection with the weak Libyan governmental response on the 11th? And are there any changes, in connection with the ARB recommendations, to the idea of special missions that are not notified formally to their host governments?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, Senator, congratulations to you as well. And welcome to this committee.

The United States notified to the Libyan government the specific names of people who were serving in Libya, in both Tripoli and in Benghazi. That in no way affected the legal obligation of Libya under the Hague -- under the Vienna Convention. The problem, as I said, was not their -- you know, their willingness; it was their capacity. And as you know, from the first time Chris Stevens arrived, before the fall of Gadhafi, he relied not on any Libyan governmental security but on the February 17th brigade, and then we supplemented that after Gadhafi's fall with DS agents, with private security contractors. So there was no effect on anything from the Libyan government that was related to that.

However, we do think that needs to be looked at going forward. The ARB made a very important point, that the so-called temporary nature of the mission did prove to be confusing to people down the chain responsible for reading those cables.

We get about -- I don't know how many millions of cables do we get. And I have to confess I do not read all the cables that come in to the State Department. That's why we have a huge workforce of people who are given responsibility and expected to carry forward that responsibility. And I think designating it as temporary in the ARB's findings did cause an extra level of uncertainty to some extent. You know, as the chairman said at the very beginning, quoting from the ARB, there has been an acculturation in the State

Department to husband resources, to, you know, try to be as careful in spending money as possible. And then, I think, adding to that the fact that it was, quote, temporary, you know, probably did lead to some of the confusion that we later saw played out in the cables, but not the status of it for the Libyan government.

**SEN. KAINE:** How common is it for us to rely on local nongovernmental security, as was the case with the Blue Mountain and February 17 brigades in Benghazi?

**SEC. CLINTON:** Well, it's very common. We employ -- privately employ security guards in a very high number of our posts around the world. I mean, if you go to the embassy in Baghdad, or you go to the embassy in Kabul or really many of our high-threat places, you will see private security guards.

Now, because of problems with private security guard contracts that came to light in Iraq, where, as you remember, there were a lot of difficulties -- these were private security guards who were protecting diplomats and development experts, other civilians -- many countries have put very stringent requirements on private security guards. And in fact, in Libya, the transitional government prohibited private security guards, which is why there was this -- unless they approved them, so they approved this Blue Mountain company that was a joint Libyan-British organization.

But we use private security guards in many places because, as I said, historically, Marine guards do not protect personnel. Their job is, you know, to really take care of classified material and to destroy it if necessary. We had no classified material at Benghazi. And it was unfortunate that we evacuated all the Americans and unclassified material was left behind, but we had no classified material. So there's going to be an effort because of this work that I have directed to really sort this out so that you know, so that everybody knows exactly what the protocols and the rules are and we act accordingly.

**SEN. KAINE:** Thank you, Madam Secretary, Mr. Chair.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** Thank you. Madam Secretary, thank you for your thorough, thoughtful and forthright answers. It's what we've become accustomed to from you. (Laughter.) I understand we're going to be able to welcome you one more time when you come tomorrow to be part of introducing Senator Kerry to the committee, so we'll look forward to welcoming you there as well.

I think that there are several takeaways here that are incredibly important. One is that we have to look at the totality of the threat environment versus just looking for a specific credible threat when we are thinking about the protection of our foreign service personnel, and I see that we are moving in that direction. The other one is the changes in the department to have clear lines of authority and responsibility for security matters instead of silos and looking more at a horizontal nature, and I understand that that is under way.

A lot has been said about resources here. You know, Secretary Gates used to famously argue that there are more people in military bands than in the entire foreign service. It seems to me that surely we can find the funds to protect our diplomats who serve on the front lines. And I am concerned when the ARB says that the State Department has been engaged for years in a struggle to obtain the resources necessary to carry out its work, and that has conditioned the thinking of some in the State Department that it is imperative for the State Department to be mission-driven rather than resource-constrained, particularly in increasingly risky parts of the world.

So I look forward to immediately working with the ranking member and reaching out for Chairman Royce to get that transfer authority within the existing budget. It's not about additional money; it's about taking money that has already been appropriated so that you have the ability to start working and the next secretary has the ability to start working to protect our people as robustly as we can. And failure to do so, I think, is going to be a poor judgment on this Congress, if we can't get you at minimum that transfer authority.

And finally, I know a lot has been made about the question of what was said and what was not said. And I simply think about that in the context that there are lessons to be learned there, as well. In our drive to produce information about a tragedy, an incident, we want to be able to get information as quickly as possible, as we should. But I think what we know and what we don't know is equally as important, and maybe the admonition that we should know before we speak is incredibly important. That would have been incredibly important when we were told that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

And as someone who voted against the Iraq war in the House and didn't believe, based upon what I was able to review, that there was such information, I look, when we talk about tragedies -- and certainly Benghazi was a tragedy -- when we lost 4,486 American lives in Iraq, and thousands who have been injured and changed their lives forever, and increased the influence of Iran, I think from my own personal perspective, that was truly a tragedy. And so there are lessons to be learned here.

There will be questions for the committee to be able to ask for the record before the close of business tomorrow, since we don't expect you to be too much longer in your position, and with the thanks of the committee for your appearance here today and your service.

And Senator Corker, a final word?

**SEN. CORKER:** I want to actually add three more take-aways. And I know they're based not only on testimony here today, but conversations we've had over the last several days.

You alluded to the over-the-transom issues that the State Department and the White House deal with on a constant basis. I think this committee will be useful and can be useful in setting a long-term exploration of what our national interest is so that we look at this over a longer-term context. I know you alluded to that in your testimony.

Secondly, I know we've talked extensively about the importance of having a full authorization, that that actually would be very helpful to people like you, come in for a very short period of time for us to help set those priorities. That would be something you would embrace and something this committee has never done since I've been here.

And thirdly, that we live in a world now where we know that al- Qaida is going to be a threat in North Africa for years to come and we need to have policies that realize that and address it.

I too thank you for your service. I know a lot of nice things will be said again tomorrow when you come here, but thank you so much. And I appreciate it.

**SEN. MENENDEZ:** On that bipartisan note and with the thanks of the committee, this committee's adjourned. (Sounds gavel.)

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