



**Opening Remarks of Thomas H. Kean and Lee H. Hamilton  
Chair and Vice Chair of the 9/11 Public Discourse Project  
November 14, 2005**

**Report on the Status of 9/11 Commission Recommendations  
Part III: Foreign Policy, Public Diplomacy and Non-Proliferation**

---

**KEAN:**

Good morning. We are pleased to appear before you today, to review progress on the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, one year later.

In September, we talked about emergency preparedness and response, and homeland security.

Last month, we reviewed the institutions of government responsible for intelligence and counterterrorism.

Today, we take up the Commission's recommendations on foreign policy, public diplomacy and nonproliferation. What has happened since we issued our report some 16 months ago?

For several of our recommendations today, the proper time line for evaluation may be not one year, but five years, or sometimes even ten.

Our standard for judgment has to be: have we put into place changes that will produce, over time, good results? And what progress is being made on those recommendations?

**I. Non-Proliferation**

Let's start with the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. The President has called this "the gravest danger our Nation faces...at the crossroads of radicalism and technology." On this, the President is right.

We know that al Qaeda has sought weapons of mass destruction for at least ten years. Bin Ladin clearly—and he said this—would not hesitate to use them. We

have no greater fear than a terrorist who is inside the United States with nuclear weapons.

The consequences of such an attack would be catastrophic – for our people, for our economy, for our liberties, and probably for our way of life.

Preventing terrorist access to weapons of mass destruction “warrants a maximum effort” by our government—this is what the Commission recommended.

There are some positive signs.

- The President met with Russian President Putin in February.
- They made an agreement, which gave the bureaucracy a push.
- American inspectors now have additional access to weapons storage sites in Russia.
- Liability issues—which had delayed efforts to eliminate plutonium from dismantled weapons—seem to be getting resolved.
- More of the vulnerable nuclear facilities in Russia are receiving security upgrades
- Useful amendments to streamline the Nunn-Lugar program are working their way slowly through the Congress.

These are good steps. But they are not nearly enough. What is most striking to us is that the size of the problem still totally dwarfs the policy response:

- The Nunn-Lugar program to secure nuclear materials in the former Soviet Union is 14 years old. About half of the nuclear materials in Russia still have no security upgrades whatsoever.
- At the current rate of effort, it is going to take another 14 long years to complete the job. Is there anybody anywhere who thinks we have 14 years?
- This is unacceptable. Bin Ladin terrorists will not wait.

The challenge is bigger than the former Soviet Union:

- Some 40 countries have the essential materials for nuclear weapons.

- Well over 100 research reactors around the world have enough highly-enriched uranium present to fashion a nuclear device.
- Too many of these facilities lack any kind of adequate protection. The terrorists are smart. They will go where the security is weakest.

In addition, our own Congress has imposed restrictions on presidential action regarding the Nunn-Lugar program. These restrictions simply have to be lifted.

Our own agencies need to make protecting the nation from a possible WMD attack an absolute priority. We are disappointed to hear, for example, that the FBI is not further along on preventing weapons of mass destruction.

In short, we still do not have a maximum effort against the most urgent threat—everybody agrees—to the American people.

Everyone knows when an issue is the highest priority:

- Why isn't the President talking about securing nuclear materials?
- Why isn't the Congress focused? Why aren't there more hearings and debate?
- What about the media? Why aren't the airwaves filled with commentary if everyone agrees this is the most serious threat?

The President should develop a comprehensive plan and dramatically accelerate the timetable for securing all nuclear weapons-usable material around the world. We believe the President should publicly make this goal his top national security priority, and ride herd on the bureaucracy to maintain a sense of urgency. The Congress and the media should make this a subject of national debate.

The President and the Congress need to work together on a bipartisan basis. There is simply no higher priority on the national security agenda.

## **II. Foreign Policy**

Turning to foreign policy, do we have the policies in place that will protect and promote American interests? We focused on a number of countries:

### **Afghanistan**

In Afghanistan, the answer is a cautious yes. We are making some progress:

- The United States has made a long-term commitment to Afghanistan.
- Presidential and parliamentary elections went smoothly.
- NATO forces are playing a bigger role.
- Allies have joined us and we have made progress in standing up an Afghan army.
- Millions of children, including girls, are now attending school.
- Through U.S. assistance, the infrastructure is improving – slowly, but improving.

Still, the problems in Afghanistan are profound:

- The Taliban and extremist forces seem to be stepping up attacks.
- More than 60 U.S. military personnel have been killed this year.
- Opium cultivation is booming.
- Afghanistan is the world's leading supplier now of heroin.
- The drug trade finances insurgents and finances warlords.
- The Karzai government does not have authority throughout the entire country. There are large areas it doesn't seem to control.

The challenge for the United States and the international community is to stay engaged, to not let attention drift. We need to accept the fact that reform in Afghanistan will take many years. The road is long, and the road will be bumpy. But our commitment must be consistent and steadfast. Afghanistan must never again become a terrorist sanctuary.

**HAMILTON:**

**Pakistan**

In Pakistan, we are making a difficult long-term commitment to the country's future.

President Musharraf is a crucial partner for today; our partnership for tomorrow must be with a politically and economically stable Pakistan.

We cannot achieve this goal unless Pakistan is wholly committed to practical reform; the United States must be equally committed to helping Pakistan achieve practical reform.

Musharraf has made significant efforts to take on the threat from extremism. Yet we are disappointed that he has not done more. Pakistan remains a sanctuary for terrorists:

- Taliban still pass freely across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and operate in Pakistani tribal areas.
- Terrorists from Pakistan carry out operations in Kashmir.
- Full cooperation with the United States in hunting down Usama Bin Ladin and his supporters has not been forthcoming.
- Madrassas with known links to terrorist groups have not been closed down.

Finally, promised democratic reforms are not in evidence.

Our support to earthquake victims has been welcomed in Pakistan; it gives us an opening:

- We should press hard in support of pragmatic economic and political reform.
- We should provide more assistance, especially in support of educational reform. Young people need alternatives to the madrassas. The people of Pakistan need to know we stand with them for a better future.

Most of all, we must pressure Pakistan to act forcefully to disrupt the Taliban presence inside its borders—to seal the border with Afghanistan, and shut down Taliban-linked madrassas and training camps.

## **Saudi Arabia**

Next, in Saudi Arabia, progress is mixed.

- Since the 2003 Riyadh bombings, the Saudi security forces are acting forcefully against domestic al Qaeda cells. The statements from Saudi authorities are positive and clear.
- However, evidence of practical change in Saudi Arabia's religious establishment – in the direction of moderation and tolerance – is far less clear.
- Saudi Arabia has started steps to address terrorist financing, but many more such steps are needed. It has announced creation of a Commission to regulate Islamic charities: now it needs to empower the Commission, and improve its intelligence.
- Economic reform is proceeding: Saudi Arabia will soon become a member of the World Trade Organization.
- Pragmatic political reform is slow: elections for half the members to municipal councils took place last spring, but the new councils have yet to meet.

We are disappointed with the extent to which the Saudi government has moved toward practical reform in the kingdom. The United States has not yet taken up the challenge of building a relationship with Saudi Arabia on a new basis, as the Commission recommended.

- A new strategic dialogue, cooperation in six areas between our two governments, is just beginning.
- We see little evidence of increased people-to-people contacts between our two societies.

We call upon our leadership to accelerate efforts to give life and substance to U.S.-Saudi Arabia dialogue, to increase exchanges and promote reform.

### **III. Public Diplomacy**

#### **America's Message**

The heart of our recommendation on public diplomacy is that the United States must define itself in the Islamic world. If we do not, the extremists will gladly do the job for us.

As our report said: “We should offer an example of moral leadership in the world, committed to treat people humanely, abide by the rule of law, and be generous and caring to our neighbors.”

We are just at the beginning of this important task.

- The President and the Secretary of State have articulated America's values in numerous speeches, including in the Muslim world.
- America has shown moral leadership in support of democratic elections and the rule of law in Muslim countries, and in generous assistance to victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami and the recent earthquake in Pakistan.

However, mistrust and dislike of the United States remains extremely high in the Muslim world:

- Detainee abuse in Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo and elsewhere undermines America's reputation as a moral leader.
- Opposition to U.S. policies in the Middle East remains high;
- Public opinion approval ratings for the United States throughout the region remain at or near historic lows.

In our report, we recommended a common coalition approach toward the detention and humane treatment of captured terrorists, drawing upon Article 3 of the Geneva conventions. This approach has not been taken.

#### **Public diplomacy**

With regard to public diplomacy, Karen Hughes is the President's choice as the point person for public diplomacy:

- She has his confidence;
- She is listening and learning;
- She is making an important start; and
- All of her key challenges remain ahead of her.

Public diplomacy is not a one-way street. It is not delivering a message: It is communication. At its heart, public diplomacy is a process of engagement and developing relationships. We must reach out boldly, broadly to all elements of society, especially to young people. We must combat misinformation, and communicate our ideals with force and eloquence.

We see a vigorous and significant expansion of U.S. broadcasting, through Radio Sawa and the satellite TV station al-Hurra.

We want to see a similar vigorous and significant expansion of scholarship, exchange, and library programs that reach out to young people and offer them knowledge and hope. Our core values and America's culture of education, equal opportunity, and tolerance still have a powerful appeal around the world.

At the same time, we must build stronger diplomatic relationships with other countries. When our policies around the world win broad support, our public diplomacy is more effective. Our message of freedom and hope will be heard.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

All of these recommendations – on foreign policy, on public diplomacy, and non-proliferation – will require, of course, sustained attention, over several years, perhaps even generations, from our political leaders.

In many cases, we are pointed in the right direction.

Our leaders need to maintain a sense of urgency, and maintain their focus, so that we can accomplish our shared goal: to make the American people safer and more secure.

It is possible other Commissioners may want to make a few remarks.

We would be pleased to respond to your questions.