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**Statement for the Record of  
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Before the  
House International Relations Committee  
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Good morning Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to be here to address the role that the Terrorist Threat Integration Center (TTIC) and the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) have played over the past year in compiling a chronology of international terrorism incidents.

By way of background, the Intelligence Community (IC) has traditionally provided input to the State Department publication of Patterns of Global Terrorism. This has included, among other things, Appendix A, that laid out in some detail those incidents of “international terrorism” that were considered “significant”. Because Patterns was produced in response to statutory directive, Intelligence Community input was consistent with the statutory criteria that, for instance, defined “international terrorism” as “terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country”. In many cases, the key statutory criteria, such as the definition of “noncombatant,” whether an attack in a specific region should be considered “international” and what constituted “significant” were open to interpretation. In such cases the IC looked to the State Department to provide counting rules; these counting rules, coupled with past practices and our own judgment were then used to evaluate specific incidents.

With the standup of the Terrorist Threat Integration Center in May 2003, responsibility to support Patterns shifted from the CIA to TTIC. However, during the hectic early days of TTIC, the database to support Patterns received insufficient attention and resources. Adequate quality control was lacking, incidents were missed, and the document was published with numerous errors. As you are aware, these shortcomings were noted by academics and the press, and Appendix A was ultimately reissued. To avoid a repeat of such problems TTIC/NCTC took a number of actions last year:

- Increased personnel assigned to the database from three part-time to ten full time individuals;
- Reengineered the database itself to improve data integrity;
- Established an Incident Adjudication Board, drawn from Intelligence Community officers assigned to the TTIC/NCTC to ensure quality control;
- And took on board, as appropriate, recommendations of the Department of State Inspector General’s Report which had reviewed the 2003 production process.

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In the process of compiling the statistics for 2004, a number of issues became apparent. Because of the significant increase in the resources devoted to maintaining the database, far more source material was reviewed and a substantially higher number of incidents meeting the statutory criteria were compiled; significant international incidents rose from under 200 in 2003 to approximately 650 last year – a copy of the entire chronology of significant international attacks is provided for the written record. While some of the global increase was attributable to incidents in Iraq, the overall growth in total incidents represented a statistical discontinuity – a function of increased resources dedicated to research and not necessarily any change in the nature of global terrorism. The impact of such additional research is seen most clearly in Kashmir, where a dramatic growth is noted over previous years' data; there is little doubt that a more accurate accounting of the incidents in Kashmir would have reflected far higher totals than was the case in 2003 Patterns. In other words: the numbers compiled for 2004 cannot be compared to those of previous years in any meaningful way.

A rigorous application of the statutory criteria and counting rules clearly gave rise to a significant increase in the number of international terrorist incidents. However, in compiling the results, TTIC/NCTC became increasingly concerned with both the statutory criteria themselves as well as the definitions that we were being asked to use: Of primary concern was the statutory definition of “international terrorism.” This definitional approach may be valid for a state sponsored threat, but is far less useful with the kind of transnational threat that we confront now. For instance, the requirement that international terrorism involve the citizens or territory of more than one country necessarily implied that if a suicide bomber from Country A blows up a café in Country A and kills only citizens of country A, it doesn't count. But... if a suicide bomber from country A blows up a café in Country A and there happens to be a tourist from Country B in the café who is killed or seriously wounded, it counts. In other words, the end results were arbitrary and often a function of serendipity; analysts were left trying to determine citizenship of those people present at an attack or the makeup of an aircraft manifest. Representative problems from 2004 included:

- On 2 November the Dutch filmmaker, Theo Van Gogh, was killed by Mohammed Bouyari, a Dutch Moroccan and Islamic extremist. The murder was clearly a terrorist attack, but because they were both Dutch citizens this attack did not meet the statutory definition of “international terrorism”
- On 24 August two Russian airliners were destroyed in mid air by Chechen female suicide bombers. One aircraft apparently had all Russian passengers and crew and therefore, did not meet the criteria for international terrorism. The other aircraft had a single dual Israeli citizen onboard and therefore, is reflected in the international terrorism statistics.
- On 26 February a member of the Abu Sayyaf Group sank a Superferry, killing 118 people and leaving many more missing. Because the reported victims and perpetrator were all from the Philippines, the attack did not constitute international terrorism.

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These are not unique instances. We have also identified over 100 other attacks conducted by Foreign Terrorist Organizations that do not meet the criteria for international terrorism.

In our compilation of 2004 data, we found problems not only with the statutory definition of “international terrorism”, but also with incidents occurring in Iraq and Afghanistan. Determining “noncombatant” status in such an environment is hard enough. But in such “war-like” circumstances, it was often impossible to distinguish between terrorism and insurgency; for instance, in some cases Iraqis were part of the Zarqawi network (a terrorist network) and in other cases they were Former Regime Elements (insurgency). Under the statutory definition, as noted above, attacks by Iraqis on Iraqis wouldn’t meet the definition of international terrorism. But in the context of attacks against the U.S. military, we had little practical or intellectually defensible way of distinguishing between terrorism and insurgency; as such, with State’s concurrence, we focused on attacks against international civilians.

Finally, we were advised by Department of State to continue to use the Community definition of “significant” as attacks that involve death, serious injury, or property damage over \$10000; that amount presents a very low bar, but it is the standard that has been used for many years.

These are just a few of the difficulties associated with counting international terrorist incidents. The Department of State and many others shared our concerns regarding the often arbitrary nature of the designations, and a consensus began to emerge on the need for a methodological change that more accurately captured the nature of the terrorist threat. I must emphasize that at no point did the Department of State attempt to pressure NCTC to lower its numbers, or indicate to us that the numbers would not be included in Patterns because they were “too high”

### LOOKING AHEAD

Under the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, NCTC has been given unique responsibilities to “serve as the central and shared knowledge bank on known and suspected terrorists and international terror groups, as well as their goals, strategies, capabilities, and networks of contacts and support”. As such, I believe that this is an opportune time to reexamine how terrorist incidents are reported; we do not pretend to have all the answers and, thus, will be reaching out to subject matter experts both inside and outside the government.

Given the concerns highlighted above, we have serious misgivings about the utility of the data that was released on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April. As such, we will make available, by the end of June of this year, a more comprehensive accounting of worldwide terrorism incidents. The precise nature of this accounting is still being worked, but we will undoubtedly extend reporting beyond those incidents that only involve citizens or territory of two or more countries. Depending on what precisely is counted, this could raise the global totals to several thousand incidents. Several points are worthy of note:

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--First, as is hopefully self evident, this will totally invalidate any comparisons with past Patterns reports. Beyond the differing levels of effort used this past years in comparison to previous years, methodologically, we will be counting very different things.

-- Second, this must be seen as a work in progress. The definition of terrorism, relative to all other forms of political violence, has never been clear-cut. We envision reaching out to experts across the Government and academia to further develop and refine a more meaningful approach.

-- Third, as we have done with the data released on 27 April, we will make both the methodology and the results as transparent as possible, ideally providing an interactive search capability on the INTERNET; we are currently reviewing precisely what can be accomplished by June. And in this vein, I also want to express my deep appreciation for the efforts of the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism in Oklahoma City (MIPT). MIPT is partnering with us to make the data as accessible as possible to the American public. The data to be released in June, like that released the end of last month, will be available at [www.tkb.org](http://www.tkb.org).

-- Finally, I would caution against the natural inclination to want to use terrorist incidents as a simple metric to judge progress in the Global War on Terrorism. While we anticipate this new approach will provide data that can be used to more accurately depict the nature of terrorism around the world, it won't necessarily translate into a simple basis for judging whether we are prevailing in the struggle against terrorism.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss NCTC's role in this important issue and look forward to taking your questions.