



Statement of

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Introduction

Good afternoon, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Jackson Lee and Distinguished Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the Department of Homeland Security's engagement in Asia-Pacific, a dynamic region of integral importance to the Department's mission abroad.

As a diverse region, encompassing a broad range of cultures, societies, and economies, Asia-Pacific shares many common interests with the United States. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) engagement in the region is predicated on a belief that we must work closely with regional counterparts to safeguard our shared transportation networks, interdict threats before they reach America's shores, and facilitate legitimate trade and travel.

The interconnected nature of world economies and international infrastructure means that seemingly isolated events often have transnational origins and global consequences. The increased flow of good, ideas, and people around the world and across U.S. borders helps sustain our economy and promote our interests, but also creates security challenges that are increasingly borderless and unconventional. These trends are particularly evident in Asia-Pacific, where rapid economic growth is coupled with an array of non-traditional security threats. The attempted bombing of Northwest Flight #253 on December 25, 2009, and the subsequent air cargo plot that was exposed in October 2010, demonstrated that U.S. homeland security is interdependent with the security of other nations, and these threats can come from a variety of sources.

Overarching Engagement Priorities

Before delving into the specifics of the Department's activities in Asia-Pacific, I would like to address the overarching guidance that drives our engagement abroad. The Department's first Quadrennial Homeland Security Review (QHSR), released on February 1, 2010, clearly states our five priority missions. Mission number one is preventing terrorist attacks against the United States and the American people. DHS also integrates preventing terrorism into its four other primary missions—securing and managing our borders, enforcing and administering our immigration laws, safeguarding and securing our cyberspace, and ensuring resilience to disasters of all kinds.

Internationally, DHS accomplishes these five missions by:

- Working with international organizations to adopt common security standards;
- Developing agreements with key partner states to implement high security standards; and
- Enabling or encouraging partners to enhance security through concrete steps.

In order to prevent threats from reaching the homeland from abroad, we work with our international partners to try to identify, detect, prevent, and respond to threats. Many of them threaten not only the United States but also our allies, with whom we have made common cause in the struggle against the threat of terrorism. To this end, we work with foreign partners to respond operationally to security threats and to share knowledge and expertise that will ultimately improve our respective capabilities.

Importance of Asia-Pacific to DHS

As an Asia-Pacific country, the United States shares a vested interest in the region's stability, security, and prosperity. This interest is amplified by Asia's growing role as an engine for global economic growth, and its increasing engagement in transnational security issues. Today, the United States enjoys extensive trade and travel linkages with a number of countries in the region, including four of our top ten trading partners – China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan – and counts five treaty allies: Australia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand.

This degree of economic interdependence makes securing and facilitating the legitimate movement of goods and people between the United States and Asia a matter of paramount importance. Our shared interests in protecting and promoting global prosperity have enabled DHS to forge strong working relationships with many regional counterparts, and create opportunities for expanded engagement across the entire homeland security mission set.

Despite the Asia-Pacific region's tremendous growth, the region still faces some of the most pressing security challenges of the 21st century, including many non-traditional threats such as terrorism, cyber attacks, violent extremism, piracy, arms trafficking, and transnational crime. These challenges are compounded in some parts of the region by lack of effective border and immigration controls. Recent terrorist activity in Southeast Asia, including the disrupted plot in Bangkok in February 2012, indicate that, despite significant progress since 9/11, the region still faces serious threats. This, in turn, demands proactive and sustained engagement to build capacity, elevate security standards, and develop collaborative solutions for transnational challenges.

DHS Engagement in Asia-Pacific: Significant Partners, Myriad Challenges

DHS engagement in Asia-Pacific is nested within the Administration's broader strategy to increase American strategic engagement in, and focus on, Asia. In particular, the Department seeks to deepen and broaden relationships with its counterparts in Japan, South Korea, and Australia; build new partnerships with its counterparts in China, Indonesia, and Malaysia; and develop robust operational cooperation to address transnational threats.

Working bilaterally, and through multilateral fora such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC), DHS pursues a series of objectives within the region:

- Deny physical, ideological, or virtual safe havens to terrorists, violent extremists, and transnational criminals;
- Establish secure travel corridors that identify and criminals or terrorists while facilitating legitimate travel;
- Develop a safe, secure, efficient, and resilient supply chain;
- Promote robust information sharing arrangements that facilitate law enforcement cooperation while ensuring the protection of privacy in accordance with U.S. law and DHS policy;
- Develop mature bilateral dialogues on cybersecurity; and
- Enhance regional disaster response and emergency management capabilities.

DHS prioritizes its regional engagement based on a dynamic threat environment, vulnerabilities, and U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives.

DHS Programs in the Asia-Pacific Region

DHS works with our partners in the region to build a framework that shares security costs and responsibilities. Regional cooperation in the areas of port and border security capacity, combined with a general regional commitment to more enhanced cooperation, allows DHS to utilize a wide range of programs to address the rapidly evolving challenges of Asia-Pacific. I would like to highlight a few of our regional efforts.

Port Environment

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), working within the framework of the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code encourages bilateral and multilateral discussions throughout the region in an effort to exchange information and share best practices that align implementation and enforcement requirements to international maritime security standards. The USCG works closely with all of our regional trading partners including its partners in China, Japan, and South Korea, to promote reasonable and consistent implementation and enforcement of the ISPS code for enhanced maritime security in countries (and ports) that participate in global trade. The USCG also leads multilateral efforts to promote maritime safety and law enforcement through participation in and promotion of the North Pacific Coast Guard's Forum.

Air Environment

As we look at the geography of Asia-Pacific, it becomes immediately apparent that secure travel means aviation security. Passenger and air cargo movements are growing rapidly – the region surpassed North America as the largest aviation market in 2009, and in 2011, ten of the top thirty airports, measured in terms of passenger travel, are in Asia-Pacific. The security of this travel requires the same standards for vigilance and due attention to security that we work to develop with our European partners. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has developed an effective series of programs such as the intelligence-driven, risk-based screening methods Foreign Airport Assessment program, which Mr. Halinski will address, and DHS components deploy effective personnel, port and border security efforts, multiple layers of security structure.

The Immigration Advisory Program (IAP) is a partnership between DHS's U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), foreign governments, and commercial air carriers to identify and prevent high-risk travelers who are likely to be inadmissible into the United States from boarding US-bound flights. CBP officer teams are stationed or deployed on a temporary basis to work with foreign law enforcement and air carriers at key airports in host countries. The Immigration Advisory Program (IAP) teams in Asia-Pacific assess passengers and their documentation with targeting support from the CBP National Targeting Center to identify high-risk passengers. The CBP officers provide the on-site capability to question and assess travelers and serve as a direct liaison with foreign authorities. The IAP has been in operation at Tokyo-Narita since January 2007 and deployed to Seoul-Incheon from January 2008 and June 2011. From 2007, the IAP has

provided 1,945 no-board recommendations to air carriers on flights from those locations. Identifying these high-risk travelers before they made it to the United States addressed potential threats before they reached our borders.

DHS programs also include Trusted Traveler and Trusted Trader programs that are essential for our international engagement in the region. These programs facilitate the secure movement of goods and people wherever they have been applied and represent essential steps forward in broader international security. These programs are the core elements that enable DHS to secure the nation against the direct threat of transnational crime against the homeland – including the movement of terrorists – and secure the nation against the exploitation of the global supply chain for illicit purpose. Global Entry is a U.S. program for U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, and growing number of foreign citizens that allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk air travelers upon arrival. The President’s January Executive Order Establishing Visa and Foreign Visitor Processing Goals and the Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness supports development of similar partner nation programs and the potential for mutual recognition arrangements. These mutual recognition arrangements greatly facilitate movement through immigration control for pre-vetted international travelers. More importantly, these arrangements will allow the U.S. and our Asia-Pacific partners to focus our security efforts on those individuals about whom we know the least. CBP is in the process of establishing a mutual recognition arrangement with South Korea, and we see additional opportunities for expanding these arrangements with Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and Singapore. We are also working on providing Asia-Pacific Economic Community (APEC) Business Travel Cards to eligible U.S. citizens participating in CBP’s trusted traveler programs. This will enable them to use dedicated entry lines at participating APEC economies and speed up our mutual private sector exchange. In addition, as my colleague Mr. Halinski will testify, TSA has efforts underway to achieve mutual recognition of air cargo security programs with foreign partners, effectively according them Trusted Trader status.

Supply Chain Security

In line with the recently released National Strategy for Global Supply Chain Security, DHS is working with key partners to develop regional commitment to efficient, secure, and resilient global supply chains. Secretary Napolitano signed joint statements with New Zealand in 2011 and just recently with Singapore on April 11th, with the intent of expanding on our already solid bilateral cooperative relationships by facilitating legitimate trade and travel, while preventing terrorists from exploiting supply chains; protecting transportation systems from attacks and disruptions; and increasing the resilience of global supply chains.

For example, through CBP’s Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT), DHS participates in on site validations of manufacturing and logistics facilities to enhance cargo security in 97 countries. Mutual recognition between C-TPAT and the Authorized Economic Operators programs of our Asia-Pacific partners is a sharp incentive for enhancing security for the manufacturers and shippers that voluntarily participate in the program. Over the last four years, DHS has established mutual

recognition of these programs with Japan, New Zealand and South Korea. Pilot programs in China and other states are also promoting higher standards of security within the private sector with the objective of preventing costly disruption to international trade and commerce.

The Container Security Initiative (CSI) continues to be a highly successful program in partnership with foreign authorities to identify and inspect high-risk cargo containers originating at ports throughout the world before they are loaded on vessels destined for the United States. Key Asia-Pacific partners include high volume ports in China, Japan, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, South Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore.

As DHS continues to build upon cooperative security programs, we find that we have ready partners in Asia-Pacific to address cross-cutting challenges to our law enforcement activities. Our U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Secret Service officers stationed in the region develop relationships and work with their local counterparts to disrupt criminal organizations, including potential terrorist threats. We focus our investigatory efforts on many forms of smuggling and counterfeiting including counter-proliferation, child sex tourism, intellectual property rights violations, and human smuggling. These criminal efforts would use many of the same gaps and weaknesses that violent extremists seek to exploit. Our efforts to disrupt and deter these non-traditional security threats also strengthen disruption and deterrence of the transnational terrorist.

Information Sharing Collaboration

I would also like to highlight the importance of information sharing arrangements such as our Preventing and Combating Serious Crime (PCSC) agreements with Asia-Pacific countries that are members of or seeking designation in the U.S. Visa Waiver Program. PCSC agreements establish the framework for a new method of law enforcement cooperation by providing each party electronic access to their fingerprint databases on a query (hit/no hit) basis. The agreement exemplifies the type of cooperative law enforcement partnership that enhances both sides ability to more quickly and efficiently prevent and investigate crime and prevent the entry of criminals and terrorists into our respective countries. We have signed PCSC agreements with Australia, South Korea, and Taiwan, and are seeking similar such agreements with Brunei, Japan, New Zealand, and Singapore.

States in Asia-Pacific as disparate as Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Japan are increasingly adopting sophisticated standards for positively identifying individuals, particularly criminals. DHS has worked with the Department of State, Department of Justice, and our partners in the region to develop collaborative programs, including assistance efforts where appropriate, to prevent the free movement of bad actors across international borders. The Philippines biometric initiative is a great example of cooperative sustained efforts to prevent potential criminal or terrorist travel. As part of this effort, an ICE Visa Security Unit worked directly with Philippine law enforcement units to catalogue biometric data on individuals convicted of terrorist acts.

By building cooperative relationships and promoting capacity building, DHS is helping to raise the standard for regional transnational security and, more importantly, concretely advancing the security of the United States. But, there is still important work to be done. Our aim in Asia-Pacific is to facilitate the development of a model for secure trade and travel. We applaud the Malaysian passage of their 2010 Strategic Trade Act, aimed at counter-proliferation and smuggling of strategic goods, but we must also work with our Malaysian customs counterparts in sharing best practices and practical solutions to the challenges that they face based on our experience in implementing export control legislation. We must also continue to develop and contribute to information sharing arrangements, including PCSC agreements, in order to prevent the free movement of known threats and risks while ensuring the protection of privacy and civil rights. And we must remain committed to DHS presence and support for partners in the region.

Conclusion

United States leadership in the Asia-Pacific region is essential to our long-term security and DHS will continue to play an important role. The dramatic growth of Asian economies and our many linkages with the region require a proactive cooperative approach that anticipates sustained long term growth while minimizing transnational threats. The growth in Asia-Pacific will inevitably present both significant challenges and opportunities for the United States. DHS is committed to meeting these challenges and seizing opportunities through comprehensive international engagement.

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Jackson Lee and distinguished Members of the House Committee, let me conclude by reiterating that I look forward to exploring opportunities to advance our cooperation with Asia-Pacific partners. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer your questions.