ACTING CTR OFFICE DIRECTOR ALEX STOLAR
REMARKS AT THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
Tuesday, September 19 9:15 am – 9:30 am (Panel Begins at 9:00am)
NAS Keck Center - 500 5th Street NW, Washington D.C. (Keck Room 100)

Welcome and Thank You

Good morning. My name is Alex Stolar and I am the Acting Director of the State Department's Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction.

I want to thank the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) and Micah Lowenthal and Ben Rusek in particular for their leadership in organizing this important conference.

I also want to acknowledge my fellow panelists. We are working together across organizations and across branches of government to strengthen CTR tools and address WMD threats.

To give a sense of this cross-government collaboration, I'd like to give a snapshot from the last two weeks:

During this two week period, for example, our State CTR teams have had meetings with Jay and Elly's teams at DoD and NNSA respectively to identify opportunities for our organizations to increase pressure on North Korea as a part of the campaign to counter North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

Our CTR team, similarly, has worked closely with NSC's Hillary Carter – who has provided outstanding leadership in advancing the Global Health Security Agenda – and our colleagues at the CDC to advance the Global Health Security Agenda's Biosafety and Biosecurity Action Package.

And last Wednesday, we briefed Lowell and his Senate and House colleagues on our future plans for State's CTR program. We are grateful for the attention and oversight of our authorizers in Congress.

The Goals of Expeditionary CTR

On Monday, Deputy Assistant Secretary Dolliff set forth three broad goals for what we see as the future of what we call the third generation of CTR.

- Rolling back ISIS's chemical weapons program and working to prevent and disrupt terrorists broadly from developing WMD by employing expeditionary and flexible CTR tools that are threat-driven.
- Making it difficult for proliferant states such as the DPRK to advance their WMD ambitions by using CTR programs to thwart proliferation pathways.
- Building international institutions such as the Global Health Security Agenda that can advance preventative, sustainable, and effective measures to reduce WMD risks.

As we have entered this third generation of CTR and are working to address growing proliferation and WMD terrorism threats, we have come to believe that our programs must have four key characteristics. **Specifically, our programs are**:

- Expeditionary: Capable of delivering nonproliferation impact wherever it is needed, including in countries suffering civil wars and insurgencies.
- Fast: Able to deliver programmatic impact to disrupt time-sensitive national security challenges or meet perishable opportunities.
- Flexible: Expert at partnering with a range of foreign partners, non-governmental organizations, and U.S. Government entities in whatever way will get the job done.
- Threat Driven: Informed by the most current information – whether that is an open-source report about CW use in Iraq, technical analysis from a National Lab, or a situation report from a diplomat or soldier in the field – to focus programming to maximize impact.

Counter-WMD Terrorism Support To Defeat ISIS

These four characteristics – expeditionary, fast, flexible, threat-driven – have been essential to our work to defeat ISIS's chemical weapons program.

As DAS Dolliff noted, ISIS has repeatedly used sulfur mustard in chemical weapons attacks in Iraq, and to a lesser extent in Syria.

To impact this challenge, our State CTR programs have worked to meet a series of time-sensitive equipment, training, and capacity-building requests from our Iraqi partners.

In close partnership with DoD elements in Iraq, we have repeatedly procured and delivered chemical weapons protection, detection, and decontamination equipment and training to Iraq's elite Counter Terrorism Service (CTS), which has used this equipment on the frontlines against ISIS.

To meet these requests, we used our understanding of the ISIS threat to drive and inform our procurement of highly specialized equipment, and then worked to deliver that equipment and associated training to austere locations in Iraq, often within six weeks following a request from our Iraqi partners.

We have similarly rushed assistance to help our Iraqi scientific partners secure dangerous materials in areas of Iraq proximate to ISIS locations – these threat-driven nonproliferation interventions were carried out in remote and austere locations often within a matter of weeks.

We are also intensifying our efforts to enhance export controls and border security measures that can detect and disrupt the movement across borders of ISIS operatives or WMD-related materials. For example, we are supporting our Iraqi partners in enhancing the security of key border crossings to prevent the flow of ISIS fighters and materiel.

DPRK

I also want to discuss how we are using this suite of tools on the North Korea problem set. The threat posed by North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs is gravely serious, and one that warrants immediate and urgent attention.

The Presidentially-endorsed North Korea strategy is to "put new pressure on North Korea to abandon its dangerous path." Our Export Control and Border Security Program has long focused on enhancing strategic trade controls and export controls, especially in Southeast Asia. We are now also in the process of bringing to bear the resources of our Cooperative Threat Reduction office to address unique aspects of the North Korea threat.

To meet this objective, our programs will focus on building partner capacity to detect and shut down financial and material flows to North Korea that support the regime's WMD programs.

We will train governmental and other stakeholders on relevant DPRK-focused UNSCRs. We will also work to freeze activities that fund DPRK proliferation and enhance partner capabilities to prohibit DPRK nationals from traveling for sanctions evasion. We will focus on supporting industry to conduct end-user checks to halt commercial activity supporting DPRK proliferation. We will also work to disrupt illicit shipping that uses "Flags of convenience" and false ship registries.

Global Health Security Agenda

I have focused so far on actors in the international system that are violating nonproliferation norms.

In addition to working to counter proliferation, we also need to be working to strengthen institutions that promote secure, safe, and sustainable science for the benefit of all.

As DAS Dolliff underscored yesterday, it is the policy of the United States to advance the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA).

GHSA advances an important vision – a world safe and secure from global health threats posed by infectious diseases.

A world where we can prevent or mitigate the impact of naturally occurring outbreaks and accidental or intentional releases of dangerous pathogens, rapidly detect and transparently report outbreaks when they occur, and employ an

interconnected global network that can respond effectively to limit the spread of infectious disease outbreaks in humans and animals, mitigate human suffering and the loss of human life, and reduce economic impact.

I have taken a personal role in championing the GHSA and its Biosafety and Biosecurity Action Package in particular because this important Agenda provides an unparalleled framework for advancing shared health security goals around the world.

And I am proud that we prioritize funding for this important work through our CTR program, which strengthens bio-risk management practices worldwide.

Organizational Innovation

One of our most important innovations is not a topic – like ISIS or North Korea – that is on the front page of the newspaper each day. But it is crucially important.

To ensure our programs can be fast, flexible, and expeditionary, we have prioritized – and invested in – the development of in-house expertise on the federal financial system – the process of executing, implementing, and overseeing funding awards that make our work possible. We now have three in-house grants officers, and have developed in-house expertise in topics such as grants, contracts, and funds management. We have integrated this financial expertise with our nuclear, chemical, and biological security teams and have also deepened our partnerships with State's Office of Acquisitions Management and our Bureau's Resource Management team.

Every member of our team – from me to the newest team member – develops skills related to the federal financial system and financial stewardship. In addition to ensuring we are strong stewards of the funds Congress provides, a key result of this innovation is that when a new need for nonproliferation assistance is identified, we can move funds – and thus have an impact – with unparalleled speed and flexibility.

ISN Support to Interagency Colleagues

I have discussed a great deal about our own work at State but one of our most important responsibilities relates not to our own programmatic activities, but the role we play for our DoD, NNSA, CDC, and NSC colleagues.

We are the diplomatic advocate and agent for the threat reduction efforts of other Departments and Agencies.

Some of our most important and meaningful work has been to provide the diplomatic support needed to advance the programs of our partner organizations.

We have been proud, for instance, to support diplomatic efforts that allowed CDC to partner with Jordan to establish an all-hazards Emergency Operations Center or to help secure legal protections that facilitated DoD's destruction of Qaddafi-era chemical weapons.

And we look forward to continuing to play this important role in the years to come.

Conclusion

I would like to highlight Phil's last point yesterday:

In the third generation of CTR, we must constantly explore new ideas and strategies to deal with evolving threats. We must ensure we are working closely across the interagency, across mission-spaces, and across regions. We must continue to identify novel approaches and find ways to overcome security, political, and other challenges. CTR is not done evolving. Our efforts must remain adaptable and we must continue to find new ways to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Thank you for everyone's time and thank you again to the National Academy of Sciences. I look forward to interacting with the audience.