Pentagon Briefing

September 11, 2002

Office of Public Affairs
703-695-2113

In Observance of 9-11

United by the memory of September 11's heroes and victims, we are a nation determined to win the war against terrorism.

- More than 3,000 people died in the September 11 attacks. They came from more than 80 different nations, and from many different races and religions.
  - Approximately 2,000 children lost a parent on September 11.
  - 184 people died and 146 children lost a parent in the Pentagon attacks.
  - 343 firefighters and paramedics, and 60 police officers perished at the World Trade Center. One business alone lost more than 700 employees, leaving at least 50 pregnant widows.
- The U.S. responded to the September 11 attacks with commitment and action to root out and punish terrorists and those who harbor, facilitate and finance them.
  - The war against terrorism will be unconventional, broad and sustained. It has military, legal, financial and diplomatic dimensions.
  - The war against terrorism is fought not only by the United States, but also by a coalition of nations offering a variety of assistance.
  - Coalition forces in Afghanistan have:
    - Driven the Taliban from power, allowing the establishment of a transitional government.
    - Captured hundreds of detainees, who are providing valuable intelligence about al Qaeda.
    - Created the conditions that allowed schools and hospitals to re-open.
    - Facilitated the drop of 2.4 million humanitarian food rations into Afghanistan.

Terrorist states, weapons of mass destruction and terrorist groups are converging to form a deadly threat -- pre-emption or preventive defense against terrorism is simply self-defense.

- The only successful defense against terrorism is a good offense.
  - As the President said at West Point in June: "We cannot defend America and our friends by hoping for the best. We cannot put our faith in the words of tyrants who solemnly sign nonproliferation treaties and then systematically break them. If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long...the war on terror will not be won on the defensive. We must take the battle to the enemy...In the world we have entered, the only path to safety is the path of action."
  - We must not wait until there is another Pearl Harbor before we defend ourselves, and our friends and allies.
  - If we know that rogue states or groups have weapons that could kill hundreds of thousands of people, it doesn't make sense to wait until they use them.
  - A growing number of countries are investing enormous sums to develop weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to deliver them.
    - Hostile powers will soon have the ability to strike U.S. cities with nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.
    - They will have the power to hold us hostage to blackmail and terror.
- Today's greatest threat comes from the nexus between terrorist groups and states that are pursuing weapons of mass destruction.
  - These are countries that have records of being active in the development of weapons of mass destruction.
  - These countries have indicated their willingness to kill their own people -- and thousands of innocent men, women and children through acts of terrorism.
    - **Iran** supports Middle East terrorist groups that have killed thousands of people, and has robust programs to develop chemical and nuclear weapons, and long and mid-range missiles.
    - **Iraq** used chemical weapons against Iran during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war and gassed its own citizens in 1988, killing thousands of innocent Kurdish men, women and children. Iraq also harbors and provides bases of operations for at least four international terrorist organizations.
    - **Syria,** which supports Hamas, Hezbollah, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, has a robust chemical warfare program and the ability to deliver chemical agents on SCUD missiles and artillery shells.

- Much of the equipment used to make and deliver WMD is commercially available from a large number of sources. It is difficult to track dual-use technology and stop it from falling into the wrong hands. The manufacturing equipment also tends to be small and portable.

  - International treaties, multilateral export control regimes, U.S. export controls and security assistance to other countries have limited effect on countries like Iran, Iraq and Libya that violate their treaty obligations with impunity.

  - The world has already witnessed the use of chemical and biological agents by terrorist organizations:

    - The Japanese group Aum Shinriko produced Sarin nerve gas for its attack in the Tokyo subway in a bathroom. Their production complex operated in plain view, but looked like a common warehouse from the outside.

    - The Rajneeshees -- cult followers of a self-proclaimed guru exiled from India -- poisoned a salad bar with salmonella in Oregon in 1984.

    - Hamas is working with poisons and chemicals in an effort to coat suicide bomb fragments.

<u>The U.S. military must transform to meet 21st century, asymmetric threats.</u>

- Our challenge in this new century is to prepare to defend our nation against the unknown, the uncertain and the unexpected. To win the war on terror and prepare for future threats, we must transform the U.S. military to become more lethal, agile and prepared for surprise.

  - In Afghanistan, we've already had a glimpse of the future: Special Forces on horseback calling in targets on satellite phones to 40-year-old planes outfitted with 21st century precision bombs.

  - But transformation was under way even before the war against terrorism.

    - Last year, the Quadrennial Defense Review outlined the goal of aligning DoD with 21st Century threats.

    - Our conclusion: We can predict <u>how</u> we will be threatened, but not necessarily <u>who</u> will threaten us.

    - We need to defend ourselves against those threats, no matter where they come from.

- Transformation requires innovation, creative thinking and risk-taking.

  - It's about more than new weapons systems and programs: it's about new business practices, more effective technology and people with new ways of thinking.

- We need to change not only the capabilities at our disposal, but also how we think about war.

- All the high-tech weapons in the world will not transform U.S. armed forces unless we also transform the way we think, the way we train, the way we exercise and the way we fight.

- To usher in the new, we must part with the old – that means accepting change that not everyone is comfortable with.

  - Our defense strategy and force structure must be focused on achieving six transformational goals:

  - First, to protect the U.S. homeland and our bases overseas.

  - Second, to project and sustain power in distant theaters.

  - Third, to deny our enemies sanctuary, making sure they know that no corner of the world is remote enough, no mountain high enough, no cave or bunker deep enough, no SUV fast enough to protect them from our reach.

  - Fourth, to protect our information networks from attack.

  - Fifth, to use information technology to link up different kinds of U.S. forces so that they can in fact fight jointly.

  - And sixth, to maintain unhindered access to space and protect our space capabilities from enemy attack.