National Security Division Report
Week ending 26 February 2021

National Security and State Department Global Functional Team Meet and greet round table

This week National Security Staff and the Director, Global Functional Team, Bureau of Legislative Affairs conducted an initial meet and greet round table. The goal was to share mutual information on foreign policy objectives.

Of note was a past initiative advocated for by The American Legion to ratify an international disability treaty recognizing the rights of people with disabilities around the world. PNC Dan Dellinger called on the Senate to ratify the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Though it garnered wide bipartisan support, the legislation fell five votes short and is worth revisiting in the 117th Congress.

Introductory topics discussed were of political, military and legislative affairs. With the new administration, there will be opportunities to create synergies to produce combined effects greater than the sum of separate effects. National Security will continue to establish new contacts and continue building trusted relationships with the long-standing supporters in the State Department established with The American Legion.

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NPR's Mary Louise Kelly talks with Secretary of State Tony Blinken about foreign policy goals under the Biden administration and how he plans to shape America's standing on the global stage.

Mary Louise Kelly: Secretary Blinken, welcome.
Secretary of State Antony Blinken: Thanks. It's so good to be with you, Mary Louise.

It is good to have you with us. Let's start here: If I asked you for one sentence, what is the goal of U.S. foreign policy under this administration, the mission statement. What would that sentence be?
On one level, the mission statement is simple, and we sometimes lose sight of it. The mission statement is to advance the security, prosperity and values that the American people share. We sometimes lose sight of those north stars. But our hope is that every single day the work we're doing is helping to make the American people just a little bit safer, a little bit more prosperous, a little bit healthier. And if we're doing that and we accumulate enough steps, we'll be in a better place in a few years.

Click Here To Read Transcripts Of Secretary of State Tony Blinken

UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

Tuesday, February 23, 2021

The Senate Armed Services Committee held a hearing on, Emerging Technologies and Their Impact on National Security. Featured witnesses included:

Dr. Eric E. Schmidt, *Co-Founder, Schmidt Futures* stated: "When it comes to emerging technologies, our government needs to get the fundamentals right. I mean that in two ways. First, to preserve national competitiveness, we need to focus on the fundamental technologies that will have broad impacts on our economy, our society, and our security. Second, to shape the military we will need to defend the United States in the future, we have to put the fundamental building blocks into place as soon as possible."

Mr. Brad Smith, *President, Microsoft Corporation* stated: "The implications for defense applications are expanding rapidly. For example, Microsoft is leveraging commercial AI technology to accelerate innovation for DoD through the creation of computer-generated, three-dimensional models of objects and environments. Until recently, Pentagon planning often was constrained by the availability of imagery from the theater of operations. Leveraging technology developed by our Xbox team, we combine gaming and rendering technology developed for consumer markets over the last 20 years to build lifelike models depicting objects in any environment, at any time of day, in any weather condition, and from any angle or perspective. (This technology is also being used in civilian scenarios to train Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to recognize the state of crops to enhance productivity for farming.) DoD can use these models to train personnel and plan operations."

General Herbert J. Carlisle, *USAF (Ret.), President and Chief Executive Officer, National Defense Industrial Association* stated: "We need to encourage and expand new and innovative partnerships across government, industry, and academia to exploit the pace of innovation and rapidly scale transformational research and operational prototyping into robust and scalable capabilities that will enable technological, and operational, superiority. We have several mechanisms to develop and field products quickly and in an innovative manner; SBIR, DARPA, DIU, the Space Development Agency, AFWERX, demonstrate daily they can bring nontraditional players into the DOD in a timely manner. We need to be nimble and thoughtful, encouraging the services to identify and support the transition of world class, disruptive technologies."

Tuesday, February 23, 2021

The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC), held a hearing on, the January 6th Capitol Attack. Featured witnesses included:

Paul D. Irving, *Former Sergeant At Arms* stated "The USCP's intelligence component relied on intelligence reporting from various state and federal agencies to draft its special event assessment. Those sources included the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security, neither of which assessed or forecast a coordinated assault on the Capitol like the one that took place. And for each of the days leading up to January 6—and indeed, on January 6 itself—the USCP issued a daily intelligence report in which it assessed the potential for civil disobedience and arrests as "remote" to "improbable."

Steven A. Sund, *Former Chief Of U.S. Capitol Police* stated "I have been in law enforcement for almost 30 years, and in that time I have been involved in a number of critical incidents, and responded to a number of horrific scenes. The events on January 6, 2021, constituted the worst attack on law enforcement that I have seen in my entire career. This was an attack that we are learning was pre-planned and involved participants from a number of states who came well equipped, coordinated, and prepared to carry out a violent insurrection at the United States

Capitol. I witnessed insurgents beating police officers with fists, pipes, sticks, bats, metal barricades, and flag poles. These criminals came prepared for war. They came with weapons, chemical munitions and explosives. They came with shields, ballistic protection, and tactical gear. They came with their own radio system to coordinate the attack, as well as climbing gear and other equipment to defeat the Capitol's security features.

Michael C. Stenger, *Former Sergeant At Arms And Doorkeeper* stated "We have to be careful of returning to a time when possibility rather than probability drives security planning. Though the events of January 6th certainly reveal that a review of Intelligence Led Policing should be done, returning to the concept of possibility driving security operations may result in the poor use of resources. This is the constant give and take of security planning."

Robert J. Contee III, *Acting Chief Of Metropolitan Police Department* of the District of Columbia Washington, DC stated: "Five people lost their lives on January 6th. We offer condolences to all the grieving families. Sixtyfive MPD members sustained injuries documented in injury reports. Many more sustained injuries from the assault scratches, bruises, eyes burning from bear mace that they did not even bother to report. Their fellow officers at MPD and elsewhere are proud of the unheralded bravery of MPD officers in the face of this unprovoked and vicious attack."

DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY
FULFILLING OUR NATION'S PROMISE

This week, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency released the following announcements. Click on the links to read more:

February 24, 2021: Marine Accounted For From World War II (Hancock, J.L.)
February 25, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Booe, J.)

Legislative Issues

 Availability of Healthcare benefits for residents at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in proposed language of the FY22NDAA – The American Legions support funding that provides long-term solvency and viability of the Armed Forces Retirement Home (Resolution No. 107, 2016)

 Quality of Life for Service members and their Families – We owe our military men and women a debt of gratitude we can never repay for all that they — and their families — sacrifice to serve our country. The American Legion supports a fully funded quality of life (Resolution No. 85, 2016)

 Ensure the Coast Guard is paid – The American Legion supports a fully funded United States Coast Guard (Resolution No. 23, 2016)

 Expedited Citizenship through Honorable Military Service – The American Legion supports measures to ensure the process of naturalization through military service is completed prior to discharge (Resolution No. 15, 2018)

 Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure – The American Legion supports refined processes and policies that will enhance interagency cybersecurity…and promulgation of best practices and standards, and to ensure the protection of critical infrastructure from cyber and other electronic attack. (Resolution No. 20, 2017)

 Addressing the Forever Wars – The American Legion advocate for elevating diplomacy to build a better safer world (Resolution No. 22, 2020)

Staff Activity:

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Week ending 02/26/2021