MR. PETER HUESSY: I want to thank you all for being here. My name is Peter Huessy, and AFA, NDIA and ROA want to welcome you to this next in our series of Congressional breakfast seminars. A very important announcement is that tomorrow Marc Schneider and Tom Schieber are going to be rescheduled, and we’re going to put them in probably June 19, 20 or 22. Those are the three dates that we have available here, which we will do. But they are not being cancelled, we’re just rescheduling them.

The next important announcement is that we are doing General Chambers on Thursday at the Reserve Officers Association of America over on the Senate side so our Senate colleagues won’t have to walk too far in walking over here to this event. And then, of course, on Friday we have General Larry Welch.

Part of what we’ve tried to do this series is to introduce you to two areas that are not necessarily in the traditional nuclear area, NNSA and DTRA, as two areas that we need to explore further. And we will be putting together four additional seminars for industry on some of the aspects of getting down in the weeds, so to speak, on some of the areas of verification and monitoring and arms control with respect to before you’re locked down; and the role of DTRA, the role of NNSA.

Another area we’re going to look at is within the ICBM and SLBM community, commonality of production elements, and the means of reducing costs. And Admiral Benedict and General Kowalski have agreed to sit on a panel together along with – we have a candidate in OSD which will join us on that and do that. And then we’ll also look at the cruise missile and bombers, which we haven’t done. I was looking back, we haven’t done a bomber seminar series since I think 1993 when we were talking about B-2 issues, and we’re going to re-explore that. So there will be four additional seminars for industry, which we will let you know about as we move on here.

We’re honored today to have Mr. Myers who, as you know, is the Director of the Threat Defense Reduction Agency, and the U.S. Strategic Command Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction. Both are co-located at Fort Belvoir, as you know. The DTRA mission is to safeguard the U.S. and its allies from WDM, which is chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear, and to counter the threat and mitigate its effects. The agency is the Department of Defense’s combat support agency for the combating the WMD mission, and develops CWMD capabilities for the warfighter. And its mission is to coordinate and supervise a lot of these efforts.
Ken Myers has been director, I believe, a little over three years at DTRA. It’s not an agency that’s known by everyone, but it probably has one of the most important missions facing this country. My hope is with seminar and the one we’re going to do with Don Cook of NNSA, we can re-establish these two mission areas as part of our seminar series.

Ken, on behalf of our three major organizations that are our sponsors, our corporate that are here today, I want to thank you for coming down and sharing your views with us. Would you all give a warm welcome to Ken Myers?

(Applause).

MR. KEN MYERS: Well, good morning. Thanks for having me. I appreciate the kind introduction, Pete. The threat posed by weapons of mass destruction is a national security priority. It has been labeled one by administrations consistently: the Bush administration, now obviously the Obama administration, as well.

There’s very little that’s divisive politically or morally, about the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction; or quite frankly, the policies and strategies that the US is employing to counter weapons of mass destruction. There’s a strong bipartisan consensus across both the legislative and executive branches in terms of what we’re doing, how we’re doing it, and the need to do more and to do it more effectively and efficiently. This is based upon a common understanding and appreciation of the seriousness of the threat and the urgency that we must confront it.

President Obama has identified two major streams that he wants to follow in the nuclear lockdown of materials around the world, and pursuing the threats posed by biological weapons and biological defense. I was told a long time ago it’s always a smart idea to quote your boss in a very favorable light when you give a public speech, because when he reads it he’ll appreciate the fact that you had him in mind. So let me do that for a minute, and I think this quote that I’m going to read to you from Gen. Bob Kehler, Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, is very, very telling. It is also a tremendous step forward in the role that StratCom plays in the counter-WMD mission.

This is before the Senate Armed Services Committee about a year ago. “Of the threats we face, weapons of mass destruction clearly represent the greatest threat to the American people, particularly when they are pursued of possessed by violent extremists or state proliferator,” end quote. Now I have been in the StratCom chain of command now, as was said, for about three years. And one of the things that really gets my attention is when the commander of U.S. StratCom says that a threat – whichever threat that might be – is the greatest threat. Because of the issues that are on his table: space, missile defense, obviously the nuclear deterrent, cyber, ISR, all of those missions; when General Kehler identifies the number one national security threat as CWMD, I think it is very telling and very critical for us to understand.

DTRA/SCC has enjoyed an outstanding relationship with and support from Congress, and we’re very, very thankful for that. They’ve fully authorized and appropriated our budgets in recent years. And
I think that’s based upon a good strong relationship and a common basis and understanding of the threat.

So these are great strengths that we have, but they’re great strengths that we have to build on. It’s almost become cliché these days to talk about whole of government or whole of governments effort, if you will. This is absolutely crucial for future success. If we’re going to always maximize, if we’re going to be perfect every single time – which quite frankly we are responsible for being, the nation state or the terrorist organization, they just have to be right once – we have to be perfect every single time.

To accomplish this, we need seamless connection and coordination across policy, strategy, plans, readiness, research and development, and obviously operational support, and across all five phases of military operations. That’s a lot easier said than done, but we are making progress. And I’m very proud of the role that DTRA/SCC is playing in that.

We work the full counter-WMD portfolio, as Peter laid out. I’ll just simplify it as nonproliferation, as the source; counterproliferation, in between the source and us; and consequence management.

Everybody always like to say their unique. I will tell you I think DTRA truly is, and let me tell you why. It’s not always readily apparent.

We are a defense agency. We have a research and development portfolio in which we have multiple customers across the department, and multiple inter-agency partners. We’re also a combat support agency in which our customers are the combatant commands. Basically, that means we have to be ready to meet every potential need that could come from any potential corner of the Department of Defense when it comes to counter-WMD. And this is a challenge, but it is something that we’re very, very proud of, the track record we have built.

In addition to being a defense agency and a combat support agency, we’re a component of U.S. Strategic Command who, as many of you know, have the UCP requirements or responsibilities for counter-WMD. In these three roles- and I will speak about them as one: DTRA and the SCC - my goal has been to align them together to get the maximum leverage across the board. Our number one goal is to combine and integrate plans, research and development and operational support. We are a 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year organization prepared to support the warfighter in any potential counter-WMD. At the same time we’re managing a $2 billion portfolio on research and development. And this is a very powerful combination that we’re able to provide.

Who is DTRA/SCC? Two thousand people at 19 locations around the world come to work every single day to keep the country safe from weapons of mass destruction.

We’re working the toughest CWMD challenges. And I’ll just lay out a couple of them to illustrate the depth and breadth of our work: arms control monitoring and verification. When you consider the implementation of the New START Treaty or the Chemical Weapons Convention or the Biological
Weapons Convention or the conventional arms control of Europe, all of those verifiers, all of those monitors or escorts, are DTRA folks.

When a New START Treaty inspection takes place, that’s a DTRA team going over. When a Russian team arrives here in the United States to conduct their inspections, it is DTRA personnel that are escorting them through our country.

We also implement the Nunn-Lugar program. We implement two very, very sensitive projects as a part of that. Nuclear warhead security efforts -- from the Bratislava Initiative, where U.S. experts were working with Russian colleagues and experts at nuclear warhead storage facilities in Russia to improve security around those stockpiles -- again sensitive effort that was a great accomplishment, a great success. And I would be remiss to say that that was not just DTRA, it was our friends at NNSA as well. It was a joint effort with our Russian colleagues.

As Peter and I discussed over breakfast, responses to emerging biological threats and dealing with threats posed by biological weapons and materials have represent very different challenge. The Nunn-Lugar program is using a very different process to address bio issues than the FSU-centric approach we saw in earlier years. Another area that has really begun to emerge is building counter-WMD partnership capabilities. We want to be part of an international team. We don’t want to be the only element, the only organization, the only country or government in the world focused on this challenge. Part of the way we can improve our chances at stopping WMD proliferation and continuing that perfect record is to help our neighbors, help our allies, help our partners become more effective role players in counter-WMD.

We’re also charged with developing the technologies to detect, locate, interdict and destroy weapons of mass destruction. This includes developing nuclear and biological detectors, and developing the capabilities necessary for WMD agent defeat. What does that require? How do you destroy them? How do you get rid of them? How do you do it in a safe manner? How do you do it in a secure manner? How do you do it in a cooperative way? And if necessary, how do you do it in an uncooperative way?

Some people don’t always associate countering weapons of mass destruction with the problem of defeating hard, deeply-buried targets. However, these challenges are directly related because proliferators conceal and protect their WMD capabilities and infrastructure underground. Being able to hold at risk hard deeply-buried targets is also part of the mission responsibilities that we have. You may have read articles about the Massive Ordnance Penetrator. That was a DTRA program that we successfully transitioned to the Air Force. That is an effort and a mission that we’ve been involved with for many years.

In our combat support role and in supporting the combatant commands, the most common way we engage on a daily basis is through reach-back. Reach-back is a resource for combatant commanders who may have a potential WMD issue or are concerned about a specific issue, whether it be a specific threat, whether it be a specific chemical, whether it be a specific indication or warning. They can contact a resident DTRA/SCC expert 24 hours a day, seven days a week to receive advice or effects
prediction to tell them what the facts are. We responded to literally thousands of reach back requests every year.

And in some cases it’s not just the combatant commands. The DTRA relationship with the Civil Support Teams and National Guard teams here in the United States charged with responding to the WMD threat, is also critical. It’s a relationship that we worked very, very hard to establish.

And I’m proud to say when those CSTs role out to respond to a potential incident, usually one of the first things they do is establish communications with DTRA, at our operations center, so they have that linkage to be able to determine what kind of threats they’re going to face when they arrive on the scene. Sometimes it’s a simple as making sure they know which way the wind is blowing, because very often that’s going to be a critical issue in their response.

Another role we play is ensuring the safety and security of the U.S. nuclear deterrent. When you look at DTRA and you look at our roots, we date back to the Manhattan Project. We have been traditionally a weapons-effects organization, and continue to play a big role in the U.S. nuclear deterrent and we’re very, very proud of what we do.

I’ve also mentioned my role as a component director at USSTRATCOM and its UCP responsibilities for CWMD. That relationship has proven to be a success. It’s something that we have made better each and every single year. That partnership is really paying dividends across the counter-WMD mission area.

Now I’ve told you what we do. But we do not have a monopoly nor all the resources nor are we the only organization out there that does counter-WMD. Our success and the progress that we’re making is due in great part to the partnerships we’ve built.

When you discuss arms control treaties and the implementation or monitoring thereof, that’s a relationship between the Department of Defense, namely DTRA, and the Department of State. We’re cooperating closely with NNSA on nuclear lockdown. And obviously in the bio arenas, tremendous expertise resides at the Centers for Disease Control, HHS, and the Department of Agriculture. All of these relationships are critical.

We also function as a U.S. government rolodex because we are the CWMD hub. When questions come in we don’t always have the resident expertise, but we know where it lies and we’re really able to help make those connections. And as the threat is evolving, that role is becoming more and more important.

On February 3rd at our Global Synchronization Conference that the SCC hosts twice a year, General Kehler activated the Standing Joint Force Headquarters for Elimination. It is a full-time joint command and control element for WMD elimination operations in a battlefield environment. What does that mean? If the Nunn-Lugar program is a cooperative effort with the goal of eliminating weapons of mass destruction in a cooperative environment where the host country wants our
cooperation; the Standing Joint Force Headquarters is responsible for being able to operate and eliminate weapons of mass destruction in a non-permissive or battlefield environment.

I am not the commander of the Standing Joint Force Headquarters. But I’m very, very pleased to report that Major General Eric Crabtree of the United States Air Force, the Deputy Director for the SCC, is the commander of the headquarters. And the headquarters will be co-located with DTRA and the SCC to ensure that we continue to maximize leveraging and alignment, to ensure that there doesn’t need to be three resident experts on the same subject in three different organizations in three different places. This will ensure we can get the most effectiveness, efficiencies and leveraging. The headquarters would deploy in the support of a combatant command or in the support of a joint task force headquarters in a WMD environment.

One of the most difficult aspects of the WMD threat is its evolution. It is evolving in ways that could have been predicted 10, 15, 20 years ago. One of the big challenges that we have is anticipating those next stages of evolution and ensuring that we have the tools in place to respond to those threats in a timely way.

The biggest issue is to stay ahead of the threat and is understand how it’s evolving. One of the best examples of what we need to do in a programmatic way is borne out through Nunn-Lugar program. The Nunn-Lugar program was born in the early ’90s to address the nuclear threat posed by Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan and to eliminate the nuclear weapons they inherited. Nunn-Lugar eliminated the third, fifth and eighth largest nuclear stockpiles in the world.

The program was tremendously successful in removing those warheads from those three countries, helping them to accede to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear states. This work has been ongoing under various arms control treaties over the last decade or two. Looking back now, the denuclearization of three countries was a huge success and one that we should all be very proud of.

But the threat is evolving. The threats that we dealt with then are not the same ones we’re dealing with today. Because of the success that we’ve had working with the Russian Federation in terms of the security and safety of these situations, the success we’re having with the global nuclear lockdown, we’re finding that proliferators’ strategies are evolving. They are moving from large fixed locations, perhaps in the former Soviet Union, to smaller entities, smaller places in sub-Saharan Africa, in Southeast Asia, in South Asia.

The Nunn-Lugar program is shifting from addressing progress such as a $1 billion chemical weapons destruction facility in the middle of Siberia to destroy two million CW munitions. Today, we’re talking about implementing security at a remote health outpost in a sub-Saharan African nation. Why? That’s where viruses such as Ebola and Marburg occur naturally. We’re engaging those countries. We’re engaging countries in Southeast Asia and South Asia with the intent of trying to help them become better partners in stopping proliferation – detecting disease outbreaks and security the dangerous disease samples under their control.
So again, the WMD threat is evolving and our programs and our responses must also evolve. But effective and efficient CWMD mission execution is going to require more than improved threat anticipation. There are some major undertakings that we have to take to improve.

First, understanding the full scope of the threat. What are the cascading impacts of potential WMD threats on systems and systems of systems? Developing a common operating picture so that we all have a common basis from which we act. Creating a defense in-depth. Creating those programs at the source, such as the Nun-Lugar program. Creating those cooperative efforts in the space in between, whether it be at international borders, whether it be at sea, whether it be at land, whether it be in the air, to create those partnerships and relationships, and construct multiple barriers between the sources of WMD threats and the American people.

The development of a mission portfolio and the management of that portfolio, synchronizing and ensuring agility and flexibility in our planning. And sustaining and integrating not only our research and development efforts, but the operational programs that we have underway.

How do you take the programs that we’re operating today and make them more effective, to make them more flexible and agile to deal with a changing and evolving threat environment? This has been challenging for DTRA because while we’ve had some great success we have had a very, very flat budget for the last decade. And what makes it even more difficult is that the funding that we receive comes from five different appropriations processes. There is no flexibility to move money across those accounts.

When you don’t have flexibility, your opportunities are limited. Also, the discretionary authority within some of those accounts is very, very limited. We have some flexibility in O&M and RDT&E. But very little in chem-bio defense, Nunn-Lugar, and PDW.

As the counter-WMD portfolio continues to mature and to expand, we are going to need to assure that it is easier to realign our resources to respond quickly to emerging threats. And one of the ways that we can do this is to go back to that whole of government concept. DTRA will not always be the best answer. We need to not only accept that, we need to embrace it. We need to develop the relationships with other unique skill sets across the U.S. government.

We need to have those relationships, and not only in Washington. We need to have those relationships abroad, inside our embassies in Africa, in Southeast Asia and South Asia. And one of the things that we’re trying to do now is develop those relationships not only here, but in the field so that a DTRA representative can walk down the hall of an embassy and engage their colleagues in the Department of Agriculture, HHS or CDC.

Specifically in Africa, DTRA is new to the game. Our friends at AID, CDC, and at Walter Reed have been working there for literally decades. They’ve operated and succeeded in that environment. They have the relationships. What we’re bringing is a focus on safety, a focus on security and biosurveillance.
I don’t want DTRA to learn on its own all the lessons that have already been learned. We want to leap ahead. And that’s based on developing a relationship with our partners who have been there before. And as logical as this sounds, and how important it is, it is not an easy process to accomplish. But we are committed to doing it.

We have developed a relationship with our partners in the State Department and other partners in embassies in Europe and the former Soviet Union. That’s where we have our tradition. That’s where we have our roots. And we need to take the same amount of effort and dedication to establishing those same relationships with our friends in the Africa bureau, Southeast Asia bureau at the State Department; and at the NNSA and at the Department of Agriculture and elsewhere. And people come, but it is a building process.

There is a current discussion about potential cuts to budgets across the U.S. government. And if we’re going to have smaller budgets we need to ensure that we’re doing a much better job of coordinating not only within the department, but the whole of U.S. government, and also quite frankly, with international partners. We have a lot of outstanding partners out there and we’re helping develop even more, and that is something we must continue to explore and expand.

For those of you who know DTRA well, you will know that we are in the process of a transformation at DTRA. Two very important world events about a year ago led to a number of important lessons: the Operation Tomodachi nuclear reactor crisis in Japan, as well as Operation Odyssey Dawn in Libya.

We learned a lot about ourselves. We were operating in two different time zones at opposite ends of the earth, and they were both very, very high tempo efforts for our organization.

Our goal was to ensure that we emerged from these two operations, with lessons to make ourselves more effective and more efficient. One of the first things we learned was we were very opaque. Our customers at the combatant commands, the military services, the Department of Defense, the Department of State, the Department of Energy and NNSA had a hard time looking into and navigating our organization. That meant that we were not the most effective, efficient partner we could be. We needed to become more a more transparent organization. So I directed that we reorganize along a J-code structure used by military organizations and familiar to many in the Defense Department and the USG.

This reorganization is really just the tip of the iceberg. In 1998 six different organizations were brought together to form DTRA. These sub-organizations retained much of their culture and preferred business ways of doing business. We are now in the process of transforming the organization into a more efficient and effective team.

We need to consolidate and transform the way we do business at DTRA because that it was taking too long. It was too hard and involved too many steps. We needed to streamline. We needed to start acting more and more like the customers we were serving.
We made an informed realignment of human resources and are looking at simplified business practices. We are well on our way and will soon be able to announce some significant progress in both of those areas. I established an Executive Director position to bring greater focus to business discipline, and improve organization-wide resource optimization, transparency, and cost-efficiency across DTRA and the SCC, and to enable the rapid integration of the Standing Joint Task Force for Elimination alongside the team. Our first Executive Director, Shari Durand is overseeing our transformation to ensure that we are doing things most effectively and efficiently.

A major goal of this transformation is to develop a workforce that keeps cost-related performance constantly in mind. One of the main messages I get from Dr. Kendall, USD(AT&L) on a regular basis is cost consciousness. Get your mind around the numbers of dollars you’re talking about and be sure that that is being spent in the most effective, efficient way possible. We’ve made much progress and I look forward to continuing to do so.

Let me stop there. I’m sure I’ve said something that many of you would like to ask me about. I very much appreciate the opportunity to be here and share a little bit about the developments taking place at Fort Belvoir within DTRA and the SCC, and with our new partner the Standing Joint Force Headquarters for Elimination.

So thanks very much.

(Applause).

MR. DAVID CULP: David Culp, I wonder if you could tell us what you can about chemical weapons in Libya and Syria? Libya was in the newspapers. It’s dropped off the radar screen recently. Syria, obviously, is in the newspapers. I’m sure you can’t tell us much, but can you tell us something?

MR. MYERS: Well I appreciate you keeping your expectations low.

(Laughter).

Perhaps not low enough. It’s not appropriate, David, for me to get into any specific details on any of those topics in an open forum. I would just point out to you that just like a potential nuclear or biological issue, we ensure that we are prepared to support our customers in dealing with chemical weapon stockpiles or pre-cursor materials. That’s part of our underlying mission that we do every single day. But I’m not able to get into any specific country issues, whether that be Syria, Libya or any other.

MR. : I’m sorry, I don’t mean to contradict what you just said about – (off mic) – but you mentioned the importance for DTRA of being involved in the present for the Fukushima Dai-ichi reactor episode in Japan. Could you tell us a little bit more about that? It’s not obvious to me that there’s a weapons of mass destruction issue there. So how did you come to be involved and what did DTRA’s involvement produce?

MR. MYERS: Well first and foremost, as I said, we’re a combat support agency. And U.S. Forces Japan has a large footprint in Japan. The first telephone calls we received came from U.S. Forces Japan
asking for assistance in understanding the potential impact of these events on US military personnel and their dependents and what steps that command needed to be thinking about.

You’re correct that we are not nuclear reactor experts. But again, our expertise in modeling nuclear effects made us, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Department of Energy sources of important information. I believe that we worked effectively together to provide best possible whole-of-expertise to our ambassador in Japan and provided sound advice for the safe transition of US military aircraft and ships in the region.

DTRA also was very proud of the relationship and the steps that we took at expanding and improving the relationship with our Japanese allies. We were proud to be invited to sit with their joint staff in their operation centers during those difficult weeks and months of last year. It was a great example of sharing information and building partnerships and partnership capability.

MR. BAKER SPRING: If I can take you back a little bit to the arms control portfolio.

MR. MYERS: Sure.

MR. SPRING: The administration’s policy is pretty clear and the New START resolution of ratification is pretty clear on the question of negotiating a follow-on agreement to New START regarding short-range or non-strategic nuclear weapons. Secretary Gottemoeller has described the administration as being in the homework stage of that process. Is DTRA involved with regard to planning for what would be effective verification measures and techniques in the context of such an agreement? And if so, what kind of concepts are you looking at?

MR. MYERS: That’s a great question, Baker. We pride ourselves on the relationship that we have with Dr. Gottemoeller and her staff at the Department of State regarding our arms control mission. Are we part of some of the homework that’s being done? Not at this point. Dr. Gottemoeller hasn’t reached out to us at this point. Obviously we have continuous cooperation on monitoring and verification and investments in technologies. There’s nothing specific that we have been engaged with at this point on short-range or non-strategic weapons. But we stand ready to assist at the appropriate time.

MR. PAUL KENDALL: Yeah, Ken, Paul Kendall. Can you comment on the relationship with DHS, and also with regard to narco-terrorism on the southern borders and the possibility of WMD coming in through that pathway?

MR. MYERS: Well I probably have not mentioned DHS and our relationship with them as much as I should have. We have a very good relationship with DHS. We do an awful lot of work in the research and development areas, not just de-conflicting our investment in research and development, but leveraging and maximizing.

DTRA and DHS clearly have two very different mission sets, but we have a shared interest in the same science that underpins nuclear detection. For example, DHS is focused on about detecting nuclear material at our ports and at our border crossings using large fixed locations.
The Department of Defense nuclear detection mission is different. DoD’s nuclear detection mission role places our military personnel in remote locations far from American borders on short notice. This necessitates ease of movement and potable equipment with the smallest possible logistical footprint.

But that doesn’t mean that there aren’t a lot of leveraging opportunities between the two departments. We’re constantly searching for that I’m sorry, I forget the second part of your question.

MR. KENDALL: Well it had to do with the narco-terrorism.

MR. MYERS: I am not a narco-terrorism expert. But it appears as though there are an awful lot of similarities between the transportation of illegal narcotics, human trafficking, and WMD smuggling. We’re always looking to learn from the lessons of our friends in the counternarcotics business. If we rapidly improve our WMD interdiction capabilities because of their experiences, I’m all for that. With WMD, we don’t have the opportunity to get it wrong and I am quite happy to learn from others.

MS. EILEEN JULIO (ph): Eileen Julio, I was on the transition team that actually (formed DTRA years ago?). And I’m really impressed with the diversity and broad scope of missions that have expanded under that agency. However, is there not a danger that you’re spread too thin into too many different arenas dealing with too many other organizations within the government?

MR. MYERS: I don’t believe so. We’re not trying to be the experts at all of them. If we have a contribution to make, we hope others will take advantage of that. Likewise, we are pleased to learn from others and leverage their capabilities.

Our aperture has widened. That’s happening because the threat is evolving. We’re not going down a path unless we have really good information about why we should go down that path. And maximizing interagency relationships allows us to be a more effective, efficient partner in more things.

I’m continually astonished by the broad diversity and depth of expertise that we have at DTRA.

MS. JULIO: Can you share some lessons learned about how you merged all those different missions with the people at DHS?

MR. MYERS: I said at the beginning that everyone says they’re unique. I believe DTRA/SCC truly is. And I’m pretty sure that one of the lessons that I’ve learned in my three years is one size does not fit all. The challenges that we were facing and the best solutions to them might not be the same someplace else.

Did you have a question, sir?

MR. : Just a quick one. You started talking about the administration’s two priorities: counter-nuclear and counter-biological. I think you have to live on a desert island not to understand the president’s focus on counter-nuclear now. It’s been very effective and Gary Samore and his team have done a great job.
MR. MYERS: A great job.

MR.: I don’t think you can say the same thing about counter-biological weapons? Should we be doing more or should we be doing more (in making clear ?) what we are doing? And would that help you in your efforts, for instance in Africa and Southeast Asia and so forth?

MR. MYERS: I believe this administration has made the threat from biological weapons a top priority. For example, the second PDD was focused on bio. I think one of the things that the WMD community is grappling with is how different biological threats are from nuclear threats. Biological is a lot more difficult. It’s a lot harder to define. It’s a lot harder to measure.

Let me use the Nunn-Lugar program for an example. If ten years ago you had asked me to take you to the most representative Nunn-Lugar project, we would have gotten on an airplane. We would have flown out in the middle of Siberia, and I would have taken you to a two or three hundred million dollar missile dismantlement facility. And you’d see workers with blowtorches, hardhats, pulling missiles in, and cutting them up. It would have been a very impressive sight.

If you asked me today to take you to the most representative project we’re doing, it’s not going to be some big industrial construction project involving the dismantlement of missiles, submarines and bombers. I’d probably take you to a small facility in sub-Saharan Africa or in Southeast Asia where the people there have a legitimate need keep on hand samples of pathogens and naturally occurring diseases in that environment. What you would see is improvements being made to the security of that facility and the accountability of its collection of pathogens. You would see bars being put on windows and the installation of computer systems to keep track of pathogen inventories and usage.

You would also see increased transparency in their mission and improvement on how they monitor and assess disease breakout in their regions. Disease surveillance is something that I don’t think is as well known or understood as it should be at this time. We have American military personnel, foreign service personnel, and other government personnel operating in every corner of the world right now. Improved bio security, safety, and surveillance is essential for their safety and the performance of their missions.

We’ve all seen examples just in recent years of the danger. Every time we’re able to expand the partnership, to expand the number of countries, the number of doctors, the number of people watching the emergence of these things, it gives us a better chance of stopping a pandemic or biological attack quickly. And when it comes to pandemic or bio attacks, time is of the essence.

A comment that I frequently hear is that all this is important, but not really a DoD mission. So why is the Department of Defense doing these things?

The reason is because DoD has the authorities. We have the expertise to do this kind of work. Our other US government partners do not. They don’t start from the security and safety point of view. They have different mission areas. And that’s why the marriage between them and DTRA can be so effective. We’re able to bring the DOD security and safety culture together with the basic research or
the work on HIV/tuberculosis, malaria, or others bring those things together and deepen our partnership. Cooperative biological engagement improves our security at a fraction of the cost of missile elimination. But the benefits are perhaps just as great if not greater.

MR. HUESSY: Ken, thank you so much.

MR. MYERS: Thank you.

(Appplause).