

**The Interrelationship of a Comprehensive Farm Policy
to National Food Security and National Security
Statement by Darren G. Owens, Major General (US Army, Retired)
Before the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Agriculture
7 July 2016, Washington, DC**

Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Peterson, members of the committee, staff and guests, it is a pleasure and an honor to be invited here today to testify about the interrelationship of a comprehensive Farm Policy to National Food Security and National Security.

My name is Darren G. Owens. I was raised in Pecos, Texas and graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in agriculture economics. At the same time, I received my commission in the United States Army. I served on active duty then returned to Texas where I worked for an agribusiness and joined the Texas Army National Guard. I then went to work for the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service which is now the Farm Service Agency. In the Farm Service Agency I was a county Executive Director, a District Director, a Program Specialist, and the Chief Program Specialist. I retired from the Army National Guard as a Major General after serving in several key leadership positions.

First, I would like to thank the members of the Committee for what you do, not only on behalf of America's farmers and ranchers but for each and every American consumer. I firmly believe that America's first line of defense is our ability to feed and clothe the people. Without American agriculture providing adequate supplies of food and fiber at a reasonable cost we would all be dependent on other nations and that could place the food security and ultimately the security of the nation at risk.

Food insecurity is caused by either a lack of adequate supplies of food or a lack of affordability of food, and can have devastating effects. From my experience, I know a man will sell his soul to do whatever it takes to feed his family. We do not want to experience that in the United States. I believe the comprehensive farm policy and integrated farm programs established in the United States have helped to ensure adequate supplies of food and fiber at a reasonable cost. This has allowed us to maintain a healthy people and economy.

I want to visit with you today about lessons we learned while doing agriculture development in Kosovo and implementing the Army National Guard Agribusiness Development Teams in Afghanistan. What we found was a profound importance and relationship between a comprehensive farm policy and the food security—and ultimately, the national security of the United States.

Before my retirement from the Army National Guard in August of 2011 I had the privilege to serve in positions that gave me a unique perspective of the need for comprehensive farm policy and how it directly affected both National Food Security and National Security. In 2005, I was

serving as the Assistant Division Commander for Maneuver of the 36th Infantry Division when the Division Headquarters was mobilized for service in Kosovo to conduct peace enforcement operations. I was selected to command the Multi-National Task Force East composed of US National Guard, US Army Reserve, and active component units from 13 states and Puerto Rico as well as multi-national units from Poland, the Ukraine, Armenia, Romania, Greece, and Lithuania. Our area of responsibility was predominantly rural and agricultural areas of eastern Kosovo that contained a few mid-sized cities.

We learned a few very valuable lessons about rural areas and communities in foreign countries that enabled us to take advantage of unity of effort and to accomplish our mission. What we observed was that rural areas and communities in Kosovo functioned basically the same as rural communities in the United States. The cultures were different, the religions were different, but the communities functioned basically the same. Agriculture was the dominate industry and source of income in these areas, giving us the opportunity to use our civilian skills to implement agriculture and rural development projects. We found that the same principles of agriculture extension, education, and development applied in Kosovo.

The United Nations (UN) and the NATO-member countries working in Kosovo had established a government for Kosovo very similar to those in many European nations, with separate ministries responsible for agriculture development, rural development, roads, and electricity. All ministries had competing goals and objectives with no overarching strategy or policy. We also found that multiple aid agencies from the US, European Union (EU), UN, and numerous NGOs were working in the area, most with competing goals and objectives, and once again with no overall cooperation or policy.

Because most of the units assigned to our Task Force were US Army National Guard units and based on previous work we had done with other nations and our experience in conducting US domestic operations in support of civil authorities, we knew the importance and power the civilian skills of National Guard Soldiers brought to the mission. So we immediately built a data base of all the civilian skills we had in our units. Once on the ground in Kosovo we began to use the civilian skills of our Solders in conjunction with military operations.

We identified several challenges that in the end impacted what we could do with Agriculture. Unemployment in our area was above 50% with more than 50% of the population living in poverty and more than 10% living in extreme poverty. Most households spent 40 to 50% of their annual income on food. More than 50% of the population in our area experienced food insecurity part of the year. There were many small agriculture producers and a very high dispersion of land tenure. Most farms had low productivity and produced poor-quality products. Most sustainable food supplies came from imports that appeared to be supported by a combination of dumping policies and foreign-based competition. Almost all crops produced in our area were immediately sold or consumed at harvest due to a combination of a lack of

storage or a lack of regulation of warehouses with no means to enforce contracts between buyers and sellers. The Kosovo Ministry of Agriculture lacked a sufficient local extension service program. Many of the agriculture production practices used technology from the 1930s with some mechanization using old Soviet equipment. There was a general lack of knowledge in production, conservation, and marketing practices.

The effects of the civil war in Kosovo appeared to primarily impact rural areas and their populations. The conflict had adverse effects on food production and quality, and appeared to be the major driver of food insecurity and malnutrition in the rural populations of Eastern Kosovo. The lasting result of the conflict was a disruption of food production and food systems. The livestock that remained was of relative low quality and the combination of high food prices and low family income directly limited the access to food for parts of the year. The direct food assistance helped those in situational poverty to improve their overall situation. However, we found that direct food assistance had little impact on improving long-term food security. Populations such as the Roma minorities who had experienced generational poverty were not able to overcome the cultural pressures to redistribute or trade the food aid for the benefit of others, thus never allowing an individual or family to improve their situation.

The lack of an available, sustainable food supply resulted in discontent, which then led to increased criminal and anti-government activities to supplement family income in order to afford food. These activities included assisting with the smuggling of food and clothing products to avoid tariffs, smuggling of weapons and drugs, deforestation of hillsides, and facilitating human trafficking through Kosovo to Europe. An individual or groups of individuals would do whatever was required to provide enough food for their families, even if these actions were against their cultural and personal beliefs. All of the criminal activities done to improve their own food security had adverse effects on the whole community and the overall stability of the region.

We found we could build resilience and improve the stability of our area by conducting comprehensive rural development activities that directly contributed to our peace enforcement efforts. By working with each group interested in providing assistance to rural Kosovo we began to achieve some unity of effort resulting in unified action that began to make a difference in food security. As food security improved we began to see improved overall security and peace within the region.

For example, one area in our sector contained many small dairies attempting to sell milk locally. Due to the lack of roads, electricity, and milk storage facilities, the dairies had no points of distribution that encouraged additional production. Their existing production per cow was very low and bacteria counts were uncontrollably high. Every community in Kosovo wanted improved roads, access to reliable electricity, and a market for their products. With no national food policy or rural development plan in place for Kosovo at the time, all development efforts

went to the loudest voice or to projects that looked good in the news regardless of the overall impact. By working with the Netherlands Mission to Kosovo we were able to identify a company interested in building a processing plant for yogurt. This would require a location with good road access, reliable electrical service, and a steady supply of milk that met the minimum EU safety standards. None of these existed in our region.

With the aid of National Guard Civil Engineers within our units we were able to work with multiple Aid Organizations, NGOs, and the Kosovo government to target road access to a central location and a plan for construction and installation of critical infrastructure including reliable electrical service. The company began construction while National Guard Soldiers with agriculture skills began work with the local Kosovo version of an extension service and focused on two specific areas that would ensure a dependable supply of milk meeting sanitary requirements. First, the teams applied the basic concepts of extension education and identified key centers of influence and early adapters of technology within communities. Through demonstration and education they taught ways to improve feed, reduce parasites, improve sanitation in order to reduce bacteria levels, and overall increase the volume of milk available that would meet the plant's standards. Some of this was done without direct aid; instead, using innovative cost-share programs that required individual dedication and community participation. Second, the teams worked with local groups USAID, Dutch NGOs, and the Kosovo government to build and develop a livestock market in which individuals could work together to improve the quality of livestock herds through sale, trade, and the use of artificial insemination.

In less than a year, the security and sustainability of food for the area was significantly improved by comprehensive agriculture and rural development which resulted in the improved security of the region. From this lesson we learned that improving food security of individuals through agriculture development at the local level reduced the willingness of the citizens to participate in criminal or anti-government activities, and in turn, gradually improved overall security of Kosovo. We were able to expand this model across our area of responsibility and improve access to food and fiber through coordinated agriculture development activities.

We learned that food insecurity contributed greatly to the continued conflict in rural areas where there was no sustained or coordinated commitment to agricultural policy, education, research, or development by the nations involved in conflict resolution in the Balkans and other areas of conflict. We were not thinking of resolving food security for the world, but for specific rural areas in conflict where US forces were currently deployed. We learned that these areas did not need new or innovative science and technology to improve their food security. They only lacked a basic, comprehensive farm policy that would provide methods and principles that would help ensure a sustainable food supply, a stable agriculture market, soil protection measures, improved farm income, and adequate supplies of quality foods and fibers. It was quickly evident that much of the farm policy that the United States has in place since the

establishment of the Department of Agriculture would also benefit Kosovo and the Balkans. Programs with objectives integrated with the national welfare and security of Kosovo were needed.

We realized that the same principles from Kosovo could be applied in Afghanistan. Our efforts in Kosovo and the potential they held for Afghanistan were recognized by LTG Clyde Vaughn, Director of the Army National Guard. In 2007, Secretary of the Army Pete Geren, LTG Vaughn, and Mr. Charles Kruse, President of the Missouri Farm Bureau were able to engage Senator Kit Bond of Missouri, member of the Senate Armed Services Committee about the Agribusiness Development Team (ADT) concept. With the help of these individuals and support from Congress, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the University of Missouri, Texas A&M University, the Missouri National Guard, and the Texas National Guard, the Army National Guard began developing what became the Agribusiness Development Teams deployed to Afghanistan. The governor of Missouri volunteered his state to take the lead with the first team and Texas followed with the second team.

According to the DOD and the CIA, Agriculture had been the mainstay of Afghanistan's largely subsistence economy for decades. In periods of political stability and economic investment prior to the conflict with Russia, Afghan agriculture had flourished as a source of valuable agricultural products. The agricultural sector employed more than 80% of the Afghan workforce but only generated about 35% of the Afghan GDP. It was projected at the time that for the next 20 or more years, agriculture would remain the most important part of the Afghan economy and that agriculture had tremendous potential for growth. The US Embassy in Afghanistan told us that Afghanistan was a chronic food-insecure nation and that significant food imports were required to provide adequate supplies of food and fiber. Factors contributing to food insecurity included the lack of warehouses for storing commodities, regulations for maintaining quality of a commodity, rules of arbitration to settle disputes between buyers and sellers, and the lack of sanctity of contracts in general. Food that was produced suffered much field loss and was sold immediately. The same food that was being produced was purchased later in the year as imports at extremely high prices.

These facts and the knowledge we had gained in Kosovo led to the concept of utilizing both the civilian skills of Army National Guard Soldiers and the unique reach-back capability of local National Guard units to state land grant universities and state level agriculture organizations and commodity groups to provide extensive and unified agriculture development through the Agribusiness Development Team concept.

Based on the efforts of LTG Vaughn, the National Guard Bureau approved deployment of Agribusiness Development Teams (ADTs) in Afghanistan. The ADTs consisted of a core group of agricultural advisors that actively supported the furtherance of the US Agricultural Strategy goals and objectives. The ADTs focused on providing extension services to Afghan farmers,

building provincial level agriculture government capacities to provide comprehensive agriculture programs and to effectively utilize funds for agricultural projects.

The Agribusiness Development Teams were designed to conduct counterinsurgency and stability operations by building Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) capacity in agriculture and sustained agriculture development. This was done in order to facilitate the establishment of a safe and secure environment, enhance the rule of law, establish sustained economic development, develop sustained governance, and foster social wellbeing.

Mohammad Asif Rahimi, Afghan Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock probably described best why we believed the ADT concept would be successful when he said, "Agriculture is the dominant factor in the Afghan economy, in food security, in livelihoods, sustainable resources, and national security. Agriculture will determine whether Afghanistan will succeed or fail." Our previous experiences taught us that a profitable and sustainable Agribusiness Sector was an operational Center of Gravity (a source of power that provides moral or physical strength, freedom of action or will to act) at the provincial level. National Guard Soldiers' civilian skills delivered through ADTs could provide critical capabilities that were considered crucial enablers for the Center of Gravity to function and that were essential to the accomplishment of the objective in areas considered non-permissive for normal development activities. These capabilities were agriculture research, agriculture extension, agriculture credit, business and marketing development, and agricultural education.

ADT effectiveness was based on the development of relationships, mentoring, continuity, and predictability. The ADTs were unique in their ability to deliver agriculture expertise with autonomy and freedom of movement on the battlefield in a non-permissive environment. The ADTs partnered with the US Department of Agriculture, the US Agency for International Development, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Afghan provincial government of each province where teams were deployed, with various Afghan colleges and universities, and other government and NGOs in the areas to maximize the use of resources and ensure unity of effort with all agriculture development work to improve food security.

The ADT mission supported the core goal of the US mission in Afghanistan to "disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat al-Qaida in the region and to prevent its return". In addition, the ADT mission pursued the US strategy of reversing the Taliban's momentum and denying it the ability to overthrow the government. The mission would strengthen the capacity of the Afghanistan Security Forces and government so they could take the lead responsibility for Afghanistan's future. I will say that neither the U.S. Agricultural Strategy for Afghanistan nor any subsequent document provided any discussion on how to execute the strategy.

The ADTs focused on meeting the goals of a combination of US Agriculture Strategy in Afghanistan, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) priorities, and in building the Afghan Agriculture Sector. The technical assistance and institutional capacity building done by ADTs was focused on GIROA capacity building and sustainable agricultural development at the provincial and district level. Transition and institutional sustainability of all ADT activities was clearly emphasized. Each activity was nested into USFORA and US mission Afghanistan strategy, the teams identified MAIL involvement in each ADT program from planning to completion into sustainment, and articulated an end state with transition to Afghan responsibility.

ADT commanders sought opportunities for improvement, including continually working to clarify the mission: ADTs served both in the conduct of stability operations (which included both counter insurgency and counter narcotics) and the carrying out of agriculture development focused on improving food security in order to improve overall security in their area of responsibility. An understanding of the expected outcomes needed to be assessed and reaffirmed on a regular basis in order to better direct the ADT efforts. The teams focused on functional coordination: there were multiple actors and activities with significant opportunity for functional coordination which when working together multiplied the effects of our ADT efforts; ADT Commanders were encouraged to maximize these opportunities.

The ADTs had two major goals and six objectives to achieve those goals, all nested within US Agriculture Strategy for Afghanistan. These goals and objectives include the following:

Goal 1: Increase agriculture sector jobs and income

Obj. 1.1: Establish food security by ensuring adequate supplies of food and fiber

Obj. 1.2: Increase agriculture productivity

Obj. 1.3: Regenerate agribusiness

Obj. 1.4: Rehabilitate watersheds and improve irrigation infrastructure

Goal 2: Increase confidence of Afghan's in their government through the MAIL

Obj. 2.1: Increase MAIL capacity to deliver services to rural farmers and herders

Obj. 2.2: Promote the private sector and farmer associations through the MAIL

We accomplished this by establishing specific ADT Lines of Operation. These lines of operation came from a review of US farm policy that had been implemented over many years. We looked at what enabled the US to have a stable and affordable supply of food and fiber that maintained a healthy people and economy.

The following lines of operation were developed and implemented by the ADTs:

1. Agriculture Extension: Develop and empower provincial and district level GIROA Director Agriculture Irrigation Livestock (DAILs) and Agriculture Extension Agents (AEA) in order to build capacity of government, connect the people with government, and enhance the MAILs ability to deliver basic agriculture extension services while using projects to reduce corruption and further legitimize the GIROA.
2. Agriculture Economics: Establish food security by ensuring adequate supplies of food and fiber, achieve sustained agriculture economic development, regenerate agribusiness, rehabilitate watersheds, and improve agricultural infrastructure.
3. Agriculture Education: Ensure effective and sustainable transfer of technology through the DAIL, AEAs and regional universities as well as ensure continuous long-term improvement in the agriculture sector.
4. Agriculture Administration: Increase capacity of Director Agriculture Irrigation Livestock (DAIL) and Agriculture Extension Agents (AEA) to deliver basic agricultural services to increase trust of the people in GIROA by improved MAIL administrative functions and reduced corruption.
5. Information Operations: Integrate Agriculture messaging and programming into Provisional Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and battle space owner's information operations in order to connect government with the people.

Each ADT was required to work and conduct actions with Battle Space Owners. This focused on carrying out unified actions and assisting all groups in the area to coordinate agriculture activities. In addition to delivering agriculture expertise, the ADTs assisted the battle space owners in preparing the battle space for sustained agriculture development by:

1. Assisting battle space owners in identifying key districts and prioritizing the need for agriculture assessments.
2. Identifying agriculture development requirements and priorities by doing provincial and district agriculture assessments.
3. Assessing the staffing of DAIL and AEA positions and prioritize the fill of vacancies.
4. Assessing the status of USAID, USDA, USACE, PRT, and NGO agriculture activities within each key district, including the current level of coordination and collaboration.
5. Assessing the willingness of and requesting the battle space owner to commit resources to agriculture development (i.e. weather, contracting, legal, engineer, security force, and IT personnel).
6. Establishing priorities for and beginning engagement with regional universities and agriculture high schools.

7. Establishing priorities for watershed rehabilitation and engineering projects.
8. Coordinating agricultural public affairs activities and assess local media resources for delivery of agricultural themes and messages.

ADT Commanders were directed to use established criteria to set conditions in transitioning agriculture related activities to DAILs and other civilian personnel as deemed necessary. Scorecards were used to constantly measure and demonstrate progress toward meeting US goals, objectives and the desired end state. Each ADT did this by measuring the following:

1. Improved agriculture productivity
2. Increased commercial viability of small and medium farms and agri-businesses
3. Improved stability in insecure areas
4. Improved integrated water management
5. Improved agriculture education
6. Improved GIRA agriculture research and agriculture extension services
7. Improved MAIL/DAIL/AEA core administrative functions

The ADT concept required a comprehensive approach to improving food security which resulted in overall improved security in each province. ADTs were doing good work; however, their full impact on Afghan agriculture and meeting the goals of US Agriculture Strategy required the Whole of Government. Deployed and forming teams had to work tirelessly to bring essential elements to bear in reaching the desired End State. Integrating elements here in the US helped the ADTs accomplish much more sustainable results than if they had been working individually.

Each ADTs work with the Land Grant University of their state and the cooperation of each cooperative extension service was instrumental in the training of each team and in the execution of their mission. Each land grant university helped us develop a training model that was used for each team and that enabled sustained follow up and support for the teams. For example, both the Texas Agri-Life Extension and the Borlaug Institute of Texas A&M University worked with the Texas ADT teams to train for deployment and coordinate activities for development in the teams' areas of responsibility. This included adding an Afghanistan County to the Agri-Life intranet giving the teams the same access to agriculture experts as any county extension agent had and working together with the Borlaug Institute on range land surveys in the ADTs area of operation where the security environment prohibited the movement of civilians. The Borlaug Institute worked with the Texas ADT to host training for a group of provincial and district extension agents here in the US. The land grant universities were great partners who all worked together to deliver the best possible products. For example, we never

fielded a team from New Mexico, yet New Mexico State University eagerly worked with the other land grant universities and provided advice and help to the teams on solving irrigation problems with canal systems similar to those used in New Mexico. While North Dakota did not field a team North Dakota State University assisted in training the Minnesota ADT. UC Davis, Purdue University, Washington State University, University of Maryland, and Texas A&M carried out extension training programs for USAID and worked with the ADTs.

The ability to meet the ADT goals and objectives would not have been possible without the help of our entire United States Agriculture community. It is difficult to explain all the assistance provided to ADTs from every part of the American agriculture sector and how this support enabled the teams to begin the development of comprehensive farm policy at the provincial and district level. USDA's Commodity Office provided copies of warehouse storage agreements, warehouse inspector handbooks, Texas Department of Agriculture provided copies of warehouse regulations, Texas Grain and Feed Association provided rules of arbitration between buyers and warehouses, and the University of Nebraska had the documents translated into Pashto and Dari. Private agriculture business firms eagerly contributed advice and equipment to the teams. State producer and commodity groups helped the teams with recommendations for crops, practices, and solutions for storage and handling. For example, the Lamesa Cotton Growers and the AMS Classing offices assisted in establishing a system to have Afghan cotton classed and graded, the National Grain Sorghum Producers Association connected the teams with private seed companies who provided recommended varieties of grain sorghum for the altitude and climate of Afghanistan that could be used in demonstration plots. I do not know of any group that ever turned down a team's request for assistance. The ADTs were able to coordinate their activities on the ground with the USDA, USAID, Department of State (DOS) and many NGOs.

I believe the work of the ADTs was effective at denying recruits to the insurgency by increasing employment, improving effective public sector services in agriculture that increased Afghans' food security by improving sustainable and affordable supplies of food, and increasing the confidence in and connectedness of the people with their government. I also believe that the experience of the ADTs reminds us that food security is critical to national security and that the best way to ensure food security is to have a comprehensive farm policy that ensures adequate, sustainable supplies of food and fiber are available at a reasonable cost, now and in the future.

The ADT mission was in place from March, 2008 to January, 2014. There were 52 separate teams totaling 3,025 Army and Air National Guard personnel. The teams came from 17 supporting states including: Missouri, Texas, Indiana, Kentucky, Nebraska, Kansas, South Carolina, Georgia, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Arkansas, Nevada, Minnesota, Mississippi, Illinois, California, and Iowa. The teams deployed into 16 supported Provinces in Afghanistan including: Nangarhar, Kunar, Khowst, Paktika, Paktya, Laghman, Kapisa, Parwan, Bamyan, Ghazni, Zabul,

Kandahar, Hilmand, Wardak, Logar, and Panjshir. The teams executed over 700 projects totaling more than \$45 million. It was a dangerous mission even though we knew of no ADT team that was attacked while conducting an actual ADT mission. However, movement to the field to conduct their ADT missions or in support of other missions was dangerous and the teams suffered several vehicles destroyed, Soldiers injured, and three Soldiers killed in action while providing support. In 2009, the Texas team lost two Soldiers: Sergeant Christopher Staats of Fredericksburg, a Texas A&M graduate and an environmental scientist, and Sergeant Anthony Green, a farmer and specialist in animal husbandry from Yorktown, Texas. In 2011, Missouri ADT4 lost one Soldier: Sgt. 1st Class Robert Wayne Pharris, of Seymour, Missouri.

A primary lesson learned from the agriculture development work we did in Kosovo and Afghanistan was that agriculture development was critical to counter the insurgency in areas where food security was an issue. We also learned that in order for agriculture development to be successful it had to be carried out in a comprehensive manner. We learned that piecemeal large-scale agriculture development resulted in failure. For example, the first wheat projects conducted by USAID produced the wrong variety of wheat. The teams also learned that large projects and unbridled spending contributed to increased corruption and cost of materials and labor. The teams also demonstrated that even small-scale projects given to individuals or groups can create dependence rather than self-reliance. Every project needed local participation in order to be sustainable.

Utilizing ADT expertise with their unique reach-back capability in a comprehensive approach based on key aspects of US farm policy demonstrated that food security has a directly positive impact on national security. The projects emphasized education, research, extension, market stabilization, resources conservation, watershed management, and improved land productivity. The coordination of rural development to improve infrastructure for storage and processing of commodities, road networks to facilities, and marketing of commodities, combined with standards and regulations to protect consumers showed us that farm policy can positively impact food security as well as the overall security of an area.

At the onset of the ADT collaborative process we learned that a comprehensive framework for collaboration was needed between the ADTs, USAID and other USAID programs, USDA, DOS, International Community (IC) agriculture programs, and GIROA ministries before we started the mission. This framework needed to be integrated with agriculture programs linked to our national security interest with a top/down/bottom-up focus. From the beginning, the continuity of effort (or the lack of it) was a real struggle. The ADTs followed agriculture development programs that appeared to have been a series of 1-year development programs rather than one long-term program focused on continuity, sustainability, and unity of effort.

As the ADT mission progressed, the comprehensive framework, continuity, sustainability, and unity of effort continued to improve.

The true success of the ADTs was due to the hard work of the National Guard Agribusiness Development Team Coordination Office. This team, first lead by Colonel (US Army, Retired) Marty Leppert, a Wisconsin National Guard Soldier, and then by Colonel Howard Schauer, a Nebraska National Guard Soldier, who transferred to the Texas Army National Guard after the end of the ADT mission, who is now serving with the 36th Infantry Division Headquarters in Afghanistan. They were both supported by Chief Warrant Officer (US Army, Retired) Anthony Romano. This team was responsible for coordinating with the individual state National Guards, the land grant universities to ensure each team was trained, equipped, mobilized, deployed, returned home safely, and ensure the continuity and unity ADT efforts. This team and the members of each of the ADT missions are true heroes and we are blessed to have great Americans like these willing to make a difference.

The ADT mission showed us it takes a lot of coordination with many groups and agencies to improve the food security, and ultimately the entire security of a region. The ADT mission provided renewed evidence that comprehensive farm policy ensuring adequate supplies of food and fiber at a reasonable cost carried out by the federal government, the individual states, and the land grant universities working together for a common goal can ensure food security and significantly add to the national security of the United States. A nation without food security has only one problem. That one problem has proven that it will escalate into many other problems destabilizing every aspect of an entire nation, and that impact can be felt on a global scale.

Chairman Conaway, members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to share with you today, my experiences and lessons learned from my many years of service. There are a few things I would like each of you to think about for the future. First, never forget the importance of agriculture. The Operations Officer of the first Texas ADT said it best, he said "Agriculture crosses all social, ethnic, and religious divides, it truly is an international language." This reminds us that food security is important to all people. As you think about the future of farm policy never forget that one of the primary purposes of all programs should be to ensure the food security of the nation and the sustainability of food and fiber for our grandchildren's grandchildren. Then one last thing, there are times when I watch the news and I worry about the future of the United States, but when I spend just a few minutes around the individuals serving in our Armed Forces or those engaged in American agriculture I am reminded we have a solid foundation and that our future is in good hands.