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Chief uses Sadr City example in describing conflict today, tomorrow. The Army's chief of staff used Sadr City, a one-mile square section of Baghdad near the Green Zone with a million people tightly packed together, as an example of the challenges for the United States armed forces in carrying out today's and future missions.

Speaking June 10 at the 25th anniversary dinner of the Army Historical Foundation in suburban Washington, Gen. George W. Casey said, "We're going to be fighting among the people [in urban areas] where we don't have a home court advantage." This kind of conflict also means "We are going to have to operate with indigenous forces" and employ economic and political elements to succeed in counterinsurgency operations. "What it all boils down to is a hugely complicated environment for our leaders to operate in. That's the central challenge we have."

Citing the publication of a new operations manual that takes a broad look at military power in these kinds of missions, "We have been working very hard to learn from what we have been doing for almost seven years," in "fighting a ruthless enemy that is not going to give up and go home," he said.

Casey predicted that the future would be one of "persistent conflict." In that future, economic globalization becomes a double-edged sword, as does technology. Casey said that the trends in demographics are "really pointing in the wrong direction" as more and more of the world's population gravitates to cities.

"The two things that really worry me the most are weapons of mass destruction in the hands of terrorists and safe havens" where terrorists can plan, stage and operate from.

Casey said that what happened in southern Lebanon in the summer of 2006 where 3,000 members of Hezbollah fought 30,000 well-trained and well-equipped members of the Israeli defense force to a standstill also could be an appropriate example of what future conflict may look like. "Hezbollah, a non-state actor, started that war with over 14,000 rockets, and not small rockets, big rockets with warheads of 200 kilograms. They channeled Israeli armored forces into ambushes ... with modern anti-tank missiles. They shot down helicopters with anti-aircraft missiles. They shot a cruise missile and hit an Israeli ship in the Persian Gulf. They used unmanned aerial vehicles for intelligence gathering and to attack Israeli targets. They used encrypted cell phones for command and control and they had their command posts hard wired with encrypted computers. And oh by the way, they got their message out on local television."

Army demonstrates, exhibits FCS on National Mall. The Army's prototype Non-Line of Sight Cannon was on display on the National Mall, near the West Side of the Capitol, in a public demonstration that the Future Combat Systems has moved from power point slides and artists' conceptions to "the future is here."

Gen. George W. Casey Jr., Army chief of staff, made that comment while pointing to the cannon, the first of eight proposed manned ground vehicles to be prototyped, and then to spin out technologies going into the current force such as rotorcraft unmanned aerial vehicles, small unmanned ground vehicles, advanced joint radios to unmanned sensors also on display June 11. "Some of these systems are already being used by our soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan," he said.

In answer to a question, Casey said that the technologies in FCS are relevant for today's fight. He used the examples of a small unmanned aerial vehicle providing a soldier on patrol a view "around the corner, what's on a rooftop," small unmanned ground vehicles, robots, "to view something at the side of the road" or unmanned sensors determining what is inside a building. As the administration changes with the coming of the new year, he said, "It is incumbent upon us to demonstrate FCS' relevance to the Army now and down the road. Again talking about the cannon's value in combat in the near term, "it gives me precision fires capability," particularly important in urban conflict. Casey said the common chassis vehicle was rolled out in early June but the cannon tube has been fired more than 2,000 times at the Yuma Proving Grounds, Ariz.

The Army expects FCS to be easier to maintain and sustain when fielded than today's tanks and fighting vehicles. Because of the common chassis and interoperable spares and parts, Casey said the logistical support needed for the manned vehicles in FCS would be reduced. The Army expects a savings in combat service support manpower as well. "Instead of having a tank mechanic, a Bradley mechanic, you have one mechanic" who could work on all variants.

FCS, launched in 2003 with the naming of Boeing and SAIC as the leading system co-integrators, is the Army's largest modernization program. When totally fielded, the 14 separate vehicles—the manned vehicles sharing a common chassis and hybrid electric drive that will also provide power for onboard computer and communications systems, and network systems down to the platoon level—is expected to cost about \$160 billion.

Ground broken for Intrepid Center at Bethesda. In the groundbreaking ceremony for the National Intrepid Center of Excellence for psychological health and traumatic injury, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said, "The need for this world-class facility has never been more pressing or more important" and is a demonstration of honoring the contract between the nation and its volunteer force in delivering needed care.

Speaking at the June 5 event on the grounds of the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., he said, "This center represents America's dedication to providing first-class treatment for troops who may be suffering combat-related stress and mental illness." Adding, "It will do for traumatic brain injury and psychological health what the Center for the Intrepid and the staff at Brooke Army Medical Center do so superbly for the care of amputees."

The 75,000-square-foot, two-story facility is being funded by the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund, a not-for-profit organization, and mirrors the organization's financing and building of the physical rehabilitation facility that Gates mentioned in his address. Bill White, president of the fund, said in a news release that \$15 million has been raised for the project so far. Its total cost is expected to be \$75 million. He added, to keep the project on schedule for completion by November 2009, that half of the money for it must be raised this year.

Arnold Fisher, whose family established the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund and serves as its honorary chairman, announced in January at the Military Health System's annual conference in Washington, plans to build the facility. Then the facility will be turned over to the Defense Department for continued resourcing and management.

At the groundbreaking ceremony next to the site of the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Fisher said, "This is not charity work. This is our duty to give back to this country, especially to the military." The fund's sister organization the Fisher House Foundation, plans to build a 21-suite Fisher House near the new center and two additional houses on another part of the Bethesda campus.

VA Secretary James Peake, a former Army surgeon general, said he expects the center "will play an absolutely essential role in an unwavering commitment to continue the forward movement in getting it right in caring for those who have borne the battle." Other speakers said that it showed the commitment of the Defense Department, VA, the nearby National Institutes of Health and the private sector to care for soldiers, their families and share what is learned with other sectors of medical care.

"Whatever we can find in terms of best practices around the world we're bringing it here. Whatever we learn here, we'll push it out," Brig. Gen. Loree Sutton, an Army psychiatrist and a special assistant for the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs.

AUSA recognizes Reyes, Hunter as outstanding legislators. The Association of the United States Army presented Reps. Silvestre Reyes, D-Texas, and Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., with its Outstanding Legislator Award at a reception on Capitol Hill June 4. Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, USA, Ret., AUSA president, cited the two congressmen, who are Army veterans of the Vietnam War, as "great friends of the Army as an institution and supporters of soldiers and their families."

Reyes, who was drafted into the Army, served as a helicopter crew chief in Vietnam. "He [and Hunter are] among the few members of Congress to have been in combat," Sullivan said. Reyes serves on three subcommittees of the House Armed Services Committee and is chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. "Because of his leadership, Congress has invested in improved base housing, including the Army's Residential Communities Initiative. This is a huge, huge program for soldiers and their families. He has worked hard on better medical care, increased pay and more modern equipment," including advocacy of the Future Combat Systems, Sullivan noted.

Hunter, who could not attend the event because of severe weather closing Washington area airports, served as a first lieutenant in the 173rd Airborne Brigade during the Vietnam War. As a former chairman of the Armed Services Committee and now its ranking member, Hunter, Sullivan said in prepared remarks, "is a sincere advocate for our military personnel, their families and for the need to provide appropriate funding for our Army." In accepting the award, Reyes said with a laugh, "I did enjoy Germany more than Vietnam," adding that he and three of his brothers were proud to have been soldiers. He said that in serving on the Armed Services Committee he "has the privilege and honor of being with you [soldiers] around the world. We [in Congress] can't do enough to repay ... the sacrifices you and your families make."

For the latest developments on Capitol Hill, check out the AUSA website: www.ausa.org. For AUSA's electronic legislative newsletter, e-mail Bill Loper at: bloper@ausa.org.

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DoD report progress on treating seriously wounded, ill and injured.

“There is still a lot of work to be done, a lot of people who need help from the start [as they] transition from DoD to VA,” the VA’s deputy secretary said in welcoming veterans service organizations to a meeting at the department’s offices in Washington, June 10. Gordon Mansfield added, “We know that we can’t get the job done alone and that includes even with our partner in the executive DoD. ... Our job is to make [severely wounded, injured or ill veterans] whole ... and provide them the opportunity to move forward,” to include families and survivors.

In looking at the work of the Senior Oversight Committee, drawn from the VA and the Department of Defense, he said, “The hardest work is ahead and the hardest dollars are ahead” to sustain the programs and initiatives that arose in the wake of stories in early 2007 on the living conditions and treatment of outpatients from Afghanistan and Iraq at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and in *Army Times* on the differences in the services’ disability evaluation system and how they also differed from the VA’s system.

Melinda Darby, executive director of the Wounded, Ill and Injured Senior Oversight Committee, put the cost for the current fiscal year at \$160 million.

Mansfield, who is a co-chair of the committee, said the pilot program in the National Capital Region with a single disability evaluation system is about to move into other parts of the country, including areas such as Northern New York where there are few large medical facilities. An announcement on the expansion is expected in the summer, Darby said at the June 10 meeting. Looking at the Federal Recovery Coordinator program, Mansfield said, “We’ve got to take the lessons learned” in caring for the catastrophically injured service member and move from the pilot phase.

Darby said there would be in the future additional coordinators hired for the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda, Md.; a second coordinator added to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio; and one at the Naval Medical Center San Diego. In addition, coordinators will be placed at VA regional medical centers in Providence, R.I., and Houston.

Eight coordinators were hired beginning in December 2007. The coordinators are working with 77 service members who have been blinded, lost a limb, severely burned, suffered brain injury or spinal cord injury.

Kristen Day, who is the VA representative for Case Management, said in addition to working with the service members themselves in the military facility, later the VA polytrauma centers and finally back in the communities in which they are going to live, the coordinators are working with “families who can’t function as a family” like they had before the catastrophic injury occurred.

TRADOC selects top drill sergeants. Staff Sgt. Herbert Thompson IV of Fort Jackson, S.C., and Sgt. 1st Class Michael Noland of the 95th Reserve Division were named the 2008 Drill Sergeants of the Year.

Following a weeklong U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command competition conducted at Forts Monroe and Eustis, Va., Thompson said, “I can’t even put it into words” concerning how he felt about winning the 39th annual competition. “Everyday we go about our soldiers’ pride. It is an honor to serve.” Thompson represents the 2,400 active duty drill sergeants.

Noland said, “This is unbelievable.” He added that he was following in the footsteps of his own drill sergeant. “Drill sergeants instill so much pride.” Noland represents the more than 3,000 Army Reserve drill sergeants.

Speaking at the June 20 ceremony at Fort Monroe, Command Sgt. Maj. David Bruner said, “The drill sergeant remains indispensable. They question everything. What must endure and what must change and what must grow. Drill sergeants will always continue to train soldiers the right way, always to stand tall and always improving combat readiness in our formations. They understand the cost of not being ready is paid in blood and with our soldiers’ lives.” Adding, “The competition and journey for these drill sergeants started a long time ago. They have represented their organizations with distinction, honor and professionalism this week.”

The seven competitors—five from the active component and two from the Army Reserve—were “battle-tested on numerous subjects and events, such as land navigation, leadership, physical fitness, running an obstacle course, communications, shooting, combatives, NBC, first aid, media events, situational awareness and appearing in front of an oral board,” he said. The competitions, covering all aspects of being a drill sergeant, began early in the morning and continued late into the night, concluding with an After Action Review.

Bruner told TRADOC News Service that the competition remained very close until the very end. Bruner said, “You are our future and you symbolize liberty and stand for freedom. Each drill sergeant standing on the field today is responsible for training America’s finest.”

Lt. Gen. David Valcourt, TRADOC’s deputy commanding general, said, “The difference between our Army and every other army in the world is our noncommissioned officers.” Recalling an incident involving Gen. Eric Shinseki when he was chief of staff of the Army, when met with his Russian counterpart, Valcourt said the Russian officer boasted how the former Soviet Union’s equipment was superior to that of the United States, but “we would not have won the war because you have the best noncommissioned officers, you have the best sergeants.”

Community Covenant program designed to raise visibility of local support. The Army Community Covenant is important to soldiers and their families, and the communities themselves because it demonstrates a commitment to deliver on a number of broad quality of life areas outside the gates, a former garrison commander and commander of the Army's soldier and family programs said in an interview with AUSA NEWS.

Maj. Gen. Craig Whelden, USA, Ret., and chairman of the community covenant task force, said, there is a distinction between the community and the Army Family Covenant, which was unveiled at the Association of the United States Army's Annual Meeting in October, and the family covenant is internal to the Army. The community covenant "is designed to raise visibility" of local support for the Army "above where it now is." This is true "even in places where we do not have concentrations of soldiers," but "there are soldiers in every single state and territory in the nation." In the active force, they can be serving as recruiters and with ROTC programs or enrolled in graduate school; or serving in the reserve components as members of the Army National Guard or Army Reserve. "If you pick a state like Texas, you are going to find three major installations there [Forts Hood near Killeen, Sam Houston in San Antonio and Bliss in El Paso], but you are going to find a much broader state and many, many miles where there are not active-duty installations."

Whelden, who described himself as the Johnny Appleseed of the program in spreading the good word, said the community initiative was rolled out in January and expects it to run into the fall. Army Secretary "Pete" Geren wants this to be a recurring event, Whelden said, so that every time a senior Army leader or senior civilian leader leaves office there would be another signing ceremony. "When they say 'who's that?' [in looking at the names on the signing document] It's time to raise it up again."

The task force is working through the more than 80 civilian aides to the secretary of the Army as the lead and the more than 120 Army Reserve's ambassadors "to help promote and connect the Army to America's communities" because "they are the one with the best connectivity to the communities particularly in states where we do not have active-duty installations." He said that the aides and ambassadors have taken on the task of reaching out to members of Congress, governors, state legislators, county commissioners, mayors and council members and business leaders and saying, "we would like you, Mr. Mayor, to consider hosting a community covenant signing ceremony whereby we recognize the wonderful support you provide to soldiers and family members. You have an opportunity to talk about the support and thank the soldiers and family members for what they do and we will have a chance to thank you for what you do for us."

AMC recognizes Army's top inventions. Gen. Benjamin S. Griffin, commanding general, U.S. Army Materiel Command, praised various research institutions for their inventions and outstanding achievements in providing the best technological solutions for soldiers. "It's a tremendous accomplishment," Griffin said at an awards luncheon June 11 in suburban Washington, "I'm very proud to be a part of this. I want to congratulate you all."

In its sixth year, the program chooses winners based on their impact on Army capabilities, inventiveness and potential benefits outside the Army. Three of the top inventions focused on increased soldier survivability, providing both physical and mental protection. Griffin thanked the awardees for their critical contributions to modern warfare. "When you talk to units in the field, they know about them," he said of the inventions. "They use them."

Nominations for the program were submitted across the Army laboratory community, and nine of the 10 recipients are elements of the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command. All 10 of the inventions have been deployed in theater. Among the Army Greatest Inventions of 2007 are:

Improvised Explosive Device Interrogation Arm, U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Research, Development and Engineering Center. The Interrogation Arm is totally operational from inside mine protected vehicles and provides stand-off detection capability, can detect metal, free- and pry-lift objects, and carry out shallow digging. A camera allows the operator to view objects at the end of the arm.

Damage Control Resuscitation of Severely Injured Soldiers, U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research. Fielded in January of 2007, Damage Control Resuscitation limits fluid resuscitation, stabilizing the patient's blood pressure to minimize renewed bleeding from recently formed blood clots. Blood volume is restored using plasma along as the primary resuscitation fluid, with packed red blood cells.

Unmanned Aircraft System Shadow 200 Communications Relay System, U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Research, Development and Engineering Center. The CRS improves two-way communications when operating beyond the limits of single-channel ground and system radios. It provides improved situational awareness, call-for-fire capability, and "imminent danger" communication to soldiers.

HMMWV Egress Assistance Trainer, U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center. HEAT teaches soldiers how to react in a vehicle rollover situation through properly training them on how to open safety restraints and exit a Humvee from several rotated positions. It also helps soldiers overcome the natural panic and fear that is associated with rollover incidents.