

**CENTER FOR
STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (CSIS)
SEEING AMERICAN INTERESTS IN AN INTERCONNECTED WORLD**

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**INTRODUCTION:
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**SPEAKER:
GEN. JAMES L. JONES,
U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR,**

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JOHN HAMRE: Okay. Okay, ladies and gentlemen, I apologize. We want to get going. This is going to be fun. We've got a lot to do this morning and we're delighted that Gen. Jones can be with us today. It was only two days ago that we had the State of the Union message and there wasn't as much foreign affairs in it that we all want and so we're going to – I don't know if we're going to get the second half today or not. We'll find out. (Laughter.)

This is good. This is great. So I'm delighted that Gen. Jones is with us. I would like just to take a very brief minute to introduce a friend, one of the international councilors here at CSIS is Lavrentis Lavrentiadis and he has been challenging us to have a bigger profile in Washington to bring voices to the policy community, especially from overseas. And Lavrentis made possible this series this year. Lavrentis, would you just come up just for a minute? I know you've got a brief set of words and then I'm going to introduce Jim Jones. (Applause.)

LAVRENTIS LAVRENTIADIS: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen and thank you, John. Allow me as well to take this opportunity to welcome you to today's forum. The presence of such distinguished guest speakers and audience gives me enormous pleasure. I'm truly honored to be part of the CSIS family.

I'm overwhelmed by the warm welcome, the integrity and thoughtfulness and inspirational embrace and support which I have been receiving during these last few months from the CSIS people. As I get back to business now, it has always been my strong conviction that part of the entrepreneurial activity, all to embrace the contribution to the consolidation and enhancement of notions such as international understanding, regional stability and security and global economic development.

It is in this light, therefore, that I recently materialized a long-sought aspiration through the recent establishment of the Lavrentis Lavrentiadis Chair in Southeast European Studies here at CSIS. This has constituted an effort to address effectively the abovementioned issues by strengthening U.S.-Southeast European relationship and thus enhancing cooperation at top leadership level.

Furthermore, this initiative was greatly appreciated and welcomed by the Greek political and entrepreneurial community as it became apparent during the – (inaudible) – official announcement, which took place in Athens on the 7th of last December.

Dear guests, we cannot escape the fact that in today's increasingly insecure environment, the challenges emerging are admittedly numerous and to a large extent, unknown. Should we not place them under close scrutiny and take immediate action to tracking them, they will almost definitely involve into severe threats.

Additionally, the globalization of world politics and economics does not permit the containment of threats to certain areas and regions. Instead it facilitates the worldwide spillover,

which may imply unforeseen and irreversibly negative developments on a global scale. President Obama's America is assuming a leading role in the restabilization and recovery process of the international system and of course, one very important measure of effective leadership is who we trust enough to appoint as our top advisors.

My own endeavors in the business world have allowed me to comprehend the significance of targeted, accurate and timely advising. I can only imagine, therefore, how crucial it may be when it comes to dealing with the challenges of national and international security, whose seriousness and complexity is indeed immense.

Furthermore, the United States now stands at a pivotal moment in helping to lead the world out of a devastating recession and towards new economic frontiers. At the same time, it must also ensure the successful navigation of the global community through our known territories as well as the effective handling of the diverse security threats that our world confronts.

In this spirit, launching the CSIS Lavrentiadis Statesman Forum Series at the beginning of 2010, where security is at the top of international agenda acquires a somewhat symbolic character by hosting one of the most important and respected figures in the American administration, President Barack Obama's national security advisor Gen. James Jones.

As an individual with some knowledge in a variety of subjects comprising the global security agenda, I feel very confident that Gen. Jones' insight and expertise on matters international security will constitute an important and very welcome contribution to the wider discussion on security issues which we hereby commence.

I wish to thank you again for attending our forum today, the first of a series of such events which will be organized by CSIS. I am thoroughly looking forward to figure – I'm looking forward to future initiatives of this nature, since I intend to become a regular visitor to Washington, D.C., the world's capital. Thank you very much and welcome. (Applause.)

MR. HAMRE: As Gen. Jones and I survey the room, we see about two-thirds of the diplomatic corps and unfortunately, there are too many for me to signal out to welcome, but I just want to say thank you for coming. We're delighted that you're here. I've had the privilege of work with Gen. Jones.

Well, that was when he was Col. Jones was the first time we met and it has been great joy to see this man of this kind of talent who gave a full measure of sacrifice to his country and then came back and was willing to be the national security advisor. It's a rare privilege that I can say that someone that's this close a friend and such a good person is also willing to lead our country at this most important time. So I introduce to you the Honorable Gen. James Jones. (Applause.)

GEN. JAMES L. JONES: Thank you, John, very, very much for that kind introduction and it was really with CSIS' influence that convinced the president to leave the foreign security

piece of his message to this moment. (Laughter.) John said we've known each other a long time. Actually, I was – no, I think I was a lieutenant colonel when we met. Yeah.

And I made colonel despite my 5 years in the U.S. Senate, so I was grateful for that. (Laughter.) John was a professional staff member of the Senate Armed Services Committee along with Jim Locker, who's here and others.

And because I was so impressed by the power by the Senate Armed Services Committee staff, I always called him sir when I talked to him – yes, sir; no, sir – because they controlled the destiny of the Marine Corps' very meager budget, which is still too small, by the way – (laughter) – as a percentage of our national defense effort.

But then the next time we crossed paths was – I think when I was military assistant to Secretary Bill Cohen. John was the director of the Office of Program Analysis and Evaluation and then deputy secretary of defense. So it was very, very clear to say, yes, sir, yes, sir, yes, sir. (Laughter.) And now, as national security advisor, I'm happy to be here with my good friend, Sir John. (Laughter.)

And it's just great to see so many familiar faces out here in the audience and I look forward to spending some time with you this morning to talk about – I think things have important and topical interest, certainly contemporary interest. We're fortunate to have organizations like CSIS and leaders like John Hamre who tackle the important issues of our time, focus not on partisan politics but on real problems and real solutions that make our country safer and stronger.

And I'm happy that organizations like the National Security Council reach out to organizations like CSIS to solicit advice and occasionally do some really important work. And I think that with the – along with some of the many dedicated professionals throughout the government, CSIS and other think tanks that represent that intellectual capital we need to meet the challenges of the 21st century. So John, thank you very much for your great contribution.

As everyone knows, last week marked President Obama's first full year in office. Naturally, a time for taking stock and measuring progress. This week, he delivered his first State of the Union address and as he said, this year, his main focus will continue to be on creating jobs here at home and focusing on domestic issue, which isn't to say that foreign policy and national security issues will take a second rank.

But it's clear that the president is focused on certain deliverables and achievable goals this year and we're all going to work very hard to make sure he's successful. But as he also made clear on Wednesday, global challenges will continue to demand American participation and American leadership and partnership with other nations. And we intend to do just that.

As the president said in laying out his foreign policy initiatives, and I quote, "As we have for over 60 years, America takes these actions because our destiny is connected to those beyond our shores," unquote. This is a really appropriate and I think perfect encapsulation of the president's approach to global and national security issues.

Like many of you here in the room, I've had the honor and privilege of spending my entire adult life dedicated to the security and defense of the United States. And for most of that time, the threats and challenges to our national security remain relatively static.

The balance of power, geopolitics between nations, nation-states and alliances, conventional armies facing off across borders, weapons of mass destruction in the hands of governments – governments that could be deterred from using them, an economic order in which decisions and power were largely centralized and concentrated.

Today, of course, the forces of globalization shape a radically different national security environment and international security environment. Yet, the ambitions – the ambitions and transience of certain nation-states continue to pose grave threats to our collective security. But the defining threats and challenges of our time are more diffuse and diverse than ever.

These threats not only transcend borders, they cross borders faster than ever and they do so at an astonishing – with astonishing speed. Weapons of mass destruction, at the risk of falling into the hands of terrorists who have sworn to use them if they acquire them, which President Obama considers – and I completely agree with this – perhaps the greatest danger to our collective security.

Violent extremists plotting and training in remote corners of the world who seek to exploit our open society and to slaughter Americans on a massive scale, economic crises that start in one country faster than ever spread to create instability in both foreign markets and foreign countries, cyber attacks launched from an apartment halfway around the world can cripple computer systems and cause untold damage and disruption in multiple countries.

Flus and diseases spreading faster than ever, affecting millions around the world and creating national health emergencies and global pandemics. Climate change, exacerbated by our dependence on oil and fossil fuels creates climate refugees and threatens to breed further hunger, migrations and conflicts.

In short, the ties and technologies of our interconnected world mean that threats are emerging and challenging our national security faster than ever before and as I said, in the cyber world, at network speed. As a nation and as a government, we have to be just as fast in responding to those threats.

So this is a matter of American competitiveness in a vastly different world that we are just starting to fully understand. And I don't mean that our responses are purely and limited to an economic response, although our ability to anticipate and adapt to a fast-changing global economy is indeed a matter of national security.

I mean it in the broadest possible terms that America's ability to compete in the world, in terms of our security, our prosperity, our health and our leadership role in the world requires institutions, structures and strategies designed for the 21st century. In other words, to meet the

world as it is, not the 20th century, which is the world as it was. And the two are dramatically different.

As President Kennedy once observed, and I quote, “History is a relentless master. It has no present, only the past rushing into the future. To try to hold fast is to be swept aside,” unquote. President Obama is determined that we shape the future, not be swept aside by that future. And that’s why early on in last year, we updated and reorganized the National Security Council to meet those challenges – to reflect the world as it is and to move beyond narrow 20th century notions of security.

And we expanded with new offices to include a whole range of issues, economics, energy, climate change, cyberspace, recognizing that homeland security is part of national security, not apart from it. We merged and unified these staffs into a single, unified national security staff.

Reflecting President Obama’s approach to decision-making, which is an important feature of reorganizing the NSC, hearing from all parties, considering all views on all major subjects, we have a structured process that bends the stovepipes of government towards the middle, brings in every equity and agency to the table to participate in the decision-making process, ensures lively debate and tease up issues in an organized fashion for the president’s ultimate consideration and decision-making.

And once the president makes his decision, what we call it in the military, and issues his commander’s guidance, we switch modes rapidly to implementation, ensuring that the vision and goals he sets out are actually implemented and then monitored and assessed to ensure they achieve the desired results.

At the same time, we’re working to formalize new national security strategy that lays out how we’ll advance our interests in an interconnected world. While we’re still finalizing that strategy and we’re talking about weeks here, not months, and I’m not here to make any announcements concerning that strategy today, but the enduring interests that guide us are clear.

Security. We have an enduring interest in the security of the United States, its citizens and U.S. allies and partners. Prosperity. We have an enduring interest and a strong, innovative and growing U.S. economy in an open international economic system that promotes opportunity and prosperity for as many people as possible.

Values. We have an enduring interest in upholding respect for universal values at home and around the world. And finally, international order, where we have an enduring interest in an international order advanced by U.S. leadership that promotes peace, promotes security and promotes opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet the variety of global challenges we all face.

And so we usher in, really, a new era of engagement. Over the past year, I think we’ve made progress in advancing these interests. From the moment – from January 20th, the president has focused on restoring American leadership in the world, not in a one-dimensional sense, but

committing the United States to a new era of comprehensive engagement based on mutual interest and mutual respect, a multi-dimensional approach that speaks to the aspirations of millions of people all over the world.

I know there's been a lot of debate and perhaps some confusion by what we mean by the term "engagement." So let me try to be clear on what engagement means from our perspective. It means laying out a strategic vision of America's role in the world in an open and transparent way. We've seen this in the president's global outreach, his speeches, town hall meetings around the world in Strasburg, in Istanbul, in Shanghai. In Cairo, where he pledged a new beginning with the – of engaging with the Muslim world.

Rather than focusing solely on the threats that endanger us, we focus on the shared interests and common aspirations that unite America with the world. People's common hope for economic opportunity, education, health, living in peace and security and indeed, our response to the terrible earthquake in Haiti, I think, shows conclusively that the United States is a partner that can be counted on in both good times and in bad times.

Engagement also, to us, means listening, consulting and coordinating with allies and partners as we've done on many occasions. Strengthening the alliances and partnerships such as NATO, the European Union, the alliances in Asia and Japan in particular, with South Korea. Israel in the Middle East, Summit of the Americas, Africa with the visit to Ghana, all our emblematic of what we mean by that.

Forging common approaches such as the length of time we took in terms of consulting with a new Afghanistan and Pakistan strategy that was universally adopted by organizations like NATO and non-NATO member nations that are contributing significantly to this effort. Partnering with key centers of power, in Russia in particular, which I would offer as one of the real successes of 2009 in terms of building a relationship that's based on trust and confidence and discussing issues of mutual interest.

In China, with the strategic and economic dialogue, with emerging powers such as India and Brazil, strengthening the United Nations. We paid our bills in the United Nations. We joined the Human Rights Council. We've worked through it on common challenges such as sanctions in Korea.

We've supported regional institutions like the EU OSCE, ASEAN, the OAS, the African Union and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. And yes, engagement also means being willing to conduct principal diplomacy with people who do not agree with us. I always make it clear that every nation has both rights and responsibilities that go along with those rights.

And of course, engagement is not an end in itself. It's a means to an end to greater cooperation on common challenges, greater burden sharing by all and greater security for us and our friends and allies. In 1 year, that's pretty much what we've seen happen. With the global economy, we've worked with the G-8 and the G-20 to pull the world back from economic catastrophe, to promote growth that is balanced and sustained in order to avoid another crisis.

Ending the war in Iraq, fulfilling our pledges to responsibly end this war, even as we partner with the Iraqi with people and forge new relationship based on the long-term interests of our two countries. Building new partnerships to take the fight to al-Qaida worldwide. We have seen an organization like al-Qaida and its affiliates start in Afghanistan, move to Pakistan then now, into Yemen, perhaps Somalia, the Sudan.

And evidence is growing that in the Sahel and Maghreb region of North Africa, we have to pay attention to this very disturbing trend. And we have to do so in a collective way, engaging with our friends and allies whose societies are also threatened by these organizations.

Strengthening the global nonproliferation regime – laid out in the president's speech in Prague, a vision of a world without nuclear weapons, doing our part to do that in a responsible way. The president was the first U.S. president to chair a meeting of the U.N. Security Council where he won unanimous resolution on steps to stop proliferation. And I'm happy to say that with Russia, we are very close to nearing completion on a follow-on agreement to START.

With regard to leading on energy security and climate change, we've worked hard to put the United States back in a leadership role. At Pittsburgh, the G-20 agreed to phase out fossil fuel subsidies. At Copenhagen, for the first time in history, all the major economies accepted their responsibility to take action. And as the president acknowledged after Copenhagen, we have to do much more and we will participate and we will lead in this effort.

We have key challenges in 2010 that I'd like to discuss briefly and this year is a moment of challenge. Despite a year of progress, the president has, I think, led the restoration of the expected role of American leadership and standing in the world. He has spoken to the common aspirations of people around the world and in so doing he's raised the expectations of millions around the world.

And to meet those expectations, we will have to work very hard because the aspirations are very high. People see, once again, that with the United States, that they have a partner, that they have an opportunity to realize a better future for themselves, their children and their grandchildren. And so as the president said in Oslo, this is truly a moment of challenge.

We're challenged to meet the aspirations that have been raised. We're challenged to deliver on those expectations. That is, our work this year and in the years ahead. And as we do, we will be tested by key challenges, challenges that will require focus and require vigilance and will require speed of action and response. And as I mentioned earlier, President Kennedy once said, "History is a relentless master."

There is the challenge of Afghanistan and Pakistan. At West Point, the president, following our strategy review, was clear about our mission to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaida in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to prevent its capacity to threaten America and our allies in the future. I think all of us can recite that from memory.

The president outlined our strategy – a comprehensive strategy that harmonizes several efforts: military effort, that targets the insurgency, protects the Afghan people, and begins the

transfer of responsibility to Afghan authorities and Afghan forces; civilian effort that partners with President Karzai to take on the narcotraffickers, install confident leaders at all levels of government dedicated to good governance and promoting the development; and an effective partnership with Pakistan, where security, political and economic issues, because the road to a secure, stable Afghanistan runs through the tribal areas of Pakistan.

And on that, that probably represents one of the single most concentrated challenges for our government and the government of Pakistan to achieve not next year, this year. In other words, we're hoping to make it clear that we will neither maintain a permanent military force in Afghanistan, nor abandon the region to extremism. The people of Afghanistan and Pakistan have a reliable long-term partner in the United States of America.

And there's a challenge of violent extremism beyond Afghanistan and Pakistan that I just alluded to moments ago. We've had some success, as the president indicated Wednesday. Hundreds of al-Qaida's fighters and affiliates, including many senior leaders, have been captured or killed – far more than in the previous year. But as we saw in the failed attack on Christmas Day, we face a dynamic and evolving threat, not only from the core of al-Qaida, but from its affiliates, from Somalia, to the Sudan, to the Sahel.

On the Arabian Peninsula, civil war in Yemen is making for fertile ground for recruitment, training, and attacks. Indeed, it was al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula that was responsible for the attempted attack over Detroit.

In East Africa, in Somalia, the terrorist group al-Shabaab is controlling more territory and launching increasing numbers of attacks. Warlordism has attracted recruits among Somalis living here in the United States.

North Africa: Al-Qaida in the lands of the Islamic Maghreb remains the most active terrorist organization in the region, and will continue to pose a significant threat to the Sahel, to Europe and to our interests as well.

In Southeast Asia, cooperation with partners, especially Indonesia, has resulted in the arrest or death of hundreds of operatives and leaders from Jemaah Islamiyah. But last summer's attacks on hotels in Jakarta underscore the continuing emphasis and threat.

And here in the United States, unbelievably, perhaps, in some minds, we face the challenge of home-grown terrorists, as well as lone wolves, who self-radicalize. This is why the president has directed us to develop a strategy that addresses this unique challenge posed by lone recruits.

In our war against al-Qaida and extremism, we are using every tool at our disposal – we must use every tool at our disposal, keeping the pressure on al-Qaida and its affiliates wherever they plot and train, strengthening the intelligence available. As the president directed after the Christmas Day incidents, we'll put into place reforms to do a better job of analyzing and integrating the intelligence we possess, aggressive law enforcement to disrupt and deter the attacks, at home and abroad.

Building the capacity of partner nations, like Yemen, to deny al-Qaida any safe havens: The fight against terrorism is predicated on the fact that we will be able to deny them safe havens and sanctuaries from which they can organize, train, equip, coordinate, plan and diversify their efforts from a secure base; securing the homeland at every level – local, state and federal – including, as the president directed after the Christmas Day attack, to improve aviation security, and to consider all other aspects of our mass transportation capacity in the United States.

We also face the challenge of Iraq. Iraq is not always on the headlines these days, except when there is an attack, and mercifully, these attacks are much fewer in numbers than ever before. American and Iraqi efforts have succeeded in greatly reducing overall violence. The number of suicide bombings has greatly diminished. Responsibility for security now rests with the Iraqis themselves.

Yet recent lethal attacks, including in the heart of Baghdad, underscore the need for vigilance and continued cooperation. The upcoming elections in Iraq will be an important milestone, but all U.S. combat brigades will be out of Iraq by the end of August of this year. It's been described as the largest movement of troops and equipment in modern military history. It will be a huge undertaking. And this year there will be more U.S. troops in Afghanistan than there will be in Iraq, by the end of the year. And all U.S. troops will be out by the end of next year. But we're not walking away from our partners – the Iraqi people. The U.S. will remain a long-term partner and we will assist them in developing their security, along with their economic prosperity.

Another challenge is proliferation. This may be one of the great ironies of the nuclear age: Just as the risk of a nuclear exchange between superpowers decreased, the risk of a nuclear weapon being used against an American city has gone up. And we need to maintain and sustain the momentum and progress that we've made last year. The president has made it clear that it's not about any one nation. Rather, it's about the rights and responsibilities of all nations, and upholding the basic bargain of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

All nations have the right to use peaceful nuclear energy. Nations with nuclear weapons have a responsibility to move towards disarmament. Nations without them have the responsibility to forsake them. The United States is doing and will continue to do its part.

On Wednesday the president made it clear that we're completing negotiations with Russia on the farthest-reaching arms control treaty in nearly two decades. Our nuclear posture review will open the door to deeper cuts and reduce the role of nuclear weapons. In April, the president will convene a nuclear security summit here in Washington to rally other nations to help secure the world's loose nuclear materials within a 4-year period. But we're under no illusions about the degree of complexity and difficulty in this challenge.

North Korea remains a challenge. We've made progress, secured stronger international sanctions against North Korea that are being vigorously enforced. In the context of the Six-Party Talks, our ambassador, Ambassador Bosworth, has visited Pyongyang last month for direct talks with the North Koreans.

We are in full agreement with our South Korean and Japanese allies and other partners on a common approach. North Korea must take concrete action and irreversible steps to fulfill its obligations and eliminate its nuclear weapons, and also the threat of a nuclear arms race in Asia. If it does so, the U.S. will support economic assistance and help promote its full integration into the community of nations. The bottom line has not changed: North Korea must live up to its obligations.

So too with Iran. Based on my recent travels in the Middle East, it's clear that Iran's nuclear program is a top concern of governments across the region and indeed, around the world. And the stakes here are enormous. We simply cannot afford a nuclear arms race in the Middle East as a consequence of Iran developing nuclear weapons and the ability to deliver such weapons.

And that's why we have followed a two-track approach. First, we've demonstrated a clear willingness to engage with Tehran directly; second, by organizing the international community around a series of proposals that would allow Iran to show its true intentions, this within calendar year 2009.

Indeed, in concert with our allies and partners, we offer Tehran a clear and reasonable proposal: Low-enriched uranium would be removed from Iran, processed and returned for research purposes in a way that it could not be weaponized. The world has watched and waited as Tehran has whittled, whittled away this opportunity over the last year.

The first track, the door for diplomacy, remains open. But we're also working closely with allies and partners on the second track, which will dramatically increase pressure. Indeed, to those who say that the president's engagement on Iran has not yielded dividends, I would say, let's look at the facts. The unprecedented level of international consensus and unity on Iran, at present, making it clear that Tehran must meet its responsibilities or face the consequences, is a clear statement of policy being implemented.

Our message is clear and remains consistent: If Iran's leaders change course, they can become full members of the international community; if they continue to ignore their obligations, we will continue to deepen their isolation, and that will include stronger sanctions.

The final major challenge in the coming year is the effort to forge peace between Arabs and Israelis. I say this is closely related to Iran and its nuclear weapons program for the following reason: History shows that when regimes are feeling pressure, as Iran is internally and will externally in the near future, it often lashes out through its surrogates, including, in Iran's case, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza. As pressure on the regime in Tehran builds over its nuclear program, there is a heightened risk of further attacks against Israel, or with efforts to promote renewed violence in the West Bank.

It's only becoming even more important, more urgent, to restart the negotiations between Israelis and the Palestinian Authority, to show that progress cannot be derailed or denied. And that's why we have made this effort a top priority, as reflected in the appointment of George

Mitchell as special envoy, and the work we have done aggressively up to now to restart negotiations.

Obviously, it's a major disappointment that that has not yet occurred. But that does not mean that we are going to stop trying. But we will continue to work this issue very hard, and our goal remains as stated: Both parties should return to negotiations without preconditions. The United States will not waver in our commitment to Israel's security, and we will not waver in our support of Palestinian aspirations.

So the goal is clear – two states living side by side in peaceful security: a Jewish state of Israel, with true security for all Israelis and an independent Palestinian state with contiguous territory that ends the occupation and realizes the potential of Palestinian people. That is what will help bring true security to Israel and the Palestinians, and that is what the United States will keep working towards.

So generally, it's been a year of progress, but the year to come will be one of continuing challenge. In fact, if you'd asked me a year ago how long it would take for America to restore its standing in the world, my answer would have been years. And yet, it's happened in just one year.

We see it in public opinion polls around the world. I see it in my own travels and in my meetings with my counterparts around the world. The United States is leading once again, as it should. Other countries hopefully see that we want to partner with them on the basis of mutual respect and mutual interest. And most importantly, other countries hopefully want to partner with us on a range of common challenges.

So as, again, as the president said in Oslo, this is a moment of challenge. We're challenged to meet the aspirations that have been raised. It is now time to deliver. That will be our work this year and in the years ahead.

John, thank you very much. (Applause.)