

**CENTER FOR
STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (CSIS)**

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN DISASTER RELIEF

WELCOME:

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MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2011

5:00 P.M.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

*Transcript by
Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.*

H. ANDREW SCHWARTZ: Welcome to the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Thank you for being here. My name is Andrew Schwartz. I'm our senior vice president for external relations and I'm thrilled to host the second edition of our partnership with LSU and the Stephenson Disaster Management Institute.

This is a series that we put together, really, from the vision of a very important and special person in this field, Lori Bertman, who runs the Pennington Foundation. It was really her vision that helped us put this together and I'd like to recognize Lori in the front row right here. Thank you for your help with this. Thank you for your vision.

I'd also to recognize Joey Booth, who's the director of SDMI and Tom Anderson from SDMI and Jamison Day, who I hadn't seen yet here from SDMI. But this is a terrific partnership for CSIS because we get to work with some of the experts; people, unfortunately, as we all know in Louisiana, who have had some very firsthand and personal experiences with disasters.

And they're here, you know, their role with us is to work together to learn from each other and to hopefully advance the ball on many of these issues. With that, I'd like to introduce my colleague, Rick "Ozzie" Nelson, who leads our homeland security program. And Ozzie is going to moderate the panel today. Ozzie.

RICK "OZZIE" NELSON: Thank you, Andrew. Well, welcome everyone. This is a great crowd. We're very excited to have this many people. I'm Rick "Ozzie" Nelson, the director of the homeland security and counterterrorism program. I found out this is problematic.

When we were doing the RSVPs for this event, this is an area people – when I started getting into disaster management and working on this issue, I was looking at it, really, from a domestic perspective.

And then it went from a domestic perspective and talking to our folks in Louisiana and realizing the significance of the international component, significance of the coordination issues, and realize that domestic management – it just isn't really a U.S. or a homeland security issue. It's actually a global issue.

So then I started talking about – you know, we have to coordinate better with state and local governments and the federal government. Well, that's kind of the easy part and that's yesterday's news. We now have to coordinate better with our international partners. We have to coordinate better with the private sector and we have to coordinate better with nongovernmental organizations, NGOs, which I have limited experience with, actually.

So when I saw the – when I was trying to get people to come to this event, we were low on the NGO RSVPs. And so one of my colleagues joked and said that's because you have

“counterterrorism” in your title. (Laughter.) So we’re here as a homeland security and disaster management. We’ll delete counterterrorism for the purposes of this meeting.

But I have to admit this is a new audience for me. I could not have done this without the help of my colleagues, who have a tremendous amount of experience in this area, such as Mark Quarterman. I’m not sure if he’s still here. He’s – runs our new and Stacey White – Stacey, what’s our new program called? Conflict –

MS. : Crisis, conflict and cooperation.

MR. NELSON: There we go. That’s the opposite of counterterrorism, right? (Chuckles.) But they were very, very helpful, as well as some others in the organization. Heather Conley, who used to work at the American Red Cross and I think – and Hardin Lang, who just came back from Haiti. So I thank my colleagues for bringing this wonderful crowd together.

So obviously, our, you know, event tonight is on international cooperation. We’re going to have Craig Fugate here in February. And then in March, our next event will probably be on public- and private-sector cooperation. So we’re trying to get a broad-brushed overview of some of the challenges that are the facing the disaster-management and preparedness and response communities.

Obviously, you know, last two years, devastating earthquake in Haiti highlighted the importance, once again, of international cooperation in disaster relief. There was an estimated 400 international organizations as well as military and government entities from over 26 separate countries that rushed to provide aid.

For the first six months, they fed 4 million people and provided 1.5 million with emergency shelter, with clean water and medical care. Despite these successes, as many of you probably know from firsthand experience, there are still struggles. There are still challenges that remain today.

We have challenges with the local government officials there. We still have government coordination between the government NGOs in the private sector that remain. And we still have, obviously, a lot of challenges there. There’s still a million Haitians without homes. We still have rubble and we’re still working on trying to get the funds that have been committed spent.

These are all challenges that are way outside of my area of expertise. That’s why we’ve invited these three distinguished people here to come speak. So using that as an overview, what we’re going to do tonight is we’re going to have each of our speakers speak for seven, 10 minutes, give us an overview of their thoughts.

But really, the benefit of this is going to be the dialogue from you all, the conversation. So when they’re done, we’re going to open it up to questions and answers. And again, it’s not statements and answers. It’s questions and answers. And we ask that you just state your name and the organization you’re from.

The bios of all of our speakers are in front of you. I'll give a short intro to each of them. First, to my left here is Mark Ward. He's the acting director of office of disaster assistance at U.S. Agency for International Development. Prior to this, Mark was a special advisor on the development to the head of the United Nations mission in Afghanistan.

Next to him, we have David Meltzer. David is a senior vice president of international services for the Red Cross. David is directly responsible for the international activities of the organization, including health programs in over 30 countries and \$580 million tsunami recovery program and disaster response activities throughout the world.

And then battling cleanup will be Joel Charny and we're absolutely thrilled that InterAction is here so Joel, thank you for coming. He's vice president for humanitarian policy and practice at InterAction, an alliance of the U.S.-based relief and development organizations. Joel has conducted humanitarian missions in Pakistan, Congo, Rwanda, Chinese border with North Korea, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, the Central African Republic, Burma, Syria, Kenya and Sudan.

So these individuals have an absolutely immense amount of experience and expertise in this area. So enough from me. And Mark, I'll go ahead and turn it over to you for comments. Thank you.

MARK WARD: Ozzie, thank you very much. David, Joel, nice to see you again. And terrific idea, CSIS and LSU, to get all of us in this town to continue to focus on the importance of being better prepared for disaster response, from my perspective, outside of the United States. So thanks very much.

You know, we'd like to think 2010 was an aberration, an exceptional year with the Haiti earthquakes and the floods in Pakistan, but I'm not sure. 2010 could be the new normal, and that's got us very concerned at USAID. And I know it's got the U.N. agencies very concerned that we deal with on disaster response on a daily basis.

And that's why this topic is so timely and the support from Pennington and from LSU and others, the growing support for discussion of this topic is so important. We think we've got to grow our response capacity and integrate new actors to meet those challenges and that's what I'm going to focus on today.

To put it bluntly, we've got to change our approach and we've got to start welcoming all the help that we can get. Look at Haiti and Pakistan. My office, the office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance at USAID, we responded to 70 – seven-zero – declared disasters in 2010, but obviously, Haiti and Pakistan were at the top of the list.

And to be frank, responding to those two disasters strained our structures and approaches – I won't say to the breaking point, but strained them significantly. Between us, all the U.N. agencies, all the other international organizations, the wonderful international NGOs, the local NGOs, other donor governments, we did great work.

We benefited millions of people, providing emergency shelter and food and water and heading off serious disease outbreaks, at least until a few months ago in Haiti. But the scale of the demand was simply too great for the international community to meet all of the needs.

Not to minimize what was done. Immediately following the earthquake in Haiti, we and others mobilized search-and-rescue teams from USAID, from FEMA and elsewhere that saved more than 130 people, pulling them out of the rubble. That was a record.

We worked with the United Nations World Food Programme to feed 3.5 million people and with other partners gave basic shelter materials to another 1.5 million people before the rainy season. That was a record. Up to 1.3 million people got safe drinking water. That was a record. And in Pakistan, we provided basic shelter material to between three and 4 million people. That was a record. But none of them was enough.

We've got to expand our capacity, bring in new organizations, the private sector, businesses, philanthropy, private contributions, adopt and adapt to new technology and do more to mitigate disaster response before the next disaster hits. So how do we do it?

First, we need to put our own house in order in the old United States government. President Obama said – and he's right – absolutely, that we need a whole-of-government approach. I wasn't here. I was in Kabul on other business at the time but I understand when the earthquake hit in Haiti, one of the first things the president said to the interagency team is I want a whole-of-government response. This is so big.

And that brought new expertise and resources to bear, which is great. But coordinating that effort here and in Port-au-Prince was a challenge. And the QDDR, which some of you have seen talks about the need for an international response framework to help the United States government figure out faster and more effectively when a disaster hits, who is going to have the lead within our government on coordinating that whole-of-government response.

And we, at USAID, very much look forward to working on that because we can and have to act faster when the whole of government is going to be put to work on one of these mega-disasters. That's on the inside.

We've also got to embrace more help from outside the government. And let me start with private contributions from the public. and I'm delighted that Pennington is here to join us in this discussion. You know, after the Haiti earthquake, there was a massive outpouring of private contributions from the diaspora, from all Americans.

Far more – well, we'll never know exactly how much it was, but we think far more than the United States' official contribution. We saw the same thing after the tsunami. And the challenge, if we will take it, is how to coordinate those private contributions to make sure that all that money is spent well on the ground.

Some private contributors, citizens, organizations, companies approach us after a disaster and ask, who should we give to? And we're very happy to share with them information about which international NGOs we are working with on the ground that are taking contributions, organizations that we know are doing good work and some of them are represented here tonight. Hello, Randy (sp). To speak of one, MercyCorps. And organizations that we know are working through the U.N. cluster system in that country so that their work is also coordinated with what everybody else is doing.

And we've all heard horror stories of when that doesn't happen. I'll never forget – I've been in this business a long time, look at me – I'll never forget that day in Sri Lanka after the tsunami when I visited the ovens. The ovens were shelter erected overnight by a very well-meaning charity who arrived with a sack full of money, bought local building materials and erected shelter. All that was left for building materials was corrugated iron sheeting. They built ovens.

And we all remember – those of us that worked on the Pakistan earthquake – the scene, Chaklala airport next to the Islamabad airport, piled high, palettes as far as you can see with – are we allowed to use colorful language at CSIS?

MR. NELSON: Absolutely. You're on webcast, too, though.

MR. WARD: Crap. (Laughter.) Piled high with crap that had to be buried but took time unloading, took time on those runways and delayed the delivery of stuff that we really needed.

So we have a mantra at OFDA that cash is best. And after the tsunami, I had the pleasure of working with former Presidents Bush and Clinton and they were great on spreading that message. And the Clinton – younger Bush Haiti fund has similarly pushed the private contributions towards cash.

Now, we're never going to be able to coordinate all of the private money that's coming in, but I think this is an area where we have to focus more attention to get as much of it coordinated with what the real needs are on the ground as we can.

I also believe that stuff, the opposite of cash, isn't always bad. And this is not the most popular view in my office. Sometimes, equipment and commodity contributions can really help. I'll never forget, working with Jeff Immelt during the Pakistan earthquake. He was one of the five CEOs that accepted the call to help us raise corporate funding for the Pakistan earthquake effort. And he said, I'll give you some generators and we turned them down.

We shouldn't have done that. We bought a lot of generators and the GE generators would have been very, very welcome. So we've got to be more flexible and figure out how to talk to the major corporations that have business interest in these countries and a philanthropic spirit better.

In the Haiti earthquake, there are some good stories. The Penske Corporation worked with the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund to donate 40 trucks. It was the right equipment. It was

absolutely needed and it was immediately put to work by WFP and the government. And I remember the contribution of UPS after the earthquake in Pakistan in 2005, where they donated a significant amount of lift for free into the country and they let us decide what to put on.

But this is going to require a lot of discussion and a meeting of the minds between my organization and the private sector to figure out how to better communicate what we need on the ground so that this is a question of pulling what's needed and not pushing what's available. But it is one of our priorities going forward, particularly after 2010 and I'm delighted that there's an office at the State Department who can also work with this on global partnerships.

I think we need to do more to take advantage of indigenous capacity in the countries where the disasters hit to increase our capacity. Pakistan, where the floods hit last year, is a great example. Civil society in Pakistan is fantastic and the United States government knows it better than most because we helped give birth to some of it decades ago.

And we have to make more of an effort in my organization to look for that capacity in-country and use it when it is there, when it is reliable, when it is accountable for the funds that we give it. Now, my friends in the audience that represent the international NGOs need not worry about this.

I'm talking about increasing our capacity, not substituting our capacity. And what we found in Pakistan as the floods spread south – it seems to me I sat right here and talked about that – as it spread down into Sindh and Baluchistan and the Punjab, we needed more capacity. We needed more NGOs. The international NGOs were saying to us, we can't spread that thin. And so the Pakistani NGOs that were available were a godsend. We need to be willing to work with them more.

And I encourage and what we will continue to encourage – corporate philanthropy, businesses with interest in those countries to create relationships with indigenous NGOs in those countries in between disasters so that when the next disaster hits, those business interests in the country know who they want to work with, have established those relationships and can use them quicker and be more effective more quickly.

And then my final point, which I just hinted at, and maybe the most important one of all that I hope everybody can get more excited about and more involved in and that's the importance of disaster risk reduction activities.

If I'm right – and sometimes I am – that 2010 is the new normal and we do not have the capacity to respond to the disasters that are coming our way, then we have got to make the investments in between the disasters so that when they hit, they're not so big. It's a challenge for us. I get a very generous budget from the United States Congress. Thank you very much.

But I have to balance – we have to balance, at USAID, funding for disaster response with funding for disaster risk reduction activities. Now, you look like a fairly intelligent group. Where do you think the money comes from when a disaster comes along that we weren't expecting? And disaster risk-reduction activities always seem to get left behind.

So again, we need help from outside sources of support and I'm delighted to be able to begin that discussion, I hope, with some of the outside players here tonight. Thanks very much.

MR. NELSON: Thanks, Mark. I really appreciate it. David?

DAVID MELTZER: Thank you, Rick. And also want to thank the center, as well as LSU and the Pennington Foundation. This is a great opportunity to talk to an audience that we don't normally talk to on the international disaster side of the shop, if you will.

I'm going to borrow a phrase that is often used in the military context where you hear about the fog of war. The same is true in disaster: the fog of disaster. Disaster relief recovery is never going to be surgical; it's never going to be clean. It's messy stuff.

I do think there are really good ways which I'll talk about to mitigate the mess, to reduce the mess. I also feel that in an international disaster, there are a number of factors that make it more complicated, more difficult to do a good job than a strictly domestic disaster.

And let me just talk a few – a few factors that contribute to the fog of disaster. In an international disaster, you have many more actors. You have international nongovernmental organizations. You have certainly what we call the host government – Haiti – but you often have a number of other governments that for humanitarian reasons, and really for political reasons, have an imperative to respond.

You have multilateral organizations, the United Nations chief amongst them. Everyone will descend upon the site of the disaster with the best of intentions and will step on everyone's toes because – and this is something Mark mentioned a number of times – coordination.

Coordination is really tough, particularly if you're not in your own country: you have language barriers; you have cultural barriers; you have the fact that you're bringing people in, and there's no place for them to sleep – really simple things that just weigh down the response and weigh down the effectiveness in the international context. So coordination is really, really difficult in an international disaster.

And in Haiti, it was multiplied, I would say, a thousand-fold because in Haiti – and it's, you know, been referred to as the “Republic of NGO.” And what that meant in practical terms is that you had before the quake – I forget the number, how many thousands of NGOs – very good NGOs. Most of them focused on a very small community – perhaps an orphanage, perhaps a school – that do very good development work.

But relief, disaster relief, is a business. It's a science. And all of a sudden, these organizations were overwhelmed with need in their little communities, and they didn't have the resources to sit through the necessary but painful meetings required to undertake effective coordination.

So in Haiti, we saw the great weight of NGOs weighing down the response in many ways. And it's not a lack of good intention, it's a lack of means to sit through these meetings and coordinate and make sure that that small NGO city next to you isn't providing assistance to the same community you are, and that you're not both forgetting the community just down the rutted road a kilometer away.

In addition to the many actors, what makes international disaster, I think, more difficult is role confusion. If we have a disaster here in our country, it may be a bit messy, more than a bit. But I think each agency has a general idea of what its role is from the federal government, state government. And yes, we certainly see conflicts.

But there is opportunity to plan ahead, to prepare and to mitigate a lot of that role confusion. It's much more difficult in an international context: there isn't as much planning; there is not as much tabletop exercising on a multilateral basis. And so when an international disaster strikes and everyone comes to the table, it can be a bit of a food fight. And it can be very confusing.

You have the added complication of media. In a large international disaster where, you know, many countries responding – and at least in the case of Haiti, over 100 countries responded through their local Red Cross or Red Crescent society to Haiti – well, the local media wants to cover that story. And so they are running around looking for their story, looking to highlight in a good way what their local government or local Red Cross or local NGO is doing to the people back home.

Well, all of that creates a real opportunity for what I referred to earlier: the fog of disaster. So how do you mitigate that? How do you reduce the inevitable noise that accompanies an international disaster and the inevitable inefficiencies?

At least within the Red Cross Red Crescent network – and I don't want to hold us out as unique. There are many other organizations and governments that have similar frameworks. But we've been doing disasters for decades, over a century. And what we have learned – and this will come as no surprise to those of you familiar in the domestic – is understand where your competency lays.

So for example, the American Red Cross in an international disaster – we do distribution of relief supplies really well. We don't do mobile field hospitals. We don't do logistics. Now, I know the British Red Cross, they do logistics. The Germans and the Canadians, they have mobile field hospitals. So understand what your role is, understand what your capacity is, and understand more importantly what you cannot do well and let someone else play that role.

So that at least in our little Red Cross network, we understand each other's roles and capacity – and I'm overstating it to make it sound like it's really clean, but we generally stay within our lanes. And that to me reduces some of the natural waste and inefficiencies that you see when the sky is falling. So I think that is a real key success factor, too, in international disaster as well as domestic. Understand your roles, stick to your lanes.

The other thing – and this was also mentioned by Mark – is indigenous capacity. Following the Haiti disaster, we fielded, I would say, thousands of calls from well-intentioned Americans saying, I want to volunteer. I want to go Haiti. I want to help.

Bless them. It's really sincere, but please do not go to Haiti. You don't speak the language, you don't understand the culture. And we've got no place to put you. You want to sleep out under the stars with all sorts of disease and security issues?

So what we get our legs, our feet on the ground is through the local society. There were tens of thousands of Haitians who understand the culture, understand the language and have a place to rest their head at night, humble as it may be, after the quake. And they are dying to volunteer. They really want to volunteer.

And the great thing about volunteering is it helps your psychological recovery. You're now playing a role in the recovery of your community. Whether it's your little neighborhood or your country, you're playing a role. So take advantage of what the local capacity, civil capacity can afford.

The other thing – and I want to touch upon is the significant advantages, but also concerns, in working with military authorities if you're an NGO or you're a Red Cross.

Capacity is great. We saw in Pakistan in 2005, you know, the only way to get to some of these remote communities were through helicopters and military helicopters. That's great. If you have only one way to help a community, use it. But you have to avoid creating confusion.

I'm the American Red Cross. I'm not the U.S. government, I'm not the U.S. military. Part of my ability to deliver assistance is my independence and my neutrality. That gets blurred if I start flying around in U.S. military aircraft. Doesn't mean you never do it. But it means you're very careful about how you partner with military.

It is very much an important partner, and we saw it in Haiti when we partnered with the U.S. Navy and they deployed the hospital naval ship, the Comfort. And the U.S. Navy said, can you, American Red Cross – can you train and deploy Creole-speaking volunteers to work on the ship and act as interpreters?

And in four days, we trained and deployed 70 interpreters. And they did wonderful work. We subjected them to all sorts of stresses and pressures by literally putting them in the OR. And they became the means of communicating horrible news to family members or survivors. There is a way to really develop a very good partnership.

So that's how I think you can avoid some of the fog of disaster. But I just want to come back to a point that Mark made at the end, which is around preparedness and disaster-risk reduction. And not to engage in the whole debate about climate change and whether it's caused by humans or it's just happening, to me, that's not relevant in the disaster business. What is relevant is, it is happening.

And you can look at all the statistics which demonstrate – and there is an institute in, I think, Belgium, CRED; I can't recall what the French translation is. But we got wonderful charts, if you can call it wonderful, that show the number of disasters and the damage those disasters bring are increasing at a rather steep rate. And they go back a couple of hundred years.

And with increased population, increased urbanization, increased poverty, all that contributes to the fact that with increasing natural disasters, we will have more damage, more deaths, more vulnerability and more insecurity.

Someone told me – I haven't checked the math, but they said, I think, 20 percent of the world's population is in the Indus and Ganges River valleys. And so think of the impact with – we saw in Pakistan, flood. Twenty million people homeless.

So to me, the important question is, in addition to how do we respond, how do we prepare, how do we mitigate the risk? And there are all sorts of academic studies which show the return on investment from disaster-risk reduction is anywhere between 4 to 8 to 1: \$4 returned for *n*th dollar invested.

And to echo what Mark's point about congressional appropriations for disaster-risk reduction, American Red Cross – we rely on public donations. And when there's a high-profile disaster like Haiti or the tsunami, we don't fundraise. We fund cash. The money comes pouring in from generous Americans.

But I've got to work 30 times harder to raise a dollar for disaster-risk reduction. It's a great business case, but it doesn't have the emotional appeal. You know, I can bring a donor – corporate, individual, foundation – and show a community in Indonesia doing a mock disaster drill. And that's great; it prepares them.

We can take them to Vietnam and show them how the community can read the Mekong River and understand when it's about to overflow its banks and what to do. Or I can take them to Haiti and show them how we have marked out hurricane evacuation routes and developed a really low-tech early warning system to get to the 1.3 million – now maybe at 800,000 – people who are homeless. That is a great return on investment. It's just not, unfortunately, sexy.

Now, we have seen the U.S. government fund some of our programs. We've seen corporate America fund some our disaster-risk reduction programs. And to me, that's a priority. When there's a high-profile disaster, the money will come. Americans are extremely generous. It's during those quiet periods when you're preparing for disaster that I think, you know, the investment needs to be made.

So just some general observations. And look forward to your questions.

JOEL CHARNY: Hello. I'll obviously echo the thanks of my colleagues, Rick, to CSIS and to LSU and Pennington Foundation. I am really impressed that we can get a standing-room-only crowd at 5:00 on a normal Monday in January for such a topic. So kudos to the audience and CSIS for, you know, doing the outreach and organizing this.

You know, the premise of the discussion that we were given is there is a humanitarian surge, that there is increasing interest in humanitarian response, there are nontraditional actors and so on.

And I'm going to push back a little bit on that. I mean, one of the problems in our community is we do tend to overreact to the most recent case.

Yes, Haiti – everyone showed up in Haiti. But did everyone show up in Pakistan? Absolutely not. Let's not even talk Pakistan. Let's talk Somalia. Three-point-five million people are facing an immense food crisis in Somalia in the midst of war even as we speak. I don't even see Sean Penn going to Somalia.

In Thailand post-tsunami, yes, humanitarian surge helped by, you know, Thai food and Thai beaches. (Laughter.) In northern Sri Lanka, post-tsunami, very thin on the ground was the humanitarian community, much less these nontraditional actors.

So one of the issues remains this whole question of equitable response, response commensurate with need, in places where access is difficult, where there's little public attention. I mean, the basic injustice in the humanitarian system remains. And I think we have to make sure that we continue to focus on that and not be overly concerned about the fact that, you know, everyone and her brother was heading down to Haiti.

It's a – it's a special case. It's a special moment. Yes, it was chaotic. But again, let's not – let's not overreact to that.

Now having said that, I will confess it's very depressing to be a 30-year member of a profession that basically anyone thinks she or he can do. I mean, you know, soldiers, ministers, firemen, actors, high school students – I mean, everyone is ready to sign up for the humanitarian venture. And it just – really?

I mean, and it's almost like – in fact, there's almost this sense that, you know, if you're a professional in this field, that somehow you've kind of sold out or you've lost the kind of heart and soul that may have motivated us in the first place.

What I'm interested in is – I mean, Mark, I want to – I mean, yes, let's expand the capacity. But let's expand the capacity through professional organizations. What I'm interested in is, sure, let's talk partnership. But let's talk partnership in terms of support for individuals and institutions that actually have expertise in humanitarian response.

I'm not really, frankly, personally – and I think I will stress that I'm speaking for myself here – I'm really not that interested in facilitating the access of many people who have no experience in this area just to increase the capacity. Let's get funding for what we do, what we know how to do. That's what I'm interested in.

Now, the challenge, I think, for our community in some ways is to demonstrate impact and show that we really are effective. I mean, I can't turn to a foundation or to a potential corporate sponsor or something and, you know, say, just give us money because you know we're good. I mean, we have to do a better job in our community of documenting impact, of being transparent about the funding that we – that we receive. I think that's one thing that's fundamental.

We have to do a better – I mean the reason everyone thinks they can do this work is that we don't do a very good job in our community of communicating what our – what our standards are. How many people in this room are familiar with the Sphere standards? Okay, decent percentage, probably more than half. (Laughter.)

But I mean, the point is, I think virtually no one outside our community knows that we have over the last 15 or 20 years developed professional standards in all the technical areas that we engage in, whether it's water and sanitation or food distribution. We're adding protection this time to the – to the new Sphere guide. InterAction has its own member standards.

So we need to do a better job of, you know, kind of making people familiar that this is a community that does, among its most responsible members, try to abide by the rules.

One of the things that we've talked about as a result of Haiti when you did have so many untraditional actors is thinking about, perhaps, a threshold for participation in the – in the formal coordination mechanisms.

So instead of having 400 organizations in a meeting of the health cluster, can you find a way to define who needs to be around the table, who has the capacity to actually deliver assistance? Because those are the people that you want in the meeting. Those are the people that you want to be part of an effort at coordination.

And you know, this "Republic of NGO" thing, I mean, one of the messages that InterAction developed in the context of the one-year anniversary was that from a U.S. perspective, 90 percent of the private assistance was delivered by 10 to 15 organizations.

So let's not – again, let's not overreact to Haiti. The bottom line is there are about 15 organizations that matter, and those organizations need to make sure that they're collaborating, cooperating, living up to community standards and so on because if a Save (the Children) or a World Vision or a MercyCorps and American Red Cross, if our community, fundamentally isn't effective, that's the problem that we should be – that we should be focusing on.

And I think we would be remiss if we don't think a little bit about the donors and their role, the government agencies that give to these efforts. And you know, we need, from an NGO perspective, I know this is a tough one, but greater flexibility in the funding. We need adherence. The U.S. was a leader in developing the good humanitarian donorship principles.

Are we living up to those principles? I mean the whole – the whole premise of good humanitarian donorship is that you leave political criteria aside, you focus on where the need is

and you provide aid based on need. Is that really feasible in the context of the war on terror? I'd say our success as a U.S. government in living up to those principles is mixed at best.

So I'm – that would be kind of the agenda that I would lay out. The one area that hasn't come up yet in terms of expanding our community is the humanitarian enterprise, unfortunately, right now, is seen as and is often in fact a Western enterprise, a northern enterprise, one that's driven by the U.S., the Scandinavians, the EU and so on.

A lot of the response in Pakistan was from the Gulf States, from Saudi Arabia, from Islamic charities and there has to be a dialogue between these communities if we're going to be – if we're going to maintain humanitarian values as universal. So I think – I mean a thousand flowers are going to continue to bloom. I mean that's the way I look at it.

But again, they're not going to bloom in Somalia. You know, they're going to bloom in places like Haiti and I think it's fundamentally – the fundamental challenge is increasing our professionalism and effectiveness and then using that as a case to build the partnerships that are needed to expand our capacity. Thank you.

MR. NELSON: Well, those were great. Let's give our panelists a round of applause real quick.

(Applause.)

(Break.)

MR. NELSON: Okay, wow, thank you all for those wonderful remarks. I learned a lot. I do – can't believe we have standing room only. We brought in a bunch of extra chairs. So thank you all for coming. I'm overwhelmed by the attendance here. Thanks again to Stacey and Mark and everyone for getting folks here.

Who wants to start off with the first question? I have a couple, but I'll let you guys go first. Please state your name – the gentleman in the blue suit right here – and your organization. And we have microphones. So if you could just wait there. And also, in your question, if you don't mind picking one of the panelists to address your question or maybe multiple ones, just who you want to answer it. Thank you.

Q: Thank you. My name is Clyde Parris. I'm from the Embassy of Barbados. I found the thoughts expressed by Mr. Charny very, very sobering and I think a perspective that we really need to pay a lot of attention to and especially in today's world with the difficult question of the confusion and so that we've had in the Haiti situation.

But I wanted to ask in terms of international cooperation, when we go back to previous examples, I wonder what lessons we have been able to learn from any previous examples. I mean there are so many of these situations have been going on around the world. And so the Haiti situation, obviously in the initial stages, yes, there's a lot of you know, fog and so on.

But what have we really learned? What lessons have we learned from the previous international situations? And then a question that always came to my mind is again, alluded to by Mr. Charny, the NGO – the volume or the – I mean in Haiti, for example, we are told that there are 10,000 NGOs operating in Haiti.

What have we seen as the benefit over the time that they have been there either before or even after the – after the earthquake situation? And what, therefore, do we think is the future with respect to maybe look at the volume of or the number of NGOs in a place like Haiti and how does that compare to any other part of the world?

I think that question was answered by Mr. Charny already, the fact that in other similar situations, there's not that desire for NGOs to get to those locations. So I'm very interested to understand, you know, how the dynamics play out here in this particular situation. Thank you.

MR. NELSON: Joel, you got the easy question first.

MR. CHARNY: Okay, well, settle – settle back. (Laughter.) And David and Mark, lessons learned. I think one fundamental one is precisely that we need to be more humble in that the lifesaving activity is often, if not always, done in the first instance by local people.

I mean when the tsunami hit Sri Lanka, the lives were saved to the extent that they were by villagers, by local governments and then you know, the aid agencies ramp up and come in and you know, try – again, it's all done out of good will and a need to help.

But this whole – I mean one aspect of prevention is you know, supporting local people in their ability to be resilient and respond to what's needed in a given situation. I mean I think that's a very important lesson among many that could be – that could be cited.

You know, NGOs are an aspect of civil society, and we want vibrant civil societies that have organizations that express, you know, community will, that meet community needs and so on. NGOs cannot solve all of the problems of a country. You need the government. You need the private sector.

And you know, you know, in other words, it's not – Haiti is not poor because there are 10,000 NGOs. I mean Haiti is poor because – I mean we can have the Haiti seminar, that can be tomorrow. But you know, I mean I think it's totally unfair to say the reason people are poor in Haiti is because there are 10,000 NGOs.

I mean to a large extent, NGOs are trying to deal with problems and represent a legitimate response to what the – to what the needs are. And you know, I point a place like – I mean there are places where NGO do absolutely phenomenal – do transformational things like in India.

You take an NGO like the Self Employed Women's Association that's organized tens of thousands of women and fought for better wages, et cetera, et cetera. I mean you know, that's a development context where organizing local people through NGO action has brought real

change. Bangladesh and the Philippines would be other places that I would cite where NGOs have made a real difference.

MR. NELSON: David, Mark, did you want to –

MR. MELTZER: Just a couple of points. One on lessons learned. And you've heard mention of cluster leads or cluster – the U.N. cluster system. And for those of you who are not international disaster experts, a number of years ago, to address that issue of coordination, the U.N., with others, developed the cluster system.

And essentially, each sector, call it health or maybe it's shelter or protection, has an organization that leads the relief effort. So in food, it's the World Food Programme. They're the quarterback. They don't run all of food relief following the disaster, but they are the quarterback. They convene the meetings to coordinate.

And the cluster system is not perfect. It's labor-intensive. It can be really painful and messy, but I think a lesson learned from earlier disasters is the need for someone to play quarterback. So there are agencies, often U.N., but not exclusively, that step forward and the international community recognizes World Food Programme, you're the quarterback for food.

World Health Organization, you're the quarterback for health and so on and so forth. So that is, to me, a positive lesson that has been learned. In terms of benefits of NGOs, you heard a few examples. I would also say in its early days, but I think the relief and recovery effort following the tsunami was very successful.

We can point to homes. We can point to improved water, improved sanitation, improved livelihoods and say that has gone reasonably well. The challenge for NGOs and I'll just use mine, for example, the Red Cross, today, is providing clean, drinkable water to about 300,000 people every day in Port-au-Prince.

And this is a country that before the quake, fewer than a third had access to clean water. What happens when the money runs out? And the Red Cross water trucks are idled? Will someone, hopefully the municipal water authority in Port-au-Prince, DINEPA, will they have the capacity to step up and backfill those very large shoes?

What is difficult for an NGO is balancing the need – balancing the desire to fulfill the humanitarian need, a desperate need, at the same time, preparing your exit. And knowing that if you have the resources, you cannot, in good conscience, just leave people by the wayside, thirsty or hungry.

So the challenge for us is not only to provide the assistance, but build that road map to transition that to someone else in a sustainable manner. We can't, in good conscience, hand it off to someone if they're not going to be able to continue to provide that water. But we have to find a way.

MR. WARD: I love a question that allows me to make my point again. (Laughter.) So thank you. What have we learned? What we've learned is we're going to fail if we focus on the response. We've got to start investing in activities between the disasters to mitigate the disaster. And I'll give you a couple of great examples that I've seen in person.

Cyclone Sidr hit Bangladesh in the early '90s – no, cyclone – I don't remember what that one was called. A cyclone hit Bangladesh in the early '90s and killed almost 100,000 people. We spent pennies on earthen dams and planting mangrove trees in the delta. Cyclone Sidr hit a few years ago and we lost 10,000 people.

And I visited after the cyclone and I saw those earthen dams and they looked awful. And I saw those mangrove trees and they looked awful. Why did they look bad? Because they did their job. They held back the water and the communities were basically okay. And those communities knew how to maintain those walls and they knew how to take care and plant those trees. Those pennies saved probably – of course, we'll never know – probably tens of thousands of lives.

Every once in a while, the United States government gets something right and it happened in Pakistan. A few years ago, we invested in something called the disease early warning system with WHO – very simple system for identifying the first signs of a serious infectious disease.

Guess when that kicked in? During the floods. And we used the disease early warning system to tell us where the isolated – isolated – cases of cholera were showing up and we zapped them and it didn't spread. Pennies invested in dues saved us, potentially, a public health calamity on top of the floods.

So what lesson has my office learned? Those pennies invested – and maybe we can get it into tens and 20s in risk-reduction activities between the disasters will really pay off because we can't win if we focus entirely on response.

MR. NELSON: Thank you. Next question? Over here on the right.

Q: Hi, Ozzie. Bob Tuohy, Homeland Security Institute. Mr. Ward, you suggested and posited that we need to have an international response framework and you said AID would be willing to participate. Who, in your mind, should lead that? What organization should lead the development of an international response framework?

MR. NELSON: Thanks, Bob.

MR. WARD: Depends on the disaster. I mean I can't presage what we will come up with. It will be an interagency effort to develop what that framework is. But I think what I expect will happen is that there will be a process in place for, depending on the disaster and the complexity of it and where it is and the security situation in that country and the resources that have to be brought to bear, some senior official in our government will decide.

You know, State's going to take the lead on this one. Maybe USAID's going to take the lead on this one. Maybe the NSC, if it's a truly whole-of-government effort and you really need strong coordinating mechanism, will take the lead on this one. I don't think – I may be wrong – I don't think that when we develop this international response framework, it will say, unlike the national response framework, that this agency is always in charge or this department is always in charge.

I may be wrong. It may come out that way like FEMA is always in the lead for the national disasters – the domestic disasters. But that's my expectation, is that it will – it will define a process that will quickly identify who is in charge but it will not say it's always this organization. And that would be progress.

Q: (Off mic.)

(Break.)

MR. WARD: We're happy to lead it, but I think everybody in the interagency has to participate, including you know, Homeland Security, absolutely. And we have a lot of lessons to learn from FEMA, so I hope they're with us there too.

MR. NELSON: Going to stay away from that way, huh? Anybody from this side of the room? I'd like to mix it up. Left side's a little slow tonight. Okay, back to the middle, the Navy guy.

Q: Bernard Helmer (ph). I work for public health service, ASPR, within the Department of Health and Human Services. Quick question first to Joel and David. The media's been kind of critical of our international response in Haiti one year afterwards. But given the status of what Haiti was beforehand, the difficulties they had in trying to develop their capacity over the several years, is things as bad as the media portrays or is this what is to be expected if we're trying to help rebuild a government at the same time?

And then my second question to Mark is to say when we try to do it by, through and with the host nation, but if the government lacks the capability or we hear about the issues of corruption that will oftentimes interfere with the development happening, are we setting ourselves up for failure but trying to do it through the local government or through a government that's not capable of helping us achieve our objectives and would it be better to look at this – doing it at the local level versus trying to go through a national government?

MR. NELSON: Go ahead. Who's first? (Chuckles.)

MR. CHARNY: On Haiti, my feeling is that the relief effort was remarkable given the obstacles. And basically, 1.3 million people have been provided with food, clean water, shelter and a revived education system over the last year, which is astonishing.

I think the negative reporting and the negative images, which are frankly hard to deal with and I understand why people are upset relate to the fact that the recovery effort, the moving

people beyond the emergency phase into something new, that has been very slow. And a lot of that relates to the overall dysfunction in Haiti: political dysfunction, historical injustice and control of resources by an oligarchy, et cetera.

So I mean when you say well, why aren't more people in permanent housing, there's no government to make a decision about where that housing should be built. If you say, well, why aren't there more permanent educational facilities or hospitals rebuilt?

Again, these are things that normally, a government would manage and would guide and would make decisions about and the NGO community is basically between a rock and a hard place because if we act unilaterally, we risk running into legal problems and into other problems that will make the effort unsustainable.

So we're kind of in a maintenance operation that to the outside observer, doesn't look, you know, all that – all that great. And you know, we've been in a huge debate within our community and with the media and the public as we've thought about what the experience in Haiti has been.

MR. NELSON: Mark?

MR. MELTZER: I'm going to echo a lot of what Joel said on the response effort. I think it's been really good. And that's small solace for someone who's living underneath a tarp one year later but what's important, I think, to remember with Haiti is that this is the largest urban disaster since the end of the Second World War.

This was the financial and political capital of the country. I heard today 30 percent of the civil service died. The earthquake occurred around 4:30 in the afternoon of a workday. This was a country that – to get relief into the country, it was terribly constricted.

I've used the analogy of Manhattan – the borough of Manhattan; an island – and that if you picture Manhattan with all 1.5 million inhabitants – people who live in Manhattan – homeless in a matter of seconds and then all the bridges down, all the tunnels down except maybe one or two, the port of New York, the port of Newark closed, JFK airport closed, Newark airport closed, La Guardia closed except one runway – that's the situation we had in Port-au-Prince the day after the quake.

The port, only two piers, destroyed. A few weeks later, one of the two piers, through a lot of effort of the U.S. Navy, came back online. We were using Santo Domingo on the other side of the island as the staging point and then had to truck things overland, over very bad roads. That, normally, I'm told, before the quake, was an eight-hour overland trip – and became an 18-hour overland trip because the conditions on the roads deteriorated.

And despite all of those difficulties, you don't – you did not see mass starvation. You did not see mass disease break out in the camps. Yes, you saw cholera but as CDC said, cholera is not the result of the earthquake. Cholera is the result of decades of neglect around a water and

sanitation system. You have not seen mass protests over the lack of assistance and aid. You have seen mass protest in Haiti around political issues.

So I think the success is – in many ways, we can measure it, how many people we fed, how much water and all that, but also what you haven't seen. You haven't seen the second and the third disaster. So I would very much say it has been successful. The recovery is slow but I don't think it's any slower than you saw following the tsunami.

Our cosponsor is from Louisiana. How are parts of the Gulf Coast, five-plus years later, doing? If I were to go to the lower ninth ward, what do I see? And we are a country with far more resources, with a government that is effective. Disaster recovery is really difficult.

I recently saw that Kyoto suffered a terrible earthquake 15 years ago, nowhere near the scale of Port-au-Prince. It took seven years for the economy of Kyoto to get back to pre-quake levels. And that, again, is a very advanced country with a lot of resources. And it was not the political, not the financial capital of Japan. Kobe – excuse me – not Kyoto.

So you have to understand that recovery takes a while. And it's small solace, as I said in the beginning, to someone living underneath a tarp. Don't get me wrong – I'm really very motivated to get them out from underneath that tarp. But it takes years, unfortunately.

MR. NELSON: Thank you, David. Next question. Left side, over here. Gentleman with –

MR. WARD: A gentleman had a question on – this gentleman asked me some question on working – the dilemma of supporting the government and then dealing with corruption. Let me try to make a distinction. And it's a good question.

Yes, all of us subscribe to the principle that when a disaster hits, you want the government of that country to be in the lead, defining the priorities and helping – sitting with the United Nations on the coordination effort. Absolutely.

It's hard when it's just been decapitated in an earthquake and it wasn't very strong to begin with. But that doesn't mean that you don't stick with it and keep trying to build that capacity. And I find that today, our efforts at fighting cholera are stronger because we have a good ministry of public health to work with in Haiti. So strengthening their capacity to help lead the effort is one thing. And the United States government will always do that.

But we do not – in our disaster response, it would be very rare that we would put money for the response through the government organs. What we do is we support very good organizations, international NGOs on the ground – indigenous NGOs on the ground that we have a track record with, who we have vetted, who we've – can trust that they can account for the funds, they've been audited and all of that.

So we work through those mechanisms to actually get the work done. We will focus on building the capacity of the government to lead, yes. But in terms of the emergency response,

we will work through, as I said, nongovernmental organizations on the ground. If we're lucky, they were already there. And many of them were already there in Haiti. Many of them were already there in Pakistan when the floods hit because of the IDP crisis last year in the Malakand valley. We will work through them.

But we will also spend some money strengthening the capacity of the government because we want them to be able to lead. And that's all a part of disaster risk reduction so that for the next disaster, they're even better equipped to lead.

MR. NELSON: Thanks, Mark. Sorry, gentleman right here in the red tie. Picking up the slack for the left side of the room – well done.

Q: I'll do my best here. Thank you. I'm Tim Stryker from U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey – the part of the bureau that deals with use of satellite imagery for disaster response. We work with a lot of other government agencies in doing that.

But on behalf of that group, I want to thank Mr. Meltzer for your remarks about the mangroves and capacity-building in – I'm sorry, Mr. Ward – for that because in a lot of ways, that's very beneficial not just for disaster resistance but ecosystem services, management, agricultural capacity – a lot of things that can provide capacity to communities before disasters hit.

But we did hear a lot about U.N. organizations involved in the response phase. But each of you guys said remarks about disaster preparedness and capacity building. And Mr. Ward or others, I was wondering if you care to comment on the U.N. role in that aspect, through the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, Hyogo Framework for Action. Can you characterize what you think is their effectiveness or where there can be added assistance in building capacity, either through the U.N. system or through the national governments that support it?

MR. WARD: Absolutely. Very often, a United Nations agency on the ground may take the lead on developing the strategy to strengthen the capacity of that government to put in place the vast disaster risk reduction measures but not necessarily.

Right now, as a matter of fact, we're working with the government of Nepal on a program that was in part developed by the United Nations there as well as other leading donors. So, certainly they are. They can be a player. And what's terrific about the United Nations is that they can help us raise the profile of this issue, as the three of us have been trying to do tonight, with the major donor countries around the world to put more resources – I called them “pennies” – into these prevention programs, these mitigation programs so that the response effort does not have to be as strong. And the United Nations is a great voice for those investments and provides us a platform to make the case for spending more money there.

MR. NELSON: David? Or Joel? Okay. All right, next question – we had some more additional ones over here. Right here. With the Apple Macintosh computer. (Chuckles.)

Q: Your role in terms of working with Department of Defense in Africa – we’ve worked with a lot of different COCOMs and there seems to be a big understanding of why it works with SOUTHCOM and why it works with PACOM but a debate on the effectiveness of DOD being able to support humanitarian assistance in Africa either before – preparedness – or after and whether or not it’s worth exercising or not together and the risk to the NGOs of being associated with the military in that country. What do you guys feel about that as far as Africa versus the other continents?

MR. NELSON: Sorry, could you give us your name and your affiliation?

Q: Oh, sorry. Patricia Koopersmith. I actually work with the whole-of-government logistics effort, which Carol Chan works with, and I work for a company called The Clearing, which is a strategy firm.

MR. NELSON: Thank you.

MR. : That is a great question for the Red Cross.

MR. MELTZER: I think in Africa, the disasters are very often different than what you see from other parts of the world. They’re slow-onset. They are the famines and the forgotten disasters that Joel spoke of. And the role for AFRICOM, I think, is less well-defined, less logical where there is the slow-onset disasters.

I would – as with any command, I would always be concerned about that independence and that neutrality. And I think it is heightened in Africa because there isn’t the urgency that you see in an earthquake and you can only get to there through a U.S. military helicopter. So I think as AFRICOM develops its mission, its humanitarian mission, I think that’s okay to have a humanitarian mission. I think our concerns about independence and neutrality will be significant.

MR. NELSON: Joel, you have to have a comment on this, right?

MR. CHARNY: Yeah, of course. (Laughter.) Yeah. I spent about three years commenting on AFRICOM because when AFRICOM was first stood up, you went to their website and it was like an NGO website. What’s the purpose of AFRICOM? Oh, to respond to humanitarian need in Africa. I mean, they almost literally said that and it was, frankly, bizarre from outside.

You know, what I want AFRICOM to be doing in Africa is defending U.S. security interests. I don’t want them responding to emergencies in the Congo or building schools in Botswana or all this other wacky stuff that they were planning to do. I mean, Africa – and really, I would extend this further: I mean, no part of the world should be a place for the U.S. military to exercise and play at being humanitarian.

I mean, if there’s a need for the U.S. to respond through military logistical capacity based on an analysis of the need in that particular setting – okay, let’s talk. But this Africa thing

seemed to be, well, we want Africans to like us so we're going to stand up AFRICOM and then AFRICOM is going to do all this humanitarian stuff. And I was just really – I mean, many of us were opposed from the beginning. I mean, let's fight terror in Africa and defend U.S. security interests, not build – again, build clinics in Botswana.

MR. NELSON: Thanks, Joel. Gentleman right here.

Q: I'm Dr. Whitt (ph) and I'm from New Orleans. I established the first CMOC in Panama – Civil Military Operations Center – followed by a year later in Kuwait; six months later, up in Iraq; two years later, in Mogadishu, where I spent a year running relief operations there; followed by Mitch (ph) and Haiti, down in –

The question that I have is there's a really good joint pub. called 30-8, "Interagency Coordination to Joint Operations" (sic), which is based on my after-action report from Mogadishu. A lot of people hear about it but very few people have read it. And it's a good template for understanding how to coordinate amongst NGOs, the military and the rest of the different OFDA organizations.

What are your thoughts on that, please?

MR. NELSON: Thank you. Who wants to take that one on? Mark?

MR. WARD: Forgive me – I'm one of those that hasn't read it yet. I'll do so. But let me just tell you a story.

Joel's right: The military is very good at certain things and ought to leave other things to us. But let me tell you a story about when I saw that coordination working the best. And that was after the tsunami. And I was traveling, actually, with then-Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz and we went out onto the deck of the Abraham Lincoln, which was still visible off the coast of Banda Aceh. And they took us into – they called it the war room; it probably was the war room. I remember because I always hit my head on the doors when I'm on ships going in.

And in the room – it was a room about, I don't know, a quarter of this size and it had a chalkboard. And the naval officers were in there looking, as you might expect, very spiffy – you know, like these guys, in all spit-and-polish, shoes shining, very professional, sir, sir, sir. And then you had in the room representatives of the U.N. agencies and some people who work for me who looked pretty good – (laughter) – you know, kind of khakis, polo shirts, probably had showered that morning. And then you had the NGOs, long hair, flip-flops, Hawaiian shirts, shorts.

Guess who everybody in the room was listening to? The NGOs. Because the NGOs were telling the military where to deliver the goods the next day on the helicopters because that was the only way and that's important. That's when we need the logistical support from the military. That was the only way to get the stuff there.

And we had worked long and hard enough with PACOM that they understand that in the middle of a disaster, you guys need to shut up and listen to us and it worked very, very well. We've talked a couple of times tonight about avoiding public health crises. We did it in Indonesia too, partly because of how we got clean water and important medicines to some of those remote villages.

MR. CHARNY: I just want to defend the NGO dress code. (Laughter.) I mean I – I have evidence from the good-bye memory book that I got from RI that I always wore a blue button-down shirt in the field.

MR. NELSON: With all the buttons on it? (Chuckles.) Okay – time for – we already – okay, Andrew says one more. Anybody – somebody who didn't ask question? Gentleman back there in the pea coat.

Q: Hi, Matt Johnson, LMI government consulting. We did some research on this Haiti response thing – I'm sorry, Joel – I don't want to make everything about Haiti here, but the DOD footprint, as we understood it, was 22,000 people at the peak, which led to them having more helicopters on the ground than actual USAID OFDA focuses.

And this prompted to say that USAID was essentially a grant-making institution. You got a lot of money out the door pretty quick to some NGO partners and you facilitate a lot of meetings. In light of the fact that the new Congress probably isn't going to double your budget or give you a bunch more on the appropriations side, are you doing anything now, strategically, to look at how you're going to manage this resource imbalance as you go forward?

MR. NELSON: Mark? (Chuckles.)

MR. WARD: I love questions that allow me to make my point again. (Laughter.) You're right. We're probably not going to grow. One of my – one of my favorite quotes from Secretary Gates is – and you've probably all read it or heard it – there's something wrong in our international response today when the military bands, you know, bands, have more people in them than the Foreign Service.

There are more people in the woodwind section than there are in OFDA, in my office. Yeah, that's not going to change dramatically, although the QDDR does say double the size of my office. That would be great. It still won't be enough to respond to the size, disasters that seem to be coming our way.

And that's why, again, I think we have to strengthen and enlarge the capacity of our response capability and put more pennies and tens and 20s into disaster risk-reduction activities because the old traditional approach, which would probably argue for a whole lot more people working in OFDA, I just don't think you can grow us enough to be able to respond.

What we need to do is get better at making grants faster. I think we actually get pretty good marks for that. We need to get better at getting out to see how the grants are being spent. We need to get better at building the capacity of the government and we need to get better at

those disaster risk-reduction activities so when it comes time to respond, we do have enough people.

MR. NELSON: David and Joel, do you want to add any closing comments before we go? I'll count that as Mark's.

MR. CHARNY: No, I mean I just think it's been a really good session and I have a few minutes afterwards if anyone has any further questions or comments.

MR. NELSON: David, last words?

MR. MELTZER: Yes, I appreciate the opportunity – I have the last words. You know, we're all trying to do faster, better. Sometimes, nature conspires against us. Sometimes, you're working in a country where the capacity to absorb all the money that we have is rather limited. You can only push so much money through a very narrow funnel.

I think, as a humanitarian and government sector, we are doing a good job responding. Where we are lacking is recovery and where we lack funds and awareness, as everyone has said, is around making the really sounds investment in mitigating tomorrow's disaster. I can talk myself blue in the face how much an investment in disaster risk-reduction returns. It's just not sexy, but man, it's worth every nickel and dime and hopefully quarters and dollars. So that's my last appeal.

MR. NELSON: Well, everyone, thank you very much for coming. Let's give our panelists a round of applause.

(Applause.)

(END)