



# REPORT ON THREATS TO THE UNITED STATES FROM UNGOVERNED AREAS 2008

## I. Overview

Section 1267 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008, Public Law 110-181, January 28, 2008, requires the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), to jointly submit a report on threats posed to the United States from ungoverned areas, including threats from terrorist groups and individuals in such areas that direct their activities against the United States.

All ungoverned areas are not safe havens for terrorists. The *Country Reports on Terrorism, 2007* identified 12 safe havens and one potential safe haven (Iraq).<sup>1</sup> Threats from terrorist groups and individuals in ungoverned areas that direct their activities against the United States involve the 11 safe havens: Somalia; Trans-Saharan Africa; Lebanon; Yemen; Afghanistan; Pakistan, specifically the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP); Sulu/Sulawesi Seas Littoral; Southern Philippines; Indonesia; Colombia Border Region (the southern and eastern border with Venezuela, Ecuador, and Brazil); and the Tri-Border Area (Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay). The potential safe haven of Iraq is also an area that threatens the national security interests of the United States.

In ungoverned areas, terrorists exploit for recruitment, operational planning, or physical safe haven conditions such as corruption, poverty, a lack of civic institutions and social services, politically repressive governments, and inadequate or unjust law enforcement and legal systems.

## II. Definition of Ungoverned Areas

The Department of Defense (DoD) defines an ungoverned area as: “a place where the state or the central government is unable or unwilling to extend control,

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<sup>1</sup> Country Reports on Terrorism 2007, Chapter 5, Terrorist Safe Havens (7120 Report), pages 179-184.

effectively govern, or influence the local population, and where a provincial, local, tribal, or autonomous government does not fully or effectively govern, due to inadequate governance capacity, insufficient political will, gaps in legitimacy, the presence of conflict, or restrictive norms of behavior. “Ungoverned areas” should be assumed to include under-governed, ill-governed, contested, and exploitable areas.”<sup>2</sup>

The Department of State (DOS) defines a terrorist safe haven as an “ungoverned, under-governed, or ill-governed area of a country and non-physical areas where terrorists constitute a threat to U.S. national security interests ” and “are able to organize, plan, raise funds, communicate, recruit, train, and operate in relative security because of inadequate governance capacity, political will, or both.”<sup>3</sup>

### **III. Statutory Requirement**

#### **SEC. 1267. REPORT ON THREATS TO THE UNITED STATES FROM UNGOVERNED AREAS.**

(a) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Director of National Intelligence, shall jointly submit to the specified congressional committees a report on the threats posed to the United States from ungoverned areas, including the threats to the United States from terrorist groups and individuals located in such areas who direct their activities against the national security interests of the United States and its allies.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of those areas the United States Government considers ungoverned, including—

(A) a description of the geo-political and cultural influences exerted within such areas and by whom;

(B) a description of the economic conditions and prospects and the major social dynamics of such areas; and

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<sup>2</sup> Ungoverned Areas and Threats from Safe Havens! Final Report of the Ungoverned Areas Project Prepared for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. Robert D. Lamb, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy Planning. January 2008, page 15.

<sup>3</sup> Country Reports on Terrorism 2007, Chapter 5, Terrorist Safe Havens (7120 Report), page 179.

