



Opening Statement (As Prepared)
Chairman Ruben Gallego
Subcommittee on Intelligence and Special Operations
Hearing:
"Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Request for U.S. Special Operations Forces and Command"
April 28, 2022

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Good afternoon.

I call to order this hearing of the Intelligence and Special Operations Subcommittee on "A Review of the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Request for U.S. Special Operations Forces and Command."

The Special Operations Forces are at an inflection point. The 2022 National Defense Strategy focuses the U.S. military's capabilities on strategic competition, toward countering China's growing multi-domain challenges and Russia's persistent threats, which have only been further magnified by its unconscionable invasion of, and ongoing war in, Ukraine. U.S. Special Operations Forces have a significant role in countering competitors and adversaries as well as deterring strategic attacks against the United States. We continue to live in an extremely dangerous and volatile world, and Special Operations Forces should be prioritized as a capability to counter these dangers through its Counter Violent Extremist Organizations mission and other non-kinetic authorities.

Today's hearing is focused on the FY23 Budget Request for Special Operations Command and Special Operations Forces. The Budget Request highlights SOCOM's support to the National Defense Strategy, which creates "a strategic, asymmetric advantage for the nation by bolstering integrated deterrence capabilities and enhancing campaigning activities and building enduring advantages through innovation and modernization."

I would like to hear from our witness how the SOF community is postured to accomplish this. I would also like to understand how 1202 authorities and SOCOM's Military Information Support Operations (MISO) can support our defense strategy and counter threats from China and Russia.

With that, let me introduce today's witnesses:

- The Honorable Christopher P. Maier, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict; and
- General Richard Clarke, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command.

This will be General Clarke's last posture hearing before this committee as the Commander of SOCOM. We appreciate your service to this Nation and all you have done for Special Operations Forces.

In the interest of time, I ask the witnesses to keep their opening remarks brief so that we will have more time for the closed session.

With that, let me again thank our witnesses for appearing before us today. I now recognize Ranking Member Kelly for any opening remarks.

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