Testimony of

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Statement for the Record of
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On
The Terrorist Threat Integration Center and its Role in Sharing Information and Supporting the Department of State's Visa Issuance Program

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security.

I appreciate the opportunity to join my colleagues from the Department of State, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to discuss information sharing and support to the Department of State's Visa Issuance Program. I'll address the critical role TTIC plays in sharing information related to terrorist activities across the Government and the specific role we have in supporting the Department of State.

As the Members of the Subcommittee well know, a key ingredient of the U.S. Government's counterterrorism strategy is to ensure that the many government agencies and departments involved in the war on terrorism work closely together and share threat information and analysis that could be used to prevent terrorist attacks. The May 1, 2003 establishment of the Terrorist Threat Integration Center is supporting this objective. Charged with the integration of terrorist threat-related information and analysis, TTIC is a multi-agency joint venture that integrates and analyzes terrorist threat-related information collected domestically or abroad and disseminates information and analysis to appropriate recipients.

To execute this extraordinarily complex mission, TTIC has both broad authorities and responsibilities in the realm of information sharing. The Homeland Security Act of 2002, of course, has very specific statutory provisions requiring that the entire government support the Department of Homeland Security with "timely and efficient" access to all information necessary to discharge DHS' responsibilities. Two other key documents are also directly relevant to TTIC. In March 2003, the Attorney General, Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Director of Central Intelligence signed the Homeland Security Information Sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which binds all members of the Intelligence Community, as well as all U.S. law enforcement entities. Among other things, the MOU directs that a broad interpretation

of mission and need-to-know be applied, that the use of originator controls be minimized, that maximum effort be made to reduce classification levels through the use of tear lines and that modern, compatible information technology (IT) systems be utilized to speed the pace of dissemination. In May 2003, Director of Central Intelligence Directive (DCID) 2/4 mandated that TTIC assignees with a need-to-know "have unfettered access to terrorist threat-related information, collected domestically or abroad." And having utilized that access to integrate all appropriate information related to the terrorist threat, the DCID also directs that a structure be created to "institutionalize sharing across appropriate federal agency lines." While these documents provide a broad mandate to share information, it is of critical importance to note - as directed by the President and specified in the DCID - that "TTIC assignees will continue to be bound by all applicable statutes and Executive Orders, including those relating to the protection of Constitutional rights and privacy."

In order to implement this broad mandate for information sharing, TTIC has undertaken a number of initiatives:

? We have partnered with other organizations to form a joint program office to implement a systematic approach to inter-agency information sharing. The task at hand is to ensure that all obligations are met, as enumerated by the President's announced policies, the Homeland Security Act of 2002, and the Information Sharing MOU. Whether it's establishing standards for tear lines, reaching out to non-Intelligence Community organizations, or overhauling reporting standards; TTIC member agencies are facilitating efforts within the Intelligence Community - in concert with law enforcement activities - to ensure that all appropriate departments and agencies receive the information necessary to execute their missions.

? In order to effect rapid information sharing with a wide array of partners and customers, we have established a TTIC Online website that hosts TTIC analysis and links to other counterterrorism reports. While TTIC Online contains some of our most sensitive intelligence and therefore must have controlled access, it already reaches analysts at all the major departments and agencies having a role in the war against terrorism. Over the coming months we will be replicating TTIC Online on less sensitive networks in order to provide terrorism information and analysis at a lower level of classification to a much broader community of analysts and consumers. This initiative will ultimately extend to a "sensitive but unclassified" (SBU) version that will allow FBI and DHS to make SBU material available to state and local government, law enforcement, and the private sector.

These initiatives have broad applicability to all elements of the Government - including the State Department - involved in the war against terrorism. But let me know address more specifically the role TTIC plays in supporting the State Department's VISA Issuance Program.

The President has directed, and DCID 2/4 specified that TTIC "maintain an up to date database of known and suspected terrorists accessible to appropriate government officials." TTIC, working with other appropriate government departments and agencies, has been developing such a terrorist identities database that will incorporate all information concerning such individuals' association with international terrorism. Our FBI partners, in turn, will continue to manage information that has been determined to be purely domestic terrorism, with both sources of information available to the new Terrorist Screening Center (TSC), discussed in more detail

below. We have been working closely with the Department of State and others over the last several months to ensure that this database is entirely compatible with the demands of the newly announced Terrorist Screening Center.

Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 6, and the associated Memorandum of Understanding signed by Secretaries Powell and Ridge, Director Tenet, and Attorney General Ashcroft, have substantially improved the terrorist watchlisting process. Under this initiative, TTIC is given specific responsibilities which impact on information sharing with the Department of State relating to visa issuance and the revocation process.

HSPD 6 and the associated MOU clearly define TTIC's role, as well as its interaction with the Department of State. Section 28 of the MOU states that "the Director of the TTIC will promptly assume responsibility for the functions and personnel of the Department of State's TIPOFF counterterrorist program, less those components devoted to providing operational support to TIPOFF users and will ensure that all terrorist identity information contained within the TIPOFF database is fully integrated into the TTIC database."

As defined in the HSPD and associated MOU, the production component of TIPOFF will become part of TTIC, in which State, of course, is a full partner, and the dissemination/ operational support function will merge with the Terrorist Screening Center. TTIC will become the sole provider of international terrorist identities information to the Terrorist Screening Center. Section (4)(a) of the MOU mandates that the TSC will: "(a) maintain a consolidated terrorist screening database that is a continuously updated, sensitive but unclassified subset of the Terrorist Information possessed by the TTIC, and the Purely Domestic Terrorism Information ...possessed by the FBI." This formulation will ensure that the Terrorist Screening Center has access to all relevant information to perform its watchlist function.

TTIC will provide the TSC with nominations for terrorist watchlisting. Members of the Terrorist Screening Center, in turn, will then perform two key functions: First, it will adjudicate those nominations to determine whether they are appropriate for entry into the Terrorist Screening Center's database, as well as determine the screening processes which will include each accepted individual. Second, it will provide operational support for the agencies that access this database.

Specifically addressing the Department of State's visa issuance and revocation processes, TTIC will provide terrorist identities information to the Terrorist Screening Center. Department of State representatives (the component of the TIPOFF Program that has been assigned to support the Bureau of Consular Affairs) will be assigned to the Terrorist Screening Center to provide the full level of support to Consular Affairs. At the Terrorist Screening Center, assignees will continue the existing support relationship, providing Consular Affairs needed input for the proper determination as to whether visas should be issued, or revoked.

In sum, Mr. Chairman, I believe that TTIC has already made significant strides in improving the sharing of critical terrorist threat-related information across the U.S. Government. There is no question that we have a myriad of technical, policy, and security challenges with which to deal. But we have a broad mandate, have established a program office that is identifying and dealing with issues, and have fielded an IT architecture that is already disseminating terrorist threat-related information across the Government. And with regard to sharing information with the

State Department, we are well along toward developing a terrorist identities database that will be merged with TIPOFF, and fully support the Terrorist Screening Center and State's VISA Application process.