

## DoD Transformation Still on Track

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**W**ASHINGTON, March 6, 2003—The Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks on the United States underscored DoD's need to transform to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said here today.

In his opening remarks to military and civilians gathered at the fifth Pentagon town hall meeting, Rumsfeld recalled that he'd spoken to Pentagon employees about transformation issues at a similar gathering the day before the attacks.

At that time nobody knew terrorists were about to launch their attacks against America the next day, Rumsfeld pointed out. Immediately after the attacks, some people, he

said, thought transformation should be put on hold, in order to better prosecute the war on global terrorism.

"The opposite was true," the Secretary emphasized. "Indeed, the attacks of Sept. 11 make transforming the Department even more urgent, because they have awakened us to a fundamental truth."

America has entered a new security environment, where, Rumsfeld remarked, "the nexus between terror and terrorist states and weapons of mass destruction means that attacks in this 21<sup>st</sup> century will be more likely—(and) very likely more deadly—than at any time in modern history."



An Air Force sergeant asks Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld a question during a "town hall" meeting at the Pentagon, March 6, 2003.

Photo by Robert D. Ward

Although the United States and its allies have routed terrorists in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the world early in the war, the Defense Department is “still not yet arranged to deal successfully with this new security environment,” he stated.

DoD entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century configured “to fight big armies, big navies, and big air forces,” Rumsfeld said. It isn’t arranged, he added, “to fight the shadowy terrorists and terrorist networks that operate with the support and assistance of terrorist states.”

To win the global war on terror, America’s armed forces have to become more flexible and agile “so our forces can respond more quickly,” Rumsfeld pointed out. “Today, we still do not yet have that agility.”

The Defense Department “is still bogged down to too great an extent in the micro-management and bureaucratic processes of an earlier era,” he said. For example, he said, DoD wants to be like a private-sector corporation and be able to transfer money from department to department rapidly, as needed, rather than halted by myriad outdated rules.

Today, he added, more than 300,000 servicemembers are performing essentially non-military jobs, “and yet, we’re calling up reserves to help deal with the global war on terror.”

Hundreds of thousands of manhours are consumed preparing reports that are likely not read and are “of marginal value,” he noted.

And the time to produce a weapon system at DoD has doubled since 1975, Rumsfeld remarked, “in an era when new technologies are arriving in years and months, not decades.”

Today’s DoD was set up to meet the challenges of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, not the 21<sup>st</sup>,

he declared. However, steps to eliminate waste and duplication have taken place on his watch, the Secretary said.

For example, headquarters staffs across DoD have been reduced by about 11 percent, he said. The acquisition process has been streamlined “by getting rid of hundreds of pages of rules and regulations and allowing program managers—we hope—to be more innovative, flexible and creative,” he added. A new financial management system is slated to debut this spring, he said, that will help DoD to greatly reduce the 1,800 different information systems it currently uses.

Rumsfeld said he wants to revamp DoD’s civilian personnel system, making it more flexible and responsive “so we can attract and retain and improve the performance of our 700,000-plus civilian workforce.”

Opening the floor to questions, he fielded inquiries about Iraq, transformation, and other topics. A female Air Force civilian employee asked if there was a way to streamline the paperwork and bureaucracy required for hiring new people.

Rumsfeld gestured toward David Chu, the Pentagon’s top personnel manager, and said: “David Chu, fix it.”

The auditorium erupted in laughter. Chu told the Air Force employee that civilian personnel management is one of the things DoD has marked to revamp as part of its transformation.

“That’s exactly what we want to try to change,” he said.

Editor’s Note: This information is in the public domain at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news>.