Thank you, Madam Chairman. And thank you for

convening this timely hearing.

Welcome, Mr. Secretary.

I look forward to your testimony today. I think we all recognize

that Libya presents a complicated set of events in a rapidly changing

set of circumstances and many of us are concerned, but I think

we were gratified to hear the President’s address to the nation.

And I think our ranking member has correctly identified there are

some issues where there will not be absolute clarity or certainty,

I am anxious to hear from you so that we can make the best decisions

based on the best and most accurate information.

And again, I welcome you and look forward to your testimony.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I want to begin by thanking and really acknowledging the administration

for its thoughtful deliberation and decision making in

a very, very difficult set of circumstances. And I particularly want

to commend the diplomatic leadership of Secretary Clinton and

you, and others for building this strong international coalition with

NATO and the Arab League and others.

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And I think most Americans are sort of genuinely conflicted. On

the one hand we accept the representations of our President that

he prevented a humanitarian crisis, or we did as a country in partnership.

And also that we have a strategic interest in preventing

instability in this region of the world, particularly as emerging democracies

in Tunisia and Egypt are being born and so that there

are consequences.

And so I think we would normally not be necessarily having the

conversation about the cost of it, except that we are in very difficult

and challenging financial times. And I hope that part of the conversation

with this emerging political leadership in a post-Ghadafi

Libya will embrace the notion of accepting some financial responsibility

for this work, both as a way to compensate American taxpayers,

but also as a real indication of the actions of a responsible

government. And I know you have heard that from the committee

loudly and clearly.

So, what I am really interested to hear from you is what is your

sense of what is the post-Ghadafi political leadership in Libya like?

Are they likely to embrace that view of the world of sort of some

responsibility? Because I really think this money belongs to the

Libyan people, but it would be a great sign of a new government

that they accepted the responsibility for some of the costs that we

are bearing. But is there religious elements to this emerging leadership

of the Transitional National Council, is it likely to form the

basis of a new political leadership in a post-Ghadafi Libya? And,

you know I know we are deepening our engagement with them, but

if you could share with us as much as you know about what that

political leadership looks like and whether the principles that they

articulated on March 22nd: The support for a constitutional and

democratic civil state, and respect for human rights, and guaranteed

equal rights, and opportunities for all its citizens, whether

they are likely to have the capacity to give meaning to those principles?

And is there a historical precedent for our having

persuaded someone that we helped in this way to bear some of the

costs? And is that part of conversations at least that are currently

underway with the Transitional National Council? I assume that

that has come up?

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I yield back, Madam Chair.