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NATIONAL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING

Tierney, Flake Comments on GAO Report on AFRICOM

Washington, D.C. –Today, Rep. John F. Tierney (D-MA), Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, was joined by Rep. Jeff Flake (R-AZ), Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs in issuing a statement about a newly-released Government Accountability Office (GAO) report their subcommittee requested. The GAO report is entitled, “Actions Needed to Address Stakeholder Concerns, Improve Interagency Collaboration, and Determine Full Costs Associated with the U.S. Africa Command.”

“As GAO reports, AFRICOM is very much a work-in-progress. What AFRICOM’s final structure and role ultimately becomes is vitally important to U.S. interests and relationships on the African continent, but it should not be the primary symbol of U.S. interaction with Africans. As a fledgling entity, AFRICOM implicates a variety of critical U.S. national security debates, such as the danger of militarization of foreign policy, the importance of coordination between the Defense, State, and other departments, and how best to ensure effective security partnerships in the 21st century. As AFRICOM stands-up, we in Congress need to step-up our vigilant and constructive oversight. This newest U.S. combatant command needs to be efficient and accountable, and it must exist within a coherent and integrated U.S. national security strategy,” said Chairman Tierney.

Ranking Member Flake added, “The successes AFRICOM has achieved so far are encouraging. Congress should continue to conduct the necessary oversight of AFRICOM’s activities to help us evaluate and clarify the appropriate role of the Department of Defense in areas of diplomacy and development.”

During the past two years, Chairman Tierney's Subcommittee has conducted extensive oversight on AFRICOM, including with two hearings last summer. The latest GAO report along with Chairman Tierney's opening statements and witness testimonies from the subcommittee's prior two AFRICOM hearings are available on-line at <http://nationalsecurity.oversight.house.gov>.

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