Statement by Secretary of Defense Ash Carter on the Kunduz Investigation Report

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After a thorough and transparent investigation, U.S. Central Command released today the final report on the tragedy that resulted from a mistaken attack on a Doctors Without Borders field hospital in Afghanistan last October. I want to once again express my deep condolences and regret for the loss of innocent life.

In light of the report's finding, I support the actions taken by General John Campbell and General Joseph Votel, and I want to thank them for the careful attention they devoted to their reviews of the facts. I also want to thank General John Nicholson, our new Commander in Afghanistan, who recently traveled to Kunduz to express his condolences and pledge the United States' full support to helping Doctors Without Borders rebuild a hospital there should they so choose.

The U.S. military takes the greatest care in our operations to prevent the loss of innocent life. When we make mistakes we must own up to them and hold individuals accountable as necessary. Learning from the past and applying that knowledge to improve how we operate in the future is also a core value of the Department of Defense. That is why, after consulting with Chairman Dunford, I am directing the Combatant Commanders and Service Chiefs to take a number of specific actions to improve our Joint Force and mitigate the potential for similar incidents in the future. This report provides important and painful lessons, and as I have directed senior leaders across the Department, we will now act upon them.