QUESTION: Thank you.

OPERATOR: The next question comes from Gary-- Kevin Whitelaw.

QUESTION: Yeah, hi, thank you, Ambassador. Two quick questions. One, can you describe at all, sort of, the level of oversight that you saw from beforehand when it came to some of these incidents and, you know, was this something that was done only in Baghdad? Was there some work back in Washington? Were people really paying attention to the aftermath of these incidents or, you know, can you characterize that?

The other thing is, in the report, it looks like you're saying that the legal framework for overseeing the work of these contractors is inadequate given that there's -- the panel is unaware of any basis for holding non-DOD contractors accountable under U.S. law, so what's the point of referring it to DOJ?

AMBASSADOR KENNEDY: Taking -- let me take them in the order. We found that there were incident reports being filed. We found that they were being read and reviewed. But we just thought that there -- that additional steps had to be taken. There were -- for example, there are incidents that come up where it's evident that State Department contractors were not involved even though they were believed to be involved. There were a couple of those.

And so the addition of a State Department professional on every move, the addition of cameras, the addition of other monitoring devices, I think, creates simply an expanded level of oversight that will enable us to fully investigate and resolve any incident that should take place and also be able to say with all clarity if someone said there was an incident at this location and you were involved, and with the expanded both personal and technical add-ons that we put into place, we will be able to say with certainty, no, there was not a State Department convoy involved. As it says in the report, there are -- there is just a huge number of private security or quasi-public security entities operating in Iraq. And we -- the State Department's goal is to have rigorous operating procedures, rigorous enforcement which leads to clarity.

On the second point, on the legal framework, the panel had four lawyers -- four non-lawyers on it. And so the statement is the statement of four non-lawyers that says that we don't see the clarity and we want to make sure that the Department of State and the Department of Justice are working on it. As non-lawyers, non-jurists, we cannot render an absolute finding, but we're saying that we -- we are unaware of this and therefore, the Department of State and the Department of Justice must address this.

QUESTION: So, I mean, the -- so there's a suggestion here, though, then, that referrals to DOJ might not result in anything more than an investigation?

AMBASSADOR KENNEDY: No, there is no suggestion of that. It's just saying that this is a question. As we work through it and talk to a variety of people, we're calling on Washington to make sure that there is legal clarity here.

QUESTION: Thank you very much.

MR. MCCORMACK: All right, that will do it. Thanks, everybody.