

**HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON U.S.
PACIFIC COMMAND AND U.S. FORCES
KOREA IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AU-
THORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR
2012 AND THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE
PROGRAM**

TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2011

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m. in room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Webb, Hagan, Begich, Manchin, Shaheen, Blumenthal, McCain, Brown, Portman, and Ayotte.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Jessica L. Kingston, research assistant; Gerald J. Leeling, counsel; Jason W. Maroney, counsel; and Russell L. Shaffer, counsel.

Minority staff members present: David M. Morriss, minority staff director; Christian D. Brose, professional staff member; Daniel A. Lerner, professional staff member; Michael J. Sistik, research assistant; and Diana G. Tabler, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Jennifer R. Knowles, Christine G. Lang, and Brian F. Sebold.

Committee members' assistants present: Christopher Griffin, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Carolyn Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Nick Ikeda, assistant to Senator Akaka; Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Roger Pena, assistant to Senator Hagan; Lindsay Kavanaugh, assistant to Senator Begich; Joanne McLaughlin, assistant to Senator Manchin; Patrick Day and Chad Kreikemeier, assistants to Senator Shaheen; Jeremy Bratt, assistant to Senator Blumenthal; Lenwood Landrum, assistant to Senator Sessions; Clyde Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Charles Prosch, assistant to Senator Brown; Pam Thiessen, assistant to Senator Portman; and Brad Bowman, assistant to Senator Ayotte.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. Today we will receive testimony on the posture of U.S. forces in the Asia Pacific and hear the views and assessments of our senior U.S. commanders on the many issues and challenges in this important region.

On behalf of the committee, I first would like to welcome back Admiral Bob Willard, Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, and General Skip Sharp, Commander of the United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command and the U.S. Forces-Korea. The committee appreciates your years of faithful service, gentlemen, and the many, many sacrifices that you and your families make for our Nation. Likewise, we greatly appreciate the service of all of our men and women, military and civilian, who serve with you in your commands. Would you please convey to them our admiration, our appreciation for their selfless dedication.

General Sharp, I understand that your successor has been identified and that this will likely be your last hearing before this committee, and so I'd like to thank you specially for your service in this very important assignment and for the assistance that you've provided to the committee and to Congress as we've worked through the complexities associated with the security situation in Korea. We wish you and your family the very best in the future.

At the outset, on behalf of the full committee I want to express our continuing solidarity with and our support for the Japanese people as they recover from the devastation caused by the March earthquake and the tsunami. Japan is one of our strongest allies and partners, not only in the Asia Pacific area, but worldwide. Since the disaster the U.S. military has been working alongside the Japanese Self-Defense Force to render aid and assistance to the tens of thousands of victims and to help the Japanese people rebuild.

Admiral Willard and your extraordinary team have been leading the military efforts, and we're very interested in your update, Admiral, on the recovery operations and in your expectations of where the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief effort is headed from the standpoint of the U.S. military.

There are many other issues and challenges in the region that also command the committee's attention. This is an important hearing not only because of things that are happening in the region today, but also because of what certain regional trends may portend for the future, and we cannot afford to take the region's current stability for granted.

A number, a significant number, of the world's largest economies and democracies reside in the Asia Pacific region, as do many of our most important allies and partners, and vital lines of commerce stream steadily and constantly and steadily throughout the region. Indeed, the importance of this region to the economic and global security can hardly be overstated.

Adding to the complexity is the dynamic change the region has undergone in just the last 50 years. Some countries in the region have experienced dramatic gains in terms of social progress and economic prosperity, while others have to deal with oppressive regimes, struggling economies, and the scourge of human abuses.

Our posture in the region has not changed much, however, during that same period. The 2010 report of the Quadrennial Defense Review states that the Defense Department needs to “augment and adapt U.S. forward presence in the Pacific,” and the national military strategy for 2011, which has been signed onto by Admiral Mullen in February of this year, articulates the need to “invest new attention and resources in Southeast and South Asia.”

To this end, our military and civilian leadership in the Defense Department is considering new arrangements with countries in the southern parts of the region, such as Australia and Singapore and others, that might offer new opportunities, but that will also likely involve new and to this point largely undetermined U.S. commitments and costs. So we’d be interested in hearing from our witnesses about what these initiatives might mean for U.S. force posture in the region and for future year defense budgets.

One ongoing realignment initiative in the Pacific involves the U.S. military on Okinawa and on Guam. The United States’ alliance with Japan is longstanding and, as seen from the disaster response effort of the last month, is multifaceted. A perplexing aspect of the relationship in the past couple years, however, has been the realignment of the U.S. military on the island of Okinawa.

Implementation of the realignment roadmap agreement signed in 2006 as a result of the broader U.S.-Japan defense posture review initiative has bogged down over issues involving the establishment of a new Marine Corps airfield on Okinawa and over concerns on Guam regarding additional requirements to support the relocation of about 8,000 marines and their families from Okinawa to Guam.

This Okinawa-Guam realignment of U.S. forces represents an important strategic adjustment to our overall future posture in the Pacific. The current price tag of the Guam buildup associated with the realignment, however, tops \$10 billion, the U.S. share of which is about 40 percent. While the roadmap agreement may have been workable at one time, subsequent delays and political, diplomatic, and fiscal realities continue to encumber progress and may increase costs significantly.

The details of the plans for Okinawa are many and complex, as are the details of the associated military buildup on Guam. That said, because these actions will affect the U.S. military’s strategic positioning well into the future, it is important that these issues be discussed and resolved.

Likewise, on the Korean Peninsula the U.S. force posture is undergoing significant change over the next several years, and even as that change takes place one thing that appears likely to remain the same on the peninsula is the belligerence and the unpredictability of the North Korean regime. While the prospects for leadership transition in North Korea, its continued and unrelenting pursuit of a nuclear program with ballistic missile technology, and its recent history of deadly unprovoked military attacks on South Korea, there’s little reason for optimism for a prompt resolution of the tensions on the peninsula.

In the mean time, our strategic alliance with the Republic of Korea is only strengthened by North Korea’s behavior. Against that backdrop, the U.S. is undergoing a significant force transformation and relocation in South Korea and is pursuing plans to grow the

number of U.S. military families on the peninsula substantially by moving from a 1-year unaccompanied assignment for U.S. troops to 2- and 3-year accompanied assignments. The details of this plan, referred to as Tour Normalization, are still being worked out and the costs associated with it have yet to be built into the defense budget.

Another regional development that bears discussion is China's growth both economically and militarily. It is important to understand and anticipate the consequences of this growth on the regional dynamic. As China's influence and military grow, traditional alliances and partnerships in the region may come under pressure from a perception that the balance of power is shifting and certain countries in the region may find it necessary to grow their militaries as well.

Some experts even warn of the potential for an emerging arms race in the region as countries leery of China's intentions for its burgeoning military seek to shore up their own defenses. Such developments must be studied and understood if informed decision-making is to proceed in a thoughtful, effective way.

To that end, a robust, meaningful, and mutually beneficial military-to-military engagement with China's military, although elusive and intermittent, remains a useful goal for the United States.

There are many other challenges in the vast Asia Pacific region: preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, countering violent extremism, providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and protecting critical sea lanes of communication.

Admiral and General, it's a pleasure to have you both back with us this morning. We look forward to your testimony on a whole range of these challenging topics, and I turn it over to Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

Senator MCCAIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, let me join you in thanking our distinguished witnesses for their many years of dedicated service, and we join the chairman in extending our deep and abiding gratitude to the men and women in uniform that you lead every day. General Sharp, thank you especially for your many years of brave and dedicated service.

Much of our focus of late has been on the historic events in the Middle East and North Africa, and with good reason. But that has not in any way diminished our concentration on the Asia Pacific region, where a less tumultuous but no less transformational process of change continues to unfold. This massive region is increasingly at the center of U.S. military, diplomatic, and economic policy, and the growing role of the Asia Pacific region in the global distribution of power will affect the future of the United States as perhaps no other trend in the world.

Amid these historic changes, our bilateral alliances remain the cornerstone of regional security and U.S. policy. Our relations with the Republic of Korea have never been better. We aim to encourage Korea's increasing emergence as not just a regional power, but a responsible global leader. We're working closely with the new government in Australia on a host of critical security issues and it is our indivisible bond with Japan that has driven the United States,

especially our armed forces, to lead the world's effort to help our ally in its time of greatest need.

Our prayers are with the Japanese government and people, especially all who have lost loved ones, and we're very concerned by yesterday's decision by the Japanese Nuclear Safety Commission to reclassify the country's nuclear crisis as a level 7 emergency, on par with the Chernobyl disaster. We would welcome the witnesses' assessment of what this means for the safety and security of people in the exposed areas and beyond, including U.S. servicemembers participating in the relief effort.

In addition to our close cooperation and exercise with our Philippine and Thai allies, the United States is also transforming its military-to-military relations with a number of emerging partners, including Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, and India. Our strategic partnership with India in particular holds immense potential for shaping a geopolitical balance within and beyond the region that favors political and economic freedom.

In short, the United States is well positioned in the Asia Pacific region, both in terms of our expanding partnerships as well as our enduring capabilities, to promote our National interests in the dynamic 21st century.

That's not to say that we and our friends and allies in the PACOM area of responsibility don't face significant challenges. We certainly do, especially from the continued uncertainty surrounding China's military modernization and the lack of transparency regarding the ends to which China intends to devote the many sophisticated capabilities it is building. Of particular concern in this context is China's development of anti-access/area denial weapons, anti-satellite capabilities, a stealth combat aircraft, a growing arsenal of ballistic missiles, offensive cyber weapons, and now an aircraft carrier. Indeed, just last week the Chinese state news agency revealed that this carrier was nearly completion and would sail this year.

Our concern over China's military capabilities has only grown over the past year in light of a sustained pattern of actions that increase tensions in the region, from expansive claims of Chinese sovereignty in international waters to provocative confrontations at sea with neighboring countries, to threats made against Southeast Asian countries.

This past year also saw a worrying freeze in our bilateral military to military engagement with the People's Liberation Army. The recent visit by the Secretary of Defense to China suggests that our military dialogue is resuming, but we would welcome our witnesses' assessment of China's recent assertiveness. We'd also welcome their thoughts on whether the continued absence of a decision on the sale of F-16s to Taiwan serves U.S. and allied interests in East Asia.

A more immediate concern is the threat posed by the North Korean regime and the prospect of instability or even conflict on the Korean Peninsula. The all too familiar North Korean pattern of behavior—increased aggression followed by attempted extortion for international assistance and diplomatic concessions—is being exacerbated at present by the regime's internal transition.

So over the past year the North Korean regime has sunk a South Korean ship, killing 46 sailors; it's shelled South Korean territory, killing Korean marines and civilians, while wounding many others; and it recently revealed a sophisticated and previously unknown uranium enrichment facility. Thus far the United States and our Korean allies have responded to these increasing and outrageous acts of aggression through a series of unprecedented military exercises, which also featured, I'm happy to say, the presence of Japanese Self-Defense Forces as observers.

But in the event of another attack by the North Korean regime, I would be eager to hear from the witnesses whether South Korea can and should respond with similar restraint. These and other challenges will require further thinking about the U.S. military posture in the Asia Pacific region. As the chairman pointed out, we currently have an agreement with our government of Japan—with the government of Japan to relocate 8,000 U.S. marines and their families from Okinawa to Guam, as well as to close other U.S. bases on Okinawa and to relocate these forces at Camp Schwab on the north side of Okinawa. These agreements will require the investment by both countries of at least \$30 billion at last estimate to build new bases for U.S. forces on the two islands.

With the recent tragic events in Japan, combined with tougher budget pressures here in the United States, I have to wonder whether either country has the resources at this point to devote to this move. I welcome new ideas for diversifying and expanding the presence of U.S. forces in the region and I look forward to hearing our witnesses' thinking about what regional presence of U.S. forces would best serve our and our allies' interests.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.
Admiral Willard, I think we'll begin with you.

**STATEMENT OF ADM ROBERT F. WILLARD, USN, COMMANDER,
U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND**

Admiral WILLARD. Thank you, Chairman Levin. Mr. Chairman, in order to accommodate the committee's questions sooner, I'll keep my remarks brief and ask that my full statement be included for the record.

Chairman LEVIN. It will be made part of the record.

Admiral WILLARD. Chairman Levin, Senator McCain: Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you to discuss United States Pacific Command and the Asia Pacific region. I'd like to begin by recognizing my wife Donna, who's been at my side for 37 years. Her brother Mike Yelbert, a senior DIA executive, is also with us today. Donna's an outstanding ambassador for our Nation and a tireless advocate for the men and women of our military and their families. She recently accompanied me to Japan, where she met with service spouses and then traveled to the tsunami-stricken region to visit a shelter for 1200 displaced Japanese survivors.

On that note, I'd like to begin you offering our deepest sympathy for the people of Japan, who've been affected by an unprecedented confluence of earthquakes, tsunami, and consequent nuclear accidents. In the midst of tragedy, the people of northern Honshu have demonstrated remarkable courage and resolve. Their ability to en-

sure, to assist one another through hardship, to clean up their communities and recover their lives should be an inspiration to all of us.

The devastation that Donna and I observed from the 11 March natural disasters was staggering, and the significance of the continuing nuclear crisis adds a level of disaster response complexity and urgency that in my experience is without peer.

United States Pacific Command remains fully committed to supporting response efforts by the Japanese Self-Defense Forces. I established a joint support force in Japan whose mission includes humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, including support to the Japanese Defense Forces who are spearheading the Fukushima nuclear accident's response. At the same time, we're guarding the safety of U.S. service personnel and their families, whether they're operating in direct support to the relief effort or carrying out their normal duties at their home bases.

A second Pacific Command joint task force planned and executed the voluntary departure of spouses and dependents and maintains follow-on departure plans should they be required.

The level of cooperation and collaboration between the service men and women of the United States and Japan has been remarkable and the job they're doing together is inspiring. Worthy of special recognition is General Ariki, Japan's chief of defense force, for his exceptional leadership of nearly 100,000 Japanese service members who've been engaged in this effort.

Our ability to quickly and effectively support their work is testimony to the maturity and strength of the United States-Japan alliance. No doubt Japan will emerge from this terrible combination of disasters a stronger nation. Our hopes and prayers continue to go out to the Japanese people.

Natural disasters are but one of the many challenges facing United States Pacific Command throughout the Asia Pacific. This vast region that covers half the Earth is unique both in its size and diversity and importance to the future of every other nation in the world. Containing the great populations, economies, and militaries along with more than \$5 trillion of seaborne commerce per year, this region has been and will continue to be of utmost importance to the United States.

U.S. Pacific Command's role is to oversee its security and to help keep the peace, both in our Nation's interests and in the interests of our five treaty allies and many regional partners. The security environment is never static. Rather, it's characterized by a dynamic range of 36 nations whose varying personalities and influence more or less affect the neighborhood. Each of our four sub-regions—Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Oceania—continue unique—contain unique challenges and challengers that test our collective commitment to security and peace.

Yet, in the face of actors such as North Korea, transnational extremist organizations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jemaah Islamiyah, and Abu Sayyaf Group, and uncertainties created by a rapidly expanding and assertive Chinese military, multilateral organizations such as ASEAN and East Asian Summit, and the bonds between the United States, its allies, and partners serve to moderate the

challenges, deter the challengers, and provide forums for advancing the collective security of the Asia Pacific region.

Overall, the prospects for continued peace, economic growth, and advancing security cooperation in the region remain promising, though we're repeatedly reminded that only through the United States' ability and willingness to underwrite that security through its continued presence, enduring extended deterrence, and protection of the global commons upon which the region's livelihood depends will regional peace and security endure.

Every day our sailors, soldiers, airmen, Marines, and civilians work to advance the security in the Asia Pacific. Their success has long enabled—has been long enabled by this committee's sustained support. You've provided the service men and women of United States Pacific Command with the most technically advanced military system in the world and a quality of life worthy of the contributions of this all-volunteer force. On behalf of the more than 330,000 men and women of United States Pacific Command, thank you, and thank you for this opportunity to testify on our defense posture in this most vital region of the world.

I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Willard follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Admiral.
General Sharp.

**STATEMENT OF GEN WALTER L. SHARP, USA, COMMANDER,
UNITED NATIONS COMMAND/COMBINED FORCES COMMAND/
U.S. FORCES KOREA**

General SHARP. Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, and distinguished members of this committee: I welcome this opportunity today to discuss the current state of United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, and U.S. Forces-Korea and to answer your questions. I also want to thank the committee for your support of our service members, Department of Defense civilians, and families living and working in the Republic of Korea.

The Republic of Korea-U.S. alliance ensures security and stability in northeast Asia. The Republic of Korea is also a great global security partner, with a PRT in Afghanistan, anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia, and in several U.N. peacekeeping operations around the world, and in their assistance in tackling proliferation.

Most importantly, the Republic of Korea and U.S. alliance continues to deter a North Korea that threatens both regional and global peace and security. Last year the Republic of Korea was the victim of two unprovoked attacks by North Korea. On 26 March 2010, a North Korean submarine attacked the Republic of Korea naval ship the Cheonan; and on 23 November 2010 a North Korean artillery barrage on the Republic of Korea island of Yeonpyeong. These brutal attacks resulted in the death of 48 South Korean servicemembers and 2 civilians.

The command's mission is to deter North Korean provocations and aggression and, if deterrence fails, to fight and win. The alliance stands ready to address the full spectrum of conflict that could emerge on the Korean Peninsula. Maintaining this preparedness is accomplished through the development and the refinement

of our bilateral plans to deter and defeat provocations, attacks like we saw last year, and all-out aggression, while maintaining the ability to respond to other destabilizing conditions that could affect the Korean Peninsula.

Successful execution of these bilateral plans requires a well-trained force. Three annual joint combined and interagency exercises—Freedom Guardian, Key Resolve, and Full Eagle—serve as key enablers for maintaining the combined command’s “fight to-night” readiness while also preparing for the future transition of wartime operational control.

Our second priority is strengthening the Republic of Korea-U.S. alliance. This better deters North Korean provocative actions and promotes a peaceful, secure, and prosperous future for the Korean Peninsula, the Asia Pacific region, and the world as a whole.

Last year President Obama agreed with the Republic of Korea President Lee Myung-bak’s request to adjust the timing of the transition of wartime operational control from April 2012 to December 2015. They also agreed to develop a plan to better synchronize all of the ongoing transformation initiatives, of which OPCON transition is just one. Called Strategic Alliance 2015, this plan was affirmed and signed by Secretary Gates and then Minister of Defense Kim Tae-young at the 42nd security consultative meeting last October.

Key elements of Strategic Alliance 2015 include: the refining and improving of the combined defense plans; defining and developing new organizational structures and capabilities required by the Republic of Korea to lead the war fight; implementing more realistic exercises based upon the North Korean threat of today and tomorrow; and preparing for the transition of wartime OPCON to the Republic of Korea joint chiefs of staff in December 2015; and finally, by consolidating U.S. military forces in the Republic of Korea onto two enduring hubs under the Yongsan relocation plan and land partnership plan. This repositioning of U.S. forces in the Republic of Korea improves force readiness and quality of life, which is our third priority. It realizes stationing efficiencies and signals a continued American commitment to the defense of Korea and the engagement within the broader region. Restationing also enhances force protection and survivability.

Normalizing tours in Korea was reinforced in October 2010 when the Secretary of Defense directed the U.S. Forces-Korea and the Services to proceed with full tour normalization as affordable. A force multiplier, tour normalization keeps trained and ready military personnel in place for longer periods of time. It improves readiness, combat capability, lowers turbulence in units, and reduces the stress placed on our troops, units, and families.

In closing, the men and women assigned to United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, and U.S. Forces-Korea remain committed and stand ready. Our ongoing efforts to implement Strategic Alliance 2015, the Yongsan relocation and the land partnership plans, and tour normalization demonstrate a long-term U.S. commitment to not only the security of the Republic of Korea, but to the broader region of Northeast Asia as well.

I am extremely proud of the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, Department of Defense civilians, and their families serving our

great Nation in the Republic of Korea and for your support—and your support is greatly appreciated.

This concludes my remarks and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Sharp follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, General.

Let's have a 7-minute round for our first round.

General, you just made reference to the full tour normalization for our troops and their families in South Korea as subject to being feasible and affordable. As I understand the plan, about 12,000 families would be living—American families, would be living in South Korea when it's fully implemented and full tour normalization is brought about. That would be an increase from about 1,700 families, so that's a huge increase in the number of families.

The timing of this seems to me to be questionable, given the belligerence of North Korea and the fact that we have, for instance, delayed the operational control of the troops from—the shift from ourselves to the South Koreans, I think we've delayed that shift now again, this time by 2 or 3 years. So I do have concerns about the timing of this shift of families to South Korea and the cost.

Putting aside the timing just for a minute in terms of North Korea behavior, focus on the cost for a moment. What would be the estimate for the cost of completing all phases of tour normalization, including the kind of housing cost, amount of money that would have to be paid for the additional housing? It's my understanding, for instance, that the overseas housing allowance would need to be set at about \$4,200 a month at Camp Humphreys, which is a significant increase over the rate of housing that we pay even in Seoul, where it's \$3,200 a month, and way above what we pay at other camps, other barracks and housing facilities such as the ones at Camp Casey, where it's 1,600 a month, Osan where it's \$1,400 a month.

So it looks like our housing cost with the influx of these 10,000 or so additional families will go way up. But there's also moving costs involved. So can you tell us, General, what your estimate is of the additional costs from the full implementation of tour normalization?

General SHARP. Thank you, Senator Levin. First off, at full tour normalization you are correct, it would be about 12,000 families there. But today we already have 4,400 families that are already there in command-sponsored tours. The number 1,700 is what we had back in 2008. We have completed to be able to bring the number of families there that I can support with the infrastructure that is currently there, which is 4,400 families.

I think it's also important to note that we also have in Korea about 1,600 non-command-sponsored families, those families who have said, I'm not going to spend another year separated from my servicemember, I'm going to come to Korea and live over there because I want to be with my servicemember and because of the quality of life that we have there.

I think everyone is aware of the importance of tour normalization with the increase of the readiness that it brings to our units that are over there, that are there, with the fact that it does show our commitment, which I think is a great deterrent value to North

Korea, and because of the fact that it reduces stress on our families.

We are working through right now—as you know, Secretary Gates has directed that the services and I bring in to him a plan that is an affordable plan to get to full tour normalization. We are looking at many different options in order to be able to reduce the costs and looking at many different options as far as how long it will take.

For example, there are cost drivers whether we build MILCON houses or whether we use public-private ventures in order to be able to fund what we need for the housing in the Republic of Korea. The same thing applies to schools, which are the other major cost factor that are there.

Secretary Gates is getting actually the report and our estimates this week. He will look at those and make his decisions and recommendations over the spring and into early summer and then direct the services to include that in the budget that will be submitted to the Congress next January.

Chairman LEVIN. Are there not budget impacts for the 2012 budget?

General SHARP. There are not.

Chairman LEVIN. So there's no additional families, no additional MILCON, no additional costs at all that will be—

General SHARP. Included for 2012? For 2012 itself, no, there will not.

Chairman LEVIN. By the way, I think the advantages are clear, and you've outlined them very clearly. But there's also some very heavy costs that are involved here, as well as the question of the security issues when you have a lot more families that are there in this time of tension.

There's also a cost issue, Admiral, relative to the move of Marines from Okinawa to Guam, and I want to ask you about that as well. As I mentioned in my opening statement, there's two major costs, at least. One is the establishment of a new Marine airfield on Okinawa; and there's also the relocation of about 8,000 marines and their families from Okinawa to Guam.

I used a figure of \$10 billion and said the U.S. share was about 40 percent of that. Senator McCain's figure—and I said that that would be growing because of all the uncertainties and the delays. Senator McCain used a figure—and I'm wondering—that was very different from mine and may indeed be right. So I'm not at all challenging the number that he used, but I'm curious about what will the cost be for these major changes in building of an airfield and the relocation of about 8,000 marines, what would be the cost to the Japanese Government, assuming that they're still able, in a position to make these expenditures, given their present economic challenges, and what would be the cost to our taxpayers?

Admiral WILLARD. Senator, the agreed-to amount when we established the framework in 2006 was as you suggested in your opening remarks. It was about \$10.3 billion, of which \$4.2 billion was United States commitment and \$6.1 billion was the commitment of the Government of Japan.

As a consequence of the delays that we experienced last year and the discussions regarding training requirements for the Marines

that would lay down in Guam and for the various infrastructure needs of the island of Guam outside the fence line of any relocation, there is a level of uncertainty regarding the end game resource consequence to that that lies outside the framework of DPRI. So DPRI, about \$10.3 billion; and other uncertainties, depending on the investments made in Guam funding, training ranges, and so on.

So as you suggest, there's some uncertainty in all of this and continued delay as a consequence of the Futenma replacement facility and other negotiations ongoing with Japan. So the likelihood of the amount being precisely what was agreed to in 2006, I think not great. I think there are definitely uncertainties that will drive that figure higher.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, I am concerned, given our budget situation, about both these situations and their costs. I think we've got to take a very, very close look at both the Korean situation as well as the Okinawa-Guam situation because of the costs involved. If you can give us an update for the record of the best estimate you have of these costs, including anything that's in the 2012 budget request, that would be appreciated.

Thank you both.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to follow up on your questioning, we've gotten a lot of different information and I'm sure that our military are doing the best they can, but—and we've been getting information. Perhaps we need to have a hearing on this whole issue and try and sort a lot of it out here. It's a lot of uncertainty. As you pointed out, the budget pressures are far more intense than they've been in the past.

General Sharp, again thank you for your service. I think you have the benefit of some years of experience with dealing with the issues regarding North Korea. It seems to me that we've been through this cycle for many years now of confrontation, acts of aggression, heightened tensions, then outreach, negotiations, on and on and on and on. We always seem to end up where we were, but unfortunately it's been coupled with North Korean increased capabilities of both acquisition of nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them.

Has that been your experience, and what would you say to American policymakers if you agree with that cycle that's been going on for many years? How do we break that cycle?

General SHARP. Sir, first off, I do agree with it, that that is the cycle that has been going on over the last several years. Unfortunately, we see no signs of that cycle changing. I think we're in a cycle right now where North Korea is asking for concessions in food, and you put that on top of what they did last year; it does not paint a good future for the North Korean—where North Korea is going, especially for their people.

Then put on top of that the issues that they're working through with succession. I do worry that there could be continued provocations into the future, based upon the cycles that we've seen in the past.

Having said that, both the Republic of Korea and the U.S. are working very hard to take the lessons that we have learned from the previous provocations, especially those of last year, and working to make sure that we have a solid plan that will hopefully deter, but if not deter be prepared to very strongly respond to future North Korean provocations.

The attack on November 23rd that killed the Republic of Korea civilians and service members and the Cheonan before that truly changed the Republic of Korea to say that we have to work together to better deter and respond very strongly to North Korean attacks, that will hopefully change their calculus in the future that they will not do these attacks on the Republic of Korea.

The last thing I'll say is, North Korea does have an opportunity to change. I think the world has made that very clear. If they denuclearize, if they promise to not do the attacks in the future and apologize for their previous acts, the world I think will come to their assistance. But they have to show and demonstrate that commitment before I think the world is willing to do anything in the future because of the cycle that we've seen so many times in the past.

Senator MCCAIN. Can you envision a scenario in which the North Korean regime is willing to give up its nuclear weapons capability?

General SHARP. Sir, not without a whole bunch of pressure from really everyone around the globe. North Korea I think has clearly said that they are developing this nuclear capability. I think it is clear that Kim Jong Il believes he has to have it for regime survival. I don't believe that to be true, but it will take people convincing him that the regime is not at risk.

To answer your question directly, no, I do not see that he will give up his nuclear capability.

Senator MCCAIN. Finally on this issue, earlier this year Secretary Gates on a trip there, as you know, said that their ballistic missile—intercontinental ballistic missile program of North Korea is “becoming a direct threat to the United States” and forecasted that North Korea would develop an intercontinental ballistic missile within 5 years. Is that your assessment?

General SHARP. Sir, we see the continuing development of their ballistic missile capability. As you know, the second Taepodong launch in 2009 was much more successful than the one before. We continue to see their continued growth and development, and that's where they're putting their money, instead of against their people in North Korea. They're putting their money in their military against developing nuclear capabilities, ballistic missile capabilities, and their special operating forces.

I think that the time line that Secretary Gates gave is obviously reasonable and feasible as they go through. Again, we call on North Korea that there are better ways to be able to spend their money in North Korea in order to be able to help their people.

Senator MCCAIN. Admiral Willard, how would the successful deployment of a Chinese aircraft carrier change the perception of balance of power in the Pacific?

Admiral WILLARD. Based on the feedback that we receive from our partners and allies in the Pacific, I think the change in perception by the region will be significant. We recognize that when their

rebuilt aircraft carrier begins its sea trial period and test and evaluation period, perhaps as early as this summer, that there will be a long period of training and development and eventual exercising preceding any operational capability that it could demonstrate. But I think as a symbol the feedback that we receive in our dialogue throughout the region is that the regional partners regard this step by the Chinese in the midst of what has otherwise been a remarkable growth in their military capability as significant.

Senator MCCAIN. It's advertised they have been increased their defense spending by some 12.5 percent. Isn't it pretty clear that that masks a lot of the spending that they're doing on—making on defense?

Admiral WILLARD. We don't know what their overall defense expenditures are, Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Isn't it your estimate that it's more than the 12.5 percent that's advertised?

Admiral WILLARD. Definitely.

Senator MCCAIN. Is there any—is there any truth to speculation that the stealth technology that went into the J-20 could have been—that technology could have been acquired or stolen from the United States?

Admiral WILLARD. I read an account that indicated that perhaps there was an exchange of information as a consequence of the Kosovo campaign and the loss of a 117 that occurred there. I don't know that that's the case. We're viewing the outline of that aircraft and attempting to ascertain its low observable characteristics. But to answer your question directly, Senator, we don't know.

Senator MCCAIN. It seems to me, finally, Mr. Chairman, that—wouldn't you welcome our involvement in this whole issue of Guam, Okinawa, all this issue? Sometimes it may appear that you're operating under some parameters that perhaps have been overtaken by time and events.

Admiral WILLARD. I think there are many complexities involved in that particular aspect of the defense program review initiative. Recalling that DPRI has 19 different parts to it, some of which are being executed today, so much of the realignment within Japan is occurring. This particular aspect of it has been particularly complex, and I would welcome overview of it.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the witnesses again.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCain.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to both of you. General Sharp, I want to come back to the quote by Secretary Gates when he was in China in January that Senator McCain referenced. He said: With the North Koreans continuing development of nuclear weapons and their development of intercontinental ballistic missiles, North Korea is “becoming a direct threat to the United States.”

I assumed when I read that that he was saying to his hosts in Beijing that the North Korean threat to the U.S. is not just growing, but it's changing in nature, and that Beijing should not expect that the U.S. would have limitless patience with the North's behavior. So I wanted to ask you, and then I'll ask Admiral Willard if

you want to add, whether, one, you believe that North Korea is becoming a direct threat to the United States; and second, whether you think that China gets the message that—and this is where I'll invite you in, Admiral Willard—whether our patience with regard to the Six Party Talks and the rest is limited?

General SHARP. Sir, I do agree that North Korea is becoming a direct threat to the United States, and it's obviously continuing to develop capabilities that are also a threat against the alliance and our service members, not only in the Republic of Korea but in the whole region, that Admiral Willard can talk to.

Admiral Willard I think could better answer the question on China.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Admiral?

Admiral WILLARD. Thank you, Senator. I think you summarize it very well. I think we have both a threat that has emanated from the Korean Peninsula, that began as a peninsular threat, began later to range its neighbors, and now to the extent that they're attempting to weaponize an intercontinental ballistic missile capability becomes an international threat, and for sure a potential future threat to the United States.

It's important to note that the People's Republic of China are treaty allies to North Korea. So I think it's appropriate that they understand the United States' impatience and recognition that what is occurring on the Korean Peninsula is not static or stable, but rather we have seen an advancing nuclear capability being developed in the midst of what are very traditional conventional provocations and the cycle that was described earlier.

So we have a significant challenge on the Korean Peninsula, one that we cannot allow to fester longer. So I think from the standpoint of a reflection of impatience, that's a fair statement.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate the answers from both of you. Of course, I agree that North Korea is becoming by its developments, technological, nuclear weapons, intercontinental ballistic missiles, a direct threat to the United States. And of course the leadership of the country is totally unpredictable and hostile toward us.

Incidentally, I just want to share with you something that you may have seen that I was shown. It was a recent report in North Korea's central news agency that said that western military action in Libya demonstrates that Qadhafi was mistaken to disarm nuclearly, in terms of his nuclear program, and that North Korea therefore will maintain its deterrent.

I know there's always a lot of rhetoric spewing out of there, but the question is—and we always come back when we're dealing with North Korea to the Chinese have the most influence on them. As this threat comes together and more directly threatens the United States, what more can we do to convince the People's Republic of China that they too have an interest in curtailing this belligerent behavior by the North Korean Government?

Admiral WILLARD. Senator, I think that dialogue is occurring. I think, as you suggest, it is directed at Beijing. China is the closest partner that North Korea has. China is North Korea's only treaty ally. Unquestionably, given the services that China has performed on behalf of North Korea in the past, China has influence in

Pyongyang. How much influence is a subject of debate and often discussion between China and its international partners.

I think that the focus of the dialogue and making clear in Beijing that the situation on the Korean Peninsula has changed both in South Korea and their willingness to tolerate the continued provocations that have become deadly and compressed in time line, as well as the impatience of the international community over the nuclearization piece, that China's understanding of the acuteness of both those things is an important factor in generating what influence they can exert over Pyongyang in order to change this calculus.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I agree. Obviously, we're all concerned about U.S. overreach and pressures on our budget here now, and it bears saying that in our reaction and our concerns about North Korea's growing capabilities we are joined with even more intensity because of their geographic location by our two, I would say, our two closest allies in the region, South Korea and Japan. I'm right, I assume you'd agree?

Admiral WILLARD. Yes.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I know in response to the Cheonan and the Yeonpyeong Island incidents the leadership of South Korea has made clear that it's not going to tolerate that kind of behavior again and that we've strengthened our combined response capabilities.

I wanted to ask you, General Sharp, in the event of another such attack by North Korea do you believe that South Korea and the United States are prepared to deliver an effective response?

General SHARP. Sir, I do. Since November 23 we have been working very strong on a whole range of possible provocations from North Korea with General Han, the Republic of Korea chairman, and the minister of defense, on plans that in self-defense the Republic of Korea will immediately strike back in a proportionate and a self-defense manner, but very strong; and then looking at what bilateral responses that we would need and potentially do to deter future provocations.

So I do believe we are prepared, yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, I appreciate that. I thank you for it, and I hope that the leadership in North Korea understands that.

Thank you both very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Ayotte is next, and then after her would be Senator Reed. Senator Reed is able to stay for a while. I must leave now and I very much appreciate Senator Reed taking over for that period of time.

Senator Ayotte.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral Willard and General Sharp, I want to share the sentiments of others on the committee and thank you for your distinguished service to our country. Please express our gratitude to all that serve underneath both of you.

I wanted to follow up on the questions that Senator McCain and Senator Lieberman asked you with respect to North Korea developing intercontinental ballistic missile capability. Just my follow-

up would be, in order to defend the United States do we have enough ground-based interceptors to be able to—we're obviously dealing with a threat to South Korea. But when you hear about them developing an intercontinental ballistic missile capability for our country, do we have sufficient resources to protect our country, and Hawaii, who would probably be one of the closet areas?

Admiral WILLARD. Thank you, Senator. I think the answer is yes from the standpoint of capabilities. From the standpoint of capacities, I think we have to continue to look at those very carefully. Particularly in our sea-based systems, there are a limited number of ballistic missile defense missiles in production, and we are accruing them at a pace, but a fairly modest pace.

So the answer is that against the types of threats that we believe North Korea poses our ballistic missile defense system in depth, to include our ground-based interceptors, is sufficient. In terms of future capacities and future contingencies, I think we're going to have to continue to study the strategic landscape in the western Pacific, especially in northeast Asia and on the Korean Peninsula, understand it, and adjust those capacities accordingly.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you very much.

I also wanted to ask you, Admiral, questions about the capabilities of LET and the growth of LET, which originally was a terrorist organization focused on Kashmir in India. Based on your written testimony, you've said in your statement that LET is also now deliberately targeting westerners and engaging coalition forces in Afghanistan, obviously presenting a problem for our troops in Afghanistan.

Can you let us know what your assessment is in terms of LET becoming a global terrorist organization and what threats they present to us, and in particular what more we should be doing to address those threats?

Admiral WILLARD. Thank you, Senator. Within the confines of an unclassified—

Senator AYOTTE. Of course.

Admiral WILLARD.—hearing, I'll attempt to characterize it. Lashkar-e-Taiba, as you are aware, is a Pakistani-based terrorist organization that's been in place for many years. It has declared jihad against the West and specifically against the United States in the past.

Also as you suggest, it has historically been focused on the Kashmir region, particularly in order to conduct attacks inside India, and it was responsible for the attack in Mumbai that we're all very familiar with.

We know that Lashkar-e-Taiba is currently laid down throughout South Asia. We're currently working in Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and India in order to build those nations' capacities or assist in building their capacities to attempt to contain LET in those areas.

But also in your question you allude to my testimony, which states that they are a broader organization than that. They're conducting attacks against our people in Afghanistan today. We have evidence of LET's presence in Europe, in Asia, the broader Asia Pacific, and in the past even in Canada and the United States. So unquestionably they have spread their influence internationally and

are no longer solely focused in South Asia and on India, although that continues to be their main training ground and India continues to be their main target.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you very much, Admiral. Just as a follow-up, I know it's outside your area of command, however, what type of—when you look about LET and the relationship with the Pakistani government, obviously that's an important relationship to us in terms of engaging in the war against terrorism and the war in Afghanistan. At the same time, their existential enemy is India.

What thoughts do you have in terms of what more—you're I'm sure working with your counterpart that has responsibility for Pakistan, but what thoughts do you have in terms of that dynamic and working together between our relationship with India and Pakistan and managing LET and getting Pakistan to really act to root out terrorism within its own country?

Admiral WILLARD. As you know, we have a partnership with both these nations. From a military to military relationship standpoint, the Central Command Commander, General Mattis, is my counterpart that covers the military relationship with Pakistan. Our two staffs work very closely and continually reinforce one another's knowledge of the Asia Pacific and India, South Asia in particular, as we exchange with Central Command and they share their perspectives with regard to our relationship with Pakistan and the rest of Central Command's area of responsibility in those exchanges, so that we understand that dividing line that exists between our two respective regions.

That said, the discussion regarding the government of Pakistan's relationship to LET is a very sensitive one. It continues to be a discussion item between the United States Government and the Pakistani government in Islamabad, and I think will continue to be. And Lashkar-e-Taiba is, as you know, historically linked in that capacity. The government of Pakistan has denounced that linkage between LET. The Indian government would offer that it still exists.

So I think, given the United States' relationship with both India and Pakistan and the importance that we place on those relationships, that it's important that this particular discussion continue to take place and that we continue to work with the government of Pakistan, as you say, to root out terrorism that exists inside their borders.

Senator AYOTTE. I know that my time is up. I think, Admiral, it obviously is going to be very difficult for us to really root out the actions of LET without the Pakistan government actually getting the terrorism outside of their own country and really acting within their own country, obviously with our assistance.

Admiral WILLARD. As the center of gravity exists there, I agree with you.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you both.

Senator REED [presiding]. Thank you very much, Senator.

Gentlemen, thank you not only for your testimony today, but for your service. Particularly, General Sharp, thank you for your extraordinary service. We've met several different places, Bosnia and elsewhere. Thank you very much, General.

Let me just, as a point of departure: We understand that the Chinese are increasing their military capacity, Admiral. Do we have a rough estimate of their budget for defense? I know it's hard to definitively say how much they're spending, but roughly do you have any idea of how much they're spending on an annual basis?

Admiral WILLARD. I don't, Senator. I'd prefer to collect the best of the statistics that we think we do have, perhaps at a classified level, and provide that on the record.

Senator REED. Okay, that's fair. It's just that it strikes me that they have over the last decade or more been able to not only expand their economy, but also increase in more sophisticated weapons, while we have been committed to struggles in many different parts of the world, while still in your capacity maintaining trade, sea lanes open, all of which they take great advantage of. And they've been able to do things because of our involvement and commitment and resources directed elsewhere. But let me take those numbers for the record.

Let me turn to another issue. There's been increasing reports, almost daily reports, of computer intrusions in many different guises emanating from China, and no clear indication whether these are individuals or institutions or sponsored, etcetera. But as we recognize too, the doctrine of the PLA calls for rather aggressive offensive and defensive cyber operations, which could be akin to these.

So let me just pose a general question on the cyber threat emanating from China, what you and your command are trying to do about it and the seriousness that you see this dimension of conflict or potential conflict?

Admiral WILLARD. I think the dimension of warfare is perfectly stated. This is a commons area that the entire world now is dependent on. I think there are international protocols, laws, and policies that eventually will have to be put into place in order to enhance the defensibility of cyber space.

But from a military standpoint, we rely on it very heavily for our command and control capabilities. To your point, we defend against attacks into our system every day. I personally think the advent of Cyber Command and the linkage that U.S. Pacific Command has with Cyber Command, which is a very close one, was a great initiative. It has not only focused our attention on cyber space and its defensibility, but it's built the capacities that we require and personnel that are skilled in this particular area, and it's established the command relationships that I require in order to appropriately fight in that particular commons domain.

So I have no question, as you suggest, that in any future major conflict that the attacks into information systems and command and control systems are paramount to anyone's campaign strategy and that we must be proficient in dealing with warfare in this particular area. So I think you're spot on. And again, this is something that we're working on and have been for a number of years, and I think we're becoming more and more aware of what's in this domain and more proficient at dealing with both the defense of the domain and the active defense should it be required.

Senator REED. And I presume from what you've said that you have constant exercises among all of your commands to test both offensive and defensive capabilities?

Admiral WILLARD. I have a major exercise occurring within the next 4 weeks, where Cyber Command is coming in in some strength to Hawaii in order to work a broader contingency plan, but with a cyber dimension, just as you suggest.

Senator REED. Well, let me take this down to North Korea, General Sharp, because there have been reports that they are persistently using GPS jammers against systems in South Korea and presumably against our forces, too. Can you tell us what kind of an impact that is having and are the South Koreans and allied forces prepared to respond if this jamming is not sporadic and annoying, but persistent and disruptive?

General SHARP. Sir, there have been some GPS jamming incidents up along the North-South Korean border. They have, as you pointed out, been sporadic over the last several months, that have caused some disruption, but not major disruption. South Korea has called on North Korea to stop this GPS jamming, and if we ever went to conflict we are very confident that we could destroy those jammers very quickly so that they would not affect any of our war plans.

Senator REED. A related question, which the Admiral's I think insight is very persuasive, that electronic, cyber dimension is part of every major country's war planning, including I presume the North Koreans. Can we assume that you feel confident the South Koreans and allied forces are able at this juncture to defeat an offensive operation, cyber operation, by the North Koreans?

General SHARP. By the North Koreans, yes, sir. In fact, in our exercises, as Admiral Willard talked about, we, working with Cyber Command, are working to make sure that they are part of our exercises. As you know, the Republic of Korea is also standing up their equivalent to Cyber Command because they understand the importance of being able to defend all of their networks. We are working very closely together in order to be able to counter this growing threat.

Senator REED. Let me ask a question which I raised with Admiral Stavridis. I'm confident of everything you've said, but I presume also that your troops and the South Korean forces are prepared to fight with compasses and maps, not sophisticated GPS devices?

General SHARP. We are, sir. We work very hard to make sure that we have some redundant backup capability. But I don't want to minimize. I don't want to minimize the effect that a strong cyber attack, if we're not properly prepared to defend against it, would have. Our capabilities are really enhanced significantly because of our capabilities in the cyber arena. That's why I think it's so important that we really do dedicate all the work that we're doing worldwide in order to be able to defend our networks.

Senator REED. Thank you very much.

My time has expired. Senator Portman.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here today and for your service, Admiral, General, and for all the men and women who are serving under you.

We've talked about a lot of interesting things here today. I missed some of the testimony, but I know you got into some of the issues that are directly affecting both of your commands. I want to

turn to Japan for a second if I could and the continuing devastation there to one of our strongest allies in the world and the strong U.S. response by our military, which I know is greatly appreciated.

Specifically, of course, focused on what's going on with their nuclear power plants, the Fukushima site I know continues to concern the Department of Energy and our Nuclear Regulatory Commission, based on testimony last month before the Senate Energy Committee I'm also on. But, Admiral Willard, if you would, if you could just give us an update on what you're doing in relationship to Japan, how you're helping. I'd also like to know what they've asked for and have they asked for things that we have not been able to provide?

Admiral WILLARD. Thank you, Senator. The current state of the Fukushima Daiichi plants I think was properly characterized by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission today as static, but not stable. Japan experienced another 6.6 magnitude aftershock last evening, this one on an island and very close to the coastline, and as a consequence not only shook up the area that has already been devastated by earthquake and tsunami, but took power down in the Fukushima Daiichi plants for about 50 minutes last night until it could be again restored.

So it remains a tenuous condition of the plants. As you know, there are six located there, three of which contain—were operating plants at the time of the earthquake and are currently the focus of much effort, Plants 1, 2, and 3. 4, 5, and 6 had been defueled for maintenance, but there are spent fuel pools, swimming pools essentially with many tons of spent nuclear fuel in them, across all six of these plants.

So we're maintaining oversight of the status of all six and very, very closely watching what is ongoing with the three that were formerly operating and that are now in a damaged and very tenuous state.

I would characterize the progress being made as steady and we're continuing to see incremental improvement day to day as not only the decay heat problem is dissipating, but the Japanese are making—are achieving through their actions incremental technical advances and stabilizing the plants. They recently introduced nitrogen to Plant No. 1 containment vessel, which was a major milestone, and they're pursuing the same thing in Plants No. 2 and 3, and that's designed to keep the prospects of a next hydrogen explosion down. So tenuous operation.

We're supporting the Japanese Defense Forces in their support to TEPCO and all of the nuclear agencies and experts that are now devoted to stabilizing these plants. They have - - we have offered a number of capabilities to General Ariki. He in turn requested consideration for several that they felt would fulfil gaps.

So for example, we've had unmanned aerial vehicles flying over the plants and providing thermal imagery and optics imagery every day to the Japanese in support of this, and other sensors as well. We deployed one that assesses surface contamination and we fly it every day the weather will permit. We're maintaining now a continuous mapping of the surface contamination around the plant area, such that we're able to share that with the Japanese and,

frankly, with others, so that we all have the same information that we're working from.

Then another example and a more recent one is General Ariki requested that we execute a prepare to deploy order for 150 Marines in a special radiological unit, who have now laid down in Japan to support the Japanese Defense Forces in the radiological areas, such as decontamination and radiological monitoring and so forth. So they're conducting work together to exchange views and standards and are prepared to work together as necessary to continue to advance this stabilization work against the plants.

Senator PORTMAN. Admiral, is there anything that the Japanese have asked that we have not been able to provide?

Admiral WILLARD. No, Senator, there hasn't been. They have requested some capabilities—there's a barge that handles contaminated water that the Japanese actually built for Russia, that they have asked for support with, and we don't have a capability like that. So there are some capabilities they have sought that perhaps weren't U.S. technologies that were readily accessible. But I think we have by and large fulfilled every request they've made, and we have many other capabilities on standby right now in the event that they require more.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you.

General Sharp, I think I just have a minute here. I'm not sure. My clock doesn't seem to be working, which is a dangerous thing for a Senator.

Senator REED. You have a minute at least.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you.

Thank you, Admiral, and I think a number of us are very interested in what's going on in Japan, and obviously you need to focus on your primary mission at the same time. But as a great ally, we would hope that we could continue to provide that kind of expertise and resources.

General, what concerns you most right now on the Korean Peninsula? I know we've talked about the ballistic missile capability and Senator Reed's talked about the jamming capability. What is your biggest concern today on the peninsula?

General SHARP. Senator, it is the continuing development in North Korea of a nuclear capability and a ballistic missile capability, and just the history that they have had over the past many decades of provocations and attacks, that I hope Kim Jong Il seeks that South Korea has changed and that these provocations and attacks stop. Unfortunately, as I said, I continue to worry whether they will continue or not.

As Kim Jong Il works towards trying—let me just stop there. My major concern is the continued provocation from North Korea.

Senator PORTMAN. My time has now expired, but maybe we'll have a chance to pursue the sentence you started at some future date. Thank you, General.

Thank you, Admiral.

Senator REED. Thank you, Senator Portman.

Senator Akaka.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral Willard and General Sharp, I want to say aloha and welcome to the committee.

Admiral WILLARD. Aloha, Senator.

Senator AKAKA. I thank both of you for being here today. I know the men and women you lead have worked hard and sacrificed to keep our region stable.

General Sharp, let me add my congratulations and appreciation as you retire. Your departure will be a significant loss to the Army and our country, and I want to wish you the best in your future endeavors.

Admiral Willard, I want to thank you for going to Japan as you did to see for yourself the destruction caused by the tsunami and the need for assistance, and also I particularly want to tell you that I appreciate you and your wife Donna for meeting with the service men and women and their families and helping them through this stressful period that they've been in. I think that really brought the human touch to our forces in Japan.

Admiral Willard, the Law of the Sea Treaty has been on the table for years. Recently, Admiral Roughead stated that the most important thing regarding activity in the Arctic is for the United States to become party to the Law of the Sea. If the United States becomes a signatory to the treaty, how would that affect our national security policy and influence in the region?

Admiral WILLARD. Thank you, Senator Akaka. It's a great question. As you have stated, we have not yet ratified the U.N. Convention for Law of the Sea. We took receipt of it in about 1984 and we have been adhering to its legal tenets ever since, so on the maritime domain my forces adhere to the legal framework that the UNCLOS represents.

But not having ratified it is both a perception challenge within the region, it is a messaging issue, I think, with our partners and allies within the region that we haven't, and generates a little bit of uncertainty as to why we haven't. But I think more importantly, it has kept the United States from the table in advancing the Law of the Sea framework over time.

It is undoubtedly the international norm right now for resolving sea space territorial issues, sovereignty issues, economic exclusion zone issues, resource disputes, as well as establishing the legal framework for conducting our business on the maritime domain and in that environment. So as Admiral Roughead suggests, I think it's very important that the United States Congress ratify the United Nations Convention for Law of the Sea, and I think not only will it then establish the United States as party to the framework agreements that UNCLOS connotes in sorting through the challenges in the Arctic and other regions of the world, but most importantly it keeps us at the table as the signators determine where the treaty will go into the future.

Senator AKAKA. General Sharp, with almost 37 years of service, the last few as commander of U.S. Forces in Korea, this question has been asked, but if you can add to this: What are the most important keys to ensuring stability on the Korean Peninsula?

General SHARP. Sir, thank you for that question. I think the most important is the continued strong alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States and the continuing development as an alliance of the capabilities that we have there from a ROK and a U.S. perspective to deter North Korea and then be prepared for the

full range of possible actions that North Korea could take in the future.

Over the last 3 years, as has been said, I think we've made great progress in that line, with the leadership of President Lee, President Bush, and then President Obama, to form and strengthen the alliance to be able to counter what we have seen North Korea do to become more and more provocative. I am very confident that the alliance now is strong and is growing stronger in the future.

But we can't stop. We see North Korea continuing to develop capabilities that we must constantly adjust our plans for, both in our exercises and our capabilities there. As we move towards OPCON transition, the continued demonstration of commitment of the United States to Northeast Asia I think is going to be very important to continue to deter North Korea and really to shape Northeast Asia for the foreseeable future.

Senator AKAKA. General Sharp, recent news articles from Korea indicate that there has been an agreement in principle to allow the Korean chairman of the joint chiefs of staff to command U.S. support troops in case of a provocation from North Korea. Can you tell us your thoughts about this agreement, as well as what the Korean chairman would have under his control?

General SHARP. Sir, the press articles are not correct. If we are going—if the U.S. forces in Korea are going to support the ROK chairman as the lead for countering provocations, they would be under my command and we would be in a supporting-supported relationship with the Republic of Korea if both national governments—if both governments, obviously, agreed to that type of response.

Clearly, provocation response, the lead for that is the Republic of Korea and the ROK chairman. We the U.S. support those type of responses from a wide variety of different possibilities, but again that would be agreed to by both of our National authorities.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator REED. Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, Admiral, I'd like to echo other comments up here and particularly those of Senator Akaka in expressing my appreciation and gratitude to you and your wife and other people in your command for the level of assistance and attention that's been paid to the situation in Japan. I think there's an old saying that the big part of leadership is showing up, and the fact that we showed up so quickly and the fact that your wife actually went among the people who were in these shelters I think is an enormous signal from our country to such a vital friend and ally as Japan.

I'd like to also express my admiration for the leadership that you have shown in overseeing the security threats of our country in this region that is so vital to our National interest. You've quite frankly been a breath of fresh air in my view, a clear head, calm style, steady hand on the rudder. That's what we need out there in this part of the world that can become so volatile if things aren't handled in that fashion.

Senator McCain mentioned that he thought we should perhaps have a hearing on the issues of base realignments and the realignment within Korea, both of them. I, rather than asking a lot of

questions on those issues today—as you know, I worked as a defense planner in the region looking at these exact issues many, many years ago, in the 1970s. I was able to revisit Okinawa, Guam, Tinian, Saipan last February. When I returned, I asked for a hearing, a full committee hearing, at that time.

I will restate my view that I think it's extremely important that we get this up at a higher level on the Senate's radar screen. We need to get some solutions in this area for the clarity of our relationships, particularly with Japan, but with all players out there in the region.

Also, I have a concern that we are at this point allowing the process to be determined in many ways simply by the momentum of defense planners at a time when a lot of these pieces are in question. So I hope we can have a hearing. I'm going to be traveling to Korea and then into Guam again and Okinawa in the coming weeks, and Chairman Levin is going to accompany me to Guam and Okinawa. I think it will be a very important set of visits and perhaps we can try to find ways to at least clarify this matter and move forward.

Admiral, you have mentioned many times about your concern with respect to increased Chinese naval activity in this part of the world. I know after my visit last February there was an increase in the operational tempo in the region, the Cheonan incident in Korea, the incident in the Shikaku Islands off of Okinawa. I would like to get just your views on the dynamic behind this increase in activity.

Also, it's pretty apparent that the Japanese have begun to adjust the positioning of their military, at least made some initial decisions in that area. Could you fill us in on that?

Admiral WILLARD. Yes, Senator, I will. To answer the last question first, the Japanese have determined that over the next several years they will re-bias their ground forces from what is currently a focus in northern Japan, the Hokkaido area and northern Honshu, to be more balanced, I think, and we'll see their ground forces be laid down further south over time.

Their naval forces continue to advance and they are I think in all respects becoming more influential throughout the region with many of the allies and partners that the United States enjoys. So Japan is advancing and adjusting.

With regard to the Chinese and the challenges that we especially witnessed last year, the assertiveness that was demonstrated in the South China Sea and, as you mentioned, in the Shinkaku Islands near Japan, we believe the motive behind that was a declaration by the Chinese regarding both their sovereign claims over the contested areas within the South China Sea region and over the Shinkakus, as well as a declaration regarding Chinese security and what they termed “the near seas” and an assertion that military activity, foreign military activity, within those near seas should only come with their permission and generally a desire to influence foreign militaries and particularly the U.S. military from the region.

I would offer that since the discussions that occurred in the ASEAN forums and the very strong statements by Secretaries Clinton and Gates over the course of their participation in ASEAN,

ASEAN regional forum, ASEAN defense ministers meeting, plus the East Asia Summit and the Shangri-La Dialogue, there has been a retrenchment a bit by the Chinese navy, such that while we continue to experience their shadowing of some of our ships and so forth that are operating in these waters, we have not seen the same level of assertiveness in 2011 that we witnessed in 2010, which I take as a positive, particularly given the fact that we have mil-to-mil relations that have recommenced to a modest extent, and perhaps we can make an advancement in that regard.

But I think there is no question regarding their aims to have great influence over that maritime space, and especially over the contested areas that they've laid claim to both the South China Sea and the East China Sea.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Admiral.

My time has expired, but I would like to get a quick comment, General, from you if I might with respect to this proposed relocation of our military people in Korea. There's a lot of arguments still about the notion of keeping a large American military presence in Korea if it were to be there for the local defense of one nation. I would just like to get your comment quickly on the ability of these forces to deploy to other crisis points outside of Korea.

General SHARP. Sir, as you know, we have 28,500 troops in the Republic of Korea today and Secretary Gates and the President have said that's the right force level, which I agree with, for the foreseeable future. The focus of those troops is obviously number one every single day on the defense of the Republic of Korea. It will go—for the foreseeable future, that is the purpose of our troops there.

As we do move into the future with full tour normalization, if you can have troops there in Korea that have their families there, depending upon the situation in North Korea and what we need based upon what North Korea is doing, it can bring additional options to our Nation as to what to do with our troops.

Senator WEBB. I wish I had more time to discuss that. I may want to in a future discussion.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator REED. Senator Hagan.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for being here and for your excellent service to our country.

I wanted to ask about the Chinese military capabilities in cyber space. As you know, the Chinese cyber intrusions have reached a new level of concern. I understand that the Chinese military is becoming increasingly capable in cyber space operations. It's also a concern of mine, especially with respect to our integrated networkcentric defense systems.

Would you please describe, Admiral Willard, your concerns regarding cyber security and how best we can reduce our vulnerability? And does PACOM have any plans in place to approach the problem in a multilateral fashion, including partner countries, inter-agency, and public-private entities?

Admiral WILLARD. Thank you, Senator. A great question, especially on the multilateral side of it. We certainly have concerns in cyber space. As I've mentioned many times, both to partners in the

region as well as in my interactions in Washington, we are defending our networks every day, not solely against Chinese intrusions, but against many intrusions that come from a whole host of global sources.

I depend entirely nearly on cyber space for the command and control of the broader Asia Pacific, of our forces there. I know that General Sharp would say the same thing about his capability to command and control on the Korean Peninsula.

In broader doctrine statements across the board, to include China, in unclassified documents that describe their military goals, the ability to affect the information systems and command and control networks of an adversary are an important basic tenet in all of that. So there's no doubt that there's a need to be able to defend cyber space.

The advent of Cyber Command has been I think a great initiative on the part of the United States and we're working with Cyber Command over the coming weeks in a large-scale exercise in Hawaii, in a large-scale contingency, to advance our ability to both characterize cyber space, the domain that we're operating in, and to sense attacks in cyber space, and to be able to defend in cyber space.

So it's critically important to my work and unquestionably there are global challenges, both state actors and non-state actors, that are challenging this particular domain.

I guess the last point I would make is an appeal that the United States in conjunction with the international community must address this. Our allies and partners are coming to us asking for help in this area, to your point regarding multilateral, and we have bilateral partners. We have treaty alliances with five nations in the Asia Pacific—the Republic of Korea and Japan, of course, but also the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia. There are cyber space concerns among all those bilateral parties.

So I think it's a very important issue, an important issue for the international community, and an important alliance issue that we need to deal with.

Senator HAGAN. Do you think more of these threats are actually coming from China than other places around the globe?

Admiral WILLARD. I think there is a sizable percentage of pressure coming from China, yes.

Senator HAGAN. I'm always concerned about the people that we hire from a technology standpoint, to be sure that we have the resources in our STEM education, our science, technology, education, and math, to be sure we are growing the highly educated, qualified people to run this. Are you using mostly military or are we contracting a lot of this expertise?

Admiral WILLARD. We're doing both. Right now we're attempting to recruit cyber expertise into our military and then grow that capability inside our military. Undoubtedly, as our economy continues to improve we'll see pressures to go after that expertise. So we're in competition with many that are concerned about information technology experts.

But we're attempting to grow from the ground up a capacity within our military, both uniformed and civilian, but uniformed for sure, that will give us this capability.

Senator HAGAN. I think it's very important for our whole future.

Let me ask a question now on India and Pakistan in a regional context. I know, Admiral Willard, Pakistan is not in your area of responsibility, but I believe it's important to talk about Pakistan and India in a regional context. Securing Pakistani regional cooperation while placating India is a difficult task. Pakistani officials seek a long-term bilateral partnership with the U.S. based on a regional vision conducive to Pakistani strategic interests and that's going to be difficult to develop as long as there continues to be an India-Pakistani impasse on Kashmir.

Progress is possible if the U.S. carefully reduces India's expectations for influence in Afghanistan, facilitates the Pakistani movement to reduce its proxies in Afghanistan, and gets India and Pakistan to the negotiating table. I think of great importance is the U.S. making every effort to restore the balance of power between these two South Asian rivals.

How do you see the Pakistani and India impasse regarding Kashmir and the competition over Afghanistan playing out?

Admiral WILLARD. It's an excellent question. There are certainly dynamics between India and Pakistan that are based on historical animosities, ages old, that we're all I think aware of, and Kashmir has often been a focal point for that antagonism to play out. The recent concerns in Kashmir that manifested both in demonstrations within the valley and have resulted in some of the accusations that have gone back and forth regarding Chinese presence in the region and so on, as well as terrorist activity across the line of control, are making this particular challenge acute for the moment.

I think the Indians have made overtures to attempt to work more closely, at least at the ministerial level, with Pakistan in terms of ongoing discussions. But unquestionably there remains a level of tension across that border that is very hard to impact. And given the turmoil that has been Pakistan for the past couple of years, it's hard to imagine that the fragile governance in Islamabad is going to rise to a level where the impasse can be broken in the near term.

I think, to your point, it's important that the United States continue to work with both these partners very carefully and thoughtfully in order to encourage them to come to the table. India has very firm views on this and are sometimes quick to remind us that in their view Kashmir is a bilateral issue and theirs alone to deal with.

So I think that the way in which we handle this challenge, the way in which we deal with the two militaries, the way in which we encourage their respective governments to engage, very, very important, not just to India and to Pakistan, two nuclear-powered countries, but to all of South Asia and, as you suggest, to the dynamic in Afghanistan that is of great concern to us.

Senator HAGAN. General Sharp, my next question was for you and my time has expired. So I will submit that in the record. Thank you.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Hagan.
Senator Manchin.

Senator MANCHIN. Admiral Willard and General Sharp, thank you so much. I appreciate it. I know this is going to be a long morning.

Real quick, Admiral Willard, if you will. At a previous Armed Services Committee hearing in March, National Intelligence Director Clapper said he believed that China posed the greatest threat to the United States. Do you agree with Director Clapper's views?

Admiral WILLARD. I don't, although there's a great deal of qualification I think before the question that was posed could be answered. So in terms of the context around the question of what poses a great threat to the United States in the Asia Pacific, we've discussed the imminent threat that North Korea poses to the Korean Peninsula in terms of the levels of provocations that we've witnessed in a year and the growing threat of nuclearization and advancements in missile technologies on the Korean Peninsula that are of grave concern to both General Sharp and myself and I know our government as well.

So there are many challenges in the Asia Pacific. China's military advancements are certainly a great challenge. Our relationship with China—if I were asked what biggest challenge I face as the Pacific Command commander, I would tell you it's the relationship between the United States and China, in order to advance that relationship to ultimately become a constructive partnership, if that's possible.

So I think I would focus on the more acute threats in answer to a question that didn't have a great deal of context surrounding it.

Senator MANCHIN. General Sharp, at every Armed Services hearing I learn about the efforts of the Department of Defense to build capacity of friendly nations, especially in Afghanistan and Iraq, our ultimate goal being the independence and professionalism of the Nations' security forces so they can defend themselves. I think it begs the question with Korea. We've been there for quite a while, since 1954. Is there any end in sight of our involvement in that task?

General SHARP. Sir, to begin with, the Republic of Korea military is very strong and they are growing stronger every day. If you look at what they are producing internally for their military, what they buy from us from foreign military sales, the exercises that we work together on, the plans that we have developed, the most recent defense reform plan that Minister Kim and General Han put out, which is going to make them even a stronger joint capable organization to be able to deter and defeat the threats of North Korea, they are very strong. So I don't want to underplay their capability.

But second, I do think that Northeast Asia is a vital part—we have vital national interests in Northeast Asia that we should protect. If you look into the future, I think that our commitment, what our armed forces bring to the plans that we have for the Korean Peninsula, we ought to keep them for the foreseeable future, not only from a deterrent perspective, but if North Korea were to miscalculate and do an attack, to be able to as quickly as possible stop that attack and defeat the North Korean military.

Senator MANCHIN. Would you know what percentage of South Korea's budget is currently contributing to the U.S. force structure in South Korea?

General SHARP. Sir, they pay about 47 percent, 46, 47 percent of our non-personnel stationing costs in Korea. We get approximately somewhere between about \$800 million, depending upon the won rate of the day, in burden-sharing money each year. The Republic of Korea signed up for a 5-year agreement with inflation on it back in 2009 that goes to 2013 to help defray our personnel stationing costs there.

Senator MANCHIN. Do you think they will be able to contribute more as the financial—as we can see, the financial burden that we have right now taking care of America is getting ever more increasing.

General SHARP. Sir, that will be up to the negotiations in 2012—I'm sorry, in 2013, as this goes through. But I will say that the Republic of Korea support not just monetarily, but along all avenues, for our troops in the Republic of Korea. We feel it on a day to day basis and it is fantastic. I've never been stationed anywhere in the world where the support from the people, from the military, is as strong as it is in the Republic of Korea.

Senator MANCHIN. Admiral Willard, for the last 2 decades China's been building its regional and world influence by spending money on large infrastructure projects in impoverished countries and buying up the rights to natural resources in those countries, which are very, very alarming to me. How does this strategy affect PACOM's efforts to exert our United States influence with the countries in your area of responsibility? How do you see them moving in? That's what I really—that's a follow-up to the first question I was asking about the ultimate threat or intimate threat.

This is what we're seeing strategically they're doing. Maybe it's alarming from the military buildup, but also economically what they're doing and the control they'll have of nations by using their economic might more than their military might.

Admiral WILLARD. I might answer it two ways. Unquestionably, the economic influence of China throughout the Asia Pacific region is profound. I might offer, the economic influence of China globally has been remarkable in the last couple of decades.

On the one hand, there is great benefit to that to this region. I mean, this is a region that has its share of certainly poverty and misshapen militaries and challenged governances, and to some extent the benefits of China's economic boom have become larger Asia's economic boom, and that's of benefit I think to the security and stability in the region.

On the other hand, the influence they attempt to exert and in that way exact favor from some of these countries I think is the influence that we might be concerned about. I would offer that as China was exerting its influence last year in a very assertive way that we were receiving general appeals across the Asia Pacific from among our partners and some of our just emerging partners with regard to a desire for more U.S. influence in the region. So they're asking for the U.S. to be present and asking for our influence to in some ways I think counterbalance what they are being challenged with China.

But make no mistake, I think the economy of Asia has benefited greatly from the economic achievements of China.

Senator MANCHIN. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Manchin.
Senator Blumenthal.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Perhaps I should begin, Admiral Willard and General Sharp, by thanking both of you for your service, as I'm sure you've heard numerous times, but we can't thank you enough, and the men and women serving with you and sacrificing away from their families, most of them, and thank their families as well for their service.

I'd like to ask both of you about the balance of power insofar as submarines are concerned, and specifically whether you are troubled by the increasing numbers and capabilities of submarines on the part of the Nations within the area that you have jurisdiction.

Admiral WILLARD. I can start. I think General Sharp can talk a little bit about North Korea's order of battle, its submarine force, which is unique in its various types.

But within the Asia Pacific region I would offer two points. First, if there is an advancing submarine force in the region it's China. They've made advancements not just in submarine numbers, but in submarine capabilities as well, both nuclear-powered and conventionally-powered. So we have been observing that for some time and this is a sizable submarine fleet.

The second point is what that has generated, I think, is a view by the neighboring nations to counterbalance that through acquisition of their own military systems. We've seen now neighbors in the region developing and purchasing submarine capabilities with increasing pace, nations such as Indonesia expressing interest in acquiring submarine capability; Malaysia with the Scorpine. Right now Vietnam is acquiring Kilo submarines. And frankly, even the white paper in Australia indicates that the Australians will sizably increase their submarine force.

So we've seen submarines proliferate at the same time that we've seen the Chinese inventory grow.

General SHARP. Sir, from the North Korean perspective, we obviously are very concerned about the North Korean submarine capability and the money that they continue to put into their asymmetric threats, of which especially the special ops versions of their submarines give them that capability, also and probably most importantly because they have demonstrated a willingness to use them, as last year they did when they sunk the Cheonan with the North Korean submarine.

We are working very hard with the Republic of Korea to be prepared to counter and deter and properly respond to North Korean submarine attacks, and that has been demonstrated through a series of anti-sub warfare exercises that we've done with the Republic of Korea. The Republic of Korea is buying more capability to be able to detect North Korean submarines. They understand the importance of that. We are continually focusing our ISR efforts to be able to watch what North Korean submarines are doing.

So yes, we have an increasing concern over that.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And are you satisfied that the United States is building adequately in its submarine program, at the rate now of two a year, to meet those threats so far as our defense is concerned, and also to protect our allies against the threat, even

though it may be asymmetric, as you've described it, still very troubling?

General SHARP. Sir, Admiral Willard and Admiral Walsh have been outstanding to be able to help work together, as I said, on exercises to increase our capability. The overall naval one, I'd defer to Admiral Willard on.

Admiral WILLARD. I think all of us certainly in the Navy and as a combatant commander, I was very encouraged when the Virginia buy was increased to two per year, and I'm very satisfied with the bias of our submarine force into the Pacific, where I think appropriately, given time, distance factors and the description that I gave earlier of the large number, increasing numbers of submarines throughout the region, I think we're appropriately served with both our classes of submarines that are located in the Pacific.

So I'm satisfied. I'm continually looking for ways in which the operational availability, the forward presence of those submarines, can be increased. I'm assured that I'm about maxed out, but I can certainly always use more.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I assume, without putting words in your mouth, that you would be dissatisfied if the two per year program were reduced and you'd be concerned in that instance?

Admiral WILLARD. I would be concerned about the U.S. submarine inventory, yes.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Aside from China, where do you think the greatest potential threat in terms of sub building is among those nations within your command?

Admiral WILLARD. North Korea has remained—with the exception of the small submarines that they export, their submarine force is relatively modest. China's is obviously very sizable. The remainder throughout the region are nations that we are either allied or partnering with and, frankly, so is China. So at the end of the day, provided that China emerges more a partner than a competitor in the Asia Pacific, I think we'll be well served with the submarine fleet that exists out there.

Russia is a supplier of submarines globally. So as a supplier, a foreign military sales provider, I think nations in Europe, and Russia in particular, are the big manufacturers of the world's submarines.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I apologize for what may be, probably is, an overly simplistic question, but how would you compare the capabilities of the Chinese subs to our—the submarines that we're producing, the most advanced that we're producing?

Admiral WILLARD. I think unquestionably the United States produces the finest submarines in the world. I think when we look at China's capabilities, they are improving. Frankly, that's true globally. The ability to quiet a submarine, the ability to keep conventionally powered submarines submerged longer, these are all technologies that are advancing.

So the margin inevitably closes in terms of quiet machinery and endurance and so forth. But there is no question in my mind where the finest submarines in the world are produced.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral Willard and General Sharp, thank you both very much for being here. I apologize for missing your testimony earlier. I had to preside over the Senate.

I was pleased to hear your responses to Senator Blumenthal's questions about our submarine fleet. Connecticut isn't the only State that has a great interest in what's going on there. We follow that very closely in New Hampshire as well because of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, so I was pleased to hear your very positive responses.

I wanted to ask you—probably I should direct this first at Admiral Willard, but, General Sharp, you may also have some perspective. As you know, over the last year and a half NATO has been debating what its future role in the world would be and has developed its latest strategic concept. One of the real subjects of debate during that whole process was what its future relationship would be around the world, and Asia of course is one of the very key areas that was discussed.

NATO obviously has a good partnership with Japan, Korea, and Australia. But I just wonder if you have any views about what the perspective is among other countries in Asia, and particularly China?

Admiral WILLARD. Thank you. I think that's a great question and one that we frankly haven't been exploring with our allies and partners to a great extent. I would offer two points. I think, number one, the United States obviously, a NATO ally and very comfortable working across NATO and, as you suggest, with NATO having influence in the region already, the United States welcomes multilateral opportunities globally. It only strengthens our ability to—whether it's to respond to a disaster or respond to a contingency. It's a great enabling function.

Within Asia, I would offer that ASEAN, East Asia Summit, some of the multilateral fora that exist in Asia, are favored greatly by the Asian nations. We've seen a strengthening of those multilateral forums over the past couple of years in particular. I was greatly encouraged by ASEAN's advances last year.

So without having polled my allies and partners in the region, I would offer that, while some level of influence and partnership by NATO in the region would be welcome, there is also an affinity for these Asian multilateral groups and their own ability to handle both the security issues and economic issues within the neighborhood.

General SHARP. The only thing that I would add—this is from a Republic of Korea perspective—I think President Lee has very strongly said that he understands the importance of global security and the Republic of Korea responsibility to contribute to that, so hence the Republic of Korea does have a PRT, Provincial Reconstruction Team, in Afghanistan. They are in eight or nine UN peacekeeping missions around the world. They are establishing a peacekeeping force in order to be able to help with peacekeeping issues around the world. So they clearly understand the importance of these type of organizations and security and stability around the world, which they are contributing to.

Senator SHAHEEN. Do you have any perspective on how China views NATO and whether it views it as a threat, a rival?

Admiral WILLARD. I think, without having discussed NATO with the Chinese, but I think studying the Chinese as we do, the Chinese would offer that they're most focused on multilateral forums with Chinese characteristics ideally, if not Asian characteristics, associated with them. I think as a consequence they would view a western alliance in that—through that optic.

Senator SHAHEEN. I don't think anybody today has mentioned the Strait of Malacca, but we hear a lot of concern about what's happening in the Middle East with Hormuz and the Suez Canal, but very little about the Strait of Malacca. It's, as you know, one of the world's most critical shipping lanes.

I wonder if you're concerned about potential threats to the Strait and what those might be and whether, given China's continued naval modernization, if we should be concerned about how they're viewing the Strait?

Admiral WILLARD. Interestingly, I think China would offer that one of the motives for their naval advancements is their concern over the strategic nature of the Strait of Malacca. In fact, in the Asia Pacific we have a dozen strategic choke points similar to the Strait of Malacca, none quite that dense in terms of shipping population, but these are strategic choke points that in history have been fought over and continue to be viewed as critical for the movement of commerce in Asia.

But to your point, the Strait of Malacca is handling the bulk of \$5 trillion a year in commercial trade for the region and more than a trillion dollars a year of U.S. bilateral trade in and out of the region. And it's the choke point that empties into the South China Sea, which is so critical and strategic for all of the partners there.

So Strait of Malacca security is important to everybody in the Asia Pacific. We are fortunate that Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand have joined together to commit to securing the Strait, and they did this some years ago when piracy was a particular problem, and they did a good job of quelling that particular threat.

As we view the importance of that particular choke point in the region, I think that were a conflict in the region to ensue the Strait of Malacca and its importance in terms of providing resource to the region becomes focal. In the past as Middle East wars have been fought and U.S. Pacific Command has flowed forces in that direction, we've had concerns in the past regarding the security of the Strait as our forces inevitably have to flow through there to get to the Indian Ocean.

Senator SHAHEEN. Does China cooperate on the effort to keep the Strait open?

Admiral WILLARD. They do. I think they acknowledge the role that the four Nations that I mentioned are playing in terms of maintaining the security in the Strait. Again, they're a huge user, as is the United States. They've been the beneficiary of the security that has been provided across the region, at times by the United States, but most recently by the Nations that are contiguous themselves.

Senator SHAHEEN. My time has expired, but I'd be interested, and for the record may ask this, whether there are lessons to be

learned from the efforts to prevent piracy in the Strait, if there are lessons that could be learned for the Horn of Africa and the piracy threat there?

Admiral WILLARD. I think the number one lesson in this is the four Nations that have joined together to quell piracy in the Strait of Malacca are all successful nation states with strong governance and some level of military power. When we look at the Horn of Africa and Somalia, it is an ungoverned state, without the ability to secure itself, and the center of gravity of those pirates are ashore in that particular area of the world, and we're endeavoring to fight them at the far end, at sea, with mother ships and small boats, and we can't get to that center of gravity.

So I think you have the difference between governed states dealing with a piracy issue and an ungoverned territory.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

Just a few additional questions. One of the elements, the inter-related elements that are involved in the Okinawa- Guam realignment, is that there be tangible progress under the agreement, and those are words of art, towards completion of the Futenma Replacement Facility on Okinawa. Admiral, has there been any such tangible progress yet as it applies to the replacement facility?

Admiral WILLARD. Senator, if progress toward the landfill permit being signed and progress toward a discussion or a decision on airport configuration by the time of the upcoming Two Plus Two between the United States and Japan can be considered to be significant and tangible, then yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Has the landfill permit, which is required to begin construction of that replacement airfield, been signed by the governor?

Admiral WILLARD. It has not.

Chairman LEVIN. Isn't that the meaning of "tangible progress"? Isn't that a term of art under that agreement that specifically—at least that's always been our understanding—requires that that permit be signed?

Admiral WILLARD. Well, there are six criteria right now that were written into our Authorization Act last year with regard to the fiscal year 2011 appropriation, and among those six criteria, as you suggest, the "tangible" word is used in each. Whether or not progress toward the signature or the signature itself is regarded as tangible, sir, I would defer to you to decide.

We believe that progress is being made toward the governor signing that document. We believe that subsequently the landfill itself and the seawall need to follow fairly quickly, and as we progress toward the Two Plus Two we're hopeful that the final runway configuration debate can be put to rest.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, the next question has to do with the force mix for the Marines, whether or not, as it's been reported, the Marines would prefer to change the force mix to include more operational troops and fewer headquarters units. Is that true? This is relative to the movement to Guam.

Admiral WILLARD. Senator, there's a—there is a Marine Corps preferred laydown. We've looked at certainly Guam in particular and, frankly, our entire laydown of Marines across the Pacific, to

include Marines elsewhere in Japan—as you know, a Marine air wing is located in one of the main islands—the Marines that are located in Hawaii, and the prospects that rotational forces of Marines could be located in northern Australia or other locations proximate to Southeast Asia.

The headquarters elements is an important part of that and there are preferences that the Marines have expressed with regard to how to distribute the headquarters elements across those Marine air-ground task force units in order to optimize them.

Chairman LEVIN. As it relates to Guam, is there a preference?

Admiral WILLARD. There is.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you know what it is offhand? Is it for a greater number of headquarters units?

Admiral WILLARD. It is for a redistribution of the headquarters that were originally planned.

Chairman LEVIN. To reduce the number of headquarters units, is that what their preference is on Guam, relatively proportionate to the operational?

Admiral WILLARD. It would reduce them, but that's not the purpose. The purpose is to distribute the headquarters so that we have senior leadership in the appropriate places where Marines are laid down.

Chairman LEVIN. Got you.

On the transfer of power issue going on allegedly in North Korea, recently Kim Jong Il's son was not given the position that apparently he was expected to get, a week ago or so. Is that significant in your judgment?

Admiral WILLARD. Go ahead Skip.

General SHARP. I don't—

Chairman LEVIN. I should have addressed that to you, General, of course.

General SHARP. I don't think it's significant. I think that the continued progression of grooming Kim Jong Eun and putting people in positions of power within North Korea that support the eventual change is continuing.

Chairman LEVIN. General, is there any recent development relative to gaining access to North Korea to account for our service personnel who are still missing from the Korean War? Any progress on that?

General SHARP. Sir, with the way that North Korea has been conducting provocations the last year and continuing, obviously the safety of our recovery teams going into North Korea would be of great concern, and we have not moved forward in that. That recovery team really comes under Admiral Willard. He may want to add something to that.

Admiral WILLARD. General Sharp states it correctly. It's the security for those humanitarian-associated teams that we would be concerned about and the conduct of North Korea over the past many months has not been conducive to restarting it.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, the time is out for our vote and we must run along. I want to thank you both again. Good luck to you, General Sharp, on your future endeavors; Admiral, to you and your family. We're delighted you have them with you today. We thank you both for your great testimony.

We'll stand adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 12:19 p.m., the committee adjourned.]