

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

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**BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE**

SECOND SESSION, 112TH CONGRESS

ON

**CURRENT READINESS OF U.S. FORCES IN REVIEW OF DEFENSE
AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013 AND THE
FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM**

APRIL 25, 2012

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

Chairman McCaskill, Ranking Member Ayotte, other distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the Readiness of your United States Army. This is my first opportunity to appear before this committee as Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. I look forward to working with you, and I pledge always to provide you with an honest and forthright assessment based upon my own experiences and best military judgment.

On behalf of our Secretary—the Honorable John McHugh and our Chief of Staff—General Ray Odierno, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your continued, strong support and demonstrated commitment to our Soldiers, Army Civilians, and Family members. At no other time in history have our Soldiers fought for as long a period. And, throughout this decade of conflict their Families have served alongside them, supporting them. In spite of the heavy demands placed on them, ours remains a remarkably resilient Force. Today, our Soldiers are better trained, better equipped and more experienced than ever before. And, our battle-tested Army remains the most agile, adaptable and capable army in the world. This is largely due to the encouragement and Congressionally-supported investment over the past ten-plus years of war. We thank you.

Today, our shared focus remains to provide the best trained and most ready land forces necessary to win the current fight while also maintaining adequate responsiveness for unforeseen contingencies. The reality is we have not fought the ‘war to end all wars.’ And, while we recognize our force will be smaller and leaner in the

years ahead, we must take the necessary steps to ensure it is still able to confront aggression and decisively defeat any opponent—anytime, anywhere. Ultimately our ability to do so will depend upon our overall level of readiness. And, readiness is all about balance.

The Army—operating as part of the Joint Force—is committed to providing Combatant Commanders with the capabilities, capacity, and diversity needed to be successful across a wide range of operations. To satisfy this enduring requirement, we have three rheostats that must be continuously assessed and adjusted: force structure, readiness and modernization. Clearly, these factors are interrelated. More importantly, decisions we make on each of them today will have a profound impact on the posture of the Army in the future. As I speak to you about readiness today, you'll see how providing for the readiness of the Army requires us all to retain the right perspective based upon our understanding of the past, present and future.

We are all well aware of the impact of prolonged demand and high operational tempo on our people and equipment. The strain on both, after fighting two wars in two separate theaters for more than a decade, is significant. A large percentage of our Soldiers have deployed multiple times in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and other locations around the world. And, many remain in Afghanistan where we are still heavily engaged in operations. Our primary focus as an Army continues to center on the fight ongoing in theater. We recognize that our military and interagency efforts

there are extremely important. Likewise, the eventual transition out of Afghanistan will prove a very challenging, yet strategically important endeavor to the United States.

Meanwhile, back at home we are focused on the many challenges and opportunities that we, as an Army, face after more than a decade of war. These include preserving and sustaining the health of the force—addressing issues, to include behavioral health injuries (e.g., post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury), the disability evaluation system and transition services. The reality is the demand on our people and equipment over the past ten-plus years has been tremendous. We are taking the steps necessary to address the full range of health and discipline issues affecting our Soldiers and Family Members. We also remain focused on strengthening Soldiers' resiliency and coping skills through our Comprehensive Soldier Fitness and Master Resiliency Trainer programs. We must continue to be proactive in our efforts to help Soldiers better deal with the stressors and challenges they are faced with in the current operational environment. Overall, our priority will continue to be providing Soldiers and their Families with a quality of life commensurate with their service. We also recognize that in coming years we will be required to retrograde, replace and Reset much of our equipment. Ultimately, our goal in these parallel efforts is to sustain the high quality of our All-Volunteer Force—Active, Guard and Reserve—in order to defend the United States and its interests, while re-shaping our Force to prepare for a wider range of contingencies in the complex and unpredictable environments we find ourselves in today and for the foreseeable future.

We also recognize we must accomplish all of these various tasks with limited resources and fewer people. And, we believe the strategy we have developed, based on the current situation and those future challenges we're able to identify, will enable us to achieve our objectives. Over time as we transition out of Afghanistan, we will gain additional trade space and we will also continue to look for ways to do things more efficiently and more effectively. That said, as we prepare to address the next challenge or challenges facing us, we must ensure we always maintain the ability to regenerate capability very quickly. In other words, while we believe we are sufficiently resourced and prepared to meet the challenges currently ahead of us, adjustments may become necessary in the event that unforeseen contingencies or unexpected changes to the current situation arise in coming days.

In the meantime, as you are all well aware, we are making reductions to our end strength and proceeding in a thoughtful, yet deliberate manner. As Secretary McHugh stated, "What's critically important is that no matter what the force ultimately looks like, we have sufficient time to ramp down, to ensure that we do it in a balanced way, that we have what is necessary for training, equipment and Resets." The Army must ultimately maintain the full capability to conduct Unified Land Operations to seize, retain and exploit the initiative through the decisive action of offensive, defense or stability operations. Our Nation demands we be prepared to operate successfully across this expansive mission set.

Force Readiness

Readiness is non-negotiable and our top readiness challenge is to ensure that next-to-deploy units have the resources and training needed to accomplish their assigned missions. To date we are meeting our priority requirements, specifically those requested by Geographic Combatant Commanders in theater. However, due to sustained demand against programmed availability, Army units have been achieving the required levels of training and readiness closer and closer to required deployment dates. This has increased the risk to Geographic Combatant Commanders by reducing operational flexibility.

As demand for forces continues to decline we do expect the readiness of those next to deploy forces to improve earlier in their deployment cycle. Of course this is dependent upon a reduced demand on the force, and will continue to be carefully assessed especially given the projected reductions to end strength. As part of the new DoD Strategic Guidance, the Army will reduce end strength in two components. The Active Component will draw down 79K Soldiers to 490K by the end of FY17. In the Reserve Component, by FY18, the Army National Guard will draw down 8K to 350.2K. The Army has conducted extensive analysis and has concluded that we will maintain sufficient capability with end strength at 490K to meet the demands described in DoD's Strategic Guidance.

The readiness of Army units is tied to the Army's Force Generation or "ARFORGEN" model which allows units to build and synchronize readiness over time in

order to meet mission requirements. The ARFORGEN model has served us well in recent years in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, we recognize that we will have to modify this model to ensure we are able to effectively meet the demands of the future security environment. We envision a progressive readiness model which will better align our active and reserve component units to leverage their unique capabilities and be responsive to geographic combatant commander requirements.

A key component of the ARFORGEN Model is training. Training is the cornerstone of Army readiness. Over the past ten-plus years, Congress has provided the necessary resources to prepare our Soldiers and our formations properly. For example, Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding has allowed our brigade combat teams (BCTs) to execute Mission Rehearsal Exercises at the Army's Combat Training Centers. The quality of pre-deployment training at the National Training Center, the Joint Readiness Training Center and the Joint Multinational Readiness Center has been extraordinary. These centers—which have transformed and adapted themselves—enable our Leaders and Soldiers to validate their tactics, techniques and procedures prior to deploying, leverage lessons learned and foster adaptability. Over the past decade of war, this training has undoubtedly saved lives in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Army must retain the flexibility to conduct a broad range of missions including regular and irregular warfare, humanitarian assistance operations, security

force assistance and support to civil authorities in a hybrid environment marked by uncertainty and complexity. As pressures for cuts in defense spending and force structure increase, the Army will assess which capabilities to emphasize, how many of each, and at what level, recognizing that finding the right mix will be a challenge.

Finally, our Reserve Component (RC) forces are a crucial element of the Army's overall deployable strength and warfighting team. Over the past decade of war they have provided essential operational capabilities and specific functions in support of the Army. To ensure we are able to maintain the readiness of our RC forces, the Army included resources for the National Guard and Army Reserve within the FY13 base budget, including additional resources for collective training, full-time manning and medical/dental readiness. We remain committed to ensuring our Citizen-Soldiers and their Families receive the support they deserve, both while they are serving on active duty and after they have returned to their communities back home.

Material Readiness

Our ability to outfit the men and women of our Army with the best equipment in the world remains fundamental to our overall readiness. Over the past decade, we have maintained operational readiness rates in theater exceeding 90% for ground systems and 75% for aviation systems. Since November 2008, all three components—our Active Component, National Guard and Army Reserve—have significantly improved in terms of equipment on hand readiness. These improvements have come about as a result of your investment in our Army. Our soldiers, civilians and contractors have done

an exceptional job restoring the readiness of our equipment returning from harsh environments.

As Commander of United States Forces-Iraq, I oversaw the transition of mission and the retrograde of people and equipment out of Iraq after nearly a decade of war. It was a complex endeavor from which we learned many valuable lessons. These lessons will certainly be applicable in Afghanistan, recognizing that the challenge there will in all likelihood be more complex—given the difficult terrain and the tyranny of limited infrastructure. The Army has carefully planned and refined our Retrograde, Reset and Redistribution (R3) process to be synchronized with the ARFORGEN process to ensure the right equipment gets repaired and redistributed to the right units.

Reset is a cost of war and it prepares our equipment for an unpredictable future and evolving threats. The Army would not be as ready as it is today without the tremendous level of support received from Congress for equipment Reset. In FY 2012, Congress appropriated \$4.3 billion for Reset. For FY 2013, the Army requested \$5.445B for Reset. The Army's Reset request for FY 2013 anticipates a higher level of effort than FY 2012, due to the retrograde of equipment from Iraq and increasing need to Recapitalize or replace combat equipment. Our need to Reset does not end when troops leave the theater of operations. In fact, it will likely continue for two to three years after our troops return home to ensure equipment readiness is restored for future contingencies.

Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS) remain a key strategic source for force projection. APS equipment sets have been used several times in the last 10 years and will continue to be a strategic asset in the future. Thanks to continuous support of Congress, the Army is on track and funded to reconstitute all APS sets by 2015. We are currently reassessing our APS strategy in light of new DOD strategic guidance and emerging needs of Combatant Commanders. The flexibility provided by these critical assets ultimately enables us to further reduce our strategic risk, thus contributing significantly to the future readiness of our Army.

Future Readiness

As we transition the Army to align with new strategic guidance, we recognize that we must balance end strength/force structure, readiness, and modernization in order to maintain our ability to respond as needed to unforeseen contingencies and to achieve maximum operational strategic flexibility. Again, as our Chief—General Odierno has said, our force will be smaller and leaner in the years ahead, but also more agile, flexible, deployable and technologically advanced. It must be tailored to ensure it is capable of meeting a wider range of contingencies and emerging threats. In part, this will be achieved by strengthening our key alliances and partnerships through regional alignment, overseas rotational deployments and other innovative ways identified to sustain our presence around the world.

Equally important will be our continued investment in our training and modernization programs. The Army's ability to enter an operational environment and

dominate hinges on the equipment available to our Soldiers and the training conducted prior to joining the fight. Too often in our Nation's history our forces have found themselves unprepared for the first battle. As we look ahead and plan for the next fight, we must ensure we have resourced our training programs properly and invested sufficiently in our research, development and modernization efforts to ensure that the Army is prepared to win the next first battle decisively. To be sure, this is not solely about resources. It is also about leadership, doctrine and adapting training strategies. We must ensure we continue to take the necessary steps to ensure our Soldiers' are trained, resourced and equipped to succeed in the future.

Where we Need Congress' Help

Critical to our success will be Congress' continued support of operations ongoing in theater. In particular, we will require OCO funding for end strength above 490K (Active Component) in order to support a gradual ramp over the next five years. This will enable us to take care of our Soldiers and maintain flexibility while providing necessary support to forces in Afghanistan. As I mentioned earlier, we will need to fund Reset for 2-3 years after we have completed the retrograde of equipment from Afghanistan. Reset is a true cost of war. The length of Reset depends upon the pace of retrograde, volume of equipment to be Reset and repair cycle time of major systems (e.g., 240 days for aviation assets). Likewise, future cost estimates ultimately depend upon force structure decisions, condition of equipment and plans for redistribution of equipment to the Afghan National Security Forces.

Overall, while recognizing the Nation's deficit challenges, it is imperative that any future reductions to the Army's budget be based on comprehensive strategic analysis. We must preclude hollowing the Army by maintaining balance in force structure, readiness, modernization efforts and commitments to our All-Volunteer Force. Simply stated, we must remain an agile Army able and capable of winning the current fight while also meeting future challenges.

Necessary to maintaining this balance is avoiding sequestration that would subject the Army to massive cuts that will have a devastating effect and carry the very real risk of producing a hollow, unbalanced or weaker force. Such reductions would adversely impact our modernization efforts, the defense industrial base and, ultimately, our ability to respond to worldwide threats and unforeseen contingencies. Additionally, we would be forced to reduce Military Construction and Operations and Maintenance which would result in risk to Training and our overall Readiness. Moreover, we risk breaking faith with our Soldiers and Family members who have performed superbly over ten-plus years of conflict. Sustaining the All-Volunteer Force is absolutely essential to our ability to support our Nation's defense.

Conclusion

With Congress' support, we have built a remarkable force that has performed magnificently in all endeavors over the past decade of war. It is better trained and equipped and our young leaders are better prepared than at any other time in history. Your Army, together with our Joint partners, will continue to serve as a bulwark against

the compounding risks inherent in an uncertain and rapidly changing world. These continue to be challenging times for our military and for our Nation. Leaders throughout our Army remain focused on effectively addressing current challenges, particularly with respect to fiscal demands and health of the Force, while also determining the needs of the Force for the future.

While we all recognize the requirement to make tough choices and necessary sacrifices in the days ahead, we also recognize that we must do so responsibly in order to ensure that what remains is a force able and capable of successfully meeting our national security requirements. Whatever its size, our Army must remain highly-trained, equipped and ready. Maintaining credibility based on capacity, readiness and modernization is essential to averting miscalculations by potential adversaries. Our Nation can accept nothing less.

Madam Chairwoman, members of the subcommittee, I thank you again for your steadfast and generous support of the outstanding men and women of the United States Army, our Army Civilians and their Families. I look forward to your questions.