TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

HEARING ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

BY

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished members of this Committee, for the invitation to appear before you. It is a great honor to testify before this body on a topic of the highest importance to our nation – the implementation of the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS), a Strategy which entails a fundamental shift in the orientation of our nation's armed forces toward great power competition.

I. Personal Involvement

During 2017 and 2018, I served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development. In this capacity, I led a superb team of civilian and military officials from key parts of the Department tasked with developing the National Defense Strategy, reporting to Secretary Mattis and Deputy Secretary Work and Deputy Secretary (now Acting Secretary) Shanahan. In light of this experience, there are a number of distinctive attributes of this Strategy that I believe it is useful for the Committee to know.

- This Strategy is a result of the leadership and deep personal engagement of Secretary Mattis as well as Deputy Secretaries Work and Acting Secretary Shanahan. The Department's top leadership engaged regularly and in depth with the Strategy team and reviewed the document numerous times. Secretary Mattis met repeatedly with the team for long sessions; he considered the hardest issues in the Strategy and made clear choices about them in close consultation with then-Deputy Secretary Shanahan, who made the Strategy his priority in his first months in office and played a crucial, personal role in bringing the Strategy to fruition. The Strategy therefore reflects the considered judgment of those charged with leading the nation's defense.
- At the same time, this Strategy was not a purely top-down document. As Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson has related, the last version of the Strategy she recalls reviewing was on the order of the sixty-sixth version of the draft. From the earliest stages of its development, the Strategy received input from across the Department, and the range of Department leaders had the opportunity to review and comment on the Strategy as it evolved. Essentially everyone had their say. While the Strategy is – by design – a reflection of leadership judgments rather than a consensus or lowest-common denominator document, it benefited from the collective wisdom of the U.S. defense enterprise as well as from input from the Intelligence Community and other relevant organs of the U.S. Government.
- The Strategy team and Department leadership received input from Congress and outside experts from the beginning of the document's development, and it was red-teamed several times by leading defense experts.
- The Strategy was also informed by both strategic and operational-level wargaming.

II. A Recap of the National Defense Strategy

This hearing has been called to ascertain how the implementation of the Strategy is faring. I believe there is no more important issue on which the Committee can focus oversight, as the Strategy requires "urgent change at significant scale" for our national interests to be effectively

protected.[1] This is especially pressing because the National Defense Strategy Commission, a body chartered by Congress and composed of leading defense experts who had unparalleled access to the Department, reported that its members are "skeptical that DOD has the attendant plans, concepts and resources needed to meet the defense objectives identified in the NDS, and [they] are concerned that there is not a coherent approach for implementing the NDS across the entire DOD enterprise…[The Commissioners] came away troubled by the lack of unity among senior civilian and military leaders in their descriptions of how the objectives described in the NDS are supported by the Department's readiness, force structure, and modernization priorities..."[2] This is cause for significant concern.

Before discussing the Department's progress in implementing the NDS and how Congress can facilitate it, however, I believe it is valuable first to recap concisely what the Strategy, in concert with the 2017 National Security Strategy (NSS) with which it is so closely tied, assesses and directs.

The National Defense Strategy can be summarized as follows:

U.S. Defense Strategy in our Broader Grand Strategy

The United States has a lasting interest in maintaining favorable regional balances of power in the key regions of the world, especially East Asia, Europe, and the Persian Gulf. These favorable balances preserve our ability to trade with and access the world's wealthiest and most important regions on fair grounds, and prevent their power from being turned against us in ways that would undermine our freedoms and way of life.

Alliances are the critical mechanism for maintaining these favorable balances, and it is in the U.S. interest to continue to be able to effectively and credibly defend our allies and established partners such as Taiwan, in concert with their own efforts at self-defense.

The Particular Threat Posed by China and Russia

China in particular and to a lesser extent Russia present by far the most severe threats to our alliance architecture. *The once overwhelming U.S. conventional military advantage vis a vis these major powers has eroded and will continue to erode absent overriding focus and effort by the United States and its allies and partners.*

China and Russia pose a particular kind of threat to U.S. allies and established partners like Taiwan. Beijing and Moscow have plausible *theories of victory* that could involve employing a combination of "gray zone" activities (such as through the use of subversion by "little green men,"), robust anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) networks, lethal and fast maneuver forces, and strategic capabilities, especially nuclear arsenals. The adept integration of these assets could enable Beijing or Moscow first to overpower U.S. allies and seize their territory while holding off U.S. and other allied combat power. China or Russia could then, by extending their A2/AD

[1] Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sustaining the American Military's Competitive Edge," Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 2018, 11.
[2] Eric Edelman, Gary Roughead, et al, *Providing for the Common Defense: The Assessment and Recommendations of the National Defense Strategy Commission*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2018, 18.

and defensive umbrella over these new gains, render the prospect of ejecting their occupying forces too difficult, dangerous, and politically demanding for Washington and its allies to undertake, or undertake successfully.

The fait accompli is not the only but it is the most severely challenging of the theories of victory the Chinese or Russians could employ – especially against Taiwan in the Pacific or the Baltics and Eastern Poland in Europe.

Particularly in the case of China, these threats will worsen and expand as the power of the People's Liberation Army grows. Taiwan is the focal point today; before long, unless the ongoing erosion of our and our allies' military edge is reversed, the threat will be to Japan and the Philippines and thus to our whole position in maritime Asia, the world's most economically dynamic region.

The Need to Focus on Great Power Competition and its Implications

Accordingly, as Secretary Mattis put it in January 2018, "Great power competition – not terrorism – is now the primary focus of U.S. national security."[3] The United States' defense establishment must therefore focus on and adapt to this top priority – at scale and urgently, as the Strategy emphasizes.

What does this new prioritization mean and what does it entail?

At its deepest level, it requires a fundamental shift in the way the Department of Defense conceives of what is required for effective deterrence and defense. This is because the United States and its allies will be facing great powers – especially in the case of China. This is a dramatically different world than that which characterized the post-Cold War period, in which our armed forces could focus on "rogue states" and terrorist groups due to the lack of a near-peer competitor. Today and going forward, however, China in particular will present us with a comparably-sized economy and a top-tier military operating in its own front yard.

Above all, this requires a change in the mindset of our defense establishment. We have left a period of overwhelming American dominance and have entered one in which our armed forces will have to prepare to square off against the forces of major economies fielding the most sophisticated conventional and survivable nuclear forces. *Our armed forces will therefore need to shift from an expectation that they could dominate the opponent to one in which they must expect to be contested throughout the fight – and yet still achieve the political objectives set for them in ways that are politically tenable.*

Fortunately, our political-strategic goals, as indicated in the NSS and NDS, are defensive. We hope only to prevent our allies and partners like Taiwan from being suborned or conquered by our opponents. We therefore must defeat Chinese or Russian invasions or attempts at suborning our allies, and force Beijing or Moscow to have to choose between unfavorably escalating – and demonstrating to all their aggressiveness and malign intent by doing so – or settling on terms we

[3] Speech by Secretary of Defense James Mattis at Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies, January 19, 2018.

can accept. This, to emphasize, is a different goal than regime change or changing borders. Rather, it is about *preserving the status quo by favorably managing escalation to win limited wars*.

How our forces achieve this objective in the event of conflict will be of the essence. Our forces must be exceptionally lethal and capable, optimized to defeat China or Russia. At the same time, however, wars with China or Russia must remain limited because the alternative is apocalypse, which neither side wants – thus we must plan and prepare for them as limited wars. Above all, this requires focusing on *defeating the other side's theory of victory, and particularly the fait accompli strategy.*

The NDS is specifically designed to deal with this challenge. Its military and force implications proceed from the political-strategic demands the NSS and NDS set out. As a core concept, the NDS calls on the Department to expand the competitive space – meaning above all to adopt a competitive mentality in everything that Department personnel do, one that refuses to take American superiority for granted, that searches for new or untapped sources of advantage, and that ensures that it is China and Russia that fear more what we might what do – rather than the other way around.[4]

The NDS therefore directs substantial changes in the following elements of our armed forces:

- Warfighting approach;
- Force structure: size, shape, and composition;
- Force employment;
- Posture; and
- Relationships with allies and partners.

Warfighting Approach

The Strategy calls for a different approach to warfighting from the post-Cold War era. This call stems from the political-strategic requirement to defeat the adversary's theory of victory by, at a minimum, rapidly delaying and degrading or ideally denying China or Russia's ability to impose the fait accompli on, for instance, Taiwan or the Baltics.

This necessitates a change from what might be called "the Desert Storm model" of warfighting. This model involved the time-consuming construction of an "iron mountain" of U.S. military capability in the region of conflict before the United States launched a withering assault to establish all-domain dominance and then ejected the enemy from our ally's territory. The Desert Storm model was enormously successful against "rogue state" adversaries – but it is also exactly the model on which China and Russia have ably and assiduously gone to school. By the time the United States constructs this iron mountain in response to a Chinese attack on Taiwan or Russian invasion of the Baltics, the war may already be lost because the costs and risks of ejecting an enemy now fortified in its new gains may be too prohibitive or because allies will not support the massive and terrifying counteroffensive needed for victory.

[4] "Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America", 4.

The United States consequently needs a new warfighting approach adapted to this threat. *This new warfighting approach involves U.S. forces resisting Chinese or Russian attacks from the very beginning of hostilities, fighting in and through enduringly contested operational environments to first blunt Beijing or Moscow's assault and then defeat it – without ever gaining the kind of all-domain dominance that the United States could establish against Iraq or Serbia.* With its invasion blunted or readily reversed, neither China nor Russia would have a way to end the war favorably; rather, Beijing or Moscow would face the awful choice of expanding the war in ways that play to U.S. advantages or swallowing the bitter but tolerable pill of settling on terms the United States can accept. Such a posture should deter a minimally rational adversary from choosing to pursue such a course.

The National Defense Strategy's Global Operating Model represents a new conceptual paradigm designed to help frame the Department's efforts to realize this new warfighting approach. This Global Operating Model is designed to defeat Chinese or Russian theories of victory, and especially the fait accompli.

- Its *"Contact" Layer* is designed to orient activities in the "gray zone," especially in concert with allies, to prevent Russia or China from dominating the crucial perceptual landscape or surprising the United States and its allies by augmenting allied defenses, collecting intelligence, and challenging salami-slicing activities.
- Its crucial *"Blunt" Layer* is designed to focus U.S. and allied force development, employment, and posture on the crucial role of "blunting": delaying, degrading, and ideally denying the enemy's attempt to lock in its gains before the United States can effectively respond. Crucially, *blunting is a function – not an attribute – of the force. The central idea is to prevent China or Russia from achieving a fait accompli* – it does not require a fixed force. Indeed, blunting is likely to be done best by a combination of munitions launched from afar as well as forces deployed and fighting forward.
- The *"Surge" Layer* is designed to provide the decisive force that can arrive later, exploiting the operational and political leverage created by the "Blunt" Layer to defeat China or Russia's invasion and induce them to end the conflict on terms we prefer.
- The *"Homeland" Layer* is designed to deter and defeat attacks on the homeland in ways that are consistent with the Joint Force's ability to win the forward fight and favorably manage escalation.

Likewise, the Strategy's core attributes of the future Joint Force also point to this new warfighting approach. The Strategy directs U.S. armed forces to become more *lethal, resilient, agile, and ready*. These terms have specific meanings, all designed to shift to a force able to fight through contested operational environments to deny the opponent's theory of victory:

- *Lethality* refers to the Joint Force's ability to strike at enemy maneuver forces without the kind of all-domain dominance the U.S. military has enjoyed over the last generation. Going forward, the Joint Force must be increasingly lethal in its ability to strike at key Chinese or Russian forces from the beginning of hostilities, even through dense air defense and other A2/AD networks.

- *Resilience* refers to the ability of the Joint Force and its enabling infrastructure to operate and achieve its objectives even in the face of determined and sophisticated multi-domain attack.
- *Agility* refers to the Joint Force's ability to become more operationally unpredictable while remaining strategically predictable, forcing the opponent to fear when, where, and how U.S. forces might appear and act rather than being able to anticipate when, where, and how they will perform.
- *Readiness* refers to the preparedness of the Joint Force on short notice to contest Chinese or Russian attempts to implement their theories of victory. This is a more narrow definition of readiness than that often used in defense discussions, one focused more on readying the Joint Force more for specific missions rather pursuing full-spectrum preparedness. Under the NDS approach, some units may not need to be highly ready; those crucial to blunting Chinese or Russian attacks against vulnerable allies, on the other hand, will need to be at a high pitch of preparedness.

To be realized and translated from concept into prepared forces, however, the Global Operating Model and these attributes *require new operational concepts* focused on these objectives and derived through rigorous gaming, experimentation, and training. These new concepts should be designed to overcome the operational problems laid out in the classified version of the Strategy.

Force Structure: Size, Shape, and Composition

The Strategy has marked implications for the size, shape, and composition of the Joint Force. Most significantly, the Strategy places a clear prioritization on being able to deter and, if necessary, to prevail over a major power adversary like China or Russia in a strategically significant, plausible scenario. Consequently, it prioritizes ensuring that the U.S. armed forces are able to win a fight over Taiwan or the Baltics before investing in the capacity to fight two wars simultaneously. This is only logical; losing the war in the primary theater would render success in any secondary theaters either fleeting or futile. Being able to fight two or more wars simultaneously is a good, but it is a good subordinate to that of winning in the primary, decisive fight.

Accordingly, the Strategy, as Secretary Mattis put it, prioritizes "capability over capacity" – or, put another way, "*capable capacity*." That is, the Joint Force must focus on what it takes to beat China *or* Russia in a key, plausible scenario – and this means enough forces of high caliber combined with attritable lower-end assets. This in turn requires budgets that prioritize manned and unmanned forces optimized to fight China or Russia over increases in personnel, force structure, and legacy systems best suited for taking on Saddam Hussein's Iraq or Slobodan Milosevic's Serbia. At the same time, it puts high emphasis on developing and fielding lower-cost and more sustainable ways of conducting secondary missions, such as operations against non-state actors in places like the Middle East.

Force Employment

The Strategy focuses on readying the Joint Force for plausible conflicts with China or Russia – precisely in order to deter them. The problem is that the Joint Force is not as ready for such

conflicts as it should be. Instead, U.S. forces have been focused on operations in the Greater Middle East and a wide variety of "shaping" missions, especially since 2001.

This must change. *The Joint Force needs to prioritize readying for major war against China or Russia* – through realistic exercises (including with allies) and training at places like Red Flag, Top Gun, and the National Training Center, as well as through needed rest and recuperation amidst a demanding readiness improvement schedule.

By necessity, this requires that *the Joint Force also do less* of these "shaping" and other secondary activities, and especially that the primary forces needed for major war be largely spared such duties. Continuing the current pace of operations and patterns of employment, such as using F-22s and B-1s over Syria and Afghanistan, will expend the readiness of the Joint Force on these peripheral missions rather than augmenting it against China and Russia.

In summary, *U.S. armed forces should become, as in most of the Cold War, primarily a training and readiness-oriented force prepared for war against a near-peer opponent, and not, as in the post-Cold War period, a military largely focused on operations in the Middle East and on "shaping" activities.*

Posture

The Strategy represents a reemphasis on forward presence – but a forward presence of a particular kind. *It is not about presence for its own sake or for symbolic or reassurance purposes.* Rather, it is about *combat-credible forward forces* – that is, forces that are or can rapidly get forward, survive a withering Chinese or Russian assault, and blunt the adversary's aggression. And it about is bases, operating locations, and logistic networks that can perform their missions in support of these goals even under heavy and sustained enemy attacks.

In the Pacific, this means investing in base defenses – including not only missile defenses but also camouflage, hardening, deception techniques, and other passive measures – that can make our relatively small number of bases more resilient, while also investing in a wider range of primary bases as well as secondary and tertiary operating locations throughout maritime Asia.

In Europe, posture is crucial. Much of the threat posed by the Russian theory of victory is due to the anachronistic placement of U.S. and allied forces, which reflects a pale fraction of the pre-1989 force laydown trapped in amber. Accordingly, the Strategy calls for a substantial near-term investment in rectifying the deficiencies in our deterrent and defense for Eastern Europe. This includes posturing more heavy equipment and advanced munitions in key places in Europe and readying allied infrastructure in Eastern Europe for rapid reinforcement.

Relationships with Allies and Partners

Another category of crucial changes initiated by the NDS is in our defense relationships with our allies and partners. The Strategy is clear: the era of untrammeled U.S. military superiority is over, yet we face not only high-end threats from China and Russia but also serious threats from North Korea, Iran, and terrorists with extra-regional reach. *We simply cannot do this all by ourselves.* This means that rebalancing our alliances and empowering new partners is not only a

matter of equity – as important as these are – but of strategic necessity. *We need our allies and partners to contribute real military capability* both to deterring China and Russia directly as well as to handling secondary threats.

This entails significant changes in how we deal with our allies and partners. We need to empower our allies as well as partners like India, Vietnam, Indonesia, and the United Arab Emirates to be able to defend themselves better from Chinese or Russian coercion, to handle secondary but still important shared threats with less U.S. involvement, or both.

Accordingly, we should see much more streamlined and liberalized procedures for arms and technology sales and transfers as well as for more intelligence sharing. States that share our broad interests, including ones, like Vietnam, with which we do not always agree, should be able to purchase military equipment more rapidly and with greater confidence in the sustainability and reliability of purchasing from the United States.

III. What Should Successful Implementation of the NDS Look Like in the Near Term?

What, then, should successful implementation of the NDS look like in the near term? The measures laid out below, while by no means exhaustive, would represent meaningful progress toward the fulfillment of the Strategy.

Warfighting Approach

The Department must make progress on developing innovative operational concepts. These must be oriented on overcoming the operational problems identified in the Strategy in ways that favorably manage escalation and achieve our national political-strategic ends.

Unfortunately, as the NDS Commission noted, there is little evidence that the Department has yet made meaningful progress on developing these new operational concepts.[5] Congress cannot make informed judgments about the Department's budget request and other authorization issues without understanding the Department's approach to developing such concepts, however, since they are vital to determining what capabilities the Department needs and what the Joint Force's composition and size should be.

- In this context, Congress might request a formal report from the Department on the state of its progress on developing novel operational concepts designed to deal with the operational problems identified in the Strategy.

Force Structure/Budget

The Department's Fiscal Year 2020 budget proposal is the first designed from its inception under NDS guidance. As Acting Secretary Shanahan has indicated, this should be the "masterpiece" budget in terms of implementing the NDS. The budget should therefore reflect measurable progress in realizing the NDS vision. *This in particular means budgets and programs should be demonstrably linked to improving the Joint Force's performance in the most stressing, strategically significant potential warfights against China or Russia. In practice, in the near*

[5] *Providing for the Common Defense*, vii.

term this should mean significant investments in augmenting capability rather than growing the size of the Joint Force, including in the FY20 budget.[6]

Key indicators of progress in the budget request toward implementing the NDS would include, but are not limited to:

- Rectifying clear, major shortfalls for key scenarios (especially Taiwan and the Baltics) through:
    - Procurement of substantial numbers of munitions designed to increase the existing Joint Force's lethality against Chinese invasion or Russian maneuver forces, such as longer-range anti-ship missiles (e.g., the Long-Range Anti-Ship Missile), longer-range air-launched cruise missiles (e.g., the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile-Extended Range), and guided anti-armor weapons for attacks on ground maneuver forces. These types of munitions are must-buys to increase the defensibility of Taiwan and the Baltics.
    - Sustained and substantial investment in augmenting threatened base and logistic network defense and resilience. This includes adequate active defenses for key bases and nodes (e.g., the Army's Indirect Fire Protection Capability, Increment 2) but also especially passive defenses to increase their resilience (e.g., funds for hardening, decoys, camouflage, deception techniques, et al).
- More robust space-based, airborne, and terrestrial assets for conducting surveillance and reconnaissance to support situational awareness, battle management, and targeting in heavily contested environments.
- Funding for a "high-low" mix of highly capable, lethal, and survivable platforms (e.g., penetrating aircraft and munitions, space systems, and attack submarines) and more attritable systems designed to complement and enable these more expensive platforms (e.g., lower cost unmanned aerial and underwater systems and smaller satellites).
- Investment in lower-cost systems and formations for secondary and tertiary missions. These include but are not limited to:
    - Light-attack aircraft, including potentially unmanned such platforms.
    - Smaller, tailored Army formations on the model of the Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) optimized for training and assisting partner militaries.
- Reduction and, wherever possible, elimination of forces that are not survivable and useful in a high-end scenario and are too expensive for economical employment in low-end operations.
    - The Department's cancellation in FY2019 of JSTARS – a platform of dubious utility in a potential conflict with China or Russia – was an important step forward in this vein.
- The Congress should consider providing authorization and resourcing to enable the Secretary of Defense to reserve a substantial fund of money to be awarded to Services

[6] I highly commend to the Committee's attention an excellent short list of key top priority investment areas designed to address the National Defense Strategy's requirements in David A. Ochmanek, "Restoring U.S. Power Projection Capabilities: Responding to the 2018 National Defense Strategy," Arlington, VA: The RAND Corporation, 2018, 10-11.

and other entities based on proposals they submit that hold promise in addressing the key operational problems laid out in the Strategy.[7] This would encourage the development of innovative programs to deal with the challenges prioritized in the NDS.

Force Employment

The Joint Force is not ready enough for major war with China and Russia. As this is the most important and dangerous security threat affecting our national interests, rectifying this shortfall must be the primary goal of the Joint Force's activities. Such activities should include:

- Focus Joint Force activities on high-end training and invest in improving training facilities and techniques to prepare the Joint Force for high-end combat against China and Russia.
- Conduct exercises, including with allies in Europe and Asia, designed to actually test the Joint Force and allies' readiness to fight and prevail against Russia or China.
    - Such exercises should be designed in light of the Global Operating Model's framework to demonstrate the ability of U.S. and allied forces to blunt Chinese or Russian fait accompli strategies, including through falling in on prepositioned stocks and engaging the adversary quickly.
        - For example, in EUCOM, focus NATO alliance exercises much more on high-end fighting.

Given how demanding improving the Joint Force's readiness for major war with China or Russia will be, U.S. forces must consequently do less of everything else not connected to that goal. Accordingly, the Congress should expect the Department to propose to:

- Reduce activities not connected to this priority goal, including a wide range of exercises; shaping, assurance and presence missions and operations.

Posture

In both Europe and Asia, U.S. posture is not optimized to deal with our potential adversary's theories of victory. Accordingly, *the NDS calls for a substantial increase in investment for European posture designed to quickly and materially address the imbalance in military power on NATO's Eastern flank and improve the Alliance's ability to defeat a Russian fait accompli strategy, followed by a plateauing of this investment in the medium term to focus on the more substantial long-term Chinese threat.* In Asia, in addition to resources for making bases and operating locations more defensible and resilient, investment should focus on increasing options for operating locations throughout maritime Asia and the Western and Central Pacific.

- Congress should expect and require investments in the European Deterrence Initiative and within Service budgets to continue to go toward enhancing the combat-credibility of U.S. forces in Europe and the ability of Surge Layer forces to fall in on prepositioned stocks in the event of crisis or conflict.

[7] David A. Ochmanek, "Improving Force Development Within the U.S. Department of Defense: Diagnosis and Potential Prescriptions." Arlington, VA: The RAND Corporation, 2018.

    - This should include prepositioning heavy equipment and advanced munitions.
- Congress should expect near-term growth in investments in our European deterrent and defense posture but a plateauing of this investment over the coming years as U.S. and NATO posture, capability, and readiness against the Russian threat improves.

Ensuring Clear and Consistent Guidance for the Department

There is a significant problem within the Department of Defense with the proliferation of strategic guidance. Candidly, there is too much guidance and it is not as rigorously aligned as it should be. Too much guidance is redundant at best and at worst confusing, conflicting, and detrimental to effectively aligning the Department behind leadership intent.

The National Defense Strategy, the document established by Congress and embraced by Secretary Mattis and Acting Secretary Shanahan as the Secretary of Defense's preeminent strategic guidance, provides clear guidance not only at the high political level but also in terms of force structure and composition, development, employment, and posture. It establishes clear priorities and identifies areas for reducing emphasis. In addition, the Secretary's Defense Planning Guidance (for budget and force development) and Guidance for the Employment of the Force/Contingency Planning Guidance (for force employment) provide clear follow-on specialized guidance.

Every other document issued by subordinate officials – civilian and uniformed – in the Department should closely and clearly reflect these priorities. Yet this is not always the case, resulting in confusion, stasis, or misaligned activities.

Congress can help rectify this problem by:

- Expressing its view that the Defense Planning Guidance and Guidance for the Employment of the Force/Contingency Planning Guidance clearly and effectively ensure the implementation of the National Defense Strategy in their respective domains.
- Providing for clearer lanes in the road for the documents issued by the Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff. In particular:
    - Providing a clearer, more narrowly scoped purpose for the National Military Strategy, and specifically providing that it focus on realizing the military dimensions of the National Defense Strategy. This should include a clear focus on operational concept development, a core military responsibility.
    - Clarifying that the Chairman's Program Recommendations and Global Campaign Plans should be derived from the Defense Planning Guidance and Guidance for the Employment of the Force/Contingency Planning Guidance, respectively.

Allies and Partners

Allies and partners are key to the success of the Strategy. They must understand and buy in to the Strategy for it to succeed. And they must be able to obtain the arms, technologies, and intelligence necessary to integrate with our Strategy.

Congress can help encourage this crucial element of the Strategy by:

- Advocating for a releasable version of the classified Strategy to be shared not only with close allies but also the broader set of allies and partners crucial to the Strategy's success.
- Reduce barriers to selling or providing financing for purchases of arms consistent with the Strategy (such as systems useful for developing indigenous A2/AD networks) to the wider range of allies and partners identified in the Strategy, such as India, Vietnam, and Indonesia. To realize this goal, Congress could:
    - Ensure that strategic considerations predominate in interagency and congressional decisions and authorizations about whether to sell arms and transfer technologies (consistent with security concerns).
    - Remove CAATSA penalties and barriers for partners such as India, Vietnam, and Indonesia. China is the most significant strategic challenge the United States faces. Penalizing partners crucial to helping us check Chinese assertiveness not only inhibits their ability to do so, but actively alienates them. It also undermines our long-term ability to shift these states away from their historical reliance on Russian arms sales toward our own and friendly states' defense industries.
        - Moreover, the best way to deal with the military threat posed by Russia is to augment our posture and forces in Europe, not to penalize partners that have historically relied on Soviet/Russian arms.

There are several allies and partners on which the Committee could most productively focus in light of their unique importance. Taiwan is especially significant because it is the most vulnerable member of the U.S. alliance and partnership architecture, especially over time, and because its own behavior is crucial to its defensibility. Japan and Germany, meanwhile, are the largest economies among U.S. allies. Greater and more focused defense effort from Tokyo is essential to the allied defense posture in the Indo-Pacific in light of the continuing military build-up by China. A cognate increase in effort by Berlin, meanwhile, is crucial to developing a more equitable and thus more politically sustainable NATO defense posture.

- The United States is committed to the defense of Taiwan against unprovoked aggression, but Taiwan itself must demonstrate much greater commitment and seriousness in providing for its own defense. Congress can help by ensuring the Administration provides and implements substantial defense sales to Taiwan that are in conformity with an asymmetric strategy along the lines of Taiwan's new Defense Concept.
    - While Taiwan's defense spending has inexcusably lagged, President Tsai Ing-wen's administration has committed to increased defense spending. Congress should encourage this and urge Taipei to fulfill its pledge.
    - Taiwan needs help from the United States to help defend itself. The Congress should therefore ensure defense sales and transfers to Taiwan are regular and actually useful for Taiwan's defense.
    - In particular, Taiwan needs to shift from a legacy force toward an asymmetric one capable of blunting and degrading a Chinese invasion or blockade. In particular, this means a shift from a focus on procuring vulnerable, big-ticket items like short-range aircraft and surface ships to an emphasis on A2/AD systems that can degrade a Chinese invasion or blockade and buy time for U.S. intervention. This

entails Taiwan focusing on procuring short-range UAVs, coastal defense cruise missiles, sea mines, mobile air defense systems, and rocket artillery.
    - Taiwan's Tsai administration has endorsed this approach but faces internal resistance, often political or bureaucratic in nature. To help, Congress should applaud Taiwan's shift to this new Defense Concept and ensure U.S. defense sales and transfers to Taiwan are consistent with the asymmetric strategy.
- Congress can applaud and support allies and partners that are working to align with the National Defense Strategy, and encourage others to do so. It can do so through direct engagements both here and on Congressional Delegations (CODELs). In particular:
    - Japan's level of defense spending is far too low for the threat environment it faces, and inconsistent with a mature, equitable alliance relationship with the United States. The administration of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has, however, been working hard to change this, and deserves support.
        - Moreover, Japan's new National Defense Planning Guidelines are a cardinal example of an allied strategy that is very much in line with the National Defense Strategy.
        - Thus, while Congress should continue to press Japan to increase its defense spending, it should applaud Japan for its new Guidelines and its efforts to bring Japan's defense efforts into conformity with the security conditions it faces and an appropriate and sustainable alliance relationship with the United States.
    - Germany has lagged behind its obligations to NATO collective security for several decades. During the Cold War, the Bundeswehr was the most capable NATO military, save that of the United States. Yet Germany effectively almost demilitarized after the Cold War, and today is incapable of meaningfully contributing directly to the collective defense of NATO's newer entrants – a collective defense from which the Federal Republic benefited so greatly during the Cold War.
        - But Germany appears to have turned a corner, and Berlin has recommitted its military to the NATO collective defense mission and to increasing its defense spending from 1.2% to 1.5% of GDP by 2031. This is not enough, but it is a start that deserves support.
        - Congress could, while encouraging Germany to continue to increase defense spending, applaud the Federal Republic for its commitments and renewed seriousness in the service of NATO defense.

Defense Spending

Adequate funding is crucial for successful implementation of this Strategy, and thus for defending America's interests abroad. *Hard choices in the Department's programs and operations are necessary simply to keep up with the Chinese and Russian military challenge; they are not a basis for a smaller defense budget.*

As Secretary Mattis regularly put it, "the United States can afford survival."[8] The Congress should therefore insist that the Department follow through on the hard choices laid out in the Strategy but also provide the substantial and consistent funding needed to realize it.

An Active Congress and Senate Armed Services Committee

Congress – and especially this Committee – played a crucial role in setting the conditions for success for the NDS, including by sending a clear signal of the importance of prioritization and providing for a classified version of the Strategy. *The NDS is as much Congress' Strategy as the Department's.*

Because of Congress' tremendous importance in the nation's defense, realizing the strategic shift initiated by the NDS will require Congress to play a central role.

Most importantly, Congress and especially this Committee can continue to make clear, as Chairman Inhofe has already indicated, its strong and continued support for the National Defense Strategy. This is especially important and timely in light of the leadership transition in the Department.

- *In this vein, the Committee should ensure that the next nominee for Secretary of Defense commits to advancing and implementing the National Defense Strategy.*

Congress can also support and enable the implementation of the Strategy by both supporting the Strategy's hard choices and providing adequate and consistent levels of funding to the Department.

This is central because what differentiates the NDS from run of the mill strategic documents is not only its clear, overriding focus on the major contemporary security challenge the nation faces – great power competition – but also the hard choices reflected in the Strategy that Congress demanded and that the Department's leadership made. The Strategy reflects the understanding that the demands of preparing for great power competition require conducting secondary missions in a more economical way.

Saying that great power competition is important but failing to delineate clearly what not to do effectively undermines the ability to genuinely prioritize on this most pressing challenge. *If the political leadership of the Department is unwilling to say with some precision not only what the Department's priority is but also where risk can be taken and cuts can be made, no one below them will do so – nor should they be expected to do so. It is the job of the political leadership of the Department to assume responsibility for those hard calls and credibly communicate those decisions to subordinate echelons.* Secretary Mattis and Acting Secretary Shanahan – in what is probably an unprecedented act (at least in the post-Cold War era) of leadership – did exactly this.

Congress' support for these hard choices – and thus for actually prioritizing great power competition – is crucial and equally commendable.

[8] Speech by Secretary of Defense James Mattis at The Reagan National Defense Forum, December 1, 2018.

- Congress should therefore work with the Department to support and authorize, as appropriate, the Department's implementation of the hard choices reflected in the Strategy.

There is no better forum than this Committee for ensuring that serious deliberation over the nation's crucial defense matters receives the official and national attention it deserves. This Committee does not need to attempt to dictate the right answers to the Department, but it can ensure the right issues are being soberly and expertly discussed and highlighted, as it did during the 1970s and 1980s.

- In this vein, the Committee could hold both closed and open hearings on key issues that require attention, featuring both Department officials and outside experts, such as:
    - The results of the most recent and authoritative assessments of key conflict scenarios;
    - New operational concepts;
    - New ways of performing missions in secondary theaters, such as the Middle East, more economically; and
    - Improving interoperability with allies and partners to defeat Chinese and Russian theories of victory.
- In addition, the Committee could help communicate more effectively to and with the American public concerning the serious and growing threat posed by great power military competition – and, given its size and sophistication, China in particular – and why this challenge demands priority even as our national security infrastructure continues to manage threats from terrorists and "rogue states."
- At the same time, it is crucial that the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy priorities be reflected across government. The Committee could therefore work with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senate Select Committee on Intelligence to ensure strategies and efforts are aligned, a crucial part of ensuring the United States effectively expands the competitive space.

Conclusion

The 2018 National Defense Strategy represents a fundamental shift in our country's defenses. Its core purpose was to identify and anticipate the most consequential and dangerous threats to our nation's interests, provide clear and actionable guidance to the Department of Defense as to how to maintain effective deterrence and defense against those threats, and by implementing these decisions stand the best chance of preserving a favorable peace in the coming years. It is a Strategy that directs hard choices and rigorous prioritization now, so that we may balance the power of a rising China and check a revanchist Russia. Failing to make those hard choices and investments now will not relieve us of the obligation to make them – it will only make them harder and costlier in the future.