

SASC OPENING STATEMENT

MR CHAIRMAN, SENATOR MCCAIN, MEMBERS
OF THE COMMITTEE

I MUST ADMIT TO YOU THAT WHEN SECRETARY
GATES APPOINTED ME AS CO-CHAIR OF THIS
REVIEW, I WAS NOT THRILLED

BUT, AS I THOUGHT MORE ABOUT THIS, I FELT
HONORED AND HUMBLLED TO BE ABLE TO
PARTICIPATE IN THIS REVIEW OF A SUBJECT
THAT IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO OUR MEN
AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM

I ANTICIPATED THIS TASK WOULD BE COMPLEX,
TOUGH, SOMETIMES UNPLEASANT AND
UNCOMFORTABLE

NOW, I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I UNDER-
ESTIMATED THOSE FACTORS

AFTER NINE MONTHS OF STUDY, I AM
CONVINCED THAT, IF THE LAW CHANGES, THE
UNITED STATES MILITARY CAN DO THIS, EVEN
IN TIME OF WAR.

I DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING A CHANGE IN THE LAW, BUT NEITHER DO I UNDERESTIMATE THE ABILITY OF OUR EXTRAORDINARILY DEDICATED SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN TO ADAPT TO SUCH CHANGE AND CONTINUE TO PROVIDE OUR NATION WITH THE MILITARY CAPABILITY TO ACCOMPLISH ANY MISSION.

I CAME TO THIS CONCLUSION NOT ONLY AS A CO-CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REVIEW, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, AS THE COMMANDER OF US ARMY FORCES IN EUROPE. I WAS COGNIZANT EVERY DAY OF THIS REVIEW THAT I MIGHT HAVE TO ACTUALLY LEAD THE CHANGES INCLUDED IN OUR REPORT.

AS A SERVING COMMANDER, I AM CONFIDENT THAT, IF THIS LAW CHANGES, I AND THE LEADERS WITH WHOM I SERVE, CAN DO JUST THAT.

THANK YOU