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**STATEMENT OF**

**ADMIRAL SAMUEL J. PAPARO**

**COMMANDER, U.S. INDO-PACIFIC COMMAND**

**U.S. INDO-PACIFIC COMMAND POSTURE**

**APRIL 2026**

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1 Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the Committee, and  
2 esteemed colleagues: thank you for the opportunity to present United States Indo-  
3 Pacific Command's (USINDOPACOM) Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 posture and priorities. The  
4 Indo-Pacific is where all four 2026 National Defense Strategy's lines of effort converge:  
5 safeguarding the U.S. Homeland, deterring China through strength rather than  
6 confrontation, deepening burden-sharing with our allies and partners, and  
7 supercharging the U.S. defense industrial base. USINDOPACOM's posture seamlessly  
8 integrates these priorities, ensuring the Indo-Pacific remains a region of stability,  
9 opportunity, and enduring U.S. leadership.

10 USINDOPACOM is a resolute and lethal Joint Force –always ready to fight and  
11 win. Our strategy is clear: we must deny China the ability to achieve its objectives  
12 through military aggression while strengthening the network of alliances and  
13 partnerships that constitutes our greatest asymmetric advantage.

14 **REGIONAL SECURITY DYNAMICS**

15 The USINDOPACOM area of responsibility (AOR) is where intense economic  
16 competition meets escalating geopolitical friction. This demands a combat-ready Joint  
17 Force to deter any attempt to subvert a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. No nation can  
18 dominate the United States or our allies. USINDOPACOM establishes the military

19 conditions necessary to uphold the 2025 National Security Strategy's vision of a  
20 balanced power structure in the Indo-Pacific—one that fosters stability and enables all  
21 nations to thrive in peace. To achieve this, we are committed to establishing a robust  
22 denial defense and creating a military posture in the Western Pacific that renders  
23 aggression infeasible, escalation unattractive, and conflict unbearable. This strategy of  
24 deterrence by denial strengthens the foundation for effective diplomacy. It also ensures  
25 the Joint Force remains capable of executing decisive global strikes, providing the  
26 Commander-in-Chief with unparalleled operational flexibility and agility.

## 27 **Warfare Dynamics**

28       Across all nations of the Indo-Pacific, the changing character of warfare impacts  
29 the entire spectrum of conflict. Three meta trends are driving this shift in modern conflict  
30 with the potential to deliver exponential leverage. First, information, influence, cognitive,  
31 and cyber operations achieve increasing strategic effects by shaping perceptions and  
32 disrupting decision-making; both in place of and in combination with military coercion  
33 and operations across the range of operations. Second, the commoditization of cheap,  
34 massed, unmanned, and frequently autonomous systems has lowered barriers to  
35 advanced capabilities, increasing the cost of assault operations and compressing  
36 decision timelines. Third, the commoditization of long-range, precision, penetrating, and,  
37 frequently cheap, strike has enabled greater leverage to coercion and cost imposition.  
38 These meta trends converge into a mega-trend: achieving information and decision  
39 superiority, via space proliferation, data, compute, application (including artificial  
40 intelligence (AI)), and human adoption. Our forces must observe, orient, decide, act,

41 assess, and adapt (learn) faster than the adversary, while integrating seamlessly with  
42 allies and partners.

43 **China**

44 China continues to pursue its rapid military buildup and modernization. The  
45 People's Liberation Army (PLA) regularly demonstrates its growing capability and  
46 capacity through persistent, provocative pressure operations. Beijing will not rule out the  
47 use of force against Taiwan; its increasingly aggressive actions near Taiwan serve not  
48 just as exercises but as rehearsals for potential forced unification.

49 In the South China Sea, East China Sea, and Yellow Sea, China claims  
50 sovereignty over contested features and sovereign rights over international waters. It  
51 uses coercive behavior and overt aggression to exert its excessive claims, including  
52 harassing the Philippines, Japan, and other Southeast Asian partners.

53 China's force design portends ambitions far beyond the first or second island  
54 chain. It reflects its ambitions toward a global military that will project power beyond its  
55 near geography to set the rules for every relationship across the globe. To this end,  
56 China is transforming the PLA into an integrated, joint, network-centric military capable  
57 of sustained, all-domain, high-intensity conflicts at greater distances from China. The  
58 PLA is rapidly modernizing its nuclear forces to achieve a credible nuclear triad: land-  
59 based, sea-based, and air-delivered nuclear weapons. Since 2020, the PLA has  
60 accelerated fielding across all three legs. China conducted a yield-producing nuclear  
61 test near the Lop Nur test site in June 2020 and an intercontinental ballistic missile  
62 (ICBM) test into the Pacific in 2024. The ICBM launch was the first such test in more

63 than four decades. China's development of advanced missile systems, space and  
64 counter-space capabilities, cyber capabilities, hypersonic weapons, a growing nuclear  
65 arsenal, and expanding maritime capabilities is an evolving challenge to U.S. national  
66 security and regional stability.

## 67 **North Korea**

68 North Korea's continued development of nuclear weapons, other weapons of  
69 mass destruction, and ballistic missiles poses a direct threat to the U.S. homeland and  
70 our allies. North Korea's modest modernization of its conventional forces creates  
71 additional complexity in the region, but more troubling is North Korea's deepening,  
72 though transactional, relationship with Russia. North Korea has supplied Russia with  
73 ballistic missiles, rockets, and thousands of containers of munitions to support Russia's  
74 war against Ukraine. North Korean forces actively engaged in combat operations in the  
75 Kursk region. Despite facing initial setbacks and high casualties, they adapted their  
76 tactics and operational capabilities. North Korea continues to attempt to gain Russian  
77 assistance in developing space launch vehicles, military satellites, one-way attack  
78 drones, missile technology, and advanced submarine propulsion technology.

## 79 **Russia**

80 Russia is expanding its Indo-Pacific footprint even as the war in Ukraine  
81 continues to strain Russian capacity. Russia has maintained the pace of air and naval  
82 force modernization in its Eastern Military District. Increased Pacific construction  
83 supplements Russia's western shipyards and will enhance redundancy, sustainment,  
84 and force flow to Russia's Pacific Fleet.

85 Russia's defense ties within the region continue to deepen. In 2025, Russian  
86 military forces conducted visits or exercises with 13 Indo-Pacific nations; several  
87 partners' militaries have not engaged with Russia since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine,  
88 including Japan, Philippines, Republic of Korea (ROK), Singapore, and Taiwan. North  
89 Korea now openly acknowledges the participation of its troops alongside Russian forces  
90 in Ukraine. Russia will continue targeting India for energy exports, defense cooperation,  
91 and strategic alignment through 2026.

92 The deepening cooperation between China, Russia, and North Korea threatens  
93 to exacerbate and accelerate security challenges in the Indo-Pacific, degrading safety  
94 and security and accelerating existing tensions and disputes in the region. Historical  
95 issues of mistrust, non-aligned goals, and resource constraints limit the type and level of  
96 support they will provide each other. But, each country could take opportunistic  
97 advantage of a regional crisis to advance its own objectives. Together, these countries'  
98 increasing mutual support creates a complex, interconnected challenge to U.S. national  
99 security and regional stability.

## 100 **Northeast Asia, the Western Pacific, and Southeast Asia**

101 The geography from Northeast Asia through the Western Pacific and into  
102 Southeast Asia is home to the most dynamic and forward leaning partnerships in the  
103 Indo-Pacific. The U.S. network of alliances and partnerships throughout this key region  
104 is unmatched and represents our strategic advantage.

105 In Northeast Asia, Japan and the ROK are building high-end capability for  
106 deterrence and defense. They are increasing defense spending, building defense

107 industrial bases, and deepening operational capability. With these allies, we will  
108 advance concrete, tangible outcomes to deepen integration and coordination,  
109 reinforcing allied burden sharing.

110 The United States and Taiwan maintain a relationship enshrined in the Taiwan  
111 Relations Act, the three U.S.-People's Republic of China Joint Communiques, and the  
112 Six Assurances. Consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act, USINDOPACOM continues  
113 to provide security assistance to enable Taiwan to build a self-defense capability that is  
114 credible, resilient, asymmetric, distributed, and cost-effective. Taiwan recently  
115 committed to strengthening its reserve forces and continues to fund U.S. and  
116 indigenous acquisition programs, as well as improve training and readiness.

117 There is room for real growth in defense, economic, and strategic ties to  
118 countries in Southeast Asia. As an example, the Partnership for Indo-Pacific Industrial  
119 Resilience (PIPIR) creates an ecosystem for co-production, co-sustainment, and supply  
120 chain resilience. With projects in development in Japan, Australia, ROK, and the  
121 Philippines, and with Thailand's accession to the group, momentum is growing to better  
122 link economic, security, and technology imperatives. Throughout the region, partner  
123 nations counter coercion and harassment while working to expand their vital roles in this  
124 emerging center of gravity for competition.

## 125 **Indian Ocean Region**

126 Cooperation between Indian Ocean Region states will have compounding  
127 positive effects on the region. India continues to be a source of stability within South  
128 Asia, making defense investments with regional partners and enhancing strategic

129 partnerships. In 2025, an Indian state-owned company acquired a controlling stake of  
130 Colombo Dockyard in Sri Lanka as part of an effort to ensure strategic infrastructure in  
131 the Indian Ocean Region remains free of adversarial influences. India also signed  
132 agreements with Mauritius in September to enhance maritime cooperation, space  
133 surveillance, and development of Agalega Island.

134 India's relationship with Pakistan will remain tense as seen in April and May of  
135 2025. Fighting during Operation Sindoor expanded military strikes into geography that is  
136 not historically disputed. While relations with Pakistan are unlikely to change, India's  
137 primary security focus is maintaining deterrence and credible warfighting capability  
138 within the region writ large.

139 **USINDOPACOM APPROACH**

140 USINDOPACOM deters challenges to regional stability and security in  
141 competition and crisis while ensuring the ability to prevail in conflict against any  
142 adversary. In coordination with allies and partners, the Joint Force develops and  
143 demonstrates the ability to deny adversaries' strategic objectives across all domains. At  
144 all times, the Joint Force is operating effectively in the information environment.  
145 Credible, prompt, and sustained combat power, visible across the Indo-Pacific region,  
146 will deter acts of military aggression that destabilize the region, undermine security and  
147 stability, and threaten the security, freedom, and prosperity of the United States.

148 In 2025, USINDOPACOM conducted more than 100 joint exercises. These  
149 exercises demonstrated capability, built combined capacity, exercised multi-domain

150 operations, advanced new capabilities, and supported partner force integration. Recent  
151 examples include:

- 152 • Combined field and command post training with United States Forces  
153 Korea (USFK), Combined Forces Command (CFC), and United Nations  
154 Command (UNC) during Exercise FREEDOM SHIELD 26 with firsts in live  
155 training for base defense, combined joint fires training, joint live air  
156 operations including modeling and simulation, and airfield seizure.
- 157 • Combined Joint All-Domain Operations (CJADO) across seven partner  
158 nations in Exercise COBRA GOLD 26 with live defensive space effects  
159 delivered from Thailand by the exercise's space component, a combined  
160 counter amphibious landing event, and 100 percent target neutralization  
161 with the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS).
- 162 • The first TYPHON live fire exercise outside the continental United States,  
163 hypersonic testing, combined HIMARS training and live fires, and ship to  
164 shore fires in Exercise TALISMAN SABER 25, demonstrating advanced  
165 land based maritime strike capability in the largest joint military exercise in  
166 Australia's history.
- 167 • Advanced anti-submarine warfare, integrated air defense, and aviation  
168 operations in Exercise MALABAR 25 southeast of Japan for complex  
169 maritime integration between the U.S. Navy, Royal Australian Navy, Indian  
170 Navy, and Japan Maritime Self Defense Force.

171           These operations are vital to maintaining peace and stability in the region, but  
172 they comprise only part of our comprehensive approach to deterrence.

173           The Department of War's primary strategic objective in the Indo-Pacific is to deter  
174 conflict by prioritizing combat credible military forces postured in the Western Pacific.  
175 Accordingly, the command operates a layer of forces west of the international dateline  
176 that demonstrates dynamic combat power and the immediate ability to respond to  
177 adversarial action. These forces conduct theater security cooperation to improve the  
178 capability and capacity of U.S. allies and partners, increase interoperability, and  
179 demonstrate to adversaries that conflict includes the prospect of coalition operations.

180           In crisis, the Joint Force will gain early leverage across all domains over a range  
181 of scenarios and assess and adjust through decision superiority. To achieve this, the  
182 Joint Force will see, understand, decide, and act faster than any adversary to obtain first  
183 mover advantage while mitigating the risk of miscalculation. Aligned with U.S. Northern  
184 Command for homeland defense, U.S. Space Command for activities in the space  
185 domain, U.S. Cyber Command for activities in the cyber domain, and U.S. Strategic  
186 Command to sustain strategic deterrence effects, and with support from our defense  
187 intelligence and national intelligence enterprises, USINDOPACOM forces are flexible  
188 and responsive to a range of crisis scenarios.

189           Recognizing that a crisis will encompass a broad range of factors outside of the  
190 military realm, USINDOPACOM has incorporated non-kinetic diplomatic, information,  
191 economic, and financial options into its major plans and exercises by including a  
192 broader group of U.S. interagency partners in processes.

193 If deterrence fails, the integrated Joint Force will fight to deny the adversary's  
194 strategic objectives. USINDOPACOM will set conditions to prevail in any conflict.

195 **CONCENTRATION AREAS**

196 Aligned to Department of War priorities, the command upholds warfighting as the  
197 central principle of every operation. The Joint Force maintains uncompromising and  
198 clear standards to maximize combat readiness in the Indo-Pacific and ensure we  
199 remain the strongest and most lethal force in the world. Within this framework,  
200 USINDOPACOM executes its operations through four integrated concentration areas:  
201 accelerate and suffuse information effects into planning; build, integrate, and employ  
202 advanced all-domain dynamic combat power; strengthen alliances and partnerships;  
203 and improve theater posture to achieve expanded maneuver. USINDOPACOM will  
204 further highlight the capabilities aligned to these concentration areas in the forthcoming  
205 congressionally mandated Independent Assessment that will specify capabilities and  
206 resources at the classified level.

207 **Information Effects**

208 USINDOPACOM's approach elevates integrating informational and physical  
209 power into a core organizing, planning, and execution principle for all operations,  
210 activities, and investments. Because deterrence is at the center of the command's  
211 mission, the Joint Force must build the link between desired information effects and  
212 physical operations, activities, and investments to assure adversary cognition of U.S.  
213 capability and will. This requires integrating the full spectrum of capabilities into each  
214 exercise and operation conducted in this theater.

215 Over the last two years, USINDOPACOM has made significant advancements in  
216 **artificial intelligence** (AI) capabilities to enhance operational effectiveness.  
217 USINDOPACOM has prioritized improving the speed and accuracy of the Commander's  
218 decision cycle by integrating AI across Joint Functions and developing AI-enabled  
219 Common Operating Picture (COP) assistants. First prototypes included the Joint  
220 Sustainment Decision Tool (JSDT) with the Defense Innovation Unit and advancements  
221 in the Authoritative Theater Object Management System (ATOMS) and Machine-  
222 Assisted Analytic Rapid-Repository System (MARS) with the Defense Intelligence  
223 Agency. The development of the INDOPACOM Mission Network (IMN), a data-centric  
224 Zero Trust Architecture Mission Partner Environment, has enabled secure, multilateral  
225 collaboration. Together these systems deliver affordable, asymmetric warfighting  
226 advantages.

### 227 **Advanced All-Domain Dynamic Combat Power**

228 Joint Forces in the USINDOPACOM AOR operate forward with lethal and  
229 credible combat power. These forces gain and sustain access to deter aggression,  
230 reassure the region of U.S. military commitment, and maintain access to the maritime  
231 commons vital to U.S. security and prosperity.

232 Though never complacent, USINDOPACOM has made great progress in both  
233 Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Cyber, Intelligence, Surveillance,  
234 Reconnaissance, and Targeting (**C5ISR**) and **Counter-C5ISR**, developing resilient  
235 systems that operate through contested domains without capability degradation. This  
236 includes enhanced space domain awareness systems, combat credible defensive

237 counter-space systems, and rapidly deployable satellite constellations that provide  
238 redundancy and complicate adversary targeting.

239 Space superiority is essential to our operations across all domains. Our  
240 adversaries are rapidly developing sophisticated counter-space capabilities, including  
241 direct-ascent anti-satellite weapons, co-orbital threats, and advanced jamming systems.  
242 To maintain our competitive advantage, USINDOPACOM and USSPACECOM require  
243 continued focus and investment.

244 Long-range **penetrating strike fires** provide critical combat power and deterrent  
245 effects across the Indo-Pacific. We prioritize ready and available fighter and attack  
246 aircraft postured in the Western Pacific with continuous bomber presence within the  
247 Indo-Pacific theater and long-range land-based precision fires for deterrence and  
248 response operations. However, to enable effective, all-domain fires across the vast  
249 Pacific theater, USINDOPACOM must implement a comprehensive modernization  
250 strategy.

251 Congressional support will help mobilize the defense industrial base and  
252 accelerate throughput of a broad spectrum of munitions critical to Indo-Pacific  
253 operations. This includes expanding production of existing munitions: Heavyweight  
254 torpedoes, Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile-Extended Range, Long Range Anti-Ship  
255 Missile, Maritime Strike Tomahawk, Precision Strike Missile, and Standard Missiles 3  
256 and 6. We must also accelerate affordable hypersonic missile options and increase  
257 throughput of essential low-cost drones and advanced maritime mines. Current

258 production timelines are misaligned with operational expenditures and the threats we  
259 face in today's global security environment.

260 Fires enabling capabilities include enhanced aerial refueling. This comprises both  
261 tanker fleet modernization and the development of innovative refueling concepts to  
262 support distributed operations. Our tanker fleet falls below requirements. Every  
263 capability we employ needs millions of pounds of jet fuel in the air. While we supplement  
264 with contract air services, only military aircraft can operate in contested environments.

265 Strengthening Integrated Air and Missile Defense (**IAMD**) is a critical part of  
266 USINDOPACOM's dynamic combat power. These forces provide a dual function:  
267 protecting key bases and infrastructure while enhancing regional deterrence. The Guam  
268 Defense System is a critical node in our IAMD constellation and serves as the  
269 pathfinder for Golden Dome for America, providing crucial lessons and capabilities for  
270 homeland defense. The changing character of warfare also demands counter-  
271 unmanned aircraft system solutions that move the cost curve to our advantage – we  
272 require cheaper defensive kill against enemy cheap kill.

273 To achieve early warning and comprehensive threat tracking, the Joint Force  
274 requires integrated space-based sensor networks that provide persistent coverage  
275 across vast distances. These systems will work in concert with advanced weapons,  
276 which the Joint Force develops for point defense against various threats, including  
277 unmanned aerial systems and cruise missiles. Enhanced command and control  
278 systems for integrated air defense will enable rapid decision-making and coordinated  
279 responses across the theater.

280 In parallel, the United States must urgently develop counter-hypersonic systems,  
281 particularly the Glide Phase Interceptor program, to address emerging threats that  
282 challenge our traditional missile defense systems. AI-enabled fire control systems are  
283 critical to engaging these high-speed and maneuverable threats, providing automated  
284 battle management and coordinated engagement recommendations across multiple  
285 defensive layers.

286 USINDOPACOM is increasing dynamic combat power through **experimentation**.  
287 New in FY25, the Joint Experimentation Campaign integrates and provides independent  
288 operational assessment of emerging Joint Force capabilities within exercises, to  
289 enhance warfighting and Joint all-domain fires capabilities and provide feedback to the  
290 Office of the Under Secretary of War for Research and Engineering's Mission  
291 Engineering and Integration Activity. Experimentation in realistic scenarios addresses  
292 integration of new capabilities into existing forces, verifies prototype maturity, and  
293 develops or refines concepts of operation – including in autonomous and AI-aided  
294 capabilities.

295 Finally, building advanced all-domain combat power fundamentally rests on the  
296 ships and aircraft that deliver massed fires forward. USINDOPACOM needs more  
297 platforms that operate with reliability and consistency. This includes submarines, aircraft  
298 carriers and their airwings, surface combatants, amphibious ships, the combat logistics  
299 force, tankers, cargo aircraft, and bombers. USINDOPACOM will work in close  
300 partnership with the Services to get these platforms ready and operating in the place of  
301 need.

## 302 **Alliances and Partnerships**

303           The U.S. network of alliances and partnerships represents a tremendous  
304 asymmetric advantage in the Indo-Pacific. The strength of our relationships with our  
305 treaty allies Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand  
306 provides strategic depth and operational flexibility that no competitor can match. In  
307 addition to the geographic advantages U.S. alliances and partnerships confer, these  
308 relationships enhance warfighting capability, increase combat capacity, and  
309 demonstrate legitimacy. To succeed, USINDOPACOM must enable key allies and  
310 partners to acquire the necessary capabilities to defend themselves and increase  
311 burden sharing while improving combined interoperability through bilateral and  
312 multilateral exercises and operations. U.S. nuclear extended deterrence provides a  
313 security backstop that enables our Indo-Pacific allies to invest in their own conventional  
314 capabilities and take lead in building conventional forces needed to deny regional  
315 aggression. INDOPACOM supports Policy-led extended deterrence dialogues with  
316 Japan, the ROK, and Australia.

317           The United States and **Japan** are working together to modernize our roles,  
318 missions, and capabilities within the alliance. Priority efforts include coordinated  
319 Command and Control, bolstering bilateral presence in the Southwest Islands, and  
320 enhancing Japan's counterstrike capabilities. Exercises RESOLUTE DRAGON and  
321 KEEN SWORD introduced new bilateral capabilities and expanded operational areas,  
322 including deployment of aircraft, sensing systems, and fires on Ishigaki and Yonaguni  
323 Islands. USINDOPACOM coordinates closely with Japan Joint Staff as they stand up

324 the new Japan Joint Operations Command. U.S. Forces Japan continues its transition  
325 to a Joint Force Headquarters. Exercise KEEN EDGE in February 2026 was a  
326 milestone event in bilateral coordination.

327 The **ROK** remains a resolute ally with global impacts. The United States and the  
328 ROK are modernizing our alliance to address evolving security challenges and burden  
329 sharing. This includes enhancing combined readiness and deterrence, integrating  
330 nuclear and conventional capabilities, and advancing defense industrial cooperation  
331 through shipbuilding and maintenance projects.

332 The ROK has pledged to increase its defense spending to 3.5% of GDP as soon  
333 as possible, demonstrating its commitment to strengthening national defense  
334 capabilities and supporting the alliance's future-oriented objectives. Recent deployment  
335 of strategic and other high-end assets to the peninsula includes two carrier strike group  
336 (CSG) port visits to Busan, fighter training with B-1s, and a U.S.-ROK-JPN multi-domain  
337 exercise with destroyers. USINDOPACOM continuously evaluates required capabilities  
338 in Korea to maximize operational lethality and flexibility.

339 The United States and **Australia** deepen our alliance through military  
340 engagements including combined naval operations in the South China Sea, robust force  
341 posture initiatives, and advanced technology cooperation. We are enhancing our force  
342 posture through initiatives in expanded rotations of key assets to Australia, such as  
343 through bomber deployments and SSN rotations, supply chain resiliency, expanded  
344 maintenance, repair, overhaul, and upgrade capacity, and fuel storage agreements.

345 Consistent with the President's direction to move "full steam ahead" on AUKUS,  
346 the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom are progressing the AUKUS  
347 agreement. Under AUKUS Pillar I, we are working to prepare for the establishment of  
348 Submarine Rotational Force-West as early as 2027, and we are executing regular visits  
349 and maintenance of U.S. SSNs at HMAS Stirling to support Australia's sovereign-ready  
350 efforts for its conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine program. Under Pillar  
351 II, we are working to deepen our cooperation with Australia on capabilities development  
352 relevant to our warfighters and to the Indo-Pacific. Further, bilaterally, Australia invests  
353 in, strengthens, and serves as a force multiplier to the U.S. defense acquisition system  
354 through the Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance Enterprise, serving as a key  
355 pathway to co-produce, co-sustain, and co-develop high priority munitions for our  
356 warfighters.

357 Significant and deepening strategic alignment between the United States and the  
358 **Philippines** improves the security environment throughout the Western Pacific.  
359 Cooperation between the United States and the Philippines strengthens regional  
360 posture, supports Armed Forces of the Philippines modernization, and operationalizes  
361 the Philippines' Comprehensive Archipelagic Defense Concept (CADC). Nine sites for  
362 U.S. access have been designated under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation  
363 Agreement (EDCA), providing USINDOPACOM with forward staging areas for logistics,  
364 rapid deployments, and effective regional response capabilities enhancing credible and  
365 combined deterrence in the First Island Chain. With the allocation of an additional  
366 \$144M for Fiscal Year 2026, the Department of War has committed over \$300M in

367 EDCA infrastructure investments to date, including 71 projects currently under  
368 construction or in the planning phase – all of which directly enhance the national  
369 security of both nations and provide economic benefits to the Philippine people, further  
370 strengthening our alliance.

371 **Singapore** remains a vital partner, providing key support for strategic basing  
372 agreements at Sembawang Naval Base, Paya Lebar Air Base, and Changi Naval Base.  
373 This sustains U.S. rotational presence, logistics, and joint training while deepening  
374 cooperation on cybersecurity, defense industrial base issues, emerging technologies,  
375 counterterrorism, and maritime security.

376 Over the past decade, our security relationship with **India** has seen  
377 transformative growth through increasingly complex military exercises, defense sales,  
378 and strategic dialogue under the umbrella of our Major Defense Partnership.  
379 Opportunities remain to enhance cooperation through underwater domain awareness,  
380 including India's purchase of MQ-9B via Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and  
381 implementation of the Underwater Domain Awareness framework.

382 The United States engages **Pacific Island** countries to support their ability to  
383 protect their sovereignty and sovereign rights against external threats and aggression.  
384 This engagement is a core effort to strengthen peace, stability, and deterrence across  
385 the Indo-Pacific region. Under the Compact of Free Association, the United States  
386 provides for the defense of the Freely Associated States (FAS) in the event of a conflict.  
387 USINDOPACOM continues to strengthen relationships with the Pacific Island countries  
388 including Fiji, Tonga, and Papua New Guinea through infrastructure investments to

389 support critical infrastructure resiliency and posture initiatives, exercises, and security  
390 cooperation activities.

391 **European partners** have enduring security interests and episodic force  
392 presence in the region, including United Kingdom basing in Diego Garcia and Brunei  
393 and French basing in New Caledonia and Tahiti. NATO capabilities are highly  
394 interoperable by design, and when available, they can seamlessly integrate into a  
395 combined-joint task force. Capabilities in the information, space, and cyber domains are  
396 a useful baseline for bilateral and multilateral activities.

### 397 **Multilateral Relationships**

398 **ASEAN** remains the core of Indo-Pacific multilateralism through platforms such  
399 as the ASEAN Regional Forum, East Asia Summit, and the ASEAN Defense Ministers'  
400 Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus). These venues enable U.S. engagement on shared  
401 challenges, including maritime security, counterterrorism, and cyber defense.

402 USINDOPACOM will continue to support the ASEAN-led ceasefire monitoring mission  
403 between Cambodia and Thailand, in furtherance of the Kuala Lumpur Peace Accord.

404 We have a robust set of exercises and other activities that we conduct with ASEAN  
405 countries as a group. The Second ASEAN-U.S. Maritime Exercise (AUMX) in  
406 December 2025 highlighted our continued dedication to strengthening partnerships in  
407 the Indo-Pacific. This September we will participate in two ADMM-Plus exercises:  
408 Trident Resolve in Indonesia, which will include military medicine and cybersecurity  
409 components, and the Joint Cooperative Activity maritime security exercise outside of  
410 Subic Bay.

411 The partnership known as the **Quad**, consisting of the United States, Australia,  
412 India, and Japan, is expanding its cooperation to enhance maritime security in the Indo-  
413 Pacific. USINDOPACOM is committed to deepening engagements with these regional  
414 partners to support Quad activities. In 2024, the Quad leaders agreed to develop the  
415 Indo-Pacific Logistics Network (IPLN). After an IPLN tabletop exercise in May 2025, the  
416 Quad partners conducted a field demonstration in December 2025 in Guam, furthering  
417 air mobility interoperability. USINDOPACOM is also working with Quad partners to  
418 improve other Indo-Pacific nations' maritime domain awareness, including through the  
419 provision of SeaVision and similar compatible systems. Exercise MALABAR, which was  
420 executed in November 2025 in Guam, also included ships from all four nations.

421 The newly formalized Indo-Pacific Quadrilateral Chiefs of Defense Cooperation  
422 Council (**QDCC**) – comprised of the United States, Japan, Australia, and the Philippines  
423 – is a grouping that supports and operationalizes the ministerial-level forum. QDCC  
424 advances priorities including combined and coordinated operations and activities and  
425 capacity building through defense modernization. By signing the organizing framework  
426 in December 2025, participating militaries demonstrated our shared commitment to a  
427 free and open Indo-Pacific through regular and increasingly advanced bilateral and  
428 multilateral maritime cooperative activities in the South China Sea. Planned  
429 enhancements in other focus areas include developing a quadrilateral common  
430 operating picture and information sharing agreement.

431 Robust multilateral engagement between the **United States, Japan, and the**  
432 **ROK** demonstrates our shared commitment to regional security and stability. U.S.

433 multilateral activities with Japan and the ROK include joint training exercises, subject  
434 matter expert exchanges, and capacity-building initiatives aimed at enhancing our  
435 combined ability to respond to regional challenges and promote a more integrated and  
436 effective regional security architecture.

437 **Theater Posture for Expanded Maneuver**

438 Maintaining an agile posture and a substantial combat credible forward presence  
439 ensures USINDOPACOM forces stand ready to rapidly and effectively respond to crises  
440 in the region, deter malign activities, and, if necessary, prevail in conflict. The command  
441 undertakes posture and sustainment initiatives to maintain consistent readiness while  
442 distributing our forces in ways that complicate adversary planning.

443 **ABO and Construction**

444 Securing access, basing, and overflight (ABO) with the right forces at the right  
445 times ensures a mobile and distributed force disposition. USINDOPACOM works  
446 unceasingly in concert with the Office of the Secretary of War and the Department of  
447 State to improve bilateral and multilateral relationships, secure agreements, and  
448 enhance interoperability. Across the Pagan-Angaur Arc, encompassing Guam, the  
449 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Palau, and the Federated  
450 States of Micronesia (FSM), posture initiatives are advancing missile defense systems,  
451 airfield capabilities, and logistics hubs, while fostering close collaboration with local  
452 governments and host nations.

453 Military construction continues to play a critical role in achieving expanded  
454 maneuver capabilities and enhanced posture in the Indo-Pacific region – and  
455 Congressional authorities and exemptions are a critical enabler. USINDOPACOM  
456 rapidly executed many of these requirements under the unspecified minor military  
457 construction (UMMC) authority previously granted. These flexible authorities allowed  
458 USINDOPACOM to streamline project identification and joint planning by leveraging  
459 operations and maintenance funding. Additionally, current H-2B visa exemptions for  
460 Guam and the CNMI expire in 2029. Extending the exemption until 2035 will prevent  
461 multi-year project delays and cost increases of 30-40% – thereby preserving readiness.

#### 462 **Sustaining The Joint Force**

463 Success in any contingency depends on robust logistics and infrastructure  
464 networks that can withstand sophisticated attacks while supporting distributed  
465 operations. Additionally, the Joint Force must develop robust sustainment strategies that  
466 ensure regional stockpiles and pre-positioned munitions are strategically placed for  
467 rapid deployment. This includes working with allies to create regional hubs for munitions  
468 storage and repair facilities, enabling quicker resupply and reducing reliance on distant  
469 U.S. bases.

470 USINDOPACOM enhances resiliency and agility by increasing the number of  
471 locations with access to assured fuel inventories and government-owned stocks.  
472 USINDOPACOM continues to expand capability through other means, such as leasing  
473 assured fuel stores in Defense Fuel Support Points throughout the Indo-Pacific theater.  
474 We also continue to operationalize our afloat consolidation tanker operations throughout

475 the Indo-Pacific and to refine this usage through increasing activity associated with  
476 inventory repositioning.

477 USINDOPACOM aims to establish a resilient defense industrial base within the  
478 Indo-Pacific. Japan, the ROK, and Australia are primary hubs for high-complexity  
479 manufacturing and sustainment. The Regional Sustainment Framework enhances  
480 sustainment capabilities in the Indo-Pacific through co-sustainment initiatives, industry  
481 collaboration, and allied partnerships to bolster readiness, address contested logistics  
482 challenges, and strengthen defense industrial resilience.

483 **SUPPORT TO OEF**

484 USINDOPACOM forces have played an indispensable role in OPERATION EPIC  
485 FURY. Our forces operating in the CENTCOM AOR build effective global deterrence by  
486 the demonstration of capability and will – which in turn creates enduring advantage.  
487 This force employment strengthens our theater operational approach of deterrence by  
488 denial.

489 This operation is forging a more lethal and experienced Joint Force.  
490 INDOPACOM forces will return to the Indo-Pacific better trained and more capable for  
491 any future conflict. We will leverage opportunities to reconstitute readiness and deliver  
492 stronger deterrence in the long term. In partnership with the Services, we are making  
493 big bets on next generation munitions including low-cost hypersonic seeker enabled  
494 weapons launched from air, land, and sea-based platforms.

495 **CONCLUSION**

496           The Indo-Pacific is the decisive theater for American security and prosperity in  
497 the 21st century. The United States possesses significant advantages over potential  
498 adversaries – our professional all-volunteer force, our technological innovation, and our  
499 network of alliances and partnerships. These advantages are not to be taken for  
500 granted – we work to expand and improve them every day. We must act with urgency to  
501 strengthen deterrence, enhance warfighting readiness and force posture, procure  
502 critical capabilities, and deepen partnerships. The investments we make today will  
503 determine whether we prevent conflict through credible deterrence or face war under  
504 suboptimal conditions.

505           USINDOPACOM stands ready to execute any mission in defense of our nation,  
506 our allies, and our interests. We are a resolute and lethal Joint Force, always ready to  
507 fight and win. With the continued support of Congress, the American people, and our  
508 allies and partners, we will defend freedom throughout the Indo-Pacific.

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