

**Senate Armed Services Committee**  
**Advance Policy Questions for Daniel Zimmerman**  
**Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs**

**Duties and Qualifications**

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (ASD(ISA)) is the principal advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Secretary of Defense on international security strategy and policy on issues of Defense Department interest that relate to the nations and international organizations of Europe (including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Russia), the Middle East, Africa, and their governments and defense establishments.

**1. What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the ASD(ISA) under current regulations and practices?**

My understanding of the duties and functions of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (ASD(ISA)) are based on U.S. code and applicable DoD guidance (see DoD Directive 5111.07). Statutorily and by guidance the ASD(ISA), under the authority, direction, and control of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)), is the principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the USD(P) on all matters relating to international security strategy and policy issues related to nations and international organizations in Europe, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union; Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia; the Middle East; and Africa. To fulfill the National Defense Strategy, the ASD(ISA) conducts defense relations in this assigned area of responsibility, develops country-specific and regional security strategy and policy, and issues guidance to translate and incorporate national and DoD policy into these approaches.

**2. If confirmed, what additional duties and functions would you expect the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to prescribe for you?**

I am not aware of any additional duties and responsibilities that would be prescribed by the Secretary, but I would be prepared to assume additional ones that are compatible with effectively meeting the core responsibilities and duties of the position.

**3. What background and experience do you possess that qualify you for this position?**

I have enjoyed the tremendous privilege to serve my country for nearly two decades in a variety of leadership and national security roles through my career at the Central Intelligence Agency. My duties have involved many of the most pressing issues confronting our national security, including matters related directly to portfolio of the ASD(ISA), as I understand it.

As a briefer for the President's Daily Brief, I presented our government's most sensitive national security insights to senior policymakers on a daily basis, discussing issues ranging from China and advanced weapons to Iran and terrorism. I was a senior member of the White House team that developed the Abraham Accords and participated in diplomatic engagements throughout the Middle East. I have managed the interagency process at both the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Council (NSC), and I have led analytic teams on cyber threats, energy security, and global trade. I have worked on sensitive projects in the Eurasia theater and served alongside special operations forces in the warzone. I have experience working closely with foreign liaison partners worldwide to advance U.S. and shared interests. My Senate fellowship in Senator Hagerty's office has equipped me with an understanding and deep respect for the role of Congress in national security policy. My academic background includes studies in international diplomacy, military and economic statecraft, financial mathematics, and history.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

**Federal ethics laws, to include 18 U.S.C. §208, prohibit government employees from participating in matters where they, or certain family members or organizations with which they have certain relationships, have a financial interest.**

**4. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to disclose any potential conflicts of interest, including investments, business ties, family relationships, or other connections that could be perceived as influencing your decision making?**

I agree to comply with all conflicts of interest disclosure requirements set forth in the Ethics in Government Act and implementing regulations.

**5. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, that if a conflict of interest arises, you will recuse yourself from participating in any decisions regarding that specific matter?**

I agree to comply with all recusal requirements under 18 U.S.C. § 208 and implementing regulations.

**6. Do you commit, without qualification, if confirmed, to decide matters on the merits, and exclusively in the public interest, without regard to private gain or personal benefit?**

I commit to deciding matters on the merits based on the public interest, without regard to any private gain or personal benefit.

### **Major Challenges and Priorities**

**7. If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish?**

I support the President's America First, peace through strength agenda. I agree with Secretary Hegseth that China and securing the homeland constitute our country's top security challenges and are the right priorities for defense policy.

If confirmed, I would work under Under Secretary Colby to further the Department's policy objectives. As I understand them with respect to the ASD(ISA) area of responsibility, these should include among others pursuing a durable peace in Ukraine, spurring urgent defense investments and greater responsibility from NATO allies, addressing threats presented by Russia, partnering with key ally Israel, denying Iran a nuclear weapon, countering terrorist threats to the homeland, and preventing China from geostrategic advances in these theaters.

In addition to such policy aims, if confirmed, I would also strive to provide diligent, accountable, and humble leadership in the position.

**8. In your view, what are the major challenges, if any, you would confront if confirmed as ASD(ISA)?**

In my understanding, the major challenge of the ASD(ISA) portfolio will be to help optimize the allocation of defense resources. I agree with Secretary Hegseth that China and securing the homeland must take precedence, and that reviving the defense industrial base and enhancing readiness are fundamental to that. In my view, the ASD(ISA) must be ready to help position the Department to focus on these priorities while resolutely addressing persistent threats facing the United States stemming from Russia, Iran, terrorism, and China's expanding influence in the Middle East and Africa. I see effective partner engagements that enable and drive greater burden sharing as vital for this end.

If confirmed, I would also anticipate the organizational challenge of quickly mastering Department processes and ensuring my advice, leadership, and decision-making are timely, informed, and effective toward furthering U.S. national security interests and Department policy.

**9. If confirmed, what management actions and timelines would you establish to address each of these challenges?**

If confirmed, I would take a number of actions to address these challenges, starting with understanding existing Departmental guidance and requesting briefings on all the core elements of the ASD(ISA) portfolio to ensure I am prepared to provide optimal advice and support to Under Secretary Colby and Secretary Hegseth in advancing the President's defense priorities. Based on previous interagency management experience, I would plan to swiftly establish clear communication and workflow practices, and to develop productive relationships with my colleagues at DoD as well as with counterparts across the NSC, State Department, Intelligence Community, and all relevant departments. I would focus closely on upcoming allied engagements to promote the Administration's clear message encouraging allies and partners to take greater ownership of their security needs. I would pursue excellent communication with Congress to ensure the Department receives appropriate Congressional input on matters related to the ASD(ISA) portfolio.

**Detainee Treatment and Naval Station Guantanamo Bay**

**10. Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, *The Department of Defense Detainee Program*, dated August 19, 2014, and required by section 1045 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114-92)?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question. My understanding is that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity conflict conducts oversight of detainee treatment.

**11. What are your views on the continued use of the detention facility at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question. My understanding is that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity conflict conducts oversight of Guantanamo Bay operational policy.

**Executive Order 13567 established the Periodic Review Board (PRB) *Periodic Review of Individuals Detained at Guantánamo Bay Naval Station Pursuant to the Authorization for Use of Military Force* process.**

**12. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to address the cases of detainees already recommended by a PRB for transfer from Guantanamo to another nation?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

**13. In your view, what standard of care should govern the physical and mental health services provided to detainees at Guantanamo, whether they are migrants or law of war detainees?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

**14. What is your understanding of the authorities that are available to the Department of Defense to transfer migrants and hold them at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

**15. What are your views on the objectives and outcomes of the Department's Military Commission process?**

My understanding is that the Military Commissions process provides standards and processes for trials of alien unprivileged enemy belligerents for violations of the law of

war and other offenses triable by military commission. If confirmed, I would not anticipate being directly involved in policy decisions regarding the Office of Military Commissions and Military Commissions proceedings. However, I support ensuring that policy is not an impediment to thorough and speedy justice for those responsible for the 9/11 attacks and other terrorist attacks.

**Section 2441 of title 18, U.S. Code, defines grave breaches of common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, including torture and cruel and inhuman treatment.**

**16. In your view, does section 2441 define these terms in a way that provides U.S. detainees in the custody of other nations, as well as foreign detainees in U.S. custody appropriate protections from abusive treatment?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

#### **U.S. Northern Command/Defense Support to Civilian Authorities**

**Civil authorities may request DOD support for domestic disasters and certain counter-drug operations as well as in managing the consequences of a terrorist event employing a weapon of mass destruction.**

**17. In your view, are the procedures by which other Federal, State, and Local agencies request DOD support efficient and effective?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question. My understanding is that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Hemispheric Affairs oversees defense support of civil authorities policy, authorities, and processes.

**18. In your view, are DOD procedures for evaluating and approving the provision of support requested by a civil authority efficient, effective, and timely?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

**19. What is your understanding of the factors that are considered in determining whether DOD will provide support to a civil authority?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

**20. What types of assistance in this context are inappropriate, in your view?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

**21. What role do you believe that DOD should play in addressing security at the southwest border? What aspects of the current DOD role at the southwest border, if any, could be improved?**

My understanding is that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Hemispheric Affairs oversees defense support of civil authorities policy, authorities, and processes.

### **U.S. Southern Command**

#### **22. If confirmed, what recommendations would you make to the President to deter Russian and Chinese influence in the SOUTHCOM AOR?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question. My understanding is that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Hemispheric Affairs and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities have responsibility for DoD strategy and policy in the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) area of responsibility (AOR) and the Western Hemisphere and advise on USSOUTHCOM posture and activities.

#### **23. Do you believe these influences threaten hemispheric security and prosperity?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

### ***Counternarcotics Activities* (SO/LIC)**

**DOD serves as lead agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime foreign shipments of drugs flowing toward the United States. On an annual basis, DOD expends nearly \$1 billion to build the counternarcotics capacity of U.S. Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and certain foreign governments.**

#### **24. What changes, if any, should be made to DOD's counternarcotics strategy and supporting activities?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question. I believe the narcotics threat facing our country is a true menace and deserves an all-of-government response. My understanding is that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict oversees the DoD counternarcotics program.

**Corruption and the absence of the rule of law enable the transnational criminal organizations' narcotics trade that contributes to the flow of illegal drugs into the United States.**

#### **25. In your view, what should be DOD's role in countering the flow of narcotics to nations other than the United States?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

#### **26. To what extent do you view our allies and partners in the region as partners in countering counternarcotics and other illicit activities?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

**27. How, if at all, should U.S. security assistance be scoped to address factors at the root of counternarcotics trafficking, in your opinion?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question.

### **Approaches to Strategic Competition**

**The Department of Defense published Interim National Defense Strategic Guidance (INDSG) on March 13, 2025. The INDSG supersedes the Biden Administration’s 2022 National Defense Strategy. The INDSG prioritizes defense of the homeland and deterrence of China over all other threats. The underlying premise of the strategy assumes that limited resources should serve to constrain America’s strategic appetite – indeed the INDSG indicates a preference for limited defense spending and a reduced focus on Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.**

**28. In your view, what are the distinctions between the military capabilities and capacities the United States needs to prevail in day-to-day strategic competition with Russia and the capabilities and capacities it needs to deter Russia’s use of military force to achieve political objectives and, if necessary, prevail in a military conflict with the Russia?**

In my understanding, the Department and the Administration judges that U.S. military strategy needs to focus our resources on defending the homeland and deterring China. For regions such as Europe and the Middle East that still hold key U.S. interests, it will be critical to maintain a network of allies and partners that the United States can count on to field capabilities necessary to defend themselves effectively, with more focused U.S. support. This applies across the spectrum from competition to armed conflict and will require many of our allies and partners, especially in Europe, to accelerate investments in their militaries, societal resilience, and defense industrial capacity. Fortunately, from public reporting, it seems that our allies have heard this call and are stepping up to take greater ownership of their defense needs. If confirmed, critical to my role will be clearly and persuasively aligning our allies’ defense goals with those of the President.

**29. In your view, what are the enduring advantages that enable the United States to prevail in strategic competition with Russia and with China? If confirmed, what policies and approaches would you implement to sustain and strengthen those advantages?**

The United States must possess the world’s most lethal fighting force. If confirmed, I would work to sustain and strengthen this advantage.

**30. In your assessment, what new capabilities are needed for the Joint Force to compete below the threshold of armed conflict?**

In my understanding, the United States is well positioned to operate below the threshold of armed conflict to defend the Homeland and deter China in the Indo-Pacific in alignment with the INDSG. If confirmed, I commit to working with our Combatant Command and Departmental leaders to understand and advocate for resourcing any additional and novel capabilities in this space.

**31. If confirmed, what policies would you propose to counter Russia's efforts to compete strategically below the threshold of armed conflict in regions within the ASD(ISA)'s responsibility?**

I would like to study this issue more closely and receive the relevant briefings before offering a well-informed view. For allies to contribute effectively to these strategies, they must surge defense spending and swiftly strengthen security capabilities, as President Trump and Secretary Hegseth have urged them to do. If confirmed as ASD(ISA), securing greater allied burden sharing and accountability will be one of my top priorities.

**32. What is your assessment of the military threat posed by the People's Republic of China in the regions within the ASD(ISA)'s responsibility?**

The military threat posed by China is the most serious and pressing for the United States. The 2025 Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community states that China presents the most comprehensive and robust military threat to U.S. national security. The heightened risk of simultaneous aggression against the United States and its allies is a significant and growing challenge. European nations stepping up and leading on conventional defense and deterrence of Russia in Europe will be vital to mitigate the threat of simultaneous aggression against the United States and its allies. The presence of China in the Middle East threatens a key geographic area which could become critical in the event of a Pacific contingency. In Africa, China has deepened engagement to bolster relationships with African countries and their militaries. China has looked to gain African countries' support for establishing maritime points of presence to advance its goal of developing the People's Liberation Army into a global expeditionary force that can project power well beyond the Indo-Pacific.

**33. What is your assessment of the military threat posed by Russia?**

Russia's nuclear, missile, and other asymmetric capabilities enable Russia to pose a direct military threat to the United States, the rest of NATO, and other allies. Russia's battle-hardened military poses a serious threat to Eastern Europe, including NATO members.

**34. What is your assessment of the threat posed by collusion among Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea?**

I am deeply concerned that China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea have increasingly collaborated with each other in recent years, presenting heightened security challenges to the United States and our allies. The United States must take such coordination seriously,

since too many of our allies are inadequately prepared to assume greater security burdens, and the United States itself would be hard pressed to adequately fight multiple major wars. This is a key challenge I would focus on addressing if confirmed as ASD(ISA).

**35. In your view, should the Defense Department's force sizing construct be based on the need to conduct simultaneous conflicts in Asia and Europe?**

In my view, a strategy that prioritizes defending the homeland and deterring China while fostering increased burden-sharing from allies and partners, especially in Europe, is the best force planning construct. This can position the United States and our allies to deter—or if necessary fight and win—simultaneous conflicts in the Indo-Pacific and Europe.

**36. If confirmed, what would you do if you determine that the DOD cannot meet the demands placed on it by the President's defense strategy?**

The Department must be responsive to the President. If confirmed, I would work under the guidance of the Secretary and USD(P) to ensure we prioritize the Department's activities and resources to achieve the President's intent.

**37. How do you view issues of economic competition as part of the border strategic competition environment? What role, if any, should DOD have in assessing, influencing or impacting economic competition as part of its broader strategy?**

I strongly support Secretary Hegseth's goal of rebuilding the military by reviving our defense industrial base, reforming our acquisition process, passing a financial audit, and rapidly fielding emerging technologies. I see the combination of these initiatives being the foundation of DoD's role in supporting a broader U.S. Government strategy for economic competition.

**U.S. European Command (EUCOM)**

**38. Do you believe the deterrent posture in Europe is sufficient to deter further Russian aggression in Europe?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question. I understand the Department of Defense has begun conducting a global force posture review to assess the effectiveness of existing missions and forces assigned to USEUCOM. If confirmed, I would actively engage in this effort, including addressing this question.

**39. In your assessment, are there capability and/or capacity shortfalls in current U.S. posture that affect the U.S. ability to carry out the EUCOM Theater Campaign Plan?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question. I understand the Department of Defense has begun conducting a global force posture review to assess the

effectiveness of existing missions and forces assigned to USEUCOM. If confirmed, I would actively contribute to this effort, including addressing this question.

**40. In your assessment, does the United States have sufficient air and missile defense capability and capacity to defend critical infrastructure in EUCOM? If not, what are the areas of highest risk?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question. I understand the Department of Defense has begun conducting a global force posture review to assess the effectiveness of existing missions and forces assigned to USEUCOM. If confirmed, I would actively contribute to this effort, including addressing this question.

**41. If confirmed, what specific changes would you make to U.S. capabilities or force posture in Europe to execute the Interim National Defense Strategic Guidance more effectively?**

I am not in a position to give an informed answer to this question. I understand the Department of Defense has begun conducting a global force posture review to assess the effectiveness of existing missions and forces assigned to USEUCOM using the INDSG to guide the process. If confirmed, I would actively contribute to this effort, including addressing this question.

**Defender Europe 2025 and other exercises the United States conducts with European Allies and partners illustrate our collective ability to mobilize large forces rapidly to respond to a crisis.**

**42. Do you support DOD maintaining the large scale and frequent exercises it has conducted in Europe in recent years?**

If confirmed, I would review the resource requirements necessary to achieve our national security objectives in Europe in light of our global strategic and defense priorities as indicated by President Trump and Secretary Hegseth.

### ***European Deterrence Initiative (EDI)***

**Since establishment of the EDI in 2014, the NDAA has authorized billions of dollars each year for EDI investments to support stability and security, and to deter Russian aggression.**

**43. In your view, has EDI improved U.S. and allied capability and capacity to deter Russian aggression in the European theater?**

If confirmed, I would review and provide my best advice to my leadership on the allocation of resources across the different theaters and recommend investments that best protect U.S. interests, deter conflict, and leverage the investments of our allies to provide for their own defense.

**44. Do you believe continued, robust funding for programs, activities, and investments under EDI's five lines of effort is required to support implementation of EUCOM's mission to deter and defend against aggression?**

It is my understanding that the EDI's lines of effort—increased presence, exercises and training, enhanced prepositioning, improved infrastructure, and building partner capacity—have contributed to the capabilities and readiness of U.S. forces in USEUCOM, of NATO allies, and of regional partners. If confirmed, I would review the resource requirements necessary to achieve our national security objectives in Europe in light of our global strategic and defense priorities as indicated by President Trump and Secretary Hegseth.

*NATO Alliance*

**45. In your view, how important to U.S. strategic interests is the U.S. commitment to its obligations under the North Atlantic Treaty, especially Article 5?**

I believe NATO holds far-reaching importance for the United States and that our commitments to the alliance are grave and serious. My understanding is that the President has said the United States remains committed to NATO. The United States remains the only country that has invoked Article 5 commitments, which gives that provision special significance. President Trump and Secretary Hegseth have been clear that Article 3 is also important, and I agree with the Administration's vision for all members to contribute to a NATO that is more lethal, ready, and relevant. The alliance must adapt, and if confirmed it will be my particular responsibility to ensure that European and Canadian NATO allies do their part.

**46. What do you view as the essential strategic objectives of the NATO Alliance and what do you perceive to be the greatest challenges in meeting those objectives?**

My understanding is that NATO's strategic objectives are to deter conflict in Europe and defeat threats to treaty Allies should deterrence fail. NATO is, and should refocus on being, a military alliance to defend the member states in the Euro-Atlantic area. A great challenge to those objectives is that Russia now has a battle-hardened military while Europe's development of combat-credible forces and its defense industrial base has lagged. Meanwhile, China poses a grave and near-term threat to U.S. interest in the Indo-Pacific. A sense of urgency among our allies is needed to achieve a NATO that is more lethal, ready, and relevant.

**47. NATO has long held the position that, "as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance." In your view, do you believe this principle requires the United States to continue to deploy nuclear weapons in NATO countries?**

I support this principle, and my understanding is that the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe has proven to be a key tenant of the alliance and played a fundamental role deterring conflict and aggression.

**48. Do you believe that NATO should expand the nuclear sharing role to additional alliance members?**

I understand this has been a topic of ongoing debate in think tank channels, but I would like to study this question more closely and receive briefings on the topic before offering a view. I do not have sufficient information at this time to give an informed answer.

**49. What do you see as the benefits, or negative consequences, of NATO countries individually pursuing their own nuclear weapons?**

I would like to study this question more closely and have an opportunity to engage our NATO allies on their views of NATO's nuclear deterrence posture before offering my own perspective. If confirmed, I would make it a priority to assess and engage on this issue in light of our global defense requirements in this critical area.

**The dual-hatted position of the Commander of EUCOM as NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) allows U.S. and Allied forces to be highly integrated in Europe. Similar dual-hat responsibilities have been integrated to other senior U.S. Commanders, including Commander of U.S. Air Forces Europe and Africa as Commander NATO Allied Air Command (AIRCOM) and Commander U.S. Army Europe and Africa as NATO Allied Land Command Commander.**

**50. What is your assessment of the benefits of these dual-hatted structures to allied cohesion and integration?**

I am not currently in a position to make a fully informed analysis of the pros and cons of the dual-hatted structures.

**51. Do you share current EUCOM Commander General Cavoli's view that the dual-hatted role for the EUCOM Commander as SACEUR is important and, as he testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee, that not having an American in the role of SACEUR "would bring some challenges in terms of nuclear command and control"?**

The SACEUR is an important position and I am not aware of any Department plans to relinquish it. If confirmed, I would consult with my leadership as well as military colleagues in the Joint Staff and USEUCOM prior to making recommendations.

*Russia*

**52. In your view, does Russia pose a threat to the United States, its allies, or its interests in the AOR and globally? If so, please describe how you perceive that threat.**

Yes. Despite facing international sanctions since 2014, which were further strengthened during the first Trump Administration, Russia has maintained a capable military, developed its strategic capabilities, and increased production of crucial military equipment. Of particular concern is Russia's expansion of its nuclear arsenal, posing a threat to the U.S. homeland, as well as its tactical nuclear weapons, which threaten its European and Asian neighbors. Russia also presents challenges in cyberspace, undersea, space, and the Arctic.

**53. In your view, which EUCOM and NATO activities most effectively deter Russia and mitigate the Russian threat to NATO Allies?**

I do not believe I am not in a position at this time to give the informed answer this question deserves. I understand the Department of Defense has begun conducting a global force posture review to assess the effectiveness of existing missions and forces assigned to USEUCOM. If confirmed, I would actively support USD(P) in this effort, including addressing this question.

**54. What aspects of U.S. and NATO force posture do you assess as having the most significant deterrent effect on Russia?**

I do not believe I am not in a position at this time to give the informed answer this question deserves. I understand the Department of Defense has begun conducting a global force posture review to assess the effectiveness of existing missions and forces assigned to USEUCOM. If confirmed, I would actively support USD(P) in this effort, including addressing this question.

**55. In your view, what more should DOD do to counter Russian malign influence in Europe?**

While I have worked on this issue extensively from within the Intelligence Community, I do not believe I am not in a position at this time to give the informed answer this question deserves from a DoD perspective. I understand the Department of Defense has begun conducting a global force posture review to assess the effectiveness of existing missions and forces assigned to USEUCOM. If confirmed, I would actively support USD(P) in this effort, including addressing this question.

## *Ukraine*

**In February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale, unprovoked, and illegal invasion in Ukraine.**

**56. What do you believe to be Russia's military objectives in Ukraine?**

I do not believe I have all the relevant information at my disposal, including classified information, to fully assess this question.

**57. What do you believe would be the implications for U.S. national security interests if Russia were able to achieve its goals in Ukraine?**

Russia remains a serious military threat to U.S. and European security, and thus credible deterrence remains a strategic imperative. As President Trump has repeatedly emphasized, it is vitally important that our European allies lead from the front in providing security assistance to Ukraine and deterring further Russian aggression, including by rapidly increasing their own defense spending and production.

**58. Do you believe it is important for the United States to continue support, including security assistance to help Ukraine deter and defeat Russian aggression? If not, why not?**

If confirmed, I would support the Administration's goal to forge a durable peace in Ukraine. I believe it is important for Ukraine to be well-armed to support its self-defense, even after the war is concluded. My understanding is that the United States has already contributed a very great deal to Ukraine's defense and must weigh future assistance against urgent security needs elsewhere, including protecting U.S. territorial integrity and deterring threats from China. The President has rightly emphasized Europe should lead from the front in securing Ukraine's future. If confirmed, I would make it a priority to advance this overall approach.

**U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM)**

**AFRICOM has minimal assigned forces and, as a result, is required to compete for the vast majority of its U.S. forces in the global force management process.**

**59. What is your assessment of the availability and predictability of forces and associated capabilities to support the AFRICOM Theater Campaign Plan, the NDS, and other emergency requirements?**

It is my understanding that USAFRICOM has no assigned forces and fewer allocated forces than most other Combatant Commands. I also understand that it competes for capabilities when it faces an emerging requirement. If confirmed, I would carefully review all requirements to provide the best advice on whether existing missions and forces allocated to USAFRICOM are sufficient to support DoD's priorities given the competitive geostrategic environment.

**60. Are there any changes you would recommend to the allocation or assignment of forces to AFRICOM, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, I would carefully review all requirements to provide the best advice on whether existing missions and forces assigned to USAFRICOM are sufficient to support DoD's priorities given the competitive geostrategic environment.

**61. What should be the primary objectives of the DOD specifically, and the United States more broadly, in the AFRICOM AOR?**

In my understanding, the Department's two key objectives in the USAFRICOM AOR are to degrade terrorist groups' ability to strike the U.S. homeland or overseas equities and to counter China's attempts to project military power.

**62. What is your assessment of the strategic objectives of Russia and China in Africa? In what areas, if any, do these oppose U.S. and partner objectives?**

With 53 countries in USAFRICOM's AOR it is hard to generalize, yet my understanding is that China and Russia both actively seek deeper engagement and influence across the continent. China has sought to bolster relationships with African countries and their militaries and to use investment to create dependencies, while gaining African countries' support for its global policy objectives. China looks to Africa as a launchpad for expanding military power beyond the Pacific. Meanwhile, Russia uses extractive and destabilizing means to assert influence in Africa, including paramilitary deployments, seeking to create dependencies on Russian military assets. These activities are too often at the expense of African countries and opposed to U.S. and partners' shared objectives for stability and security.

**U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM)**

**63. In your opinion, what are the key U.S. national security interests in the Middle East? Please explain your answer.**

In my view, key U.S. national security interests in the Middle East include countering terrorist threats to the homeland, denying Iran a nuclear weapon and intercontinental ballistic missiles, promoting the security of model ally Israel, supporting the free flow of goods and trade, and generally acting increasingly as a security enabler and integrator for our regional partners.

Counterterrorism remains a key national security priority in the USCENTCOM AOR. Several terrorist groups aspire to possess either the intent or capability to strike the U.S. homeland or U.S. personnel.

The Middle East also remains at risk of nuclear proliferation by Iran. If confirmed, I will help ensure that the Department of Defense stands ready to support the President's National Security Presidential Memorandum on Iran, which among other provisions specifically says it is the policy of the United States to deny Iran a nuclear weapon.

The United States has strong partners in the Middle East with whom we have overlapping interests, long-standing cooperation, and substantial economic and technological trade ties.

**64. In your opinion, to what extent does achieving U.S. national security interests in the Middle East require a continuous U.S. military presence, and in your view is the current U.S. force presence appropriately sized? Please explain your answer.**

I understand the Department is currently reviewing global force posture to ensure the optimal level of forces are assigned to USCENTCOM to achieve regional and global defense strategy goals. If confirmed, I would support this review and advise the Secretary and USD(P) on the force posture necessary to achieve the President's national security objectives. It is my understanding that the Department of Defense strives to maintain the capability to surge forces anywhere in the world to respond to regional threats and emerging crises.

**65. What opportunities exist for increasing burden-sharing with U.S. partners to counter threats emanating from and affecting the CENTCOM AOR?**

My understanding is that the United States collaborates effectively with multiple partners in the region to counter threats emanating from and affecting the USCENTCOM AOR. I believe our partners can and must take greater ownership of their own defense. This is both in their interest and ours. If confirmed, I would seek increased opportunities to enable regional partners to counter terrorist groups, defend their sovereign territories, and cooperate on countering Iran and its threat network.

**66. What threat does Chinese and Russian involvement in the Middle East pose to U.S. operations and interests and to what extent does a continuous U.S. presence counter their involvement? In your view, what other policy tools might be useful in this regard?**

Given its size, energy resources, location, and other factors, the Middle East is relevant to great power competition with China and Russia. The United States can counter Chinese and Russian involvement in the region through strong relationships with partners who are enabled and empowered across a full spectrum of activities.

*Iran*

**67. What is your understanding of the objectives of the U.S. national security interests with respect to Iran? What is the role of the U.S. military in this strategy?**

I fully support the President's National Security Presidential Memorandum on Iran, which establishes that: 1) Iran should be denied a nuclear weapon and intercontinental ballistic missiles; 2) Iran's terrorist network should be neutralized; and 3) Iran's aggressive development of missiles, as well as other asymmetric and conventional

weapons capabilities, should be countered. The U.S. military, alongside other elements of national power and allied capabilities, plays a critical role in this strategy.

**68. What is your assessment of the current military threat posed by Iran? What is your assessment of the threat posed by Iranian proxy groups? In your opinion, what is the most effective way to defeat Iranian proxy groups?**

Iran poses a significant threat to the security of the United States and its allies and partners. Last year, Iran launched two unprecedented major missile and drone barrages against Israel from Iranian territory. In addition to its conventional military, Iran also leverages proxy forces to launch kinetic attacks and advance Tehran's aims across the Middle East. These forces have been significantly weakened but still threaten U.S. forces and our partners. Iran also continues to further its ability to gain a nuclear weapons capability, which the President has rightly said cannot happen.

**69. In your view, what would be the security implications for U.S. and regional security interests should Iran acquire a nuclear weapons capability?**

The President has said clearly that the United States will not allow Iran to obtain a nuclear weapon, and I support that position. The President has also clearly expressed his preference to negotiate an agreement that prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. I support the President's policy approach to produce a far better agreement than the shortsighted Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. For its part, the Department's role is to ensure that the President is armed with the best possible military options to deny Iran a nuclear weapon. If confirmed, I would regard it as my responsibility to ensure that the Secretary and the President have the best possible military options for this purpose.

**70. In your opinion, can Iran be sufficiently deterred through military force alone? Please explain your answer.**

I support the President's stated intent to address Iran's malign activity through non-military tools if possible, including economic pressure and diplomacy. At the same time, it is the Department of Defense's role to ensure the President is armed with the best possible military options. If confirmed, I would ensure the President has these.

*Israel*

**71. In your opinion, what are U.S. national security objectives with regards to Israel?**

I believe that the U.S.-Israel alliance is of great importance to the United States and that enabling Israel's security and ability to defend itself is a key U.S. national security objective. Israel is a model ally for the United States in its self-reliance, independence, and grit. My understanding is that the Department of Defense supports Israel's security by helping facilitate security assistance to Israel, extensive military cooperation through

USCENTCOM channels, and through coordination with the Israelis to help secure the release of all hostages held by Hamas, including American citizens.

**72. In your opinion, what should DOD's role be in supporting Israeli efforts to degrade and defeat Hamas?**

If confirmed, I would fully back U.S. support for Israel's security and its ability to defend itself. Hamas started this war on October 7, 2023 by launching a horrific and unprovoked terrorist attack on Israel. Hamas killed more than 1,200 innocent people, including 46 Americans, and took some 250 hostages. The United States should provide the security assistance that Israel needs to defeat Hamas and prevent future attacks. I support measures by the Trump Administration to bolster support to Israel, including through the release of the shipment of 2,000 lb. bombs previously paused.

**73. Should U.S. policy towards Israel include work towards a two-state solution?**

From a Department of Defense standpoint, U.S. policy toward Israel should support U.S. interests, which includes close partnership with our model ally Israel and the re-establishment of deterrence and stability in the region. If confirmed, I would support the President's vision for peace in the Middle East.

*Syria and Iraq*

**74. What is your understanding of current U.S. strategy and objectives in Syria? How have those objectives changed, if at all, in light of the fall of the Assad regime?**

My understanding is that the Department is closely watching developments in Syria with a primary objective of maintaining pressure on ISIS and responding to any other terrorist threats to the United States that arise, while, as President Trump has indicated, limiting the U.S. presence there. If confirmed, I would work to continue to review our objectives in light of the fall of the Assad regime.

**75. From a DOD perspective, what must be done to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS? What non-military efforts are needed for the enduring defeat of ISIS?**

I understand that the U.S. military supports the enduring defeat of ISIS through counterterrorism operations and by enabling key ally and partner militaries to assume the burden for addressing terrorist threats within their own countries. More broadly, the enduring defeat of ISIS will require a whole-of-government effort, to include intelligence and law enforcement.

**76. What do you perceive to be the role of the Syrian Democratic Forces and Iraqi Security Forces in countering ISIS and al Qaeda?**

My understanding is that these partners have played a critical role in our efforts to counter ISIS and al Qaeda. If confirmed, I would seek the appropriate briefings on the

current role of these forces to ensure a full-picture assessment and determination on the future of U.S. counterterrorism policy in the region.

**77. In your view, should U.S. troop levels in Syria be tied to the achievement of certain conditions on the ground? If so, what conditions would you factor into your recommendation to the President on future troop levels in Syria?**

My understanding is that the Secretary as of mid-April has directed a consolidation of U.S. forces in Syria, reflecting the significant achievements we have made toward degrading ISIS that go back to President Trump's first term. Moving forward, the deployment of U.S. troops in any foreign country should always be tied to specific objectives and conditions. If confirmed, I would review this issue closely and shape my recommendations to the USD(P) by this principle.

**78. In September 2024, the U.S.-Iraq Higher Military Commission announced the transition of the global coalition to defeat ISIS to a bilateral security relationship with the Government of Iraq. However, many of the details of such a transition are still being negotiated with the Iraqi Government.**

**In your view, what should the guiding principles for DOD's presence in Iraq moving forward?**

The deployment of U.S. troops in any foreign country should be assessed continually based on changing objectives and conditions on the ground. If confirmed, I would seek a thorough analysis along these lines prior to making a recommendation.

**Do you assess that U.S. forces should remain in Iraq beyond next September? Why or why not?**

My understanding is that the United States and Iraq agreed in September 2024 to wind down Operation INHERENT RESOLVE inside Iraq by September 2025, and to continue counter-ISIS operations in Syria from Iraq until at least September 2026. If confirmed, I would study the security implications of this matter closely and ensure that they are considered in the global force posture review.

### *Middle East Regional Partners*

**79. In your view, what support should DOD provide the Lebanese Armed Forces?**

My understanding is that the Department's current objectives are to strengthen Lebanon's sovereignty by building the capabilities of the Lebanese Armed Forces to counter internal and terrorist threats and combat corruption. I understand that the aim of these capacity building efforts is to reduce regional tensions, improve Israel's security along its northern border, and further degrade Iran's influence in Lebanon. If confirmed, I would look at whether these efforts are performing against their objectives and generally be open to

DoD support that advances the Administration's security assistance priorities in the Middle East and beyond.

**80. In your view, what support should DOD provide to the Jordanian Armed Forces?**

If confirmed, I would look at this question closely and generally be open to DoD support that advances the Administration's security assistance priorities in the Middle East and beyond. Jordan has proven itself an important U.S. partner for promoting regional stability. My understanding is that the Department already works with Jordan to enhance the capabilities of the Jordanian Armed Forces to defeat threats posed by terrorist organizations, including ISIS, to counter the smuggling of narcotics and illicit weapons across Jordan's borders, and to detect and intercept unmanned aerial systems and missile threats that continue to violate Jordanian sovereignty and endanger U.S. and partner forces in the region.

**Defense Security Cooperation**

**81. In your view, what are the necessary and appropriate strategic objectives that should underpin the Defense Department's approach to building the capabilities of a partner nation's security forces?**

The Department's approach to building the capabilities of foreign partners should advance U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives and must be planned and resourced accordingly. If confirmed, I would conduct and manage defense relations within the ASD(ISA) portfolio to further the Administration's objectives of increased readiness, complementary alliances, and greater burden sharing.

**82. In the competition with near-peer rivals, what steps would you recommend, if confirmed, to ensure that the United States is taking a strategic approach to its security cooperation with allies and partners?**

If confirmed, I will review the specific steps needed to ensure that security cooperation is appropriately aligned with the Administration's strategic objectives. In a resource-constrained environment, the Department's security cooperation activities must be carefully tailored toward the highest-priority threats facing the United States.

**83. Do you have any recommendations for how to improve coordination of international armaments cooperation activities, including FMS, across the various stakeholders in Policy, A&S, and R&E?**

I believe it is vital to bring efficiency to the foreign military sales (FMS) process. If confirmed, I will review existing rules and regulations involved in the development, execution, and monitoring of foreign defense sales, look for opportunities to increase government-industry collaboration, and advance our competitiveness abroad.

**84. Do you have views on how DOD might be able to streamline and improve that parts of the FMS process under its control to improve coordination and timeliness?**

The United States must maintain the strongest and most technologically advanced military in the world, along with a robust network of capable partners and allies. In my understanding, the FMS process is a vital part of encouraging our allies to strengthen their defense capabilities and increase burden sharing. I believe the FMS process should be agile, able to adapt to demands and respond to current and emerging security concerns. If confirmed, I will review existing processes and collaborate with the relevant stakeholders in the FMS process to further the Administration's goals of improving accountability and transparency in the FMS system, and to ensure predictable and reliable delivery of capabilities to our allies and partners.

**Cyber**

**In September 2023, DOD released its 2023 Cyber Strategy. The strategy charges DOD to persistently engage malicious cyber actors and other malign threats to U.S. interests in cyberspace.**

**85. What do you perceive to be the role of the ASD(ISA) in accomplishing these objectives, and how will you deconflict with the roles and responsibilities of the newly established ASD(Cyber Policy)?**

The ASD for Cyber Policy (CP) is the senior official responsible for overall supervision of DoD policy for cyber issues and is the Principal Cyber Advisor to the Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I will work with the ASD(CP) to ensure the Department is best positioned to deter adversaries and non-state entities from seeking to threaten the political, military, or economic preeminence of the United States. In that vein, I will support ASD(CP)'s role by reflecting the President's and Secretary's objective of increasing DoD's effectiveness in the cyber domain in my own bilateral and multilateral engagements, including through coordination and deconfliction of cyber activities and operations with highly capable allies and partners.

**86. If confirmed, how would you plan to strengthen the role between your office and other DOD organizations that contribute to these objectives, such as United States Cyber Command and the ASD for Cyber Policy?**

If confirmed, I will work in close collaboration with the ASD(CP) and the Commander of USCYBERCOM to ensure the Department's cyber policies are consistent with the Administration's priorities, as they relate to alliances and partnerships falling under the ASD(ISA) portfolio.

**87. What role do you see ASD(ISA) having in integrating cyber into broader defense strategies for deterrence or force employment?**

ASD(ISA) is responsible for managing the Department's relationships with key allies and partners, many of which are highly capable in the cyber domain. I believe ASD(ISA) should play a role in integrating our military cyberspace capabilities with other tools of national power, such as intelligence, diplomacy, and economic sanctions to advance U.S. national security objectives. If confirmed, I will work closely with ASD(CP) and other key stakeholders in the Department such as USCYBERCOM and other Combatant Commands to integrate the strengths of our most advanced cyber partnerships into our broader deterrence and defense planning, force employment planning, and strategy formulation.

**88. What role do you see for ASD(ISA) in international cyber engagement activities, including the potential of cyber tools and equipment for consideration in the FMS process?**

President Trump and Secretary Hegseth have been clear that in order to restore peace through strength, the Department must defend the homeland, deter China, and increase burden-sharing with allies and partners to address all threats. If confirmed as ASD(ISA), I will work closely with ASD(CP) to ensure that the cyber tools and equipment we share with international partners in my portfolio enable them to reinforce the security of Department of Defense networks, U.S. government critical infrastructure, and the American people. In my own engagements with international partners, I will reinforce the imperative of protecting sensitive U.S. information from existing and future cyber threats.

**Congressional Oversight**

**In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.**

**89. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**90. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**91. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective**

**staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**92. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**93. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**94. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**95. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.