Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE POSTURE OF UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND AND UNITED STATES CYBER COMMAND IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023 AND THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

Washington, D.C.

ALDERSON COURT REPORTING
1111 14TH STREET NW
SUITE 1050
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005
(202) 289-2260
www.aldersonreporting.com
HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE POSTURE OF
UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND AND
UNITED STATES CYBER COMMAND IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE
AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023 AND THE
FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

U.S. Senate
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack Reed, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Committee Members Present: Senators Reed [presiding], Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Hirono, King, Manchin, Rosen, Inhofe, Fischer, Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Sullivan, Scott, Blackburn, Hawley, and Tuberville.
OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE ISLAND

Chairman Reed: Let me call the hearing to order, and for the benefit of my colleagues there is a vote at 10:30, and conferring with the Ranking Member we will recess at 10:30, reconvene at 10:45, so we can promptly get that vote done. And then there will be a second vote later.

Welcome to our witnesses. Good morning. The committee meets today to receive an update on the readiness and posture of U.S. Special Operations Command and U.S. Cyber Command. Our witnesses are Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict Christopher Maier; Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command General Richard Clarke; and Commander of U.S. Cyber Command, National Security Agency Director, and Chief of the Central Security Service, General Paul Nakasone.

I would note that this is likely General Clarke's last appearance before the committee, and I would like to express my appreciation for your 38 years of service to the nation, including as the Commandant at West Point and Commanding General of the 82nd Airborne Division, but most importantly 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment. Thank you very much, sir.

On behalf of the committee, I hope our witnesses will convey our appreciation to the men and women you represent,
and their families, for their dedication and professionalism.

For the first time since Congress reformed the responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, or ASD SO/LIC, more than 5 years ago, the office has, again, for the first time, a Senate-confirmed Assistant Secretary and a full-time Director of the Secretariat for Special Operations, focused on the advocacy and oversight of special operations forces. These positions are critical to ensuring our special operations forces are trained, equipped, and organized to adequately support our National Defense Strategy. I appreciate the Department's efforts over the past year to institutionalize the role of the ASD SO/LIC, but I remain concerned that the number and expertise of the personnel assigned to supporting the office's "service secretary-like" responsibilities continues to fall short of what is required. I hope the Department will prioritize and accelerate these hiring efforts in the coming months.

The threat from violent extremist groups like ISIS and al Qaeda, while diminished, remains real and will continue to require the sustained application of special operations capabilities that have been honed over the last 20 years. Additionally, long-term strategic competition with China and Russia as well as the challenges posed by Iran and North
Korea increasingly require the tailored and often clandestine capabilities that only our special operations forces can provide.

Following our withdrawal from Afghanistan, the special operations community is at an inflection point. Assistant Secretary Maier, General Clarke, I look forward to an update regarding your efforts to focus and prepare our special operations forces for the challenges ahead. In particular, I would ask that you discuss the capabilities we need to build an enduring advantage over our strategic competitors, how you are shaping the force of the future through recruiting, retention, and building a culture of accountability, and how you are addressing the unique challenges faced by special operations families.

Turning to Cyber Command. General Nakasone, the Commander of U.S. European Command recently testified to the committee about his appreciation for the performance of your command and the National Security Agency prior to and during the Russian assault on Ukraine. Please convey our gratitude to the personnel under your command for their exceptional work.

I also want to commend General Nakasone, the President and his staff, and the leaders of the intelligence community for the unprecedented and skillful release of intelligence over the last several months that exposed Russia's
aggressive intentions and deceitful activities.

Intelligence officials are understandably cautious about revealing hard-won insights on adversaries, but this current strategy has proven highly effective in strengthening the international community's response and creating dilemmas for Vladimir Putin. This is a great example of competing effectively in the information domain, and I hope we will continue to make this kind of creative use of intelligence information.

General Nakasone, you have been working to mature the cyber force and advance its capabilities to conduct defensive, offensive, and supporting intelligence operations to counter our adversaries. I know that improving the readiness of our Cyber Mission Forces is your highest priority. For you to succeed, however, the military services must increase their numbers of qualified and trained personnel for this mission set. Compounding this challenge, the private sector has realized the immense value of our highly skilled military cyber operators and is offering them very high compensation to leave the military. The services must adjust accordingly by providing a combination of incentives to retain these personnel. And I would note that Senators Manchin and Rounds are holding a Cyber Subcommittee hearing focused on this critical topic this afternoon, and I would welcome your thoughts on the
issue, and again, I commend both Senators Manchin and Rounds for their forward-looking and insightful approach to the problem.

Over the past several years, Cyber Command and the NSA, working jointly, have taken vigorous and sustained actions to defend our elections from foreign interference and malign influence operations. General Nakasone, with the 2022 midterm elections approaching, I would ask for your assessment of our election defense efforts, which you have described as an "enduring, no-fail mission."

Finally, I would note that, in accordance with changes in the global security environment and President Biden's heightened focus on the Indo-Pacific region, Cyber Command has shifted a task force to focus on competition with China and has created the China Outcomes Group under senior-level leadership. The work of these organizations will be of keen interest to the committee.

I again want to thank the witnesses for their service and appearance before us today. I look forward to your testimony.

Let me now turn to the ranking member, Senator Inhofe, please.
STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE, U.S. SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for welcoming our great witnesses.

As I have said many times, we face a more dangerous and complex set of threats than any time in my life. Just last week, Army Secretary Christine Wormuth said, quote, "this is probably the most dangerous security environment" in her 25 years of service. Well, it is the same with me, except it is more than 25 years.

The Chinese Communist Party announced a 7.1 percent defense budget increase this year, continuing two decades of historic military modernization. Every day, they give us more evidence that their goals and interests are fundamentally opposed to ours.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has upended European security, North Korea is developing more capable ICBMs, Iran has accelerated its aggression, and terrorist groups are reconstituting in Africa and Afghanistan.

For our witnesses today, you face challenges across each of these threats. In addition to growing their conventional military capabilities, our adversaries are expanding their use of irregular warfare and cyber to threaten the United States and our partners.

I am still working through the recently released 2022
National Defense Strategy, but I have seen an extensive description of the gray-zone expansion and cyber threats posed by each of our adversaries. But I have not seen much in this budget so far about responding to those threats.

General Clarke, you have the daunting challenge of reorienting SOCOM for a high-end fight, even as you will be stretched thin in shouldering the burden of the fight against terrorism. Like with our Afghanistan withdrawal, I am concerned we are taking too much risk there. Mitigating that risk will largely fall on you and your troops.

General Nakasone, the pace of Chinese advances in cyber is pretty breathtaking, and our other adversaries are also moving fast. We want to make sure you have the resources and authorities you need to maintain or regain your advantage. I definitely want us to do more in cyber cooperation with our allies and partners, so we will have to look at funding for that this year also.

I look to our witnesses to describe how the men and women they lead are postured to deal with this array of threats and what this committee can do to ensure they have the tools necessary to be successful.

So, Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Chairman Reed: Well thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

Since a quorum is now present I ask the committee to
consider the following civilian nominees: The Honorable William A. LaPlante, Jr., to be Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment; Mr. Erik K. Raven, to be Under Secretary of the Navy; Ms. M. Tia Johnson to be a Judge in the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces; and Dr. Marvin L. Adams to be Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs, National Nuclear Security Administration.

Is there a motion to favorably report these four nominations to the Senate?

Voice: So moved.

Chairman Reed: Is there a second?

Voice: Second.

Chairman Reed: All in favor, please say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman Reed: The motion carries. Thank you very much.

Now let me recognize Secretary Maier and then I will recognize General Clarke and then General Nakasone.

Mr. Secretary, please.

You might want to pull that as close as you can get to you. Some of us cannot hear.
STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER MAIER,
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND
LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

Mr. Maier: Thank you, Chairman. Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the global posture of our nation's special operations enterprise, or SOF. I am honored to testify alongside General Clarke and General Nakasone, two of our nation's most dedicated military professionals.

On a personal note, and reinforcing, Chairman, what you said, I would like to thank General Clarke for his leadership and partnership during his tenure as SOCOM commander during a time of major transformation and strategic importance. I also appreciate the leadership of Command Chief Master Sergeant Greg Smith, who is here today.

The dedication, service, and sacrifice of our SOF leaders and the SOF community motivates me each and every day to ensure we are doing all we can to provide them the ways and means to win, regardless of the challenge. I would also like to thank Congress, and particularly this committee, for its steadfast support for our SOF warriors and their families. Since the establishment of SOCOM, our strong partnership with Congress has been instrumental to fielding the world's most capable and elite special
operations force.

We continue to make progress in advancing Congress' intent to institutionalize the role of the office I lead, the Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, within the Department, or SO/LIC. Sustaining and enhancing the competitive advantage of the U.S. military, and even more broadly the nation's capabilities and future fights, depends on our effectiveness to provide the civilian oversight and backing of the SOF enterprise. This group of extraordinary military, civilian, and contractors has proven itself over so many decades to be essential to the U.S. military and strategic success.

In today's increasingly complex security environment, the SOF enterprise provides our nation's leaders with agile, scalable, and discrete options to address challenges across the spectrum of competition, crisis, and conflict. SOF play an essential role in the National Defense Strategy by holding adversary systems at risk and by enhancing our allies' and partners' ability to resist aggression and malign influence.

Even as we transform the SOF enterprise to meet the challenges of achieving enduring advantage through integrated deterrence and active campaigning, we continue to enhance our capabilities to conduct high-priority counterterrorism crisis response operations. The
President's fiscal year 2023 budget request for SOF reflects these priorities in modernizing our maritime capabilities and investing in artificial intelligence and other key technologies. The budget also supports the Armed Overwatch Program to ensure our SOF had the required support in remote and austere environments where they operate.

As reflected in the fiscal year 2023 budget, we continue to invest in the health and well-being of our SOF warriors and their families. Our flagship Preservation of the Force and Families program, or POTFF, complements service-administered programs to address the unique physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual health needs of our SOF community.

We continue to prioritize enhancing diversity and inclusion within SOF. Drawing on a diverse set of talents and perspectives is essential to our success in a changing operational environment and to SOF's unique ability to engage and collaborate with allies and partners around the world.

The number of women in our ranks continues to grow, and in the past 2 years the first three women have successfully completed special forces qualification, and last year the first woman qualified as a naval Special Warfare Combatant Crew member, or SWCC. We are proud of these warriors' individual achievements and continue to actively promote a
career in SOF for all who meet our rigorous standards.

Lastly, I would like to briefly mention the war in Ukraine. Among many observations, it serves as a daily reminder of the importance of building the capabilities and resilience of our allies and partners. As we watch the Ukrainians employ a number of elements of irregular warfare against a larger force to great effect, we should internalize the need to continue to grow our own irregular warfare skills and continue to develop and refine irregular warfare options for our nation's leaders.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Maier follows:]
Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Secretary Maier.

General Clarke, please.
STATEMENT OF GENERAL RICHARD CLARKE, COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

General Clarke: Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of this committee, thank you for this opportunity. I am honored to testify alongside the Honorable Chris Maier and my good friend, General Paul Nakasone. Joining behind me is Chief Greg Smith, SOCOM's senior enlisted leader. This is Greg's final time appearing before this committee before he retires after 33 years in uniform. He is representative of the extraordinary women and men of USSOCOM, and I am consistently grateful for his counsel.

This April 16th, next week, marks 35 years since USSOCOM was activated. We are thankful for the foresight and support of Congress and particularly this committee and Senators Nunn and Cohen, who had the foresight to stand up USSOCOM. Thank you for your decades of continued support ever since.

Your special operations forces create strategic, asymmetric advantages for the nation across the spectrum of conflict. USSOCOM bolsters deterrence globally through our campaign activities, all providing critical options for the Joint Force. We are also innovating and modernizing to build enduring advantage while strengthening our force and family and make continual challenges to the rule-based
international order. Maintaining a range of credible options unpins our nation's strategic advantage.

We have witnessed Russia's unprovoked and unjustified invasion of Ukraine, China's coercive and malign activity in the Indo-Pacific, and efforts by other state and non-state actors, including violent extremist organizations to sow instability. In this dynamic environment, USSOCOM's enduring value resides in our ability to combat asymmetric threats, particularly in the gray zone and below the threshold of armed conflict. We employ precision and surprise to both prevail and respond in crisis, and our formations support the resilience and resistance efforts of our allies and partners, often through sustained, long-term partnership with their special operations forces.

Regardless of the threats we face, SOF represent a critical strategic edge to respond in crisis. Exquisite, tailored capabilities enable us to undertake sensitive and high-risk missions, crucial to safeguarding our citizens and protecting our vital national interests.

A cornerstone of all these efforts remain our longstanding partnership with ASD SO/LIC. The oversight, policy guidance, and advocacy within the Department of Defense provided by ASD SO/LIC are essential for the modernization, readiness, and well-being of our SOF and their families. Together we are committed to sustaining
trust by strengthening our culture of accountability. We are preparing for future threats by unlocking our nation's diverse talent, and we are leading with our values through our continual efforts to mitigate civilian harm.

As we speak here today, more than 5,000 men and women from SOCOM are defending our nation and standing shoulder-to-shoulder with partners in over 80 countries worldwide. The courage and commitment of over 75,000 members of our special operations community are inspiring. As this may be my final opportunity before this committee I would emphasize that it has been the honor of my lifetime to serve with them every day.

I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Clarke follows:]
Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General Clarke.

General Nakasone, please.
STATEMENT OF GENERAL PAUL NAKASONE, COMMANDER, UNITED STATES CYBER COMMAND/DIRECTOR, NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY/CHIEF, CENTRAL SECURITY SERVICE

General Nakasone: Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to testify beside Assistant Secretary Maier and General Rich Clarke. I am joined today by Command Sergeant Major Sheryl Lyon, the U.S. Cyber Command and NSA senior enlisted leader. We are honored to represent the military and civilian members of U.S. Cyber Command.

Command Sergeant Major Lyon and I want to recognize Rich Clark and Greg Smith and their families for 36 and 30 years of dedicated service to our nation. Well done, gentlemen.

Defending the nation is the heart of U.S. Cyber Command's mission. The command has been integral to the nation's response to the current Russia-Ukraine crisis. We have provided intelligence on the growing threat, helped to warn government and industry to tighten security within critical infrastructure sectors, enhanced resilience of the DoD information network, accelerated efforts against criminal cyber enterprises, and together with interagency and allied partners, plan for a range of contingencies.

Coordinating with the Ukrainians in an effort to help them harden their networks, U.S. Cyber Command deployed a
hunt forward team, who sat side-by-side our partners to gain critical insights that have increased homeland defense for both the United States and Ukraine.

U.S. Cyber Command views 2022 as a year of significant opportunity for building our capabilities as we pursue five priorities: readiness; operations in defense of the nation; integrated deterrence; recruitment, retention, and training; and the Joint Cyber Warfighting Architecture and Enhanced Budget Control. My goal as the commander remains world-class, ready and capable at providing options and conducting operations in defense of the nation with wider partnerships and exceptional talent.

These elements will be essential to national security as our nation faces an array of adversaries who are expanding, in scope, scale, and sophistication. Cybersecurity is national security. Speed, agility, and unity of effort, brought about by the connected relationship between U.S. Cyber Command and the National Security Agency is the ingredient that protects the United States against our enemies.

The men and women of the United States Cyber Command are grateful for the support of this committee and Congress that you have given to our command. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Nakasone follows:]
Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General Nakasone. Before I begin let me too commend Sergeant Major Greg Smith for his service. We all understand that the great advantage that the United States military has are the NCOs and enlisted men, and thank you for your service.

Secretary Maier, we, over the past many years, have been trying to create this "service secretary-like" posture with SO/LIC, and as I indicated in my opening testimony, it seems to me you need additional resources and additional facilities. Can you give us an idea of what you need to be that service-like, Secretary?

Mr. Maier: Chairman, thanks for the question, and this committee, more than any other I think, has been a huge supporter of reinforcing the institutionalization of ASD SO/LIC, so we very much appreciate that.

Where I think we have made progress over the last year, from the time I was last here, testifying in front of you on institutionalizing the role of ASD SO/LIC in the Department with, frankly, a lot of advocacy personally from Secretary Austin, I think elements of the dual reporting structure that I am a big proponent of, where we report up one chain for policy and another chain for the service sec responsibilities does not translate always well into the Department. It just does not graft well in the blueprint. So that puts us, at times, at a disadvantage for competing
for resources and some of the other aspects that we would need in a start-up organization.

I think your continued advocacy, your continued support for funding for staff, and as I think was highlighted in your opening remarks, the right mix of expertise, and frankly senior expertise, where we are a small proportion as a ratio of senior executives who are having the responsibility to oversee many of the key aspects of the SOF enterprise, and we are doing it with people who traditionally are at a lower rank, as just some of the key aspects that we continue to work with the Department to reinforce, sir.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much.

General Clarke, from your perspective as the commander, can you indicate how valuable the role is of the SO/LIC, and what improvements you might suggest from the standpoint of a commanding officer?

General Clarke: Thanks for the question. Senator, first, it is great to have a confirmed nominee that has been consistent in the position. Mr. Maier testified last year. Mr. Maier is the seventh ASD SO/LIC, either confirmed or acting, that I have had. So the consistency for SOCOM is very important, but it is also important for those deputy assistant secretaries and the structure within.

The other aspect that I would highlight, Senator, is
that Mr. Maier now has a seat at the table with the other
service secretaries that allow him to, one, provide advocacy
for SOCOM structure and what we need to do in the future for
the Department but also to provide that advocacy and
insights as to what the Secretary is thinking. And that is
everything from human resources to the Secretary's
priorities, and that has been extremely valuable for this
command, where sometimes we could be working more in the
dark without Mr. Maier at the table. So thank you.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General Clarke. I
was going to ask questions, General Nakasone, about the need
for talented personnel, but I think I will cede that to
Senator Rounds and Senator Manchin today, in anticipation of
the hearing.

But I do have a question about the social media data
threat analysis center. We authorized that in the NDAA's of
2020 and 2021. Do you agree that it would be helpful to
have such a center to provide ongoing analysis and trends
and also provide some deterrence perhaps? Could you comment
on?

General Clarke: Chairman, I can. Based upon my
experience watching two different election cycles and the
work of our adversaries to attempt to garner greater
influence, I think such a center would be helpful. Here is
what the center really needs to do, though. It needs to be
able to look at all of the full spectrum operations of what our adversaries are doing. What are the tactics? What are the tradecraft? What are the procedures they are doing?

And I think the second piece is that what would probably be most helpful is this center being outside the government, a federally funded research center or perhaps another center that is obviously in support that is able to attract the talent and remains very, very vibrant and dynamic in its approach.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much. Again, gentlemen, thank you for your service. General Clarke, please give my regards to your father, who was my physical education instructor at West Point, and passed me despite my inadequacies. Thank you very much.

Senator Inhofe, please.

Senator Inhofe: I enjoyed that.

General Nakasone, it is clear that threats posed by our adversaries in cyberspace is growing. China is using cyber to steal our cutting-edge technologies and Russia is using destructive cyberattacks in Ukraine and elsewhere to deter the United States and our partners.

General Nakasone, in the face of these serious cyberthreats your stance has been consistent and it has been clear on the benefits of the dual-hat arrangement. And you know, the dual-hat arrangement, for some reason, has become
controversial, and I think you and I both agree on this. But why is it that that arrangement is in the national security interests of the United States? Explain that to us.

General Nakasone: Senator, thank you for the question. I begin with just 2018, when I came into the job, both as Commander of U.S. Cyber Command and the Director of the National Security Agency, and I look at the change in terms of our national security today, in terms of what our adversaries in cyberspace are trying to do.

We were not thinking about ransomware in 2018. We were not necessarily thinking about near-peers in terms of their capabilities in 2018. Very, very focused on coming out of the 2016 elections, obviously the midterm elections of 2018, and then also being able to address a series of threats with counterterrorism.

But over this past 4 years, as you have indicated, Senator, the world has changed considerably, and what we see is a speed of sophistication and a willingness for our adversaries to operate tremendously impactful within cyberspace.

And so what we have done is to continue to mature the relationship between U.S. Cyber Command and NSA. How do we bring the best of what is being done in foreign intelligence and cybersecurity to the work that is being done on the
command, to be able to get after our adversaries? This is
what changed.

And so 1 plus 1, we do not want it to equal 2. We
wanted a force multiplier of 5 or 10 that can get after our
adversaries. And we are not alone at this, Senator. Our
adversaries are doing the same thing.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you. That is a great response.

China views Africa as key to its global ambitions,
which is why they built their first overseas military base
in Djibouti. People do not realize that it is not just that
military base in Djibouti. That was the first military
base, period, in their history. So they want to build
another one on the West Coast of Africa.

Now we witnessed this in Djibouti, and the bulk of the
U.S. forces in Africa are special operations troops who work
with our partners to build capabilities, collect
intelligence, and push back on China, Russia, and terrorist
groups. We should deploy more of these troops to Africa,
given the growing threats that we have pointed out several
times in Africa.

General Clarke, what is your assessment of what the
Chinese military seeks to accomplish in Africa, and what can
our special operations forces do to confront these growing
threats?

General Clarke: Senator, I have been to Djibouti many
times and also see it as a strategic location not just for Africa but what it gives for a platform for us to conduct counterterrorism missions into the Middle East, with its proximity to Yemen. And as a key strategic hub there, the Chinese clearly see the same thing.

For U.S. Special Operations Command in support of AFRICOM, it is to ensure that the violent extremist elements there are disrupted so they cannot cause a threat back to the United States. As far as our ability, by being there really allows us to see and sense what the Chinese pernicious behavior is inside of Africa, with a great interest specifically in collecting resources and minerals for the future. And by being there it helps us to highlight those for the partners with whom we work.

Senator Inhofe: Well, and I am glad that we have that opportunity. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much.

Senator Gillibrand, please.

Senator Gillibrand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General Nakasone, it is great to see you, and I just want to give my gratitude to all three witnesses today for their extraordinary service, especially General Clarke on your retirement. You have really been a bright light for many, many years, and we are grateful for everything you have done.
General Nakasone, I have advocated for the need for a national cyber and digital services academy, which was consistent with the recommendations of the AI Commission, to train the next generation of the civilian cyber workforce. This would serve as a complement to existing fellowship and scholarship programs.

Looking forward, what are the key competencies that these pipelines should be developing? And second and related, DHS is still in the pilot phase of their new DHS community talent management system, where they seek to more quickly onboard 150 new cyber personnel outside of the traditional OPM process. Are there any early lessons that can be learned from this and helpful to the DoD in increasing civilian hiring?

General Nakasone: So Senator, I think the first lessons that we have is we need the largest pool that is possible. This is a critical piece of what our nation is going to do in the future. Cyberspace is where our nation stores its wealth and its treasure. And so as we take a look at that, being able to attract from, you know, a broad range of our society, that traditionally perhaps have not touched science, technology, engineering, and mathematics is an important first step.

Secondly is focusing on some of the key competitive advantages our nation is going to need for the future --
data science, coding, artificial intelligence, machine learning. All of these are capacities that our nation is going to need well into the future.

And the third piece, I think, is just the ability to attract and to focus on the mission of what really gets done here. This is what we have learned at the National Security Agency and Cyber Command, is it is the mission that attracts people to work in this field. Thank you.

Senator Gillibrand: Do you have any particular views on the development of the national cyber and digital services academy?

General Nakasone: Senator, if I might let me take that for the record, just so I give a more fulsome answer.

Senator Gillibrand: I appreciate that. How many personnel are detailed to domestic agencies, such as DHS, to help protect domestic critical infrastructure? The 2018 MOU authorized 50 detailees. In 2020, DoD scaled it down to about 20, and as of last year, OIG report had only 10 filled. Obviously, we are trying to position ourselves to defend against any oncoming Russian cyberattacks, especially to the civilian sector, and as you know, about 80 percent of our cyber networks are civilian owned and operated.

So I would like to know what your perspective is on this and how we can create better collaboration so that not only can DoD resources, through the National Guard, but
certainly NSA and other cybersecurity forces can be
supportive of what we do to create cyber defense
domestically.

General Nakasone: Senator, what we have done, we began
not only with the ability, as this committee has allowed us
to generate up to 50 personnel, but I think the first thing
that we want to do is make sure that we exchange liaison
officers, which has been done now, between ourselves and
CISA.

The second piece is focusing a part of my force on
direct support to CISA. This is a discussion that Director
Easterly and I have had. It is also the ability for us to
look at and say, what are the areas that perhaps are unique
for our force that might be available to CISA and the nation
in the future.

And the third piece is working very closely to better
understand what are the competitive advantages that we might
bring from U.S. Cyber Command to what is necessary for
defense of the critical infrastructure. Thank you.

Senator Gillibrand: Thank you very much, General. And
I would like to work with you on creating a more formalized
relationship between you and CISA for the future, because I
know that the jointness efforts in New York City are among
the best in the country. Currently in our cyber protection
with both assets from National Guard, NSA, NYPD, and FBI, we
are collaborating now with over 50 entities that are deemed critical infrastructure -- major banks, major supply chain, major energy, major water -- and that is working extremely well.

So also for the record I would be grateful for any thoughts you have on that collaboration, making sure it could become more robust and more formalized. I would like your thoughts if you have any today but also for the record.

General Nakasone: Let me take that for the record, Senator. I did have the opportunity yesterday to speak with Director Easterly. We were actually in the same location and had an opportunity to just go over some of these topics. So that will be an apropos time.

Senator Gillibrand: Thank you. Thank you, General. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Gillibrand.

Senator Fischer, please.

Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Clarke, special operations forces have an indispensable and outsized role in counterterrorism operations. Would you agree that without sustained CT pressure terrorist groups are more able to focus on planning and preparing for external attacks?

General Clarke: I would fundamentally agree. That, but I would also add that it is key to do that with allies
and partners, because then you actually are able to expand and get a bigger bang for your buck.

Senator Fischer: As commander you must be extensively familiar with the challenges associated with conducting over-the-horizon CT operations. Correct?

General Clarke: I am, Senator.

Senator Fischer: Can you describe the challenges of conducting over-the-horizon CT operations without reliable partners on the group, without basing access in neighboring countries, and without reliable access to airspace?

General Clarke: Senator, it is more difficult, and I am not going to sit in front of this committee and say that it is not. I would also, on the same hand, though, say that in the last 20 years we have developed exquisite capabilities, and we can conduct counterterrorism missions over-the-horizon, and we have exhibited that in the past.

The most important aspect, from my purview -- and I have witnessed this multiple times, and you are referencing it -- is the intel collection that is associated to ensure that you have that intelligence to conduct those operations.

Senator Fischer: And we have been successful in the past, but have we been successful in the recent past, specifically in Afghanistan after we left?

General Clarke: Senator, I can point to a recent raid in Syria to show that we have had success, and we continue
to observe and monitor in Afghanistan, along with Central
Command and other intel agencies.

Senator Fischer: In this setting can you say if we
have had success in Afghanistan?

General Clarke: Senator, I think some of those
questions best be served in a closed hearing.

Senator Fischer: Thank you. Secretary Meier, has
there been progress made towards securing any basing
agreements or arrangements with any country bordering
Afghanistan?

Mr. Maier: Senator Fischer, there has been but I would
prefer to talk about that in closed session, due to the
sensitivities.

Senator Fischer: Okay. Mr. Secretary, our current
strategy for countering terrorist groups in Afghanistan
assumes an immense amount of risk. I am also deeply
concerned by the lack of intelligence collection
capabilities that we have for Afghanistan.

In December, CENTCOM Commander General McKenzie stated
that, quote, "we are probably at about 1 or 2 percent of the
capabilities we once had to look into Afghanistan," end
quote. Does the Department plan to develop any additional
resources to ISR in Afghanistan or is the Department
comfortable with the current level of risk associated with
the current ISR levels?
Mr. Maier: Senator, the Department is looking actively right now at other forms of intelligence. I would not limit it only to ISR. There are other capabilities that I think can be surged, and that is an ongoing effort to look at those opportunities.

Senator Fischer: Will you be able to discuss those in a closed setting with us?

Mr. Maier: Senator, yes, I will be able to.

Senator Fischer: Thank you.

General Clarke, for the better part of two decades the counterterrorism fight has been your main effort in your command. The unclassified summary of the new National Defense Strategy clearly states that China is the pacing threat, and de-emphasizes other persistent threats, including the threat from violent extremist organizations. How do you envision the demand signal from geographic combatant commanders changing given the shifting priorities under the new National Defense Strategy?

General Clarke: Senator, the demand for special operations forces will always exceed the capabilities that we can provide. But what we are doing is to ensure that we are developing and modernizing to provide unique capabilities such as undersea modernization, maritime mobility that could work very well inside the Indo-Pacific, and to do things that only SOF can do. We have recently
stood up a special reconnaissance enabling command to look at our sense of activities that can be applied globally.

Senator Fischer: In your written testimony you talk about rebalancing the activities, and for the record if you could explain how special operation forces are realigning to support the priorities that are identified in that National Defense Strategy, please.

General Clarke: I will. I will take that for the record, Senator.

Senator Fischer: Thank you, and thank you so much for your service to this country.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Fischer.

Senator Hirono, please.

Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for testifying, and a special aloha and mahalo to General Clarke, as this may be the last time that you are appearing before this committee.

A question for General Nakasone. In your prepared remarks you note that one of your priorities is maintaining a skilled cyber workforce through recruitment, training, and retention. And we all know that recruitment and retention in this area is particularly important.

We have a number of cyber education programs in Hawaii that work collaboratively with NSA and DHS, such as the National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense and
Center of Academic Excellence in Research. However, we also struggle to retain these trained cybersecurity experts in Hawaii, where opportunities do exist. Yet, you know, we are competing with the private sector, among other entities.

Are you able to meet the demands of an ever-changing cyber landscape with the talent that you currently have, General Nakasone?

General Nakasone: Senator, thank you. Very specifically, yes right now, but we need to be postured for the future. To give you an example, we stood up, at U.S. Cyber Command this year, the Academic Engagement Network, over 92 universities across 40 different states, to include the University of Hawaii at Manoa, which I have had the ability to go and actually talk there, and talk with the students there. This is an incredibly important piece of what we do because my sense is that as good as our technology is, it always come back to people.

And so our talent initiatives right now are focusing on being able to develop the next generation. So while we have enough for today, our nation needs more for tomorrow.

Senator Hirono: I think it is a constant need. And so we have a situation where we need to recruit or encourage a lot more people into the STEM areas, wouldn't you say?

General Nakasone: That is correct, Senator. In fact, we have a program with the National Science Foundation, Next
Generation Cyber that is being run by NSA and the National Science Foundation, of which we have camps every summer for K-12, generating interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Senator Hirono: And are you finding that you are able to recruit women or girls and minorities into these programs?

General Nakasone: Senator, we are. However, again, I point to the fact that it is not enough, and we need to do better in the future. Right now our forces, 35 percent female in terms of our overall strength on the civilian side and about 20 percent on the military side. Overall, in the cybersecurity industry, it is at 20 percent. That is a very, very low number for our nation.

And so I am concerned about our command, our agency, and certainly our nation in this area.

Senator Hirono: So I think that whatever programs, educational programs that we have that would encourage more women and minorities into the STEM fields are important, wouldn't you say?

General Nakasone: I agree, Senator. I think the other piece that I would add, being the son of two educators, is ensuring that the teachers, that we are able to bring this curriculum to the teachers that are so instrumental in being able to sow the foundation for the future.
Senator Hirono: I agree. I know that we have to do a heck of a lot more to encourage particularly women and minorities, because that is a vast, untapped group of individuals.

Again for you, it is likely that many of our military installations in the Pacific would be targeted in the event of conflict with China, and it is clear we need a flexible and resilient approach to logistics in the Pacific. In her testimony last week, General Van Ovost, commander of USTRANSCOM, highlighted cybersecurity as a chief threat to her mission as it pertains to contested logistics, and highlighted partnerships with CYBERCOM.

In what ways has CYBERCOM integrated with STRATCOM and INDOPACOM regarding the vulnerability of our assets spread across the Pacific?

General Nakasone: Two ways, Senator. First of all, being able to ensure that the network that U.S. Transportation Command utilizes, along with a series of private sector companies. This is an unclassified network, it is resilient, and assured in terms of being able to do that. We have special focus on USTRANSCOM.

The second piece is working with USTRANSCOM, USINDOPACOM, and other combatant commands to ensure that the partnership that we have built in the Pacific and Europe are foundational to being able to ensure the cybersecurity of
these nations as we continue to partner with them.

Senator Hirono: I do have a few more questions that I will submit for the record. But I would also like to join the Chairman in expressing our congratulations to you, General Nakasone, for exposing Russia's aggressive intentions regarding Ukraine. That was very helpful to enable all of us to be much better prepared for this terrible war that is happening in the Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Nakasone: Thank you, Senator. I will pass that on to my people.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Hirono.

Senator Rounds, please.

Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, let me begin by just saying, gentlemen, thank you for your service to our country, and General Clarke, to you and your team, what you have done over your years of service will make a difference in the safety and security for our country for years to come, and thank you.

General Nakasone, my understanding is that the Administration has launched an interagency review which could lead to revisions to the National Security Policy Memorandum Number 13, or NSPM-13. For my colleagues who may be unfamiliar with this document, the NSPM-13, along with NSPM-21, allows the delegation of well-defined authorities
to the Secretary of Defense to conduct time-sensitive
military operations in cyberspace. It is based on the idea
of persistent engagement, which means continuously engaging
in contesting adversaries in cyberspace.

Recognizing that you have just talked about dual-
hattedness and the fact that that has worked successfully, I
think you are absolutely correct with regard to the dual hat
that you wear. Would you share with us, with regard to the
cyber effects that you have been able to conduct? We have
made a difference with NSPM-13 as well. Could you just
share with us, before NSPM-13 was in effect, which came into
effect after the first year or so of the Trump
administration, but prior to that how many cyber operations
or cyber-effect operations were conducted prior to that time
in the previous 4 or 5 years?

General Nakasone: Senator, I know of no effects
operations ever conducted prior to 2018, but I would like to
take that question just for the record to make sure that I
look back, since it is before my time.

Senator Rounds: Thank you. I think recognizing that
we are in an unclassified setting, would it be fair to say
that the number of these operations greatly increased after
NSPM-13 went into effect?

General Nakasone: Senator, two critical events took
place in 2018. One was this committee allowing cyber to be
a traditional military activity in the fiscal year 2019 NDAA. The second piece, as you highlighted, was National Security Policy Memorandum 13.

Senator Rounds: So would it be fair to say that the NSPM-13 would have been considered as playing an important role in enabling you to protect the 2018 and 2020 elections, along with recognizing that it is now part of a traditional military activity?

General Nakasone: That is correct, Senator.

Senator Rounds: If they were to change the NSPM-13 and the authorities that you have, is there a possibility that your capability to conduct cyber effects operations may be affected?

General Nakasone: So certainly, Senator, we would take a look at any changes, obviously, and we will adjust to those changes. But significant changes to that NSPM, it could affect what we need to do.

Senator Rounds: Thank you. General Nakasone, the members under your command are highly trained technical experts. There is a high demand in the global market for their skill sets. I understand that the service components are responsible for recruiting and retaining these individuals, but their retention directly affects your ability to conduct operations. Senator Manchin, as chair of the Cyber Subcommittee, and myself, as ranking member, I
know we are having a specific subcommittee discussion on that this afternoon. But in this open setting I think it is critical to discuss the need about, number one, either the volume of individuals coming in, the ability to retain them for a longer period of time, but also when they come to you from the services, because they are theoretically supposed to be trained at the service level and then delivered to you for the operations, are they in a position today to be used directly in operations or do you have to go through an extensive retraining or additional training of these individuals?

General Nakasone: Senator, first of all thanks to you and Senator Manchin for the hearing you are going to hold this afternoon. When I look at readiness, really three parts to the readiness with our cyber forces. First of all, what the services are responsible for, the man, train, and equip piece of that, for 6,187 cyber warriors.

Secondly, it is what we at U.S. Cyber Command and the National Security Agency must do to provide additional training. This is above and beyond what someone would come into the service and need to be able to be effective on our teams.

And the third piece is I think the critical piece that you have highlighted, which is retention and the ability for our cyber warriors to continue to stay within our force.
That is a shared mission between the service and U.S. Cyber Command. I take that very seriously. I have worked very closely with the service chiefs to make sure that all three of those areas are going to be balanced in the future. We have work to do.

Senator Rounds: So in other words, if you get them and they are not ready to go on the job day one, and you are training them, that takes time away from the time that they are then available for your use by a significant amount of time.

General Nakasone: It does, but I would say, Senator, that there is a basic level that the services have to meet, and for the most part they meet that all the time. It is us being able to do the advanced training that is so necessary for them to be effective as part of our teams.

Senator Rounds: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rounds.

Senator Shaheen, please.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and General Clarke, thank you so much for your service. Thank you all for testifying this morning.

General Clarke, I know that The New York Times has pointed out that you all had been very involved in Ukraine, and we discussed this yesterday, in terms of providing training to them that began in 2014. Can you talk about how
important that has been in providing the expertise that we are now seeing on the battlefield in Ukraine?

    General Clarke: Senator, I hit a few highlights. One is the competency towards the security force assistance and specifically the high-end training that we did for the Ukrainian special operations forces. But I would also highlight for the committee the military information support ops, or information warfare, that we had a dedicated team that was in the Ukraine for 8 years, providing that, and that was everything from billboard to print to using internet-based capabilities, along with civil affairs teams that were working with them. And it really, as we see today, the resistance that the Ukrainian forces have held and the training that they were given I think directly contributed to the success on the battlefield.

    Senator Shaheen: Thank you. And you mentioned the importance of the information warfare that has occurred there, and clearly Ukraine has been masterful at what they have been doing. Of course, Putin also has good a good job in preventing his citizens in Russia from knowing what is actually going on on the battlefield.

    So can you talk a little bit about whether we should develop, or maybe we already have, a gray zone strategy to encompass that kind of information warfare as we are looking at particular conflict areas around the world.
General Clarke: Senator, you are pointing at a really key factor, and yes, we have already begun this, in coordination with ASD SO/LIC and particularly with CYBERCOM, where much of the delivery of information resides. It is critical, and I would say we already have the authorities, in many cases, to conduct information operations. We just have to make sure that they are, in fact, directed at the right audiences and that we work very closely with our Department of State colleagues and the interagency so that we are delivering proper effects at the right point in time.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you. And General Nakasone, what is CYBERCOM's role in defending the homeland from foreign cyber threats beyond just the critical infrastructure protection, and how are you working with public and private partners to protect the country, as we have looked at the potential for the Russian government to attack our critical infrastructure and we still are concerned that that might happen? What are you doing?

General Nakasone: Senator, it begins outside the United States, where my authorities rest, and that is through a series of persistent engagement campaigns against malicious cyber actors that intend to do our nation harm, with the National Security Agency being able to release that information, so when we do a hunt forward operation in a specific country, being able to understand the tradecraft
and the malware. And then releasing it publicly provides an antidote to what they might do.

And then within the United States, working closely in support of Department of Homeland Security and CISA, providing them any assistant that they need in terms of capacity or capabilities.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you. Mr. Maier, one of the things that we have seen, and you mentioned this in your opening statement, you talked about the effort to encourage more women to join SOF. And we have seen, in Afghanistan, with the Female Tactical Platoon, and Syria, with the Women's Protection Units, we are now seeing in Ukraine the important role that women are playing in conflict, and they are actually getting more attention today than they were in years past.

So can you talk about what we are doing to work with our international partners to highlight the role of women and make sure that they have the attention and support they need when we are working in an area?

Mr. Maier: Senator, I think we concretely say that women in SOF are an operational imperative because of the ability to do some of the things you described in your question. It is critically, and especially some of the areas we have traditionally worked, to be able to have women that are operators or have exquisite skills go to areas to
be able to gather information that, frankly, men cannot go, or have a different outreach capability to different parts of communities. And as we look toward the future fight, whether it is against, you know, gray zone competitors and non-state actors or state actors, we are going to need that capability. It is a force multiplier, ma'am.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

Senator Ernst, please.

Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and gentlemen, thank you very much for your service to our country. General Clarke, to you and Suzanne, and Chief Smith, to you and Tina. Thank you very much for your collaborative efforts in supporting our SOF warriors and their teams.

There is no doubt that our special operations forces are the most capable of military elements on the globe, and of course our cyber forces, General Nakasone, are essential to the defense of this nation. And we have to ensure that both of these elements are fully resourced and modernized to defeat the current threats to our national security.

So General Clarke, the health of the force is the fifth pillar in your command, and it ties into directly the first SOF truth, which is humans are more important than hardware. I think we all believe that. And I, like you, want to make sure that we are providing our servicemembers with the best
So can you talk through SOCOM's efforts focused on brain and behavioral health for our servicemembers and, of course, for their loved ones as well?

General Clarke: Thank you, Senator. Our people are our most precious resource and we have got to put the resources behind that to ensure they are taken care of. Specifically, the Brain Health Initiative falling with the Preservation of the Force and Family is one of the critical things we do.

We focused initially on the physical domain because that is what you could see. But what we are finding is through the invisible wounds, you know, TBI, multiple explosions, multiple breaches in proximity to those explosions is having an impact.

And so we are working very closely. I recently went up, with Chief Greg Smith, up to Boston, where we are working with Mass General and a couple of academic departments and universities up there to look at how we can do imaging that previous we could not do except on a cadaver. And this may be groundbreaking for us to be able to determine beforehand what some of our operators may be going through.

And so as you are well aware, we stood up an additional pillar within our Preservation of the Force and Family
specifically towards the cognitive domain, because we realize that this is the most important part for our people is what is inside their brain housing group, that they can make the right decisions, and it affects everything they do. So we are going to continue working to improve our operators' and their families' lives.

Senator Ernst: I appreciate that, sir. It is so important. And you brought up Preservation of the Force and Family, as did ASD SO/LIC Maier. But how can we take this program and sustain improvements in how our military approach is sustaining those SOF operators? Again, just focused on POTFF, how do we sustain and improve?

General Clarke: Senator, the key for us is the sustained funding that we need in order to do that, and most of that funding attributes to the people that we have to support the Preservation of the Force and Family program.

Senator Ernst: Thank you. And just very briefly as well, I want to talk a little bit about your operational posture, General Clarke. So I am frustrated by a number of mobilizations within terror networks, whether it is Russia and China across Africa, what we see in South America, Eastern Europe, all these hot zone conflicts that are currently ongoing.

What does supporting your unfunded requirement list, or what I like to think of as risk assessment list, by us in
these particular theaters?

General Clarke: Senator, what it provides us, if we find support for the unfunded, it buys down risk, because we are able to modernize faster, and then we are also to ensure readiness, that we are placing the appropriate dollars towards those unfunded requirements. We will buy some of that back.

Senator Ernst: And for me, Mr. Chair, that is extremely important that we are able to focus on these unfunded requirements because they are so important within the area of SOCOM, and making sure that we are taking one of our smallest, most agile elements and being able to use them as a force multiplier.

So thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, gentlemen, very much for being here today.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Ernst.

The vote has commenced, and as I indicated at the beginning of the hearing, and with the concurrence of Senator Inhofe, we will recess for approximately 10 minutes. We will rejoin the hearing at the call of the chair, but approximately 10 minutes, so we can accomplish this vote, and then get on with the hearing.

The committee stands in recess.

[Recess.]

Chairman Reed: Let me call the hearing to order again.
I thank the witnesses for their understanding as we voted, and let me recognize Senator Rosen.

Senator Rosen: Thank you, Chairman Reed. It pays to be the first one back from votes, does it not? So thank you. I want to thank you for testifying. Thank you for your years of service and continual service. I know you are going to continue to serve on, and for everyone else that is here.

But we have got a lot going on with Russia, so I want to talk about Russian cyber threats, General Nakasone, because last month President Biden warned that Russia is exploring options for cyberattacks targeting the U.S. The elevated threat level comes as we know Russia is launching cyberattacks against Ukraine, hitting the country's national telecommunications industry just last week, and causing great denial of service, service disruptions.

So last week Senator Rounds and I called on the Administration to brief Congress on how we are protecting critical infrastructure right here in the U.S., and I am happy to report that just last night Director Easterly was with us in a classified briefing to talk about what CISA is doing.

And so can you tell me how CYBERCOM has been coordinating with Ukraine to harden their networks, and as you conduct your hurt forward operations to identify network
vulnerabilities are you sharing that not just with Ukraine but all the NATO allies, particularly the border countries that are helping to provide that military and humanitarian relief?

General Nakasone: Yes, Senator. As I mentioned, we had a hunt forward team that deployed to Ukraine at the end of 2021, and spent well over 2 months working with our partners there to harden their networks, focused on a number of key critical assets.

The big piece about hunt forward, though, is not only the fact that we understand the networks of our allies and partners as they invite us in there but it also understanding what our adversaries are doing, and then to your point, sharing that broadly, not only with our partners and NATO but also with the private sector. Critical infrastructure is within the private sector, so as we expose these types of things they are broadly being able to shine a light on this type of activity.

Senator Rosen: Yeah, I think it is important, and I know this is not classified but can you speak broadly about some of the insights that we have gained? Are they using their state-sponsored networks? Are they using criminal networks?

General Nakasone: So broadly, Senator, what I would say is what we learned is obviously what we had a pretty
clear indication, which is the fact that there is a persistence that the Russians have towards this type of activity, and they have been in the Ukraine for a long time. So being able to identify the persistence, being able to identify the adversaries, being able to share that information, again, broadly with our partners, broadly with our allies and NATO, and then, most importantly, with the private sector again reinforces this idea of you cannot hide in terms of what you are doing.

Senator Rosen: Thank you. I look forward to some more classified briefings with everyone.

But I want to move on to you, General Clarke, because we know the world is watching. We know Iran is watching. We know this for sure. And so we have to combat Iranian aggression. And in several previous hearings we know Iran and Iran-aligned militia groups, they are increasingly targeting the United States installations and servicemembers in Iraq, in Syria, via rocket and, of course, drone attacks. On a regular basis, Iran is, of course, we know the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism. They threaten the United States and they threaten our allied interests in the Middle East and around the world, via both direct attacks and through its support for Hezbollah and the Islamic Republic's other terrorist proxies such as KH and AAH.

So can you discuss the threat Iranian-aligned militia
groups in the Middle East are posing to our U.S. troops and allies, and do you believe the United States, how do you think we should respond as you are currently addressing this threat? Do you have the necessary authorities, besides the ability to act in self-defense?

General Clarke: Senator, I have served a long amount of time in CENTCOM area, and specifically in Iraq, and I have watched the Shia militia groups, as you accurately described, their capabilities, which are only growing, particularly, as General McKenzie identified to this committee, in the missile and in their unmanned aerial systems, which threaten U.S. forces.

I would leave the policy side to what we do with the authorities to Mr. Maier, but at the same hand I would say that we continue with our special operations forces to provide options for those policymakers by seeing and understanding how they conduct these attacks and try to be in front of those attacks to provide those options.

Senator Rosen: Thank you. Oh, I see my time is up. I yield back. Thank you.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rosen.

Senator Tuberville, please.

Senator Tuberville: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for being here today. General Clarke, thank you for your service.
General Clarke, in January 2021, the DoD awarded Teledyne Brown Engineering a contract to continue production on the Mark 11 Shallow Water Combat Submersible. These subs are used to deliver Navy SEALs and their equipment, special operations. When do you expect these Mark 11s to be delivered, all of them?

General Clarke: I will take that one for the record, because we do have a timeline over years, Senator. But what I am committed to, and take it broader, is that this capability for a maritime, undersea collection is critical for our nation, to be able to work in the littorals and team with the Navy, to be able to do those type of operations.

Senator Tuberville: Do we need more of them?

General Clarke: Senator, I think what we have requested has been sufficient, and if we believe we need more of that unique capability -- because it is not just that delivery system but it is other SEAL deliver systems that we are putting forward, to give variances of the type of capabilities we will need. But if we need more I will come back to this committee and to the Department.

Senator Tuberville: Good. Thank you.

Secretary Maier, to what do you attribute the cost and time overruns of Block 2 of the Dry Combat Submersible, an important asset for the Pacific?

Mr. Maier: Senator, I would also like to take that for
the record. That is a complicated answer that I do not have all the details on. But we will get you written responses. Senator Tuberville: Take more than 5 minutes to explain that probably, would it not?

Mr. Maier: Yes, it would, sir.

Senator Tuberville: You know, in November, Acting Secretary of Defense Chris Miller enacted the fiscal year 2017 NDAA requirement to elevated SO/LIC positions to be on par with the other service secretaries, but last May, Senator Austin reversed this decision, burying SO/LIC back under the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. SO/LIC is still understaffed and is not getting the routine direct access to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary as should, as directed by the NDAA.

As a service Secretary, do you control acquisition and budget items in your purview?

Mr. Maier: So, Senator, by law I do not for acquisition, but I approve the special operations budget. So the answer is yes to one and no to the other.

Senator Tuberville: Okay. Thank you. You know, I would like to say this, that Secretary Austin changed this back but this body, we believe in civilian oversight, and hopefully we can get back to that somehow.

General Nakasone, in July 2021, General Hayden said that the joint warfighting concept had, quote, "failed in
many different ways," end quote, could not produce a victory against an aggressive red team, and needed a new emphasis on space and cyber.

Where, specifically, regarding Indo-Pacific, did the joint warfighting concept, JWC, fall short with cyber?

General Nakasone: Senator, this is one that I certainly will take for the record, just because I want to provide a classified response to that. There are some very unique things that we have addressed, but again, I think it is better to put that in a classified response.

Senator Tuberville: All right. What resources to ensure cyber protections across the joint force have you asked for and not received? Is there anything that you have not received that you have asked for?

General Nakasone: Senator, not right now. I think the broader question which the Department is working towards right now is how big a cyber force, and that is a study that is being undertaken right now. We will grow by 14 different teams over the FIDA, but I think that, you know, in our estimation that that is probably a down payment on a broader force that is going to be necessary for the nation.

Senator Tuberville: How can we help you in this coming budget?

General Nakasone: You know, I think the biggest piece is just the continued support of our talent initiatives. We
have talked about this. The importance of being able to
grow a force begins well before they ever are recruited for
any of the services or enter civilian service.

Senator Tuberville: Thank you. And I would love for
you to come to Alabama and check our new Cyber Technology
and Engineering School, grades 9 through 12, top in the
state, started 2 years ago. It is unbelievable and going to
be unbelievably successful. It will open the doors of its
new building this year, coming up in September. And we have
over 150 in it now, and it is an amazing place of education,
and I think it is going to be very beneficial to what you
are doing. I am talking about high school kids. I am not
talking about college. And these kids will be ready to go
to work as soon as they get out of high school. So
hopefully one day you can visit in Huntsville.

General Nakasone: Senator, I would enjoy that. I
would also, Senator, to solicit your assistance for our
Academic Engagement Network for U.S. Cyber Command. We have
four institutions within the state of Alabama. But given
your long experience as an educator I think your proponency
within the state of Alabama could double that number.

Senator Tuberville: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Tuberville.

Senator King, please.
Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before beginning my questions I want to associate myself with the questions of Senator Rounds about National Security Presidential Memorandum 13. My understanding is that the Administration is considering changes. Substantial changes, I believe, would be a grave mistake, would undermine deterrence at the worst possible moment, and I have communicated that to the White House, along with Congressman Mike Gallagher, my co-chair of the Cyberspace Solarium Commission.

General Nakasone, if you can answer this in an open session, why no Russian serious cyberattack in Ukraine? We all thought that was going to be the first thing they did, and it did not happen. I know there were some attacks but nothing of the scale that we were expecting. Do we have an answer to that?

General Nakasone: So Senator, I think I would begin by saying we are not out of Ukraine yet, so obviously our position right now is one of vigilance, in terms of anything that might still be done.

In terms of what the Russians decided to, I would anticipate that this was based upon a series of assumptions that they may have made, I think coupled with the defensive capabilities that we were able to work with a number of partners within Ukraine, and then thirdly, I think is just a
realization that a lot of times these are very, very
difficult attacks to be able to conduct.

Senator King: I think their assumption was that the
war would last a week so they did not really have to do
that. That seems to be one of their gravest mistakes.

I am concerned about attribution. If we are going to
respond to cyberattacks we have to have timely attribution.
Are the U.S. government's attribution assets adequate? Do
we coordinate adequately? Who is in charge of attribution
if a cyberattack occurred tomorrow? Is it you? Is it NSA?
Is it the FBI? Is it CISA? Where does that responsibility
fall?

General Nakasone: So certainly, Senator, there is a
combination of all of those that lead to attribution, to
include our partners as we work very closely with them. I
think the other one that I would add is the private sector.
You know, when you consider some of our private sector
entities that have over 300 million endpoints in the United
States, being able to understand what is going on there is
critical for what we are able to see.

But ultimately this is brought up to a policy-level
decision based upon what we are able to provide from
intelligence and our partnerships with industry and foreign
nations.

Senator King: It makes me nervous when I hear the
first part of the answer being coordination. I like it when somebody is in charge and responsible, but I understand that the coordination is important.

One of the -- I do not know if I would call it a gap, but you mentioned, for example, outside of our borders, that is where NSA's responsibility is, CIA's responsibility is. We are no longer in a world of borders, and what concerns me is a cyberattack that originates in a foreign country but goes through a server in New Jersey or California, and therefore it is a gray question as to where that cyberattack is coming from. Do we have adequate authorities and lines of authority and definitions to deal with a foreign cyberattack that comes through U.S. infrastructure?

General Nakasone: I think that we are making much better progress in being able to address some of those authority gaps. You have identified one of the areas that we certainly were relevant during the SolarWinds most recently supply chain attack, when our adversaries had positioned themselves within the United States and we found that there was a blind spot there.

So again, the breach notification that has been done, the discussions in terms of upping the standards for both national security systems and government systems that the Administration has done I think have all contributed to this.
But you point out a key piece, Senator, which is this is much more difficult than one person being in charge. There is not one agency, one department, or even one entity that has all the information, and is so why this coordination is so important.

Senator King: We talked about recruiting talent, and I know that is an issue that has been discussed in other questions. One of my questions is, what about tenure? Is it an issue in CYBERCOM that you have soldiers and sailors and marines, people that come through, but they are only there for a limited period of time and then they move on, or do they move on within CYBERCOM? Do we have enough continuity, or is that an issue that we need to address?

General Nakasone: So that is an area that each of the services handles differently, and I think each of the services has to focus on this. Once we train an operator within our force we are very, very reluctant to have them go back and do anything else but cyber. And I would offer that most of the cyber operators that is all they want to do is cyber.

And so, again, the investment in this and the repeat tours is critical for us to maintain our readiness.

Senator King: So we do have repeat tours now. That is a standard part of the way you operate.

General Nakasone: We certainly do, but I think there
could be more.

Senator King: General Clarke, I am running out of time. Just a short question. Are you providing the kind of training that you did to the Ukrainians to other allies, particularly in Eastern Europe, in special operations?

General Clarke: Yes, sir, we are, and I can give you more detail or provide that for the record, and we have continued that through what is going on in the Ukraine today.

Senator King: Well I think what is going on in Ukraine in terms of success has been attributable to lots of factors, but one of them is the training that you have provided. Thank you.

General Clarke: I agree with that assessment. Thank you.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator King.

Senator Blackburn, please.

Senator Blackburn: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to each of you for the update.

General Clarke, I want to talk about the small unit dominance for just a moment and see where you are with that, to provide solutions for SOF small unit dominance. And what progress have you made to bolster the collaboration with external government and non-governmental organizations concerning advancement of adversary asymmetric advantages?
And then when you look at your resource shortfalls when it comes to information gathering, situational awareness, where are you with that? As you are very well aware, and as we have talked, Fort Campbell and the men and women that are stationed there -- and this is something that is important to them.

General Clarke: Senator, you bring out a great point about our forces. Many times they are working in small teams and they are disaggregated, but they bring with that disaggregation some power of being able to work with foreign partners, and providing them all the assets and tools, and as we look at this, at a point forward that very few could do. And it is accepting to the host nation that they can work there because they have the culture, they have the language, and most times they are combat-credible forces who have been tested on the battlefields in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in Syria, and providing them all the tools that they need.

What we are focused on is specifically giving them the most tools that they can have forward, what we call the hyper-enabled operator. That is one of my top five technology focus areas, to make sure that they have those tools. And a lot of that will be, as you referenced, making sure that we can put artificial intelligence and machine learning forward at the edge where they are.
Senator Blackburn: And in the 2022 NDAA, SOCOM, we had the operating concept, you need to articulate an operating concept that supports the joint warfighting concept. And when you are looking at that joint landscape how do you seek to define that, and then how are you filling in those gaps as you bring in and avail technology?

General Clarke: Senator, you are hitting a really key point, that working with ASD SO/LIC, who has given us guidance to actually look at our force structure and come up with that operating concept for 2040. I believe we have the force size that we need, but within that force size that we have we actually have to do some restructuring to ensure that we can properly compete with a nation state like China, and develop those unique capabilities that will be required for that future conflict.

Senator Blackburn: Okay. And then in that vein, as you look at all of this, how are you going to bring into review different levels and degrees of specialization and competence, and how do you do that with your existing force?

General Clarke: The way we do it now, and it works best, is through experimentation. We actually create exercises and venues so that we can actually test those, and we are doing that today. So as you look at our operations and maintenance budget for this year, about $9.7 billion, that is what directly contributes to that experimentation
and building the future force that we will need.

      Senator Blackburn: Okay. Before I run out of time,  
General Nakasone, I always appreciate your insights. I want  
you to talk for just a minute about the value of the current  
cyber defense partnerships that you have and how that  
affects your multi-domain partnerships, how that affects  
your multi-capable operations.

      General Nakasone: Senator, let me begin with the  
partnerships in a number of different phases. So first of  
all I would say our partnerships with the National Security  
Agency is critical to what we do. U.S. Cyber Command is  
powerful based upon our partnership with NSA.

      The second piece is the partnerships that we have with  
the private sector. As I mentioned, the change that taking  
place in cyberspace is mainly taking place within the  
private sector. So having those partnerships, like our  
under advisement program that this committee sponsored is  
critical for what we are doing.

      The third piece is partnerships with our allies. Hunt  
forward teams, nine which were conducted in 2021, by the  
invite of foreign governments, coming into their networks  
and understanding is critical.

      Senator Blackburn: Okay. I am over time but let me  
ask you. Having those partnerships, does that help you to  
retain some of the human capital and the troops that you
need to retain?

    General Nakasone: Most definitely. I mean, people want to work with the private sector. They want to be able to deploy. They want to be able to work with academic institutions. There is an excitement that goes with that.

    Senator Blackburn: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

    Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Blackburn.

    Senator Manchin, please.

    Senator Manchin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, thank all three of you for your service, and General Clarke, thank you and your family. I know how a commitment that is and what a commitment that is, but now you get to spend hopefully a little time with them.

    To General Clarke and to Secretary Maier, this is for you all. I noted the comments in your advance testimony about special operation forces, unique training authority, and the need to maintain readiness in the diverse global environments that we are in.

    I wanted to make sure you were both aware that in West Virginia we are working and making our state more available to SOCOM training operations -- we are only 3 hours away now. We are not that far. You can hop, skip, and a jump -- available for SOCOM operations. We have parts of the states that are in great condition for training opportunities, if
it has not been brought to your attention, from subterranean complexes to austere rural environments. There is surface mine land -- that is possible for transfer to DoD for nothing. Zero. One dollar to make it legal, probably -- the East Coast-based units to train to significantly reduce cost compared to similar training that you are going to travel to the West Coast and do. It is right in your backyard.

And my office has been working with J3 representatives from SOCOM and our state as well as the West Virginia National Guard to highlight what we have to offer. And I hope to have you out soon to do a site visit. If you could I would appreciate it very much.

So if your SOCOM staff has not briefed you on this program would you work with me and maybe come and visit and see what we have to offer?

General Clarke: Senator, the SOCOM staff has briefed me. Having been appointed to West Point from Martinsburg, West Virginia, by Senator Byrd 42 years ago --

Senator Manchin: Oh, you have got to come. You have got no option.

General Clarke: -- I am very familiar with West Virginia and this initiative and your hosting of 2nd Battalion 19th Special Forces Group and our continuous assessment that we run in your state.

Senator Manchin: We are a state that is totally
committed to the defense of this country, and think you it
proves that by the amount of veterans that we have who have
fought in every war in conflict, and have even shed a lot of
blood. So we are ready to go, and we would love to have you
all there because you would be most welcome in whatever we
have to offer.

I have always said this too, about West Virginians
fighting. I say when there is not really a good fight going
on around the world, we fight each other just to stay in
practice, because we are ready. Just like Alabama.

So General Nakasone, this is for you. As Chairman of
the Cyber Subcommittee I am particularly concerned that it
is only a matter of time before cyber criminals and bad
actors launch attacks on our commercial space assets,
particularly our global positioning system. Cyber and space
realms are intertwined and it is imperative for CYBERCOM and
SPACECOM to work in lockstep, because every system SPACECOM
uses has a cyber component that has to be secure and
reliable.

So how are you all working together, and if there are
things you can talk about. If not, we will do it in a
secured setting.

General Nakasone: So again it begins with the ability
for us to work closely with U.S. Space Command. We put a
cyber integrated planning element into Space Command
headquarters last summer. This is our ability now to work hand-in-hand with General Dickinson and his staff to be able to plan those types of operations.

Senator Manchin: How about nitro?

General Nakasone: Pardon me?

Senator Manchin: Nitro.

General Nakasone: If I might come back to you on that, Senator.

Senator Manchin: That is what I thought. Okay. We will do that.

And also, General Nakasone, a few weeks ago we heard from STRATCOM and SPACECOM on their readiness posture. Maintaining our nuclear deterrent and preserving our ability to operate in space are fundamental to today's great power competition with Russia and China. I believe that both of these missions are connected to our cyber defensive and offensive capabilities. The cyberspace and nuclear missions have to be interconnected and cannot operate in a vacuum.

So my question would be, given that CYBERCOM is operating in a highly complex and ever-evolving environment, how integrated would you say that the efforts are between STRATCOM and SPACECOM right now?

General Nakasone: Totally integrated, and it begins with the assurance of our nuclear command and control and communications capabilities.
Senator Manchin: I know that Senator King asked the question about what is going on and why has Russia not -- are you seeing indications that we should have some concern there, that there might be movement in that area of cyberattacks?

General Nakasone: So again, Senator, I think that the President, as he announced last week with his indications of concern, we have concerns all the time. We remain vigilant, and we will continue to remain vigilant.

Senator Manchin: Do you believe that we are adequately capable of stopping these horrible cyberattacks that could harm just the well-being of the average United States citizen?

General Nakasone: We are, along with our partners at CISA, and the private sector.

Senator Manchin: So everybody is on track. Thank you very much. No further questions.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Manchin.

Senator Cotton, please.

Senator Cotton: Welcome, gentlemen. General Nakasone, let us talk a little bit about intelligence sharing with Ukraine. We have heard a lot about that over the last few weeks. You mentioned it a little bit today in your testimony. Can you tell us exactly, like how does that happen for you and your people, at NSA and CYBERCOM? Do you
have partners in Ukraine that you are going direct to with intelligence we share? Is it going up in the United States government and then going to them somehow? Just give us a little more visibility.

General Nakasone: Senator, if I might, I think this is a great conversation for this afternoon, in closed testimony, just because I can lay out the numbers and the procedures upon which we do this.

Senator Cotton: Okay. We will have that conversation in a closed session.

I would like to know what kind of limitations that you face on what you are able to share, if any. Has the Administration put limitations on your ability to share actionable intelligence with Ukrainians?

General Nakasone: So, Senator, again there is policy guidance that we follow at the National Security Agency with regards to the sharing of that intelligence.

Senator Cotton: Are you allowed to share intelligence that would allow or facilitate strikes into the Donbas region?

General Nakasone: Again, Senator, I think this is obviously better handled in closed testimony.

Senator Cotton: Okay. We will talk about it in closed testimony. I certainly hope that you and the rest of our government is allowed to share such intelligence, since
Russia has announced that that is the main effort in Ukraine now and that the White House is not nervous as a cat in a room full of rocking chairs about allowing Ukraine to retake some of its territory in the Donbas.

General Clarke, you have planned a mission or two in your life. Do you think it would complicate Russia's operations in the Donbas if they had to worry not just about Ukraine's defense operations there but also had to worry about potential offensive operations across the line of contact in the Joint Forces area?

General Clarke: Senator, I believe that any time that any nation has increased capabilities and knowledge of their opponent it is helpful.

Senator Cotton: I bet it would complicate the hell out of their planning, if you asked me. But anyway, we will talk about it at closed setting.

General Clarke, I want to talk to you briefly about a couple of matters. The first is Afghanistan and the so-called over-the-horizon counterterrorism strikes we heard so much about last summer, in the lead-up to and during the collapse in Kabul. Since the last American soldier left Afghanistan, how many over-the-horizon strikes have we conducted in Afghanistan?

General Clarke: Senator, I am not aware of any over-the-horizon strikes that have been conducted since we
departed Afghanistan.

Senator Cotton: Yeah. Unfortunately, neither am I. I think it might have been better called over-the-rainbow counterterrorism strikes at the time by the White House.

Another thing, General Clarke, I want to address with you is the authorities you have. Last year, when the Biden administration took office, one of the very first actions was to remove approval delegations for actions outside of Iraq and Syria, so places like, say, Yemen. We talked about it in this hearing last year, and you probably remember me referencing a story from the previous President about his first encounter with this question, when he was asked to approve a strike, and he did not understand why some captain or major or colonel who was on the ground was not approving it.

Has the Biden administration's policies affected your ability to get after terrorist targets in places like Yemen or Somalia or elsewhere?

General Clarke: Senator, I defer those specific questions to the geographic combatant commander. We continue to give that capability to those combatant commanders to conduct those strikes with our SOF personnel. I defer policy over to Secretary Maier, if there is anything that he would want to add on top of that.

Senator Cotton: Secretary Maier, is there anything you
would like to add on top of that?

Mr. Maier: Senator, I think there has been no change in the policy from where we talked a year ago.

Senator Cotton: So at what level in the United States government does a strike against a bad guy in Yemen or Somalia have to be approved? Do you have to wake the President up in the middle of the night and ask him?

Mr. Maier: Senator, is that question for me?

Senator Cotton: Sure.

Mr. Maier: So I think it varies based on the geographic area, but there are very few that rise to the level of the White House. Most of those are within the DoD hierarchy, sir.

Senator Cotton: And at what level in the DoD hierarchy? Would that go to the combatant commander?

Mr. Maier: Oftentimes the combatant commander, sir, but I think it varies depending on how low they are delegated. In some cases it is well below the combatant commander.

Senator Cotton: Okay. General Clarke, I have a lot of confidence in you and your combatant commanders, but you know who else I have a lot of confidence in? People who are doing jobs that Major and Colonel Clarke used to do back in the day. Thank you. See you in the closed setting.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Cotton.
Senator Blumenthal, please.

Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for being here. Thank you all for your extraordinarily distinguished and dedicated service to our country.

General Nakasone, in your responses to Senator Cotton you did not mean to say that we are not sharing intelligence with Ukraine, did you?

General Nakasone: I did not. I said that I believe, Senator, I wanted to make sure that we talked about the details in a closed setting.

Senator Blumenthal: But the idea that we are denying intelligence or refusing to share intelligence is incorrect.

General Nakasone: That is correct, Senator.

Senator Blumenthal: Thank you.

General Clarke, I wonder if you could provide some background as to why use of undersea vehicles for inserting our special operators is important, whether it is through the Dry Combat Submersible or through the existing undersea warfare platforms that we have.

General Clarke: Senator, our naval special operators can get into places that a larger maritime ship or an undersea vessel, one of the Navy submarines, cannot get into, and it provides us the opportunity -- which I can cover specifics in a closed session -- to get in places that we need to conduct reconnaissance in, and to be able to give
the Joint Force insights for potential future conflict and
for competition.

Senator Blumenthal: So the smaller vehicles can enter
places that submarines could not, which makes them
potentially very valuable, and I think in response to
Senator Tuberville you talked a little bit about the
timeline. What is the fastest that we could see those Dry
Combat Submersibles available?

General Clarke: Senator, we are testing one now. I
went on it personally within the last 12 months, and found
that it is almost ready at this point. We are still going
through some specific testing of it, and I can get back to
you on the record with what that specific timeline is. But
we are talking months, probably not years. We are
operationally validating it now, to make sure it would be
completely safe in an operational environment.

Senator Blumenthal: Are you satisfied that the budget,
The 2023 budget, includes sufficient funding to make it
operational during the coming year, if it is a matter of
months before it would be?

General Clarke: Senator, I do, for this year's budget,
but there are additional capabilities that we will continue
to advocate for to build the modernization not just of the
Dry Combat Submersible but other undersea, clandestine type
vessels that will also assist us in the maritime and the
littoral domain.

Senator Blumenthal: I would appreciate hearing more, whether it is in a closed setting or on the record in writing more about this program.

General Clarke: Yes, sir. I will take that for the record, Senator.

Senator Blumenthal: Thank you. One other area. When I visited Ukraine just very shortly before the invasion, in January, and I think it is certain now it is a matter of public record that we had trainers there for the Ukrainian forces. How would you assess the effectiveness of the training that we gave to Ukrainians through our special operations as well as other personnel, and would such training now be useful for more of them outside of Ukraine? Obviously, we are not going to put any of our personnel into Ukraine, but if there were training outside the country for some of their special operators.

General Clarke: I assess that training as very effective, and what we did for 8 years prior for both lethal capabilities but also in the information operations. And I do believe that at Ukrainians' desire, based upon what they will need in the future, for what could become a protracted engagement with Russia, we should look at and assess what future capabilities they will need, because they will need to have a sustained effort, and I think we could provide
those if the policy is decided. But I think that would benefit the Ukrainians in the future.

Senator Blumenthal: Absolutely. Thanks so much, General. Thank you all.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

Senator Sullivan, please.

Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen, thank you for your service here. General Clarke, both you and General Nakasone, I think you are two of our best four-star commanders focused on lethality, warfighting, crushing our enemies when called upon, and I just really want to thank you for that, and General Clarke, for your service, if you are going to be retiring soon. I hope you are not retiring soon but I understand it is maybe close to 40 years now, so good luck with everything. But you have done an exceptional job. Both of you have.

I just want to emphasize what Senator Cotton mentioned, General Nakasone, on the intel-sharing piece. I know you cannot say a lot here, but I think it is strong bipartisan support to the extent we can share as much intel, of course, without compromising sources and methods, with Ukrainian forces, including in Eastern Ukraine, I think it is really important. And I think I am speaking for a lot of Senators on this committee.

General Clarke, I have kind of a multi-part question.
Could you elaborate a little bit on SOCOM's role in building out Ukrainian Special Forces over the last several years, and then what lessons are we applying with regard to what we have learned there to Taiwan Special Forces?

You know, one of the things that you mentioned in the what-we-do section of your vision for SOCOM is helping shape the environment to reduce risk, prevent crises, and set conditions for success in competition and conflict, and I would like to get a little sense, to the extent you can talk about it here, on what we are doing to help Taiwan the way we have helped Ukraine, particularly in the SOF world.

General Clarke: Senator, when we first started training with the Ukrainian special operations over 8 years ago they were a smaller force and they did not necessarily have a SOCOM-like headquarters. That force grew to three brigade equivalents, commanded by colonels, and a training regiment. And they also, over the last 18 months, added a resistance company made up of what we -- like a home guard, that was embedded in each one of those. And that was through the persistent effort of not just the U.S., but we also brought in allies from other NATO countries.

Senator Sullivan: And you are seeing, obviously, some of the success of that training and structure in the current conflict.

General Clarke: Yes, Senator, we are.
Senator Sullivan: What about Taiwan, to the extent you can talk about that?

General Clarke: Senator, I would prefer to talk about Taiwan in a closed setting. But broadly, building both resistance and resilience in the force -- resistance being the ability to give the punch, but resilience being the ability to take the punch and make sure you can get back up, through medical training, through logistics, and through communications -- is critical. And I think we have got to work on both of those with other nations, writ large.

Senator Sullivan: Let me ask a question for both of you, kind of, again a two-part question. General Clarke, Rear Admiral Howard recently wrote a piece in USNI and talked about making sure our special operations forces were combat ready for new tactics, techniques, particularly in some of the most stressing environment and hard-target conditions. And he talked about SOCOM competition in the High North.

Are there initiatives that you are undertaking? And General Nakasone, can you talk a little bit about what NSA Alaska has been doing, the capabilities that they bring? Even a lot of Alaskans are not aware of the great work that goes on, particularly as it relates to Russia and other places that goes on in the High North of America and Alaska, with the buildout and exceptional work that NSA Alaska is
General Clarke, can you take that question first, and then General Nakasone.

General Clarke: Yes, sir. I just left Norway less than 10 days ago, where I observed our special operations forces working 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, using all of their capabilities -- insertion clandestinely, looking at hard targets, working with partners. Simultaneously, as you know, there was another exercise going on in Alaska, where we also had a large contingent of all elements of our special operations command that were practicing experimenting. And so this alone highlights the importance of training inside the Arctic for those hard targets in the future.

Senator Sullivan: Thank you. General Nakasone?

General Nakasone: Senator, geography matters, and as we take a look at our ability to provide both indications and warning and awareness of the Pacific, a critical element of this is what the men and women at NSA Alaska are doing today. And so that location, in your home state, has provided us insights into our adversaries' actions and provided protection to our forces that are deployed in that region.

Senator Sullivan: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Sullivan.
Senator Hawley, please.

Senator Hawley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks to all of you for being here. Thank you for your service.

I want to come back to this question of Taiwan that Senator Sullivan was just asking about, and let me frame it this way. Secretary Maier, let me start with you.

I think the Ukrainians are showing how effective and important irregular warfare can be for defeating an enemy invasion. Obviously that has got a lot of potential relevance to the situation that we see in Taiwan. Our goal in Taiwan, I think hopefully we all agree, should be to prevent an invasion. We do not want to be behind the eight ball where we are trying to displace one. But we have got to plan for all scenarios, so irregular warfare has an important role to play.

You testified last year, and I am going to quote you here, that the United States should "strongly" -- that is your word -- "strongly consider options to strengthen Taiwan's irregular warfare capabilities, including their ability to fight in depth" -- that is you again -- "using resistance networks or other capabilities after a Chinese amphibious landing." Is that still your view?

Mr. Maier: It is, Senator, and I think we are doing more work in that regard, as others have testified.

Senator Hawley: Perfect. Can I just ask you to expand
on that? Can you give us an update on what you are doing, what the Pentagon is doing to help strengthen Taiwan's irregular warfare capabilities?

Mr. Maier: So, Senator, I think General Clarke already hit on some of that. Obviously we can only go so much in this session. But I think consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act, we are doing all we can to look at a whole-of-resistance approach. So in some cases that means doing more exercises, more ability to touch aspects of the Taiwanese infrastructure and determine its both, as General Clarke said, ability to take a punch and give a punch. That is sort of the most basic level of our assessment at this point.

Senator Hawley: Very good. General, you testified also last year, and you just reiterated it to Senator Sullivan, but you testified that you thought the United States should help Taiwan strengthen its irregular warfare capabilities. I am assuming, based on your answer just a second ago, you think that is still a priority. Is that fair to say?

General Clarke: All in accordance with our policies. But, Senator, if I could take it a bit broader.

Senator Hawley: Yeah.

General Clarke: It is not just about Taiwan either. It is also more than 15 countries that we are working with
in the Indo-Pacific that are like-minded, have the same values, and have the same interests. And so bolstering their defenses and ensuring they are seeing the same pernicious behavior that we have seen on behalf of the Chinese is critical, because we would rather be looking at 15 nations aligned or 20 nations aligned than just one or two.

Senator Hawley: Sure. Absolutely. I agree with that 100 percent. And as you may or may not know, I have introduced a bill called the Arm Taiwan Act, which would create the Taiwan Security Assistance Initiative modeled on the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, that would help accelerate the ideas, help accelerate Taiwan's deployment of critical asymmetrical defenses. I think it is critical we learn the right lessons from what we are seeing in Ukraine. Obviously deterrence failed in Ukraine. We do not want to see deterrence fail in Taiwan -- we just simply cannot afford that -- and making sure that they are in a position, the Taiwanese are in a position to wage irregular warfare if necessary, and China knows they can do that I think is critical.

General, let me ask you a related question. What role do you see SOCOM playing in helping to deter or, if necessary, defeat a Chinese invasion of Taiwan?

General Clarke: Senator, I described our role in that
as the war around the edges, and being able to hold hard
targets at risk to ensure that we provide the national
command authority those options. And that is set up by
conducting reconnaissance and ensuring, as I addressed to
other members, building the undersea capabilities that we
need today, ensuring that we are postured in places around
the globe that can pull that. That is combining elements
like cyber, space, and special operations forces together to
provide unique capabilities for our nation.

Senator Hawley: Let me ask you if you have been able
to use any resources freed up from our withdrawal from
Afghanistan to invest in more capabilities relevant to the
Taiwan scenario.

General Clarke: Senator, we have put additional forces
into both the Indo-Pacific theater and into the European
theater over the last 3 years. I would say we started the
rebalancing of some of the soft requirements based upon the
2018 National Defense Strategy that identified the threats
from near-peer competitors.

Senator Hawley: But I guess my question is, has the
withdrawal from Afghanistan, has that freed up resources
that you have been able to repurpose to this theater for
this pacing scenario?

General Clarke: I cannot draw a direct correlation
from one to another, but fundamentally we do not have as
many people in Afghanistan, you know, today. We have no
people in Afghanistan today.

Senator Hawley: Got it. I have got some additional
questions that I will give to you each for the record.
Thank you for your service. Thank you for being here.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Hawley.

Senator Scott, please.

Senator Scott: Thank you, Chair Reed.

General Clarke, what does the future operating
environment look like for special forces, special operation
forces over the next 5, 10, and 20 years, and do you expect
to need more personnel and resources given the threats from
Communist China, Russia, and emboldened Iran?

General Clarke: Senator, I think we have the
sufficient amount of forces that we need today that exist
within the force. We have just now, this year, gotten to
the first time to where we actually have a predictable
schedule that all of our forces are on a 2-to-1 deployment
to dwell, or greater. And so the force that we have is
right.

In some cases, though, we actually need to make some
changes within the force that we have, to be able to put
towards the capabilities that we will need. For example,
potentially more information operators that we will need in
the future. So we may have less in one area but actually
look at where we need to put more in the future. And what
we do need is a continuous, sustained budget that will allow
for increased modernization and readiness so that we can
build those capabilities in time for the Department.

Senator Scott: Thank you. General, as we know,
President Biden's budget is in step with the raging
inflation we are seeing right now. Are there any assets or
any spending you would like to do that you will be unable to
do because of the budget basically being cut when you look
the inflation?

General Clarke: Senator, we have submitted an unfunded
requirement list that hits specifically to the points, and
top line that asks for additional funding in the information
operations, in artificial intelligence and machine learning,
and it hits on the speeding up of some of our modernization
of our clandestine insertion maritime, but also looks a
developing counter-UAS, unmanned aerial systems, to be able
to protect our forces that are forward, and that will speed
those processes up in the future.

Senator Scott: We watched Vladimir Putin's aggression
against Ukraine, and I think we are all disappointed that
President Biden did not do enough to deter it. But what can
special operations continue to do to assist Ukraine and
support our other partners that hopefully will help Ukraine
win against Russia and also make sure that Putin does not feel emboldened to invade a NATO country?

General Clarke: Senator, I would highlight a few. Number one is continue to ensure the lethal aid makes it into the Ukraine and for special operators to make sure that it gets to the Ukrainian special operations forces. I think they are doing a fantastic job today inside the Ukraine.

But we also have to be predictive and work with the Ukrainians on not what they need today but as this potentially goes into protracted conflict what will they need in the future? And it may not be as much on the lethal side but it may be other capabilities, whether it is mobility or whether it is first aid or whether it is protection. And I think we have to be predictive to that.

And the other one that was already hit is the continued info and intel sharing about what is going on, and we can talk about that separately.

Senator Scott: Are there any lessons learned from how U.S. special operations forces have been able to help Ukraine that we can apply to potentially what is going to happen when China invades Taiwan or, you know, Iran continuing to threaten Israel?

General Clarke: Yes, sir. Number one is it is not just the U.S. and Ukraine. While we are sitting here we have 16 NATO nations all on their own accord that are
currently working with our Special Operations Command Europe, and they are collaborating, they are sharing, and they are sensing what is happening in that environment that we will then collectively be able to provide the best support to Ukraine. And I think the same lessons could be applied in other theaters.

The second one is, though, getting ahead of it. The more than you can set up for success today, the better off you will be. And having the urgency to see that in advance and not waiting until the end.

Senator Scott: Thanks. General Nakasone, what has CYBERCOM been able to do to increase its efforts to protect our public and private infrastructure from bad actors from Russia?

General Nakasone: Senator, several things. First of all, deploying a team to the Ukraine to see what our adversaries are doing and being able to capture their malware and their tradecraft and share that broadly with the private sector.

Secondly, it is working with the lead for this, which is DHS CISA, and providing the capacity, if necessary, and also the collaboration that is ongoing.

And the last piece is working broadly with the private sector, particularly our defense industrial base, to ensure that they have an understanding of the tactics and
techniques our adversaries are using.

Senator Scott: Thank you. Thank you, Chair Reed.

Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Scott, and gentlemen, thank you too. I will adjourn the open session. We will reconvene in SVC-217 in approximately 10 minutes, to begin the closed session. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

[Whereupon, at 11:41 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]