

**STATEMENT OF  
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COMMANDER, UNITED NATIONS COMMAND;  
REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND UNITED STATES COMBINED FORCES COMMAND;  
AND UNITED STATES FORCES KOREA  
IN SUPPORT OF COMMANDER, UNITED STATES PACIFIC COMMAND  
TESTIMONY BEFORE  
THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

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## **1. Introduction**

Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, thank you for your continued support to our efforts. I sincerely regret that I am unable, due to the ongoing mission requirements here in Korea, to appear before you in person. I am grateful to Admiral Harry Harris, my “battle buddy” of many years for shouldering the testimony load by himself.

For nearly two years, I have had the distinct honor to command the men and women of the United Nations Command (UNC), the Republic of Korea (ROK) and United States Combined Forces Command (CFC), and the United States Forces Korea (USFK). These extraordinary Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Civilians – Korean and American, and representatives of the original 17 UNC Sending States from the Korean War – remain forward-deployed, devoted to deterrence, and postured to defend the Republic of Korea and its citizens every day. I could not be prouder of their efforts.

We could not accomplish our mission in the Republic of Korea without the steadfast Congressional support we receive each year. We are dedicated to maintaining strong relationships with our counterparts on Capitol Hill and are grateful for the opportunity to host Congressional delegations to visit our facilities, discuss our challenges, and meet with senior officials to engage on various issues to strengthen our posture and defend our allies. Your unwavering dedication to the Command enables us to foster the cohesion in Northeast Asia necessary for the Alliance to act as the guarantor of peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula. Thank you for your commitment to the maximum pressure campaign, and the implementation of United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR), all of which are vital to the international efforts to apply the diplomatic and economic pressure to further isolate the Kim regime while finding the way toward complete, irreversible, verifiable denuclearization.

These diplomatic and economic efforts rest on the foundation of a credible, ready military capability. Our effort to maintain a high state of military readiness is coupled with developing and strengthening relationships within the U.S.-ROK Alliance, regionally with our allies and

partners, and globally with UNC Sending States to ensure that we have a structure of relationships tailor-made to adaptively respond to the myriad of potential security challenges in the region. I am confident that our combined and unified team is prepared to address the complex and dynamic challenges we may potentially face. The ROK-U.S. Alliance – although increasingly tested by North Korea’s military advancements – remains ironclad. A spirit of goodwill between the United States and the Republic of Korea as enduring allies undergirds our day-to-day interactions. Here in Korea, we (ROK and U.S.) go together.

## **2. Activities across the three Commands**

The three commands – UNC, CFC, and USFK – made improvements in numerous areas in the past year, which significantly increased our readiness to fulfill the unique missions of each command. UNC is the home for international commitments to the Korean Peninsula. CFC is the heart of the U.S.-ROK Alliance. USFK is living proof of America’s enduring commitment to the defense of South Korea. Together the three Commands provide the collective capabilities necessary to enhance the security of the ROK and its citizens.

Throughout the past year, UNC harnessed efforts to increase its vitality and relevance as the home for international commitments to the Korean Peninsula. While steadfastly maintaining the Armistice, we actively sought to expand our engagements with the 17 United Nations Command Sending States and our like-minded international partners. We continued to identify and enhance intelligence sharing, interoperability and unified training and planning opportunities. UNC Sending States provided liaison officers to augment the 2017 UNC Military Armistice Commission (MAC) Secretariat mission including advise and assist visits, inspections and investigations, observations, Armistice education, and DMZ access control. Over the last two years, other non-U.S. UNC Sending States have shared their perspectives and robustly supported exercises on the Peninsula by contributing a total of 755 service members.

Efforts are advancing for the possible development of Visiting Forces Agreements (VFA) for UNC Sending States. We are also striving to establish greater end-to-end awareness with UNC-Rear Headquarters in Japan. Corollary efforts are being made to discuss the critical role of bases in and agreements with Japan. During 2017, UNC-Rear hosted a significant increase in

multilateral engagements, including port calls, aircraft visits, and visits from UNC Sending States and other international partners. These notable activities serve to reinforce UNC's organic, multinational framework for international peace and security on the Peninsula.

CFC is the heart of the U.S.-ROK Alliance (which, for the ROK, is the cornerstone of their foreign policy) and its primary warfighting command. Over the past year, CFC strived for an increase in naval, aerial, and special operations exercises, which highlighted the strength and readiness of the combined force. These bilateral efforts demonstrated that we stand ready to defend against all adversaries and support diplomatic, economic, and informational efforts of our two governments. CFC increased its interactions with multilateral partners through its robust exercise program. The Command also refined its Operations Plans (OPLAN); made significant advances in ballistic missile defense (BMD); closed early warning gaps; and advanced theater command, control, communications, computers and intelligence (C4I) capabilities. CFC continues to make progress in countering-weapons of mass destruction (CWMD), cyber, and joint information environment efforts.

As living proof of America's commitment to the defense of the ROK, U.S. Forces Korea also made advances in readiness and capabilities. Based upon the Alliance decision this past year, the Command successfully deployed the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) BMD system to South Korea. This advanced system is the most effective BMD platform in the world and an important capability that – when paired with existing systems like Patriot – reinforces the BMD architecture defending millions of ROK citizens, much of South Korea's critical infrastructure, as well as U.S. forces and assets in the ROK. Action by the U.S. Congress improved our ability to logically integrate Patriot and THAAD systems so the “right” interceptor, not just the “best” interceptor defeats any incoming threats. Our ability to intercept inbound North Korean ballistic missiles threatening the areas defended by THAAD and Patriot have been remarkably enhanced.

USFK also increased several critical munition stockpiles essential for the defense of the ROK. This major effort was accomplished with the tireless assistance of the military Departments, in close partnership. The Command continued to receive and integrate rotational

brigades, which participated in numerous combined exercises with their ROK counterparts. Last year, the Command also relocated the U.S. Eighth Army from Yongsan Garrison, within the capital city of Seoul, to Camp Humphreys, approximately 50 miles to the south and well outside the Greater Seoul Metropolitan Area (GSMA). This is a milestone in USFK's efforts to return Yongsan Garrison to the ROK Government and a move that reflects the enduring nature of our commitment.

The Command also continued to emphasize a robust and challenging exercise program that serves as a cornerstone of our readiness. We participated in bilateral exercises ULCHI FREEDOM GUARDIAN (summer) and KEY RESOLVE (spring), the two largest command post exercises supported by the Department of Defense (DoD). U.S. Eighth Army executed two Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) exercises, named FOCUSED PASSAGE and COURAGEOUS CHANNEL, in the spring and in the summer, respectively, which improved NEO readiness and better integrated our plans and actions with U.S. Embassy Seoul, U.S. Embassy Tokyo, U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) and U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). U.S. Special Operations Command Korea (SOCKOR) executed nine joint combined exercise training events that focused on working with their ROK Special Operations counterparts. USTRANSCOM, U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM), and U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) remain key partners who have enhanced their readiness to support contingency operations in Korea over the last year, and I remain grateful for their devoted support.

In November, the USS *Ronald Reagan*, USS *Nimitz*, and USS *Theodore Roosevelt* carrier strike groups conducted a tri-carrier strike force exercise in U.S. Seventh Fleet's area of operation, the first of its kind in ten years. In a truly combined and joint fashion, CFC conducted two maritime counter-special operations forces (MCSOF) exercises where combined Army, Air Force, and Navy aviation assets operated under the tactical control of ROK Aegis ships and U.S. Navy strike groups to rehearse preventing infiltration along South Korea's maritime flanks. The U.S. Seventh Air Force-hosted VIGILANT ACE exercise brought state-of-the-art capabilities to the Peninsula by incorporating F-22s and F-35s into our combined air operations for the first time. In a show of close cooperation between U.S. and ROK military forces, we

conducted numerous multilateral shows of force utilizing B-1 bombers and our newest 5<sup>th</sup> Generation aircraft, as well as combined live fire exercises utilizing the U.S. Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) and the ROK Hyunmoo-II Missile.

We also cooperated with our ROK ally through other formal and informal frameworks. In October 2017, the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff hosted the annual Military Committee Meeting (MCM) and Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) between the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the ROK Minister of Defense. The Foreign Affairs and Defense agencies of both countries also approved a framework for the Extended Deterrence Strategy and Consultation Group (EDSCG), which now works to strengthen the Alliance's deterrence posture against North Korean nuclear and missile threats. The second EDSCG meeting convened this past January, with increased emphasis on Alliance coordination of defense activities and strategic communications. Informal processes were also continuously at play through the conduct of our bilateral command post exercises and the recurrent engagements between members of our Command and various ROK officials.

### **3. Strategic environment**

**a. North Korea.** North Korea remains a significant threat to security and stability in Northeast Asia and beyond. The past year was marked by continued North Korean provocations, threats, and actions that have raised tensions on the Korean Peninsula and across the globe. The Kim Jong Un regime continues to hold security and stability in the Indo-Pacific at risk with its conventional arms and further development of WMD and other asymmetric capabilities capable of posing a direct threat to the U.S. homeland. Their strategy is aimed at fracturing consensus among the key regional actors by carefully orchestrating the timing and methods of their provocative actions and messaging.

In 2017 alone, North Korea launched three ballistic ICBMs and conducted its sixth nuclear test along with 16 other missile launch events (two of which overflew Japan). North Korea's missiles threaten not only South Korea, but an increasing number of our allies. Pyongyang overtly threatens the safety of citizens in Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States, specifically calling out Guam, and South Korea. In addition, the Kim regime deployed a

chemical agent in Malaysia to assassinate Kim Jong Un's half-brother Kim Jong Nam in the sovereign territory of another nation. While the sum of these unlawful activities and developments may have extended the reach of North Korea's threats, the international community has confronted the Kim Jong Un regime in months past with unprecedented diplomatic and economic pressure.

Though the expanding range of North Korea's ballistic missiles is concerning, a serious, credible threat to 25 million ROK citizens and approximately 150,000 U.S. citizens living in the GSMA is also posed from its long range artillery. Nearly 250,000 U.S. citizens live in South Korea, with approximately 150,000 Americans in the GSMA. North Korea has deployed at least three artillery systems capable of ranging targets in the GSMA with virtually no warning. Conservative predictions of a likely attack scenario anticipate an initial artillery barrage focused on military targets, which would result in significant casualties, while a larger attack targeting civilians would yield several thousand casualties with the potential to affect millions of South Korean citizens, not to mention hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizens and nationals of other countries within the first 24 hours. North Korea also possesses the world's largest special operations force, the fourth largest standing army, and a long-standing chemical weapons program with the capability to produce nerve, blister, blood and choking agents. Moreover, North Korea could employ chemical weapons agents by modifying a variety of conventional munitions, including artillery and ballistic missiles. Considering its known research efforts, physical infrastructure, and weapons industry, the North also has a potential capability for biological warfare.

Kim Jong Un's regime continues to expand its offensive cyber capabilities. In May 2017, ransomware attributed to North Korea attacked computer systems worldwide. This came on the heels of cyber operations that allowed the country to steal more than \$80 million from international financial systems in 2016. According to reports, North Korea has more than 6,000 hackers, whose improving capabilities provide the regime a financial pipeline to support its weapons programs and a means to collect sensitive information from other parties and disrupt infrastructure in other countries.

While North Korea continued its pattern of destabilizing activities, cooperation and consensus among concerned partners and the greater international community increased. Just this last year, the United Nations Security Council championed efforts to further isolate the North, unanimously adopting Resolutions (UNSCRs) 2345, 2356, 2371, 2375, and 2397 to denounce its unlawful nuclear and ballistic missile tests, condemn its persistent defiance of the will of the international community and violations of international law, and further sanction the Kim regime. The full and strict implementation of UN sanctions will bring about greater pressure on North Korea.

The year came to an end with a 73-day hiatus from North Korean provocations, interrupted by the 29 November (Korea date – and 28 November in Washington) ballistic missile launch that achieved the highest apogee and longest flight time yet. In the time since that event to the submission of this report, we have experienced another hiatus from provocations. This is worthy of note, given the rapid pace of testing that characterized 2017.

The steady application of focused international pressure may be having an effect, given the recent signs of rapprochement between North and South Korea. Both sides cooperated at the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics hosted by South Korea and have pursued cultural exchanges in conjunction with athletic engagements. In addition, they agreed to conduct military engagement around the re-established border hotline and explore other senior official meetings in order to improve relationships between the countries and ease tensions on the Korea Peninsula. We continue to observe and closely coordinate with our ROK partners during these recent developments. The ROK government believes that dialogue must be added to pressure in order to move toward denuclearization. My frequent encounters with the senior leadership of the ROK government make this clear. South Korea will respond to North Korea's sending an Envoy and a representative to the ROK during the Pyeongchang Olympics, while conveying a unified Alliance demand for complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization of North Korea.

**b. Republic of Korea.** Strong Alliance military cooperation persisted through South Korea's political transition in 2017, as the ROK continued to demonstrate commitment to increase its primary military role of conventional deterrence by developing and procuring modern,

interoperable capabilities. The ROK government continues to increase spending on defense (currently 2.7 percent of GDP), and ROK President Moon Jae-in committed to further raise ROK defense spending by 0.1 percent of GDP each year through 2022. As a comparison, ROK defense spending as a proportion of GDP is higher than all NATO members save the United States. The ROK government also contributes significant funds to the U.S. military presence in South Korea. In 2017, the Special Measures Agreement (SMA) provided approximately \$830 million in support of USFK activities that would have otherwise been paid by the U.S. Treasury, and the ROK government approved a one percent increase to the SMA for 2018. South Korea is also funding 92 percent of the total costs for the expansion, construction and relocation effort into U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys in the city of Pyeongtaek. In addition to strong fiscal support from the ROK government, the South Korean public is strongly in favor of the Alliance, demonstrated by a high U.S. favorability rating that today ranges between 75 and 85 percent.

Seoul is also investing heavily in defense modernization. The United States and South Korea currently manage over 650 foreign military sales cases, valued at over \$26 billion. Our Korean ally has committed to acquire a number of military capabilities critical to our Alliance, particularly in the areas of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), missile defense, air superiority, precision guided munitions, and maritime security. Some examples of recent acquisitions include Global Hawk unmanned surveillance aircraft, Patriot PAC-3 upgrades, Guidance Enhanced Missiles (GEM-T), Harpoon missiles, Aegis KDX-III destroyers, AH-64E Apache attack helicopters, upgrades of KF-16s, and F-35A Joint Strike Fighters. These capabilities and commitments are designed to greatly enhance the warfighting readiness of the ROK-U.S. Alliance and bring about many of the conditions required for successful transition of wartime operational control (OPCON) to South Korea. Additionally, South Korea recently began BMD modernization. Once completed, ROK Patriot BMD forces will have greater effectiveness against theater ballistic missiles. In concert with these advances in ROK defense modernization, we are striving for ever-greater transparency within the Alliance regarding these maturing capabilities to ensure there is a common understanding of all of the tools that will be available to the CFC in wartime. It is notable that South Korea not only invests in advanced

U.S. technologies in a large way, but they also develop their own advanced capabilities as a sophisticated, technologically advanced ally.

Beyond the Korean Peninsula, South Korea contributes to international security through peacekeeping operations, stabilization and reconstruction efforts, regional security cooperation initiatives, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Seoul has also taken important steps to increase its cooperation with Japan by bolstering multilateral cooperation, particularly in the areas of information-sharing and BMD. There is sufficient military willingness to cooperate more with Japan both trilaterally and multilaterally; however, the deep social and political issues that mark the history of the relationship between the two countries will determine the pace of progress toward this collective end.

**c. China.** China remains a pivotal player with unique global reach and is one of the region's most influential actors. While it once held a reputation for being as close to North Korea as "lips and teeth," Beijing has expressed frustration with the North's repeated provocations, and supported multilateral sanctions against the regime. However, China also retaliated economically against Seoul in protest of its deployment of the THAAD BMD system on the Peninsula. One of the most impacted sectors was ROK tourism, with losses estimated to exceed \$6.5 billion. During President Xi and President Moon's summit in Beijing in December, the deployment of THAAD to the Peninsula and China's pressure on the South continued to linger as an issue between the two nations. China and South Korea pledged to improve bilateral relations and bolster cooperation. I find that this has been partially acted upon, and there are still limits to the degree of cooperation and relief between South Korea and China.

The United States is looking closely at how China approaches its relations with North Korea, especially regarding implementation of recent UNSCRs. There are open source reports of recent Chinese efforts to uphold sanctions which indicate China's trade with the North has fallen since strengthened international sanctions came into effect in September 2017 and January 2018. Such a drop in trade may be attributable to decreases in North Korean exports of coal, iron ore, lead ore, and seafood to China. It is evident that the relationship between China and North Korea is a strained one, perhaps at an historic low point. China's continued enforcement of sanctions will

be vital to achieving the “biting” effect required to cause the North Korean regime to reconsider its strategic weapons development.

**d. Russia.** Russia remains opposed to North Korea’s persistent provocations and has implemented some sanctions against Pyongyang. However, as it observes international cooperation, it also adopts the opportunist role in the Indo-Pacific that it takes elsewhere in the world. Recent signaling indicates that Moscow may attempt to continue to grow its role on the Korean Peninsula. In July 2017, Russia joined China in endorsing a “freeze-for-freeze” initiative that calls for North Korea to refrain from missile and nuclear testing and the U.S. and South Korea to halt large-scale bilateral military exercises. In December 2017, Russia also expressed a willingness to mediate talks between the United States and North Korea. We find Russia’s actions to be based on self-interest and must always remain alert to their inclination to “spoil” progress being made around them.

**e. Japan.** In light of North Korean provocations, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has sought to bolster his country’s defensive posture and allow Japan to play a larger role in the U.S.-Japan alliance. Along these lines, Tokyo is pursuing its largest-ever defense budget for FY 2018, with funds earmarked for introducing the U.S. military’s Aegis Ashore land-based missile interceptor system to protect against North Korean missiles. Tokyo also sought to advance substantive cooperation with Seoul in areas where they have complementary interests. Japan’s recent attendance at the Vancouver Foreign Ministers Meeting on Security and Stability on the Korean Peninsula and Prime Minister Abe’s appearance at the Winter Olympics in South Korea are positive signals between South Korea and Japan. Japan and South Korea remain in a complex relationship, which I assess may improve in 2018 if internal domestic politics provide more room for cooperation and constructive engagement. UNC, which maintains a headquarters and seven bases in Japan, and USFK remain in unprecedented closeness to the Japan Self Defense Forces, and to U.S. Forces Japan, through engagements in South Korea and in Japan. The trajectory is measured, yet positive.

#### **4. Looking to the future**

**a. Innovation.** USFK endeavors to become a hub for burgeoning technologies, innovative thinking, and the application of fresh strategic capabilities. With the addition of ROK and UNC partner capabilities, we seek innovative approaches to solve our challenges in this highly dynamic environment. I have directed the creation of a small team – the Emerging Capabilities and Innovative Effects Division – to connect and apply the innovation that is emerging from across the DoD to the Alliance’s opportunities and challenges on the Korean Peninsula.

Initial efforts are centered on the integrated defense of the GSMA. The ability to destroy North Korean artillery and ballistic missiles at their firing positions, coupled with the ability to intercept and protect the South Korean capital from these threats, are options we seek to continually develop and employ with our ROK partners. We also look to develop a robust chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive integrated early warning system with our ROK counterparts in order to provide immediate detection and public warning while informing decision making at the highest levels of the two governments. When examining many of the military challenges we face, there are opportunities for path-changing innovation. Through this work, USFK established unique partnerships with defense, government, industry, and academic organizations in the United States, South Korea and UNC Sending States. Recent Command engagements with Defense Digital Service (DDS), Defense Innovation Unit – Experimental (DIUx), Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), U.S. Army Research, Development, and Engineering Command (RDECOM), Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), and Massachusetts Institute of Technology-Lincoln Laboratory have enabled the Command to begin to sharpen its focus and spur innovation with our partners.

**b. Increased multilateral cooperation.** Nations in the Indo-Pacific and beyond are increasingly concerned about the North Korean threat, and many have demonstrated their willingness to work with South Korea, Japan, the United States, and like-minded partners to more rigorously implement UNSCRs that impose sanctions on the Kim regime. Our efforts extend to integrating UNC Sending States and FVEY partners into combined exercises and planning efforts in the Korean theater of operations. We are grateful to the Department of State for their successful sponsorship of the January 2018 Vancouver Foreign Ministers Meeting on

Security and Stability on the Korean Peninsula, an idea that emerged from monthly meetings with the Ambassadors of the 17 United Nations Sending States of the Korean War. We will stand ready to enable any additional opportunities that may arise from this important international gathering.

By reinforcing our multilateral efforts, we will work toward a coherent, collective response to our common security challenges and find ways to enhance interoperability and improve our collective defense capabilities. It is paramount that we continue to improve ballistic missile defenses, facilitate the sharing of information, and conduct exercises to maintain a common operational framework. We will bolster maritime interdiction operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster response exercises, and anti-submarine warfare capabilities.

**c. Improved readiness.** USFK's efforts to improve readiness on the Peninsula are a two-pronged approach aimed at ensuring we conduct robust combined and joint exercise cycles and continue whole scale integration efforts throughout each subordinate component command. We will execute the two major theater-level command post exercises and one theater-level field training exercise each year. These exercises are essential to strengthen the Alliance, deter North Korean aggression, ensure the UNC's ability to maintain the Armistice, improve force readiness and interoperability, and integrate UNC Sending State (multinational) forces and capabilities into theater defense operations. Maintaining and further developing these exercises in the future also provides the ability to execute certification requirements for the transfer of wartime OPCON, while concurrently assessing our combined warfighting readiness.

The Combined Forces Command is also making great progress toward becoming more united at the component level. Cooperation between the Commander, Naval Forces Korea (CNFK) and the Commander of the ROK Fleet (CRF) hit an inflection point in February 2017 with the collocation of their headquarters (HQ) on the ROK Fleet base in Busan. This has dramatically increased cooperation, interoperability, and warfighting synchronization and effectiveness. Current initiatives are underway at U.S. Seventh Air Force to streamline the integration of combined component-level HQ staffs to operate together on a routine basis. SOCKOR is becoming more combined with their ROK counterparts through a recent increase in engagements, establishment of a co-located staff element within the ROK Special Operations

Forces Headquarters, and a planned feasibility assessment for the collocation of the SOCKOR HQ with ROK Special Warfare Command.

**d. Yongsan Relocation Plan (YRP).** Our commitment to the timely completion of the Yongsan Relocation Plan (YRP) and Land Partnership Plan (LPP) remains one of my top priorities. USFK unit relocation and the closing and relocating of camps continue to progress favorably. Through the consolidation of U.S. forces and positioning troops closer to air and sea installations south of Seoul, the relocation program enhances U.S.-ROK Alliance readiness, and improves USFK's capacity to respond to future defense initiatives. 2017 saw the relocation of the U.S. Eighth Army Headquarters to U.S. Army Garrison - Humphreys. Relocation of most remaining units to that garrison – USFK, UNC, U.S. Marine Forces Korea and the 2nd Infantry Division Headquarters – is slated for completion in 2018. We continue to cooperate closely with the ROK government to enable seamless progress of the remaining USFK base relocations, and to consult closely on camp return issues through the Joint Environmental Assessment Procedure (JEAP).

**e. Conditions-based OPCON Transition Plan (COTP).** The Alliance has made significant progress in setting the conditions for the future combined command. The command will continue to operate under the bilateral guidance of the Presidents of the United States and South Korea or their delegates. After this transition, a U.S. general officer will change roles to serve as the deputy commander of the future combined command and remain as commander of the UNC and USFK. U.S. forces will continue to operate under U.S. national authorities. The Alliance is prepared to accelerate OPCON transition as South Korea continues to develop and acquire the critical capabilities required for the Alliance's wartime success. The OPCON transition process must proceed in a way that strengthens deterrence against North Korea and enhances our combined capabilities.

The ROK Minister of Defense and U.S. Secretary of Defense pledged in October 2017 to make joint efforts to implement the commitment by President Trump and President Moon in June 2017 to enable the expeditious conditions-based transfer of wartime OPCON. The Minister

of Defense emphasized South Korea's commitment to complete the preparations necessary to exercise OPCON in accordance with the signed COTP. The draft organization of the future combined command was discussed, and the Ministers decided to continue to refine the concept through combined exercises and certifications. They also committed to develop Alliance guiding principles for the further enhancement of combined defense posture post-OPCON transition. The two sides decided to reexamine the implementation plan for OPCON transition, such as the Alliance capability acquisition plan; Terms of Reference – Relationship (TOR-R) and Operation Plan; and combined exercises and certification plan. They also agreed to jointly review and update COTP by the 2018 SCM.

## **5. Critical capabilities**

**a. Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR).** CFC and USFK will seek multi-discipline, persistent ISR capability and associated exploitation support to extend the warning time available to the Commander. Deep-look ISR and moving target indicators provide the ability to continuously track indications and warnings (I&W) targets over longer durations. As North Korea grows its threat to the homelands of the U.S. and our allies, it is essential to have the fullest possible picture of activities in all domains above the Military Demarcation Line. While there are restrictions, both generally under international law and under the Armistice regime, on using ISR assets outside of ROK territory or in international airspace and waters, an increase in assets available and a broadening of the spectrum of collection would be helpful to improve our I&W, and to better sense opportunities in our competition short of war.

**b. Command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (C4I).** It is important that we strive for C4I interoperability with our Korean ally, in areas including tactical communications and blue-force situational awareness and seek system survivability and robustness to enable modernized information sharing. Policies, agreements, and technologies must lean toward enabling bi-national and multi-national information sharing. We rely on military and commercial satellite capacity for mission command to provide assured communications and situational awareness down to the individual Soldier. Advanced C4I capabilities that are compatible with the available frequency spectrum in Korea, able to penetrate

underground facilities and capable of transmitting high bandwidth imagery and data via satellite are essential to our mission set.

**c. Ballistic missile defense (BMD).** We have made significant strides in BMD capability this year with the commitment to thicken the layers of missile defense through THAAD and Patriot system modernization. Increasing interoperability with ROK systems is a key part of improving Alliance missile defense, including program upgrades to the ROK Patriot system and procurement of PAC-3 interceptors. As North Korea continues to improve its missile forces, the ROK-U.S. Alliance must also continue to expand its BMD capabilities.

**d. Countering-WMD (CWMD).** North Korea continually demonstrates its commitment to develop its chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs, so it is imperative that we work diligently to close any gaps in our CWMD capabilities that would put ROK-U.S. forces, civilian safety and our objectives at risk. We must ensure we have sufficient integrated early warning, protection, decontamination capabilities, and medical countermeasures and that our systems provide a shared picture of the combined operational environment.

**e. Critical munitions.** Thanks in large part to our U.S. military service partners, we made significant progress during the past year to increase our stocks of select munitions that are critical to early phases of conflict. However, there is still work to be done. Together with our ROK counterparts, we continue to identify ways to close these capability gaps through various procurement channels. The long-term U.S. solution is for the services to develop munitions requirements, fund, and procure munitions identified through the Joint Capabilities Integration Development System (JCIDS) and Munitions Requirements Process (MRP) to supply munitions that are not available from other sources.

## **6. Closing**

Through the difficult challenges of the past year, UNC, CFC, and USFK have steadfastly defended U.S. security interests on the Korean Peninsula, and sought to maintain stability in Northeast Asia. The U.S. military presence on the Korean Peninsula and the strength of the U.S.-ROK Alliance are critical to deterring future aggression, and posturing for potential

conflict. As Commander, I can report that over the past year the Command improved readiness; pursued innovative solutions to our challenges; and filled capability shortfalls that lessen North Korea's ability to hold the United States and South Korea at risk. By making thoughtful resource decisions, developing Alliance initiatives, and reinforcing relationships with our allies and partners, we will continue to shape our environment to advance security and stability on the Korean Peninsula. Thanks to the Committee for your support, and for the opportunity to communicate my assessment of our current posture. I am honored to have the privilege of leading American Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines; our government civilians; and their counterparts from the Republic of Korea. Our Alliance remains strong through daily trust-building interactions that are enabled by your support. We will remain ready to "fight tonight" while also ensuring we take every possible route to prevent war and accomplish U.S. and ROK strategic objectives.

"Katchi Kap-shi-da!" We Go Together!

This posture statement is submitted for the record.

VINCENT K. BROOKS  
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