

**Advance Questions for General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC,
Nominee for the Position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

Defense Reforms

On previous occasions you have answered the Committee's policy questions on the reforms brought about by the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the last time being in connection with your recent nomination to be Commandant of the Marine Corps. You indicated that you did not see a need for modifications to Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions.

Has your view of the importance, implementation, and practice of these reforms changed since you testified before the Committee at your last confirmation hearing?

No.

In light of your experience as Commandant of the Marine Corps, do you see any need for modifications to Goldwater-Nichols? If so, what modifications do you believe would be appropriate?

I do not currently anticipate the need to modify the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

Duties

Based on your experience as Commandant of the Marine Corps, as Commander of United States Forces and the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, and as Vice Director of Operations for the Joint Staff, what recommendations, if any, do you have for changes in the duties and functions set forth in section 152 through 155 of title 10, United States Code, and in regulations of the Department of Defense (DOD), that pertain to the Chairman and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the organization and operation of the Joint Staff in general?

I do not presently have recommendations to change the law or regulations.

Relationships

Other sections of law and traditional practice establish important relationships between the Chairman and other officials. Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the following officials:

The Secretary of Defense.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff must have a close working relationship with the Secretary of Defense. Under Title 10, the Chairman is assigned several duties that guide this relationship to include serving as the principal military advisor to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. The Chairman also performs other duties assigned by the Secretary of Defense.

The National Security Advisor.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the National Security Advisor to ensure that our military efforts and options are synchronized with civilian efforts across the government. Since the Chairman is also the principal military advisor to the National Security Council and Homeland Security Council, I also will work with the National Security Advisor to inform and implement Presidential decisions.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Existing directives grant the Deputy Secretary of Defense full power and authority to act for the Secretary of Defense on any matters upon which the Secretary is authorized to act. As a result, I expect the relationship of the Chairman with the Deputy Secretary will be similar to that of relationship with the Secretary.

The Under Secretaries of Defense.

Current DoD directives and Title 10, U.S. Code establish the Under Secretaries of Defense as the principal staff assistants and advisers to the Secretary regarding matters related to their functional areas. Under Secretaries exercise policy and oversight functions within their respective areas. In carrying out their duties, they may issue instructions and directive memoranda to implement policies approved by the Secretary. These instructions and directives are applicable to all DoD components. When directed by the President and Secretary of Defense or when carrying out their responsibilities, Under Secretaries typically transmit communications to commanders of the unified and specified commands through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The General Counsel of the Department of Defense.

The DoD General Counsel serves as the chief legal officer of the Department of Defense consistent with Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 140. The DoD General Counsel generally is responsible to oversee legal services, establish policy, and administer the DoD Standards of Conduct Program. The DoD General Counsel also establishes policy and positions on specific legal issues and provides advice on significant international law issues raised in relation to major military operations, the DoD Law of War Program, or the legality of weapons reviews. Communications between the combatant commanders and the DoD General Counsel are normally transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The office of the DoD General Counsel works closely with the Office of Legal Counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Department of Defense Inspector General.

If confirmed, I will continue to cooperate with and provide support to the Department of Defense Inspector General as required. The Department of Defense Inspector General performs the duties, has the responsibilities, and exercises the powers specified in the Inspector General Act of 1978.

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff performs the duties prescribed for him as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other such duties as may be prescribed by the Chairman, with the approval of the Secretary of Defense. When there is a vacancy in the Office of the

Chairman or in the absence or disability of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman acts as Chairman and performs the duties of the Chairman until a successor is appointed or the absence or disability ceases. If confirmed, I intend to discuss potential duties with the Vice Chairman as part of our close working relationship. I have not yet determined any additional duty assignments that I would to assign the Vice Chairman beyond those prescribed in law.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments.

The Secretaries are the heads of their respective military Departments and are responsible for, and have the authority necessary to conduct, all affairs of their respective Departments. Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 165 provides that, subject to the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of Defense, and subject to the authority of the Combatant Commanders, the Secretaries of Military Departments are responsible for administration and support of forces that are assigned to unified and specified commands. The Chairman advises the Secretary of Defense on the extent to which program recommendations and budget proposals of the Military Departments conform to priorities in strategic plans and with the priorities established for requirements of the Combatant Commands. The Secretaries of the Military Departments also are responsible for such other activities as may be prescribed by law or by the President or Secretary of Defense.

The Chiefs of Staff of the Services.

The Service Chiefs are no longer involved in the operational chain of command as a result of the reforms of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, but this change does not diminish their importance with respect to Title 10 responsibilities. The Chiefs of Staff of the Services serve two significant roles. First, they are responsible for the organization, training, and equipping of their respective Services. Without the full support and cooperation of the Service Chiefs, no Combatant Commander can assure the preparedness of his assigned forces for missions directed by the Secretary of Defense and the President. Second, as members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chiefs are advisers to the President, National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense as the senior uniformed leaders of their respective Services. In this function, they play a critically important role in shaping military advice and developing our joint capabilities. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with the Service Chiefs to fulfill warfighting and operational requirements.

The Combatant Commanders.

The Combatant Commanders are responsible to fight our wars and conduct joint military operations around the world. By law, and to the extent directed by the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman serves as spokesman for the Combatant Commanders and is charged with overseeing their activities. He provides a vital link between the Combatant Commanders and other elements of the Department of Defense, and as directed by the President, may serve as the means of communication between the Combatant Commanders and the President or Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with the Combatant Commanders to enable their warfighting capability and to provide support. If confirmed, I also will ensure that I consider and work to de-conflict any issues or decisions than span multiple combatant commands.

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

The Chief of the National Guard heads a joint activity of the Department of Defense and is the senior uniformed National Guard officer responsible for formulating, developing and

coordinating all policies, programs and plans affecting more than half a million Army and Air National Guard personnel. Appointed by the President, he serves as principal adviser to the Secretary of Defense through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on National Guard matters. He is also the principal adviser to the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Army and the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force on all National Guard issues. As National Guard Bureau Chief, he serves as the department's official channel of communication with the Governors and Adjutants General. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau has the specific responsibility of addressing matters involving non-Federalized National Guard forces in support of homeland defense and civil support missions.

The Commander, U.S. Forces – Afghanistan.

Although the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military advisor to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Council, he is not in the chain of command of the Commander, U.S. Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A). The Commander, USFOR-A reports to the Commander, USCENTCOM, who, in turn, reports directly to the Secretary of Defense. This reporting relationship is prescribed in 10 USC Section 164(d)(1). The Commander, USFOR-A does not have a formal command relationship with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but he coordinates with him through the Commander, USCENTCOM on a regular basis. The Commander, USFOR-A sends his advice and opinions related to Operation Resolute Support to the Commander, USCENTCOM, who, in turn, presents them to the Chairman.

Major Challenges

What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you expect to face if you are confirmed?

The current security environment is extraordinarily complex and volatile. We face challenges from state actors including Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea. We are also engaged in a long-term fight against violent extremist organizations. We are in the midst of a critical transition in Afghanistan. While dealing with these issues, we face the need to modernize the Joint Force in the context of fiscal challenges and budget uncertainty. Particular areas of concern are our cyber capabilities, space capabilities, modernizing the nuclear enterprise, and assuring all domain access for the Joint Force. We must navigate this environment while maintain our flexibility to deal with the unexpected.

Assuming you are confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?

First, I will energize our efforts to develop a framework for deterrence that will address the full range of threats that we face in the 21st Century. I will also work closely with the services and combatant commanders to ensure we strike the right balance between dealing with current operations, being prepared for the uncertain, and developing the Joint Force of the future. Given the nature of the challenges we confront, it will also be critical that we enhance our integration with other elements of the Interagency in partnership with Congress.

Priorities

Recognizing that challenges, anticipated and unforeseen, will drive your priorities to a substantial degree, if confirmed, what other priorities, beyond those associated with the major challenges you identified in the section above, would you set for your term as Chairman?

If confirmed, I would focus on contributing to the development of a comprehensive and sustainable Interagency strategy to address the challenges associated with violent extremism. I would also be decisively engaged in restoring the readiness of the Joint Force. Finally, I would focus on shaping the capabilities and capacities of the future Joint Force with a particular focus on leader development.

Chain of Command

Section 162(b) of title 10, United States Code, provides that the chain of command runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense and from the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commands. Section 163(a) of title 10 further provides that the President may direct communications to combatant commanders be transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and may assign duties to the Chairman to assist the President and the Secretary of Defense in performing their command function.

Do you believe that these provisions facilitate a clear and effective chain of command?

Yes. The chain of command runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense and from the Secretary of Defense to the commanders of the combatant commands. If confirmed, I will continue to inform decisions as appropriate and transmit directions as directed. However, there will be no ambiguity about the chain of command: the Combatant Commanders receive their orders from the Secretary of Defense.

Are there circumstances in which you believe it is appropriate for U.S. military forces to be under the operational command or control of an authority outside the chain of command established under title 10, United States Code?

The armed forces should ordinarily operate under the chain of command established in Title 10. In the case of certain sensitive military operations, it may be appropriate for the President to establish other temporary command relationships. However, in all cases U.S. armed forces supporting such operations are still governed by the law of armed conflict, remain accountable to the Title 10 chain of command, and are subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice for disciplinary matters. If confirmed, I would provide the President with my best military advice regarding any operation in which an exception to the established chain of command may be warranted.

What is your understanding and assessment of the authorities and agreements which are in place to allow U.S. military personnel to carry out missions under the authorities contained in title 50, United States Code? Do you believe any modifications to these authorities are necessary?

Title 50 of the U.S. Code tasks the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the military departments maintain sufficient capabilities to collect and produce intelligence to meet requirements of the DNI, Secretary of Defense, CJCS, and COCOMs. Title 50 of the U.S. Code also authorizes the Secretary to use such elements of the DOD as may be appropriate for the execution of the national intelligence program functions described in Section 3038 of Title 50. While I believe that our military forces are generally most effective when they operate under a military chain of command, there are circumstances in which exceptions to this general rule are appropriate; authorities and agreements exist to facilitate the granting of such exceptions. In some cases, the Secretary of Defense may approve this exception and in other cases only the President has approval authority. I believe the current authorities strike the appropriate balance between enabling DoD to operate within its independent Title 50 authorities, providing necessary and appropriate support to other agencies of the U.S. government under Title 50, and ensuring critical oversight of sensitive operations.

Advice of the Service Chiefs, Combatant Commanders, and Chief of the National Guard Bureau

Section 163 of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff serves as the spokesman for the combatant commanders, especially on the operational requirements of their commands. Section 151 of title 10 provides for the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to submit their advice or opinion, in disagreement with or in addition to the advice or opinion of the Chairman, and requires the Chairman to provide that advice at the same time that he presents his own advice to the President, National Security Council, or Secretary of Defense.

What changes to section 151 or 163, if any, do you think may be necessary to ensure that the views of the individual Service Chiefs, Combatant Commanders, and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau are presented and considered?

I do not see a need to change section 151 or 163.

Officer Management Issues

As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff you would have significant responsibilities with regard to joint officer management policies.

If confirmed, what modifications would you make to provide the Department of Defense and the military services the force management tools necessary to meet the needs of the 21st century joint, all-volunteer force?

The Department, the Joint Staff, and the Services already possess a wide range of force management tools which provide ample flexibility in meeting the needs of the 21st century joint, all-volunteer force. However, if confirmed, I will continue to examine the joint operational and strategic environment to determine if there are opportunities for, or capability gaps that require, reform to make the Joint Force even more capable of meeting both today and tomorrow's needs.

Do you believe the current DOD and service procedures and practices for reviewing the records of officers pending nomination by the President are sufficient to ensure the Secretaries of the military departments, the Secretary of Defense, and the President can make informed decisions?

In conjunction with existing statutes, the current Department and Service policies provide a sound framework for the Services' evaluation of the qualifications, previous performance, and potential of their officers. I believe these frameworks provide the necessary information to allow the Services to make sound decisions regarding the promotion and utilization of each Service's officers.

In your view, are these procedures and practices fair and reasonable for the officers involved?

Yes. I believe these procedures and practices are fair and reasonable for the officers involved.

What modifications, if any, to the requirements for joint officer qualifications are necessary to ensure that military officers are able to attain meaningful joint and service-specific leadership experience and professional development?

I feel the current combination of Joint Professional Military Education and requisite experience gained through joint assignments, training, and exercises adequately prepares officers to operate effectively at both the strategic and operational level in steady-state and wartime conditions. Therefore, I do not currently recommend any modifications to the requirements for joint officer qualification.

In your view, what is the impact of joint qualification requirements on the ability of the services to select the best qualified officers for promotion and to enable officer assignments that will satisfy service-specific officer professional development requirements?

It is certainly challenging for Services to ensure that officers are adequately prepared to operate effectively as senior leaders in both the Service and joint environment. Although satisfying qualification requirements may curtail the time available for the Services to develop their officers' Service-specific skill sets, current requirements produce a cadre of well-rounded and competitive officers, who are capable of integrating Service functions with national directives in both strategic and operational environments. In my opinion, officers with these capabilities possess the greatest potential for success in positions of senior leadership. As such, they are the most qualified, and hence most competitive, for promotion.

In 2008, Congress created the requirement that the Legal Counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff be selected by a board of officers convened by the Secretary of Defense. This process remains the only joint duty officer position specifically selected by a selection board from among qualified officers of the armed forces.

Do you consider the selection process required by section 156 of title 10, United

States Code, to be an efficient and effective process for selecting officers from among the services to serve in this joint position?

Based on available information, I believe the selection process for the position of the Legal Counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is an efficient, equitable, and effective means to select an officer for this position from a pool of talented judge advocate leaders across the Services.

What lessons, if any, have been captured from this joint officer selection board process that could improve the processes for selection of officers in the military services?

I'm not aware of any lessons that could improve the processes for selection of officers in the military service. The process to select the legal counsel to the CJCS was informed by service processes.

Would you support expanding the process used to select the Legal Counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to other joint billets? Why or why not?

I do not see a need to expand our selection process to other joint billets as currently established processes used to select general/flag officers to joint positions are sound. First, our process for identifying officers gives the Combatant Commander and the Chairman flexibility. We can select from across the Services (to include the Coast Guard) and the Active, Guard, and Reserve Components to ensure we get the right individual with the appropriate skills and experience. Second, the current process is efficient in that it gives the commander and other senior leaders an opportunity to quickly review a slate of nominated officers, and conduct interviews as necessary. Finally, our process is extremely responsive to emerging or unexpected requirements. We can quickly alert the Services to identify eligible personnel, select candidates, nominate them, and have them in position in as little as 90 days, if necessary.

Headquarters Streamlining

The Senate reported Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act directs reforms to consolidate the headquarters functions of the Department of Defense and the military departments.

If confirmed, and if the provisions in the bill become law, what would be your role in identifying and implementing streamlining and reductions in the Joint Staff?

The current Chairman directed an enterprise-wide functional review with a detailed evaluation of tasks and activities associated with primary Joint Staff directorates. This review identified a range of potential areas for reduction, realignment, or elimination within the staff, and some of the recommendations have already been implemented. I would continue to use this functional review as a roadmap to quantify the efficiency of past actions and spur organizational streamlining by reducing, realigning or eliminating redundant or conflicting requirements.

What Joint Staff areas, specifically and if any, do you consider to be the priorities for

possible consolidation or reductions?

There are a number of potential areas for consolidation or reduction. For example, the Joint Staff J6 is currently working with the US Army Information Technology Agency (ITA), the Washington Headquarters Services (WHS), and the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) to determine which IT functions can be consolidated within the Pentagon to improve our IT capabilities while reducing costs and unnecessary redundancies. Further areas for efficiencies include consolidating support functions common to the Joint Staff directorates and eliminating duplicative functions accomplished by the OSD, Joint Staff and Defense Activities.

To the extent that the Joint Staff has functions that overlap with the Department of Defense and the military departments, what would be your approach to consolidating and reducing redundancy?

The first, and most important step, would be to determine whether those functions are currently codified in statute. Some duplicative efforts may be due to the responsibilities being laid out in law with some respective pieces executed by the Department, some by the Joint Staff, and some by the military departments. Consolidation and reduction of redundancy may require legislative changes. Second, I would recommend a combined review by the OSD, the Services, and the Joint Staff to determine the most appropriate ways to reduce, realign, or eliminate duplicative functions.

Training and Assignment of General and Flag Officers

In your view, do a sufficient number of general and flag officers have advanced training and degrees in scientific and technical disciplines?

Yes. Rigorous and deliberate Service accession, training, and development processes generate the technical and scientific capability needed in sufficient numbers to meet DoD needs. I will work closely with and support the Service Chiefs and other leaders to continue to ensure we maintain an appropriate pipeline of specialized, technical officer talent.

Are the career paths for officers with technical skills appropriate to ensure that the Department and the services can execute complex acquisition programs, adapt to a rapidly changing technological threat environment, and make informed investment decisions? If not, what will you do to address this deficiency?

I believe the Department has grown, and continues to grow, world-class, technically-astute officers who are ready to take on the challenges inherent in a rapidly changing and technical acquisition environment. While the Services vary with respect to their use of officers in acquisition, each Service tailors officer career paths to meet their particular mission priorities, to include successfully executing critical major acquisition programs. Each Service has career path models that are appropriately aligned with their force management process.

In your view do current general and flag officer assignment policies provide and incentivize qualified officers to serve in acquisition programs? Do tour lengths for those assignments

enable and empower such officers to effectively manage acquisition programs? If not, what changes do you believe are necessary to improve the effectiveness of senior officers assigned those duties?

Yes. Senior officers are assigned with adequate tenure and are empowered to effectively manage their programs. The Services demonstrate flexibility in adjusting tour lengths to match logical progression points in acquisition programs. That said, I will support the Service Chiefs, Service acquisition executives, and OSD leaders in their efforts to ensure we continuously improve the development and assignment of highly-motivated and qualified officers in acquisition positions.

Are you satisfied that the Department of Defense, the Joint Staff, and the military services have in place sufficient training and resources to provide general and flag officers, and Senior Executive Service employees the training they need to make informed, ethical decisions? If not, what actions would you take, if confirmed, to address your concerns?

Yes. I judge that sufficient training and resources are in place to achieve the desired outcome. The ability to make ethical decisions based on the shared values of the profession of arms is identified as a specific Desired Leader Attribute for leaders throughout the military and is foundational to all Joint and Service developmental efforts. The ethical foundation is laid at the outset of an officer's career and is further developed and reinforced in formal education and training settings throughout their progression through the ranks.

It has been observed that despite numerous changes in the law, the requirements and the process for attaining joint officer qualifications is still beset by systemic challenges. Some of these challenges appear to force the services to make officer assignments to "check the box" for joint qualifications at the cost of depriving the services of flexibility to assign officers to other career enhancing and professional development opportunities. Officers not assigned to a designated joint billet on an operational staff receive joint credit while other officers supporting the same joint commander do not receive joint credit unless they submit a package to have their assignments qualify for joint service. As operational tempo remains high and as end strength continues to decline to historically low levels, some exceptionally qualified officers will be unable to serve in qualifying assignments to earn joint credit because the Nation demands they perform other critical duties. As a result those officers may be disadvantaged professionally as compared to their peers for promotion eligibility. Given the substantial resources invested in the developing officers to serve successfully in, and to support or lead joint forces, more must be done to improve the joint qualification system or to replace it with a system that is more effective.

If confirmed, I will work to identify inequities or inefficiencies in the current system and implement change where appropriate.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to review the joint qualification requirements to ensure that the qualification process is matched to the increasingly joint service environment in which many officers serve throughout their careers?

If confirmed, I will ensure that we have a process in place to continuously review our qualification process and drive appropriate revisions.

Should the formal requirement for joint qualifications be eliminated as a consideration for promotions and assignments?

No. I believe we need to continue to ensure that our future senior leaders are well prepared to operate within both the Services and the joint environment in steady-state and wartime conditions. This is best accomplished through a continued mixture of mandatory formal professional military education and hands-on experience in positions dealing with both joint and Service matters.

Security Strategies and Guidance

How would you characterize current trends in the range and diversity of threats to national security we face today?

The range and diversity of potential threats is increasing. We face both state and non-state adversaries who are more capable in terms of military capabilities, and more empowered by the diffusion of technology. Both types of adversaries are developing new ways to counter our traditional military advantages.

The Defense Strategic Guidance issued January 2012 took into account a \$487 billion dollar reduction in defense resources.

With the additional \$500 billion in cuts to the Department of Defense as a result of sequestration, is the Defense Strategic Guidance still valid?

The 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review superseded the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance, and provided new DoD guidance for capabilities, capacity, and readiness. We cannot execute the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review with an additional \$500 billion in cuts as the result of the Budget Control Act further exacerbated by Sequestration.

In your view, as Russian aggression and the emergence of ISIL have occurred since the Defense Strategic Guidance was issued in January 2012, is that strategic guidance still appropriate for the threats we face today or do you think an update is warranted?

The 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review superseded the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance. This QDR did not fully anticipate growing Russian aggression, the emergence of the ISIL threat, and the increase in cyber intrusions.

In your view, are our defense strategy and current establishment optimally structured, with the roles and missions of the military departments appropriately distributed, and U.S. forces properly armed, trained, and equipped to meet security challenges the Nation faces today and into the next decade?

I believe our defense strategy is sound but we must continually adapt it to address emerging threats and a dynamic strategic landscape. I also believe that the current defense establishment is effective with an appropriate distribution of roles and missions. I am concerned with the readiness of the force today and I believe we need to review the capabilities and capacities that will be needed to meet future security challenges.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you propose to the capabilities, structure, roles, and missions of the defense establishment?

The defense establishment is extremely complex. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Chiefs, Combatant Commanders, and Joint Staff to identify needed change to the capabilities, structure, roles, and missions of the defense establishment. Our cyber, space, and nuclear capabilities will be areas of particular emphasis.

Strategic Risk

How and over what periods of time, if at all, will reductions to Army and Marine Corps end strength increase strategic risk?

Reductions to Army and Marine Corps end strength must be considered in the context of the current security environment and our military objectives. If confirmed, I will be decisively engaged in ensuring that we have a clear understanding of risk as we make changes to the capabilities and capacities of the Joint Force.

What is your understanding and assessment of the Army and Marine Corps' decision to reduce active end strength to 450,000 and 182,000 soldiers respectively by the end of 2017?

I am confident that the Marine Corps can meet its requirements at 182,000. If confirmed, I will work to better understand the requirement for Army end strength.

If confirmed, what additional actions would you take, if any, to reduce or mitigate this strategic risk?

If confirmed, I will provide my best military advice to the Secretary of Defense and the President to include an assessment of risk and proposed actions to mitigate risk.

Upon issuance of the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, the FY 2015 budget reduced projected defense budgets by \$113 billion over five years. What was the incurred strategic risk of this reduction relative to the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance?

Overall, the strategic and military risk to our ability to accomplish the objectives laid out in the QDR and DSG have increased. I would be happy to discuss the details of this increased risk in a classified venue.

Chairman's Risk Assessment

In his 2013 risk assessment, Chairman Dempsey identified for the first time six National Security Interests that were derived from four enduring interests contained in the 2010 National Security Strategy. The April 2013 assessment identified several areas of broad and significant risk to national security as a result of current budget issues.

How would you characterize the trends of risk in these areas (whether they are increasing or decreasing)?

Overall, both strategic risk and military risk are increasing. I would be happy to discuss risk further in a classified venue.

What is your current assessment of the risk to Combatant Commanders in their ability to successfully execute their operational plans?

In an unclassified response I cannot go into much detail. Generally, however, our Combatant Commanders face increasing risk.

Transformation

Military “transformation” has been a broad objective of the Armed Forces since the end of the Cold War.

In your view, what does military “transformation” mean?

Military transformation involves leveraging new concepts, organizational constructs, or technologies to fundamentally change the way we fight. In the end, transformation is about innovating to maintain a competitive advantage.

What is your understanding and assessment of the progress made by the Department, including the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, toward transforming the Armed Forces?

Transformation is more of a journey than a destination. We can never be satisfied with our progress. I believe we need to energize our Joint exercise and experimentation efforts.

If confirmed, what goals, if any, would you establish during your term as Chairman regarding military transformation in the future?

If confirmed, I would develop a detailed concept for Joint exercises and experimentation. My initial assessment, from the perspective of a service chief, is that our operational tempo over the past decade has adversely impacted us in this area.

Do you believe the Joint Staff should play a larger role in transformation? If so, in what ways?

I believe, consistent within the statutory responsibilities of the Chairman, that the Joint Staff has

a leading role in the transformation of the Joint Force.

Military Capabilities in Support of Defense Strategy

In your opinion, do current military plans include the necessary capabilities to meet the defense strategy stated in the 2014 QDR? Where are areas of higher risk?

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the committee continues to receive a quarterly report in response to this question. I will personally engage in this area.

Does the 2014 QDR specify the correct set of capabilities to decisively win in future high-end engagements?

I believe so from the perspective of my current assignment. I believe this is an area that requires continuous review.

According to the force sizing construct in the 2014 QDR, American forces should be able to “defeat a regional adversary in a large-scale multi-phased campaign, and deny the objectives of – or impose unacceptable costs on – another aggressor in another region.”

In your opinion, does the Department’s force sizing construct provide adequate capability to address the country’s current threat environment?

Yes, the force sizing construct, with its emphasis on a range of military options, provides adequate capability to address the country’s current threat environment should deterrence fail.

Are the services adequately sized to meet this construct?

The Services are currently able to provide forces to support the construct to “defeat a regional adversary in a large-scale multi-phased campaign, and deny the objectives of—or impose unacceptable costs on—another aggressor in another region.” Resource constraints, however, have eroded readiness and extended the timeline by which forces can be made available to fulfill Combatant Commanders’ requests and respond to emerging requirements.

What will you advise if the Department cannot meet the demands placed on it?

I would advise we carefully prioritize the most important missions necessary to meet our military objectives and protect our national security interests. I will also provide the Secretary of Defense and the President with a clear articulation of risk.

Future Army

The Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) of January 2012 articulated the need to shift strategic emphasis toward the Asia-Pacific region while continuing to engage in the Middle East.

Do you agree that future high-end military operations, as envisioned by the DSG, will primarily be naval and air engagements such that the Army will have difficulty justifying the size, structure, and cost of the number and equipment its combat formations?

We cannot predict where or when we will be asked to fight. Hence, we need a full-spectrum, balanced military force capable of responding to various threats to our national security.

In your view, what are the most important considerations or criteria for aligning the Army's size, structure, and cost with strategy and resources?

In my view, our Nation requires an Army able to conduct full spectrum operations as part of the Joint Force. The Army is realigning and resizing consistent with the 2014 QDR. I believe that is appropriate.

If confirmed, what actions, if any, would you propose to properly align the Army's size and structure with the requirements of security strategies and the likely availability of resources?

As force structure changes are made within both the active and reserve components, we will continue to assess the impact of these changes and make adjustments as necessary to ensure we maintain the health of the force, retain an effective balance of active and reserve forces, and continue to meet the needs of our strategy.

Defense Reduction

In your view, what have been/will be the impacts of the following budget reductions on the military, their capability, capacity, and readiness?

Initial Budget Control Act reduction of \$487 billion

The abrupt, deep cuts resulting from the Budget Control Act forced our military to make topline-driven decisions, such that we now have a strategy with little to no margin for surprise.

Therefore, we are operating at higher levels of risk to our defense strategy. To limit adverse consequences, we need the certainty of a more predictable funding stream, time to balance force structure, modernization, compensation, and readiness, and the flexibility to make trade-offs.

Sequestration in FY 2013

The sequestration cuts in FY 2013 reduced already-strained readiness, which takes resources, principally time and money, to restore. To date, sequestration has resulted in cuts to training, exercises, deployments and maintenance, in civilian furloughs and a hiring freeze, and in disruptions to modernization and force morale. If sequester continues, our military will be forced to make sharp cuts with far reaching consequences, including limiting combat power, further reducing readiness, and rewriting our defense strategy. We are doing what we can to support our all-volunteer force, as well as protect necessary funding for our deployed forces and nuclear enterprise.

Reduction of \$115 billion in projected spending in the FY 2015 budget, in line with the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review

The FY15 budget request assumes higher risks in some areas, but this budget helps us to remain the world's finest military—modern and capable even while transitioning to a smaller force and resetting readiness over time. The \$115 billion reduction refers to the difference between the PB15 (FYDP) submission and the BCA sequestration levels across FY15-19. Funding to the sequester levels removes the flexibility to respond to emergent challenges (i.e., increasingly contested space and cyber domains, a resurgent Russia, the Ebola response, and the rise of ISIL), while also being able to execute our defense strategy.

Sequestered Budget Control Act discretionary caps starting in FY 2016 onward

If sequester level cuts return in FY16, then we will see further increased risks and fewer military options to defend our Nation and its interests. The impact of sequestration and other budget constraints will further reduce unit readiness. The effects caused by deferred maintenance will impose significant strain on long-term institutional readiness. Ultimately, reduced readiness (i.e., reduced training cycles, deferred maintenance, and the continuing pace of current operations) will damage the credibility and the morale of our military.

The fiscal year 2016 budget request assumes that the Budget Control Act will be amended in fiscal year 2016. The fiscal year 2016 budget resolution passed by the Senate and House of Representatives do not assume this but instead provides \$38 billion of the necessary spending through OCO budget.

Should this funding not be available, what recommendations would you have, if confirmed, for how the Department of Defense should manage the \$35 billion in cuts for fiscal year 2016?

Ongoing cuts will threaten our ability to execute the current defense strategy. Our military remains hopeful that Congress can once again come together in a manner that avoids the abrupt, deep cuts of sequestration. We will continue to reduce costs through efficiencies and reforms, but an FY16 budget at BCA cap levels will create risks requiring a new defense strategy. Should we be cut \$35 billion in FY16, we will be forced to further reduce the size of the force, delay readiness restoral, and reduce modernization and investment programs.

What are your views on the impact that these cuts could have on readiness?

These cuts would have a dangerous impact on readiness and future force generation capability of the Department, which are critical to our ability to execute the defense strategy. Losing \$35 billion from the FY16 defense budget would force us to mortgage ongoing readiness recovery efforts, equipment recapitalization and force modernization in favor of supporting currently deployed and next-to-deploy forces, all within a context of expanding global threats. We rely on sufficient and predictable resourcing to ensure our military readiness and ability to meet additional operational demands.

What are your views on the impact that these cuts could have to military capabilities?

Quite simply, these cuts would make our military smaller and less capable. We would be forced to disproportionately reduce funding for operations and maintenance, procurement, RDT&E, and military construction. FY16 cuts would increase risk, prolong readiness recovery, and delay

necessary modernization programs. Funding for hundreds of program line items, large and small, will be significantly reduced. Cuts in funding for research and development will ultimately slow discovery and advancement, erode the technological superiority enjoyed by U.S. forces and translate into less desirable military outcomes in future conflicts.

Readiness Funding

Given the reductions in readiness funding, what is your assessment of the current readiness of the Armed Forces to meet national security requirements across the full spectrum of military operations?

The Joint Force's overall readiness remains at levels posing significant risk to our ability to execute our National Military Strategy. While specific details cannot be addressed in this unclassified forum, it is understood that sequestration exacerbated an already declined state of readiness fueled by sourcing over a decade of exceptional demand. The Bipartisan Budget Act restored some resources, and provided much needed fiscal certainty and stability, thereby preventing further decline in readiness. The Department has since experienced minor Service readiness gains, which show continued promise as long as funding and commitments remain constant. However, this recovery is fragile. Recent gains are dependent on a combination of recovery time paired with sufficient and predictable resourcing allowing the Services to rebuild the necessary capabilities for full spectrum operations.

What is your assessment of the near term trend in the readiness of the Armed Forces?

If current funding levels prevail, I expect the Department's readiness to remain at significantly-less-than-optimal levels for the foreseeable future. Any additional operational demands and/or a loss of resourcing will introduce a significant amount of risk to ongoing military operations, limit military options the Department can offer to respond to emerging crises, and increase the Department's risk in meeting the requirements of our National Security Strategy.

How critical is it to find a solution to sequestration given the impacts we have already seen to DOD readiness in fiscal year 2013?

Sufficient and predictable resourcing is absolutely critical to restoring the Joint Force's ability to provide the full range of military capabilities at a sufficient capacity required to meet the challenges posed by today's dynamic international environment. Current funding and OCO allow the Department to conduct operations at their present level of commitment. However, recovering to the readiness posture needed to sustain these operations, meet additional commitments, and restore our comparative advantages through modernization will only come from a robust and predictable funding profile. Without adequate funding, maintaining current operations will come at the expense of long-term development and sustainment efforts, thereby exacerbating our readiness challenges.

What is your understanding and assessment of the methods currently used for estimating the funding needed for the maintenance of military equipment?

The method for funding equipment maintenance is requirements-driven based on a variety of factors to include: force structure, operations tempo, schedule, nature and usage rate of the equipment, and safety. The Services develop detailed maintenance plans that balance operational availability to the warfighter with maintenance requirements. However, perturbations in the budget process and funding uncertainties will have a negative effect on the workload scheduling at Service depots. These negative effects ripple beyond the current year and can extend for months and even years.

Given the backlog in equipment maintenance over the last several years, do you believe that we need an increased investment to reduce this backlog?

The Services have relied upon OCO funding to supplement their equipment maintenance backlogs over the past several years. This is because OCO was used for deliberate reset of equipment used to support OIF and OEF combat operations. Also in the past, baseline funding of maintenance accounts has been at levels below the Services' enduring requirements. While some level of backlog is normal in the repair cycle process, shortfalls in baseline funding cause increased maintenance backlog and drive greater future funding needs. We need consistent and predictable base budget funding to reduce the maintenance backlog.

How important is it to reduce the materiel maintenance backlog in order to improve readiness?

It requires continuous attention. The accumulation of backlog or deferred maintenance beyond what is manageable may not be immediately apparent, but it reduces readiness. These manifest as reduced equipment availability rates, less reliable systems, and shortened service life.

How important is it to receive OCO funding two or three years after the end of combat operations in order to ensure all equipment is reset?

It remains very important. OCO has been a necessary funding source to conduct ongoing operations and restore equipment readiness for future operations. The Services have done well in prioritizing their equipment for reset and filling shortfalls in deployed and deploying units. However, much work remains to reduce the accumulated backlog of scheduled and deferred maintenance. As our operations tempo remains high, this funding is necessary to fully restore equipment readiness levels to support the National Security Strategy.

In years past, Congress has based additional readiness funding decisions on the Service Chief unfunded priorities lists. However, in recent years those lists have either been nonexistent or have arrived too late in our markup process.

Do you agree to provide unfunded priorities lists to Congress in a timely manner beginning with the fiscal year 2017 budget request?

I will always strive to be compliant with Congressional direction.

Defense Acquisition Reform

Congress is considering a number of acquisition reform measures designed to reduce the costs and development timelines of major systems, and to streamline access to innovative commercial technologies and systems.

What are your views regarding acquisition reform and the need for improvements in the Defense acquisition process?

I am a strong proponent of acquisition reform based upon the following key principals:

- a. The responsibility and authority for acquisition system outcomes should be clearly identified within the DoD;
- b. The requirements' sponsor should be an integral part of delivering needed capability and remains accountable throughout the acquisition process, and;
- c. There is a continued effort to reduce overhead and increase efficiencies across defense acquisition.

If confirmed, how would you improve all three aspects of the acquisition process requirements, acquisition, and budgeting?

I would work with the Department leadership and the Congress to bring about necessary reform.

Do you believe that the current investment budget for major systems is warranted given increasing historic cost growth in major systems, costs of current operations, and asset recapitalization?

I am concerned that acquisition, procurement, and operations and support costs will continue their historic growth profiles, further exacerbating shortfalls under a sequestered budget. Although recent cost and schedule trends have shown improvement, we will continue to scrub our processes, including our warfighter requirements, to ensure they are aligned with strategy and available resources.

If confirmed, how do you plan to address this issue and guard against the potential impact of weapon systems cost growth?

I will partner with Secretary Carter to refine our processes, and work closely with our Combatant Commanders and the Services to mitigate cost growth on our highest priority investments. I will continue to drive the requirements process to consider cost-informed performance tradeoffs to assist in mitigating cost and schedule growth perturbations across our investment accounts and advocate for versatile capabilities that are both affordable and sustainable.

If confirmed, what actions would you propose, if any, to ensure that requirements are realistic, technically achievable, and prioritized?

As the Department's senior validation authority for joint military requirements, the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) continues to make improvements to the Joint Capability Integration Development System (JCIDS). These refinements to JCIDS ensure the

appropriate rigor in validating realistic, technically achievable, prioritized, and cost-informed requirements. If confirmed, the necessary refinements to the requirements process will continue during my tenure as Chairman.

If confirmed, what actions would you propose, if any, to ensure that resources are programmed for acquisition programs that are consistent with their cost estimates and schedules?

If confirmed, I will participate in the Department's program and budget process, and advocate for major system resource allocation consistent with the Secretary's cost and schedule position.

What should the role of the Combatant Commanders, Service Chiefs, Service Acquisition Executives, and Undersecretary for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics be in the acquisition process?

The role the Combatant Commanders and Service Chiefs play today in the requirements generation process is crucial to the success of the acquisition process. Likewise, their proactive engagement with the Service Acquisition Executives (SAE) and the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (USD(AT&L)) throughout the acquisition life-cycle ensures that major systems stay relevant, timely and cost-effective. USD(AT&L)'s role in reviewing Service plans at discrete milestones associated with major Department resource commitments ensures programs are affordable and executable, and that they follow sound business and risk management practices. This role should continue in conjunction with the efforts of the Service Acquisition Executives.

Are there specific new roles or responsibilities that should be assigned to the Service Chiefs or Service Secretaries in the acquisition process?

I am supportive of current efforts that would provide additional authority and accountability to the Services as long as it does not undermine the statutory responsibilities of the Secretary of Defense. Any potential changes should hold the Services accountable and streamline the bureaucratic processes involved.

Tactical Fighter Programs

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program, which is the largest and most expensive acquisition program in the Department's history, and was formally initiated as a program of record in 2002, with a total planned buy of 2,443 aircraft for the U.S. The program has not yet completed the System Development and Demonstration (SDD) phase, and is not due to enter full rate production until 2019, 17 years after its inception. At projected procurement rates, the aircraft will be procured by the Department well into the 2030 decade to reach its total quantity buy.

The requirement for 2,443 aircraft was established nearly 20 years ago; do you believe that requirement is still valid in light of countervailing pressure to reduce force structure to conserve resources and to improve capability to respond to

prospective adversary technological advances and increased capabilities with regard to establishing contested combat environments, combined with updated threat assessments and an evolving national defense strategy?

With projected adversarial threats challenging our current capabilities in coming years, the Joint Strike Fighter is a vital component of our effort to ensure the Joint Force maintains dominance in the air. Given the evolving defense strategy and the latest Defense Planning Guidance, we are presently taking the newest strategic foundation and analyzing whether 2,443 aircraft is the correct number. Until the analysis is complete, we need to pursue the current scheduled quantity buy to preclude creating an overall near-term tactical fighter shortfall.

Do you believe the nation can afford to procure these aircraft at a cost of \$12B to \$15B per year for nearly the next 20 years for an aircraft design that will be 30 years old at the completion of the program procurement phase?

Fifth-generation fighter aircraft, including the F-35, are critical as we contend with the technological advancements of near-peer competitors. We must ensure that we do not allow shortfalls in fighter capability or capacity to develop. The Department has been working diligently to make the overall cost per F-35 more affordable. Additionally, there will continue to be critical updates throughout the life cycle of the F-35 that will ensure the platform maintains a tactical advantage.

Do you believe the Department's current and planned force mix of short-range fighters and long-range strike aircraft, whether land- or maritime-based, is sufficient to meet current and future threats around the globe, and most especially in the Asia-Pacific theater of operations where the "tyranny of distance" is such a major factor?

The Department continually assesses our ability to meet current and future threats, especially concerning short-range fighters and long-range aircraft. Over the past three years, DoD has made significant progress in developing new alliance initiatives, securing new rotational access for U.S. forces, and enhancing both the quantity and quality of U.S. forces and capabilities in the Pacific region. The rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region is an important component of our effort to ensure we are postured to address the "tyranny of distance" and succeed militarily if required.

The Senate Armed Services Committee report accompanying S. 1376, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, would require the Secretary of Defense to assess the current requirement for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter total program of record quantity, and then to revalidate that quantity or identify a new requirement for the total number of F-35 aircraft the Department would ultimately procure.

What will be your role in assisting the Secretary to revalidate the F-35 total program quantity?

If confirmed, I will advise the Secretary as he assesses the delicate balance of the capacity and the capabilities of the future Joint Force. This advice will be informed by the extent to which the

F-35 program conforms to the priority requirements identified by Combatant Commanders and the Department's strategic plans.

The Air Force has proposed several times over the last decades to retire the A-10 close air support aircraft fleet, but each time Congress has rejected the proposals due to lack of a sufficient replacement capability. The Air Force's latest proposals to retire the fleet in fiscal years 2015 and 2016 were again rejected by Congress.

Do you believe a need exists for a dedicated capability to provide close air support for American troops in close quarters battles?

I believe America's troops in close quarters battles must have effective close air support.

What will be your role in ensuring our land forces receive the air support they'll need to survive and succeed while fighting the nation's land battles?

If confirmed, I will make recommendations to the Secretary of Defense concerning our ability to deliver effective air support to the Joint Force.

The Secretary of the Navy recently remarked that he believed the F-35 would be the nation's last manned fighter aircraft.

Do you believe this to be true?

While robotic and autonomous systems technology has advanced greatly over the past decade, I believe it is premature to rule out manned fighter aircraft without a more thorough analysis of the technologies currently available, as well as those likely to be available in the future. Decisions about future platforms should also take into consideration the threats our aircraft will face and their required missions.

If so, what will be your role in leading capabilities and requirements development to increase the role of unmanned aerial combat systems in the Department?

If confirmed, I will continue to lead the ongoing development of a joint concept for robotics and autonomous systems. This concept will establish a vision to establish capability requirements and to guide the subsequent development, fielding, and employment of robotics and autonomous technology in the Joint Force.

If not, how do you see the future balance developing between manned and unmanned combat aircraft for the Department's future force structure?

I expect that the rapid growth in robotic and autonomous systems technology we have seen in the past decade will only increase in the coming years for all weapons systems, not only combat aircraft. With this growth will come opportunities for increased capability across the Joint Force through the complimentary use of manned and remotely operated systems. The Joint Staff is currently developing a Joint Concept for Robotic and Autonomous Systems that will help guide

the Joint Force as it incorporates these new technologies and determines how to balance manned and remotely operated systems to maximize effectiveness.

Space

China's test of an anti-satellite weapon in 2007 was a turning point for the United States in its policies and procedure to ensure access to space. As a nation heavily dependent on space assets for both military and economic advantage, the United States has to make protection of space assets become a national priority.

Do you agree that space situational awareness and protection of space assets now has the appropriate level of national security priority?

No. Both are in need of attention in order to securely and effectively project U.S. military power.

In your view, how should China's continued development of space systems inform U.S. space policy and programs?

China is rapidly developing space capabilities of its own that both mirror U.S. capabilities and could threaten our access and use of space for national security purposes. If confirmed, I will review our efforts to address China's developments in space, and will coordinate closely with the Secretary of Defense.

If confirmed would you propose any changes to National Security space policy and programs?

If confirmed, I will continue to review our policies and programs to ensure U.S. warfighters can continue to depend on having the advantages that space confers.

Access to Radio Frequency Spectrum

What actions would you take to ensure that the Department continues to have access to radiofrequency spectrum that is necessary to train and to conduct its operations?

Overall, it is recognized that electromagnetic spectrum superiority is essential to all joint operations, and spectrum has become increasingly important to the Department's missions. Spectrum is also critical to the economy of the nation. If confirmed, I will continue to work diligently with the Interagency and industry on spectrum sharing in order to ensure that the Department maintains assured access to the spectrum necessary to train and conduct operations, while enabling access for commercial broadband.

Additionally, Public Law 106-65 (National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000) requires the Secretaries of Commerce and Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to certify that any alternative band or bands to be substituted for spectrum currently used by DoD provide "comparable technical characteristics to restore essential military capability that will be

lost as a result of the band of frequencies to be so surrendered." Preserving this provision is absolutely necessary to ensure that DoD maintains access to spectrum necessary to operate critical military capabilities.

Strategic Systems

Over the next 5 years DOD will begin to replace or begin studies to replace all of the strategic delivery systems. For the next 15 plus years, DOD will also have to sustain the current strategic nuclear enterprise. This will be a very expensive undertaking.

Do you have any concerns about the ability of the Department to afford the costs of nuclear systems modernization while meeting the rest of the DOD commitments?

The strategic, operational and fiscal environments we face pose significant challenges for the Department of Defense. The modernization of strategic delivery systems and the sustainment of the strategic nuclear enterprise are important to maintaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent. I support the continued investment in sustainment and modernization as a priority for defense spending. I am, of course, concerned about the impact of future budget resource reductions on our ability to meet these requirements. Therefore, if confirmed, I plan to continue to request budget certainty, stability, and flexibility to ensure we continue to modernize and sustain our nuclear capabilities, while balancing DOD priority commitments.

If confirmed will you review the modernization and replacement programs to ensure that they are cost effective?

Yes.

Missile Defense in the Boost Phase

The Missile Defense Agency's (MDA) mission is to develop, test, and field an integrated, layered ballistic missile defense system to defend the United States and its allies against all ranges of enemy ballistic missiles in all phases of flight. While MDA is conducting research into next generation laser concepts that could be mounted on high altitude unmanned aerial vehicles, there is no program of record designed to intercept missiles during the boost phase of flight, when they are potentially most vulnerable.

Do you agree with the Commander of Northern Command, when he said on April 7, 2015, referring to missile threats that "we need to be able to start knocking them down in the boost phase...and not rely on the midcourse phase where we are today?"

Yes. We should continue to support research and design efforts to defeat threats in the boost phase if operationally, technically and economically practical. Current capabilities are limited to denial in the midcourse and beyond phases; we need to look for solutions across the entire ballistic missile kill chain. The science shows a ballistic missile is comparatively easy to detect and track while boosting. Further, countermeasures on a missile, such as decoys designed to

distract defensive systems, are not typically deployed until after the booster burns out. As such, boost-phase intercept is an attractive missile defense alternative.

Would you support an increase in the priority of technology investments to develop and deploy a boost phase airborne laser weapon system for missile defense in the next decade, if technically practicable?

Yes, but only if operationally, technically and economically practical. The current budget supports pursuit of a laser demonstrator. A laser potentially would be capable of acquiring, tracking, and eventually destroying an enemy missile at a much lower cost than existing systems.

DOD's Cooperative Threat Reduction Program

The Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, which is focused historically on accounting for, securing or eliminating Cold War era weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and materials in the states of the former Soviet Union, has started to expand its focus to other countries. With this expansion the CTR program is widening its focus to biological weapons and capabilities including biological surveillance and early warning; and encouraging development of capabilities to reduce proliferation threats.

Do you think the CTR program is well coordinated among the U.S. government agencies that engage in threat reduction efforts, e.g., the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and the State Department?

I understand that the Departments of State, Energy, and Defense in conjunction with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and the Combatant Commands, make extensive efforts to conduct both formal and informal coordination across the different WMD threat reduction efforts on a regular basis. These efforts also include placement of DTRA liaison officers at U.S. Embassies where significant activities take place.

About 60% of CTR resources are proposed for biological programs.

With the very real threat of chemical weapons use and/or proliferation as we saw in Libya and are seeing in Syria, why is there such a large percentage of resources directed toward biological issues?

The DoD CTR Program remains postured to eliminate state-based WMD programs, including chemical weapons programs, if opportunities arise. At the same time, current scientific, economic, and demographic trends are magnifying the risks posed by outbreaks of infectious diseases of security concern, whether they are the result of a laboratory accident, a bioterror attack, or natural transmission. Such events are difficult to contain, pose a high threat to the health of U.S. citizens, drain economic resources and can potentially undermine geopolitical stability. As seen with the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak, due to the ease and speed of global travel, a bio-incident anywhere in the world may lead to dangerous regional and global security consequences when states are unable to provide basic services for their citizens, potentially

creating environments enabling terrorists to act with impunity and increasing the risk of pathogens of security concern being stolen or diverted due to insecure storage.

Prompt Global Strike

The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review concluded that the United States will continue to experiment with prompt global strike prototypes. There has been no decision to field a prompt global strike capability as the effort is early in the technology and testing phase.

In your view, what is the role for a conventional prompt global strike capability in addressing the key threats to U.S. national security in the near future?

Future circumstances may require the capability to address high value, time sensitive, and well-defended targets from outside the range of current conventional technology. I support the continued exploration of alternatives to existing strike system technologies and operational concepts to address these threats. The joint requirements process will continue to evaluate the alternatives to make informed recommendations for capability development balancing potential operational employment against costs.

What approach (e.g. land-based or sea-based or both) to implementation of this capability would you expect to pursue if confirmed?

I would expect to continue support of a sea-based approach as articulated in established joint requirements. If confirmed, I will monitor the review of potential alternatives that support this capability.

In your view what, if any, improvements in intelligence capabilities would be needed to support a prompt global strike capability?

In an unclassified response, I cannot go into much detail. If confirmed, I will seek to better understand and identify the capability improvements necessary to address any intelligence gaps discovered in the development this requirement.

Nuclear Weapons and Stockpile Stewardship

Congress established the Stockpile Stewardship Program with the aim of creating the computational capabilities and experimental tools needed to allow for the continued certification of the nuclear weapons stockpile as safe, secure, and reliable without the need for nuclear weapons testing. The Secretaries of Defense and Energy are statutorily required to certify annually to the Congress the continued safety, security, and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile.

As the stockpile continues to age, what do you view as the greatest challenges, if any, with respect to assuring the safety, security, and reliability of the stockpile?

To sustain a safe, secure, and effective stockpile, we must prudently manage our stockpile and related warhead Life Extension Programs. Our success in executing these programs will largely depend on our people and our infrastructure. We must recruit and retain our next-generation workforce capable of certifying the stockpile without underground testing. And, we must maintain and modernize the nuclear weapon infrastructure to ensure we have the full range of capabilities available to produce components required for our Life Extension Programs.

If the technical conclusions and data from the Stockpile Stewardship Program could no longer confidently support the annual certification of the stockpile as safe, secure, and reliable, would you recommend the resumption of underground nuclear testing? What considerations would guide your recommendation in this regard?

Any decision to resume underground nuclear testing should not be taken lightly. I would strongly consider recommendations from the Department of Energy and the National Laboratory Directors before making my recommendation to the Secretary and President. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Department of Energy to maintain the critical skills, capabilities, and infrastructure needed to ensure the safety, reliability, and security of the stockpile without underground testing if practicable.

Do you agree that the full funding of the President's plan for modernizing the nuclear weapons complex, commonly referred to as the 1251 report, is a critical national security priority?

Yes, funding the President's plan for sustaining and modernizing our nuclear weapons delivery platforms, sustaining a safe, secure, and reliable nuclear weapons stockpile, and modernizing the nuclear weapons infrastructure is a critical national security priority. Our nuclear deterrent is the nation's top military priority. The President's plan for modernizing the complex aligns funding with this priority.

Prior to completing this modernization effort, do you believe it would be prudent to consider reductions below New START Treaty limits in the deployed stockpile of nuclear weapons?

Yes, I believe it is prudent to consider options for future reductions below New START Treaty limits, both in the deployed stockpile and in non-deployed weapons. However, I strongly believe that any further reductions should be accomplished "hand-in-hand" with Russia and focus on measures that will maintain or strengthen deterrence of adversaries, assurance of our Allies and partners, and strategic stability.

If confirmed, would you recommend any changes to the non-deployed hedge stockpile of nuclear weapons?

I support reducing the size of the stockpile consistent with deterrence objectives and warfighter requirements. The United States retains a force of non-deployed nuclear warheads to hedge against technical failure and geopolitical developments that might alter our assessment of U.S. deployed force requirements. Completion of life-extension programs that improve safety,

security and reliability of the stockpile and infrastructure modernization efforts that improve responsiveness may provide opportunities to change the non-deployed hedge while still effectively managing stockpile risk.

Countering the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in Iraq & Syria

To “degrade and ultimately destroy the terrorist group known as ISIL” the Department of Defense seeks to deny ISIL safe-haven and build partner capacity.

If confirmed, what criteria would you use to evaluate ISIL degradation and what is your assessment of the progress to degrade ISIL in Iraq and in Syria?

I view ISIL’s inability to hold key terrain and lines of communication, and ISIL’s failure to resupply or refit its fighters as indicators of degraded capability. I would additionally consider the rate at which ISIL recruits and replaces fighters on the battlefield. I would also view large groups of displaced persons returning to their homes and working to restore their former way of life, in cities like Tikrit, as another positive indicator of degraded ISIL influence. DoD will continue to work closely with the U.S. Intelligence Community, using its databases and analytic tools to run assessments on these and other indicators as necessary.

If confirmed, I will visit the region to make a personal assessment of our progress in degrading ISIL in Iraq and Syria.

A large part of the support for ISIL and other violent extremist groups like al Nusrah by the local Syrian population is based on the fact that these groups seek to remove President Assad from power.

What limitations, if any, do we face by failing to have the removal of Assad as an objective in Syria?

President Assad’s policies contributed to the rise of ISIL and limits effective C-ISIL operations in Syria today.

In Iraq, what is the importance of arming the Sunni tribes in Anbar province to degrading ISIL and how do you assess progress to date? What is your understanding of the current plan to train and equip Sunni fighters to help in the campaign against ISIL?

Support to Sunni tribes is an important component of the effort to defeat ISIL. Sunni tribal fighters have the potential to be a credible ground force, and are necessary to protect Iraqis in Anbar and other Sunni-dominant areas. PM Abadi and the GoI have made some progress in mobilizing Sunni tribes, supported by our efforts at airbases like Al Asad and Al Taqaddum. Much additional work remains.

What is your assessment of the fall of Ramadi to ISIL last month and what adjustments, if any, to U.S. and coalition strategy do you believe need to be made?

Ramadi was a tactical setback, and it shows that ISIL is an agile and adaptive adversary. CENTCOM and the Iraqis have learned from this setback, and are adjusting the implementation of the strategy accordingly. If confirmed, I'll review the military campaign to make sure it will allow the non-military lines of effort the time and space they need to succeed. This will be a long campaign.

What is your assessment of the coalition air campaign in Iraq and Syria and what adjustments, if any, do you think need to be made?

The Coalition air campaign is making some progress toward degrading ISIL's military capabilities and disrupting key ISIL enablers like oil production and communications. These efforts limit ISIL's freedom of movement, constrain its ability to recruit and reinforce its fighters, and impede its command and control. Coalition air support has enabled some key achievements for local forces, including ISF efforts to clear Tikrit and the recent success of anti-ISIL forces who took control of Tal Abyad. The air campaign is creating time and space for our ongoing diplomatic and political efforts and the development of credible ground partners in Iraq and Syria.

If confirmed, I will consult with commanders on the ground and make recommendations on how to improve our effectiveness.

What is your assessment of the capabilities of the Iraqi security forces to respond to the threat posed by ISIL and other security challenges?

Our strategy is dependent upon having a trained, capable, and motivated partner on the ground. We have seen that with effective training, equipping, command and control, and Coalition air support, Iraqi and Kurdish forces can fight and achieve success against ISIL. However, it will take time to repair the damage caused by sectarian policies and corrosive leadership and to build the capability and capacity of our Iraqi partners on the ground. If confirmed, one of my first trips will be to Iraq to assess the current situation for myself.

What lessons do you assess need to be taken from the fighting in Tikrit in March and April of this year?

We learned that Iraqi forces supported by Coalition air power have the potential to achieve success against ISIL. Iraqi leaders learned that Iranian support comes with conditions, and that there is no substitute for U.S. power.

Does the current troop limitation of 3,100 give U.S. commanders, in conjunction with Iraqi security forces, Kurdish Peshmerga, tribal and local security forces, and coalition partners, in Iraq enough capability to successfully degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL?

I think our troop levels, including the recent addition of another 450 troops in al Taqqadum, is sufficient for us to advance the strategy's two military lines of effort in the near term. However, as conditions change on the ground, it may become necessary to adjust how we implement the military campaign. In the long term, the success of our advisory forces' efforts must be matched

by the commitment and capacity of credible Iraqi ground partners in order to degrade ISIL. Our Iraqi partners must own this fight, and we must continue to enable their forces.

What do you see as the principle role or roles of the Office of Security Cooperation within the U.S. Embassy in Iraq?

The Office of Security Cooperation is the Department's primary interlocutor for traditional security assistance and cooperation, in support of the U.S. Embassy. OSC-I, along with the Foreign Military Sales program, enables military programs to enhance the professionalization of the Iraqi Security Forces.

What is your assessment of the success of the current strategy against ISIL?

We are only in month nine of a long campaign, but we have seen that well-led and determined Iraqi forces supported by Coalition air power potentially can have success against ISIL. Iraqi and Kurdish forces in Iraq and Syria have repelled ISIL advances in several towns, halted their advances following large-scale attacks, and cleared and secured lines of communication, which disrupts ISIL's ability to replenish combat power and supplies.

Militarily, we are making moderate progress. ISIL has lost ground overall since the beginning our campaign. However, the current strategy depends on the development of reliable ground partners and on progress toward inclusive political systems in Iraq and Syria. If we get an indication that the other lines of effort cannot make the necessary progress, we should re-examine the strategy. Any enduring solution to the challenge that ISIL and other VEOs pose requires a generational effort, and our military efforts must be part of a whole of government approach.

Do you assess that the training and equipping of Syrian opposition fighters by the United States and coalition partners under section 1209 of the FY2015 NDAA will produce enough fighters to make a strategic difference on the battlefield in Syria?

The outcome of the T&E program remains to be seen, but we face significant challenges in recruiting and vetting suitable volunteers at the scale necessary to have strategic effects. If confirmed, I plan to visit the region and assess our approach in Syria to develop a better understanding of this immensely complex and challenging situation.

In your view, what military support, if any, will the Syrian opposition fighters who receive support under section 1209 of the FY2015 NDAA need from the United States and coalition partners when they return to Syria?

We will provide equipment, such as basic military gear, some mobility assets in the form of trucks and vehicles, and small arms and ammunition so that they can better defend themselves. The United States is committed to the success of the personnel we train, and we have legal and ethical responsibilities to support them. We are still considering the full complement of assistance we might provide to the T&E forces.

What are the lessons learned from the drawdown and post-combat operations in Iraq that should be applied to the drawdown and post-combat operations in Afghanistan?

Iraq demonstrated that decisions about the drawdown and post-combat operations in Afghanistan should be based on conditions on the ground, with the flexibility to make adjustments as those conditions evolve. In addition, the drawdown from Iraq shows that whole-of-government cooperation is required to sustain security gains. We learned that U.S. forces can only mitigate the effects of security threats that are fueled by underlying political or sectarian problems. Ultimately, it is critical to have credible and capable local partners.

Afghanistan Campaign

What is your assessment of the progress of the Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan?

The initial forward momentum of the Resolute Support mission has been stymied by delays in forming the full new 25-member Afghan cabinet. In general, the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) are better trained and equipped than insurgent forces, and continue to demonstrate tactical proficiency as they work together across the security pillars. The ANDSF's most critical gaps remain in aviation, intelligence, and special operations, all linked to the ANDSF's targeting capability. These gaps will endure for some time, even with the addition of key enablers. RS advisors are also working to address developmental shortfalls in the areas of logistics, medical support, and counter-IED exploitation.

In May of 2014 President Obama said "...by the end of 2016, our military will draw down to a normal embassy presence in Kabul..."

What is your understanding of what military forces comprise a "normal embassy presence"?

A normal embassy presence will have counter-terrorism and security operation components; it will consist of a Defense Attaché Office, an Office of Security Cooperation, and a special operations element. A deliberate and measured transfer of enduring security cooperation activities is required to maintain continuity of ANDSF development and maintain our relationship with Afghanistan as an enduring counter-terrorism partner. Planning for this presence is underway at CENTCOM and its size will depend upon factors such as security force assistance objectives, ANDSF capabilities, Afghan government requests, and force protection concerns.

What lessons should we learn from the experience of a calendar-based drawdown of U.S. troops in Iraq as applied to the drawdown of U.S. and international troops in Afghanistan?

We have learned that transitions must be conducted in a manner that properly balances our end state with conditions on the ground.

If confirmed, are there changes you would recommend to the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan?

I support our overall approach in Afghanistan. If confirmed, I will visit Afghanistan to make an assessment of our current progress toward achieving our objectives. That visit will inform any recommendations I may make for changes to our strategy.

What is the effect of ISIL operations in Afghanistan and/or coordination with the Taliban for the U.S. strategy for Afghanistan?

ISIL is a competitor with other groups that have traditionally operated in Afghanistan, which may result in increased violence between the various extremist groups. The Taliban has declared that it will not allow ISIL in Afghanistan. The coalition and the Afghan government are closely watching ISIL's attempt to expand its reach to Afghanistan and Pakistan. The ANDSF, National Directorate of Security (NDS), and Afghan political leadership are also collaborating closely to prevent this threat from expanding.

If security conditions on the ground in Afghanistan degrade in 2016, would you recommend to the President revisions to the size and pace of the drawdown plan in order to adequately address those security conditions?

Yes.

Should the authorities granted to the commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan take into account the security conditions on the ground faced by U.S. troops?

Yes.

Afghanistan National Security Forces

What is your assessment of the progress in developing a professional and effective Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF) and what recommendations would you make to address challenges to building ANSF capacity?

My assessment is that the ANDSF are strong at the tactical level and still needs assistance at the corps and institutional levels. They still need help in developing the systems and processes necessary to run a modern, professional army and police force. They also need sustained support in addressing capability gaps in aviation, intelligence, sustainment, and special operations. To address these gaps, our advisory mission and mentorship will continue to be vital. Our advisors are at the security ministries, at the army corps level, and in the police zones – those remain our main efforts.

Do you support plans for building and sustaining the ANSF at 352,000 personnel and, if so, what factors influence your recommendation about the proper size of the ANSF?

Yes, for the near-term the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) are the right size and possess the right capabilities to address the security situation in Afghanistan. Long-term, we will need to evaluate and assess the threat and security situation,

and work with the Afghan government to right size the force to a level consistent with its long term security requirements and funding limitations.

Reconciliation

In your view, what should be the role of the United States in any reconciliation negotiations with the Afghan Taliban and other insurgent groups?

The United States should continue to support a political process that enables Afghans to sit down with other Afghans to determine the future of their country.

What additional steps, if any, should the United States take to advance the reconciliation process?

We remain strongly supportive of an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned reconciliation process whereby the Taliban and the Afghan government engage in talks toward a settlement to resolve the conflict in Afghanistan.

In your view, what should be the role of Afghanistan's neighbors, in particular Pakistan, in the reconciliation process?

We believe regional partners have an important role to play in ensuring a stable, democratic Afghanistan. We have encouraged stronger ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan and have been pleased with their recent bilateral efforts to address their security concerns.

An audit report by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) raised concerns about Department of Defense plans to purchase PC-12 aircraft and Mi-17 helicopters for the Afghan Special Mission Wing and recommended suspending the contracts for these purchases. The Department of Defense and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Training Mission—Afghanistan/ Combined Security Transition Command—Afghanistan did not concur with the SIGAR's recommendation on contract suspension.

What is your assessment of current plans to equip the Afghan Special Mission Wing with PC-12 aircraft and Mi-17 helicopters?

These programs are long term and are moving in the right direction and will have a significant impact on ANDSF's ability to provide security to Afghanistan. If confirmed, however, I will assess all options to support the Special Mission Wing (SMW). With the ANDSF assuming full responsibility for security, and an associated significant decrease in coalition air support, the demand for air support in the form of ISR, airlift, aerial fires, and CASEVAC is likely to increase significantly.

What is your assessment of the impact to effectiveness of current Afghanistan counterterrorism and counterinsurgency efforts of the PC-12 aircraft and Mi-17 helicopters?

Both the Mi-17s and PC-12s have enhanced the ANDSF's capability to conduct counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations. The Mi-17 fleet remains the workhorse of the Afghan Air Force (AAF), conducting personnel transport, CASEVAC, resupply, close combat attack, aerial escort, and armed overwatch missions. The SMW uses its Mi-17 helicopters to provide Afghan special forces with medium-lift air assault, personnel transport, CASEVAC, and quick reaction force capabilities. The PC-12 aircraft is Afghanistan's first fixed-wing ISR platform, and it has expanded the SMW's capability to locate and identify threats using enhanced video and other intelligence collection capabilities. These platforms have improved the SMW's ability to conduct intelligence preparation of the battlefield, provide mission overwatch during the infiltration and exfiltration of forces, and gain access to areas prohibitive of vehicular traffic. Both of these aircraft provide the ANDSF with increased capabilities to overmatch the Taliban.

U.S. Strategic Relationship with Pakistan

What in your view are the key U.S. strategic interests with regard to Pakistan?

The key U.S. strategic interests in Pakistan are 1) preventing al-Qaeda's resurgence in Afghanistan and Pakistan to limit its ability to attack the homeland, 2) preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology, and 3) promoting regional stability (including a peaceful outcome in Afghanistan).

What would you consider to be areas of shared strategic interest between the United States and Pakistan?

The United States and Pakistan share the common strategic interests of defeating al-Qaeda and other extremist threats, ensuring regional stability, and furthering the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology. We also share the goal of a stable peaceful Afghanistan.

In what areas do you see U.S. and Pakistani strategic interests diverging?

Areas of divergent interest with Pakistan include our views on the use of proxies and the importance of a positive and stable Pakistan-India relationship.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend for U.S. relations with Pakistan, particularly in terms of military-to-military relations?

The U.S.-Pakistan relationship is fundamental to our vital national security interests. We will need to continue cooperation with Pakistan to defeat al-Qaeda, support Pakistan's stability, and achieve a lasting peace in Afghanistan. If confirmed, I would continue to evaluate the specifics of the relationship based on my assessment of our shared interests with Pakistan and its effectiveness of achieving our shared goals. I will continue to evaluate the efficacy of the mil-to-mil cooperation we have with Pakistan and identify ways in which we can work with Pakistan to enhance regional stability.

U.S. Assistance to Pakistan

Since 2001, the United States has provided significant military assistance to Pakistan. In addition, the United States has provided significant funds to reimburse Pakistan for the costs associated with military operations conducted by Pakistan along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

As U.S. troop presence draws down in Afghanistan, what recommendations, if any, would you have regarding the reduction or cessation of Coalition Support Funds that currently reimburse Pakistan for military support in connection with U.S. military operations in Afghanistan?

Pakistan has been, and remains, the largest recipient of CSF. It is in our interests to have an enduring partnership with Pakistan. As our mission in Afghanistan transitions, there remains a need for our mutually beneficial relationship. If confirmed, I will provide military advice and recommendations regarding our support for their operations based on my assessment of Pakistan's effectiveness and the larger strategic environment. .

In your view, how effective has the assistance and other support that the United States has provided to Pakistan been in promoting U.S. interests?

Our assistance has enabled operations in Afghanistan and operations against al-Qaeda and helped secure our strategic interests. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Pakistani military to ensure that they continue to do more.

Do you support conditioning U.S. assistance and other support to Pakistan on Pakistan's continued cooperation in areas of mutual security interest?

Yes.

What is your assessment of the current relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan?

The current relationship appears to have improved since the election of President Ghani. It is clear that security in Afghanistan and Pakistan are linked. Both sides are working to ensure that concrete steps are taken to enhance their bi-lateral relationship and cooperation.

What is your assessment of Pakistan's cooperation with the United States in counterterrorism operations against militant extremist groups located in Pakistan?

Pakistan has cooperated with the United States in our operations against al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations. Their actions in North Waziristan and other areas of western Pakistan have disrupted groups that are a threat to U.S. personnel and objectives in Afghanistan. We will continue to work with Pakistan to do more.

What is your assessment of Pakistan's efforts to maintain transit and provide security along the ground lines of communication (GLOCs) through Pakistan?

The GLOCs are open and Pakistan's support has been commendable. We currently rely on

multiple lines of communication, to include the Pakistani GLOCs to support operations in Afghanistan and do not foresee any issues that would constrain our ability to operate.

What is your assessment of Pakistan's efforts to counter the threat improvised explosive devices, including efforts to attack the network, go after known precursors and explosive materials?

Pakistan recognizes that improvised explosive devices (IED) are a shared problem. They suffer significant casualties within Pakistan due to IED attacks. We are making progress in the area of counter-IED cooperation, and Pakistan is taking demonstrable steps to disrupt the IED network, to include placing new restrictions on the distribution of precursor materials and hosting regional discussions to discuss the IED problem with international partners. More progress needs to be made though, particularly as it relates to interdicting explosives through increased border security.

Iran

What is your assessment of the military and political threat posed by Iran?

Iran, the foremost state sponsor of terrorism, is both a regional and global security threat. Iran attempts to export its influence and protect its governing regime through support for proxy terrorist groups like Hezbollah; weapons trafficking; ballistic missile procurement and advancement; and maritime assets that threaten and harass international waters in the Straits of Hormuz and beyond.

What is your assessment of the threat of Iran's influence in Iraq to U.S. interests?

Iran's goals and actions are inconsistent with our interests. Iran's goal in Iraq is not to build an inclusive government; rather, it is to create a compliant, Shia-dominated buffer state.

In your view, what are the risks, if any, associated with reducing U. S. presence in the Middle East with respect to the threat posed by Iran?

Reducing our presence in the Middle East could leave space for Iran to pursue its hegemonic goals. U.S. military presence gives credibility to the military options in the Middle East that both demonstrate our commitment to our regional security partners and deters Iran from employing its large conventional army or ballistic missiles and from interdicting the Strait of Hormuz. Nothing we say can match the message we deliver with our military presence or lack thereof.

Negotiations on the Iran nuclear program have been extended with a deadline now of June 30, 2015 to finalize a comprehensive agreement. What are the elements of a nuclear agreement with Iran that you consider critical to ensuring that it is a "good" deal for U.S. national security interests?

A good deal rolls back Iran's nuclear program; provides the international community with unprecedented access and transparency into Iran's nuclear facilities and nuclear supply chain; and preserves critical sanctions on conventional arms and ballistic missiles. A finalized deal

based on the 02 April political framework satisfies all three of these criteria and clearly makes it more difficult for Iran to move towards a nuclear weapon.

If Iran is allowed to maintain a monitored and limited uranium enrichment program, do you believe that other states in the region may seek to develop enrichment programs of their own and why or why not?

Any response I would make at this time would be speculation. If confirmed, I will make an assessment based on intelligence and my engagement with regional partners.

What role, if any, should DOD play in countering Iran's support of international terrorism?

The DoD's role is to deter and counter Iran's support of international terrorism and support our interagency partners' efforts. We deter Iran through our own responsive military presence in the Middle East and through defensive infrastructure and tactics for both ourselves and our allies. To counter Iran, we enable our partner nations through counter terrorism training and equipment sales, multi-national exercises, and information sharing, which when combined help to both weaken terrorist groups and Iran's ability to support them.

The 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force

What is your understanding of the scope and duration of the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), including with respect to military operations against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant?

The United States is in an armed conflict against al-Qaeda and its associated forces. An associated force is defined as a group that (1) is an organized armed group that has entered the fight alongside al-Qaeda and, (2) is a co-belligerent with al-Qaeda in hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners. These are the same terrorist threats that carried out the grievous attacks on U.S. soil on September 11, 2001, and the AUMF still serves as the legal basis under U.S. domestic law to employ military force against these threats. Since September 2014, the Administration has stated that the 2001 AUMF is interpreted to permit the use of military force against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). ISIL, previously known as al-Qaeda in Iraq, has been subject to the use of force under the AUMF since at least 2004, when it entered the conflict against the United States and joined Usama bin Laden's al-Qaeda organization. While there are tensions between ISIL and parts of bin Laden's al-Qaeda network, ISIL views itself as the true executor of bin Laden's legacy of global jihad, and continues its violent campaign against the United States, its citizens, and interests.

What factors govern Department of Defense determinations as to where the use of force is authorized, and against whom, pursuant to the AUMF?

The May, 2013 Presidential Policy Guidance (PPG) governs direct action against terrorist targets located outside the United States and areas of active hostilities. This document establishes the procedures necessary for the DoD to conduct these types of military operations. The PPG and its

underlying operational plans provide clear standards and procedures for DoD concerning where, how, and against whom military force may be used. The DoD meticulously adheres to the formalized procedures of the PPG to ensure that decisions in these counter-terrorist operations are informed by sound military and policy advice, and are based the most up-to-date intelligence and the expertise of our national security professionals. Senior commanders, with the advice of their legal counsel, carefully review all operations for compliance with U.S. and international law before a decision is rendered by the Secretary of Defense or the President.

Are you satisfied that current legal authorities, including the AUMF, enable the Department to carry out counterterrorism operations and activities at the level that you believe to be necessary and appropriate?

In its current form, the 2001 AUMF provides the necessary and sufficient authorities to counter al-Qaeda and its associated forces. Furthermore, the 2001 AUMF and the 2002 AUMF provide statutory authority for the current operations against ISIL.

Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)

What is your assessment of the threat posed by ISIL to the U.S. homeland, U.S. interests overseas, and Western interests more broadly?

ISIL is currently focused on strengthening and expanding its self-declared caliphate in Iraq and Syria and, to a lesser extent, on strengthening its affiliates in Libya and Nigeria. If ISIL were to refocus its efforts on attacking the U.S. homeland or other Western countries, it would have access to a pool of operatives from which to draw. ISIL already poses a threat to the U.S. and Western interests abroad, particularly U.S. persons traveling in the region.

How would you describe the U.S. strategy to counter ISIL?

We have a whole-of-government strategy. The “ends” are defined as degrading ISIL over the course of 36 months and ultimately defeating ISIL, in coordination with the international coalition. Nine lines of effort across the USG constitute the “ways” in which we will achieve that objective, including supporting effective governance in Iraq, disrupting ISIL’s finances, disrupting the flow of foreign fighters, and protecting the homeland. DoD is responsible for two of those lines of effort: to deny ISIL safe haven and to build partner capacity. The Department’s “means” include: kinetic strike operations, advise/assist operations, training/equipping efforts, and our military posture in the region.

The military campaign, as one component of the broader strategy, provides time and space for progress along the other lines of effort, particularly the development of inclusive and legitimate governments in Iraq and Syria.

What is your assessment of the effectiveness of that strategy in achieving its objectives?

We are seeing some military progress, but it is early in the campaign. In both Iraq and Syria, ISIL’s ability to mass and maneuver forces is degraded, its leadership cells are pressured, and its

command-and-control and supply lines are being severed. We have reduced ISIL's ability to produce, process, and transport oil. However, challenges remain, and this will be a long campaign.

The current strategy depends on the development of reliable ground partners and on progress toward inclusive political systems in Iraq and Syria. If we get an indication that the other lines of effort cannot make the necessary progress, we should re-examine the strategy. Any enduring solution to the challenge that ISIL and other VEOs pose requires a generational effort, and our military efforts must be part of a whole of government approach.

What do you assess to be the greatest impediments to implementing the strategy to counter ISIL?

Poor governance and sectarian divisions create the greatest challenge to our efforts to counter ISIL. Political systems that foster inclusive and legitimate governance remain the most likely path to enduring stability and security in Iraq and Syria over the long-term.

What modifications, if any, would you recommend be made to the strategy to counter ISIL?

If confirmed, I will assess the military lines of effort to ensure that they are providing the time and space necessary for the non-military lines of effort to succeed. I also will evaluate the efficacy of our efforts to train and equip security forces in Iraq and Syria, and assess whether we can make adjustments to increase their effectiveness. A final area I would examine is whether and how we would need to adjust our efforts to respond to ISIL's shifting geographic reach to confront ISIL not only where it exists today, but also where it is most likely to take root in the future. As with any strategy, I expect that continued assessment and refinement of both the strategy and its implementation is ongoing. As a key component of the overall strategy, we will continue to adjust implementation of the military campaign based on changes on the ground in Iraq and Syria.

Al Qaeda

What is your assessment of the threat posed by al Qaeda and its affiliates to the U.S. homeland, U.S. interests overseas, and Western interests more broadly? Which affiliates are of most concern?

Al-Qaeda and its affiliates continue to pose a threat to the U.S. homeland, U.S. interests overseas, and Western interests more broadly despite ongoing counterterrorism (CT) pressure and competition from ISIL. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) remains the affiliate of most concern.

Yemen and al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

What are the U.S. national security interests in Yemen?

We seek a stable Yemen, with an inclusive and legitimate government, that is willing and able to confront violent extremist organizations. Continued instability in Yemen not only imposes significant humanitarian costs on civilians, it also enables AQAP to thrive – a group which poses a direct threat to the U.S. homeland – and allows groups to threaten freedom of navigation in the Gulf, particularly in the Bab al Mandeb Strait.

What is your assessment of U.S. strategy in Yemen to date?

Our current U.S. strategy in Yemen is founded upon three related pillars: (1) support political transition, namely National Dialogue, Constitutional reform, and Elections, (2) provide continued economic and humanitarian assistance, and (3) lay the groundwork for security reform, specifically counterterrorism capacity building, border security, and critical infrastructure protection. The first step is for political parties to return to negotiations and establish a legitimate government. That would enable the United States to resume cooperation with the Yemen government in the future, particularly on countering AQAP. At this time we are challenged to conduct effective CT operations.

What are the implications of recent events in Yemen for U.S. counterterrorism policy both in Yemen and globally?

The current turmoil in Yemen has hampered DoD CT operations against AQAP. Although, the United States still maintains a diminished capability. Prior to a Houthi takeover, DoD worked with the Republic of Yemen Government (RoYG) military units to combat the significant terrorist threat to the U.S. homeland emanating from AQAP. However, security concerns in Yemen led to an evacuation of all U.S. personnel, hindering efforts to combat AQAP. AQAP continues to pose an immediate security threat to Yemen, the region, and the United States. When the political and security situation allows, DoD will resume our counterterrorism partnership with the Yemeni government

What is your assessment of the effectiveness and capability of coalition operations led by Saudi Arabia in Yemen?

Coalition airstrikes are slowing Houthi expansion in Yemen. Saudi-led Coalition operations can be sustained at least in the near term. However, these operations have not compelled the Houthis to withdraw from cities they captured earlier this year nor deterred Houthi attacks along the Saudi border.

Somalia and Al Shabab

What is your assessment of the threat posed by Al Shabab?

Al-Shabaab is primarily a threat in Somalia, Kenya, and other regional countries. It specifically targets countries providing forces to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) as well as government facilities and Western targets in and around Mogadishu.

In your view, does al Shabab pose a threat to the United States and/or western interests

outside of its immediate operational area?

Al-Shabaab does not pose a direct threat to the U.S. homeland or Europe at present. Nevertheless, the group poses an ongoing threat to U.S., Western, and other allied interests in East Africa, to include Somalia and Kenya.

What is your understanding of the current U.S. strategy in Somalia and the role of DOD in that strategy?

The current U.S. strategy on Somalia that was put in place in May 2014 focuses on two main security lines of effort: (1) Continued support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), to stabilize the short term security situation and (2) Promoting Somali security sector reform by expanded support to the Somali National Army, to advance longer term security and stabilization. DOD had an integral role in developing the strategy and we are playing an important role in its execution. These security efforts promote the stabilization of the political and economic situation which allows for the creation of responsive and functioning governmental institutions at the federal, regional, and local level.

What role should DOD play in building the capacity of the Somali national military forces?

DOD continues to work closely with our colleagues at the Department of State to build the capacity of Somali security services that are loyal to the federal government and are composed of a mixture of clans and regional backgrounds. We intend to increase our support to the Somali National Army in the next year, with programs designed to provide equipment and logistics capacity to units of the Somali National Army to support their continued efforts alongside the African Union Mission in Somalia to defeat al-Shabaab.

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)

What is your assessment of the threat posed by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)?

Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and affiliated groups pose a local and regional threat. AQIM will likely continue to target Malian government and military targets and Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization in Mali (MINUSMA) forces and facilities, as well as pursue kidnapping for ransom tactics in Niger and Mali.

In your view, does AQIM pose a threat to the United States and/or western interests outside of its immediate operational area?

No, AQIM does not presently pose a direct threat to the U.S. homeland. We see no indications the group views conducting attacks outside North Africa and the Sahel as a priority in the near term.

What capacity has AQIM demonstrated to plan and carry out actions threatening U.S. interests?

AQIM has the capacity to threaten U.S. and Western interests within North and West Africa, where it has conducted or attempted attacks in several countries (i.e. Mali, Niger, Algeria, and Mauritania). The group will likely continue to bolster its ties to al-Qaeda-associated terrorist groups throughout the region to influence and support attack planning.

In your view, what has been the impact of the recent expansion of AQIM's area of operations in northern Mali on the group's capacities and aims?

AQIM's expansion in northern Mali has increased its freedom of movement and enabled it to institute its own severe brand of sharia in territories it controls, implementing policies that are particularly brutal for women. AQIM remains capable of conducting small-scale improvised explosive device (IED), indirect fire (IDF), and mortar attacks against Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSMA) and Malian interests in the north.

Libya

What is your assessment of the current security situation in Libya?

Libya's civil war has created a security vacuum and the country will remain volatile in 2015. Two rival governments are seeking to establish legitimacy, and their aligned militias are vying for control of territory and key infrastructure. ISIL also has declared the country part of its caliphate, and ISIL-aligned extremists are trying to institute sharia in parts of the country.

What is your understanding of the U.S. strategy with regards to Libya and the role of DOD in that strategy?

The United States maintains a national interest in stabilizing Libya and preventing terrorists from using it as a safe haven. The United States and our allies are supporting the United Nations-led efforts to help the warring Libyan factions reach a political solution by forming a national unity government. Currently, the role of DoD in the U.S. strategy is to leverage military relationships with regional partners to encourage support for a political solution. A unity government containing both secularists and Islamists provides the best the long term partner to counter VEOs in Libya. Should diplomatic efforts to form a unity government succeed, the United States will be prepared to revisit security assistance efforts for the legitimate Libyan security forces.

How would you assess its effectiveness in achieving its objectives?

Political reconciliation has yet to materialize. Libya's political landscape is severely fragmented and the country is in the midst of civil war. The UN-led negotiations have so far failed to gain traction, however negotiators remain optimistic that an agreement can be reached and a unity government formed.

What do you assess to be the greatest impediments to implementing the strategy and protecting U.S. interests in Libya?

The greatest impediment to advancing U.S. goals in Libya is the severe fragmentation of Libya's

political and security landscape, which has significantly complicated the negotiations. Libya has disintegrated into a complex mix of rival political factions, tribes, militias and other armed groups, interspersed with local and foreign extremists. Competition between these rival groups poses a challenge to building enduring political consensus, while violent extremists exploit this window of uncertainty to compromise regional stability.

North Africa

In recent years, there has been a growth of terrorist networks, capabilities, operations, and safe havens throughout North and East Africa, including groups that have the intention to target U.S. and Western interests. In the face of growing instability and threats, the U.S. counterterrorism effort in the region has been described as an “economy of force” effort.

Do you agree with that characterization of the situation in North and East Africa and the U.S. counterterrorism efforts to combat the related threats?

North and East Africa are important areas in our fight against extremists. Multiple different terrorist networks are indeed active in North and East Africa, as well as West Africa. These networks have primarily local ambitions – seeking increased influence over resources or territory, and threatening the stability of our regional partners and safety of civilians on the ground. Some have, at times, also demonstrated a willingness to target U.S. and Western interests. AFRICOM is continually working to identify, prioritize and target these networks, in partnership with host nations.

What is your assessment of the current U.S. counterterrorism strategy in the region? In your view, is the U.S. military allocating adequate resources to effectively address the terrorism threat in the region?

DOD assets have been allocated based on the level of threat and the potential for collaboration with partner nations. Based on that criteria, our current allocation of resources appears appropriate, however if confirmed, I will consider whether additional investments are required in order to stem the growth of violent extremism in the region.

General Rodriguez noted in his March 2014 testimony that “North Africa is a significant source of foreign fighters in the current conflict in Syria.” What is your understanding of the foreign fighter flow from North Africa to the conflict in Syria and Iraq?

North Africans make up the vast majority of foreign fighters entering Iraq and Syria; however, increasingly many are choosing to remain in North Africa, and join the ISIL affiliate in Libya. Tunisians provide the largest contingent of foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq, followed by Morocco, Libya, and Algeria.

In your view, is it likely that many of these fighters will eventually return home from Syria and Iraq to North Africa and continue their fight against regional governments?

Yes, it is likely that North African foreign fighters will eventually return home to conduct attacks

in their home countries; however, it is currently unknown if these individuals would be tasked by ISIL to conduct attacks or if it would be of their own accord.

Russia

Crimea was formally annexed when President Putin signed a bill to absorb Crimea into the Russian Federation on March 18, 2014, and Russia continues to fuel instability in eastern Ukraine despite a ceasefire agreed to in September 2014.

How effective do you assess the sanctions of the U.S. and the European Union have been in deterring additional aggression by Russia?

Sanctions alone are unlikely to deter future Russian aggression; deterring combined Russian-separatists actions against Ukraine requires a whole of government approach that is aligned with our NATO allies and friends in Europe. However, U.S. and EU sanctions have had an impact on Russia's economy and send a clear signal to Moscow that aggression against Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity entails costs.

What other specific U.S. actions helped to deter additional Russian aggression in Eastern Europe?

Congressional support for the European Reassurance Initiative has enabled DoD, via Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE (OAR), to conduct military exercises and training on land, in the air and at sea, while sustaining a rotational presence across Europe; and increase the responsiveness of U.S. forces to reinforce NATO by pursuing the prepositioning of equipment and enhancing reception facilities in Europe. Our bilateral efforts as well as our continued support of NATO adaptation measures all support the goal of deterring additional Russian aggression. Senior defense and diplomatic officials travel and consult with our allies and friends to affirm Alliance resolve and bolster approaches to deter Russian aggression.

What additional steps, if any, are likely to prove most effective at deterring Russian aggression in Eastern Europe?

If confirmed, I will continue to evaluate current measures and take a close look at potential adjustments and adaptations. Of key concern to me is wisely channeling US military efforts and resources to ensure our allies and partners are militarily capable and interoperable.

Are you concerned that Moldova and Georgia may be at a heightened state of vulnerability given Russian willingness to take aggressive action in Ukraine?

Yes. Russia has demonstrated both in Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine today its willingness to use force, violate sovereignty, and exploit the vulnerabilities of these fragile democracies to achieve its strategic objectives. Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine all contain Russian occupied

separatist regions that the Kremlin exploits for its own purposes.

Russian tactics in eastern Ukraine have been called “hybrid” and combine hard power with soft power, including elements such as lethal security assistance to separatists, the use of special operations forces, extensive information operations, withholding energy supplies and economic pressure.

If confirmed, what steps would you recommend as part of a strategy to counter this “hybrid” approach?

We need to remain alert to Russian strategic intent and capabilities – and their integration of military and non-military tools in the gray space. Most importantly, we must lead in order to maintain Trans-Atlantic resolve to resist Russian coercion now and in the future. I will continue to emphasize efforts and investments that enable our allies and friends to defend against a range of threats – and to do so collectively. Increasingly, there is a non-military dimension to security that requires whole-of-government and multinational approaches. Military power is just one aspect of these approaches.

In light of Russia’s actions in 2014, what do you believe are appropriate objectives for U.S.-Russian security relations?

Cooperation with Russia in areas of mutual interest within the military sphere remains possible if Russia assumes the role of a responsible international actor moving forward, not isolated and moving backward as it is today. If confirmed, my intent for the military-to-military relationship is to reduce the chances of miscalculation or escalation through professional, candid communications and behaviors.

NATO Alliance

The reemergence of an aggressive Russia has resulted in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) developing the Readiness Action Plan that NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg called “the biggest reinforcement of our collective defense since the end of the Cold War.” NATO also continues to be central to our coalition operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere, even as many NATO members have significantly reduced their national defense budgets in response to economic and fiscal pressures.

How important is the NATO alliance to U.S. national security interests?

The Alliance is essential to our national security. The bedrock of NATO’s collective defense obligation is Article 5, but NATO’s importance extends beyond Article 5. NATO has been fundamental to sustaining Trans-Atlantic unity, prosperity and security. This has enabled Europe to contribute to security and prosperity on a global basis. The Alliance maintains a persistent air, land, and maritime presence in and around the territories of our European allies, demonstrating a commitment to defend its territory against any aggression. NATO is a fundamental contributor to international order. NATO conducts military operations in Kosovo, Afghanistan, the

Mediterranean Sea, and off the Horn of Africa to support stability to those areas. NATO also assists nations in North Africa and the Middle East to develop local capabilities to stem the growing instability and transnational threats in and around their countries and to prevent those threats from spreading to Europe or threatening the U.S. homeland.

In light of the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine, what do you see as the major strategic objectives of the NATO Alliance in the coming years and what are the greatest challenges in meeting those objectives?

NATO must affirm Trans-Atlantic Unity by adapting its collective defense against state and non-state threats across a broad spectrum. NATO’s unity is fundamental, and that requires us to be attentive to the challenges confronting all members. The Russian Federation’s aggression in Ukraine consolidated attention on the Alliance’s clearest responsibility, which is to protect and defend its territory and populations against attack, per Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. NATO must also remain prepared and continue to undertake its other “core tasks” of crisis management and cooperative security. Violent extremist non-state actors and Russian coercion and subversion in “gray space” test the Alliance’s ability to adapt Article V to these challenges. As Allies, we must thereby ensure that the Defense Investment Pledge at the 2014 Wales Summit meets these challenges and threats.

What do you see as the proper role, if any, for NATO in addressing the threat posed by ISIL and in addressing the problem of illegal immigration across the Mediterranean Sea?

A unified Europe can and must do more than one thing at a time. But NATO must be judicious about prioritizing its engagement given limited resources to address the threats and challenges to the southern and eastern flanks.

Information sharing is a useful contribution NATO could make to counter ISIL and/or to support Mediterranean Allies and friends managing border security and immigration challenges..

The concept of defense cooperation among NATO members was emphasized at the NATO summit in Chicago in May 2012.

What areas or projects would you recommend, if confirmed, that NATO nations cooperate in to improve NATO alliance capabilities?

Cooperative efforts among Allies on developing capabilities have become increasingly important in light of the worldwide challenges and the fiscal straits facing many Allied nations. If confirmed, I would use my office to influence Allies to implement Wales Summit pledge to move toward the two percent defense spending target as soon as possible. In doing so, I would encourage Allies to focus their resources on specific Alliance capability needs, such as developing command and control and joint intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and maintaining and improving readiness and interoperability.

Under what conditions, if any, would you envision further enlargement of NATO in the coming years?

Enlargement should be reserved for those candidates deemed ready to accept the obligations of membership, who are prepared to make the necessary reforms that further NATO's principles, and who contribute to the unity and security of the Alliance.

Turkey continues to be a gateway for foreign fighters proceeding to and from Syria and Iraq.

What steps would you recommend to encourage Turkey to continue to address the threat posed by foreign fighters proceeding to and returning from Syria and Iraq?

Turkey acknowledges the foreign terrorist fighter threat and is taking steps to bolster its law enforcement and border security efforts, including increased monitoring, border security, and counter-illicit finance measures. If confirmed, I would support the Department's contributions to interagency support of Turkish enhance border security enhancements, to include strengthening critical information sharing with the Turkish military. Moreover, I would support international efforts to help source countries identify and disrupt foreign fighter transit through Turkey.

At the NATO Summit in Wales in 2014, NATO leaders declared their "aim to move towards the 2% guideline [of GDP for defense spending] within a decade with a view to meeting their NATO Capability Targets and filling NATO's capability shortfalls."

In your view, what impact have national defense budget cuts had on the capabilities of the NATO alliance, and what do you believe needs to be done to address any capability shortfalls?

National defense budget cuts and fiscal austerity measures by our Allies have limited their ability to address long standing Alliance capability shortfalls such as in joint intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. These capabilities can be costly, but we need to ensure that in the future the United States is not the only Ally with such capabilities. The rhetoric of the Wales Defense Investment Pledge must be matched by real resources to build capability. The United States is committed to working with Allies on defense planning to ensure they maintain or develop the specific capabilities that the Alliance is lacking.

What are the greatest military capability shortfalls that you see in the NATO alliance?

The most significant shortfalls that I see in the Alliance are: cyber defense, defense institution-building, enabling capabilities such as joint intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, air-to-air refueling and strategic lift. The Alliance places heavy reliance on the United States to provide these limited but high-demand capabilities. Other Allies should be encouraged to develop these capabilities through national and multinational investment.

In light of the reductions in national defense spending by some NATO members, are you concerned that the Alliance will lack critical military capabilities? If so, what steps, if any, would you recommend be taken to address potential shortfalls in Alliance capabilities?

The United States is engaged in political, diplomatic and military channels to address continued reductions in defense investment by our Allies. We are particularly focused on NATO Allies that have been our most reliable partners for managing global security issues and those with the largest Gross Domestic Products. Alliance capability shortfalls will increase as national defense spending decreases. Most Allies have gone as far as they can go in wringing out efficiencies in their defense spending. The key step for addressing capability shortfalls is to arrest the decline in national defense investment and move to meet the Defense Investment Pledge made at the 2014 Wales Summit.

What are the greatest opportunities and challenges that you foresee for NATO in meeting its strategic objectives over the next five years?

The greatest opportunity and challenge are the same: adapting NATO to better meet current and future security challenges while preserving Trans-Atlantic unity. The events in both Europe and the Middle East have provided the catalyst for adapting NATO's political, military and institutional processes and focus. NATO leaders – including our President – have committed to this adaptation which will make NATO more responsive and ready to face, or deter, challenges. Following thru on this adaptation is the greatest opportunity for NATO; gaining the consensus to do this in a focused, proactive manner is the greatest challenge.

In your view, is there a continuing requirement for U.S. nuclear weapons to be deployed in NATO countries?

The 2010 Strategic Concept for the Alliance states NATO will remain a nuclear alliance for as long as nuclear weapons exist. Further, the 2012 NATO Deterrence and Defense Posture Review, the DDPR, concluded NATO's current mix of conventional, nuclear, and missile defense capabilities remains appropriate. I concur with both of these judgments by the Alliance. Finally, in the context of recent Russian behavior, including their development of dual capable intermediate-range missile systems that directly threaten our NATO allies, now is not the time to eliminate a capability that has been an effective centerpiece of Alliance cohesion, resolve and deterrence for decades.

U.S. Force Posture in Europe

The Department of Defense continues to review its force posture in Europe to determine what additional consolidations and reductions are necessary and consistent with U.S. strategic interests.

How would you define the U.S. strategic interests in the European area of responsibility (AOR)?

As the National Security Strategy states, the United States maintains a profound commitment to a Europe that is free, whole, and at peace. According to the National Military Strategy, NATO's collective security guarantees are strategically important for deterring aggression, particularly in light of recent Russian aggression on its periphery.

Do you believe that additional consolidation and reductions of U.S. forces in Europe are consistent with U.S. strategic interests in that AOR given the increase in Russian aggression in the last 15 months?

Yes. The current U.S. footprint in Europe – including the recent changes announced by Secretary Carter – supports garrison operations, training facilities and power projection capabilities for operations inside and outside the AOR. However, the credibility and effectiveness of our response to Russian aggression in the East depend not only on the operational scale and geographic scope of our operations, but also on their longevity. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure the persistent, appropriate level of rotational presence is retained in Europe to effectively assure allies and deter Russian aggression.

U.S. Force Posture in the Asia-Pacific Region

The Department continues the effort to rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific as announced in the January 2012 Strategic Defense Guidance.

Are you satisfied with the rebalance efforts to date?

Yes. I am satisfied with our Rebalance efforts to date. The rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region has resulted in a significant adjustment in U.S. force structure and capabilities. As indicators of our success, we have negotiated new comprehensive force posture and access agreements with key allies and partners to support broader U.S. goals and objectives in the region. We have strengthened our alliances and greatly expanded partnerships with countries like Singapore, Vietnam and India. We have moderated tensions in East and South China Sea maritime disputes and reinforced our position as the security partner of choice for most nations in the region. An added benefit of these strengthened ties is the commitment of military forces and assets of several countries to the anti-ISIL coalition.

What do you see as the U.S. security priorities in the Asia-Pacific region over the next couple of years and what specific capabilities or enhancements are needed in to meet those priorities?

The United States faces a range of challenges in the Asia-Pacific region, including provocations by the DPRK and the growth of its ballistic missile programs; China's development of new technologies intended to prevent open access to the air and maritime domain; widespread natural disasters and transnational threats; and territorial disputes. Going forward, we must prioritize investments in advanced capabilities that are critical for the future operational environment. I will support the ongoing efforts to increase U.S. military presence in the region and invest in and deploy critical advanced capabilities.

I believe we must not only continue to modernize U.S. alliances and partnerships, which provide a critical role in underwriting regional security, but also help grow the ISR, HADR and maritime security/domain awareness capacities of our allies and partners in the region. The Department must continue to enhance U.S. force posture and capabilities and work with China to encourage greater transparency about how it will use its growing military capabilities.

Do the budget cuts and resource constraints associated with sequestration threaten your ability to execute the rebalance to the Pacific?

If we return to sequestration-level cuts in Fiscal Year 2016, we will face serious risks across the board, and may have to reassess the rebalance strategy. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Department and Congress to help solve this pressing problem.

As the United States realigns its forces in the Asia-Pacific Theater, do you believe we have the air and maritime lift required to support the distribution of Marines across North and Southeast Asia?

No. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Services and the U.S. Pacific Command to address this challenge.

Kosovo

Approximately 700 U.S. troops remain in the Balkans as part of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) that first deployed to Kosovo in 1999 and today is comprised of over 4,600 personnel from 30 countries. Spikes in violence in 2011 required the deployment of the NATO Operational Reserve Force battalion of approximately 600 soldiers to bolster KFOR and maintain a secure environment. Progress is required in both the military and political realms before further troop reductions can be made.

What major lines of effort do you think are required to further reduce or eliminate U.S. and NATO presence in Kosovo?

Continued progress in the EU implementation of the April 2013 accord between Serbia and Kosovo will go a long way to stabilizing the Western Balkans and ending Kosovo's ethnic partition thus setting the security conditions appropriate for further reducing or eliminating US and NATO presence in Kosovo.

In your view, can the European Union play a more significant role in Kosovo?

The EU plays a significant role by contributing to the security of Kosovo through its European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX-Kosovo) in addition to ongoing efforts to implement the 2013 Accord. The EULEX mission supports Kosovo on its path to a greater European integration in the rule of law area by investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating sensitive cases using its executive powers as well as by monitoring, mentoring, and advising local counterparts in the police, justice and custom fields to achieve sustainability and EU best practices in Kosovo. The EU's active engagement has helped facilitate political dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo and will continue to be an essential part of progress.

Security Situation on the Korean Peninsula

What is your assessment of the current security situation on the Korean peninsula and of the threat posed to the United States and its allies by the current state of North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear weapons capabilities?

North Korea remains one of the most challenging security problems for the United States and our allies and partners in the region. North Korea continues to take actions that are destabilizing for the region, including its December 2012 missile launch, February 2013 nuclear test, series of short-range ballistic missile launches in 2014, and the cyber-attack against Sony Pictures Entertainment.

North Korea's ballistic missile and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) capabilities clearly present a serious and direct threat to U.S. forces postured in the Asia-Pacific region as well as to our regional allies and partners. These capabilities could eventually pose a direct threat to U.S. territory. Moreover, North Korea's history of proliferation amplifies the dangers of its asymmetric programs.

The US - ROK alliance continues to be the linchpin to deterring North Korean aggression and maintaining stability on the Korean Peninsula. If confirmed, I will ensure that the U.S.-ROK Alliance continues to strengthen alliance capabilities to counter North Korea's increasing missile and nuclear threat. I will also ensure that we draw upon the full range of our capabilities to deter, defend, and respond to North Korean ballistic missile and WMD threats.

In your view, are there additional steps that DOD could take to ensure that North Korea does not proliferate missile and weapons technology to Syria, Iran and others?

If confirmed, I will continue efforts to strengthen our strong defense posture against the North Korean ballistic missile threat. This includes enhancing DoD's ability to highlight and disrupt the illicit proliferation networks that North Korea uses, and promoting cooperation with partners to interdict vessels and aircraft suspected of transporting items of proliferation concern.

What is your view regarding the timing of transfer of wartime operational control from the U.S. to the ROK?

At the 2014 U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting, SecDef Hagel and ROK Minister of Defense Han decided that in light of the evolving security environment in the region, we will implement the ROK-proposed, conditions-based approach to the transition of wartime OPCON.

The ROK will take wartime OPCON when critical ROK and alliance military capabilities are secured and the security environment in the region is conducive to a stable wartime OPCON transition.

China Assertiveness

How has China's aggressive assertion of territorial and maritime claims, particularly in the South China Sea and East China Sea, affected security and stability in the region?

China's actions in the South and East China Seas, as well as its rapid military modernization and growing defense budgets, have led many in the region—including the United States—to question its long-term intentions. It has still not clarified its expansive 9-Dash Line claim, and it continues to conduct large scale land-reclamation activities in the South China Sea. Such behavior has been destabilizing.

China Mil-Mil

What is your assessment of the current state of the U.S.-China military relationship and your views regarding China's interest in and commitment to improving military relations with the United States?

I view the U.S.-China military-to-military relationship as a critical component to our overall bilateral relations. It allows us to increase cooperation on areas of mutual interest and reduces risk as our forces come into closer contact. The Chinese leadership has expressed the view that the military-to-military relationship is useful as vehicle for stability in the overall bilateral relationship. The relationship has room for improvement.

What is your view of the purpose and relative importance of sustained military-to-military relations with China?

As an enduring Pacific power, the United States has a clear interest in sustaining military-to-military contacts with China. I will continue to seek a mil-mil relationship that builds sustained and substantive dialogue, practical cooperation in areas of mutual interest, and mitigates the risk of miscalculation.

Anti-Access/Area Denial

Over the past few years, much has been made of the emerging anti-access and area denial capabilities of certain countries and the prospect that these capabilities may in the future limit the U.S. military's freedom of movement and action in certain regions. Do you believe emerging anti-access and area denial capabilities are a concern?

Yes. One of the keys to our nation's success is our ability to rapidly project power around the globe. Our power projection capability is essential to deterring our adversaries and maintaining global stability. Russia, Iran, and China are developing technologies, most notably missiles, designed to limit U.S. military's freedom of movement. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to ensure that we sustain our ability to project overwhelming combat power into any theater at a time of our choosing.

If so, what do you believe the U.S. armed forces need to be doing now and in the next few years to ensure continued access to all strategically important segments of the maritime domain?

The United States is committed to keeping the global commons, especially maritime, free. We will continue to invest in the personnel and technological advantages that will allow us to meet

that commitment, especially to counter anti-access and area denial capabilities of our potential enemies. However, any discussion of specific actions and investments associated with our counter A2AD strategy and capabilities are more appropriate for discussion in a classified forum.

If confirmed, you would play an important role in the process of transforming the U.S. armed forces' capability and capacity to meet new and emerging threats.

Concerning capability and capacity to meet new and emerging threats, what are your goals regarding transformation of the U.S. military?

If confirmed, I would develop a detailed concept for Joint exercises and experimentation. My initial assessment, from the perspective of a service chief, is that our operational tempo over the past decade has adversely impacted us in this area.

Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Capabilities

Despite the ongoing drawdown in Afghanistan, demand for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities of every kind remains very high due to the enhanced situational awareness and targeting capabilities they bring to our commanders. Almost all of the geographic combatant commands still have validated ISR requirements that are not being met.

What is your assessment of the Department's current disposition of ISR assets across the various combatant commands?

Demand for ISR continues to outpace available supply. The Services are operating at maximum capacity; therefore, sourcing for new requirements is a zero sum game. Assets are primarily reallocated from other combatant commander operations to meet new demands.

The Department's allocation strategy remains focused on leveraging our ISR capabilities to maximize effects. To support counter-terrorism and force protection, we have allocated nearly 90% of our remotely-piloted full-motion video assets to USCENTCOM, with the remaining sourced primarily to USAFRICOM. In USEUCOM and USPACOM's sensitive reconnaissance operations areas, we have leveraged assets with standoff capabilities to maximize indications and warning collection.

As our forces are withdrawn from Afghanistan, should existing ISR assets be re-postured to support combatant command needs in other regions, or can we afford to reduce ISR capacity?

The Department continually evaluates our capabilities against evolving combatant command requirements, ensuring a balance across operational, force management, and institutional risks. When appropriate, ISR assets can be repostured to support emerging combatant commander needs across other regions. For example, within the last year, we shifted some ISR from Afghanistan to monitor ISIL activity in the Middle East. Additionally, we made the challenging decision to return medium-altitude ISR capacity to a steady-state 60 flights a day, from an almost

continual surge of 65, reducing risk to the long-term sustainability of the USAF's unmanned pilot force.

Most of the highest-value ISR assets acquired after 9/11 are aircraft that were not designed to be survivable in high-threat air defense environments, although in some cases unmanned aerial vehicles were designed to be deployed in large numbers in the expectation of substantial combat attrition.

Do you believe that the Department needs a major shift towards ISR platforms that are survivable in high-threat situations, or merely an augmentation of the capabilities we now have, with the assumption that air superiority can be gained rapidly enough to operate today's assets effectively?

We have learned a great many ISR lessons from more than ten years of conflict. It is in the best interest of the United States to invest in ISR platforms, sensors, and communications capabilities designed to penetrate and survive in high-threat and denied environments; not just in the air domain, but in space, surface, and sub-surface domains as well. These systems also offer the potential to improve pre-conflict warning. These capabilities are expensive to develop and field, but are a necessary component of balanced efforts to maintain our warfighting advantages. However, existing ISR systems remain very relevant for today's operations and future scenarios; particularly in support of ongoing counter-terrorism missions. So the right path appears to be augmenting the capabilities we have today to fill critical capability and capacity gaps.

Aircraft Carrier-Launched Unmanned Systems

The Navy's current plan for the Unmanned Carrier-Launched Airborne Surveillance and Strike (UCLASS) system aircraft is to develop an airframe optimized for unrefueled endurance (~14 hours) and the ISR mission.

Given the combat radius of the planned carrier air wing, are you concerned the carrier will lack the ability to project power at relevant distances given emerging anti-access/area-denial threats?

Yes. That's why it's critical that we continue to develop concepts and capabilities that will allow us to maintain a competitive advantage in an A2AD environment.

Special Operations Forces

The 2006 and 2010 QDRs have mandated significant growth in our special operations forces (SOF) and enablers that directly support their operations. The most-recent QDR released in 2014 capped this growth at 69,500, approximately 2,500 below the originally planned growth.

In light of the growing global terrorism threat, do you believe the currently planned end-strength for SOF is sufficient to meet global requirements?

The last two Quadrennial Defense Reviews (QDRs) directed significant growth in our special operations forces (SOF) along with enablers that directly support their operations. We will continue to carefully balance the need for further growth in SOF with our need to address other capability demands in light of increased budgetary pressures.

SOF are heavily reliant on enabling support from the general purpose force. In light of current fiscal challenges, do you believe sufficient enabling capabilities can be maintained within the general purpose forces and that such capabilities will remain available to special operations forces?

Special operations forces depend on general purpose forces for many enabling capabilities, including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), logistics, and medical evacuation. I believe that we have sufficient and trained general purpose forces to support high priority special operations missions.

International Peacekeeping Contributions

In testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs (July 29, 2009), Ambassador Susan Rice, then U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, stated that the United States “is willing to consider directly contributing more military observers, military staff officers, civilian police, and other civilian personnel—including more women I should note—to UN peacekeeping operations.”

What is your view on whether the U.S. should contribute more military personnel to both staff positions and military observers in support of U.N. peacekeeping operations?

I believe we should focus on how best to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of UN peacekeeping operations. Deliberate and strategically crafted placements of personnel to key positions within the UN can advance U.S. influence and interests.

If confirmed, would you support identifying methods through which the DOD personnel system could be more responsive to requests for personnel support from multilateral institutions like the United Nations?

Over the past year the Joint Staff has provided multiple officers to the UN to include the head of the UN’s military planning service. The recent administrative waiver extension provided by the UN to the United States will help ease future assignments, when warranted.

Interagency Collaboration

The collaboration between U.S. Special Operations Forces, general purpose forces, and other U.S. Government departments and agencies has played a significant role in the success of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations in recent years. However, much of this collaboration has been ad hoc in nature.

What do you believe are the most important lessons learned from the collaborative interagency efforts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere?

Military power is necessary, but not sufficient to achieve our national security objectives. The non-military dimensions of national security are increasing in their importance. Our adversaries understand this and have adapted to challenge us outside or short of our military redlines. Whereas the U.S. military provides a range of options to employ force, our diverse civilian partners provide potent and diverse options to exert and sustain American influence. Much of the incremental progress bringing civil and military capacities together in the field is waning. Agencies and Departments must deliberately and jointly invest in civil-military strategy, doctrine, training and operations to meet the tests of this era, whether State-based coercion in “gray space,” non-state violent extremism, or cyber threats to our homeland and overseas interests. If confirmed, my military advice to the President, NSC and Congress will reflect the need to invest, apply and sustain deliberate civil-military approaches to national security.

How do you believe these efforts can be improved?

It begins with leadership. If confirmed, I will consult early and often with Secretary Carter, other members of the NSC and Congress to understand specific ways the Joint Force can support or enable the non-military dimensions of our national security. My focus will remain on the military instrument of power. I will establish expectations that the Joint Staff parallel my efforts by pursuing a more collaborative and engaged posture in NSC fora and with departments, agencies and the private sector.

How can the lessons learned in recent years be captured in military doctrine and adopted as “best practices” for future contingency operations?

The Department’s Joint Force Development process that takes observations from operational practice, joint training and concept development, analyzes them, and synthesizes them into Joint Doctrine for the operational preparation and employment of the force. As an example, the current average age of the Department’s 81 Joint Doctrine publications is about 2 years old, a refresh rate that is about 3-times faster than it was in the years after 9/11. We should look at making doctrine more adaptable to the dynamic environment and accessible to the joint force. But we must also infuse learning into our joint education and joint exercise programs to ensure that its impact is aligned at the strategic, operational and tactical echelons within OSD, the Military Departments and Services, combatant commands and defense support activities.

Interagency collaboration on an operational or tactical level tends to address issues on a country-by-country basis rather than on a regional basis (e.g. international terrorists departing Mali for safe havens in Libya).

How do you believe regional strategies that link efforts in individual countries can best be coordinated in the interagency arena?

Combatant Commanders develop Theater Campaign Plans and Functional Campaign Plans that address regional and trans-regional issues. They seek input from interagency partners in the

development of these plans to de-conflict and complement efforts. We need to change our paradigm. The State Department has initiated regional, functional and country strategies and supporting processes. DHS is maturing its scenario-based planning process. Our military paradigm needs to shift from expecting others to integrate into military plans and processes. This reinforces the tendency for DoD to become the option of first resort and the default integrator. We need to be more engaged with OSD to support and influence foreign affairs and homeland security planning and resourcing processes and integrate those into military plans and processes.

Responsibility to Protect

The U.S. Government has recognized the “responsibility to protect” (R2P) – that is, the responsibility of the international community to use appropriate means to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, by encouraging states to protect their own populations, by helping states build the capacity to do so, and by acting directly should national authorities fail to provide such protection. In its 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, the Department of Defense names “preventing human suffering due to mass atrocities” as one of a long list of potential contingencies that DOD might be called on to address. DOD has begun to explore some of the implications of R2P, by considering “mass atrocity prevention and response operations” (MAPRO).

In your view, how high a priority should the “responsibility to protect” be for the U.S. Government as a whole?

My role is not to set policy priorities but rather to design and employ the military instrument in support of policy decisions. The military instrument can be used to meet many priorities as directed by the President. The U.S. military has often taken an active role in helping to prevent and responding to mass atrocity situations.

In your view, what should be the role of DOD, if any, in fulfilling the responsibility to protect?

The role of DoD is to support the broader U.S. government’s response in any situation as part of a whole-of-government approach. DoD should provide options, assess the risk associated with those options, and execute selected options as needed.

In your view, what is the proper application of R2P doctrine with respect to the situation in Syria?

We incorporate R2P considerations, and civilian security considerations more broadly, when we weigh the acceptability and feasibility of our military strategies, whether in Syria or elsewhere. The U.S. Government is working with allies and partners and with the Syrian opposition to provide humanitarian assistance within Syria and across the region. Since FY12, the United States has provided over \$4.4 billion in aid to help the victims of this conflict, including emergency medical care and supplies, food, and shelter. Of that, over three quarters of a billion dollars have already been spent in FY15.

Operation Observant Compass & the Lord's Resistance Army

Despite pressure by the Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) and efforts by U.S. Special Operations personnel to support them, elements of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) – including Joseph Kony – continue to operate and commit atrocities against civilian populations in the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan. Some observers have identified operational concerns with this mission, including that: (1) supported forces are trying to find an elusive foe in an area roughly the size of California, much of which is covered in thick jungle; (2) technical support to U.S. forces and their UPDF partners from the defense and intelligence community continues to be inadequate; and (3) limitations continue to be placed on the ability of U.S. Special Operations personnel to accompany UPDF partners outside of main basing locations, thereby limiting the level of direct support they can provide.

In your view, what is the objective of Operation Observant Compass?

Operation OBSERVANT COMPASS has four main objectives:

- 1) Increase protection of civilians affected by the LRA
- 2) Promote defection, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of LRA fighters
- 3) Remove Joseph Kony and LRA leaders from central Africa
- 4) Increase humanitarian access and provide relief

Our African partners, with DoD and interagency assistance, have made progress in achieving these mission objectives.

Do you support the continuation of DOD's current level of support to this mission?

I am sensitive to the resource constraints we face, especially in the Africa area of operations, and am open to exploring other options to achieve our stated policy goals. I recommend resourcing at a level appropriate to the threat the LRA poses to our national interests in the region.

National Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime

Criminal networks are not only expanding their operations, but they are also diversifying their activities, resulting in a convergence of transnational threats that has evolved to become more complex, volatile, and destabilizing. The Director of National Intelligence recently described transnational organized crime as “an abiding threat to U.S. economic and national security interests,” and stated that “rising drug violence and corruption are undermining stability and the rule of law in some countries” in the Western Hemisphere. In July 2011, the President released his Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime: Addressing Converging Threats to National Security. One of the priority action areas designated in the strategy is “enhancing Department of Defense support to U.S. law enforcement.”

What is your understanding of the President's strategy to combat transnational criminal organizations?

The President's Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime integrates all elements of our national power to combat transnational organized crime and related threats to national security – and urges our partners to do the same. The strategy seeks to reduce transnational organized crime from a national security threat to a manageable public safety concern in the US and strategic regions abroad.

What is your understanding of the Department's role within the President's strategy?

The Department of Defense provides support to other U.S. government agencies who lead our efforts to combat transnational organized crime.

In your view, should DOD play a role in providing support to the U.S. law enforcement and the Intelligence Community on matters related to transnational organized crime?

Consistent with current and recently expanded authorities provided in the FY15 NDAA, the Department provides unique capabilities that support U.S. law enforcement and Intelligence Community activities as part of a whole-of-government approach to address the national security threat posed by transnational criminal organizations. Intelligence support, counter-threat finance support, building partner capacity, and detection and monitoring are specific DoD capabilities which support the interagency and partner nations.

Mass Atrocities Prevention

President Obama identified the prevention of mass atrocities and genocide as a core U.S. national security interest, as well as a core moral interest, in August 2011 under Presidential Study Directive 10.

Among interagency partners, what is DOD's role in addressing atrocity threats, and what tools does DOD have for preventing or responding to atrocities?

DoD has developed Joint Doctrine for conducting Mass Atrocity Response Operations. Based on this doctrine, atrocity prevention and response is now incorporated into DoD plans and planning guidance. In addition, DoD has conducted a comprehensive review of training in this area and is working to strengthen the capacity of UN peacekeeping operations to respond to atrocity situations.

Has DOD developed planning processes toward this effort so that it will be able to respond quickly in emergency situations?

Yes, DoD has developed planning processes toward this effort. All DoD components have been directed to integrate atrocity prevention and response into their policies and plans. Specific plans are further developed and implemented at the Geographic Combatant Command level, in coordination with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and the interagency as appropriate.

In your view, is the situation in Syria a mass atrocity?

Assad's actions against his own people have harmed civilians and undermined security in Syria and the region, with over two hundred thousand combatant and non-combatants deaths and over four million displaced.

Counter Threat Finance

DOD and the Intelligence Community (IC) have begun investing more resources in identifying and tracking the flow of money associated with terrorist networks and illicit trafficking, but the opportunities for tracking and degrading illicit financing flows are not yet matched by the effort and resources devoted to them. Identifying and disrupting key individuals, entities, and facilitation routes enabling the flow of money that supports terrorism, production of IEDs, narco-trafficking, proliferation, and other significant national security threats could have an outsized impact on confronting these threats.

What are your views on the role of DOD in counter threat finance activities?

Many terrorists, criminal networks, and other adversaries who threaten U.S. strategic interests rely heavily on licit or illicit financial networks to support and sustain their operations. DoD policy is to work with other U.S. government entities and partner nations to effectively deny, disrupt, degrade, and defeat our adversaries' ability to access and utilize financial resources. If confirmed, I will review our level of integration across the interagency and with our foreign and institutional partners with the goal of maximizing cooperation and effectiveness in countering these activities and networks.

Are you aware of any policy, legal authority, or resource shortfalls that may impair U.S. counter threat finance efforts?

Lack of sufficient insight and fidelity on the sources of corruption in partner nations can hinder our ability to achieve counter threat network goals. Additionally, in non-terrorism cases, there is room for improvement with respect to the full and timely sharing of relevant information between law enforcement and intelligence elements in a timely manner.

In your view, how should the Department of Defense coordinate and interface with other key agencies, including the Department of Treasury and the Intelligence Community, in conducting counter threat finance activities?

The Department should, and currently does, use its unique capabilities to augment and support the efforts of other U.S. government entities, including the Department of Treasury and the Intelligence Community. The result is a well-coordinated, capable, and robust counter threat finance posture. If confirmed, I will continue to remain fully engaged in the interagency process to diminish adversary use of both licit and illicit financial networks.

Section 1208 Operations

Section 1208 of the Ronald Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (Public Law 108-375), as amended by subsequent bills, authorizes the provision of support (including training, funding, and equipment) to regular forces, irregular forces, and individuals supporting or facilitating military operations by U.S. Special Operations Forces to combat terrorism.

What is your current assessment of this authority?

Section 1208 funding allows the U.S. government to reduce our reliance on unilateral Direct Action operations and increase the role of our foreign partners in combatting terrorism around the globe. It is an effective Advise and Assist program that can be rapidly established to advance U.S. counterterrorism objectives in areas that do not possess the will or capacity to fight terrorism. It can serve as a bridging solution to future programs focused on building partner nation capacity.

Active-Duty and Reserve Component End Strength

Last year DOD announced its 5-year plan to reduce active-duty end strengths by over 100,000 service members by 2017 and the reserve components by another 21,000 over the same period. These cuts do not include any additional personnel reductions that could result from sequestration or any agreement to avoid sequestration.

What is your view of the role of the reserve components as the active components draw down?

As an integral part of our Total Force, the Reserve Components provide much of the operational capability and strategic depth needed to meet our nation's defense requirements. The drawdown of both active-duty and reserve end strength requires us to rebalance some capabilities between the active and reserve components to maintain the force structure required by our National Military Strategy. This balance between components provides us with the agility to meet strategic objectives while managing our current fiscal constraints. I see the Reserve Components as continuing to provide much of the operational capability needed to support current operations while maintaining the strategic depth required in responding to the more demanding global contingencies. Our nation's investment in the Reserve Components has generated a well-trained, fully integrated, and capable force that will continue to fulfill these roles. In addition, we will continue to capitalize upon the broad skills and experience our Reserve Component service members bring to the force from their civilian occupations.

What additional military personnel reductions do you envision if the sequester continues into 2014 and beyond?

PB16 FYDP manning levels already reflect the maximum acceptable risk in executing our defense strategy. If sequestration continues, we will further reduce total personnel numbers, known as end-strength, consistent with the numbers we have provided since the Strategic Choices Management Review (SCMR) of 2013-2014. These numbers were highlighted by all of the Service Chiefs in their combined testimony to the SASC on January 28, 2015.

In your view, what tools do DOD and the Services need to get down to authorized strengths in the future, and which of these require Congressional authorization?

The Department and Services' current force management tools provide adequate flexibility to enable the drawdown to authorized Service end strengths, and, at present, the Services do not seek additional authorities in this regard.

Religious Guidelines

American military personnel routinely deploy to locations around the world where they must engage work effectively with allies and with host-country nationals whose faiths and beliefs may be different than their own. For many other cultures, religious faith is not a purely personal and private matter; it is the foundation of their culture and society. Learning to respect the different faiths and beliefs of others, and to understand how accommodating different views can contribute to a diverse force is, some would argue, an essential skill to operational effectiveness.

In your view, do policies concerning religious accommodation in the military appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion and other beliefs, including individual expressions of belief, without impinging on those who have different beliefs, including no religious belief?

Yes. I believe current policies appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion, including individual expressions of belief, without impinging on those who have different, or no, religious beliefs. Department of Defense policy regarding religious accommodation, set forth in DoDI 1300.17, affirms the rights of individuals to express their sincerely held beliefs, whether they be matters of conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs. The Department of Defense places a high value on the rights of individuals to do so, or not do so. This is held in balance with the need of the Military Departments to maintain military readiness, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline.

Under current law and policy, are individual expressions of belief accommodated so long as they do not impact unit cohesion and good order and discipline?

Yes. The current policies regarding religious accommodation provide a clear means by which individual expressions of belief, including apparel, grooming and worship practices, can be considered by commanders. Denial of religious accommodation requests may only occur when it furthers a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Unit cohesion and good order and discipline are compelling interests, but they must be preserved in the least restrictive manner that is practicable for mission accomplishment.

In your view, does a military climate that welcomes and respects open and candid discussions about personal religious faith and beliefs in a garrison environment contribute in a positive way to preparing U.S. forces to be effective in overseas assignments? Would a policy that discourages open discussions about personal faith and beliefs be more or less effective at preparing service members to work and operate in a pluralistic environment?

In my view, a military climate that welcomes and respects open and candid discussion about personal religious faith in garrison can positively prepare U.S. forces to be effective in overseas assignments. In a world that appears to be increasingly committed to expressing religious belief, possessing this skill is necessary to not only understand our adversaries, but also understand our partner nations (consistent with the National Strategy on Integrating Religious Leader and Faith Community Engagement into U.S. Foreign Policy). Any policy that discourages open discussion diminishes our ability to develop these skills. However, there must be clear guidance about the importance of mutual respect and trust.

Prevention of and Response to Sexual Assaults

In 2014, there was what the Department described as an “unprecedented 53% increase in victim reports of sexual assault. In fiscal year 2014, victims made 4,660 Unrestricted Reports and 1,840 initial Restricted Reports of sexual assault. Also in fiscal year 2014, the Department saw the number of victims who converted Restricted Reports to Unrestricted Reports increase from an average of 15% to 20%. According to the 2014 RAND Military Workplace Study approximately 72% of service member victims who indicated they made a sexual assault report said they would make the same decision to make a report if they had to do it over again. The Rand Study also indicated the percentages of active duty personnel who experienced unwanted sexual assault declined in 2014, from 6.1% to 4./3% for women and from 1.2% to 0.9% for men. The Department also concluded the estimated gap between reporting and prevalence of sexual assaults was at the narrowest point since the Department began tracking this data.

What is your assessment of the current DOD sexual assault prevention and response program?

The Department’s response to sexual assault continues to improve, but work remains. The Services have developed a number of reforms and policy changes designed to increase victim confidence and enhance access to victim advocacy and legal support. To reinforce these changes, as the Services have instituted unique training for investigators and prosecutors who handle sexual assault crimes. They have also increased bystander intervention training and sexual assault awareness across the entire force.

What is your view of the provision for restricted and unrestricted reporting of sexual assaults?

Victim care remains a top priority for the Department. We face the same challenges that society faces in dealing with incidents of sexual assault – balancing care to victims with prosecuting offenders. Unrestricted reporting automatically initiates a criminal investigation. After learning some victims were choosing to forego support services rather than initiate an investigation, the Department offered the restricted reporting option. Offering both forms of reporting provides a means to protect a victim’s privacy while also providing access to medical care and support services.

What is your understanding of the adequacy of DOD oversight of military service implementation of the DOD and service policies for the prevention of and response to sexual assaults?

The Department has put a considerable amount of effort into the development of policies and procedures designed to address sexual assault. The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office provides oversight for sexual assault policy and works with the Services to execute their prevention and response strategic plans. The Joint Chiefs of Staff's partnership with OSD provides the operational perspective to the sexual assault program in support of initiatives to improve oversight and accountability.

What is your view about the role of the chain of command in changing the military culture in which these observed changes in sexual assaults have occurred?

Establishing an appropriate culture where victims are treated with dignity and respect starts at the top. Commanders are accountable for what happens in their units and they set the leadership tone. Commanders are crucial to our ability to effect institutional change and leaders at all levels must foster a command climate where sexist behavior, sexual harassment and sexual assault are not condoned or ignored.

Surveys report that up to 62 percent of victims who report a sexual assault perceive professional or social retaliation for reporting. If confirmed, what will you do to address the issue of retaliation for reporting a sexual assault?

First of all, any form of retaliation goes against our core values and has no place in our military. While the latest surveys confirmed that victims perceive retaliation, the data did not provide the depth needed to understand this challenging problem or to develop appropriate solutions to the problem of peer retaliation. If confirmed, I, along with the Joint Chiefs, will continue to support efforts to better define the problem and determine root causes. I will also continue to work to ensure that the joint force culture is one of respect and that retaliation is not tolerated, especially among peers.

Sexual assault is a significantly underreported crime in our society and in the military. If confirmed, what will you do to increase reporting of sexual assaults by military victims?

In order to increase reporting of sexual assaults by military victims, we must improve victim confidence in our ability to respond to incidents of sexual assault. We must also establish a climate in which victims are treated with dignity and respect, and where any form of retaliation or reprisal is unequivocally unacceptable. If confirmed, I will continue the partnership with OSD to assess current programs and develop initiatives to enhance support services and improve our systems to hold perpetrators appropriately accountable.

In your view, what would be the impact of requiring a judge advocate outside the chain of command, instead of a military commander in the grade of O-6 or above as is currently the Department's policy, to determine whether allegations of sexual assault should be prosecuted?

I support the Department's current policy. The Uniform Code of Military Justice operates as both a criminal justice system and a critical component of a commander's authority to maintain good order and discipline. I believe our military members and national security will best be served by retaining the military commander's key role in the military justice decision process. While I greatly value the legal analyses and recommendations provided by our highly proficient judge advocates, and fully expect all leaders in the Services to take the greatest advantage of this expertise, I firmly believe the military commander's role is indispensable in the prosecutorial process.

Assignment Policies for Women in the Military

As you know, the Department in January rescinded the policy restricting the assignment of women to certain units which have the primary mission of engaging in direct ground combat operations, and has given the military services until January 1, 2016, to open all positions currently closed to women, or to request an exception to policy to keep a position closed beyond that date, an exception that must be approved by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense. The services are working now to develop gender-free physical and mental standards for all military occupations, presumably with the goal of allowing individuals, regardless of gender, to serve in those positions if they can meet those standards.

If confirmed, what role will you play in the development of these standards?

The Services are in the final stages of validating their standards. In my current capacity, I have been involved in the process. Military Department Secretaries must certify that their standards are gender-neutral and in compliance with all applicable Public Laws by 30 Sept. If confirmed, I will be engaged in the development and implementation of standards that affect joint warfighting.

Will you ensure that the standards will be realistic and will preserve, or enhance, military readiness and mission capability?

Yes. The Services and USSOCOM worked with various scientific and research agencies to ensure the standards are current, occupationally valid and tied to the operational requirement. Preserving readiness is a key tenant of the guiding principles established in the Jan 2013 memorandum.

Do you believe that decisions to open positions should be based on bona fide military requirements?

Yes. Decisions to open positions will be based on rigorous analysis of the Services and USSOCOM integration studies and the recommendations of the Secretaries of the Military Departments.

If so, what steps will you take, if confirmed, to ensure that such decisions are made on this basis?

As the senior military advisor to the Secretary of Defense, I will provide sound advice from a Joint operational perspective to ensure that we preserve unit readiness and maintain the best qualified forces to meet mission requirements.

Some family members have expressed concerns about assigning women to what are currently male-only combat units.

To what extent do you believe that this will be a problem in the implementation of this policy?

As with any institutional change, we can expect there will be concerns from a variety of sources. I respect the concerns of our military families, but I do not see this as a problem as we implement the policy. Women are already serving in units that provide direct support to combat units.

If it is a problem, what steps would you take if confirmed to address it?

If confirmed, I will continue to engage with military families our service members to discuss their concerns and explain our policies.

Military Health Care Reform and Modernization

Congress authorized the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 to conduct a review of the military compensation and retirement systems and to make recommendations to modernize those systems. The Commission released its report in January 2015.

What is your view of the Commission's findings regarding the military health system?

I agree with the Commission that DoD needs to continue to improve the military health care system. I also believe the health care reforms proposed in the FY16 budget are a good first step and offer service members, retirees, and their families more control and choice over their health care decisions. I'm open to working with Congress to develop additional reform proposals for consideration in the FY17 budget.

Do you believe the Department's FY16 proposal to consolidate TRICARE adequately addressed the Commission's findings on military health care?

Yes. The TRICARE proposal in the President's Fiscal Year 2016 budget more effectively achieves the aim of providing family members and retirees with greater choice and control over their healthcare decisions without the risk of an untested, and potentially infeasible, overhaul of the Military Health System. If confirmed, I will work closely with DoD leadership and Congress to ensure the proposal is implemented as efficiently and effectively as possible.

What is your view of the Commission's recommendation to establish a Joint Readiness

Command?

I agree with the Commission's overall objective of protecting medical readiness across the joint force including establishment of essential medical capabilities (EMCs). However, a new, four-star readiness command is not necessary as the Department has sufficient processes and governance structures in-place to identify, track, and measure the readiness status of enterprise wide and Service specific EMCs.

What is your assessment of progress the Defense Health Agency has made to create efficiencies and generate cost savings by combining the medical support functions of the Services?

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) will reach Full Operational Capability (FOC) on 01 October 2015 and I am told they are on track to meet this goal. Once FOC, DHA will receive a Combat Support Agency Review Team Assessment (CSART) from the Joint Staff NLT 2017 to determine its responsiveness and readiness to support the operating forces.

Do you believe the Defense Health Agency should be replaced with a new combatant command, a Unified Medical Command?

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) will reach Full Operational Capability (FOC) on 01 October 2015 and I believe it is premature to make a determination if DHA is able to meet its mission. As a Combat Support Agency (CSA), DHA will receive Combat Support Agency Review Team Assessment (CSART) in early 2017 to determine its responsiveness and readiness to support the operating forces. In addition, in my role as the Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, I was directly involved in Department's review of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission recommendations. As such, I agree with the Secretary's assessment of not supporting creation of an additional new four-star combatant command for the purpose of ensuring joint medical readiness.

Wounded Warrior Support

Service members wounded and injured in combat operations deserve the highest priority from their Service for support services, healing and recuperation, rehabilitation, evaluation for return to duty, successful transition from active duty when appropriate, and continuing support beyond retirement or discharge.

What is your assessment of the progress made by the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Services to improve the care, management, and transition of seriously ill and injured service members and their families?

DoD, the VA, and the Services have made considerable progress in ensuring the Nation's wounded, ill, and injured Recovering Service Members (RSMs), their families, and caregivers receive the support they need for recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration. The NDAA for FY 2008 directed DoD to improve the care, management, and transition of recovering Service members. It established the office now known as Warrior Care Policy (WCP) to develop policies for the Department and provide the oversight of those policies to ensure proper execution and

outcomes. The policy and oversight areas for WCP include the Recovery Coordination Program, the Integrated Disability Evaluation System, the Military Adaptive Sports Program, Operation Warfighter, the Education and Employment Initiative, and the Caregiver Support Program. The Department continuously evaluates our wounded warrior and caregiver programs, and implements improvements. We are incorporating lessons-learned and best practices to update policies and programs to improve support for RSM and their families.

If confirmed, are there additional strategies and resources that you would pursue to increase support for wounded service members and their families, and to monitor their progress in returning to duty or to civilian life?

The recovery care coordinators are a crucial resource for Wounded Warriors and their families, and we must continue to fund and evaluate the effectiveness of this resource over time. The Joint Staff conducted a thorough review of the Service's policies and procedures related to returning our Wounded Warriors to service, and found that all Services were operating within OSD guidance. We provided constructive feedback to OSD which will allow the Services to retain flexibility to develop programs unique for their Service needs and culture, while also providing guidance that better supports Wounded Warriors. This guidance provides clarity on how to navigate the "reassignment and retraining" process if they desire (and qualify for) continued service. If confirmed, I am committed to continued improvement on our efforts and results with regards to the care and support of our Wounded Warriors and their families.

What is your assessment of the need to make further improvements in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System?

The Department continuously evaluates IDES to identify improvements. DoD has implemented several actions that have resulted in the IDES reaching a critical milestone in timeliness and overall Service member satisfaction. As of May 2015, Active Component case timeliness averaged 223 days against a 295-day goal, Reserve Component timeliness averaged 298 days against a 305-day goal, and 87 percent of Service members expressed overall satisfaction with the IDES process. If confirmed, I will ensure my staff and I support improvements to the Disability Evaluation Process that benefit both our Service members and the Department.

Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Resources

The numbers of suicides in each of the Services continues to concern the Committee.

In your view, what role should the Joint Chiefs of Staff play in shaping policies to help prevent suicides both in garrison and in theater and to increase the resiliency of all service members and their families, including members of the reserve components?

Suicide prevention is an important responsibility I share with the Service Secretaries and Service Chiefs. We have joined forces with agencies across DoD and Interagency, the White House and civilian sector to better understand the factors leading to suicide and refine our prevention programs. As leaders, we have the responsibility to not only seek to build strong and resilient individuals, but also to grow strong and resilient organizations.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to ensure that sufficient mental health resources are available to service members in theater, and to the service members and their families upon return to home station?

Adequate mental health staffing must remain a priority to ensure the highest delivery of mental health services. I support several initiatives underway to improve access to mental health care, increased provider availability, and more effective recruitment and retention of mental health providers. The continued embedding of Mental Health personnel across the deployed force is critical with required in-theater periodic mental health assessments. These initiatives in conjunction with the cooperative efforts underway between the VA and DoD work to ensure continuity of mental health care for deployed and returning service members. It is imperative that these efforts continue to address the long-term mental health needs of Service members and their families.

Military Quality of Life

The Committee is concerned about the sustainment of key quality of life programs for military families, such as family support, child care, education, employment support, health care, and morale, welfare and recreation services, especially as DOD faces budget challenges.

If confirmed, what further enhancements, if any, to military quality of life programs would you consider a priority in an era of intense downward pressure on budgets?

I don't have any recommendations for enhancement at this time. If confirmed, I will continue to engage in the maintenance and development of effective quality of life programs.

Family Readiness and Support

Military members and their families in both the active and reserve components have made, and continue to make, tremendous sacrifices in support of operational deployments. Senior military leaders have warned of growing concerns among military families as a result of the stress of frequent deployments and the long separations that go with them.

What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for service members and their families?

Every family has unique needs, requiring a flexible and responsive network of services to deliver support at the right time, using the most effective methods. From pay and benefits, to deployment forecasting to wellness plans, military families have valid concerns that should be addressed. Our research indicates that military families are most concerned about pay and benefits, including retirement. Other critically important issues are health care, education, and housing.

How would you address these family readiness needs in light of global rebasing, deployments, and future reductions in end strength?

If confirmed I will continue to work with the Services to meet the changing needs of our military families. Community-based partnerships will be key to improve education, employment, and wellness support for current and transitioning members. The Services have also adjusted force size and rotation, redoubled transition support, and invested in world-class health care for our wounded. Family support programs that are flexible, responsive, and communicate and coordinate with interagency and non-governmental family services are critical to meet the enduring needs of our Service members and their families, whether they live on, near, or far from military installations. Working together with the Services, we can find efficiencies and enhance the accessibility of support when and where it is needed and at the right level. I remain committed to building and retaining ready, resilient Service members and families. Readiness/retention efforts must look beyond reactive financial incentives to emphasize total Service member and family wellness.

If confirmed, how would you ensure support is provided to reserve component families related to mobilization, deployment and family readiness, as well as to active duty families who do not reside near a military installation?

We must continue outreach, education, awareness, and engagement strategies to promote Service member and family readiness programs within the Reserve Component. Since 2008, the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program has led our support efforts with this population, providing access to deployment cycle information, resources, programs, services, and referrals to more than 1.53 million Service members and their families. The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program eases transitions for Service members and families as they move between their military and civilian roles. Our geographically diverse populations are also supported by Department of Defense Military One Source Consultants that works to build capacity to identify and meet evolving needs at the local community level. To augment and enable that local support, Military OneSource provides support to military families, military leadership, and military and civilian service providers through delivery of information, referrals, specialty consultations and non-medical counseling.

Operational Energy Budgeting

Since Congress created the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Operational Energy Plans and Programs, much progress has been made in a few short years in these programs.

In what specific areas, if any, do you believe the Department needs to improve the incorporation of energy considerations into the strategic planning and force development processes?

The Joint Staff and Combatant Commands will continue to analyze, evaluate, and assess where increased energy demand necessary for improved combat capabilities intersects with operational energy and energy security constraints or vulnerabilities. We will further refine and improve

plans, strategy, procurement, force development and policies regarding energy considerations as it relates to mission success.

In what specific areas, if any, do you believe the Department should increase funding for operational energy requirements, energy efficiency, alternative energy, and renewable energy opportunities?

I am mindful of our need to increase military capability, reduce risk, and mitigate operational costs through our use and management of energy. As a result, I believe that we should make additional investments to increasing both operational effectiveness and efficiency. This will be accomplished by improving the energy performance of aircraft, ships, ground vehicles, and military bases, reducing the vulnerability of our energy supply chains, and diversifying the kinds of energy accessible to our Combatant Commanders. Additional funding applied towards alternative energy solutions for contingency operations would be particularly welcomed given ongoing and anticipated operational requirements.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Officials of the Department of Defense, including previous Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have advocated for accession to the Law of the Sea Convention.

Do you support United States accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

I support accession to the Convention. Being a party to the Convention enhances the United States' security posture by reinforcing freedom of the seas and rights vital to ensuring our global force posture. The Convention provides legal certainty in the world's largest maneuver space. Access would strengthen the legal foundation for our ability to transit through international straits and archipelagic waters; preserve our right to conduct military activities in other countries' Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) without notice or permission; reaffirm the sovereign immunity of warships; provide a framework to counter excessive maritime claims; and preserve or operations and intelligence-collection activities. Joining the Convention would also demonstrate our commitment to the rule of law, strengthen our credibility among those nations that are already party to the Convention, and allow us to bring the full force of our influence in challenging excessive maritime claims. Finally, it would secure for us a leadership role in shaping and influencing future maritime developments.

How would you respond to critics of the Convention who assert that accession is not in the national security interests of the United States?

There are significant national security impacts from failing to join the Convention. By remaining outside the Convention, the United States remains in scarce company with Iran, Venezuela, North Korea, and Syria, and foregoes the most effective way to counter undesirable changes in the law or to exercise international leadership. By not acceding to UNCLOS we deny ourselves the ability to challenge changes to international law as a result of the practice of nations at the local, regional, or global level. As some states seek to interpret treaty provisions in a manner that

restricts freedom of navigation, U.S. reliance on customary international law as the legal foundation for our military activities in the maritime becomes far more vulnerable and needlessly places our forces in a more tenuous position during operations. Moreover, by failing to join the Convention, some countries may come to doubt our commitment to act in accordance with international law.

In your view, what impact, if any, would U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea Convention have on ongoing and emerging maritime disputes such as in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

Acceding to the Convention would strengthen our credibility and strategic position on issues pertaining to these regions. While we do not take sides in the various territorial disputes in the South China Sea, we do have a national security interest in ensuring disputes are resolved peacefully, countries adhere to the rule of law, and all nations fully respect freedom of the seas. However, we undermine our leverage by not signing up to the same rule book by which we are asking other countries to accept. As for the Arctic, the other Arctic coastal nations (Russia, Canada, Norway and Denmark (Greenland)) understand the importance of the Convention and are in the process of utilizing the Convention's procedures to establish the outer limits of their extended continental shelves (ECS) in the Arctic. The United States has a significant ECS in the Arctic Ocean, but cannot avail itself of the Convention's mechanisms to gain international recognition of its ECS. We must put our rights on a treaty footing and more fully and effectively interact with the other seven Arctic Council nations who are parties to the Convention.

Detainee Treatment Policy

Recent Department of Defense operations in Iraq and Syria highlight the need for a continued detention capability for both interrogation and law of war detention.

What recommendations do you have for ensuring that the Department of Defense maintains sufficient detention capabilities for capture operations against ISIL and other affiliated terrorist groups to remain a viable option?

The United States needs a viable detention capability to support our counterterrorism strategy. If confirmed, I will work with civilian and military leadership to ensure our commanders on the ground have the capability to lawfully detain as part of capture operations.

Do you support the policy set forth in the July 7, 2006, memorandum issued by the Deputy Secretary of Defense stating that all relevant DOD directives, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures must fully comply with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?

Yes.

Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated August 19,

2014?

Yes.

If confirmed, will you ensure that all DOD policies promulgated and plans implemented related to intelligence interrogations, detainee debriefings, and tactical questioning comply with the Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and the Army Field Manual on Interrogations?

Yes.

Do you share the view that standards for detainee treatment must be based on the principle of reciprocity, that is, that we must always keep in mind the risk that the manner in which we treat our own detainees may have a direct impact on the manner in which U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen or Marines are treated, should they be captured in future conflicts?

Yes.

Offset Technologies

During the Cold War, the DOD pursued three key technologies to offset the numerical superiority of Soviet conventional forces: precision guided munitions, stealth technology, and satellite-based navigation. These three technologies have given U.S. forces unparalleled superiority until now. However, with advancements by our emerging adversaries, it seems like the military technological superiority is beginning to erode. As a result, it is critical that the United States once again focus on offsetting the technology advantages being gained by our adversaries.

Which technology priorities do you believe the Department of Defense should be pursuing to maintain the military technological superiority of the United States?

To offset advances in anti-access and area-denial weapons and other advanced technologies that are proliferating around the world, the Department will identify, develop, and field breakthroughs in cutting-edge technologies and systems—especially from the field of robotics, autonomous systems, miniaturization, big data, and additive manufacturing.

What strategies would you recommend that Secretary Carter implement to develop these technology priorities?

I strongly support Secretary Carter's vision and strategy as captured in the Defense Innovation Initiative. This multi-faceted effort recognizes that more than just developing new technology priorities is required, and acts as the organizing and integrating construct weaving cutting-edge technology recommendations developed by our long-range research and development planning program into new innovative operational concepts. We must also make sure that our investments

in operational concepts and human capital proceed apace with our efforts to pursue innovative solutions through technological means. Our greatest asset will remain our service members.

What role do the services have to play in their development?

The Services will have a key role, as part of the Defense Innovation Initiative team and as the Department's primary organizations for developing and acquiring weapons systems. The Services identify combinations of new and existing technologies that are necessary to project power globally, and to prevent the erosion of our technological superiority in other areas. Ultimately, the Services integrate technology, training, and operational concepts to produce capabilities and generate fielded forces for the combatant commanders.

Science and Technology

One of the main objectives of the defense research enterprise is to develop advanced technologies that will be of benefit to the warfighter. In this regard, it is critical that advancements quickly transition from the development phase into testing and evaluation and ultimately into a procurement program for the warfighter.

What are some of the challenges you see in transitioning technologies effectively from research programs into programs of records?

There are three challenges that I see in transitioning technologies effectively into programs of record. The first is establishing a compelling case and the necessary "head-room" in the budget. The second is maintaining momentum in the program and budgeting process given the competing and evolving strategic demands placed on the U.S. military. The third is achieving the promise of the research technology in a timely manner at a reasonable cost.

As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, what steps will you take to ensure that the services are benefitting more quickly and directly from the research being performed by the defense research enterprise?

As the primary advocate for warfighter requirements, I will ensure that the resourcing and acquisition processes are well-informed on the priority and timing of capability needs. I will also continue to use the Chairman's Gap Assessment and the Chairman's Program Recommendation to communicate directly to Secretary Carter my thoughts on promising research being performed by the research enterprise.

Do you feel that defense technologies and systems, especially in areas such as mobile communications, computing, and robotics, are keeping pace with global and commercial technological advances? If not, what do you suggest that the Department do to keep up with the pace of global technological change?

I believe the Department is challenged keeping pace with global and commercial technology advances. The Secretary's Defense Innovation Initiative is focusing the Department on

maintaining our military's technological edge in an increasingly competitive technology environment.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?

Yes.

Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

Yes.

Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?

Yes.

Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted Committee, or to consult with the Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?

Yes.