



TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
HEARING ON GLOBAL SECURITY CHALLENGES AND STRATEGY

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Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Inhofe, and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify today on global security challenges and strategy.

Russia's military invasion of Ukraine, and the failure of deterrence in Europe more broadly, makes it clear that we need a bolder National Defense Strategy with more aggressive implementation, so we avoid losing more ground in this era of ever-increasing great power competition.

The absence of key strategic documents fourteen months into the Biden Administration presents an opportunity to ensure that those documents that the Administration eventually puts forward recognizes the world as it is, not as we may hope it to be.

To regain our footing strategically today and to best prepare our military for tomorrow, I recommend the following steps:

Adopt a National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy that Competes with China and Russia

We need a National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy (NDS) that advance U.S. leadership in the world by promoting US comparative strategic advantages with China and utilizing China's strategic weaknesses to advance US interests in the Indo-Pacific while at the same time credibly deterring adventurism and aggression in Europe and the Middle East.

The landmark 2018 NDS correctly identified China as a near-peer "strategic competitor" and ensured that the United States competes today while also being able to prevail in a potential future conflict with China. Notably, deterrence in other theaters was also a priority of the strategy, and Russia, along with China, was characterized as a peer competitor. This element of

the strategy must be retained and indeed be reinforced by the Biden Administration.

Our defense strategy must have a force planning construct that would simultaneously prevail in a conflict with China, our primary adversary, while deterring Russia, which is not China's equal, but is a still powerful adversary. Our strategy must extend also to the Middle East where deterring Iran and countering terrorism remain a national interest. Achieving this construct will be difficult, especially given the robust capabilities required to counter the threat posed by China.

To realize the deterrent element of that force planning construct two elements of the 2018 NDS must be increased in importance.

1. *Meaningful Alliances and Partnerships*: We need to rely on our alliances more than ever before. For that reason, our allies ought to not only stand with us in word but operate with us in deed. Additionally, our European allies must make substantial investments in their defense, including, at the very least, meeting NATO member-states' two percent of GDP commitment. Chancellor Scholz's announcement this weekend that Germany will finally invest at least two percent of its GDP is long overdue; it should not have taken Russian aggression to change German policy.
2. *Modernization and Reliance on the Nuclear Deterrent*: Realizing our strategic objectives will require modernized nuclear weapons, especially given both our major adversaries' staggering nuclear modernization investments in recent years. We may also need more nuclear weapons that we currently have. In no way should we reduce our reliance on that capability or negotiate it away. The nuclear deterrent will remain a key component regarding security in the European theater; news this weekend that Putin placed Russian nuclear forces on high alert reinforces this point.

Funding Our Defense: Five Percent Real Growth for Today and Investments for Tomorrow

The war in Ukraine is the latest real-world event that demonstrates we need to make a robust investment in our military strength with five percent real growth year over year in our defense budget. Chinese military modernization—both conventional and nuclear—already necessitated sustained real growth in the U.S. defense budget in the near term. Defense budget growth above inflation is consistent with Secretary Mattis' and Chairman Dunford's recommendation five years ago and what the bipartisan National Defense Strategy Commission advanced and promoted in its 2018 report. What matters now more than ever, though, is the 'real' part of the 'three to five percent real growth' recommendation. With inflation currently approaching eight percent, and some experts predicting that it will rise further into double digits, the buying power of the Department of Defense has already been severely undermined and diminished.

As a result, the NDS and this committee must emphasize the need for real growth. The Biden Administration's FY22 defense budget, as this committee knows, was inadequate. Before inflation reached its current heights, the budget request failed both to keep pace with inflation and deliver the Department of Defense the real growth it required. This issue will become magnified in the months and years ahead. For this defense strategy to work, it absolutely needs resources at this higher level with more aggressive prioritization.

The Department must allocate its investments to deter adventurism in the day-to-day competition with China and others while also ensuring that we can prevail in any future 21st century conflict. This committee has received considerable testimony on the necessity of investments in game changing technologies, like quantum computing, artificial intelligence, and machine learning. I associate myself with those recommendations. Yet, as Russia's invasion of Ukraine has made clear, conventional forces still matter: ships, submarines, tanks, fighter aircraft, and end strength cannot be sacrificed in favor of a future capability that exists on a power point slide. We need to sustain our conventional capability to prevail in the current competition.

Now is the moment to end the continuing resolution and push through a robust defense budget.

Responding to Russian Aggression and Deterring China

Our strategy must account for the growing coordination between Russia and China, in what is an emerging axis between the two countries. China is watching Russia's aggression in Europe, which will inform its own conclusions as to how to undermine U.S. deterrence. Coordination, cooperation, and opportunism between Russia and China can advance their objectives especially when they jointly exploit weaknesses in our own deterrent and in the cohesion of our alliances. What happens in Ukraine matters to European security and will determine the future of freedom on the continent. It will reveal whether or not we allow an autocrat like Putin to threaten NATO by bringing additional massed forces up to the eastern borders of the alliance, which could trigger our Article 5 obligations. Of equal if not greater importance, Putin's success or failure in the European theater will have a material impact on China's calculus and perception of its prospects for successful adventurism in the Indo-Pacific theater.

Therefore, we must respond wisely and decisively to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. American conventional deterrence has failed and needs to be restored; Moscow's aggression reinforces the need for a significant budget increase with real growth. Events in Ukraine are changing by the hour, but at the first opportunity we ought to coordinate with our allies to establish an air bridge to support Ukraine. Like we did in 2008 when Russia invaded Georgia, there should be C-130s and C-17s in the air with additional supplies, both military and humanitarian. We must move additional U.S. forces to the eastern border of NATO beyond those that have already been deployed. Importantly, Russia has violated the terms of the NATO-Russia Founding Act, rendering it null and void. We should not be bound by the Act's declaration that NATO member states "have no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, nor any need to change any aspect of NATO's nuclear posture or nuclear policy - and do not foresee any future need to do so." NATO should not be bound by commitments made during a bygone era, including the stationing of major combat forces on the territory of new member states. To that end, NATO must develop and deploy conventional Intermediate Range Missiles in Europe and not forgo the right to deploy nuclear warheads on those missiles in the future.

If the United States and its allies re-establish deterrence in Europe, it will strengthen our ability to deter Chinese aggression in the Pacific, including against Taiwan. There can be little doubt

that American presence and capability will determine the strength of our ability to deter Chinese action against Taiwan. Deterrence by denial is a sound approach and worthy of investment. It requires dollars for today's force, different deployment decisions, and enhanced capabilities for tomorrow. This will send the persistent message to Beijing that Taiwan's independence will be supported and defended by the United States. The strategic impact of Taiwan falling will not only be felt by the Taiwanese people; it also will be felt by the American people economically, politically, and militarily. Not meeting this requirement will only invite more such aggression and expansion by Chinese Communist Party outside and beyond the first island chain.

Making Strategic Choices: Climate, COVID, and the Middle East

Department of Defense leadership, even resourced at five percent real growth, will be pressed to make real choices. The Department cannot do all things it wants to do in every theater across every challenge, whether it be dealing with COVID, climate change, or the Middle East. The choices we make will determine whether we will accomplish our primary objectives, which, as I have laid out, are to have a force that could deter and prevail in a conflict in the Indo-Pacific while deterring aggression in other theaters. The Congress should demand those choices be made through its oversight and budget allocation functions. We should not confuse those choices by adding priorities that blur the lines between what are the most important objectives for our national defense, and what are objectives that perhaps the Department of Defense can support but should not lead such as COVID and climate change.

Conclusion: True Peace

There are some who fear foreign entanglements and argue against policies that would strengthen our alliances in Europe or the Indo-Pacific, or that support Ukraine or Taiwan. However, the peace achieved through such short-sighted accommodation would result in less economic freedom and opportunity for the United States and ultimately less political freedom for people all over the world. Simply put, it would result in a false peace that will eventually undermine our national interest.

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan explained, “*Peace is more than just an absence of war. True peace is justice, true peace is freedom, and true peace dictates the recognition of human rights.*” The great challenge for the National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy is to develop a serious, clear pathway to realizing this peace.