

**Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General Thomas D. Waldhauser, United States
Marine Corps
Nominee for Commander, U. S. Africa Command**

Defense Reforms

Based on your experiences as a senior officer, what challenges have you observed with the current organizational structure, with particular focus on warfighting capabilities, and what modifications, if any, do you think are necessary to the current organizational structure including any Goldwater Nichols Act provisions?

First, The pace of global operations demand increased inter-agency synchronization, unity of command and an agile, responsive processes. Today's Joint Force can be better organized to meet the 21st Century spectrum of threats and integrate or execute operations to address global, transregional, and multi-domain threats. Second, we need to institutionalize practices that will facilitate the ability of the CJCS to offer best military advice to the Secretary of Defense and the President. Finally, while the Joint Officer Development process has been successful in producing quality leaders for the past three decades, refinement of the program is now needed. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the discussion of this topic and other defense reforms with the Secretary and this committee on these important considerations.

In your view, what modifications to the Unified Command Plan, if any, would enhance the warfighting effectiveness of the Department of Defense?

Like the Secretary of Defense, I believe the Unified Command Plan's current alignment of geographic combatant commands is sound. I support the Secretary's recommendations to seek greater efficiencies by integrating functions across the Joint Staff, combatant commands and subordinate commands and eliminate redundancies wherever possible without losing capability. Any changes to the Unified Command Plan need to speed the strategic decision-making processes, but not to the detriment of our ability to work with our friends and allies or command and control our own forces.

Duties

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander of U.S. Africa Command?

In my view, the most important requirement is to detect, deter and prevent attacks against the United States, its territories, possessions and bases and to employ appropriate force to defend the nation should deterrence fail.

If confirmed, I take responsibility for carrying out AFRICOM's mission to, along with partners, disrupt and neutralize transnational threats, protect U.S. personnel and facilities, prevent and mitigate conflict, and build African partner defense capability and capacity in order to promote regional security, stability, and prosperity. The AFRICOM Commander is also responsible for the health, welfare and security of those 2,000 personnel stationed at AFRICOM's headquarters as well the over 6,600 service members forward deployed in the AFRICOM area of responsibility.

If confirmed, I will ensure our approach is synchronized and focused, capitalizing on regional cooperation and close coordination with a host of partners. AFRICOM, along with our diplomatic, defense, and development partners will continue to help build African institutions capable of deterring the spread of extremism, protecting their populations, enabling economic prosperity, and expanding the rule of law and human rights.

What background and experience do you possess that you believe qualifies you to perform these duties?

In my years of military service, I have served in numerous positions that have prepared me for this opportunity. For the greater part of my career I have focused on the training and readiness of Marines in order to prepare them for the challenge and chaos of combat. Moreover, I have worked hard to build and foster command climates that value trust and respect. Having served in combat with our Joint and coalition partners I know firsthand what it takes to build teamwork and competence with military units from other services and nations. Serving in the dual-hatted position of Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force and the Commander US Marine Corps Forces, Central Command I came to appreciate the value and challenge of training and working with coalition partners, numerous interagency elements, and non-governmental organizations. Recently as a member of the staff of the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I have gained experience and understanding on the ends, ways and means with regard to our National Security Strategy and how combatant commanders interact with the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. If confirmed I will draw on this knowledge and experience to ensure the missions and tasks assigned to USAFRICOM are accomplished in an efficient and professional manner.

Relationships

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. Other sections of law and traditional practice, however, establish important relationships outside the chain of command. Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Commander, U.S. Africa Command to the following offices:

The Secretary of Defense

The Commander of AFRICOM is directly responsible to the Secretary of Defense and reports to the Secretary of Defense through the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Under Secretaries of Defense

The Under Secretaries of Defense serve as principal staff assistants and advisors to the Secretary of Defense on all matters concerning their portfolios. As such, they are a valuable consul to Combatant Commanders and part of the overall decision-making process within the Department of Defense.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs is the principal advisor to the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, providing advice on international security strategy and Department of Defense policy issues relating to the Europe, the Middle East, and African. If confirmed, I anticipate coordination between the Assistant Secretary's Office and the elements of the AFRICOM staff involved in security cooperation.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict and Interdependent Capabilities

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict is the principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense on special operations and low-intensity conflict matters. In addition to policy oversight, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict has policy oversight for strategic capabilities and force transformation and resources. If confirmed, I anticipate coordinating with this office on policy issues related to resourcing strategic capabilities.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Chairman functions under the authority, direction, and control of the National Command Authority. The Chairman will transmit communications between the National Command Authority and AFRICOM Commander as well as oversee the activities of the commander as directed by the Secretary of Defense. As the principal military advisor to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman is a key conduit between a combatant commander, interagency organizations and the service chiefs.

The Vice Chairman serves on several councils and boards whose decisions affect AFRICOM including the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, the Defense Acquisition Board, the Defense Advisory Working Group, and the Senior Readiness Oversight Council. Interaction between the Commander of AFRICOM and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is important to ensure these boards and councils make informed choices on matters affecting the command.

The AFRICOM Commander keeps the Chairman informed on significant issues regarding the AFRICOM area of operations. The Commander communicates directly with the Chairman and Vice Chairman on a regular basis.

The Service Secretaries and Service Chiefs

The Service Secretaries are responsible for all affairs of their respective Services including the administration of and support for forces employed by AFRICOM. The Secretaries exercise administrative control through the Service Component Commands assigned to AFRICOM.

The Service Chiefs are responsible for ensuring the readiness of their Service branch. The

Service Chiefs are also members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and serve as advisers to the President, National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council and the Secretary of Defense. AFRICOM's Commander relies on the Service Chiefs to provide properly trained and equipped forces to accomplish AFRICOM's mission. If confirmed, I anticipate regular communications between AFRICOM and the Service Chiefs.

Commander U.S. Special Operations Command & other Combatant Commands

The Commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command is responsible for the administration and support of special operations forces assigned or attached to the AFRICOM Commander in Special Operations Command Africa. The AFRICOM Commander maintains a close relationship with the Commander, US Special Operations Command on issues of mutual interest.

Other Combatant Commanders

The relationship among combatant commanders is characterized by coordinating mutual support, and close communication. These relationships are critical to the execution of the National Military Strategy. Combatant Commanders coordinate as necessary to accomplish all assigned missions. The AFRICOM Commander has a close relationship with the Commander, US European Command and Commander, US Central Command.

The relationship among Combatant Commanders is characterized by coordination and communication. Each Commander leads a Combatant Command and has a mission to accomplish, but all are on the same team. U.S. strategic priorities are not evenly divided among us, therefore neither are resources. The AFRICOM Commander has an especially close relationship with the Commander of U.S. European Command as some forces and assets are shared between the two.

The respective U.S. Chiefs of Mission within the AFRICOM area of responsibility (AOR):

AFRICOM currently enjoys a very positive relationship with the Chiefs of Mission in the AFRICOM area of responsibility. As the President's representative, they have the weighty task of carrying out overarching U.S. foreign policy goals and strategic objectives. I recognize their scope of authority and if confirmed, would ensure all AFRICOM partner engagement compliments the Ambassador's priorities and diplomatic mission.

The respective U.S. Senior Defense Officials/Defense Attachés (SDO/DATT):

The respective U.S. Senior Defense Officials/Defense Attachés are the Combatant Commanders senior representatives in a country and represent the Command's perspective on the Country Team. They are assigned to their respective embassies and work for the Chief of Mission. There is a supervisory relationship between the AFRICOM Commander and the U.S. Senior Defense Officials/Defense Attachés. The U.S. Senior Defense Officials/Defense Attachés are formally evaluated by the AFRICOM Commander. This relationship ensures the Senior Defense Officials/Defense Attachés maintain close coordination with AFRICOM on all matters

involving U.S. military forces in the country. If confirmed, I will maintain a close working relationship with the U.S. Senior Defense Official in each country in order to coordinate activities between the command and the respective country's military, as well as between the Command and the State Department Country Teams led by the Ambassador to each country.

Major Challenges and Opportunities

If confirmed, you will be responsible for all military operations in the region. In your view, what are the major challenges and opportunities that you would confront if you are confirmed?

A major challenge is effectively countering violent extremist organizations, especially the growth of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabab in Somalia and ISIL in Libya.

Challenges in Africa include the underdeveloped governments and security forces across much of the continent, creating conditions which lead to endemic violence, mass migration, political instability, illicit trafficking, resource depletion, and the expansion of violent extremism.

Africa is a continent with huge potential for continued growth and development. If confirmed, I will pursue objectives that strengthen and professionalize African security institutions in order to reduce the risks of destabilization, radicalization, and persistent conflict to support our partners' aim to realize their potential as stable and prosperous members of the global community.

If confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges and opportunities?

I understand AFRICOM's Theater Campaign Plan and, if confirmed, believe it will provide the basis for my plan to address challenges and opportunities in Africa. In the East, Al-Shabaab must be neutralized and operations to counter them transferred from the African Union Mission in Somalia to a Somalia-led operation. We must degrade violent extremism, such as IS-Libya, in the Sahel-Maghreb and contain instability in Libya. We must contain and degrade Boko Haram. In the Gulf of Guinea and Central Africa, AFRICOM is working to interdict illicit activity. We must also work to build the peace-keeping and humanitarian and disaster-relief capacity of our African partners.

To do this, we must build defense institutions. AFRICOM strengthens partner capacity through Security Force Assistance which is the primary way to achieve success over time. AFRICOM will also continue to use multinational exercises, operations, engagements, and posture, presence and agreements to achieve our goals.

What is your understanding of U.S. Strategic Objectives in Africa and what role do you believe AFRICOM should play in supporting these objectives?

AFRICOM's mission supports overall U.S. strategic objectives to (1) strengthen democratic institutions; (2) spur economic growth; (3) advance peace and security; and (4) promote opportunity and development.

AFRICOM's mission is to, along with partners, disrupt and neutralize transnational threats, protect U.S. personnel and facilities, prevent and mitigate conflict, and build African partner defense capability and capacity in order to promote regional security, stability, and prosperity.

AFRICOM's security force assistance efforts support the U.S. strategic objective to strengthen democratic institutions by promoting accountability, transparency, and responsiveness in security institutions. AFRICOM's efforts to build our partners' defense capabilities and increase maritime security promotes stability and helps create an environment for economic growth, a major U.S. strategic objective in Africa.

In support of the U.S. strategic objective to advance peace and security in Africa, AFRICOM conducts counter-violent extremist organizations operations and multinational training exercises with our partners to bolster the security sector. Building the peace-keeping and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief capacity of our partners is a stated major line of effort for AFRICOM which directly supports U.S. strategic objectives.

Counterterrorism Priorities

Within AFRICOM AOR, what do you consider the highest counterterrorism priorities?

AFRICOM's top counterterrorism priorities are neutralizing al-Shabaab and transitioning the campaign from the African Union Mission in Somalia to a Somali-led operation, degrading violent extremist organizations in the Sahel-Maghreb, such as IS-Libya, containing and degrading Boko Haram, and interdicting illicit trafficking that resources violent extremism. While each has not specifically targeted the United States, they have successfully carried out attacks on western interests and engaged in kidnapping.

Given your current knowledge of AFRICOM programs, do you believe that Command's resource are aligned in a manner consistent with these counterterrorism priorities?

Yes. AFRICOM's Theater Campaign Plan identifies countering violent extremism as its number one key task and alignment of resources reflect its importance.

Al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)

What is your assessment of the threat posed by Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to the region, the United States, and broader western interests?

Al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb and its affiliates have the capability and intent to conduct attacks on western targets and pose a significant threat to U.S./western interests and regional stability. Notable recent western-frequented hotel attacks include: 20 November

2015 attack on Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako, Mali, killing 21, including one American citizen; 15 January 2016 attack on Hotel Splendid in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, killing 28, including one American citizen; and, 13 March 2016 attack multiple hotels and restaurants in Grand Bassam, Cote D'Ivoire, killing 16. Al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb also conducts kidnappings against western and international targets. The group's ability to conduct attacks in Algeria and Tunisia has been degraded, but attacks in Mali and bordering countries will likely continue.

In your view, does AQIM pose a threat to the United States and/or western interests outside of its immediate operational area? What capacity has AQIM demonstrated to plan and carry out actions threatening U.S. interests?

At this time, al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb does not pose a threat to the U.S. homeland, but al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb will continue to conduct attacks and kidnappings against western and local interests in North and West Africa. Al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb and its affiliates have demonstrated the ability to attack outside of Mali, its primary operational area of focus, to include the attack in Ouagadougou in January 2016 and an attack on hotels in Cote D'Ivoire in March 2016. Al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb's proposed next targets are Ghana and Togo, raising security concerns in those countries.

What is your understanding of the extent to which AQIM has benefitted from the flow of arms from Libyan stockpiles since mid-2011 – either in terms of arming itself or profiting from regional arms sales?

Al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb's operational capability and regional influence benefitted from the outflow of Libyan weapons starting in mid-2011. Mali-based al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb elements leveraged weapon outflows after the collapse of the Qaddafi regime and through its contacts with smuggling networks across the Sahel. This acquisition of arms enabled it to seize and control northern Mali prior to the French counter-offensive in January 2012. In northern Africa, al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb was less successful in using Libyan weapons to reinvigorate its capabilities due to consistent and effective Algerian security efforts.

If confirmed, what efforts, if any, would you undertake to prevent and/or counter the spread of AQIM operations, fundraising activities, and ideology in North and West Africa?

AFRICOM is and will continue to work to degrade violent extremist organizations across the Sahel-Maghreb. Crucially, AFRICOM supports Operation BARKHANE, France's 3,000 person effort to stabilize the region. In Mali, Niger, and Chad, AFRICOM will continue to provide Security Force Assistance in concert with Department of State Security Sector Assistance.

What risks, if any, do you see accompanying greater potential AFRICOM engagement in regional efforts to expand government control and dismantle AQIM?

Current levels of AFRICOM resourcing provide adequate support to effective French efforts against al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb. Expanding U.S. resource contributions against al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb would come at the expense of other priority AFRICOM efforts – many of which do not benefit from the same level of commitment and resourcing from a major European ally.

Do you believe current legal authorities, including the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), are sufficient to enable you to carry out counterterrorism operations and activities against AQIM at the level you believe to be necessary?

Yes. AFRICOM currently possesses the authorities required to execute the Secretary of Defense-directed efforts in the Sahel-Maghreb.

Somalia and al-Shabaab

What is your assessment of the threat posed by al-Shabaab to the region, the United States, and broader western interests?

Despite losses of territory, influence, and conflict among their senior leaders, Al-Shabaab remains a threat to U.S. persons and Western interests in East Africa, and retains the capability to effectively attack members of AMISOM, the Somali National Army (SNA) and the Somali Federal Government. Additionally, al-Shabaab propaganda, which consistently singles out U.S. and other Western targets, further demonstrates the group's intent to target western interests throughout the region as evident in the Westgate Siege video of 2015 and the Path to Paradise video of 2013.

In 2016 we expect activity to increase across the region during the Ramadan period. Al-Shabaab seeks to conduct high profile attacks similar to the one on Kenyan Defense Force Forward Operating Base, El Adde.

Al-Shahaab continues to pose a threat to aviation as demonstrated by attacks against Daalo airlines and the Improvised Explosive Device attack at Beledweyne Airport.

How would you evaluate the effectiveness of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) efforts to counter al-Shabaab and the prospects for longer term stability in Somalia?

Modest and sustained U.S. assistance has contributed to AMISOM's increased effectiveness. AMISOM forces liberated large portions of southern Somalia. AMISOM's gains against al-Shabaab have increased opportunities for progress in governance and development. However, as demonstrated by recent al-Shabaab offensives, AMISOM successes are fragile and will require continued U.S. and international assistance. The Somali Federal Government's ability to govern justly, provide economic opportunities, and deliver services to the population will be critical to stabilizing the country in the long term.

What role, if any, do you see for AFRICOM in building the capacity of the Somali National Army (SNA) and what should the objectives of such efforts be in the near, mid, and long-term?

The international community is working to train the Somali National Army (SNA). AFRICOM can best assist in the effort by helping to coordinate the international efforts and by focusing US efforts on developing the SNA's force generation (those institutions which man, train, equip, and sustain the tactical forces) and the agencies charged with the Executive Direction of the Army (primarily the Ministry of Defense). This will allow other international partners to focus on the development of the SNA's tactical units. Near term efforts with the SNA should focus on the development of effective tactical units, while mid-term efforts should focus on building a national army and long-term efforts should focus on developing self-sustaining military institutions.

Do you believe current legal authorities, including the 2001 AUMF are sufficient to enable you to carry out counterterrorism operations and activities against al Shabaab at the level you believe to be necessary?

Yes, AFRICOM currently possesses the authorities required to execute the Secretary of Defense directed counter-Al Shabaab approach with its African partners.

What role, if any, do you see for AFRICOM in preventing further deterioration of the humanitarian crisis in Somalia, which according to experts remains among the worst anywhere in the world?

AFRICOM's primary role in preventing and mitigating humanitarian disasters, in Somalia and elsewhere across the continent, lies in building the capacity of our African nations to respond to emerging crises themselves. While some US assistance, particularly in logistics and communications, is almost always needed, our African partners are increasingly capable of addressing emerging humanitarian crises through national and regional efforts. For example, since the Ebola crisis the nations of West Africa have, with US assistance, significantly expanded their ability to identify, contain, and treat outbreaks of infectious disease. The scale and scope of African humanitarian crises make it likely that AFRICOM will be called upon to provide airlift and other capabilities to assist in addressing human suffering for many years to come. It is our investment in indigenous capability which will have the greatest positive impact in the long term.

Nigeria and Boko Haram (Islamic State-West Africa (IS-WA))

What is your assessment of the threat posed by Boko Haram to Nigeria, the region, the United States, and broader western interests?

Traditionally, Boko Haram has focused the vast majority of its operations on local national and host nation targets; however, the group is avowedly anti-Western. Boko Haram has issued public calls for attacks against Western/international targets, but has only conducted one mass-casualty anti-Western attack – the August 2011 suicide bombing of the United Nations

building in Abuja, Nigeria. At this time, there are no indications Boko Haram has shifted its targeting strategies away from regional targets to Western interests. Boko Haram will likely focus on soft targets in the region, given the group would probably conclude security at hard targets like U.S./Western embassies would prevent a successful attack.

How would you characterize the ties between Boko Haram and other terrorist groups in Africa, particularly the Islamic State?

Boko Haram is a recognized branch of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and calls itself the “Islamic State - West Africa.” This link provides Boko Haram greater legitimacy; the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant has also provided guidance and support to propaganda efforts and has likely helped enhance some Boko Haram tactical tradecraft. In the future, this could expand to limited provision of fighters and materiel.

What is your assessment of the Nigerian government’s efforts to combat Boko Haram?

President of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, appears to be fulfilling anti-corruption promises made during his campaign. Early indications are that appointees to senior military positions will be willing partners in US security force assistance activities and are attempting to improve the effectiveness and professionalism of the security forces.

If confirmed, what role would you recommend for AFRICOM in building the capacity of the Nigerian and other regional security forces to respond to the Boko Haram threat?

AFRICOM should play a supporting role in the efforts of the nations of the Lake Chad Basin to counter Boko Haram. Building capacity and enabling regional cooperation should form the centerpiece of our support.

What risks, if any, do you see accompanying greater potential AFRICOM engagement in regional efforts to expand government control and dismantle Boko Haram?

With the establishment of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF), the nations of the Lake Chad Basin have made significant progress in their efforts to use coordinated military activities to counter the regional threat posed by Boko Haram. The MNJTF and the increasing regional cooperation which it has encouraged are positive indicators of the region's ability to counter Boko Haram using its own resources, although much work remains to be done. US efforts to support regional militaries should be within the context of the growing regional cooperation, and should seek to enable and empower the region's nations to degrade Boko Haram and restore regional stability through their own collective efforts. While providing the region with inadequate support will undoubtedly endanger our objectives in West Africa, providing too much support risks replacing the growing will of region’s nations with our own capability.

Do you believe current legal authorities, including the 2001 AUMF are sufficient to enable you to carry out counterterrorism operations and activities against Boko Haram at the level you believe to be necessary?

Yes, AFRICOM currently possesses the authorities required to execute the Secretary of Defense-directed counter-Boko Haram approach with its African partners.

Violent incidents, reportedly including indiscriminate killing of civilians, committed by Nigerian police and military services during operations intended to be against Boko Haram have risen significantly in recent months. In your view, what measures should the United States incorporate into current and future military-to-military engagements to help address allegations of violent incidents by the Nigerian police and military services against civilians during operations intended to be against Boko Haram?

Nigeria is one of several African nations in which allegations have been made of indiscriminate killings and atrocities regarding the nation's security forces. Such predatory practices undermine the faith of the people in those institutions charged with protecting the people, and often produce conditions ripe for the spread of extremism. Our work in Nigeria includes efforts to prevent such activities and incentives compliance with the rule of law. For example, AFRICOM conducts regular professional interaction with Nigerian forces, and those of our allies, including formal training and education, joint exercises, and military-to-military engagements thereby increasing their professionalism, competence, and commitment to conducting military operations in accordance with the rule of law.

Those militaries which fail to comply with international norms may be restricted from receiving assistance, for example restrictions imposed in accordance with the US Leahy Law. Under the Leahy Law, assistance may be withheld from a unit of a security force when there is credible evidence the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. The impact of this legal requirement is significant and incentivizes compliance with the rule of law. The potential loss of US support can act as a deterrent to improper behavior, although the record is clear that it is not always sufficient in and of itself. The combination of regular professional interaction and incentives offers the best approach to addressing military practices which fall outside international norms.

Libya

What is your assessment of the security situation in Libya, to include the size and operational capabilities of the Islamic State?

Libya's precarious political situation coupled with IS-Libya's destabilizing influence could push the country toward civil war, threatening U.S. interests in Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. IS-Libya's current estimated strength now in question after Libyan forces cordoned and advanced into Surt. We previously assessed IS-Libya had 4,500-6,500 fighters with a majority of the group being comprised of foreign fighters from Tunisia and the Sahel region. This number is likely in flux as fighters have left Surt and the surrounding area, possibly seeking an alternate safe haven to the south or west. Whether Libyan forces can clear and hold Surt remains unknown.

Before the Surt offensive, IS-Libya was considered the most proficient Islamic State branch outside of Iraq and Syria in terms of its ability to project force and govern territory. As

conditions rapidly evolve, we believe IS-Libya will adapt a more asymmetric approach seeking to slow and disrupt further gains made by Libyan forces. We expect IS-Libya to use its enduring presence in the west near Sabratha to facilitate attacks in Tunisia as a way to export instability.

There are few ground forces that are exclusively loyal to the Government of National Accord. Misratan militia forces and the Petroleum Facilities Guard Central Branch aligned with the Government of National Accord primarily because the GNA is the foremost political counter-weight to their eastern Libyan adversaries: the Libyan National Army and the House of Representatives.

Utilizing approximately 3,000-4,000 fighters, Misratan and Petroleum Facilities Guard forces are currently engaged in fighting against IS-Libya in Surt. In the event of a crisis that threatened the city of Misrata, Misratan militias could probably augment their expeditionary forces to over 10,000 fighters.

What is your assessment of the threat posed by the Islamic State in Libya to the region, the United States, and broader western interests?

IS-Libya is a transregional threat affecting the security and interests of our North African partners, European allies, and the U.S. in an already unstable North Africa and Sahel environment. An unchecked IS-Libya could become an external operations hub threatening Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, shipping in the Mediterranean, and our European allies. ISIL Core in Iraq and Syria would also be able to use IS-Libya as a means to support further expansion into the Sahel, supporting ISIL adherents in Mali, Nigeria, and elsewhere by taking advantage of existing illicit trafficking networks to move weapons, funds, and personnel. The current unprecedented migrant crisis coupled with IS-Libya's long-term intent to strike US and European interests poses a growing threat to Europe's southern flank. The ability to infiltrate IS-Libya operatives into Europe provides many more attack venues against Westerners as well as US persons and property, though we have yet to see clear evidence of IS-Libya exploiting the cross-Mediterranean refugee flow for operations into Europe. The immense propaganda value of external operations in Europe helps feed and validate ISIL's extremist narrative.

What role, if any, do you envision the United States playing in helping Libya build capable security institutions?

While the U.S. has a number of capabilities which can help in building capable Libyan security institutions, the desires of the Libyans themselves will be the most critical factor in determining the U.S. role. In cooperation with such multi-national efforts as the Libyan International Assistance Mission, the U.S. could employ such tools as our 12-series security assistance programs, the Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF), the Ministry of Defense Advisors (MoDA) Program, the Defense Institutional Reform Initiative (DIRI), and other such capabilities to assist the Libyans in building lasting professional security institutions. Finally, our efforts must match the requests of the Libyan government and be synchronized with our international partners.

What is your assessment of the risks associated with the paramilitary forces that continue to have control of large swaths of Libya?

The greatest risks associated paramilitary forces in Libya is the lack of centralized control. These groups and subordinate elements are administered by transactional relationship and shifting allegiances driven by tribal ties, religious beliefs, political agendas, and material gain. These variables make the paramilitary forces a dynamic factor in the stability and security of Libya; allegiances can change without notice, possibly effecting access, degrading security, and ultimately complicating efforts to build political unity.

The unpredictable nature of paramilitary group patronage will most likely remain a significant obstacle to the GNA's efforts to establish sovereignty. Powerful paramilitary groups would probably capitalize on weak facets of the GNA, such as its unsteady legal standing and internal divisions, to exert their own power and agendas if the GNA remains in a politically depressed state.

What is your assessment of the impact of the proliferation of weaponry from Libyan military stockpiles into neighboring countries?

Following the collapse of the Qadhafi regime, the proliferation of weapons from Libyan military stockpiles via illicit trafficking networks reinforced the military capacity of VEOs in Africa and the Levant, including Algeria, Egypt, Mali, and Tunisia. AQIM's operational capability and regional influence benefitted from the outflow of Libyan weapons starting in mid-2011. Mali-based AQIM elements leveraged the weapon outflows through contacts with Sahelian smuggling networks. The group's rapid acquisition of small arms, heavy machine guns, rocket propelled grenades, indirect fire weapons, and military explosives enabled its seizure of northern Mali prior to the French counter-offensive in January 2012. Robust trafficking networks directly challenge the security forces in the region.

In your view, what role, if any, should AFRICOM play in assisting the Libyans with addressing the threat to stability posed by paramilitary forces?

The widely held Libyan bias against active foreign assistance would most likely hinder or preclude any direct assistance by USAFRICOM. Paramilitary forces represent substantial security structure in Libya, in addition to a limited number of police forces that have maintained their security role since 2011. Paramilitary groups are often better armed and paid than the official security forces. AFRICOM's role in addressing these challenges will depend upon U.S. policy.

What do you view as the most significant challenges to the Libyan government in building capable and sustainable security institutions?

From a U.S. perspective, mitigating the risk associated with regionally oriented power blocs rests primarily on our continued support to the Government of National Accord, encouraging our partners outside of Libya to expand international support to the GNA and to the extent possible, limiting external military support to those armed groups not aligned with the

GNA. The GNA has and continues to make progress in unifying Libya against the threat posed by IS-Libya and continued support to the GNA will be important in establishing a unified, stable Libya.

In what ways can the United States be most effective in assisting the Libyan government in building capable and sustainable security institutions?

The reconstitution of Libyan security apparatus will require significant resourcing and development of national-level institutions. The U.S. can potentially contribute to these efforts working as part of an international effort based on Libyan requests for assistance and U.S. policy.

Building Partner Capacity and Security Assistance

In your view, what should be our strategic objectives in building the capacities of partner nations in the AFRICOM AOR?

AFRICOM, along with our diplomatic, defense, and development partners, is helping to build African capacity and institutions capable of deterring the spread of extremism, protecting their populations, enabling economic prosperity, and expanding the rule of law and human rights.

Building Partnership Capacity is a decisive effort within the AFRICOM Theater Campaign Plan. The intent is to enable African partners to develop the defense capabilities necessary to achieve our shared objectives. Our command approach is synchronized and focused, relying upon regional cooperation and close coordination with a host of partners. Along with our diplomatic, defense, and development partners, AFRICOM's strategic objectives are helping to build African institutions capable of deterring the spread of extremism, protecting their populations, enabling economic prosperity, and expanding the rule of law and human rights.

AFRICOM efforts account for what our partner nations can absorb, with the complementary objective of aligning resources to our strategy.

Are there ways in which existing authorities could be reformed to more effectively and efficiently respond to requirements in the AFRICOM AOR?

As Building Partner Capacity and Security Force Assistance proposals run on an annual cycle, often proposals focused on long-term projects cannot be fully vetted and scrutinized within the bureaucracy to meet submission deadlines. This causes long-term proposals to be broken down into smaller proposals that lose sight of its long-term capacity building and security assistance objectives. By expanding the authorities' timeline, proposals can be evaluated as whole-effort proposal that provide the most effective and efficient way to response to AFRICOM requirements.

Development programs that complement Security Force Assistance are essential to promote long-term stability in fragile or conflict affected states, to effectively and sufficiently counter violent extremism and radicalization

In your view, what is the appropriate balance between efforts to build partnership capacity at the tactical and operational level and at the institutional and ministerial-level?

The balance of efforts to build capacity within the Operational Force (comprised of the nation's tactical and operational units), the Generating Force (those institutions charged with manning, training, equipping, and sustaining the Operational Force), and the agencies charged with the Executive Direction of Operational and Generating Forces (normally the Ministries of Defense and Interior) is a matter of considerable concern within Africa. Our historic tendency has been to focus heavily on the Operational Force, at times producing capable military formations which lacked the institutions necessary to sustain them once our development efforts concluded. AFRICOM is working hard to correct this tendency, and has been working with the Services to find those entities within our own force which are best equipped to help our African partners develop and expand their own Generating and Executive Direction capabilities. We are beginning to see some encouraging signs in this regard.

The correct balance is not universal, however, and must be tailored to each partner individually and to the strategic environment in which each partner operates. The absorptive capacity of our partners varies widely, and not all are capable of making use of our assistance in all areas. AFRICOM works closely with each African partner, in coordination with the Ambassador-led country team, in seeking to strike the right balance.

Do you believe the ability of a partner nation to sustain U.S.-provided equipment and capabilities should be a key factor in determining the level and type of assistance to be provided?

Yes. Our partner nations' absorptive capacity and their ability to sustain capabilities procured through the various Security Force Assistance programs are evaluated during the proposal writing and submission process. Consultations and assessments are conducted between AFRICOM, our components, the country teams, and the host nation. If any of these stakeholders believe that a capability proposal will exceed partner nation's absorptive capacity and sustainment capability, the proposal is either scaled back, rewritten, or in some cases, pulled from the AFRICOM proposal submission.

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)

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

Operation Observant Compass provides support to the African Union Regional Task Force to mitigate and eliminate regional threats posed by the Lord's Resistance Army. Operation Observant Compass is one component of the multifaceted U.S. Government strategy to support regional efforts to reduce the threat to civilian populations posed by the Lord's Resistance Army.

In your view, what is the appropriate level of priority to be accorded to AFRICOM's efforts to counter the Lord's Resistance Army in central Africa, compared to other AFRICOM objectives?

U.S. counter-Lord's Resistance Army efforts have been largely successful, with most of the Lord's Resistance Army degraded. The Lord's Resistance Army poses a much reduced threat to regional security and does not currently threaten U.S. or western interests in the region. Nevertheless, AFRICOM continues to work with regional partners to counter illicit activities that support the Lord's Resistance Army and other destabilizing influencers in the region.

If confirmed, will you promptly review and report back to the committee on your assessment of this mission?

Yes. AFRICOM closely monitors and regularly assesses the effectiveness of our missions. If asked, I will report back to the committee, accordingly.

Each of the countries affected by the LRA face other security threats viewed by their governments as more serious to their national well-being and, as a result, these countries place a lower priority on addressing the LRA problem.

If confirmed, how would you seek to strengthen the impact of Operation Observant Compass while recognizing those competing national priorities of our partners in the counter-LRA fight?

Despite competing priorities, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, and Central African Republic remain committed to participating in the African Union Regional Task Force – though their force capabilities are limited. Uganda, the largest troop contributor to the African Union Regional Task Force, has announced its intention to withdraw its forces. AFRICOM has a longstanding relationship with the Ugandan People's Defense Force, and if confirmed, AFRICOM would continue close coordination with the U.S. Country Team to ensure our engagement with the Ugandan government and security forces is in support of regional stability.

Regardless of force composition, AFRICOM remains committed to building the capability of the African Union Regional Task Force until a change in U.S. policy dictates otherwise. In addition to working with our African partners to counter the Lord's Resistance Army directly, AFRICOM is also working with regional partners to counter illicit activities that support the Lord's Resistance and other destabilizing influencers in the region.

Support to United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Africa

In your view, should the United States increase the number of personnel it contributes in the form of staff positions and military observers to UN peacekeeping missions and other international peace operations?

United Nations peacekeeping operations play a critical role in advancing peace, stability, and security throughout Africa. The role of the U.S. in these operations, whether providing civilian police, staff officers, or military observers, offers the U.S. a cost-effective way to advance our mission and interests. Of course, expanding the number of United States personnel or contributions to United Nations peacekeeping missions requires a policy decision from the

administration. All else being equal, more United States personnel contributions would benefit peacekeeping missions and long-term efforts to promote stability and security in Africa.

In your view, what are the advantages and disadvantages of contributing additional military personnel to UN operations in the form of staff positions and military observers' positions?

United Nations-led peacekeeping operations can be cost effective, especially in comparison to unilateral operations. Sharing the manpower and financial burden across donor organizations and countries expands the international community's ability to contribute to stability and security in more places. Contributing additional United States military personnel to United Nations operations adds value to those operations and affords our troops a unique opportunity to build relationships and trust with other United Nations members' military personnel – relationships that could be of future benefit. Working in partnership with and sharing a sense of purpose with other militaries also affords our troops invaluable cultural, regional, and international experience which helps further our national interests.

Determining the relative value of additional contributions relative to other investments of military personnel is a policy decision, one requiring careful thought and planning.

AFRICOM Military Service Component Commands

Given the Department's focus on the greater Middle East and Asia-Pacific, do you believe the AFRICOM Commander will be able to secure the necessary personnel to accomplish its partnering and engagement mission within its AOR? If not, how would you assess the risk to U.S. strategic interests in the region?

AFRICOM has only a small pool of U.S. forces but is adept at combining our efforts with those of our partners to achieve our common objectives. In an effort to produce the greatest impact with the available resources, AFRICOM employs security force assistance and exercises as decisive efforts to build partner capacity. The use of military operations to create the conditions for African partners to develop the capacity they need and the use of engagements across the continent as well as posture, presence, and agreements are sufficient to sustain current efforts in Africa. These efforts expose our African partners to U.S. values and capabilities, model military professionalism and proficiency, and inspire them to pursue excellence in their own institutions.

Regional Alignment and Rotational Deployments of U.S. Units

What is your understanding and assessment of the Army's capability and capacity to align combat brigades or other units with regional combatant commands?

The Army has the capability and capacity to align combat brigades and other units to combatant commands using a combination of CONUS and forward basing including active component, reserve component, and National Guard forces. Most Army units are allocated to AFRICOM on an annual rotational basis.

The Army's objective is to enhance its support of Combatant Commanders. Regionally aligned Brigades receive training in culture, geography, and language. This type of training and education promotes an understanding of the militaries they will engage during their mission assignment.

What are your views, if any, on the use of general purpose forces for missions providing security force assistance to other nations' militaries?

Security Force Assistance is a major tool in building partner capacity. General Purpose Forces (GPF) are well suited to meet requirements across exercises, and military-to-military activities at battalion level and below. In the AFRICOM Area of Operations, U.S. general purpose and Special Operations Forces closely coordinate to integrate appropriate skill sets to various missions.

Although there are key missions that require Special Forces training, the level of training required for the majority of Security Force Assistance provided by AFRICOM can be and is provided by general purpose forces. AFRICOM's use of GPF for SFA enhances GPF skill sets and contributes to multi-mission readiness in our Forces, while satisfying critical SFA requirements in support of AFRICOM's Theater Campaign Plan.

In your view, how should, if at all, a unit's regional alignment determine the assignment of personnel, selection of unit commanders, priority for cultural and language training compared to core combat training, and identification and acquisition of special equipment?

A unit's regional alignment should not determine the assignment of personnel or the selection of unit commanders. Decisive Action, or core combat training that the U.S. Army conducts for its units, is foundational training and sufficient for the majority of missions Army forces will execute for AFRICOM. Beyond core training, there are additional skillsets leaders need in order to successfully interact with and provide Security Force Assistance to foreign partners. Once identified for future alignment to AFRICOM, unit training plans must include cultural and regional awareness, and some basic language training. If future units to AFRICOM are habitually allocated to AFRICOM, I believe we will reap an increased return to our investments in cultural, regional, and language training.

If confirmed, how would you propose to implement the use of regionally aligned forces in support of your theater assistance and engagement strategies?

Regionally aligned forces are currently used to shape the security environment and set the theater. The theater campaign plan addresses SFA across the executive direction, generating force, and operating force functions. We will find opportunities across the continent and within planning efforts to incorporate the expanded capabilities and capacity of the Regionally Aligned Forces within these authorities.

In your view, how should funding responsibility be consolidated or distributed between the military departments and the combatant commands for training and employment of regionally aligned forces?

The U.S. military is without peer at mobilizing and deploying forces worldwide. Our services are responsible for manning, training, and equipping these forces to support the combatant commanders as directed by the Department of Defense using funds allocated and distributed for this purpose. The funding for missions related to the employment of the Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) should also remain allocated to and distributed by the service component designated as the Financial Management Executive Agent.

In your view, is it feasible and suitable to satisfy theater engagement and assistance strategies completely with rotational forces? If not, why not?

Currently, SFA on the continent is done with rotational forces. Consequently it is feasible to conduct assistance with rotational forces. A mix of rotational and permanent forces would allow for more efficient and continuous SFA across all 3 SFA functions, with permanent subject matter experts building capacity at the Executive Direction and Generating Force levels instead of just at the Operating Force level. Assigned forces allow for long term SFA that can assess the sustaining institutions of an African partner and provide a better enduring cycle of assistance and evaluation. If a permanent force is not available, at least having the same forces, particularly enablers such as command and control, sustainment, communications, and intelligence habitually allocated would improve our SFA execution.

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 AFRICOM's role in addressing atrocity threats, and what tools does AFRICOM have for preventing or responding to atrocities in its AOR?

AFRICOM is committed to preventing mass atrocities.

AFRICOM plays an important role in support of and in coordination with the Department of State to address atrocity risks across Africa. AFRICOM engages with African militaries to foster their professionalism, political and ethnic neutrality, and respect for human rights. AFRICOM also leads contingency planning efforts aimed at developing requirements to support a mass atrocity response effort.

The Department of Defense sits on the interagency Atrocity Prevention Board alongside the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, State Department, and others. The Board works to identify atrocities risks and implement policy options before situations escalate to the point of possible U.S. military intervention. AFRICOM regularly coordinates on intelligence assessments that are presented to the Board and AFRICOM staff monitor the area of responsibility for indicators that mass atrocity risk is rising. These efforts are supplemented by initiatives that forecast the risk of violent and political instability in Africa, including partnership with the National Intelligence Council and Central Intelligence

Agency to produce a biannual instability outlook and leveraging tools that monitor social media activity for indications of mass violence.

Has AFRICOM developed planning processes toward this effort so that it will be able to respond quickly in emergency situations? In your assessment, what country or countries are the most at risk for mass atrocities in Africa?

AFRICOM has emphasized the requirements for responding to mass atrocities across its planning efforts. The Theater Campaign Plan focuses on building the capacity of African militaries to enable responses to crises, including mass atrocities. AFRICOM is in the process of developing scalable contingency requirements to meet the potential demands of a mass atrocity response.

The Atrocities Prevention Board lists the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and Sudan as countries where they are “currently engaged to prevent or stop genocide or mass atrocities.” According to the Board, Libya has “significant potential for widespread attacks on civilians” and is included on their Watch List. Based on a number of indicators, including the Fund for Peace’s annual Fragile State Index and intelligence community reports, we would also highlight Somalia, Central African Republic, Nigeria, and Burundi as additional countries at elevated risk of mass atrocities.

Special Operations Forces

Special Operations Command Africa (SOCAFRICA)

What special operations capabilities are in highest demand by AFRICOM?

AFRICOM relies heavily on the needs of our partner forces and the priorities of the U.S. Country Teams to make decisions on providing special operations capabilities. Capabilities in highest demand include: (1) special operations forces teams deployed on a persistent basis to advise, assist, train and equip host nation units countering violent extremist organizations; (2) Military Information Support and Civil Affairs Teams provide greater access within the countries and enhance both military and diplomatic objectives; (3) AFRICOM also maintains a Special Operations Crisis Response Force, a continued priority is the ability to deploy this highly trained force in a timely manner to respond to a crisis threatening US lives and interests; and (4) AFRICOM SOF requires intelligence collection capabilities, medical surgical treatment, non-standard rotary and fixed wing aviation, personnel recovery, and close air support capabilities to accomplish their assigned missions.

Which countries in the AFRICOM AOR do you believe have the greatest need for increased engagement with U.S. Special Operations Forces?

U.S. Special Operations Command Africa is currently engaged with partners from 20 countries in the AFRICOM area of responsibility. SOCAFRICA is regionally aligned, threat-focused, working with African partner countries to overcome challenges they face from violent extremist organizations. SOCAFRICA's approach, nests with the AFRICOM Theater Campaign

Plan, is promoting stability through two approaches. We focus on working with those countries where the threat survives in ungoverned and under-governed safe havens and sanctuaries enabled by the countries' limited security apparatus or fractured governance. These include, but are not limited to Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Libya, Mali, Niger, and Somalia.

The second approach is to engage with emerging countries where the threat can have effects, but the country has the ability to eventually export security through their respective regions, the ability to synchronize regional security efforts, and a demonstrated resiliency needed to overcome challenges they face from violent extremist organizations. These regional influencers include but not limited to Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Senegal, Morocco, and Tunisia.

Special Operations Personnel in Embassies

U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) deploys personnel to work with country teams in a number of high priority countries where the United States is not engaged in direct action operations, but rather trying to train host nation security forces. Their mission is to support the priorities of the Ambassador and the combatant commander's theater campaign plan. At times, Ambassadors have complained that they have not been adequately informed of activities by special operations forces in their country.

If confirmed, what do you intend to do to make sure the goals of special operations personnel deployed to these countries are aligned closely to those of the Ambassadors with whom they are working?

Special Operations Command Africa's command and control construct sets AFRICOM up to achieve our military goals and be effective. Plans are closely aligned with and account for every Ambassador's Integrated Country Strategy. Engagements support both bilateral and regional relationships to address regional problems, and emphasize U.S. Embassy Chiefs of Mission in the critical roles they play in strengthening military-to-military relationships.

Crisis Response Capabilities in the AFRICOM AOR

What is your understanding of the crisis response capabilities available to AFRICOM?

AFRICOM has two specific crisis response forces designated: the Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force – Crisis Response Africa and the East Africa Response Force. These forces are deployable throughout a specific region (North West Africa and East Africa, respectively), and operate in permissive and uncertain environments to provide embassy reinforcement or military assisted departure of DOS-designated personnel.

AFRICOM also has a Commander's Crisis Response Force, designed to provide military counterterrorism capabilities and resolve terrorist acts against U.S. personnel and interests. The Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team (FAST) provides rapid response anti-terrorism and security capabilities suited for deliberate contingency response based on indications and warnings of emerging threats.

Do you believe that the mechanisms and availability of appropriate capabilities are sufficient to meet the crisis response requirements within the AFRICOM AOR?

AFRICOM currently is short personnel recovery aircraft, impacting its ability to deploy response forces. This will be compounded with additional Air Command Element degradations pending in the next fiscal year. AFRICOM is engaged with the Joint Staff to mitigate these shortfalls.

In light of increasing threats to U.S. diplomatic personnel by terrorists throughout the world, do you believe modifications to the Marine Security Guard Program's mission and protocols are warranted?

The Marine Security Guard Detachments are key stakeholders in the protection of US persons and facilities. I would refer to the Department of State and the Diplomatic Security Service for any questions on modifications to their program.

In your opinion, what additional steps, if any, should be taken to reduce the risk of attacks on U.S. embassies and consulates and diplomatic personnel by terrorist organizations throughout the region?

Flexible posture through cooperative security locations and contingency locations, complemented by the Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response (SPMAGTF-CR) at Moron Air Base, Spain and the East Africa Stand-by Force in Djibouti are strategically positioned to enable U.S. and partner operations to respond both to crisis and terrorist threats. Completion of our Cooperative Security Locations, coupled with accurate indications and warnings, will ensure swift crisis response to all fifteen high threat/high risk embassy locations in Africa.

Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Capabilities

Demand for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities of every kind has grown exponentially in recent years largely due to the enhanced situational awareness and targeting capabilities they bring to our commanders. Almost all of the geographic combatant commands have validated ISR requirements that are not being met.

What is your understanding of the support AFRICOM is currently receiving to respond to its ISR requirements?

Intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance collection is critical to situational understanding, indications, and warnings of threats to U.S. personnel and facilities throughout the continent, and violent extremist organizations in East and North Africa are the command's top priorities. Currently, approximately 20 percent of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance requirements are met: an increase from 13 percent last year.

Do you believe the growth in threats emanating from the AFRICOM AOR should warrant additional resources from within DoD? If so, how do you intend to advocate for additional ISR assets?

AFRICOM has the following capability shortfalls: flexible, sea-based intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; long-range, long-endurance intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; flexible-manned intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; and platform and collected intelligence support such as processing, exploitation, and dissemination. AFRICOM is mitigating these and other intelligence capability shortfalls by leveraging allied and partner capabilities (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and human intelligence) and building partner intelligence capacities.

Maritime Security

Maritime security has proven to be a significant issue on the coasts of West and East Africa. What is your assessment of AFRICOM's ongoing maritime security initiatives?

AFRICOM has seen some success in its maritime security initiatives. The challenges have global implications and include piracy, trafficking in persons, narcotics, and weaponry, armed robbery and kidnapping, illegal migration, and illegal fishing. These transnational threats are best addressed with regional solutions. AFRICOM-sponsored maritime exercises, partner training events, and regional maritime Operation Coordination Centers contribute to our partners' abilities to perform maritime security for themselves.

Through United States Naval Forces Africa, AFRICOM supports regional maritime security activities and complements civilian initiatives that address root causes of maritime crime by strengthening governance and promoting economic development. In the Gulf of Guinea, our cooperation with Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, and Togo has led to the regional enforcement of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, an information sharing and maritime security agreement that has increased our partners' capacity to counter illicit trafficking and piracy.

Very few African countries have the capacity to project naval forces beyond their coastal waters; as a result, the economic exclusion zones of many coastal African countries are exploited by a variety of international actors. What opportunities, if any, do you see for expanded U.S. engagement on maritime security in the AFRICOM AOR?

There are many opportunities to expand AFRICOM's maritime engagement. Illicit maritime trafficking has global reach and impact and requires a globally coordinated response. AFRICOM's operations, exercises and engagement focus on increasing regional cooperation, further integrating national maritime strategies and leveraging the expertise of global partners and allies to build capacity.

From a regional standpoint, the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States, and the Gulf of Guinea Commission are leading the way in the Gulf of Guinea. In the Gulf of Aden, the European Union's Operation ATLANTA has proven a powerful example of regional coordination and has significantly reduced incidents

of piracy and rates of maritime crime. In the Mediterranean Sea, the European Union's Operation SOPHIA is addressing the surge of migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea from Libya and combatting human smuggling and trafficking networks in north Africa. AFRICOM also seeks to include more North and South American partners and North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies in exercises and maritime security efforts with the goal of expanding the pool of expertise available to our African partners.

AFRICOM also supports efforts to integrate regional frameworks to facilitate the sharing of maritime information between neighboring states, develop pursuit-and-entry protocols to operate in the territorial seas of another state, establish cooperative ship-rider agreements for combined operations, and establish Multi-National Maritime Operations Coordination Centers. The African Union's 2050 Integrated Maritime Strategy is a good example of long-term, regional planning and focus. These strategies foster rule of law, emphasize good governance and support economic development.

China

In your view, do China and the United States share common security objectives in the AFRICOM AOR?

China's security interests are ensuring access to valuable resources and markets while enhancing its political influence. The United States and more closely aligned western nations have broader interests that include stability, humanitarian concerns, and improved governance. Nevertheless, China and the US should cooperate on issues of mutual interest such as counterterrorism, and on other projects that satisfy both countries objectives.

In your opinion, what effect has China's engagement with African militaries had on those militaries and on U.S. security interests?

While China seeks influence, it has yet to yield significant impacts on African militaries and US interests. China's engagement with African militaries will allow them to increasingly gain favor among African military elites to further arms sales and MIL-Mil engagement opportunities. China does provide limited training for military leaders and has engaged in arms sales or military training with two thirds of all countries in Africa. China currently has approximately 2,600 troops and advisors involved in seven peace operations across Africa who are interacting and learning from militaries on the continent. However, China does not have as extensive of an advising and training program as many Western countries, to include the U.S.

In regard to arms sales to Sub-Saharan African countries, China is a leading supplier of military equipment to include small arms and heavier weapons such as armor and artillery. China may be a preferred vendor by providing customer incentives such as lower pricing on equipment and weaponry or other types of assistance bundled with arms sales.

Importantly, Chinese security cooperation programs and arms sales are untied to demands for political or social reforms. This fact has been very enticing to many African governments who often resent or are frustrated with U.S. and other Western countries'

insistences on political and governmental reforms tied to receiving economic or security assistance. Many African leaders view this approach as a threat to sovereignty, which is contrasted with the Chinese policies that do not include social changes or restrictions on use as conditions.

To what extent do you view China's activities on the continent as a threat/challenge to U.S. national security interests?

China's interests overall in Africa are primarily economic and they are competing with the rest of the world for Africa's markets and abundant natural resources. At this time, China's activities on the African continent do not pose a direct threat or challenge to U.S. National security interests. However, Chinese influence on the continent is increasing. This influence may exclude U.S. economic and military influence and reduce U.S. leverage over democratic changes on the continent. Support from African countries, which make up over a quarter of the voting bloc in the United Nations General Assembly, is important for China as they continue to pursue increased global influence.

China's construction of a naval logistics facility in Djibouti, its first overseas logistics facility, to resupply their ships supporting UN anti-piracy operations in the Horn of Africa illustrates its desire to be seen as a global maritime power. This facility, although geographically located close to U.S. facilities in the region poses minimal threat to our security interests. Chinese dedication to ongoing peace operations shows their willingness to seek influence among African and other peacekeeping nations to improve global perceptions and to support China's global agenda.

Are United States policies in Africa sufficient to counter China's influence when that is appropriate, or are there additional measures we should be considering? What role should AFRICOM play in this regard?

Current U.S. policies are sufficient to counter existing levels of Chinese influence in the AOR as China is primarily engaged in economic, not military competition. As China endeavors to expand influence in Africa and strengthen influence in international organizations, the United States will increasingly have to compete for influence on the continent but this is a by-product of, not the main objective, of China's policies on the continent. China's focus will likely remain increasing its political influence and maintaining access to African markets and resources. Chinese activities on the continent are not a zero-sum game in regard to competition with the United States. China's recent offer to provide a \$60 million grant intended to improve the capability of the African Standby Force and their crisis response capacity highlights China's willingness to increase its involvement in African security and engage African militaries. China does provide limited training for military leaders and often engages militaries without restrictions due to previous human rights violations. China has arms sales or military training with approximately two-thirds of all countries in Africa, and has engaged economically with almost all. Chinese assistance has built much needed infrastructure to include rail lines, roads, buildings, and airports.

Do you foresee China's growing energy and resource demands affecting security developments in Africa?

China seeks to gain expanded access to Africa's natural resources to meet the Chinese economy's needs and support China's economic health. China has limited concerns about how its acquisition of resources may affect the security and development situations on the continent. However, China's involvement in several peacekeeping and development missions on the continent demonstrates that China can play a direct role in helping promote African stability.

China may inadvertently undermine U.S. efforts to encourage the professionalism of African militaries through its substantial arms sales on the continent. While U.S. equipment is generally superior, Chinese equipment is adequate for the needs of most African nations and comes without end use verification requirements normally associated with U.S. arms sales. This makes Chinese arms an attractive alternative to governments which might seek to use their military forces in a manner not aligned with U.S. expectations.

Section 1208 Funding

Section 1208 of the Ronald Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (Public Law 108-375), as amended, gave U.S. Special Operations Command the authority to provide 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 assessment of this authority?

Section 1208, within the context of its authority, has proved to be one of the most responsive and flexible tools to meet AFRICOM security challenges. This authority allows AFRICOM to enable partner nations who share the common goal of countering the violent extremist organizations threat in the region.

Section 1208 is not a capacity building authority. The purpose of the funding is to better enable those units that are legitimate representatives of our partner nation. AFRICOM identifies and engages with a partner unit capable and willing to conduct counter terrorism operations against violent extremist organizations threats. To do this requires close coordination with both the regional Country Teams as well as the host-nation civilian and military officials. It is essential that all parties understand and agree to the common threat picture and have a displayed willingness to act against those threats.

U.S. assistance is having positive effects on strengthening the counterterrorism capabilities and willingness of our regional partners to maintain pressure on terrorist organizations. 1208s, especially when coupled with US enabling support such as C2, intelligence, tactical mobility, near real-time situational awareness through ISR, and extended-range robust communications, are high payoff with low risk to US Forces.

Do you believe this authority has been appropriately utilized in Africa?

Yes, this authority has been appropriately utilized in Africa. The Secretary of Defense with Country Team(s) concurrence has approved ten Section 1208s in the AFRICOM area of responsibility that effectively leverage partner forces to prosecute the fight against terrorism.

In Somalia for example, 1208 operations have degraded al-Shabaab and reduced al-Shabaab strongholds, while expanding the territory held by African Union Mission in Somalia and Somalia National Army forces. This capability was instrumental in recent operations to remove senior al-Shabaab leadership. These actions will help to disrupt al-Shabaab planning and potentially save many innocent lives. Additionally, increased presence patrols and civil-military engagements in the region have improved the local populace perception of the Somalia National Army, while expanding friendly force space, and potentially contribute to the security and early warning network against al-Shabaab.

If confirmed, how would you seek to have this authority used in Africa?

I will seek to continue to provide the foundation on which to build, shape, and pursue our shared interests of combating terrorism across Africa. I will seek to increase the scope of AFRICOM Section 1208s, where appropriate, ensuring end states are in line with and achieve National Security Strategy objectives.

Africa Health Related Issues

Health issues are a significant concern in many African nations and in their militaries and the U.S. Government's engagement strategy in Africa includes an emphasis on health-related issues.

To what extent should AFRICOM be involved in broader U.S. Government "health diplomacy" efforts in Africa?

I believe AFRICOM should be heavily involved. Healthcare and engineering are foundational components of stable governments. Force Health Protection within our partner nation's militaries crucial to their success. We must be cognizant of building sustainable health care solutions based on African solutions for African problems.

In your view, should AFRICOM's engagement strategy, perhaps more than other combatant command engagement strategies, include an emphasis on military health engagement?

Nowhere are global public health challenges more acute than in sub-Saharan Africa. With just 13 percent of the world's population, the region carries 24 percent of the global burden of disease. Africa is home to 60% of the world's HIV/AIDS-afflicted population, more than two million tuberculosis cases every year, and 90% of the world's malaria cases. African militaries must be trained to respond and perform in health crises.

How much success has DoD had in efforts to support prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS in African militaries?

The Department of Defense's HIV/AIDS Prevention Program (DHAPP), which is a complimentary effort to the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), has enhanced and supported HIV programming and readiness. Thirty-three African countries have active DHAPP programs, and according to the most recent DHAPP Annual Report (2014), success has varied by country. Many African nations have noted a significant increase in the institutional capacity of their militaries to develop effective HIV-related policies and legal frameworks to support the implementation. With the intent of eliminating HIV/AIDS as a threat to the theater stability, AFRICOM, with DHAPP, focuses on prevention, supporting sustainable care and treatment programs, capacity building, and development of national HIV policies. Overall, the DoD has had major successes in the fight against HIV in African militaries, and the trend for HIV testing, counseling, and outreach is positive among the African militaries.

If confirmed, how, if at all, would you like to see such efforts increased or programmatically altered?

If confirmed, in our current resource restricted environment our programs must be results-oriented. If confirmed, I would place a strong emphasis on ensuring that Department of Defense health programming is delivering the impact we expect while also being well-coordinated with other ongoing efforts, both by United States government agencies and other organizations.

In your view, what should DoD's role be in the program relative to other elements of the U.S. Government?

Since Department of Defense's focus is on military health systems, we target a population that other United States government agencies are not easily able to work with. Our efforts are vital to ensuring that military health systems are capable of responding to the needs of host nation populations. We do so in close coordination with other agencies, in particularly under the auspices of the Global Health Security Agenda.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response in AFRICOM

What is your assessment of the problem of sexual assaults in USAFRICOM?

It is my understanding that AFRICOM has the required programs and personnel in place to set the conditions for the prevention of sexual assault both at our home base in Stuttgart and in the Offices of Security Cooperation on the African Continent. AFRICOM's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) personnel identify cases of sexual assault in the Command are limited. This is reflective of a Headquarters that is staffed with senior military and civilian personnel.

What is your assessment of USAFRICOM's sexual assault prevention and response program?

If confirmed, I will personally evaluate of the effectiveness of AFRICOM's sexual assault prevention and response programs and make any required adjustments. I am also supportive of a comprehensive review of the sexual harassment policies and procedures to ensure that all individuals work in an environment free from sexual harassment.

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

The provision for victims to make either a restricted or unrestricted report of sexual assault appropriately, in my estimation, balances the following priorities: protections for victims of sexual assault; a recognition of the victims' right to make elections as to how this most personal type of assault is handled; and the necessity for good order and discipline in military organizations.

What is your view about the role of the chain of command in providing necessary support to victims of sexual assault?

Unequivocally, it is the Commander's responsibility to ensure a victim's safety and support after a sexual assault occurs. It is the chain of command's duty to actively comply with these Department of Defense and Service standards of support to victims of sexual assault, demonstrate concern for the individual victim, and insist on timely, gender-responsive, culturally-competent and recovery-oriented care and protection for the victim. If confirmed, I intend to ensure these

What is your view of the adequacy of resources and programs in USAFRICOM to provide victims of sexual assault the medical, psychological, and legal help they need?

It is my understanding that the resources and programs at AFRICOM provide appropriate medical, psychological and legal help to victims of sexual assault. U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart is the lead agent to provide assistance for AFRICOM personnel in Stuttgart, Germany. It is my understanding that the garrison collaborates with AFRICOM to ensure necessary services are available to assist victims of sexual assault, to include 24/7 hotline response and credentialed AFRICOM Victim Advocates.

What is your view of USAFRICOM initiatives to prevent additional sexual assaults?

It is my understanding that AFRICOM and its components actively implement, support and engage in dynamic training to prevent sexual assaults. Additionally, it is my understanding that AFRICOM took the initiative to establish a full time Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Program Coordinator to ensure the command was leaning forward in engagement on sexual assault prevention, education, response and partnership.

What is your view of the adequacy of the training and resources available to USAFRICOM to investigate and prosecute allegations of sexual assault?

It is my understanding that AFRICOM investigative and prosecutorial resources are adequate. Criminal investigative agencies, from each of the Services prioritize sexual assault cases and thoroughly investigate all allegations of sexual assault. The Office of Legal Counsel for AFRICOM maintains a close working relationship with the senior Judge Advocates of each of the Service Components to ensure sexual assaults are thoroughly reviewed, and, if appropriate, prosecuted.

What is your view about the role of the chain of command in changing the military culture in which these sexual assaults occur?

First and foremost, Commanders must establish a positive culture within their units that will eliminate sexual harassment and sexual assault. This includes focusing on not just prevention, but ensuring that there is a climate of empowerment to take the appropriate action when confronted with a situation which could lead to a sexual assault as well as ensure individuals are not afraid of retaliation or stigma for reporting a crime.

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?

If confirmed, I will republish, as my personal Command policy, the Department's directives on the prevention of sexual assault and the prevention of retaliation for reporting sexual assault. This includes the social retaliation which may be conducted on private social media sites. In any case of sexual assault occurring within my Command responsibility, I will take the necessary measures to preclude personal or institutional retaliation, ensure victims understand the protections accorded to them, and take appropriate steps within the provisions of Departmental directives and the Uniformed Code of Military Justice to first, prevent any Service Member from being ostracized or retaliated in any way, and second, to respond appropriately to any allegations of either personal or institutional retaliation.

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?

If confirmed, I will emphasize development of positive command climates that foster trust in the reporting process and ensures a thorough understanding of responsibilities to victims of sexual assault. Ultimately, reporting of sexual assaults will occur when victims trust their leaders to handle their reports of sexual assault consistent with the manner of reporting – restricted versus unrestricted reporting – and with appropriate understanding, sensitivity, and care.

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?

In my opinion, requiring a Judge Advocate to act in place of the Commander would significantly undermine the concepts of Command authority and responsibility. The military holds commanders responsible for all aspects of mission accomplishment and discipline in their unit. The Commander is trusted with life and death decisions in combat, they should be also trusted with all aspects of unit discipline – to include the response to allegations of sexual assault.

What additional steps would you take, if confirmed, to address the problem of sexual assaults in USAFRICOM?

If confirmed, I will personally meet with leaders and subject matter experts within my Command to gauge the effectiveness of our sexual assault prevention and response programs. I will apply my personal experience and judgment in evaluating whether there are avenues for improving the Command's emphasis on prevention, our processes for response to allegations, and our systems to protect those who make reports of sexual assault from personal or institutional retaliation. If I identify improvements needed in any aspect of the Command's programs, I will take all necessary steps to do so.

What is your assessment of the effect, if any, of recent legislation concerning sexual assault on the capability of USAFRICOM commanders to prosecute sexual assault cases?

At this time, I cannot evaluate the effect of recent legislation concerning sexual assault on the prosecution of sexual assault cases in AFRICOM or its Service Components. However, my assessment of the impact of this legislation is positive. I am particularly impressed with the requirement for trained special victim counsel and the additional specialized sexual assault prosecution training provided to the counsel who advise Commanders.

The Armed Services Committee has received testimony about troubling allegations concerning child sexual abuse by coalition partners in Afghanistan. In your view, what is the appropriate role for a U.S. military commander who is working with coalition partners, when that U.S. officer becomes aware of allegations of child abuse by members of that coalition force?

The U.S. military takes all allegations of this nature very seriously and upon witnessing or receiving allegations, U.S. military members are required to report any incidents to their chain of command. I will evaluate, if confirmed, the necessity for specialized training in the reporting and responding to observed child sexual abuse for units and individual service members supporting the operations of AFRICOM.

If confirmed, what direction would you give to U.S. personnel assigned to your command who become aware of such allegations?

As previously noted, if confirmed, I will evaluate the adequacy of established tactics, techniques, and procedures for the reporting and response to observed child sexual abuse. I will also examine the guidance established with AFRICOM for the notification of my Headquarters (e.g., establishing observed child sexual abuse as a Commander's Critical Information Requirement), our partner nations, and the Department of Defense of such allegations.

Under what circumstances would you expect U.S. personnel under your command to intervene to stop such misconduct if they suspect it or observe it?

If U.S. personnel suspect or observe an incident of abuse, I expect them to report it through their chain of command, bring it to the attention of the appropriate partner nation officials, and encourage those officials to address the incident through appropriate criminal justice systems.

While U.S. forces do not have the legal authority to enforce matters of partner nation domestic law, I expect our service members to do what is morally correct at all times and, within the imperatives of mission accomplishment and force protection, to stop abuse on the spot, if observed. I would expect all U.S. personnel under my command to embody this responsibility and act accordingly.

Quality-of-Life Challenges in AFRICOM

What quality-of-life challenges are unique for personnel and their families assigned to the AFRICOM area of responsibility?

The AFRICOM Headquarters works closely with the Ambassadors and Embassy staffs for each country to ensure they receive the quality of life they deserve. The quality of life challenges for personnel and families assigned to the Embassies include lack of medical, dental and recreational facilities, language barrier, cultural differences, changing force protection levels, and limited education opportunities in remote locations. Currently, AFRICOM supports 800 families to include 53 families on the African continent.

If confirmed, how would you address these theater-wide challenges to help improve the quality-of-life for these personnel and their families?

Continued support for the AFRICOM Family Forward Program will be key to ensuring we are addressing the quality of life issues unique to the AFRICOM AOR. The program is to prepare families for mission requirements, travel, culture, and operational considerations before traveling to their assignment in Africa. It helps manage expectations before the family pushes forward to their duty location. Lastly, we will continue to conduct surveys and working groups to analyze the feedback we receive from our service members and families. We will continue to visit locations of concern and continue to grow and strengthen our AFRICOM Family Forward Program.

Mental Health of Servicemembers and Stress on the Force

The Committee is concerned about the stress on military personnel resulting from lengthy and repeated deployments and their access to mental health care to deal with this increased stress. The suicide rates in each of the Services are clear reminders that service members, particularly those who have been deployed multiple times, are under tremendous stress and need access to mental health care.

In your view, are there sufficient mental health assets in AFRICOM to address the mental health needs of the military personnel and their families?

Military families stationed at African embassies rely predominantly on tele-behavioral health through TriCare and Military One Source, as well as the embassy's health unit's primary care providers.

AFRICOM uses its limited resources at deployment locations wisely and leverages telehealth capabilities for our personnel and their families serving in our embassies. Resources have thus far been adequate, but we always look to improve.

Due to limited resources, AFRICOM prioritizes mitigation of the risk. Efforts include pre- and post-deployment behavioral health support provided through European and United States based facilities. AFRICOM conducts redeployment screening with strict adherence to deployment criteria and there is a strong command emphasis on seeking assistance during deployment and the post-deployment period.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to address the mental health needs of military personnel and their families in AFRICOM?

If confirmed, I will continue to foster a culture in which military personnel and families seek assistance for mental health needs (i.e. reduce the stigma). Engaged leadership, education, and accessibility of services are all key components of that culture.

Focus on prevention and early recognition should include resiliency training, compassionate outreach by the chain of command, medical providers, and the chaplaincy. Additionally, we must adhere to both service and family member screening and execution of the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) as designed and intended as a means to ensure families are not put in a position where known medical issues are beyond local medical capabilities. Then, we must review and monitor compliance with our deployments and EFMP criteria. Treatment can be augmented through increased availability of tele-behavioral health and home station provider support before and after deployments. We will work with Tricare to enhance the tele-behavioral health resources available to service members and families on the continent.

Do you have any views on how to reduce the stigma, real or perceived, for seeking mental health care?

The primary reasons service members do not seek mental health assistance are concerns they will be treated differently by their units, they will be perceived as weak, or it will harm their career. The best methods for overcoming this stigma is for leadership to engage, honestly and openly, with all levels of personnel. I also believe that direct supervisors, friends and family have the greatest influence on a person's decision to seek help.

I and my subordinate leaders will support those seeking help and encourage family and friends to do the same, while consistently messaging that it is okay to seek help. We will continue to explore education efforts and new programs to assist families, friends, and supervisors in early recognition of those struggling with mental health issues.

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, I will.

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

Yes, I will.

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 the Commander, AFRICOM?

Yes, I will.

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, I will.

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, I will.