

**Opening Statement of U.S. Senator Jack Reed  
Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee**

**Room SH-216  
Hart Senate Office Building  
Wednesday, January 21, 2015**

**To receive testimony on global challenges and U.S. national security strategy.  
(As Prepared for Delivery)**

General Scowcroft, Dr. Brzezinski, welcome this morning.

Both of you have been leading American practitioners of diplomacy and strategic thinkers for several decades. We thank you for your service to the country and for agreeing to share your insights with the committee.

I'd also like to commend Chairman McCain for calling this hearing, the first in a series of hearings examining the challenges to the world order and the U.S. strategy for responding to those challenges. These hearings provide an opportunity for the committee to hear from leading experts and retired military commanders on key national security issues ahead of the Administration's submission of its fiscal year 2016 budget request for national defense. So I welcome this chance to take a broader, strategic look at some of the factors underlying the key security challenges we face.

The number and breadth of those challenges seems unprecedented: from Russia's aggressive and destabilizing actions in Europe, to the breakdown of nation-states in the Middle East and the rise of non-state actors like al Qaeda and ISIL that threaten the integrity of states throughout the region; to Iran's continued pursuit of a nuclear weapons program and the proliferation risks associated with that; to the growing assertiveness of China both regionally and globally; to cyber threats from North Korea and other malign actors.

LTGEN Scowcroft and Dr. Brzezinski, we would be interested in hearing each of your perspectives on these challenges and the principles that should guide U.S. policy in addressing these challenges. These include the following:

- With regard to the Middle East, first, how would you define the near- and long-term U.S. interests in the region; second, what do you believe will be required to defeat the threats from violent extremist groups like the so-called ISIL, both in terms of U.S. policy and internationally; and third, what role, if any, do you believe nations outside of the Middle East should play in addressing centuries-old divisions in that region, including the Sunni-Shia's divide, ethnic rivalries, and political and ideological divisions?
- With regard to Iran, there are a variety of ongoing developments -- another round of negotiations just wrapped up over the weekend; the July deadline - while a few months away - is approaching quickly; and the Senate Banking Committee is working on legislation that it hopes to markup as early as next week. So, the Committee would be interested in your assessment of

the likelihood that negotiations will succeed or fail and the value of giving this process an opportunity to play out, and your assessment of Iran's regional ambitions and how an Iran with or without a nuclear weapon would change the dynamics in the region and within the broader Sunni-Shia conflict.

- With regard to Europe, how should the United States and its allies contend with an aggressive, revanchist Russia, while reassuring our allies and respecting the aspirations of the people of eastern European countries to draw nearer to Europe?
- With regard to China, how should the U.S. keep the relationship from spiraling into conflict, while still demonstrating to its allies and partners in the region that it will help to counterbalance China's assertiveness?
- Regarding the cyber problem, our society appears to be very vulnerable to destructive attacks from even small states like North Korea who currently have no other means of threatening the homeland militarily. What are the implications of this vulnerability for the conduct of coercive diplomacy in the future?

Again, I join with Chairman McCain in welcoming you both, and I look forward to your testimony.